

The Asian Reporter

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Read your
New Year
horoscope!
See page 14!

Welcome the Year of the Rabbit!



RABBIT HOPS IN! A street vendor displays different lucky charms, including golden colored Rabbits, while waiting for customers in the Chinatown area of Manila, the Philippines, in this February 1, 2011 file photo. This year's Lunar New Year celebration welcomes the Year of the Rabbit. Those born in the Year of the Rabbit are usually hospitable, honorable, and expressive individuals. The Asian Reporter's special section celebrating the Lunar New Year begins on page 10. (AP Photo/Pat Roque, File)




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China again issuing passports, visas as virus curbs ease

BEIJING (AP) — China says it will resume issuing passports for tourism in another big step away from anti-virus controls that isolated the country for almost three years, setting up a potential flood of Chinese people travelling abroad for the Lunar New Year holiday. The announcement added to abrupt changes that are rolling back some of the world’s strictest anti-virus controls as President Xi Jinping’s government tries to reverse an economic slump. Rules that confined millions of people to their homes kept China’s infection rate low but fuelled public frustration and crushed economic growth. The latest decision could send free-spending Chinese tourists to revenue-starved destinations in Asia and Europe for the Lunar New Year.

Bangladesh opens first metro service to ease Dhaka traffic

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Bangladesh has launched its first metro rail service, mostly funded by Japan, in the densely populated capital amid enthusiasm that the South Asian country’s development bonanza would continue with both domestic and overseas funds. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the service accompanied by newly appointed Japanese ambassador Kiminori Iwama and Ichiguchi Tomohide, the chief representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, or JICA. “We have added another feather of pride to the crown of Bangladesh’s people today. Another feather added to the crown of the development of Bangladesh,” she said during the inauguration. Hasina also used the ceremony to commemorate six Japanese rail engineers working on the project who were killed during an attack on a Dhaka café by Islamic extremists in 2016.

HK scraps vaccine pass, COVID-19 tests for travellers

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong is scrapping some of its COVID-19 restrictions, including PCR tests for inbound travellers and vaccination requirements to enter certain venues, according to the city’s leader. For most of the pandemic, Hong Kong has aligned itself with China’s “zero-COVID” strategy, requiring stringent COVID-19 tests and isolation for close contacts of infected cases as well as for incoming travellers. But the mainland has relaxed measures in recent weeks, and Hong Kong prepared for the January reopening of its border with China, which had previously imposed harsh restrictions and snap lockdowns to stamp out the virus. “Our society as a whole has built an extensive and high-level barrier of immunity (to COVID-19),” said Hong Kong chief executive John Lee at a news conference.

Court in Myanmar again finds Suu Kyi guilty of corruption

BANGKOK (AP) — A court in military-ruled Myanmar convicted the country’s ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, of corruption, sentencing her to seven years in prison in the last of a string of criminal cases against her, a legal official said. The court’s action leaves her with a total of 33 years to serve in prison following a series of politically tinged prosecutions since the army toppled her elected government in February 2021. She has also been convicted of several other offenses, which previously gave her a total of 26 years of imprisonment. Her supporters and independent analysts say the charges against her are an attempt to legitimize the military’s seizure of power while eliminating her from politics before an election it has promised.

S. Korea’s unannounced rocket launch causes UFO scare

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea’s military confirmed it test-fired a solid-fuelled rocket after its unannounced launch triggered a brief public scare of a suspected UFO appearance or a North Korean missile launch. The Defense Ministry said in a statement that the rocket launch was part of its efforts to build a space-based surveillance capability and bolster its defense posture. It said it didn’t notify the general public of the launch in advance because it involved sensitive military security issues. A twisty tendril of vapor in white-to-red ombre could be seen snaking behind a bright white light in parts of South Korea’s sky.

Time zone by time zone, another new year swept into view

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — New Year’s celebrations swept across the globe, ushering in 2023 with countdowns and fireworks — and marking an end to a year that brought war in Europe, a new chapter in the British monarchy, and global worries over inflation. The new year began in the tiny atoll nation of Kiribati in the central Pacific, then moved across Russia and New Zealand before heading deeper, time zone by time zone, through Asia and Europe. At least for a day, thoughts focused on possibilities, even elusive ones like world peace, and mustering — finally — a resolve to keep the next array of resolutions.

North Korea’s Kim lays out key goals to boost military power

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un presented new plans to further bolster his military power at a meeting of top political officials, according to state media, in an indication he’ll continue his provocative run of weapons displays. Kim’s statement came as animosities with rival South Korea rose sharply with the South accusing the North of flying drones across the border for the first time in five years. North Korea has already performed a record number of missile tests in what experts call an attempt to modernize its arsenal and increase its leverage in future dealings with the United States.



SCARE SUPPLIES. People gather around a street food vendor in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on December 28, 2022. In Sri Lanka, where the tourism-driven economy has been hammered by political upheavals and shortages, the situation remains dire since COVID-19 hit in early 2020. Across South Asia, hotels and restaurants are finding past business models obsolete, forcing a reset in strategies as investments recover to meet rising demand from hungry diners eager to eat out again. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

South Asian eateries try “going local” as recovery strategy

By Vineeta Deepak
The Associated Press

NEW DELHI — Hotels and restaurants across South Asia have had to adapt and reimagine dining out since the pandemic ripped through the region, forcing many out of business.

Those that have survived are tapping local sources and going online.

In India, from hole-in-the-wall casual eateries to fine dining, restaurants were devastated by lockdowns and virus outbreaks, with millions losing their jobs since COVID-19 hit in early 2020.

In neighboring Sri Lanka, where the tourism-driven economy also has been hammered by political upheavals and shortages, the situation remains dire.

Saman Nayananda, a food and beverage manager at a hotel chain in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo, says going local for food sourcing and menu offerings is vital.

Nayananda, who was in New Delhi recently for the South Asian Food for Thought festival, survived the devastating tsunami in 2004 that killed 230,000. He lived through a prolonged civil war that ended in 2009 and witnessed the aftermath of deadly 2019 Easter terrorist attacks. After every calamity, the economy managed to get back on its feet.

The struggle to recover for the nation of 22 million is infinitely tougher given Sri Lanka’s troubles with debt, fuel, and food shortages, said the 50-year-old hospitality industry veteran.

“We had lot of challenges, including raw materials and the transport problems. A year after COVID, all hotels started food delivery.

We were slowly recovering and then this economic crisis came. We ran out of both imported and local materials. Again back to zero,” said Nayananda, who lost his job at a tourist resort in 2020 as everything shut down.

“We recovered from terrorism, from the tsunami, but this crisis, it has broken the middle class,” he said. With food inflation at 70% and hard currency to buy from abroad in short supply, going local both in terms of food sourcing and menu offerings is the only option.

“We came out with the concept of grow and sell. We replaced imported production with local production, coming up with innovative food items,” he said, mentioning dishes using locally grown sweet potatoes, cassava, yams and cowpeas, or black-eyed peas.

Across the region, hotels and restaurants are finding past business models obsolete. That’s forcing a reset in strategies as investments recover to meet rising demand from hungry diners eager to eat out again.

India’s food services market is expected to grow to \$79 billion by 2028 from \$41 billion in 2022, according to a report by the Francorp and restaurantindia.in. But the sector will still face supply delays or shortages, the report says.

Maneesh Baheti, founder and director of the South Asian Association for Gastronomy, said the pandemic has raised awareness about health concerns and food sourcing, leading the industry to adopt more sustainable practices.

That includes offering dishes made with locally sourced ingredients.

“Eating fresh local produce according to season, returning to diets rich in nuts, legumes, and green leafy vegetables, are

Continued on page 3

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Iranian Rial	41858
Japanese Yen	131.83
Laos New Kip	17327
Malaysian Ringgit	4.4
Nepal Rupee	132.51
Pakistani Rupee	226.4
Papua N.G. Kina	3.52
Philippine Peso	55.639
Russian Ruble	72.0
Saudi Riyal	3.757
Singapore Dollar	1.3406
South Korean Won	1256.9
Sri Lankan Rupee	365.08
Taiwan Dollar	30.695
Thai Baht	34.55
Vietnam Dong	23628

Dervishes on mystic Rumi’s path whirl for god

By Emrah Gurel
The Associated Press

KONYA, Turkey — To prepare for the ritual ahead, Omer Kilic and his 14-year-old son dress in white robes, drape black cloaks over them, and don cone-shaped hats called “sikke.”

The tennure robes symbolize funeral shrouds, the cloaks a tomb, and the hats a tombstone — outfits that are part of a centuries-old tradition performed by the whirling dervishes of Turkey.

The dervishes, a Sufi order of Islam that is rooted in mysticism, are chiefly known for the “sama” ritual in which they spin in unison with prayers and verses from the Quran.

Kilic has belonged to the order for 23 years. Now a tennure tailor, he is teaching his craft to his apprentice and son, Toprak Efe Kilic.

Kilic says the religious path first appeared to him in a dream. He decided to start training as a dervish a few days later.



Each year, the dervishes of the Mevlevi order perform their unmistakable act of devotion in the Turkish city of Konya, where thousands of people attend a weeklong series of events and ceremonies

that mark the death of the 13th-century Islamic poet, scholar, and Sufi mystic Jalaladdin Rumi.

Rumi, who is known as Mevlana in Turkey, was born in 1207 in Balkh, a city renewed focus on guest experience and the eateries are evolving as they respond to the shift towards healthier food,” Bandal said.

In Colombo, Nayananda began cycling to work and growing food at home after markets ran dry and it became difficult to feed his family of four.

In Sri Lanka and elsewhere in Asia, a wave of COVID-19 infections in China after it dropped its pandemic controls has revived worries over the risk of a return to shutdowns and other restrictions. But Nayananda says he’s hopeful.

“What is important is to learn to live with what we have in our hands,” he said.

ROBUST RITUAL. Whirling dervishes of the Mevlevi order perform during a “Sheb-i Arus” ceremony in Konya, Turkey, on December 16, 2022. The dervishes, a Sufi order of Islam that is rooted in mysticism, are well known for the “sama” ritual in which they spin in unison with prayers and verses from the Quran. (AP Photo/Emrah Gurel)

that now is part of Afghanistan. He settled in Konya in central Turkey, where he died on December 17, 1273. He is regarded as one of the most important Sufi philosophers, and members of the Mevlevi order follow his teachings.

Instead of mourning his death, the ceremonies in Konya celebrate what his followers believe is Rumi’s union with god. The main feature of the “Sheb-i Arus,” or “night of the union,” is the ritual in which the whirling dervishes revolve with their right hands symbolically turned up toward god and their left hands turned down toward the Earth.

Ahmet Sami Kucuk, the head of the dervishes in Konya, described the whirling as an “end” and a state one attains after years of training and discipline.

In 2005, the U.N. cultural agency proclaimed the practice as an example of “the oral and intangible heritage of humanity.”

The structure holding Rumi’s tomb in Konya is a museum and a pilgrimage site. One pilgrim, Mohammad Mobeen Dervesh, a Kashmiri living in the United Kingdom, said all lovers of god come to the site to honor Rumi.

Two years after the COVID-19 pandemic’s strict lockdowns, tourism official Abdulsettar Yarar said the site attracted more than 3.1 million visitors this year, 10% of them from abroad.

Mehmet Guzel in Konya and Robert Badendieck in Istanbul contributed to this report.

South Asian eateries try “going local” as recovery strategy

Continued from page 2

trends that are here to stay as they engage customers who are now a health conscious-aware segment with deep pockets,” Baheti said.

“The entire food industry has realized the importance of promoting better health and the potential of wellness-based menus,” Baheti added. “Eating local and eating fresh also helps in reducing the carbon footprint since the dependence on transportation and refrigeration reduces the emission of greenhouse gasses,” he said.

As the food services industry rebuilds itself, restaurant owners say some

practices born out of necessity during the pandemic can offer a way forward.

Many urban communities are experimenting with plant-based diets and growing farm produce on their rooftops and in backyards.

Siddharth Bandal, a partner at the Hideaway café and bar in the western Indian state of Goa, said they’ve learned to be nimble enough to adapt to changing customer behavior.

“It possibly made the sector stronger by exposing the weak spots and the industry has shown its resilience by adapting quickly. The pandemic made everyone more alert about hygiene. There is a

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The Rosewood Initiative
1-4 p.m.
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JANUARY 12
Nightstrike
7-9 p.m.
Under the Burnside Bridge

JANUARY 16
Clark Center
9-11 a.m.
1437 SE MLK Blvd, Portland
Doreen’s Place
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
610 NW Broadway St, Portland

JANUARY 17
Union Gospel Mission
2-3 p.m.
3 NW 3rd Ave, Portland

JANUARY 18
Cultivate Initiatives
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
12505 NE Halsey Street, Portland

JANUARY 19
Nightstrike
7-9 p.m.
Under the Burnside Bridge

JANUARY 23
Street Roots
9-10:30 a.m.
211 NW Davis St, Portland
Cultivate Initiatives
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Lents Park

JANUARY 24
Cultivate Initiatives
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
247 SE 82nd Ave, Portland

JANUARY 26
Nightstrike
7-9 p.m.
Under the Burnside Bridge

JANUARY 28
Love Your Neighbor
12-2 p.m.
526 SE Grand Ave, Portland

JANUARY 30
Clark Center
9-11 a.m.
1437 SE MLK Blvd, Portland

Doreen’s Place
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
610 NW Broadway St, Portland

JANUARY 31
Union Gospel Mission
2-3 p.m.
3 NW 3rd Ave, Portland

South Korea lifts ban on imported sex dolls

By Hyung-Jin Kim
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has formally lifted a ban on the import of full-body sex dolls, ending years of debate over how much the government can interfere in private life.

Although there are no laws or regulations banning the import of sex dolls, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, have been seized by customs, which cited a clause in the law that bans the import of goods that “harm the country’s beautiful traditions and public moral.”

Importers complained and took their case to courts, most of which agreed with them and ordered customs to release the sex dolls, saying they are used in people’s private spaces and don’t undermine human dignity.

The Korea Customs Service said in a statement that it began enforcing a revised guideline for import of life-size adult sex dolls. It said it reviewed recent court rulings and opinions from relevant government agencies including the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.

The customs service said it will still ban the import of child-like sex dolls or others embodying certain people. It said other countries like the United States, Australia, and the U.K. also ban child-like sex dolls.

While the decision reflects South Korea’s slow yet gradual moves to restrict state interference into personal lives, some women’s rights and conservative organizations will likely again voice their opposition to the use of sex dolls. They say they deepen sexual objectification of women and undermine public moral.

Carensare Co., a South Korean company that imports sex dolls, said in a statement that it was “deplorable” for the customs service to lift the import ban after allegedly wasting taxpayers’ money for lawsuits with importers. The company said it has suffered immense losses. It said South Korea must reform other regulations that have a negative impact on the economy.

“We thought our people’s rights to seek happiness and use (sex dolls) in their private lives have been restricted by the state,” said Lee Sang-jin, who headed one of the company’s online shopping malls.



IMPORT ALLOWED. A lawmaker (not seen) who brought a sex doll to the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea, speaks during a parliamentary inspection in this October 18, 2019 file photo. South Korea has formally lifted a ban on the import of full-body sex dolls, ending years of debate over how much the government can interfere in private life. (Lee Jong-chul/Newsis via AP, File)

“There are various types of people who use (sex dolls), including those who are sexually alienated or those who need them for artistic purposes.”

Lee said the decision by customs was “reasonable” but a “bit late.”

South Korean authorities don’t crack down on the sale of domestically made sex dolls, but their quality is in general inferior to those made abroad, Lee said.

Lee said his former company has already taken back more than 20 sex dolls from customs officials through lawsuits. He said the company has filed separate lawsuits seeking government compensation as many of the retrieved sex dolls became unusable following about two years of seizures by the customs service.

The customs service’s decision would allow importers to get back their sex dolls held in government storages run by the agency.

Customs officials said they still likely hold more than 1,000 sex dolls that had been sent to South Korea since 2018.

Sri Lankans face food crisis amid economic crunch

By Eranga Jayawardena
The Associated Press

VAVUNIYA, Sri Lanka — Rasarathnam Anushiya once had a mission: She awaited orders to blow herself up as a suicide bomber during Sri Lanka’s civil war. Years on, her struggle now is to feed her three children during the country’s unprecedented economic crisis.

Anushiya, 36, was arrested in 2009 when government troops defeated the Tamil Tiger rebels, who had sought to create an independent homeland for minority Tamils. She had been a



FOOD CRISIS. Rasarathnam Anushiya gives only two vadei, made from lentils, to her eight-year-old daughter Madushika in her lunchbox before she leaves to school in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka, on December 14, 2022. Due to Sri Lanka’s current economic crisis, families across the nation have been forced to cut back on food and other vital items because of shortages of money and high inflation. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

member of the rebels’ and spent the next five dreaded suicide squad years under government known as the Black Tigers,

Deaths of 3 endangered Cambodian dolphins raise alarm

By Sopheng Cheang
The Associated Press

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia — Three endangered freshwater dolphins have died within 10 days of each other, alarming conservationists in Cambodia.

The death of a third healthy dolphin in such a brief period indicates “an increasingly alarming situation and the need for an intensive law enforcement be urgently conducted in the dolphin habitats,” the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said in an announcement.

The latest Irrawaddy dolphin death — believed to have stemmed from entanglement in an illegal fishing line — spotlighted the need for law enforcement to help save the species, also known as the Mekong River dolphin, according to the statement.

The WWF said the body of a healthy female dolphin estimated to be between 7 and 10 years old was found floating in the river in the eastern province of Kratie. It said an examination of its carcass suggested that the dolphin, 6.5 feet long and 205 pounds, had been hooked and wrapped in a tangle of fishing line.

Seng Teak, WWF Cambodia director, said in the statement that without immediate action “the recent increase in illegal fishing activities in the dolphin conservation areas” would destroy the Mekong River dolphin population in Cambodia.

The statement advocated stepping up day and night patrols to protect the remaining dolphins in the conservation areas.

The first census of Irrawaddy dolphins in Cambodia in 1997 estimated their total population was about 200. In 2020, the population was estimated to have fallen to 89. WWF said 11 dolphins have died in 2022, bringing the total number of deaths to 29 in the past three years.

The Irrawaddy dolphin is classified as an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Other groups of these dolphins are found in two other freshwater rivers: Myanmar’s Irrawaddy and Indonesia’s Mahakam on the island of Borneo.

In February, Cambodian wildlife officials announced the death of the last known Irrawaddy dolphin in a population on a stretch of the Mekong River further upstream, which appeared to be caused by entanglement in a fishing net.

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		1		8		6	2	
				7	9	8	4	
9								
			3					
1		6	9		4	3		8
					2			
								5
	1	7	2	3				
	6	3		9		4		

Difficulty level: Medium

#18627

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that the digits 1 through 9 appear one time each in every row, column, and 3x3 box.

Solution to last issue's puzzle

Puzzle #54767 (Easy)

All solutions available at <www.sudoku.com>.

5	3	4	1	2	9	6	8	7
2	9	8	6	7	3	1	5	4
1	6	7	4	8	5	9	3	2
6	1	5	3	9	4	2	7	8
7	2	3	5	6	8	4	9	1
8	4	9	7	1	2	3	6	5
3	8	1	9	4	7	5	2	6
9	7	6	2	5	1	8	4	3
4	5	2	8	3	6	7	1	9

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PANDEMIC & TURMOIL. Injured people are helped on the street near where 156 young revellers were crushed to death in Seoul, South Korea, on October 30, 2022. Natural disasters and crowd-related tragedies last year claimed hundreds of lives in Asia and overshadowed the COVID-19 pandemic. (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man, File)

Relaxed COVID rules, deadly crowd crushes mark year in Asia

By The Associated Press

Natural disasters and crowd-related tragedies claimed hundreds of lives in Asia and overshadowed the COVID-19 pandemic, with most countries easing or completely lifting the tough restrictions of the previous two years. Even China, the last major country to try to control virus transmission through a “zero-COVID” strategy, relaxed the rigorous rules that triggered rare public protests.

Political turmoil hit debt-laden Sri Lanka, where protesters broke into President Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s residence and forced him into resigning after fleeing abroad. He later returned to the country headed by a new leader, Ranil Wickremesinghe, who negotiated a bailout package with international lenders contingent on sweeping economic reforms.

Japan was shocked by the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during a campaign rally on July 8. The suspect cited Abe’s links to the ultra-conservative Unification Church, whose ties to the ruling party caused major headaches for the new prime minister, Fumio Kishida.

In Seoul, 156 young revellers were crushed to death when more than 100,000 people flocked to the city’s popular nightlife district for Halloween celebrations, the first since the country’s strict COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

Earlier in October, police at a soccer match in Indonesia fired tear gas after some fans spilled onto the field, sending people rushing toward the exits, some of which were locked, and causing a crush that left 135 dead.

Still that same month, the collapse of a newly repaired suspension bridge in India’s Gujarat state killed 134 people as hundreds were celebrating the Hindu festival

Continued on page 7

Sidecar ambulances help moms give birth in India

By Altaf Qadri and Aniruddha Ghosal
The Associated Press

NARAYANPUR, India — The motorbike roared as it strained to carry the ambulance sidecar up a steep river bank. The bike’s rear tire whirled in place, kicking up water and mud while the sidecar — a hospital bed on wheels, under a white canvas canopy — lolled dangerously. Two health workers, who had been following on foot, tried pushing it, but it didn’t budge.

Eventually, the three gave up and settled for digging a new path.

After 40 minutes of digging and a push to lift the vehicle from the river bed onto the muddy path, the team was on its way again. The bike ambulance resumed its nine-mile trek across the forest known as Abhujmarh, or “the Unknown Hills,” to reach 23-year-old Phagni Poyam, nine months pregnant in the isolated village of Kodoli.

When the team arrived, Poyam was waiting next to her sleeping one-year-old boy, Dilesh. Like many babies in Kolodi, Dilesh wasn’t born in a hospital, both because of the distance, and distrust of authorities. But in recent years, Poyam said, she has seen women or their babies dying during childbirth and she doesn’t want to take any chances.

“My baby will be safer,” she said in Gondi, a language spoken by an estimated 13 million members of the Indigenous Gond community.

Motorbike ambulances are helping mothers give birth in Naryanpur district, in central India’s Chhattisgarh state. The heavily forested district is one of India’s most sparsely populated, with about 139,820 inhabitants spread over an area larger than Delaware. Many local villages, like Kodoli, are 10 miles or more from motorable roads. The state has one of the highest rates of pregnancy-related deaths for mothers in India, about 1.5 times the national average, with 137 pregnancy-related deaths for mothers per 100,000 births.

While authorities and health workers agree that bike ambulances don’t offer a long-term solution, they are making a difference.

The state’s health system has struggled to reach remote villages. Residents of Kodoli usually walk the 12 miles to Orchha, the nearest market town. It takes about two and a half hours. The lack of roads often forces villagers to resort to makeshift palanquins to transport the very sick.

Although the government has been trying to build a road network, road works are often targeted by armed rebels, who’ve been operating in the region for four decades. The rebels say their fight is for the rights of Indigenous communities, who make up 80% of Chhattisgarh state’s population.

Bike ambulances were first deployed in Narayanpur in 2014. Today, there are 13 bike ambulances operating in



REMOTE OUTREACH. Cat Basanti Warda, left, a health worker, holds one-year-old Dilesh as his mother, Phagni Poyam, 23, a nine-months-pregnant woman, disembarks from a motorbike ambulance upon arrival for a checkup at a hospital in Orchha in central India’s Chhattisgarh state, in this November 16, 2022 file photo. The ambulances, first deployed in 2014, reach inaccessible villages to bring pregnant women to an early referral center, a building close to the hospital where expectant mothers can stay under observation, or visit doctors if needed until they give birth. The state has one of the highest rates of pregnancy-related deaths for mothers in India, about 1.5 times the national average, with 137 pregnancy-related deaths for mothers per 100,000 births. (AP Photo/Altaf Qadri, File)

three districts of Chhattisgarh, run by local authorities and a nonprofit called Saathi with the support of UNICEF. The idea stemmed from a similar project in Ghana, said Bhupesh Tiwari of Saathi. The ambulances focus on bringing mothers to and from the hospital, but have also been called to transport victims of snake bites and other emergencies.

Since 2014, the number of babies born in hospitals in Narayanpur district has doubled to a yearly average of about 162 births each year, from just 76 in 2014. The bike ambulances have helped nearly 3,000 mothers and their babies in the 99 scattered villages of Narayanpur district.

Once Poyam and her son were safely aboard, the motorbike ambulance retraced its route back to Orchha, taking Poyam to an early referral center close to the hospital where expectant mothers can stay under observation and see doctors. Mother and son had to disembark a few times while the motorbike ambulance negotiated a tricky slope or a rocky river bed. Sometimes, the driver, Sukhram Vadde, 24, had to lift large stones that threatened to jam under the carriage.

By the time they reached Orchha, it was dark. Lata Netam, the health worker in charge of the center, had called ahead when they left from Poyam’s village to ensure dinner was ready. One-year-old Dilesh gurgled happily, playing with others who work there, while Netam answered questions from Poyam: “What will the doctor ask me? Do I need documents? Can my husband come to visit me?”


“We are from here. We know these villages. We want mothers to feel like they have not left home,” she said.


Trust in hospitals and modern medicine is growing. In
Continued on page 8


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HEADING HOME. Giant Pandas Le Le, left, and Ya Ya, right, wrestle in Memphis, Tennessee, in this January 10, 2007 file photo. The Memphis Zoo says Ya Ya and Le Le will head back to China in the next few months. (AP Photo/The Commercial Appeal, Matthew Craig, File)

Memphis Zoo pandas Ya Ya, Le Le to return to China

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The Memphis Zoo says its giant pandas will be heading back to China within the next few months.

The zoo says 22-year-old Ya Ya and 24-year-old Le Le will return after two decades in Memphis under a giant panda loan agreement that is ending with the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens.

The zoo says the pandas were key to research and conservation projects and helped people experience some of Chinese culture.

“It has been a wonderful 20 years fostering this relationship with Ya Ya, Le Le, and the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens and we look forward to continuing this partnership in the future,” the zoo said in a statement.

The advocacy group In Defense of Animals applauded the return of the animals, saying they had been suffering in the zoo setting. Zoo officials have said the pandas are healthy and well taken care of, with as much as they want to eat.

Relaxed COVID rules, deadly crowd crushes mark year in Asia

Continued from page 5

season.

In November, a shallow 5.6-magnitude earthquake struck Indonesia’s main Java island, killing 334 people and injuring nearly 600.

And in Thailand, the deadliest mass killing in the country left 36 dead when a fired police officer stormed a rural daycare center and massacred mostly preschoolers.

China entered 2022 as host of the Beijing Winter Olympics in February, with participants and guests sequestered in a “bubble” as part of strict COVID-19 rules.

But the country’s pandemic approach — which tried to isolate every single infection at a huge cost to the economy and freedom of movement — unravelled when thousands took to the streets in major cities to protest the restrictions and call for leader Xi Jinping and the Communist Party to step down. The party responded with a massive show of force and an unknown number of people were arrested.

The government under Xi, who granted himself new powers as China’s potential leader for life, relaxed measures and indicated it will tolerate more cases without

Making pig livers humanlike in quest to ease organ shortage

By Lauran Neergaard
The Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — The ghostly form floating in a large jar had been the robust reddish-brown of a healthy organ just hours before. Now it’s semitranslucent, white tubes like branches on a tree showing through.

This is a pig liver that’s gradually being transformed to look and act like a human one, part of scientists’ long quest to ease the nation’s transplant shortage by bioengineering replacement organs.

The first step for workers in this suburban Minneapolis lab is to shampoo away the pig cells that made the organ do its work, its color gradually fading as the cells dissolve and are flushed out. What’s left is a rubbery scaffolding, a honeycomb structure of the liver, its blood vessels now empty.

Next human liver cells — taken from donated organs unable to be transplanted — will be oozed back inside that shell. Those living cells move into the scaffolding’s nooks and crannies to restart the organ’s functions.

“We essentially regrow the organ,” said Jeff Ross, CEO of Miromatrix. “Our bodies won’t see it as a pig organ anymore.”

That’s a bold claim. Sometime in 2023, Miromatrix plans first-of-its-kind human testing of a bioengineered organ to start trying to prove it.

If the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) agrees, the initial experiment will be outside a patient’s body. Researchers would place a pig-turned-humanlike liver next to a hospital bed to temporarily filter the blood of someone whose own liver suddenly failed. And if that novel “liver assist” works, it would be a critical step toward eventually attempting a bioengineered organ transplant — probably a kidney.

“It all sounds science fiction-ey but it’s got to start



SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS. A technician works with bioreactors containing pig organs in a Miromatrix laboratory on December 8, 2022, in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. The pig liver is gradually being transformed to look and act like a human one, part of scientists’ long quest to ease the nation’s transplant shortage by bioengineering replacement organs. (AP Photo/Andy Clayton-King)

somewhere,” said Dr. Sander Florman, a transplant chief at New York’s Mount Sinai Hospital, one of several hospitals already planning to participate in the liver-assist study. “This is probably more of the near future than xenotransplantation,” or directly implanting animal organs into people.

More than 105,000 people are on the U.S. waiting list for an organ transplant. Thousands will die before it’s their turn. Thousands more never even get put on the list, considered too much of a long shot.

“The number of organs we have available are never going to be able to meet the demand,” said Dr. Amit Tevar, a transplant surgeon at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. “This is our frustration.”

That’s why scientists are looking to animals as another source of organs. A Maryland man lived two months after receiving the world’s first heart transplant from a pig last January — an animal genetically modified so its organs didn’t trigger an immediate attack from the human immune system. The FDA is considering whether to allow additional xenotransplantation experiments using kidneys or hearts from gene-edited pigs.

Continued on page 17



ASIA ISSUES. A worker prepares to administer a COVID-19 test at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, in this February 1, 2022 file photo. China entered 2022 as host of the Beijing Olympics in February, with participants and guests sequestered in a “bubble” as part of strict COVID-19 rules. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip, File)

quarantines or shutting down travel or businesses as it winds down its “zero-COVID” strategy, even as cases rise and threaten to overwhelm health resources.



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E**EYES**


Do they have sudden blurred or double vision, or loss of vision in one or both eyes?

F**FACE**


Ask them to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A**ARM**


Ask them to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S**SPEECH**

Ask them to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can they repeat the sentence correctly?

T**TIME**

If they show any of these symptoms, time is important. Call 911





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Avoiding counterfeit at-home COVID-19 tests

The FDA has identified two counterfeit tests that are **made to look like** Flowflex COVID-19 Test Kits and iHealth Antigen Rapid Test Kits.

If you have either of these tests, **look for these signs that they may be counterfeit**. Note: iHealth tests distributed by OHA are **not** counterfeit.

- ✗ **Poor print quality** of text or images
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- ✗ **Grammar or spelling errors** on the product label
- ✗ **Kit components don't match** box description



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<www.facebook.com/ TheAsianReporter>.

Events calendar

Please note: Policies vary for venues. Please read online guidelines for each event and proceed accordingly. Some activities feature timed ticketing with advance online purchase required.

“Illuminating Time”

Currently on view, 11am-3pm (Fri-Sun), Portland Chinatown Museum (127 NW Third Ave, Portland). View “Illuminating Time,” a display featuring original works by Creative Heights Artists-in-Residence Alex Chiu, Shu-Ju Wang, and Sam Roxas-Chua. The show is curated by artist and residency director Horatio Law. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 224-0008 or visit <www.portlandchinatownmuseum.org>.

“Beyond the Mountain”

Currently on view, 10am-5pm (Fri-Sun), Seattle Asian Art Museum (1400 E Prospect St, in Volunteer Park, Seattle). View “Beyond the Mountain: Contemporary Chinese Artists on the Classical Forms,” an exhibit that conceptualize China’s rich legacies in art, language, and culture. The pieces contemplate the societal tolls of modernity and globalization and the challenge humans create for the natural world. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 654-3100 or visit <www.seattleartmuseum.org>.

“Beyond the Gate: A Tale of Portland’s Historic Chinatowns”

Currently on view, 11am-3pm (Fri-Sun), Portland Chinatown Museum (127 NW Third Ave, Portland). View “Beyond the Gate: A Tale of Portland’s Historic Chinatowns,” a display of rare objects such as Chinese opera costumes, theatrical sets, bilingual text, audio-visual media, and more that tell a sprawling transnational story of contact and trade between China and the west, focusing on Portland’s Old Chinatown (1850-1905) and New Chinatown (1905-1950). For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 224-0008 or visit <www.portlandchinatownmuseum.org>.

“Deities & Demons: Supernatural in Japanese Art”

Currently on view, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Seattle Art Museum (1300 First Ave, Seattle). View “Deities & Demons: Supernatural in Japanese Art,” a display of paintings, sculptures, prints, and textiles from the museum’s collection that presents the rich visual culture of the supernatural in Japan. For info, call (206) 654-3210 or visit <www.seattleartmuseum.org>.

Beaverton Winter Lights

Through Jan 5, 4pm-8am, Beaverton City Park (SW 5th St & SW Hall Blvd, Beaverton) & The Round (12655 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton). Stroll along outdoor light displays at Beaverton City Park and The Round daily from 4:00pm to 8:00am. Participants are encouraged to bring a camera to capture the moment, dress in warm clothing, and pack an umbrella in case of rain. For info, call (503) 526-2222 or visit <www.beavertonoregon.gov/winterlights>.

ZooLights

Through Jan 5, 4:30-8pm, Oregon Zoo (4001 SW Canyon Rd, Portland). Ring in the holiday season at the Oregon Zoo’s ZooLights display. The family tradition features more than a million-and-a-half lights illuminating life-size animal silhouettes, trees, buildings, walkways, and the zoo train. The ZooLights “drive” is available January 3 through 5. For info, or to buy tickets, call (503) 226-1561 or visit <www.oregonzoo.org/zoolights>.

Roberta Wong: “Vincent”

Through Jan 8, 10am-5pm (Mon-Sat), noon-5pm (Sun), Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). View “Vincent,” a display by Roberta Wong in memory of Vincent Chin, who was murdered in 1982 in Detroit. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <www.ohs.org>.

“I Am an American: Stories of Exclusion and Belonging”

Through Jan 8, 10am-5pm (Mon-Sat), noon-5pm (Sun), Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). View “I Am an American: Stories of Exclusion and



“SAME OLD SONG.” “Srijon Chowdhury: Same Old Song” is on view at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle through January 15. Pictured is “Pale Rider,” 2019, oil on linen, 84” x 192”. (Image courtesy of the Henry Art Gallery)

Belonging,” an exhibit featuring photographs, paintings, and installation art designed to focus on the experiences of Asian Americans. For info, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <www.ohs.org>. To learn about the project behind the exhibit, visit <www.theimmigrantstory.org>.

“Srijon Chowdhury: Same Old Song”

Through Jan 15, 10am-7pm (Thu), 10am-5pm (Fri-Sun), Henry Art Gallery (15th Ave NE & NE 41st St, Seattle). View “Srijon Chowdhury: Same Old Song,” a display by Portland-based Srijon Chowdhury. The artist’s dreamlike oil paintings consider the present moment as part of a larger mythology. Moving between a highly stylized approach and startling realism, Chowdhury brings an uncanny contemporary twist to genres like family portraiture, biblical scenes, and vanitas still lifes. For info, call (206) 543-2280 or visit <www.henryart.org>.

“Finding Your Roots” casting call

Through Jan 27, Online. “Finding Your Roots,” a popular program of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., is looking for a non-celebrity viewer who has a “family mystery” that the show might be able to solve. The person cast would be featured on season 10 of the family ancestry series. Interested individuals may apply online at <http://findingyourrootscasting.com>.

“Human | Nature: 150 Years of Japanese Landscape Prints”

Through May 7, 2023, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Portland Art Museum (1219 SW Park Ave, Portland). View “Human | Nature: 150 Years of Japanese Landscape Prints,” an exhibit that explores Japan’s journey with and through nature during the 19th century and into the modern age through the lens of landscape prints. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 226-2811 or visit <www.portlandartmuseum.org>.

Moulin Rouge! The Musical

Jan 4-15, Keller Auditorium (222 SW Clay St, Portland). Watch *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*, a performance held as part of the Broadway in Portland series. The show takes theater-goers to a world of splendor and romance, of eye-popping excess, of glitz, grandeur, and glory — a place where Bohemians and aristocrats rub elbows and revel in electrifying enchantment. For info, showtimes, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 248-4335 or visit <www.broadwayinportland.com>.

The TL Collective

Jan 26-28, 8pm, Portland State University, Lincoln Performance Hall 1620 SW Park Ave, Portland). Watch a performance of *Drift* by the 8-member TL Collective. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 245-1600 or visit <www.whitebird.org>.

“Alliance”

Jan 28, 7pm, Portland State University, Lincoln Performance Hall, Room 75 (1620 SW Park Ave, Portland). Attend “Alliance,” an event that brings together five winners of the International Association for Women in Music’s (IAWM) annual jazz composition prize to play with the Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble. The featured composers — lauded instrumentalists and bandleaders of their own ensembles — include Migiwa “Miggy” Miyajima, Sam Spear, Jhoely Garay, Yu Nishiyama, and Eliana Fishbeyn. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (502) 291-4718, e-mail <info@pjce.org>, or visit <www.pjce.org/event/alliance>.

Sidecar ambulances help moms give birth in India

Continued from page 5

the villages, there are mothers who speak glowingly of the hospital. In the weekly market at Orchha, where hundreds gather from far-flung villages to buy basics or to attend the keenly contested cockfighting tournament, government health workers are busy screening people for diseases like diabetes and malaria.

Blood tests revealed that Poyam’s iron levels were dangerously low, likely because of a poor diet. This can lead to complications, like excessive bleeding while giving birth, so doctors prescribed supplements to help her.

Dilesh also tested positive for malaria. He immediately was hospitalized and treated for the virus, which kills thousands of children every year.

Dilesh has since returned to the village to stay with his father. Regular meals, boosted by supplements, have raised Poyam’s iron levels and she’s put on 9 pounds.

And a little after 2:00am, she gave birth to a healthy baby boy.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s Science and Educational Media Group. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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Breakthrough Entertainer: Stephanie Hsu, now everywhere

By Mark Kennedy
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Dressed as Elvis and nonchalantly walking a pig on a leash, Stephanie Hsu made a memorable big screen impression in 2022.

Hsu actually had two roles in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, playing both a sullen teen and an intergalactic supervillain for a film that can best be called a fantastical science fiction comedy-drama.

With Michelle Yeoh joining Hsu as her onscreen mother, the indie film has garnered critical acclaim, hit over \$100 million in global ticket sales, and has sparked Oscar buzz.

“The movie is so special because we could not have possibly expected this to have happened and so we were really able to just throw paint at the wall,” Hsu said. “It came from a very raw place with zero expectations, only trying to tell the story as deeply and honestly as we can.”

Hsu’s performance — combining deep hurt with a real skill with nunchucks while rocking sequin-lined eyes — has made her one of The Associated Press’ Breakthrough Entertainers of the Year alongside Joaquina Kalukango, Sadie Sink, Iman Vellani, and others.

“I have been working for a really long time and I guess that’s what a breakout is: You chip away and then all of a sudden, there’s one thing that everyone is like, ‘That’s the thing that put you on the map.’”

Hsu was a Broadway veteran with a few TV credits when she worked with the writing and directing duo of Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert for an episode of “Nora From Queens.”

Working with Kwan and Scheinert — know as The



Daniels — was a revelation for Hsu and when they contacted her about *Everything Everywhere All at Once* she never hesitated.

“We’re like artistic soulmates in so many ways,” she said. “When I read the script, in so many ways, it actually made a lot of sense to me weirdly enough. I don’t know what that says about me.”

The film begins with Yeoh as a struggling laundromat owner who is being audited by the IRS and has a strained relationship with her daughter. The story gets surreal when she discovers she has to connect with parallel universes to prevent cataclysmic destruction, also involving her daughter. It’s also a family drama, with

EVERYWHERE ACTOR. Stephanie Hsu poses for a portrait in New York. Hsu began her acting career on Broadway. She was born in California and moved to New York to study at New York University, graduating in 2012. (Photo by Christopher Smith/Invision/AP)

richness in the complex love between relations.

“This movie, in so many ways, embodies what I love to do as an artist. So it feels like the most honest handshake I could make with Hollywood,” she said.

“I think art at its very best offers some help in processing or helping us move through a very confusing world and offer some healing. And that is ultimately the type of work that I want to make.”

Hsu began her acting career on Broadway, where she played Karen the Computer in *SpongeBob the Musical*, and Christine Canigula in *Be More Chill*. She was born in California and moved to New York to study at New York University, graduating in 2012.

She showed off her work ethic by combining a punishing eight-show-a-week Broadway schedule with filming “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel” on Mondays, her only day off.

“The discipline that forced me into, I think, really prepared me for everything that has happened since. And I feel really grateful that I was given the opportunity to work that hard,” she said.

Hsu will next be seen in Rian Johnson’s Peacock anthology series “Poker Face,” alongside Natasha Lyonne and Joseph Gordon-Levitt. She’ll also star opposite Ashley Park in *JFC*, a raunchy, R-rated comedy directed by Adele Lim.

“What I’m excited to do next, honestly, is to develop more of my own work,” she said. “In order to make this career sustainable and joyful is to be able to dig in and not always just fill shoes for someone else.”

Simone Ashley finds her voice

By Alicia Rancilio
The Associated Press

DETROIT — Simone Ashley was busy working and travelling when “Bridgerton” debuted on Netflix in December 2020 and was an immediate smash with viewers. The Shonda Rhimes-produced series about the romantic pursuits of a large family in Regency-era London wasn’t on Ashley’s radar. So, when the audition for season two came about, she didn’t quite grasp what a big opportunity lay before her.

“It kind of came at a time of my life where I was living between Los Angeles and London and all of my stuff was in the states,” recalled Ashley. “I was just on the road the whole time.”

In hindsight, it worked to Ashley’s benefit that she wasn’t fully aware of what a high-profile project “Bridgerton” would be, so it didn’t overwhelm or distract her during the audition process.

“A lot of the time when you audition for something, there is a bit of pressure and you can’t help but feel emotionally invested and get your hopes up and all of those things that every actor goes through. This one all happened in like 10 days, and I just didn’t really understand what was happening,” she said.

Ashley got the role of Kate Sharma, a fiercely independent, sharp, protective older sister who wins the heart of Anthony Bridgerton, played by Jonathan Bailey. It’s Ashley’s charisma, charm, and grace that make her one of The Associated Press’ breakthrough entertainers of 2022 alongside Iman Vellani, Stephanie Hsu, and others.

Although she was already a working actor when she got the job and best-known for the Netflix series “Sex Education,” Ashley realizes filming season two of “Bridgerton” was a “once in a lifetime” experience she can never duplicate. “I don’t think I’ll ever be able to approach a project with that kind of obliviousness, because there will always be a slight expectation and pressure now.”

A big part of the magic of that experience was her chemistry with Bailey, whom she calls Johnny.

“Among all the chaos and the craziness, as soon as we were in front of the cameras and they were rolling, it was just better. We didn’t have to warm up to anything,”



AMBITIOUS ACTOR. Simone Ashley poses for a portrait in New York. Success has incentivized Ashley to keep working to meet the variety of opportunities that are now possible. (Photo by Drew Gurian/Invision/AP)

she said, adding they had a kind of “tunnel vision” while working together.

The reach of “Bridgerton” is worldwide and Ashley has been recognized in some surprising places at times when she did not expect it.

“I was in the middle of nowhere in Switzerland, literally in the middle of nowhere, and I was going swimming and some girls recognized me there,” she said. “Everyone that does approach me, the majority are women of color and they are just so lovely. People are just always so supportive to see someone like me representing in the industry, which I think is really important.”

She’s also intent to enjoy the ride and “just have fun with it. It’s a very fun industry that we’re in. It’s a lot of hard work, but, you know, it’s the entertainment industry.”

Some memorable experiences from this past year include attending her first Met Gala, where she was dressed by Jeremy Scott and met Maggie Rogers, one of her favorite musicians. She went to the Grand Prix in Monaco. Then there was the time at the BAFTAs when she was approached by education and human rights activist Malala Yousafzai.

“I met Malala during the BAFTAs. She came up to me and she was like, ‘Oh my god, ‘Sex Education.’ My name is Malala.’ And I was like, ‘Babe, I know who you are.’ So that was really exciting because she’s Malala, you know? It was very humbling to introduce herself to me.”

Success has only incentivized Ashley to keep working to meet the variety of oppor-

Continued on page 17

Iman Vellani — in marvellous form

By Alicia Rancilio
The Associated Press

DETROIT — With countless auditions, constant rejection, and a calendar that’s often in flux, acting professionally can be anxiety-inducing. Once success comes, there can then be added pressure to keep the momentum going, book more jobs, be seen in the right places, and strike while the iron is hot.

Iman Vellani, who had her big break earlier in 2022 as the star of “Ms. Marvel” on Disney+, and will next appear in *The Marvels* movie alongside Brie Larson and Teyonah Parris, is pacing herself and not concerned with the Hollywood rat race.

“I am taking a bit of a break right now,” said the actor over Zoom. “*The Marvels*’ was extremely stressful on my body, physically and mentally, and it was a lot. I was away from home for like two years and I was only 17 when I left. I am spending time with my family right now and living the nice, calm Ontario life.”

Vellani’s maturity, enthusiasm, and acting skills have led to her becoming one of The Associated Press’ Breakthrough Entertainers of 2022, alongside stars including Sadie Sink, Simone Ashley, Daryl McCormack, and fellow Marvel standout Tenoch Huerta.

Now 20, Vellani could attribute some of her Zen perspective to wise words from Samuel L. Jackson while filming *The Marvels*.

“I remember when Sam Jackson was on set, I had this whole laundry list of questions for him. And I was asking him like, ‘What are the best characteristics of an actor?’ And he was like, ‘Patience.’ I was like, ‘Yes, Sam, you’re right, patience.’ After that, I never complained, ever. If anything took longer than 5 minutes or 10 minutes or coming to set and not even working, you know, it’s all part of the job. You have to understand, there’s so many moving parts.”

While she wants to continue with showbiz beyond Marvel, Vellani remains open to possibilities and has two criteria: “I just want to meet cool people and do cool things.”

“I have so much to learn ... I feel Marvel Studios compared to the rest of Hollywood is such a different world. I want to



BIG BREAK. Iman Vellani poses for a portrait in Dana Point, California. Vellani, who had her big break earlier in 2022 as the star of “Ms. Marvel” on Disney+, and will next appear in *The Marvels* movie alongside Brie Larson and Teyonah Parris, is pacing herself and not concerned with the Hollywood rat race. (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)

experience what’s out there. I’m in a very lucky position where I’m able to do that, and I’ve built so many incredible connections at this point. So yeah, I don’t know where life is going to take me, but I’m excited and obviously I will work for Marvel until the day I die. I’m loyal.”

She’s not kidding about being a Marvel fan. Vellani read the comics and watched the films before the opportunity to act in “Ms. Marvel” was even on her radar. Because of her own fandom, she’s especially encouraging and open to those who recognize her and want to chat.

“I’ve lost my anonymity now. I don’t really mind,” said Vellani. “Yes, it’s annoying to kind of lose the ability to have a first impression, but it means so much when people tell me how much the show meant to them. I’ve had so many great conversations with people. I just like to picture them watching the show.”

Vellani says she had “a two-year countdown” to prepare her for fame. “I got cast during the pandemic. How rare is that, that someone actually gets to mentally prepare for two years to know how their life is going to change? Because I’ve seen it happen to like the Tom Hollands and the Chris Hemsworths of the world, I kind of knew what to expect.”

Happy Lunar New Year!



HOPPY NEW YEAR! The Lunar New Year, which begins January 22, 2023 this year, marks the Year of the Rabbit. People born under the sign of the Rabbit are generally considered to be talented, well-mannered, and principled individuals who are sensitive and honorable. They are also known for their tendency to be secretive and timid, and can be gossipy and superficial. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung, File)

What sign are you?

Find the year you were born. Those born in January or February should consult page 13.

- 1900, 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020 — Rat
- 1901, 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021 — Ox
- 1902, 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022 — Tiger
- 1903, 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023 — Rabbit
- 1904, 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024 — Dragon
- 1905, 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025 — Snake
- 1906, 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, 2026 — Horse
- 1907, 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, 2027 — Sheep
- 1908, 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028 — Monkey
- 1909, 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, 2029 — Rooster
- 1910, 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, 2030 — Dog
- 1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, 2031 — Pig

The Gregorian and Chinese lunar calendars

Animal	Gregorian	Chinese
Rabbit	January 22, 2023	Year 4721
Dragon	February 10, 2024	Year 4722
Snake	January 29, 2025	Year 4723
Horse	February 17, 2026	Year 4724
Sheep	February 6, 2027	Year 4725
Monkey	January 26, 2028	Year 4726
Rooster	February 13, 2029	Year 4727
Dog	February 3, 2030	Year 4728
Pig	January 23, 2031	Year 4729
Rat	February 11, 2032	Year 4730
Ox	January 31, 2033	Year 4731
Tiger	February 19, 2034	Year 4732

A few animal characteristics

- Rat:** Honest, idealistic, practical, sentimental, argumentative, greedy
- Ox:** Careful, diligent, eloquent, patient, eccentric, stubborn
- Tiger:** Ambitious, dynamic, honorable, loyal, critical, impatient
- Rabbit:** Artistic, considerate, intelligent, peaceful, hesitant, judgemental
- Dragon:** Energetic, faithful, generous, sincere, defensive, opinionated
- Snake:** Charitable, elegant, organized, reflective, anxious, possessive
- Horse:** Calm, confident, independent, talented, contradictory, moody
- Sheep:** Adaptive, creative, empathetic, polite, impractical, pessimistic
- Monkey:** Charming, sensitive, vivacious, wise, cunning, selfish
- Rooster:** Adventurous, courageous, funny, hardworking, cynical, vain
- Dog:** Brave, devoted, knowledgeable, trustworthy, disagreeable, strict
- Pig:** Affectionate, cheerful, obliging, optimistic, naïve, snobbish

Read your forecast for the Year of the Rabbit!
Horoscopes by Madame Mingmei begin on page 14.

The Rabbit hops in

The Year of the Rabbit arrives January 22, 2023, and its arrival will be celebrated by people throughout the world with varied traditions and celebrations. Considered by many to be the oldest calendar system in the world, the Chinese lunar calendar traces its origin back as far as 2637 B.C.E. Each year is represented by one of the 12 animals of the zodiac: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig.

Similar to many traditions, the observation dates back to an ancient legend: China's Jade Emperor wanted to determine the order of the calendar, so he called upon 12 animals in the kingdom to participate in a race. The order in which the animals finished determined the placement in the calendar. The Rabbit finished fourth, after the Rat, Ox, and Tiger. In 2023, we celebrate the delicate and intelligent Rabbit.

Similar to celebrations observed by multiple cultures, the Lunar New Year is known by many names. In Vietnam, it is known as *Tet Nguyen Dan*, while Korea celebrates *Sol*, Cambodia commemorates *Chaul Chnam Thmey*, and Thailand enjoys *Songkran*, which occurs in April. China recognizes the Spring Festival, *Chuen Jie*, when friends and family come together to wish one another happiness and pay respects to ancestors in a celebration that begins on the New Year and continues for 15 days.

Different lunar zodiac animals

Each culture has different traditions, and in the case of the lunar calendar, the animals that make up the yearly cycles sometimes differ. For example, in the Tibetan cycle, the Rat is referred to as the Mouse, the Rabbit is referred to as the Hare, and the Rooster as the Bird. In the Vietnamese tradition, the Rabbit is referred to as the Cat, the Sheep as Ram, and the Rooster as Cock.

Each animal recurs every 12 years, but in a different incarnation based on one of five elements — metal, water, wood, fire, and earth. For example, this year is the Year of the Water Rabbit, which was last celebrated 60 years ago in 1963. After exiting on February 9, 2024, the Water Rabbit will not return until 2083.

According to Chinese astrology, people born in the Year of the Rabbit (1915, 1927,

1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, and 2023) are generally considered to be talented, well-mannered, and principled individuals who are sensitive and honorable. They are also known for their tendency to be secretive and timid, and can be gossipy and superficial. Water Rabbits — including those born between January 22, 2023 and February 9, 2024 — are popular, sympathetic, and relate to the feelings of others, but can sometimes be indecisive and overemotional.

New Year traditions

For many cultures, the arrival of the New Year marks a spiritual time in which celebrants give thanks at temples and pray for a year's good luck. Another widely practiced tradition involves sweeping homes clean of evil spirits by literally cleaning and sweeping dwellings of dirt. In addition, new clothing is often purchased in commemoration of the New Year.

The Spring Festival usually ushers in China's busiest travel season, a time when families journey great distances to celebrate with loved ones. Amidst the continuing coronavirus pandemic, people may choose to travel this year depending on the level of infection in their particular area. In Thailand, revellers typically get wet and wild during *Rohd Nam Songkran*, a festival in which celebrants douse one another with water to bring rain in the coming year.

Worldwide celebrations also bring out many culinary traditions. Chinese traditionally eat rice cakes and dumplings, Vietnamese dine on a kind of rice cake called *banh trung*, and people in Korea prepare traditional foods, including *duk-kuk*, a rice cake soup.

Children celebrating the arrival of the Lunar New Year are greeted with many treats. In China and Vietnam, youngsters receive special red envelopes containing New Year's money (in China, the envelopes are called *hong bao*). Korean children usually bow to their parents and grandparents and, in return, receive freshly minted money (though not in red envelopes).

The next Lunar New Year will bring the Year of the Wood Dragon, from February 10, 2024 to January 28, 2025. Have a safe and prosperous Year of the Rabbit!

The Year of the Rabbit

The Rabbit is the fourth animal of the lunar zodiac. Those born under the Rabbit sign are generally considered to be artistic, peaceful, intelligent individuals who are diplomatic, considerate, and affectionate. They are also known for their tendency to be secretive and at times can be indifferent. Rabbits born between January 22, 2023 and February 9, 2024 are Water Rabbits. The water element enhances a Rabbit's sensitive quality, so they tend to be fragile and emotional by nature. Water Rabbits are usually popular among friends and family, as they can relate to how others feel. Sometimes they become too attached or overemotional about the problems of others, though. Water Rabbits dislike conflict and confrontation.

Rabbit facts

Year of the Rabbit: January 22, 2023 to February 9, 2024

Chinese Calendar Year: 4721

Rabbit Years: 1903, 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023

Characteristics: Those born in the Year of the Rabbit are expressive, diplomatic, and moderate. They are considerate and hospitable, but sometimes are hesitant and judgemental. Cultured and artistic, Rabbits decorate their home beautifully and are often well-dressed. Rabbit people find compromise to avoid conflict and try hard to keep the peace and make everyone happy.

Best careers: Rabbits tend to be good art collectors, librarians, lawyers, pharmacists, public relations executives, interior decorators, tailors, landlords, accountants, chemists, and politicians.

Born in the Year of the Rabbit: Confucius, César Chávez, Jet Li, Tiger Woods, Albert Einstein, Jaime Lim, Wayne Chan, Jason Lim.

Ruby and the zodiac animals go on an adventure

Ruby's Chinese New Year
By Vickie Lee
Illustrations by Joey Chou
Henry Holt and Co., 2017
Hardcover, 40 pages, \$17.99

By Jody Lim
The Asian Reporter

Ruby's *Chinese New Year* is a picture book aimed at children between four and eight years old, but both young and seasoned readers will enjoy this book. I read it to my five-year-old nephew and he thoroughly enjoyed the delightful story and colorful drawings.

On the first page, we meet Ruby, a bubbly child who finds out that her grandmother is unable to travel to visit her. For as long as she could remember, Ruby and her grandmother would celebrate the Lunar New Year together, “eating special foods and making drawings for good luck.”

Soon after hearing the news, Ruby makes a decision: “If grandmother could not come to Ruby, Ruby would to go grandmother!”

“She’s going to see her,” my nephew chimes in enthusiastically.

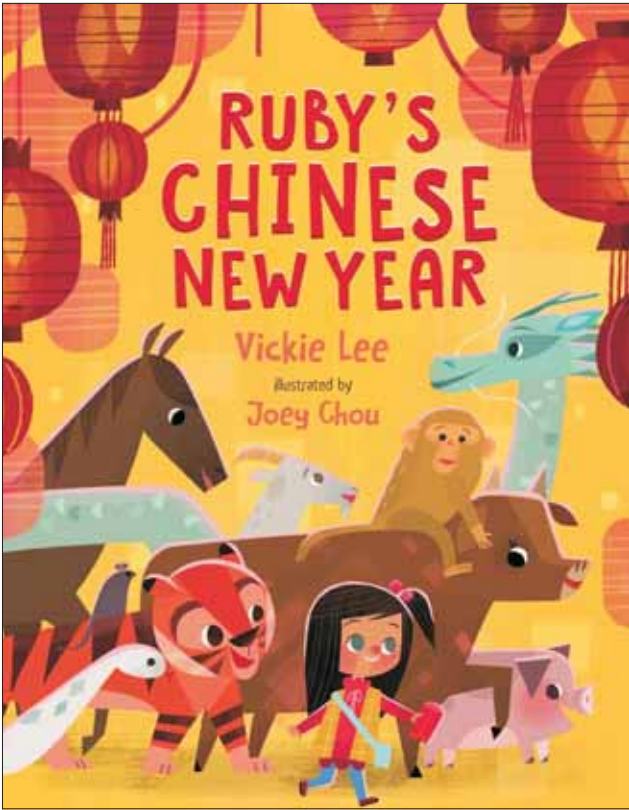
On a red piece of paper, Ruby draws a picture of her family sitting at a table full of “noodles, dumplings, fish, vegetables, and holiday sweets,” then folds the creation, places the gift in a red envelope, and heads out on an adventure.

Along her journey, Ruby meets a Cat and a Rat and asks them to join her in delivering the gift for her grandmother. Ruby and the two animals discuss how to travel across the meadow and pond. Rat’s solution: “Let’s ask Ox. She’s so strong and dependable.”

Soon they meet Tiger and Rabbit who are flying colorful streamers, and discover Dragon and Snake making red paper lanterns. “Ribbons,” says my nephew, “and homemade decorations for the party!”

Next the group discovers Horse and Goat grazing in the

Continued on page 12



一圖千字

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An online version of this Lunar New Year special issue is available at <www.asianreporter.com>.

Ruby and the zodiac animals go on an adventure

Continued from page 11

meadow and Monkey and Rooster catching fish for the holiday feast. From the pond, they can see grandmother’s house.

The next task? Crossing the pond. “With a leap and a bound, Ruby dove into the pond. She would swim to grandmother’s! She *was* so close!”

But the red envelope falls into the pond, and the animals help retrieve Ruby’s gift from the water.

“Oh no,” cried Ruby. “It’s ruined. Everything is ruined.”

“She’s sad because her card is broken,” says my nephew.

“It’s not ruined!” Rooster crows in the book.

The animals and Ruby continue on their way with the wet gift. Dog and Pig greet them upon arriving at their destination.

“Ruby! What a wonderful surprise,” grandmother says.

“Everything is okay; they have each other,” my nephew proclaims. (Such wise words from a preschooler.)

Of course, we all know how the tale ends for Ruby, her grandmother, and the animals — a lovely Lunar New Year gathering. But there is a small, sleepy twist; you’ll have to read it to find out.

Ruby’s Chinese New Year is filled with vibrant and lively images of Ruby and the animals of the zodiac. At the end of book, readers are also treated to the legend of the lunar zodiac, the traits of each animal, and directions on how to make a paper lantern, paper fan, and good luck banner.

Thank you, author Vickie Lee and illustrator Joey Chou, for an entertaining Lunar New Year book we can all enjoy.



STORY + CRAFTS. Ruby’s Chinese New Year is a picture book written by Vickie Lee and illustrator Joey Chou. After reading the delightful story with colorful drawings, readers will find directions on how to make a paper fan, paper lantern, and good luck banner.

USPS issues Year of the Rabbit Lunar New Year stamp

A new Year of the Rabbit stamp is the fourth in the third series by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) celebrating the Lunar New Year. The Rabbit stamp will be dedicated on Thursday, January 12 at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco.

The Lunar New Year is one of the most important holidays of the year for many Asian communities around the world and is celebrated by people of Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Malaysian, Filipino, and other heritages.

In the United States and elsewhere, the occasion is celebrated in various ways on New Year’s day and in the days that follow. Across many cultures, numerous traditions exist for ringing in a new year of good luck and prosperity.

In communities across the United States, people shop for food and other supplies, hang decorations, and ceremoniously clean their homes and streets to welcome the year with a fresh start. Many people also attend parades and special events.

2023 Rabbit stamp

Utilizing red, pink, and purple as the predominant colors — said to be lucky colors for individuals born during the Year of the Rabbit — the mask of the Rabbit in the new stamp’s art incorporates elements



RABBIT STAMP. A new Year of the Rabbit stamp (left image) is part of a third series of Lunar New Year stamps issued by the U.S. Postal Service. Previous Rabbit stamps were issued in 1999 (top right) and 2011 (bottom right). (Images courtesy of the U.S. Postal Service)

with symbolic meaning.

Several of the patterns were created with the style of Asian textiles in mind as well as green flowers that represent the arrival of spring, which the Lunar New Year also signals in Chinese culture.

The crescent shape in the center of the Rabbit’s head references the lunar calendar on which Lunar New Year is based and the celestial themes of the lunar zodiac.

Art director Antonio Alcalá designed the stamp and pane with original artwork by Camille Chew.

The 2023 Year of the Rabbit stamp is being issued in panes of 20. A forever stamp, it will



always be equal in value to the current first-class mail one-ounce price.

Year of the Rabbit


The Rabbit, also referred to as the Cat in some cultural traditions, is the fourth of the zodiac animal signs associated with the lunar calendar. Those born during the Year of the Rabbit are often viewed as artistic, considerate, intelligent, and peaceful. The Year of the Rabbit begins January 22, 2023 and ends February 9, 2024.

First stamp series began in 1992

Late artist Clarence Lee, an American of Chinese descent who was born in Honolulu, designed the original USPS series of Lunar New Year stamps.


The first stamp, a Year of the Rooster stamp worth 29 cents, was issued in 1992. The stamp had a paper-cut two-dimensional look. The 11 animals in the lunar zodiac followed each year. Another feature of this series were *kanji* characters written by a profes-

Continued on page 15



**Celebrate the
Year of the Rabbit!**

**January 22, 2023 to
February 9, 2024**





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February 7, 2023.

Lunar New Year events



ILLUMINATED GARDEN. *Lan Su Chinese Garden celebrations in honor of the Year of the Rabbit begin January 21 and end February 5. Festivities feature cultural performances, festival decorations, craft activities, audio tours, a scavenger hunt, demonstrations, workshops, and Lantern Viewing (pictured). (Photo courtesy of Lan Su Chinese Garden)*

Tet Nguyen Dan at PSU

Jan 9, 4-6pm, Portland State University (PSU), Smith Memorial Student Union, Rooms 327/328/329 (1825 SW Broadway, Portland). Learn about the Vietnamese Lunar New Year and sample authentic Vietnamese New Year food at *Tet Nguyen Dan*, presented by the PSU Vietnamese Student Association. For info, call (503) 725-5855, e-mail <vsa.psu@gmail.com>, or visit <<https://pdx.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8641118>>.

“Tet 2023” at Gregory Heights Library

Jan 13, 3-4pm, Gregory Heights Library (7921 NE Sandy Blvd, Portland). Celebrate “Tet 2023,” the Vietnamese Year of the Cat, at Gregory Heights Library. Participants are invited to learn fun facts and traditions about Tet at the event, which features craft and read-along activities in English and Vietnamese. Attendance is first come, first served. For info, call (503) 988-5123 or visit <<https://multcolib.org/events/t%E1%BA%BFt-2023-celebrating-vietnamese-year-cat/123268>>.

Tet Festival at Seattle Center

Jan 14-15, 11am-6:30pm (Sat-Sun), Seattle Center (305 Harrison St, Seattle). Attend *Tet Nguyen Dan* — the Vietnamese New Year — presented by Seattle Center Festál in partnership with Tet in Seattle. Tet Festival 2023 ushers in the Lunar New Year with live performances, lion dances, local food vendors, art exhibits, a fashion show, hands-on activities for children, a health fair offering free screenings and services for eye health, osteoporosis, blood pressure, diabetes, immunizations, and more, along with interpreter services. For info, call (206) 684-7200, or visit <www.seattlecenter.com> or <www.tetinseattle.org>.

Vietnamese Lunar New Year Festival

Jan 21, 10am-5pm, SF Supermarket (5253 SE 82nd Ave, Portland). Attend the Vietnamese Lunar New Year Festival, a celebration presented by the Vietnamese Community of Oregon that features lucky red envelopes, a dragon dance, music performances, traditional dance, martial arts, awards for outstanding students, a raffle, vendors, and more. For info, call (503) 349-9232, e-mail <thaotvnco@gmail.com>, or visit <www.facebook.com/vncousa>.

Chinese New Year Cultural Fair

Jan 21, 11am-5pm, Oregon Convention Center (777 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Portland). Celebrate the Year of the Rabbit at the Chinese New Year Cultural Fair. The daylong event returns in person in 2023 after broadcasting virtually the past two years. The event, themed “Golden Rabbit Celebrating the New Year,” includes traditional and contemporary Chinese cultural activities; Chinese folk dance and music; artists from the Oregon Chinese Artist Association showcasing Chinese calligraphy and more; booths offering food, beverages, products, and services; and more. For info, or to obtain the full schedule of events, call (503) 771-9560 or visit <www.portlandchinesetimes.com>.

Chinese New Year at Lan Su

Jan 21-Feb 5 (daily), 10am-4pm, Lan Su Chinese Garden (239 NW Everett St, Portland). Ring in the Chinese Lunar New Year — the Year of the Rabbit — with cultural performances, festival decorations, craft activities, audio tours, a scavenger hunt, demonstrations, workshops, and more at Lan Su Chinese Garden. Festivities kick off January 21 with a lion dance performance at the garden’s Entrance Plaza to usher in the Year of the Rabbit. The January 21 community event is free and open to the public and will also be streamed live

Continued on page 16

LUNAR CALENDAR

When were you born?

Look up your date of birth to find out what sign and element apply to you!

Jan. 31, 1900 to Feb. 18, 1901 — Metal Rat
Feb. 19, 1901 to Feb. 07, 1902 — Metal Ox
Feb. 08, 1902 to Jan. 28, 1903 — Water Tiger
Jan. 29, 1903 to Feb. 15, 1904 — Water Rabbit
Feb. 16, 1904 to Feb. 03, 1905 — Wood Dragon
Feb. 04, 1905 to Jan. 24, 1906 — Wood Snake
Jan. 25, 1906 to Feb. 12, 1907 — Fire Horse
Feb. 13, 1907 to Feb. 01, 1908 — Fire Sheep
Feb. 02, 1908 to Jan. 21, 1909 — Earth Monkey
Jan. 22, 1909 to Feb. 09, 1910 — Earth Rooster

Feb. 10, 1910 to Jan. 29, 1911 — Metal Dog
Jan. 30, 1911 to Feb. 17, 1912 — Metal Pig
Feb. 18, 1912 to Feb. 05, 1913 — Water Rat
Feb. 06, 1913 to Jan. 25, 1914 — Water Ox
Jan. 26, 1914 to Feb. 13, 1915 — Wood Tiger
Feb. 14, 1915 to Feb. 02, 1916 — Wood Rabbit
Feb. 03, 1916 to Jan. 22, 1917 — Fire Dragon
Jan. 23, 1917 to Feb. 10, 1918 — Fire Snake
Feb. 11, 1918 to Jan. 31, 1919 — Earth Horse
Feb. 01, 1919 to Feb. 19, 1920 — Earth Sheep

Feb. 20, 1920 to Feb. 07, 1921 — Metal Monkey
Feb. 08, 1921 to Jan. 27, 1922 — Metal Rooster
Jan. 28, 1922 to Feb. 15, 1923 — Water Dog
Feb. 16, 1923 to Feb. 04, 1924 — Water Pig
Feb. 05, 1924 to Jan. 24, 1925 — Wood Rat
Jan. 25, 1925 to Feb. 12, 1926 — Wood Ox
Feb. 13, 1926 to Feb. 01, 1927 — Fire Tiger
Feb. 02, 1927 to Jan. 22, 1928 — Fire Rabbit
Jan. 23, 1928 to Feb. 09, 1929 — Earth Dragon
Feb. 10, 1929 to Jan. 29, 1930 — Earth Snake

Jan. 30, 1930 to Feb. 16, 1931 — Metal Horse
Feb. 17, 1931 to Feb. 05, 1932 — Metal Sheep
Feb. 06, 1932 to Jan. 25, 1933 — Water Monkey
Jan. 26, 1933 to Feb. 13, 1934 — Water Rooster
Feb. 14, 1934 to Feb. 03, 1935 — Wood Dog
Feb. 04, 1935 to Jan. 23, 1936 — Wood Pig
Jan. 24, 1936 to Feb. 10, 1937 — Fire Rat
Feb. 11, 1937 to Jan. 30, 1938 — Fire Ox
Jan. 31, 1938 to Feb. 18, 1939 — Earth Tiger
Feb. 19, 1939 to Feb. 07, 1940 — Earth Rabbit

Feb. 08, 1940 to Jan. 26, 1941 — Metal Dragon
Jan. 27, 1941 to Feb. 14, 1942 — Metal Snake
Feb. 15, 1942 to Feb. 04, 1943 — Water Horse
Feb. 05, 1943 to Jan. 24, 1944 — Water Sheep
Jan. 25, 1944 to Feb. 12, 1945 — Wood Monkey
Feb. 13, 1945 to Feb. 01, 1946 — Wood Rooster
Feb. 02, 1946 to Jan. 21, 1947 — Fire Dog
Jan. 22, 1947 to Feb. 09, 1948 — Fire Pig
Feb. 10, 1948 to Jan. 28, 1949 — Earth Rat
Jan. 29, 1949 to Feb. 16, 1950 — Earth Ox

Feb. 17, 1950 to Feb. 05, 1951 — Metal Tiger
Feb. 06, 1951 to Jan. 26, 1952 — Metal Rabbit
Jan. 27, 1952 to Feb. 13, 1953 — Water Dragon
Feb. 14, 1953 to Feb. 02, 1954 — Water Snake
Feb. 03, 1954 to Jan. 23, 1955 — Wood Horse
Jan. 24, 1955 to Feb. 11, 1956 — Wood Sheep
Feb. 12, 1956 to Jan. 30, 1957 — Fire Monkey
Jan. 31, 1957 to Feb. 17, 1958 — Fire Rooster
Feb. 18, 1958 to Feb. 07, 1959 — Earth Dog
Feb. 08, 1959 to Jan. 27, 1960 — Earth Pig

Jan. 28, 1960 to Feb. 14, 1961 — Metal Rat
Feb. 15, 1961 to Feb. 04, 1962 — Metal Ox
Feb. 05, 1962 to Jan. 24, 1963 — Water Tiger
Jan. 25, 1963 to Feb. 12, 1964 — Water Rabbit

Feb. 13, 1964 to Feb. 01, 1965 — Wood Dragon
Feb. 02, 1965 to Jan. 20, 1966 — Wood Snake
Jan. 21, 1966 to Feb. 08, 1967 — Fire Horse
Feb. 09, 1967 to Jan. 29, 1968 — Fire Sheep
Jan. 30, 1968 to Feb. 16, 1969 — Earth Monkey
Feb. 17, 1969 to Feb. 05, 1970 — Earth Rooster

Feb. 06, 1970 to Jan. 26, 1971 — Metal Dog
Jan. 27, 1971 to Jan. 14, 1972 — Metal Pig
Jan. 15, 1972 to Feb. 02, 1973 — Water Rat
Feb. 03, 1973 to Jan. 22, 1974 — Water Ox
Jan. 23, 1974 to Feb. 10, 1975 — Wood Tiger
Feb. 11, 1975 to Jan. 30, 1976 — Wood Rabbit
Jan. 31, 1976 to Feb. 17, 1977 — Fire Dragon
Feb. 18, 1977 to Feb. 06, 1978 — Fire Snake
Feb. 07, 1978 to Jan. 27, 1979 — Earth Horse
Jan. 28, 1979 to Feb. 15, 1980 — Earth Sheep


Feb. 16, 1980 to Feb. 04, 1981 — Metal Monkey
Feb. 05, 1981 to Jan. 24, 1982 — Metal Rooster
Jan. 25, 1982 to Feb. 12, 1983 — Water Dog
Feb. 13, 1983 to Feb. 01, 1984 — Water Pig
Feb. 02, 1984 to Feb. 19, 1985 — Wood Rat
Feb. 20, 1985 to Feb. 08, 1986 — Wood Ox
Feb. 09, 1986 to Jan. 28, 1987 — Fire Tiger
Jan. 29, 1987 to Feb. 16, 1988 — Fire Rabbit
Feb. 17, 1988 to Feb. 05, 1989 — Earth Dragon
Feb. 06, 1989 to Jan. 26, 1990 — Earth Snake

Jan. 27, 1990 to Feb. 14, 1991 — Metal Horse
Feb. 15, 1991 to Feb. 03, 1992 — Metal Sheep
Feb. 04, 1992 to Jan. 22, 1993 — Water Monkey
Jan. 23, 1993 to Feb. 09, 1994 — Water Rooster
Feb. 10, 1994 to Jan. 30, 1995 — Wood Dog
Jan. 31, 1995 to Feb. 18, 1996 — Wood Pig
Feb. 19, 1996 to Feb. 07, 1997 — Fire Rat
Feb. 08, 1997 to Jan. 27, 1998 — Fire Ox
Jan. 28, 1998 to Feb. 05, 1999 — Earth Tiger
Feb. 06, 1999 to Feb. 04, 2000 — Earth Rabbit

Feb. 05, 2000 to Jan. 23, 2001 — Metal Dragon
Jan. 24, 2001 to Feb. 11, 2002 — Metal Snake
Feb. 12, 2002 to Jan. 31, 2003 — Water Horse
Feb. 01, 2003 to Jan. 21, 2004 — Water Sheep
Jan. 22, 2004 to Feb. 08, 2005 — Wood Monkey
Feb. 09, 2005 to Jan. 28, 2006 — Wood Rooster
Jan. 29, 2006 to Feb. 17, 2007 — Fire Dog
Feb. 18, 2007 to Feb. 06, 2008 — Fire Pig
Feb. 07, 2008 to Jan. 25, 2009 — Earth Rat
Jan. 26, 2009 to Feb. 13, 2010 — Earth Ox


Feb. 14, 2010 to Feb. 02, 2011 — Metal Tiger
Feb. 03, 2011 to Jan. 22, 2012 — Metal Rabbit
Jan. 23, 2012 to Feb. 09, 2013 — Water Dragon
Feb. 10, 2013 to Jan. 30, 2014 — Water Snake
Jan. 31, 2014 to Feb. 18, 2015 — Wood Horse
Feb. 19, 2015 to Feb. 07, 2016 — Wood Sheep
Feb. 08, 2016 to Jan. 27, 2017 — Fire Monkey
Jan. 28, 2017 to Feb. 15, 2018 — Fire Rooster
Feb. 16, 2018 to Feb. 04, 2019 — Earth Dog
Feb. 05, 2019 to Jan. 24, 2020 — Earth Pig

Jan. 25, 2020 to Feb. 11, 2021 — Metal Rat
Feb. 12, 2021 to Jan. 31, 2022 — Metal Ox
Feb. 01, 2022 to Jan. 21, 2023 — Water Tiger
Jan. 22, 2023 to Feb. 09, 2024 — Water Rabbit
Feb. 10, 2024 to Jan. 28, 2025 — Wood Dragon
Jan. 29, 2025 to Feb. 16, 2026 — Wood Snake
Feb. 17, 2026 to Feb. 05, 2027 — Fire Horse
Feb. 06, 2027 to Jan. 25, 2028 — Fire Sheep



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The staff at
The Asian Reporter
wish you and
your family a
safe and happy
Lunar New Year!

Year of the Rabbit forecasts

We hope you enjoy Madame Mingmei's Year of the Rabbit forecasts.

The first prediction applies to each animal sign (Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Pig) for the new lunar year. Each prediction is followed by an additional forecast specific to one's element (metal, water, wood, fire, earth).

To find out what sign and element apply to you, turn to page 13 and look up your date of birth.

By Madame Mingmei
Special to The Asian Reporter

The Rat

Following a good Year of the Tiger, the Year of the Rabbit will bring with it some ups and downs. Rats will need to use their dynamic, imaginative, and calm traits to make the best of opportunities that present themselves. Being quick-witted, practical, patient, and open-minded will help Rats weather any bumps in the road. Also be considerate of the feelings and thoughts of family and friends.



Element specific:

- **Metal Rat:** Ambitious Metal Rats should be open to compromise and keep their anger in check this year.
- **Water Rat:** Utilize your accommodating nature in 2023 to set yourself up for 2024.
- **Wood Rat:** Wood Rats need to burrow into their creative side to find success during the Year of the Rabbit.
- **Fire Rat:** Energy and idealism is the key to success this Rabbit Year.
- **Earth Rat:** Earth Rats who hold onto their sense of order and discipline will have some success in 2023.

The Ox

The Year of the Rabbit will be a lucky one for reliable and consistent Oxen. If a new opportunity arises, plow into it and seriously consider its merits. Recognition for your talent, hard work, and diligence may be waiting for the clear-thinking, organized Ox. 2023 may be a busy one, but Oxen who contain their hot tempers should achieve their goals.



Element specific:

- **Metal Ox:** Remain hardworking, as always, but avoid being stubborn.
- **Water Ox:** Flexibility and practicality are important characteristics to have this Rabbit Year.
- **Wood Ox:** The Year of the Rabbit is a good opportunity for a sociable Wood Ox to blossom and grow.
- **Fire Ox:** Honest and fair Fire Oxen should have a productive year; remember to try not to offend those around you.
- **Earth Ox:** To obtain the security you prefer, stay principled and loyal during the 2023 Year of the Rabbit.

The Tiger

The Rabbit Year will be a lucky one for the enthusiastic and engaged Tiger. Be generous with your time, idealistic in your pursuits, and open-minded to new opportunities to maximize your blessings. During your lucky year, remember also to show compassion toward friends and family to help strengthen those important relationships.



Element specific:

- **Metal Tiger:** The active and passionate Metal Tiger should exercise confidence and flexibility in 2023.
- **Water Tiger:** Take on Rabbit's Year clearly and objectively to maximize your lucky year.
- **Wood Tiger:** The charming Wood Tiger should enjoy an active social life this year.
- **Fire Tiger:** Optimistic and capable Fire Tigers should contain their explosive tempers during the Year of the Rabbit.
- **Earth Tiger:** The Earth Tiger will roar in 2023, as long as they are fair and responsible.

The Rabbit

2023 is your year, Rabbit, and it's a year of hope, so go for it! Use your intellect, learned experiences, and craftiness to help pursue your goals and aspirations. Act diplomatically when encountering complicated situations, do not allow your tendency to be indecisive hold you back, and always remain modest. While it should be a good year, remember to guard wealth you've accumulated.



Element specific:

- **Metal Rabbit:** Don't be timid in 2023, Metal Rabbit. Gather your confidence and try something new.
- **Water Rabbit:** Being sensitive is a good trait for the Water Rabbit; use it to sympathize with others' feelings.
- **Wood Rabbit:** Generous and easygoing Wood Rabbits should use their creative and adventurous side to achieve happiness in 2023.
- **Fire Rabbit:** The affectionate Fire Rabbit should rein in their moody side by utilizing leadership skills.
- **Earth Rabbit:** Earth Rabbits should embrace their decisive yet practical traits to achieve their goals.

The Dragon

The enthusiastic and principled Dragon will experience success and have attention focused on them this year, as long as they hold back their impatient and defensive tendencies. If clear goals are set, progress and success are likely. Dragons who are courageous and visionary will have the tools necessary to overcome any roadblocks in 2023.

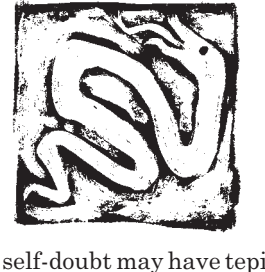


Element specific:

- **Metal Dragon:** The expressive and determined Metal Dragon should set new goals, big or small, this Rabbit Year.
- **Water Dragon:** A balanced and optimistic Water Dragon needs to pay close attention to the tasks that are actually attainable.
- **Wood Dragon:** The Wood Dragon should keep logic and reason at the forefront when making decisions.
- **Fire Dragon:** Perfectionist Fire Dragons will need to set their impatience aside during the Year of the Rabbit.
- **Earth Dragon:** Cooperative and sociable Earth Dragons should focus on family and friends this year.

The Snake

A lucky year is in store for the Snake, who had a tough Year of the Tiger. New experiences may be on the horizon in 2023, so evaluate and analyze them with the wisdom you're known for. Remember to be determined and sympathetic when making important decisions, as those who display self-doubt may have tepid results. Lastly, trust your gut to guide you through your lucky Rabbit Year.



Element specific:

- **Metal Snake:** A chance to travel may be presented to the opportunistic Metal Snake; set aside funds and start planning for the possible adventure.
- **Water Snake:** Use your voice this year to help others. When you speak, people listen.
- **Wood Snake:** Find a hobby that is right for you, as it may serve as a great outlet during 2023.
- **Fire Snake:** Keep your family and friends close, as a fun and interesting year may be in store.
- **Earth Snake:** Seek advice from a trusted friend or family member.

The Horse

The Year of the Rabbit may bring tough luck to the anxious or hard-nosed Horse. The calm, confident, and sincere Horse should work very hard to make a rough year a little better. During this Rabbit Year, flexible Horses may be able to turn an



unlucky event into good fortune for their family and friends. The year will also have good times; energetic Horses should gallop toward these events and savor them.

Element specific:

- **Metal Horse:** Focusing on good health is an important goal for the stubborn Metal Horse.
- **Water Horse:** The Water Horse should strive to overcome inconsistency to experience success.
- **Wood Horse:** The high-spirited Wood Horse should be kind to others and put their best hoof forward in 2023.
- **Fire Horse:** Fire Horses should organize their personal and professional schedules to stay on top of everything.
- **Earth Horse:** Earth Horses should find a hobby that is a good fit for them, then step back from some of their responsibilities to occasionally enjoy it.

The Sheep

Tough luck is in store for the impractical Sheep during the Year of the Rabbit. Adaptable, candid, and imaginative Sheep need to shed illogical thinking to shear off the chance of a rocky year. Be sure to spend time with the important people in your life. In addition, pay attention to your health and listen to what your body is telling you.



Element specific:

- **Metal Sheep:** The shy or sensitive Metal Sheep should work toward harmony and security during the Rabbit Year.
- **Water Sheep:** Opportunistic Water Sheep should shed their fear of change.
- **Wood Sheep:** Opportunity may come knocking; be sure to act promptly after consulting trusted friends.
- **Fire Sheep:** Fire Sheep should remain focused this Rabbit Year in order to finish any projects they start.
- **Earth Sheep:** Always give your best to make each day a little better for those around you.

The Monkey

The Year of the Rabbit may be a bit rough for the deceitful Monkey, but an inventive, enthusiastic, and sensitive Monkey may lessen its intensity. Monkeys will need to work very hard to have some stability this year. Problem-solving Monkeys will thoroughly analyze new opportunities and chances that arise and be careful about all aspects of their life in 2023.



Element specific:

- **Metal Monkey:** A big decision is on the horizon. Be rational and confident when evaluating the potential options and outcomes.
- **Water Monkey:** Water Monkey should cultivate healthy relationships in 2023. Toxic ones may bring you down, so be sure to remove them.
- **Wood Monkey:** This Rabbit Year may present interesting offers and opportunities. Be cautious.
- **Fire Monkey:** Remember, Fire Monkey, that without clear targets, not much is accomplished.
- **Earth Monkey:** Earth Monkeys should focus on the safety of themselves and others to avoid potential incidents.

The Rooster

Thoughtless Roosters will endure a rocky Year of the Rabbit. Honest, charitable, and brave Roosters will need to work really hard to overcome the challenges that may come their way. The communicative nature and generous spirit of Roosters will be the key to having a productive year, as will prompt and clear thinking.



Element specific:

- **Metal Rooster:** An important decision will descend upon you this year; seek advice if needed.
- **Water Rooster:** Take time in 2023 to rejuvenate relationships and friendships from the past.

Continued on page 15

Year of the Rabbit forecasts

Continued from page 14

- **Wood Rooster:** Wood Roosters should act courageously this year and continue to be good troubleshooters.
- **Fire Rooster:** Fire Roosters should listen very carefully to family and friends.
- **Earth Rooster:** The Year of the Rabbit may become full of responsibilities, both new and old.

The Dog

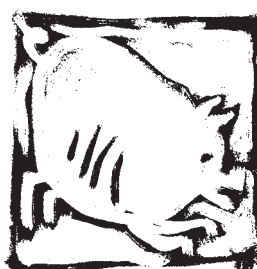


After a lucky Tiger Year, the Year of the Rabbit may bring tough luck to the distrustful Dog. Idealistic and responsible Dogs will be well served by barking, working hard, and acting unselfishly. Being helpful and loyal to others may aid dutiful Dogs in their pursuit to keep 2023 stable and productive.

Element specific:

- **Metal Dog:** Surround yourself with positive people this year. Don't be nervous.
- **Water Dog:** 2023 may end up being one in which you must work really hard to achieve your goals.
- **Wood Dog:** It would be better for Wood Dogs to avoid big changes this year.
- **Fire Dog:** Take on an unforeseen task this Rabbit Year, as it may enlighten you to new things.
- **Earth Dog:** Be cautious when taking on a new project during the Year of the Rabbit.

The Pig



Rough times may be around the corner for the overconfident Pig. Self-sacrificing, forgiving, and knowledgeable Pigs may avoid the trough of misfortune by finding motivation and focusing on goals and priorities. In addition, sensible and caring Pigs should spend time focusing on personal and familial relationships.

Element specific:

- **Metal Pig:** Help raise up those around you in 2023. Your efforts will not only help them, but also bring you joy and satisfaction.
- **Water Pig:** Investing in education or expanding your horizons may help you reach your goals.
- **Wood Pig:** The Rabbit Year may present many activities to keep you busy and also help plan for the future.
- **Fire Pig:** Meeting problems head on during the Year of the Rabbit will help put your life in order.
- **Earth Pig:** Earth Pigs should focus on a specific skill to create a solid foundation for 2024.

Illustrations by Jonathan Hill

USPS issues Year of the Rabbit Lunar New Year stamp

Continued from page 12

sional calligrapher. The series ended in 2005.

After the initial series of stamps concluded, members of the Asian community urged USPS to continue its issuance of Lunar New Year stamps annually.

Second series released in 2008

The second set of stamps was called the Celebrating Lunar New Year series and the first stamp was released in 2008.

Instead of following the route of illustrating the zodiac animals, artist Kam

Mak chose to depict symbolic objects of Lunar New Year celebrations — a red lantern, the lion dance, firecrackers, drums, lucky bamboo, and more.

The stamps also featured small animal illustrations, in a traditional paper-cutout style, by Lee, the artist who created the first stamp series in 1992. Mak designed the series with art director Ethel Kessler.

To learn more, or to purchase the new Lunar New Year stamp, call 1-800-STAMP24 (1-800-782-6724) or visit <www.usps.com/stamps>.

Scheduling your updated booster

The updated booster targets the Omicron subvariants (BA.4 and BA.5) and the original COVID-19 virus strain.

When CAN I get it?

At least **two months** since your last shot, whether that is completion of an initial COVID-19 vaccine series or an original (monovalent) booster dose.

When SHOULD I get it?

When you are able, make time to get your booster.

If you or your loved ones are high risk due to your health or exposure to crowds (through school, work, or a hobby), it is important to get your booster as soon as you can.

If you are at lower risk, you should plan to get the shot before cold weather sets in and activities move indoors. Just be sure to schedule a time and add it to your calendar so you don't forget.



Miss you, Janice ♥

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Have a safe and prosperous Year of the Rabbit!



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multco.us/health/diabetes-awareness

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Reach Out Oregon:
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The National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988

Community Counseling Solutions: 1-800-698-2392

Support for Teens

Oregon Youth Line:
1-877-968-8491 or
text "teen2teen" to 83986

Support for Seniors

Senior Loneliness Line of Oregon: 503-200-1633

LGBTQ+ Support

The Trevor Project:
866-488-7386



Lunar New Year events



DRAGON DANCE PARADE. The Lunar New Year Dragon Dance Parade & Celebration on January 28 starts at 10:00am at the Portland Chinatown Museum with lion dances, drummers, and a 150-foot dragon. The parade then travels through downtown Portland and ends at the Oregon Historical Society Museum. (AR Photo/Jan Landis, File)

Continued from page 13

on Lan Su’s social media accounts. The first 500 visitors to the garden receive *hong bao*, or traditional lucky red envelope at entry. The 16-day festival, which ends February 5, includes Chinese brush painting, family craft activities, a chopstick challenge, foods of the New Year, a lion dance workshop, a Chinese calligraphy workshop, and more. Another highlight of the celebration is Lunar New Year Lantern Viewing — illuminated hanging red lanterns and large lantern sculptures — which is held on the evenings of January 26 to 29 and February 2 to 5 (separate admission tickets are required). For info, to obtain a complete schedule of activities, or to purchase Lantern Viewing tickets, call (503) 228-8131 or visit <www.lansugarden.org/things-to-do/events/lunar-new-year>.

Lunar New Year Dragon Dance Parade & Celebration

Jan 28, 10am-1pm, NW Davis Street near the Portland Chinatown Museum (127 NW Third Ave, Portland). Kick off the Lunar New Year with a mile-long parade in Portland coordinated by the Oregon Historical Society and numerous community partners. The Lunar New Year Dragon Dance Parade & Celebration starts at the Portland Chinatown Museum with lion dances, drummers, and a 150-foot dragon, followed by a parade that marches under the China Gate and through downtown Portland to the Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland) for a joyous conclusion. Members of the community who are interested in volunteering for the event should e-mail <info@portlandchinatown.org>. For info, call (503) 222-1741 or (503) 224-0008, or visit <www.ohs.org> or <www.portlandchinatownmuseum.org>.

2023 Lunar New Year Fair

Jan 28, 10am-3pm, Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). Celebrate the Year of the Rabbit at the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience’s family-friendly Lunar New Year Fair. Events include a live lion dance performance by LQ Lion Dance in front of the museum entrance on King Street to bring good luck for the new year; crafts, games, and art; exploration of a new Lunar New Year exhibit; and a storytime session about lion dancing. Indoor activities require paid museum admission. For info, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

Asian Spring Festival Celebration

Jan 28, noon-5pm & 6:30-9pm, Seattle Center (305

Harrison St, Seattle). Celebrate the Year of the Rabbit with friends and family at a Spring Festival celebration organized by the Seattle Chinese Association and Chinese Microsoft Employee Network. A food court, an afternoon performance, games, gifts, a photo booth with traditional Chinese outfits, and more are featured during the afternoon portion of the event, which takes place from noon to 5:00pm. The evening gala held at McCaw Hall is held from 6:30pm to 9:00pm. For info, or to buy tickets, call (206) 684-7200 or visit <www.seattlecenter.com>.

VCA Chinese New Year

Jan 28, 5-7pm (light meal & games), 7-9pm (performances), Skyview High School (1300 NW 139th St, Vancouver, Wash.). Enjoy food, performances, and more at the Vancouver Chinese Association’s (VCA) Chinese New Year celebration. For info, or to purchase tickets (required), e-mail <vca_usa@yahoo.com> or visit <https://vca-wa.org/vca-2023-new-years-gala>. For addresses of businesses selling tickets in person, visit <www.facebook.com/vcausa>.

2023 Lunar New Year Cake Time

Jan 29, 2-4pm, Virtual. Welcome the new year safely online at the Lunar New Year Cake Time event, presented by Multnomah County Library. For info, call (503) 988-5123 or visit <events.multcolib.org>. To register, visit <https://multcolib.org/library-location/online>.

“Lunar New Year: Altars, Ancestors, Traditions, Blessings”

Jan 29, 2022-Jan 8, 2023, 10am-5pm (Tue-Sun), Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). Learn about how different cultures observe the Lunar New Year at “Lunar New Year: Altars, Ancestors, Traditions, Blessings,” a new exhibit at The Wing. For info, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

Northwest China Council New Year Gala

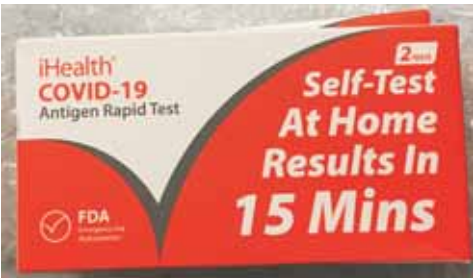
Feb 5, 5-9pm, Happy Dragon Restaurant (707 NE 82nd Ave, Portland). Attend the Northwest China Council’s annual Chinese New Year Gala ringing in the Year of the Rabbit. The event features a 10-course banquet, silent auction, performances, door prizes, and music. For info, or to purchase tickets (by February 3 at 5:00pm), call (503) 558-5492, e-mail <info@nwchina.org>, or visit <www.nwchina.org>.



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First of all, I don’t even like carrots

By Wayne Chan
The Asian Reporter

I have been living a lie. I’m not who I thought I was. Apparently, everything I knew about myself is now in question. It wasn’t intentional. I would have been fine if I had never found out the truth about my identity. But somehow, somehow, I’m gonna have to live with myself. You see, I am not a Dragon. I’m reminded every Lunar New Year, which this year begins January 22. In 2023, we are celebrating the Year of the Rabbit.

For years, actually decades, I had the firm belief I was born in the Year of the Dragon. Why would I think this? Well, when I was a kid, there was no internet. Most people learned information at school, or if they wanted to find out something specific, they read an encyclopedia. Fortunately for me, I was reminded that I was born in the Year of the Dragon every time my parents took me to their favorite Chinese restaurant.

When we sat down at our favorite booth, it was right there on the table in front of us — a paper placemat with red lettering listing various birth years and how one’s birth year correlated to an animal in the lunar zodiac.

Looking at the year I was born, it was as plain as day. I was born in the Year of the Dragon.

I was a Dragon, and this was way before the series “Game of Thrones” made them a cool thing.

And who wouldn’t want to be a Dragon? Now that the internet is accessible nearly everywhere, it’s easy to expand on the characteristics of the Dragon. The Dragon is “the most vital and powerful beast in the Chinese zodiac.” Also, below are characteristics of people born in the Year of the Dragon. (I couldn’t help comparing them to my own personality.)

Dragons have:

1. Innate courage. OK ... me.
2. Tenacity. Yup, me again. Keep going.
3. Intelligence. OK, now I’m starting to blush. Stop it!

With all of my natural, inherent intelligence, I set out to learn more about Dragons and the lunar zodiac.

It turns out that with each new year, the celebration of each animal is also a time when that animal is at its most robust and virile. And since my birthday is in early February, not only was I a Dragon, but a Dragon at the top of its game. A truly beautiful and magnificent creature.

Please, please, stop with the compliments. Yes, I’m a powerful, magnificent Dragon at the height of my powers, but I’m just like everyone else — just stronger and more magnificent.

This is what I believed for decades, and to say the least, I was perfectly fine with it.

Until.

Until I got married.

I remember it vividly. My beautiful wife Maya and I went to dinner at a Chinese restaurant. As if right on cue, there was the usual lunar zodiac placemat. It was time for me to regale my wife with my life story and how lucky she was to be married to a courageous, virile, and brilliant Dragon. I pointed at my year of birth and proudly exclaimed, “Yup, I’m a Dragon.”

Then Maya picked up her smartphone. After a little research, she said, “Wait, you were born on February 6, and that year, the lunar new year began on February 13.

“WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!” I said.

You’re not a Dragon. You were born seven days before the new year that year. That means, you’re ... a Rabbit!

“WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!” I said. Again.

A Rabbit? How can I be a Rabbit? I was a strong, virile, courageous Dragon just two minutes ago!

What makes it worse, is that if I really was born at the tail end of the Rabbit Year, I’m not even a strong, energetic Rabbit. I’m basically a Rabbit at the end of its rope. I’m a Rabbit on its deathbed. I’m a bunny on life support!

In shock and in a panic, I looked up the characteristics of the Rabbit. It turns out that people born in the Year of the Rabbit have soft and tender personality traits. Well, of course they’re soft and tender! You’re a Rabbit! You’d be soft and tender too if you were a Rabbit on its deathbed on life support!

My whole life is in question. I love my wife, but she cannot be right. I need a second opinion.

Anyone know a reliable lunar zodiac specialist?

For timely information about upcoming events, visit <www.facebook.com/TheAsianReporter>.

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Jessica Henwick talks making it, diversity and Nicolas Cage

By Krysta Fauria
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Just before Jessica Henwick was cast in “Game of Thrones” and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, the then-aspiring actor had already left Los Angeles for her hometown in England.

“I ran out of money, so I went back and moved back in with my parents,” she recalled.

Although she hadn’t quite given up on acting, Henwick was struggling to find jobs in front of the camera. Before leaving L.A., she did work as a crew member on sets — an experience she drew from for her role in Rian Johnson’s *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*, which debuted last month on Netflix.

In the whodunit film boasting a star-studded ensemble cast, Henwick plays Peg, the assistant and handler to model and sweatpants line founder Birdie (Kate Hudson). But her experience as a crew member was more than just a source of inspiration for her character — it was “hugely educational” for her as an actor, Henwick said.

“To be on a set and listen to how the director communicated with the cast and with the crew and how it worked, it was hugely insightful,” she said.

Although her performance as Bugs in *The Matrix Resurrections* garnered critical praise, she still considers herself a “jobbing actor.”

“I’m not just getting things handed to me,” she said, though she admits working



with Keanu Reeves felt like a turning point in her career as well as a personal triumph.

“I mean, what an icon. They just don’t make ’em like that anymore. It’s kind of sad,” she said.

Reflecting on her experience with Reeves, Henwick lamented the ways in which the Hollywood landscape has shifted.

“He’s from an era where it meant something to be a star or an A-lister,” she said. “There are so many actors nowadays. I don’t know if it’s just diluted or maybe we’re overexposed with social media.”

Henwick had always known the chances of her making it in Hollywood were slim,

which she says informed her decision to drop out of acting school after being cast as the lead in the BBC series “Spirit Warriors” in 2009.

“Maybe I got too big for my boots. I don’t know. I just think that I realized you don’t have to do that,” she said when asked why she quit. “If I had continued going to that school, I would have been in debt.”

She said she struggles with the issue of equity in acting given the high cost of training in England.

“It’s definitely predisposed towards people of privilege,” she said. “I know that we have some of the best teachers in the world, so I fully support how much schools charge, but it does mean that people from

HENWICK’S JOURNEY. Actor Jessica Henwick poses for a portrait to promote the film *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* on December 8, 2022 in Los Angeles. Henwick, who says she would have gone into debt had she not dropped out of acting school, reflected on the issue of equity in the industry given the high cost of training in England. (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)

lower income families can’t afford to go.”

Henwick, whose mother is Singaporean Chinese, was also mindful of the limited opportunities for people of color in England, which she said was one of the factors that prompted her initial move to Los Angeles.

“England’s main export, in terms of entertainment, is period dramas. We do it better than anyone else in the world. Shakespeare, Austen. Even at the time, the biggest show was ‘Downton Abbey,’” she recalled. “I used to want to be in one of those so bad. The costumes, the language. It’s poetry.”

When asked how to address that lack of representation, Henwick praised “Bridgerton” executive producer Shonda Rhimes for her ability to bring diversity to the genre.

Henwick is looking forward to a more rooted and restful 2023 after years of travelling and big projects. But she said, if she has her pick in the future, she hopes to work with Nicolas Cage one day.

“I just want to see the method behind the madness,” she laughed. “I also feel like I’m working my way through ’90s action heroes. I’ve worked with Keanu. I’ve work with Edward (Norton). Nicolas Cage, you’re next.”

Making pig livers humanlike in quest to ease organ shortage

Continued from page 7

Bioengineering organs is markedly different — no special pigs required, just leftover organs from slaughterhouses.

“That is something that in the long term may very likely contribute to the development of organs we can use in humans,” said Pittsburgh’s Tevar. He’s not involved with Miromatrix — and cautioned that the planned outside-the-body testing would be only an early first step.

The Miromatrix approach stems from research in the early 2000s, when regenerative medicine specialist Doris Taylor and Dr. Harald Ott, then at the University of Minnesota, pioneered a way to completely decellularize the heart of a dead rat. The team seeded the resulting scaffolding with immature heart cells from baby rats that eventually made the little organ beat, garnering international headlines.

Fast forward, and now at university spinoff Miromatrix sit rows of large jugs pumping fluids and nutrients into livers and kidneys in various stages of their metamorphosis.

Stripping away the pig cells removes some of the risks of xenotransplantation, such as lurking animal viruses or hyper-rejection, Ross said. The FDA already considers the decellularized pig tissue safe for another purpose, using it

to make a type of surgical mesh.

More complex is getting human cells to take over.

“We can’t take billions of cells and push them into the organ at once,” Ross said. When slowly infused, “the cells crawl around and when they see the right environment, they stick.”

The source of those human cells: donated livers and kidneys that won’t be transplanted. Nearly a quarter of kidneys donated in the U.S. last year were discarded because hospitals often refuse to transplant less than perfect organs, or because it took too long to find a matching recipient.

As long as enough cells still are functioning when donation groups offer up an organ, Miromatrix biologists isolate usable cells and multiply them in lab dishes. From one rescued human organ the company says it can grow enough cells to repopulate several pig liver or kidney scaffolds, cells responsible for different jobs — the kind that line blood vessels or filter waste, for example.

In 2021, researchers with Miromatrix and the Mayo Clinic reported successfully transplanting a version of bioengineered livers into pigs.

That set the stage for testing a “liver-assist” treatment similar to dialysis, using bioengineered livers to filter the blood of people in acute liver failure, a life-threatening emergency. Doctors now have little to offer except

supportive care unless the person is lucky enough to get a rapid transplant.

“If you can just get over the hump, then you might actually recover” — because the liver is the only organ that can repair itself and regrow, said Mount Sinai’s Florman. “I’ll be excited when they get their first patient enrolled and I hope that it’s with us.”

It’s not clear how soon that testing can begin. The FDA recently told Miromatrix it has some questions about the study application.

If the outside-the-body liver experiment works, what’s next? Still more research aimed at one day attempting to transplant a bioengineered organ — likely a kidney, because a patient could survive with dialysis if the operation failed.

While regrowing kidneys isn’t as far along, “I was completely stunned” at the progress so far, said Dr. Ron Shapiro, a kidney transplant expert at Mount Sinai.

He treats many older patients on dialysis who “will wait for years and years to get a kidney and likely die waiting on the list who would be perfect” for such experiments — if they come in time.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s Science and Educational Media Group. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Simone Ashley finds her voice

Continued from page 9

tunities that are now all possible. She’s looking to 2023 with a clear understanding of her goals. There are “exciting” projects on the horizon, she says, which she can’t speak about, including the live-action *Little Mermaid* movie starring Halle Bailey.

“I’ve got ambitions that I’m determined to achieve,” she says. “I know what works for me. I know what I want to do with my voice now and the kind of roles that I want to take on.”

She’s also filming “Bridgerton” season three which she says has been “really lovely” because she and Bailey are now supporting characters to a new love story.

“I think both Johnny and I were just relieved that we could kind of have fun a little bit more and go off and do whatever things we have surrounding this and then come back.”

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Sri Lankans face food crisis amid economic crunch

Continued from page 4

questioning and later at a rehabilitation camp.

She learned dress-making in the rehabilitation center but was unable to build a profitable business after her release and relied on her husband’s salary from his job at a finance company as she devoted herself to raising their children.

Her husband, like many people, lost his job as a result of Sri Lanka’s current economic crisis. Families across the nation have been forced to cut back on food and other vital items because of shortages of money and high inflation.

For weeks, Anushiya has had to feed her 11-year-old son and 8-year-old daughter only rice and either potato curry or tomato curry. The couple’s 3-month-old baby is still breastfed. While her daughter receives school lunches sponsored by the World Food Program and the Ministry of Education, her son does not because the program only covers children from Grade 1 to 5.

Anushiya also is heavily in debt to micro-finance companies and is often hassled by creditors waiting by her home. She can’t afford to pay the rent, and the house owner had asked the family to leave by the end of December.

In another village, Dimbulagala, primary school children receive a free breakfast, a glass of milk, and lunch with help from the education ministry, WFP, and a private donor agency. Mothers of students prepare the meals at school with a menu provided by the education ministry. Each meal costs \$0.27.

School principal Anusha Sirimanne said attendance has improved since the meal program began 20 weeks ago. Before, she said, many children fell asleep during classes and had trouble concentrating, but since the program started, they are more alert and physically active.

“Most would not attend school without the feeding program, and eventually the school would have to close,” she said.

S.M. Madushanka Kumara, the father of three children in Dimbulagala, said his family can only eat once or twice a day since he lost his job at a bakery when its owner decided to close it after prices of ingredients sharply increased.

“We can’t think about balanced diets,” said his wife, Malkanthi. “My 12-year-old son cried, saying his head hurt and he was hungry. I had nothing to offer. Today for lunch I gave him rice with okra curry, which I made from two okras I picked in the backyard.”

NORTHWEST JOB MARKET



Find general information about the city and employment opportunities at:
<www.hillsboro-oregon.gov>

The Office of the Commissioner-elect
Rene Gonzalez is hiring for

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Closing Date/Time: Open Until Filled
Salary: Depends on Qualifications
Job Type: At Will

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Bureau: Commissioner #3 Public Affairs

Specific roles are likely to include: operations leadership, executive assistant, policy/program/project management as a liaison to one or more City bureaus, communications, and social media specifically. Regardless, you can expect to work every day with internal and external stakeholders, operate within a lively communications environment, and have good project and time management skills. We look forward to considering your interest!

For more information or to apply for the job, please visit our website:
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For more information about Custodian openings, please call Gracie La Pietra at (503) 916-3544.

The Asian Reporter is published
on the first Monday each month.

The classified advertising deadlines
for our next two print editions are:

February 6 issue: Friday, February 3, 2:00pm

March 6 issue: Friday, March 3, 2:00pm

For more information, e-mail <ads@asianreporter.com>.



Celebrate
The Year of the Rabbit:
January 22, 2023 to
February 9, 2024!

The Asian Reporter's Lunar New Year
special section begins on page 10.

BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

SUB-BIDS / SUPPLIER
QUOTES REQUESTED

GRACE PECK TERRACE

1839 NE 14th Ave., Portland, OR 97212

Bids Due:

January 13, 2023 at 2:00pm

Proposals Due: 1/13/2023

Grace Peck Terrace is an existing six (6) story building with precast hollow core planks supported by reinforced masonry bearing / shear walls that houses ninety-five (95) units of affordable housing. The project will be an occupied remodel which will include removal and replacement of the existing roof and exterior cladding; plus selective mechanical, plumbing, electrical / low voltage, and fire suppression systems in the units and common spaces. Additionally, the ground floor and site will be re-programmed to better accommodate the services provided.

Trades Excluded:

Fire Protection, Plumbing, Electrical, HVAC, Siding, Metal Panelm WRB/Window Install, Window Supply, Appliance Supply, Storefront, Membrane Roofing & Flooring

Plans are currently available at:

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Contact: Bennett Barnwell
ORCCB # 147267/WALSHCC962LD

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLABORATIVE
INNOVATION CENTER

Corvallis, OR 97331

Early Trade Partners

Mass Timber (supply), Elevators, Fire Protection, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical
Interim Design Development Documents

Proposals Due: 1/13/2023

The general description of work for this Request for Proposals can be found in the formal RFP document:
<<https://andersencloud.egnyte.com/fl/wPfzXj7rBV>>

Non-Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting:

Wednesday, January 4, 2023, 9:00am (pacific)
E-mail Jeff Slinger at

<jslinger@andersen-const.com> to be forwarded the Zoom meeting invite link.

Please submit questions via e-mail by 1/6/2023 to the following people:
Jeff Slinger, Preconstruction Manager
<jslinger@andersen-const.com>

Submit proposals via e-mail using the appropriate forms by Friday, 1/13/2023 at 2:00pm
(See specific instructions in formal Request for Proposals)



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The Portland Metro Workforce Development Board

WORKSYSTEMS, THE PORTLAND
METRO WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEETING NOTICE*

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

8:00am to 9:30am

1/13/2023

4/14/2023

7/14/2023

10/13/2023

WORKSYSTEMS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE*

The Executive Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month from 11:30am to 1:00pm

Agendas for meetings will be posted on our website at least 5 days prior to meeting date

*Meeting dates, time and locations are subject to change. For more information, visit our website
<<https://www.worksystems.org>>
or e-mail <jweller@worksystems.org>

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

Notice of Funding Availability
for the 2023-2024 Program Year

The City of Beaverton announces the availability of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. These HUD funds are authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

The City of Beaverton is seeking proposals for projects that include:

- Economic Development,
- Public Services, and
- Critical Home Repair for Low-income Homeowners (includes manufactured homes in parks as well as site-built homes).

The objectives of CDBG activities must be in accordance with the Washington County Consortium's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and in compliance with National Objectives to develop viable urban communities through implementation of the following goals, principally for the benefit of low-and moderate-income (LMI) persons.

Organizations seeking public services money, in particular those working with matters of homelessness as well as homeless prevention, will need to align their application narratives with both the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and A Road Home objectives.

To apply, a representative from your organization must

- attend our virtual CDBG workshop scheduled for **January 6, 2023, from 10am to 11am -OR-**
- schedule an individual information session prior to the application opening on January 10, 2023.

Please RSVP by **noon on Wednesday, January 5** with your choice of joining the workshop or requesting an individual session. Once we have received your RSVP, a calendar invitation along with supporting guidance and a zoom link will be provided. Choosing both options is not necessary. However, individual sessions are recommended for new applicants.

Application Period and Deadlines

Applications for all programs areas will be available Wednesday, January 10, 2023. Completed applications are due by midnight on **Tuesday, January 31, 2023**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Applicants will be contacted in June regarding their award amount.

If you have any questions, please reach out to: Lisa Bailey, Affordable Housing Program Coordinator, at (503) 319-2216 or <lbailey@beavertonoregon.gov>.

Additional jobs, public notices & bids are
updated online as new opportunities arrive.

View new posts at <www.asianreporter.com/nwjobmarket.htm>
or <www.asianreporter.com/notices.htm>.

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Portland

BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

South Korea looks to youth after World Cup loss to Brazil

By Stephen Wade
The Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar — South Korea lost in the Round of 16 of the World Cup and then lost its coach. The team was beaten by five-time champion Brazil 4-1. After the match, South Korea coach Paulo Bento announced that he was stepping down to end his four-year stint. The Portuguese coach said he made the decision several months ago.

Expectation vs. performance

South Korea was knocked out of the 2019 Asian Cup in the quarterfinals, so reaching the last 16 in Qatar can be seen as a positive. South Korea was appearing in its 10th straight World Cup, and its 11th overall. This was the third time South Korea reached the knockout round. It's best performance was in 2002 when it co-hosted the event with Japan and reached the semifinals.

Who's out

A key figure missing will be Bento. However, the current group of players is arguably the best that South Korea has assembled, and most are relatively young. One of the older players is 30-year-old Son Heung-min, the star midfielder at English club Tottenham. Son failed



to score in this World Cup after getting goals in the last two.

He did get a beautiful assist on Hwang-Hee-chan's goal, which gave South Korea a 2-1 victory over Portugal and a place in the last 16.

Son played in the tournament wearing a black facemask to protect a broken left eye socket picked up in a Champions League game on November 2.

WHO'S NEXT. Brazil's Casemiro, left, and South Korea's Lee Kang-in (#18) challenge for the ball during a World Cup Round of 16 soccer match between Brazil and South Korea at Stadium 974 in Doha, Qatar, on December 5, 2022. South Korea lost the match then lost its coach. The country is looking to Lee Kang-in to be a future leader of the squad. (AP Photo/Manu Fernandez)

Who's next

After the loss, Son pointed out who he thinks will be the next players to lead South Korea. He singled out Lee Kang-in and Paik Seung-ho. Paik came in and scored as a substitute against Brazil in his first World Cup action.

"I am grateful that our young players showed what they are capable of doing on this stage and also the potential for what they could do in the future," Son said. "I hope they get even better."

Son also took center stage to apologize for the Brazil loss. "I am really sorry for our people, for soccer fans who supported us," Son said. "It turned out to be an extremely difficult match."

What's next?

South Korea has qualified for the Asian Cup, but will receive tough competition from Japan, Australia, and Saudi Arabia — all World Cup qualifiers. The event, scheduled for January 2024, was moved to Qatar after China withdrew, citing COVID-19.

What's next for Japan after exit on penalty kicks at the World Cup?

By Stephen Wade
The Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar — In Japan's fourth appearance in the Round of 16 at the World Cup, the team was knocked out for the fourth time. The Japanese lost to Croatia in a penalty kick shootout after a 1-1 draw. The Croats won the shootout 3-1.

Japan also reached the Round of 16 in 2002, 2010, and four years ago in Russia.

Expectation vs. performance

Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu said for months that the goal was to reach the quarterfinals for the first time. So by that standard, Japan under-performed.

However, 2-1 victories over former

World Cup champions Spain and Germany in the group stage showed Japan has improved enough to compete with top soccer nations.

"Even though we could not break the wall of the Round of 16 again, players demonstrated a new era of our soccer," Moriyasu said. Moriyasu talked of still needing to improve, but the coach said his players "can look eye-to-eye with anyone now."

Moriyasu's contract expired at the end of the World Cup. Japan soccer association president Tashima Kohzo said in Doha that Moriyasu was likely to be a candidate to continue. He gave no more details.

Who's out?

Fullback Yuto Nagatomo, 36, and

goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima, 39, have each been on four World Cup squads and certainly will not return. Nagatomo played in all four games in Qatar, but Kawashima never left the bench. Instead, he served as a veteran mentor to the young team.

Captain and defender Maya Yoshida was in his third World Cup and, at 34, most likely his last.

"I'm having trouble finding words to describe how I feel," Nagatomo said after the loss to Croatia. "We did everything we could until the very end. I trust that younger players, driven by this sense of regret, will make a better future for Japanese soccer."

Who's next?

Three names come immediately to mind.

Midfielder Ritsu Doan, who plays at German club Freiburg, scored two goals and will certainly be a backbone of future teams. Another is midfielder Kaoru Mitoma, who is having at stellar season at English club Brighton in the Premier League.

Mitoma was one of three Japanese players who missed their penalty kick in the shootout loss to Croatia.

The third is another midfielder, 21-year-old Takefusa Kubo, who plays at Spanish club Real Sociedad.

What's next?

Japan has qualified for the January 2024 Asian Cup, a tourney it has won four times.

OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING RESOURCE

OPGR

The Calendar Page Turns

Whew! Another whirlwind of a holiday season winds down, and you have a moment or two to sit quietly and breathe deeply. It's no wonder that January is the season for introspection and resolution.

For many, a review of the year just past is a chance to find a better path going forward. It's a chance to establish some new practices that could have a positive impact on finances, relationships or personal fulfillment. For some people, gaining control of a gambling habit might be a goal for this new year. If this includes you, we can help.

Free Help is Available

If you have a gambling habit that is costing you more than you're comfortable with, reach out. Through the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR), gamblers and those who love them can get support from trained addiction counselors, often right from home. Treatment is effective. People are ready and waiting to provide better mechanisms to cope and to heal. And, best of all, it's free.

All it takes is a phone call, a text, or an online chat to get started. Are you ready? Let this new year set you on a new path — a path to recovery.

For more information, visit OPGR.org



