

# The Asian Reporter

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## 30 years after Pokémon's release, fans are still trying to catch 'em all



**PERSISTING POPULARITY.** A person in a Pikachu character costume attends the premiere of Pokémon Detective Pikachu at Military Island in Times Square, New York, in this May 2, 2019 file photo. In the 30 years since Pokémon debuted in Japan with the 1996 release of Pokémon Red and Pokémon Green for Nintendo Game Boy, the franchise has taken over the globe with its animated shows, mobile games, and highly coveted trading cards. Its popularity continues with fans young and old. See story on page 7. (Photo by Evan Agostini/Invision/AP, File)



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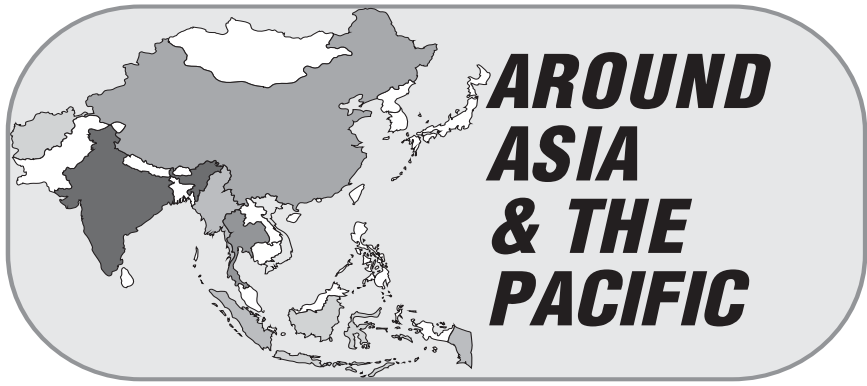
Space reservations due: Wednesday, April 1 at 1:00pm

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**May 4, 2026 edition:**

Space reservations due: Wednesday, April 29 at 1:00pm

Artwork due: Thursday, April 30 at 1:00pm



**City stunned by anonymous gold bars to fix aging pipes**

TOKYO (AP) — Osaka has received a hefty gift of gold bars worth 560 million yen (\$3.6 million) from an anonymous donor asking for its specific use: to fix the Japanese city’s dilapidated water pipes. The gold bars, weighing 21 kilograms (46 pounds) in total, were given to the Osaka City Waterworks Bureau in November by the donor who wants to help improve aging water pipes, mayor Hideyuki Yokoyama told reporters. “It’s a staggering amount and I was speechless,” Yokoyama said. “Tackling aging water pipes requires a huge investment, and I cannot thank enough for the donation.” The mayor said his city will respect the donor’s wishes and use the gift to improve waterworks projects. Concern over the safety of Osaka’s waterworks systems grew after a massive sinkhole swallowed a truck and killed the driver last year. It was linked to a damaged sewer in Saitama, north of Tokyo. Osaka had 92 cases of water pipe leaks under city roads in the fiscal year ending March 2025, the city’s waterworks official, Eiji Kotani, told The Associated Press. With a population of 2.8 million, Osaka is the country’s third-largest city that serves as a western Japanese capital. Most of Japan’s main public infrastructure was built during the rapid postwar economic growth. Urban development in Osaka, a regional commercial hub, started earlier than many other cities and its water pipes and other infrastructure are also aging earlier, Kotani said. Osaka needs to renew a total of 160 miles of water pipes, he said. Renewing a 1.2-mile segment of water pipes would cost about 500 million yen (\$3.2 million), Kotani said.

**DoorDash exits 4 markets, including Japan**

(AP) — DoorDash says it’s ending operations in Qatar, Singapore, Japan, and Uzbekistan. The San Francisco-based delivery company said the decision comes after a months-long review of country-specific conditions. DoorDash said it wants to focus its investments on places where it can build sustainable scale and long-term market leadership. “Our priority is supporting our teams and partners through an orderly transition as we focus on the geographies where we can offer the best products and build for long-term success,” said Miki Kuusi, the head of DoorDash’s international division, in a statement. DoorDash was a latecomer to some of the affected markets. The company began operations in Japan in 2021, five years after its rival Uber Eats. Deliveroo, a U.K. delivery company that was acquired by DoorDash last year, has only been operating in Qatar since 2022. That’s almost a decade after Dubai-based Talabat began making deliveries in Qatar. DoorDash also faces stiff competition from entrenched rivals like GrabFood and Foodpanda in Singapore and Russia-based Yandex Eats in Uzbekistan. DoorDash is the dominant delivery provider in the U.S., but it has been playing catch-up to Uber Eats internationally. In addition to its purchase of Deliveroo, DoorDash acquired Finnish delivery service Wolt in 2021 to help it expand into Europe.

**Thai police go undercover as lion dancers to nab burglar**

BANGKOK (AP) — When Thai police were having trouble catching a serial burglar who repeatedly slipped through their fingers, they came up with a creative plan: going undercover in a traditional lion costume to get close to their elusive quarry. Video footage released by the Bangkok police department showed officers hidden beneath a red-and-gold lion costume dancing toward the suspect as he wandered through a Lunar New Year fair at a temple in Nonthaburi, a province neighboring Bangkok. Moments later, the officer who was holding the lion’s papier-mâché head lunges at the suspect and swiftly pins the man to the ground. Police say the suspect, identified as a 33-year-old man, is accused of breaking into the home of a local police commander in Bangkok three times in early February, making off with valuables worth about 2 million baht (\$64,000). In a press release, police said they had attempted to arrest the man several times, but he was quick to spot police officers and ran off. They later identified him by tracing stolen amulets he had sold and learned that he frequently visited temples in Nonthaburi. While the Lunar New Year is not an official holiday in Thailand, celebrations are common and lion dances are often part of the festivities, providing the perfect cover for the operation. Police said the suspect has confessed to the burglaries, saying he stole to buy drugs and gamble. They added that he has previously been convicted of drug-related offenses and burglary.

**China grants U.K. and Canada visa-free entry**

BEIJING (AP) — British and Canadian citizens can now enter China without a visa, bringing to 79 the number of countries granted visa-free access in a bid to boost tourism and business. China has expanded eligibility for the program significantly in the last two years. Visitors can stay for up to 30 days for business, tourism, exchange programs, and to visit family and friends. Most Europeans qualify for visa-free entry, along with some from select countries in other regions including Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Citizens of a few other countries, including the United States and Indonesia, can enter for 10 days if they are in transit — meaning they have a ticket departing for a different country than they arrived from. Business executives and tourists have welcomed the change, as the China visa application process can be a relatively cumbersome one. The U.K. and Canada are being added following visits to China in January by their prime ministers, Keir Starmer and Mark Carney. Both are relatively new leaders who are trying to revamp ties with Beijing after a downturn in recent years. For most countries, the visa-free access expires at the end of this year, but it has been extended in the past.



**AI ANTICS.** Humanoid robots in lion dance costumes perform during a media preview of a robotic temple fair in advance of the Lunar New Year in Beijing, China. Ahead of the Lunar New Year, and as part of different “fairs” and activities around Beijing, some venues were busy setting up their stages and props. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

**People — and robots — were ready to celebrate the Lunar New Year in China**

By E. Eduardo Castillo  
The Associated Press

**B**EIJING — It’s not just people — in China, the robots were also getting ready to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

There was a dress rehearsal for four cute humanoid robots, each about 3 feet tall, at a mall in western Beijing. Curious onlookers stopped to watch.

Each robot got a colorful lion costume and within minutes the moves started: Bend the knees, up, to the left, to the right, shake the mask, and do it all again!

Ahead of the Lunar New Year, and as part of different “fairs” and activities around Beijing, some venues were busy setting up their stages and props.

For a second year in a row, one of the fairs was devoted to technology and — yes, again — robots took center stage.

People saw them dancing and also stacking blocks on top of others to make a little tower, skewering hawthorn berries onto a stick — coated with a syrup, a popular sweet snack — or playing soccer.

“This year, the number of our robots has increased a lot,” said Qiu Feng, a member of the organizing committee. “They will perform dance, martial arts, Peking Opera, poetry, and soccer.”

“Some events were also available last year but the finesse of the actions and the high-tech vibe” were stronger this time, Qui added.

China scaled up its efforts to develop better robots that could perform different activities,

powered by artificial intelligence and with less human intervention.

But though they can now do things that were difficult to imagine a few years ago, humans are still needed to help — for example, to dress them or move them when they stop in the middle of a mini-soccer field.

“Technology is developing faster and becoming more advanced every day,” Qui also said. “As long as we keep up with this trend, our ... fair will continue to evolve and rise with the times.”

The robots performing at the mall were developed by some Chinese startups, like Booster Robotics. The company displayed around 20 humanoid robots dancing and playing soccer.

“It is an AI environment, which means, once the whistle sounds, the remote control will all be put aside and all its decision-making and motion control are made by the robots themselves,” said Ren Zixin, director of marketing at Booster Robotics.

**A robotic dog made in China gets an Indian university kicked out of an AI summit**

By Rajesh Roy  
The Associated Press

**N**EW DELHI — A private Indian university was booted from a top artificial intelligence (AI) summit in New Delhi after one of its staffers displayed a commercially available robotic dog made in

*Continued on page 4*

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Indonesian Rupiah	16842
Japanese Yen	156.09
Laos New Kip	21383
Malaysian Ringgit	3.891
Nepal Rupee	145.79
New Zealand Dollar	1.6683
Pakistani Rupee	279.54
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Russian Ruble	77.423
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Sri Lankan Rupee	309.18
Taiwan Dollar	31.368
Thai Baht	31.085
Vietnam Dong	25937

# Lunar New Year prayers, robots, and festivities usher in the Year of the Horse

By Ken Moritsugu  
The Associated Press

**B**EIJING — Traditional prayers, fireworks, and fairs marked the Lunar New Year — alongside 21st-century humanoid robots.

The activities ushered in the Year of the Horse, one of 12 animals in the Chinese zodiac, succeeding the Year of the Snake.

Thousands of people in Beijing jammed into the former Temple of Earth to buy snacks, toys, and trinkets from stalls. Sun Jing, who brought her parents to the capital for the holiday, said the atmosphere was as lively as in her childhood.

“I haven’t felt such a strong sense of Lunar New Year festivity in a very, very long time,” she said.

Crowds descended on popular temples to burn incense and pray for happiness and success in the coming year. The Lunar New Year is the most important annual holiday in China and some other East Asian nations and is celebrated outside the region, too.

## Robots take the stage of an annual TV show in China

As every year, China celebrated the Lunar New Year with a TV show and once again the humanoid robots were a central part of the performance.

One of the highlights of the CCTV Spring Festival gala was a martial arts performance by children and robots. For several minutes, humanoids from Unitree Robotics showed different sequences and even brandished swords.

The performance showed China’s push to develop more advanced robots powered



**WELCOMING THE HORSE.** Workers install ornaments during a celebration of the Lunar New Year at a temple in Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, Indonesia, on February 17, 2026. Traditional prayers, fireworks, and fairs marked the Lunar New Year — alongside 21st-century humanoid robots. The activities ushered in the Year of the Fire Horse. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)

by improved AI capabilities.

Viewers applauded the robots, with one saying they give good guidance and direction for young people. One man, though, said that while China’s advances in robotics are great, they detracted from his experience.

“It lacks a bit of the New Year atmosphere,” Li Bo said. “It’s not as enjoyable as when I was little watching the gala.”

## Temple crowds at midnight in Hong Kong

Incense smoke wafted into the air at a temple in Hong Kong where people line up every year to make wishes for the new year at midnight.

Holding up a cluster of incense sticks, many bowed their heads several times before planting the sticks in containers placed in front of a temple hall.

## Thailand uses a birth control vaccine to curb its elephant population near expanding farms

By Jintamas Saksornchai  
The Associated Press

**B**ANGKOK — Thailand has begun using a birth control vaccine on elephants in the wild to try and curb a growing problem where human and animal populations encroach on each other — an issue in areas where farms spread into forests and elephants are squeezed out of their natural habitat.

The initiative is part of efforts to address confrontations that can turn deadly. As farmers cut down forests to make more farmland, elephants are forced to venture out of their shrinking habitats in search of food.

Last year, wild elephants killed 30 people and injured 29 in Thailand, according to official figures, which also noted more than 2,000 incidents of elephants damaging crops.

Sukhee Boonsang, director of the Wildlife Conservation Office, recently told The Associated Press that controlling the wild elephant population has become necessary as numbers of elephants living near residential areas rises sharply, increasing the risk of confrontations.

The office obtained 25 doses of a U.S.-made vaccine and conducted a two-year trial on seven domesticated elephants — using up seven doses of the vaccine — which yielded promising results, he said. He explained the vaccine doesn’t stop female elephants from ovulating but prevents eggs from being fertilized.

Then, in late January, the vaccine was administered to three wild elephants in eastern Trat province, he said, adding that authorities are now determining which areas to target next as they prepare to use up the remaining 15 doses.

The vaccine can prevent pregnancy for seven years and the elephants will be able to reproduce again if they don’t receive a

booster after that time expires. Experts will closely monitor the vaccinated elephants throughout the seven-year period.

The vaccination drive has drawn criticism that it might undermine conservation efforts.

Thailand has a centuries-old tradition of using domesticated elephants in farming and transportation. Elephants are also a big part of Thailand’s national identity — and have been officially proclaimed a symbol of the nation.

Sukhee said the program targets only wild elephants in areas with the highest rates of violent human-elephant conflict. Official statistics show a birth rate of wild elephants in these regions at approximately 8.2% per year, more than double the national average of around 3.5%.

About 800 out of the nation’s approximately 4,400 wild elephants live in these conflict-prone areas, Sukhee said.

“If we don’t take action, the impact on people living in these areas will continue to grow until it becomes unmanageable,” he said.

In addition to the contraception vaccine, authorities have implemented other measures to reduce conflict, Sukhee said, such as creating additional water and food sources within the forests where elephants live, constructing protective fencing, and deploying rangers to guide elephants that stray into residential areas back into the wild.

A court-ordered operation in February to remove wild elephants that have repeatedly clashed with locals in northeastern Khon Kaen province sparked a public outcry after one elephant died during the relocation process.

An initial autopsy revealed that the elephant died from choking after anesthesia was administered ahead of the move, officials said.

## Fireworks light up skies in Vietnam

Entertainers in Vietnam sang at an outdoor countdown event before multiple fireworks shows at several cities in the Southeast Asian nation, where the festival is called Tet.

Light shows lit up bridges and skyscrapers as the fireworks went off and crowds clapped in rhythm to live pop music performances.

## Chinese street fairs in Moscow

People sampled Chinese cuisine from stalls and strolled along snowy streets decorated with red lanterns and dragons as two weeks of events got underway at various venues in the Russian capital.

The third annual Lunar New Year celebration comes at time of warming relations between China and Russia — ties that have frustrated many European governments because of the war in

Ukraine.

## A temple bell rings 108 times in Taiwan

The solemn peal of a temple bell rang out 108 times — an auspicious number — as people flocked to the Baoan Temple in Taipei the morning of February 17.

They lit incense sticks, bowed their heads, and left offerings of colorful flower bouquets on outdoor tables on the temple grounds in Taiwan’s capital city.

## Argentines join celebrations in Buenos Aires

Thousands of Argentines gathered in Buenos Aires’ Chinatown to celebrate the Lunar New Year and enjoyed dragon and lion dances on the main stage, alongside martial arts demonstrations.

The Chinese immigrant community is among Argentina’s most dynamic, accounting for more than 180,000 people in the South American country.

## Firecrackers light up in NYC

In New York City, crowds gathered in Manhattan’s Chinatown to celebrate.

The 28th annual Firecracker Ceremony and Cultural Festival was held in Sara D. Roosevelt Park, where lion dancers performed.

The event culminated with a massive amount of firecrackers being set off to scare away bad spirits.

*Associated Press journalists around the world contributed to this report.*

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# Thai coffee chains cut default sugar content in coffee and tea drinks in a new health push

By Jintamas Saksornchai  
The Associated Press

**B**ANGKOK — For many Thais, a meal doesn't feel complete without an iced coffee or tea so sugary it could pass for dessert. The government, concerned about the health consequences, wants them to dial it back.

Starting in February, nine major coffee chains across the country have pledged to cut the default sugar content in some of their drinks by half in a government initiative aimed at tackling excessive sugar consumption.

According to the Health Department, Thais consume an average of 21 teaspoons of sugar per day, more than three times the World Health Organization's recommended limit of six teaspoons. Health officials warn that such high intake increases the risk of obesity, diabetes, and other diseases.

The initiative is the first significant step to change consumers' sugar consumption behavior, said Amporn Benjaponpitak, the director general of the department.

Pakorn Tungkasereerak, the depart-



ment's deputy, said 2025 data show that about 45% of Thais age 15 and older are obese, while 10% of the population has diabetes.

A survey by the Bureau of Nutrition found that a 22-ounce (650-milliliter) iced

coffee contains an average of nine teaspoons of sugar, while a 10-ounce (300-milliliter) serving of bubble milk tea — an iced milk tea with tapioca pearls known as boba — can contain as much as 12 teaspoons.

**SWEETNESS SLASHED.** Porwares Tantikanpanit, left, drinks coffee in Bangkok, Thailand, alongside a friend. For many Thais, a meal doesn't feel complete without an iced coffee or tea so sugary it could pass for dessert. The government, concerned about the health consequences, wants them to dial it back. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lalit)

Sirinya Kuiklang, an office worker, said she approves of the changes. She already orders her drinks at just 25% of the standard sugar level, but she is aware that many others consume too much sugar.

"It's good for Thai people," she said.

Another office worker, Porwares Tantikanpanit, said he has enjoyed his non-coffee beverages at their current sugar levels but is willing to adjust if shops reduce the sweetness.

However, putting the policy into practice may prove challenging. Officials have said each brand can apply the initiative as they see fit.

Some customers have expressed confusion in response to social media posts promoting the initiative, asking how to order drinks with the level of sweetness that they prefer. Several brands said that the reduction applies only to certain menu items.

## Malaysia bans e-waste imports, vows to end illegal dumping

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)** — Malaysia has announced an immediate and full ban on the importation of electronic waste, as the government vowed the country would not be a "dumping ground" for the world's waste.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) said in a statement that all electronic waste, commonly known as e-waste, would be reclassified under the "absolute prohibition" category effective immediately. This removes the discretionary power previously given to the Department of Environment to grant exemptions for the importation of certain e-waste.

Environmental advocates have long urged stronger action. E-waste — discarded electronic products such as computers, phones, and appliances — can contain toxic substances and heavy metals including lead, mercury, and cadmium that pollute soil and water resources if improperly processed or dumped.

"E-waste is no longer permitted," MACC chief Azam Baki said in the statement, vowing "firm and integrated enforcement action" to prevent illegal imports.

Malaysia has previously grappled with large volumes of imported e-waste, much of it suspected to be illegal and hazardous to human health and the environment. Authorities have seized hundreds of containers of



suspected e-waste at ports in recent years and issued notices for return to exporters.

The ban comes as authorities widen a corruption inquiry tied to e-waste management. Last month, MACC detained and remanded the director-general of the environment department and his deputy over alleged abuse of power and corruption involving e-waste oversight. The probe has also seen authorities freeze bank accounts and seize cash linked to the case.

The Home Ministry in a social media post vowed the

**WASTE WOES.** Thai officials show samples of illegally imported electronic waste from the United States, which they say they seized at a Bangkok port, during a press conference in Bangkok, Thailand, in this May 14, 2025 file photo. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lalit, File)

government would bolster efforts to combat the smuggling of e-waste into the country.

"Malaysia is not a dumping ground for the world's waste," it said. "E-waste is not just garbage but a serious threat to the environment, people's health, and national security."

Neighboring Indonesia has also pushed back against attempts to ship toxic electronic waste into the country.

Late last year, the government said it seized more than 70 containers of hazardous e-waste, primarily from the United States, at a port on Batam Island. In January, four of the containers — carrying used computers, hard drives, audio-video devices, modems, power boards, and printed circuit boards — were shipped back to the U.S.

Southeast Asia has become a frequent destination for such shipments after China moved to ban most foreign waste imports beginning in 2018, prompting exporters to seek alternative sites with lower recycling costs and weaker enforcement, though governments in the region have increasingly tightened controls.

## A robotic dog made in China gets an Indian university kicked out of an AI summit

Continued from page 2

China, claiming it was the university's own innovation.

According to two government officials, Galgotias University was ordered to take down its stand at the summit a day after the university's professor of communications, Neha Singh, told state-run broadcaster DD News that robotic dog Orion was developed by the Centre of Excellence at the university.

Internet users, however, quickly identified the robot as the Unitree Go2,

sold by China's Unitree Robotics with a starting price tag of \$1,600 and used widely in research and education.

Singh told reporters she never explicitly claimed the dog was the university's own creation, but only an exhibit.

The incident was an embarrassment for host country India, the two government officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to the media.

A statement from Galgotias said the university was "deeply pained" and described the incident as a "propaganda campaign" that could spread negativity and harm the morale of students working to innovate, learn, and build their skills using global technologies.

Then, in a new statement, the university apologized for the confusion and said Singh, its representative at the AI summit pavilion, was not authorized to talk to the media and was "ill-informed."

"She was not aware of the technical origins of the product and in her enthusiasm at being on camera, gave factually incorrect information," it said.

It wasn't immediately clear if the university had removed its booth from the summit.

Still, the episode underscores the high stakes for India as it tries to cast itself as a global hub for AI and advanced manufacturing, drawing billions of dollars in investments while stressing credibility and local innovation.

The summit kicked off with some organizational hiccups as attendees and exhibitors reported long queues and delays at the venue. Several exhibitors took to social media to complain that their personal belonging and products on display were stolen. Organizers later said the items were recovered and returned.

The India AI Impact Summit, billed as a flagship event in the Global South, is attended by at least 20 heads of state and governments, including French President Emmanuel Macron and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

□

## Thailand uses a birth control to curb elephant population

Continued from page 3

The Department of National Parks, Wildlife, and Plant Conservation carried out the relocation effort, and its director general, Athapol Charoenshunsa, expressed regret over the incident while insisting that protocol was followed properly. He said an investigation was underway to prevent such incidents from happening again.

### Celebrate the Fire Horse!

February 17, 2026 to February 5, 2027



Our Lunar New Year special edition was published on Feb. 2, 2026. To download a copy, visit <[www.asianreporter.com](http://www.asianreporter.com)>.

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# Netflix's "Culinary Class Wars" has transformed South Korea's fine dining scene

By Juwon Park  
The Associated Press

**S**EOUL, South Korea — When South Korean chef Jun Lee opened his restaurant SOIGNÉ in Seoul 13 years ago, explaining what fine dining meant was part of the job.

Customers would ask for à la carte items at his "modern Seoul cuisine" restaurant, which only serves a tasting menu, or question why a meal took so long.

Today Lee finds himself answering different questions — queries about flavor combinations, cooking techniques, and the philosophy behind his dishes.

"Many people either didn't know this culture existed or weren't particularly interested," said Lee, whose restaurant name means "well-made" in French. "But now they're becoming interested, and when they come to dine, the questions they ask — the style of their questions — have more depth."

Chefs and culinary experts say part of the shift is driven by Netflix's cooking competition series "Culinary Class Wars," where Lee recently appeared in the second season.

The unscripted series pits acclaimed "white spoon" chefs — including Michelin-starred restaurateurs — against underdog "black spoon" challengers. The second season of "Culinary Class Wars" debuted at No. 1 on Netflix's Global Top 10 (Non-English TV) list in December, and has remained on the chart for five consecutive weeks. Netflix has officially confirmed a third season.

### Hundreds of thousands of booking requests

Tei Yong, CEO of CATCHTABLE, South Korea's leading restaurant reservation platform, said the show's influence far exceeded entertainment value.

"I never imagined a single TV show could generate this level of interest in gastronomy," Yong told The Associated Press.

In November 2024, after Season 1 aired, Seoul's Metropolitan Government hosted a pop-up event featuring fine dining chefs from the Netflix series. When CATCHTABLE



**SEOUL FOOD.** Chef Jun Lee, top left photo, prepares food for a photo at his restaurant, SOIGNÉ, in Seoul, South Korea. When South Korean chef Lee opened his restaurant in Seoul 13 years ago, explaining what fine dining meant was part of the job. Today Lee finds himself answering different questions — queries about flavor combinations, cooking techniques, and the philosophy behind his dishes. Also pictured is Kim Sung-woon, right photos, the chef and owner of Table for Four.

opened 150 reservations, nearly 450,000 people attempted to book — roughly 3,000 people competing for each spot.

Yong said the interest in gastronomy has "sustained" after the first season. The average booking and waitlist registrations per participating restaurant jumped approximately 303% in the five weeks following Season 2's premiere compared with the five weeks prior, he said.

### Personal transformations

Chef Kim Sung-woon, of Table for Four in Seoul, said that reservations have tripled after the show.

His staff receives roughly 100 phone calls daily — so many they can barely answer while working.

But Kim said his life has changed in other ways, too.

"Customers ask for photos constantly now — I feel like a celebrity," Kim said. "I've received more letters than at any time since my military service. Young fans, even children, write to me."

Born and raised in Taean, a seaside town south of Seoul, Kim grew up farming and once dreamed of becoming a baseball

umpire before stumbling into the restaurant industry. Despite decades in the culinary world, he said he was speechless when he arrived at the Netflix set and saw legendary chefs he'd idolized.

Lee has seen similar changes. Walking down the street, people now ask for photos. Requests for international collaboration have increased significantly.

"Before the show, foreigners made up the majority of our reservations," Lee said. "Now South Korean customers book so quickly that foreign visitors often can't get tables."

### Modern Korean cuisine

The show has proven particularly significant for chefs serving Korean cuisine with fine dining techniques — a category gaining international attention. For Lee, simply adding Korean ingredients doesn't make a dish culturally Korean.

"If you just put kimchi in a dish and say it's inspired by Korean food, does that make it Korean?" he said. "Korean food culture isn't about specific recipes — it's the accumulated lifestyle habits people have created."

Beyond the familiar Korean barbecue

and bibimbap that have come to define Korean cuisine globally, chefs like Lee are reclaiming a more nuanced cultural identity. He draws on French, American, and other techniques learned in New York kitchens. "But because I'm expressing them as a South Korean person living in Seoul, Korean elements naturally come through," he said.

Rather than translating concepts into western terms, Lee keeps them in Korean — beginning with his signature dish, Hanwoo and Banchans — top-quality beef with an array of seasonal Korean condiments and vegetables.

"Side dishes in English suggest something optional. But in Korean culture, without banchan, a meal feels incomplete. The number of banchan signals whether it's an ordinary day or a special occasion — emotions shared by those who live this culture."

### Broader context

The show's success builds on years of groundwork — the South Korean government has actively promoted Korean cuisine globally since the late 2000s.

Jihyung Andrew Kim, a professor in

*Continued on page 7*

## su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

Difficulty level: Easy

#96243

**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 #28197 (Hard)

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

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

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# The Asian Reporter

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**MY TURN**

■ **Wayne Chan**



## When race should (and shouldn't) matter

**W**e don't live in a color-blind country, but much of the time, that's OK.

It's naïve to believe that race doesn't matter. You might even say that it's naïve to believe that race *SHOULDN'T* matter. As far as I'm concerned, race matters — at least for the little things.

There's an example that quickly comes to my mind. I belong to an athletic club, and I am one of the few non-white members there. The group of guys I hang out with are all decent, honorable people, and one thing we have in common is that we like to have a good laugh.

Every summer, we get out on the tennis court and the conversation inevitably leads to recent injuries, and often times, who had a spot burned off their face or arms due to damage from sun exposure.

My typical reaction is, "I dunno guys — you should all try being Asian." I usually get a laugh from the guys with that one. I don't pretend to even understand why, but those with darker skin tones seem to be naturally more resistant to sun damage.

Conversely, my friends may also express mock revulsion when we go out for dim sum and I order chicken feet. They simply can't fathom it. My reply usually has something to do with not understanding the attraction of taking ground beef and vegetables and stuffing it into a bread pan to make a loaf of meat, a la "meatloaf."

What's the point?

That's what I mean with the little things. My friends and I don't really care about our inexplicable affinity for chicken feet and meatloaf, but it makes for a funny conversation.

I know I live in a relatively sheltered world. I live in the suburbs, in a community where people have achieved some level of success and a higher level of education. I am surrounded by people where topics of race are usually relegated to the little things. I am the first to acknowledge that I am fortunate. My friendships continue to be my friendships because

race was never part of the equation.

But for the first time in my adult life, race has become much more about the bigger things. I know it's always been there, but to a far greater extent, for our country as a whole, those who have hate in their hearts for those they consider "others" seem to have found a freedom to voice that sentiment without shame or consequence.

It amazes me that those in power can so easily pit people against each other and allow those who are willing to unleash their inner demons to do so to the detriment of all.

Since the civil rights movement, when Martin Luther King Jr. first proclaimed, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," I've always hoped and believed that to be true. But over the last ten years, it seems that arc is more like a series of peaks and valleys.

The peak is when we start running out of superlatives: Ichiro Suzuki is the first Japan-born player to win an American League MVP award. Bad Bunny is the first Latino artist to headline the Super Bowl halftime show. Barack Obama is the first African American President. Kamala Harris is the first female black and South Asian American Vice President of the United States. When we start running out of firsts, that's a good thing.

A valley is when you start questioning whether the absence of racist remarks or actions in the past was because of ongoing progress of a civil society, or whether such things were held back and just waiting for a more opportune time.

The past year — ICE conducting raids and stopping people without judicial warrants based simply on how people look or speak, while welcoming white South Africans as refugees into our country — is a blunt example of how the current administration is using race as it relates to the biggest things, such as life and liberty.

This November's elections will tell us whether we are still in a valley or whether a peak is just ahead.

*Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.*



# 30 years after Pokémon's release, fans are still trying to catch 'em all

By Jaimie Ding and Liam McEwen  
The Associated Press

**L**OS ANGELES — Benson Lu's life revolves around Pokémon. The 26-year-old has played the mobile game Pokémon Go every day for a decade, watches the animated show every week, goes to the local card shop in his Los Angeles suburb to play the brand's trading card game every week, and has a whopping collection of cards worth more than \$70,000.

"I don't remember when was the last day I did not think about Pokémon at all," he said.

In the 30 years since Pokémon debuted in Japan with the 1996 release of Pokémon Red and Pokémon Green for Nintendo Game Boy, the franchise has taken over the globe with its animated shows, mobile games, and highly coveted trading cards. Its popularity continues with fans young and old.

Pokémon offers a masterclass in character design, which has helped make it so enduring, said Heather Cole, teaching assistant professor of game design and interactive media at West Virginia University.

"I think the longevity of it has to do with the characters and world-building it does with the characters," she said.

## A valuable commodity

It's not just cuteness that has people clamoring for merchandise, particularly trading cards. Today, some are so coveted that social media star Logan Paul sold one for a record \$16.5 million. In Southern California, the fervor around Pokémon cards has led to strings of break-ins in recent months at trading card stores that have amounted to hundreds of thousands of dollars of losses and even some collectors robbed at gunpoint.

Adam Corn, owner of card business



Overdose Gaming Inc, said he was able to buy a house last year from his Pokémon cards.

"Pokémon almost always appreciates in value over time," Corn said. "So it's just a really good place to put your money in my opinion, better than a lot of other assets."

Companies like Beckett Grading Services and Professional Sports Authenticator authenticate and grade the quality of Pokémon cards on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being pristine mint condition and fetching the highest prices. Paul bought the PSA Grade 10 Pikachu Illustrator card a few months prior for \$5.3 million and wore the card on a chain around his neck in videos. It features a Pikachu holding a pen and feather sweeper.

In late February, thieves stole more than \$80,000 of Pokémon cards from Do-We Collectibles in Anaheim — the second time the store has been targeted. Other stores around Los Angeles and in

New York have been hit by Pokémon thieves too.

Duy Pham, owner of the Anaheim store, said the financial incentive of trading cards for robbers and scalpers means "the hobby will never be the same."

"It's rougher for collectors and players," Pham said. "It's hard for us to get anything."

Collectors can either pay retail price for a standard pack of randomized Pokémon cards, around \$5 for 10 cards, or buy the specific card they want secondhand for higher prices. But much like gambling, opening packs doesn't always pan out to profit — Aiden Zeng spent \$1,000 on packs of cards that were only valued at \$60 on the resale market, he said.

Zeng, 17, said his fandom began in elementary school, when he obsessed over character guidebooks. He eventually began trying to collect every single type of card available for his favorite, Black

**POPULAR POKÉMON.** A mobile screen is reflected on a fan's sunglasses while playing "Pokémon Go" in Hong Kong, in this July 25, 2016 file photo. In 30 years, the Pokémon franchise has taken over the globe with its animated shows, mobile games, and highly coveted trading cards. Pokémon offers a masterclass in character design, which has helped make it so enduring, according to Heather Cole, teaching assistant professor of game design and interactive media at West Virginia University. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung, File)

Kyurem.

"I memorized every single Pokémon's specific move set, what region they come from, some of the lore behind it," Zeng said.

## Resurgence of popularity

Even beyond dedicated collectors, Zeng said he has seen a resurgence of popularity for Pokémon at his high school in Toronto, where some students decorate their phone cases with cards featuring special artwork or a holographic sheen.

Pokémon creator Satoshi Tajiri has said he enjoyed catching insects and other small critters in the fields and forests outside the Tokyo suburb where he lived as a child. Those creatures inspired him to make the colorful, fantastical Pokémon of which there are thousands of species today.

While his hobby is lucrative, Lu said the draw for him is still nostalgia for the characters he grew up with and the community he has formed around Pokémon. He prefers not to sell his single cards because he worries he will never be able to find them again.

Lu recently spent an entire Saturday walking around the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, looking for Pokémon on his augmented reality phone game at an event attended by thousands.

"I've liked Pokémon ever since I was a kid," he said. "And I still like it the same amount."

## A nearly blind refugee is found dead after Border Patrol agents drop him at Buffalo doughnut shop

By Michael Hill and Jake Offenhartz  
The Associated Press

**A**nearly blind refugee from Myanmar who disappeared after U.S. Border Patrol agents dropped him off at a Buffalo doughnut shop was found dead on the street five days later, prompting a police investigation and

## Netflix's "Culinary Class Wars" has transformed South Korea's fine dining scene

Continued from page 5

culinary arts and food management at Hanyang Women's University, said entertainment content proved particularly effective in reaching younger audiences.

"The government made genuine efforts for a long time," Kim said. "But Netflix and cultural content — like BTS gaining international recognition — accelerated globalization of Korean food."

The academic observed that fine dining interest has grown particularly among diners in their 20s and 30s, driven by social media culture where dining experiences become shareable content.

## Persistent challenges

Despite the enthusiasm, challenges remain.

Chef Kim pointed to service staff shortages following COVID-19 as a critical industry obstacle. "For fine dining to truly develop, we need service teams to grow alongside chefs," Kim told The AP.

Lee said Korean fine dining chefs now face intense competition in a thriving market.

"If the market hadn't broadened through Netflix and the show like this, it would have been a much more difficult environment," he said.

complaints from city officials that he'd been abandoned without care for his safety.

Nurul Amin Shah Alam, 56, was detained by Border Patrol agents on February 19 after his release from a county jail, but was let go that same day after federal authorities determined he wasn't eligible for deportation.

The agents brought him to a Tim Hortons restaurant north of Buffalo's downtown and dropped him there, authorities and advocates said. His family, which had initially expected him to walk out of jail, wasn't informed he had been released. Shah Alam's lawyer reported him missing to Buffalo police on February 22 after learning that an area immigration detention center didn't have him in custody.

Shah Alam was found dead Tuesday night, February 24, near the downtown sports arena where the NHL's Buffalo Sabres play. It was unclear how he got there from the Tim Hortons, several miles away, or when he died.

The county medical examiner was investigating the cause of death, health officials said. The Buffalo Police Department told reporters that the medical examiner had concluded that the death was "health related" and ruled out exposure or homicide, but the Erie County Department of Health later disputed that account, saying no determination had been made. Detectives were investigating the events leading up to Shah Alam's death, which was first reported by the Investigative Post.

Khaleda Shah, a family friend and spokesperson, said the family wants justice.



"We do not want his death to just go to waste," she said at Shah Alam's funeral. "We want his death to bring awareness to his community, his family, his community at large. We want his name, his story to be a voice for those who are still suffering."

## Mayor blames death in part on "dereliction of duty"

Buffalo's mayor blamed Shah Alam's death at least partly on a "dereliction of duty" by federal agents, saying they shouldn't have left him alone, miles from his home.

"A vulnerable man — nearly blind and unable to speak English — was left alone on a cold winter night with no known attempt to leave him in a safe, secure location. That decision from U.S. Customs and Border Protection was unprofessional and inhumane," mayor Sean Ryan said in a statement.

Ryan said Shah Alam had been wearing orange booties issued by the county holding center, rather than proper shoes suitable for winter weather.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection defended its actions.

"Border Patrol agents offered him a courtesy ride, which he chose to accept to a coffee shop, determined to be a warm, safe location near his last known address, rather than be released directly from the

**DERELICTION OF DUTY.** This image made from video provided by WKBW.com shows a family friend holding a missing person flyer for Nurul Amin Shah Alam, while sitting with other family friends including Khaleda Shah, second from right, and MD Karim, far right, on February 25, 2026, in Buffalo, N.Y. (WKBW.com via AP)

Border Patrol station," it said in a statement. "He showed no signs of distress, mobility issues, or disabilities requiring special assistance."

## Cold and light snow in Buffalo while Shah Alam was missing

During the days Shah Alam was missing, temperatures in Buffalo fell below freezing and light snow fell.

Shah Alam arrived in the United States with his wife and two of his children in December 2024 in search of opportunity for his family, said Imran Fazal, who knows the family and founded a group called the Rohingya Empowerment Community. He had worked in construction for many years previously in Malaysia.

Buffalo police arrested Shah Alam a year ago after an incident that resulted in minor injuries to two officers. He was initially indicted on charges of assault, burglary, and criminal mischief, according to Erie County District Attorney Mike Keane. Prosecutors said he had two metal poles when he approached the officers.

Fazal said the arrest was a misunderstanding based on the language barrier and cultural differences, and that Shah Alam had been taking shelter from the snow near a house at the time. He also said Shah Alam cannot walk properly without a cane. Shah Alam ultimately pleaded guilty February 9 to misdemeanor charges of trespassing and possession of a

Continued on page 8

# Chinese American restaurants question why Chinese cuisine can't get the chef's table treatment

By Terry Tang  
The Associated Press

**S**AN FRANCISCO — Taiwan-born chef George Chen, whose family immigrated to Los Angeles in 1967, remembers vividly how his school lunch of braised pork and Chinese sauerkraut between two pieces of bread was looked at by his classmates.

“Oh, god, what are you eating? That's gross,” Chen recalled during a recent busy lunch hour at his San Francisco restaurant and bar, China Live, on the edge of the nation's oldest Chinatown. “And now everybody wants the braised pork and Chinese sauerkraut. Hopefully, perception of Chinese (food) has now come a long ways.”

The immigrant kid who felt like he had to hide his food has built a reputation for serving Chinese fine dining in the Bay Area. At China Live, Chen is like a circus ringmaster overseeing a dumpling-making station, a stone oven roasting Peking ducks, a noodle station, and a dessert station churning sesame soft serve.

With all this, he hopes to one day revive his upstairs restaurant, Eight Tables, where course-by-course dinners ranged from \$88 to \$188. In addition, he and his wife Cindy Wong-Chen are getting ready to launch a similar concept, Asia Live, in Santa Clara.

The Chens aren't the only ones elevating Chinese cuisine. They're within walking distance of the equally established Empress by Boon, Mister Jiu's, and the newer Four Kings.

Upscale Chinese American restaurants, from San Francisco to New York City, have sprung up in recent years, garnering buzz with their refined tasting menus that soar far beyond Chinese takeout-food staples. Many put special spins on traditional Lunar New Year dishes for the Year of the Fire Horse. Doing creative deconstructions of Chinese foods is part of their culinary hallmark, as many chefs are hungry to showcase their own culture.

But in an industry where diners rarely question high prices of French haute cuisine or Japanese omakase, Chinese restaurateurs often contend with resistance in getting customers to pay fine-dining tabs. Still, these owners and chefs insist their food, labor, and cooking techniques are just as worthy.

“Why shouldn't I?” says Chen about his prices. “Just because we're in Chinatown? Or just because people's perception of Chinese food is that it's only good if it's cheap? It's not true.”

## Being a Chinese chef who gets to cook Chinese

Since husband and wife Bolun and Linette Yao opened Yingtao, named for Bolun's grandmother, in New York's Hell's



**ELEVATED CUISINE.** Sous chef Frank Bonilla cooks House Famous Kung Pao Firecracker chicken at China Live in San Francisco. Taiwan-born chef George Chen, whose family immigrated to Los Angeles in 1967, remembers vividly how his school lunch of braised pork and Chinese sauerkraut between two pieces of bread was looked at by his classmates. The immigrant kid who felt like he had to hide his food has built a reputation for serving Chinese fine dining in the Bay Area. At China Live, Chen is like a circus ringmaster overseeing a dumpling-making station, a stone oven roasting Peking ducks, a noodle station, and a dessert station churning sesame soft serve. Pictured on the right are a miso-glazed pan-roasted Chilean sea bass dish, top, at China Live restaurant, and dumplings, bottom, at the Empress by Boon restaurant in San Francisco. (AP Photos/Jeff Chiu)

Kitchen in 2023, they have been up-front about their mission: “contemporary” Chinese food as an elegant dining concept. Their Michelin-starred restaurant offers a \$150 chef's tasting menu.

“We are trying to break this bias, this boundary of people who only think about like Sichuan food, Cantonese food, the takeout box,” said Bolun Yao, who has nothing but respect for casual Chinese takeout restaurants.

After earning a master's degree in food studies at New York University, Yao knew he wanted “to build a bridge between traditional Chinese and the fine dining scene that New York people are familiar with.”

Emily Yuen, who was a James Beard Award semifinalist last year for her Japanese American fare at Brooklyn's Lingo, is helping Yao achieve his goal as Yingtao's new executive chef. For Yuen, a Chinese Canadian whose culinary education emphasized French cooking, the importance of representation — from who's in the kitchen to what's on the plate — has always stayed with her.

“I want to go back to like, who I am, and kind of explore that,” Yuen said. “I was really like struck by his (Bolun's) mission statement and it just really struck a chord with me of wanting to elevate Chinese culture and Chinese food.”

She is eager to play around with typical recipes like the Cantonese custard egg tart, “dan tat,” with a savory makeover with caviar and quail eggs. “Egg on egg on egg,” Yuen said.

Similarly, Ho Chee Boon, the Michelin-starred chef who transformed the long-

dormant Empress of China in San Francisco into Empress by Boon in 2021, is pushing for Chinese cuisine to be considered fine dining in the U.S. The Malaysia-born restaurateur was accustomed to seeing high-end Cantonese food in China and India.

“I try to do something for the Cantonese cuisine and for the culture as well, for the young people and to know about and for other people to know about it,” said Boon, who has opened a chain of his Cantonese Hakkasan restaurants from Dubai to Mumbai and in the U.S.

“We can try to do something better here,” he said, “and let people come back to Chinatown.”

## Chinese food's stigmatized U.S. history

Chinese culture and food has had its ups and downs when it comes to its reception in the west. More than 200 years ago, Europe highly desired Chinese silks, ceramics, and tea, said Krishnendu Ray, director of NYU's food studies Ph.D. program.

China's defeat by the British in the 19th century Opium Wars led to a view of China “as a poor country,” Ray said. Racist myths that Chinese people and their cuisine were strange and dirty persisted when Chinese railroad laborers came to the U.S. and were segregated to enclaves.

Even today, Asian American restaurants have been impacted by tired stereotypes.

Ray says the rise in an “ethnic” food's prestige tends to correlate with its country of origin rising in economic power. In Michelin's New York City guides — which highlight between 300 and 400



restaurants — Ray found the percentage of Chinese regional cuisine went from 3% to 7% of mentions between 2006 and 2024.

“I think it's wonderful that there are these restaurants now” in Chinatown, said Luke Tsai, food editor for the San Francisco Bay Area PBS station KQED. “It's fine also if you don't think it is worth it. But at the same time, I'm really glad that these restaurants exist.”

## Don't call it “fusion”

Many Chinese chefs want to make it clear they are not serving fusion, or food tinged with Asian influences. Their food is “more East to West rather than West to East,” said Chen, of China Live. Yuen, of Yingtao, agrees that kind of characterization puts the “fusion” in confusion.

“I think fusion food is in a lot of those places where it's dimly lit with the trendy cocktails,” Yuen said. “What we're trying to do is just Chinese.”

What also matters to these chefs is incorporating Chinese cooking techniques and not defaulting to European ones. At Empress by Boon, chef Boon and his staff maintain four wok stations with woks shipped from Hong Kong.

“We want to do exactly everything the same operation,” Boon said. “We want to keep the traditional, but we can look in a modern way.”

Chen takes pride in having an open kitchen where customers can see woks and clay pots being utilized. They represent techniques from various regions of China.

“You actually look at the greater culinary disciplines of China and because you have the space, you can showcase the cuisine,” Chen said. “I think that's really served us well.”

## Nearly blind refugee found dead after Border Patrol agents drop him at doughnut shop

Continued from page 7

weapon and was scheduled to be sentenced in March.

Keane, the district attorney, said he had offered a reduced plea “in the interest of justice.” One factor in the decision was avoiding the mandatory deportation that would result from a felony conviction, he said.

Fazal said the family was able to post bail and went to the county jail February 19 expecting Shah Alam to be freed.

“The family was waiting in the waiting room,” Fazal said. “They were thinking he was just coming out.”

But since federal Border Patrol had lodged an immigration detainer after his arrest, the Erie County Sheriff's Office

followed standard practice and informed the federal agency about his pending release.

Ryan said Shah Alam was initially taken to an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility, which did not take him.

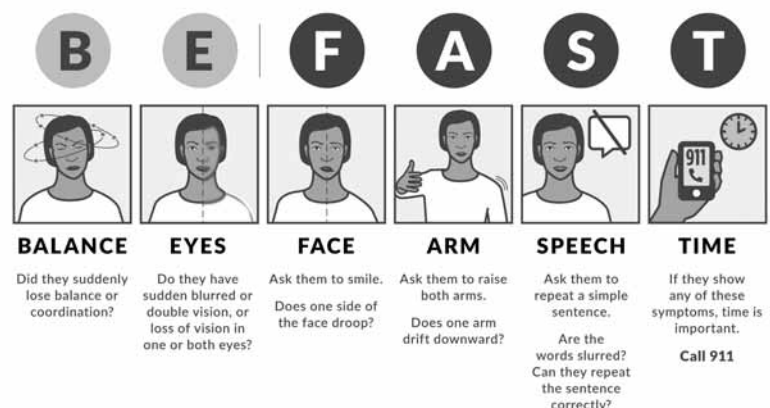
Shah Alam's family searched for him after his attorney was notified about the nighttime drop-off at a Tim Hortons, but could not locate him, said Fazal.

Fazal called it “a complete failure of the system.”

U.S. senator Kirsten Gillibrand sent a letter to federal officials demanding a full accounting of the actions taken by agents. New York Attorney General Letitia James said her office is reviewing its legal options.

## Learn the signs of stroke

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# Japanese American soldiers once branded “enemy aliens” promoted posthumously

By Jennifer Sinco Kelleher  
The Associated Press

**H**ONOLULU — Seven Japanese American soldiers were promoted to officer ranks in a solemn ceremony in January, eight decades after they died fighting for the U.S. during World War II despite having been branded “enemy aliens.”

White flower lei-adorned framed photos of the men were displayed in a Honolulu military memorial park and received salutes as their family members watched from tents shielding them from rain that stopped as the ceremony began.

The seven were students at the University of Hawai‘i and cadets in the Reserve Officer Training Corps, on track to become Army officers, when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. They initially served in the Hawai‘i Territorial Guard, but soon after the attack the U.S. barred most Japanese Americans from service and deemed them enemy aliens.

The seven cadets instead worked with a civilian labor battalion known as the “Varsity Victory Volunteers,” which performed tasks such as digging ditches and breaking rocks, until American leaders in early 1943 announced the formation of a segregated Japanese American regiment. The seven were among those who joined the unit, known as the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

The combat team, along with the 100th battalion comprised of mostly Japanese Americans from Hawai‘i, went on to become one of the most decorated units in U.S. history. Some of its soldiers fought for the Allies even as their relatives were detained in Japanese American internment camps because they were considered a public danger.

“It is important for us to really kind of give back and recognize our forefathers and these veterans that we stand on the shoulders of,” said 1st Sgt. Nakoa Hoe of the 100th Battalion, 442nd Regiment, what the unit is now known as in the Army Reserve. He noted the once-segregated



**POSTHUMOUS PROMOTION.** The top image, a combo image made with photos provided by the U.S. Army Pacific, shows from left to right, University of Hawai‘i ROTC cadets Jenhatsu Chinen, Daniel Betsui, and Howard Urabe, top row, and Hiroichi Tomita, Grover Nagaji, Robert Murata, and Akio Nishikawa, bottom row. Seven Japanese American soldiers were promoted to officer ranks in a solemn ceremony eight decades after they died fighting for the U.S. during World War II despite having been branded “enemy aliens.” In the bottom photo, U.S. Army soldiers stand behind framed photos of former University of Hawai‘i ROTC cadets during a moment of silence during a posthumous commissioning ceremony at Ke‘ehi Lagoon Memorial Park in Honolulu.

they were born in Hawai‘i after its annexation in 1898.

The ceremony capping efforts to honor the men comes amid growing concern that President Donald Trump’s administration is whitewashing American history ahead of the nation celebrating 250 years of its independence. The administration has faced criticism for taking such steps as the recent removal of an exhibit on slavery at Philadelphia’s Independence National Historical Park.

The exhibit about nine people enslaved by George Washington was ordered restored by a federal judge last month. The ruling was announced on Presidents Day, the federal holiday honoring Washington’s legacy.

Last year, the Pentagon said internet pages honoring a Black Medal of Honor winner and Japanese American service members were mistakenly taken down. But it staunchly defended its overall campaign to strip out content singling out the contributions by women and minority groups amid Trump administration opposition to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Honoring the seven isn’t about DEI but recognizing them for their merit and that “they served in the ultimate capacity of giving their lives for the country,” said Lt. Col. Jerrod Melander, who previously led the University of Hawai‘i’s ROTC program as professor of military science.

Melander said he launched the commissioning effort in 2023 during former President Joe Biden’s administration and that the promotions were approved last year during the Trump administration.

The university awarded the men posthumous degrees in 2012.

unit now includes a “multitude of cultures.”

The seven “sacrificed so much at a challenging time when their loyalty to their country was questioned and they even had family members imprisoned,” he added.

The seven men — Daniel Betsui, Jenhatsu Chinen, Robert Murata, Grover Nagaji, Akio Nishikawa, Hiroichi Tomita, and Howard Urabe — died fighting in Europe in 1944. All but Murata were killed during the campaign to liberate Italy from Nazi Germany. Murata was killed by an artillery shell in eastern France.

Murata’s nephew, Todd Murata, 65, grew up hearing about his uncle’s sacrifice. “It’s an honor to be related to one of those people, those men, who volunteered for service,” he said. “After all these years, people still remember them.”

He was among the relatives who watched as the men were promoted to 2nd lieutenant, the rank they would have attained had they completed the ROTC program.

Urabe’s niece, June Harada, said the ceremony helps heal some injustice from the past. “Growing up, even though I wasn’t belittled for my race, there wasn’t a lot of pride,” she said. “It’s nice to have our uncle recognized for this huge sacrifice that he made.”

Even though Hawai‘i was not yet a state, the cadets were American citizens because

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# Kicker, punter come up big for Seahawks in a Super Bowl devoid of early touchdowns

By Kyle Hightower  
AP Sports Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — During a defensive struggle in the first half, the Seattle Seahawks got the consistency and cushion they needed — from their kicker.

Filipino American Jason Myers connected on a Super Bowl-record five field goals, scoring the first 12 points of the game to help the Seahawks pull away for a 29-13 Super Bowl 60 (LX) victory.

Myers connected on kicks of 33, 39, two from 41, and 26 yards. His 17 total points on five field goals and two extra points were also the most by a kicker in Super Bowl history.

“He’s elite,” holder and punter Michael Dickson said. “The attention that goes into the detail with him, it’s really cool to see, and it pays off. And he’s cool to be around. ... He’s got that mentality, and it’s really cool to share this experience with him.”

The 34-year-old Myers, in his 11th NFL season and seventh with Seattle, became the first player to score 200 points in a season, playoffs included. He finished with 206 points, breaking LaDainian Tomlinson’s record of 198 set in 2006.

Dickson said there should have at least been some discussion about Myers winning the Super Bowl MVP award, a honor that has never been bestowed upon a kicker. Running back Kenneth Walker III, who ran for 135 yards and added 26 receiving, was selected the game’s MVP.

“We need multiple MVPs because K9, he went off,” Dickson said of Walker. “He’s incredible.”

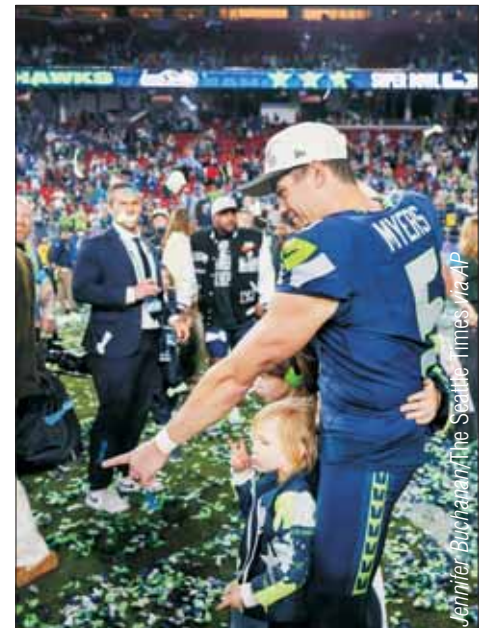
The 30-year-old, Australia-born Dickson also helped put the Seahawks’ defense in



AP Photo/Brynn Anderson



Santiago Mejia/San Francisco Chronicle via AP



Jennifer Bucaram/The Seattle Times via AP

**CRUCIAL KICKS.** Filipino American kicker Jason Myers of the Seattle Seahawks, top left photo, makes a 26-yard field goal during the second half of the 2026 NFL Super Bowl football game against the New England Patriots in Santa Clara, California. Myers connected on a Super Bowl-record five field goals, scoring the first 12 points of the game to help the Seahawks pull away for a 29-13 victory. In the bottom photo, Myers kicks a field goal in the second quarter of the Super Bowl. In the top right photo, Myers gathers with his family in the confetti after the Seahawks defeated the Patriots to win Super Bowl LX.

an advantageous position, dropping three punts inside the 6-yard line.

With Seattle hanging on to a 19-7 lead in

the fourth quarter, Dickson had a 55-yard punt that was downed at the Patriots 4.

New England’s final drive of the game

started at its 6 when Dickson booted a 52-yarder that went out of bounds.

“I mean, this week was no different to any other week in the year,” said Dickson, in his eighth NFL season with the Seahawks. “So, you know, I always want to give my defense the best field position, and it’s cool, you know, hitting it inside a few times, and getting the boys around me was special.”

## At the Olympics and beyond, women’s sports media outlets are writing their own playbooks

By Claire Savage and Alyce Brown  
The Associated Press

Veteran sports columnist Christine Brennan remembers when male colleagues used to laugh at her for insisting on covering women’s sports back in the 1990s.

“It was absolutely infuriating to me,” said Brennan, a best-selling author who served as the first president of the Association for Women in Sports Media.

Now? Entire media outlets dedicated to centering women’s sports are springing up, growing rapidly, and tackling coverage themselves, including in the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympics.

Alongside the historic growth of women’s sports, the women’s sports media ecosystem is likewise flourishing, and outlets like TOGETHXR, The GIST, Just Women’s Sports, The IX Sports, GOALS, and Good Game with Sarah Spain are expanding their reach.

“The male-dominated mainstream sports media totally missed the boat on women’s sports,” said Brennan, a sports columnist at *USA Today* who was covering her 22nd Olympic Games, adding that she is heartened by newer outlets “doing a job that should have been done by mainstream sports media.”

While even mainstream sports media have upped their game by increasing the scale and quality of women’s

sports coverage, University of Michigan sport management professor Ketra Armstrong says the recent influx of women-led outlets is uniquely “liberating” because women athletes are “owning their stories and not waiting for it to be filtered through any traditional lens.”

That’s how Just Women’s Sports got its start. When founder Haley Rosen stopped playing professional soccer, she realized how hard it was to keep up with her sport in the news.

“Everything I was seeing just felt nothing like the world I had known,” Rosen said. “It felt very young, very pink and glitter, a lot of lifestyle content. And I was just like, where are the sports?”

So Rosen built Just Women’s Sports, which started as an Instagram account back in 2020 and has since grown into a prominent industry outlet with brand partners like Nike and Amazon Prime. One of the most important things to her is that women’s sports get covered with the same intensity and seriousness as men’s sports, she says.

“These women are the best athletes in the world, competing at the highest level. And I think we have to treat them as such,” Rosen said.

The GIST, a Toronto-born “fan-first sports media brand,” was created by a similarly frustrated spectator.

Co-founder Ellen Hyslop describes herself as “a super-massive avid sports fan.” But despite watching ESPN SportsCenter every morning, “the default was always, ‘Oh, you’re a girl, so you’re not a sports fan,’ as opposed to just being welcomed into those communities,” she said.

Founded with college friends Jacie deHoop and Roslyn McLarty, Hyslop said The GIST was designed for readers who felt shut out of traditional sports media. Today, the outlet prides itself on providing equal coverage to men’s and women’s sports and reaches roughly 1 million newsletter subscribers — nearly 50% growth over the past two years — most of them Gen Z and millennial women.

“Sports are supposed to be for everyone. They really do have the ability to unite people,” Hyslop said.

Sarah Spain, ESPN veteran and host of daily women’s sports podcast Good Game on iHeart, credits a combination of social media, WNBA star Caitlin Clark, and the women’s national soccer team for accelerating the industry’s growth, pointing to “a very organic and natural push for more women’s sports coverage.”

Spain also noted that media attention is critical for the

success of any professional league, and women’s sports have suffered from the lack of it.

“There was this blaming of the product of women’s sports, without understanding the incredible ecosystem and infrastructure that was lifting up and bringing fans back over and over again to men’s sports,” she said. “Now we’re finally catching up in terms of investment.”

The Olympics have long shown that when women’s sports receive meaningful media attention, they attract an enthusiastic audience, according to Spain, a sports journalist of more than 16 years who was in Italy covering her first-ever Olympics for Good Game.

The Milan Cortina Games were no exception: Skiing star Lindsey Vonn, downhill champion Breezy Johnson, and snowboarding phenom Chloe Kim continued to dominate headlines.

“The Olympics are the shining star for women’s sports coverage that proves if you tell people that there’s value, and you give them the information, and the nuance, and the context to care, that they will be die hard for it,” Spain said.

But while women’s sports media may be growing, it still represents a “very small piece of the pie” when compared to the wider sports media industry, notes Armstrong of the University of Michigan. And Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism professor Craig LaMay cautions that growth doesn’t necessarily signal long-term sustainability, adding that decisions about which sports receive coverage have long been “relentlessly a business decision.”

“For all the changes, there’s a lot of things that haven’t changed,” he said, noting that *Forbes’* annual list of the world’s 100 highest-paid athletes includes no women.

Nonetheless, TOGETHXR, a media and commerce company founded in 2021 by four star athletes, including Olympic halfpipe silver medallist Kim, is leaning into the slogan, “Everyone Watches Women’s Sports.” It’s a nod to the industry’s recent surge as well as a deliberate rejection of “very antiquated rhetoric in women’s sports that no one watches,” said co-founder and chief brand officer Jessica Robertson, whose company has sold more than \$6 million worth in t-shirts, tote bags, and hoodies flaunting the message.

In Robertson’s view, the audience for women’s professional sports has always been there, just “starved and underserved.” Now, she says increased accessibility has

Continued on page 13

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# Alysa Liu walked away from skating. Her fresh outlook when she returned helped her win Olympic gold.

By **Dave Skretta**  
AP Sports Writer

**M**ILAN — Alysa Liu probably cared the least of all the women in figure skating at the Milan Cortina Olympics about winning the gold medal.

Maybe that is why she won it.

The 20-year-old with the striped hair, prominent frenulum piercing, and carefree attitude never showed any worry or strain when she took the ice for her free skate. Instead, Liu waved up at her friends and family in the stands, grinned throughout her program, and acted as if she was going through just another training session at the Oakland Ice Center back in California.

“My family is out there. My friends are out there. I had to put on a show for them,” Liu said afterward. “When I see other people out there smiling, because I see them in the audience, then I have to smile, too. I have no poker face.”

It was all smiles for her crew after Donna Summer’s version of “MacArthur Park” came to a conclusion. Liu earned a score of 226.79 points, sending her surging past silver medallist Kaori Sakamoto and Japanese teammate Ami Nakai, who took bronze.

Liu’s coaches, Phillip DiGuglielmo and Massimo Scali, embraced in a hug, content in knowing that a comeback two years in the making had achieved something incredible: The first women’s figure skating gold medal for the U.S. since Sarah Hughes in 2002.

Liu’s family members stood and cheered, as did the rest of the crowd inside the Milano Ice Skating Arena.

No doubt every official at U.S. Figure Skating, and every member of its Olympic team, also felt a surge of joy. Or relief. It had been a frustrating Winter Games on a number of levels, beginning with some controversial ice dance scoring that denied Madison Chock and Evan Bates the gold medal, and continuing right through Ilia Malinin’s struggles in his free skate earlier in the week.

The only golden moment until that night had been the team event, when Liu helped the U.S. defend its Olympic title.

“If I had a nickel for every gold medal I have here,” Liu joked, “I would have two!”

That’s the kind of “dad joke” only Liu would crack after triumphing on figure skating’s grandest stage.

Four years ago, the daughter of a Chinese immigrant was in a much different mental state. Liu had just finished

*Continued on page 14*

## Alysa Liu dazzles to win figure skating gold, ending a 24-year Olympic drought for U.S. women

By **Dave Skretta**  
AP Sports Writer

**M**ILAN — Alysa Liu had just delivered a near-flawless Olympic free skate, one that left a packed crowd inside the Milano Ice Skating Arena standing and roaring, when a television camera zoomed in on the American star as she was heading off the ice.

“That’s what I’m f—— talking about!” Liu shouted into the lens.

Oh, they’ll be talking about her for quite a while.

The 20-year-old from the San Francisco Bay Area, who walked away from the sport before finding her way back again — and finding herself in the process — delivered the U.S. its first women’s figure skating gold medal in 24 years. She finished with 226.79 points to upstage Japanese teammates Kaori Sakamoto and Ami Nakai, who took silver and bronze at the Milan Cortina Games.

“I think my story is more important than anything to me,” Liu said, her frenulum piercing glinting in the light as she smiled, “and that’s what I will hold dear, and this journey has been incredible, and my life has just been — I have no complaints.”

The moment Nakai’s score was read after the final program of the night, U.S. teammate Amber Glenn jumped into the kiss-and-cry and raised Liu’s hand in triumph. Liu sheepishly turned and applauded the 17-year-old Nakai, who raced over and hugged her.

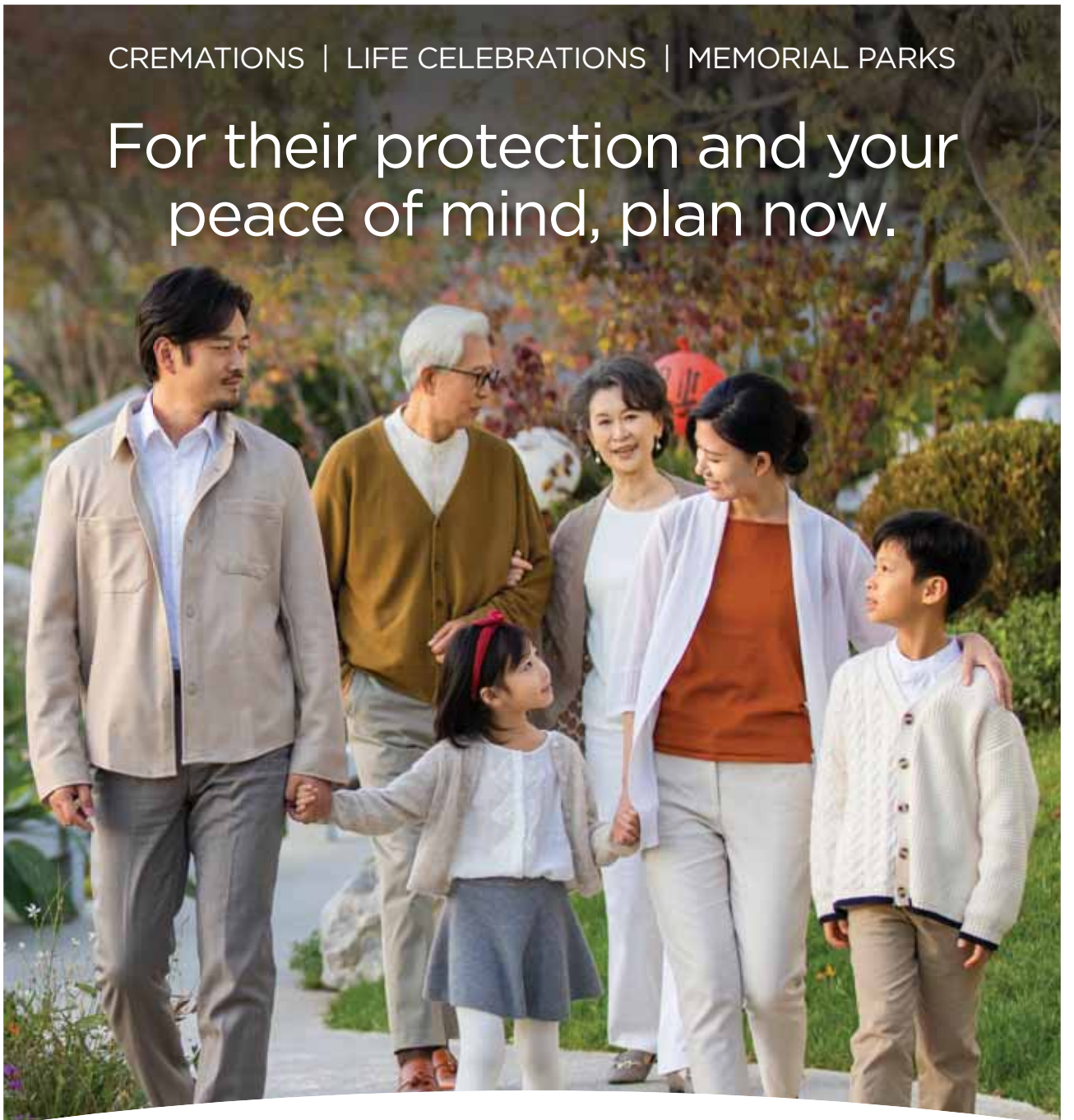
It was the first individual gold medal for an American woman since 2002, when Sarah Hughes stood atop the podium in Salt Lake City, and it was the second gold for Liu at the Milan Cortina Games. She and Glenn helped the Americans win team gold.

“Her story of taking a step back, mental health, I think it really attests to you never know what the journey to success is going to be,” said Glenn, who finished fifth. “I

*Continued on page 12*



**PAUSE PAYOFF.** Alysa Liu of the United States reacts to her score, left photo, after competing in the women’s figure skating free program, right photo, at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy. The 20-year-old with the striped hair, prominent frenulum piercing, and carefree attitude never showed any worry or strain when she took the ice for her free skate.



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# Alysa Liu dazzles to win figure skating gold, ending a 24-year Olympic drought for U.S. women

Continued from page 11

really hope that can reach the skating community, that it's OK to take time."

It was a bittersweet silver medal for Sakamoto, the three-time world champion, who intends to retire after this season. One of the most popular figure skaters of her generation earned a bronze medal four years ago in Beijing and had her heart set on gold. "I'm really regretful," said Sakamoto, who finished with 224.90 points. "I feel like I'm so disappointed, to be honest."

Liu's gold medal, meanwhile, blended right into her glittering gold-sequined dress, only the blue ribbon standing out. And it seemed the perfect complement to the golden stripes running through her dark brown hair, which are meant to resemble the growth rings on a tree.

Liu has done a whole lot of growing up over the years.

She was the youngest U.S. champion ever when she won the first of back-to-back titles at 13 years old. But after finishing sixth at the Beijing Games, Liu was so burned out that she abruptly retired. She spent the next two years doing bucket-list things like climbing up to the base camp of Mount Everest and enrolling at UCLA, where she is studying psychology.

It was on a skiing trip a couple of years ago, when Liu felt the same familiar adrenaline rush she once felt while skating, that she began to think about a comeback. But this time, Liu would be skating on her terms, more carefree and self-assured than she'd been as a child prodigy, when her life revolved around the practice rink.

"I mean, it's just how my life has gone," Liu said, shrugging. "Everything in general has led me to this point."

Even during warmups that night, Liu skated with a grin on her face, never showing any outward signs of pressure. She took the time to wave at friends and family in the stands who had been keeping her out late for dinners, which she called "super fun." "What I was feeling," Liu said, "was happy and confident."

Glenn must have felt the same way a couple of hours earlier. She had to perform long before her friend and teammate following a disappointing short program two nights prior. But Glenn rebounded in spectacular fashion, and her season-best free skate not only gave her a score of 214.91 points but it nearly put her on the podium, too.

Glenn pumped her fist and fought back tears when her score was read, then she took a seat in the new "leader's chair."

"It was nice to watch some great figure skating up close," Glenn said, "but it's also conflicting, because you



**TRIUMPHANT RETURN.** Gold medalist Alysa Liu of the United States, center, jumps on the podium to receive her medal after competing in the women's free skate program in figure skating at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy. Twenty-year-old Liu, who walked away from the sport before finding her way back again — and finding herself in the process — delivered the U.S. its first women's figure skating gold medal in 24 years. Pictured on the left is silver medalist Kaori Sakamoto of Japan and on the right is bronze medalist Ami Nakai of Japan. (AP Photo/Stephanie Scarbrough)

want to stay there but you don't want to wish mistakes on anybody else."

She wound up staying there for quite a while.

Adeliia Petrosian, an 18-year-old Russian competing as a neutral athlete, tried the only quadruple jump during the women's competition but fell on the quad toe loop. She was clean the rest of the way, but the points Petrosian lost on that fall ended up leaving her less than a half-point behind Glenn sitting in the leader's chair.

"I feel a little ashamed," Petrosian said, after taking a few minutes to compose herself, "for myself, for the federation, for my coaches, and for the spectators that it went this way. I understand that it's my own fault."

It wasn't until Mone Chiba — the ninth skater to follow Glenn to the ice — that the three-time U.S. champ was bumped from her spot.

Chiba's stint in the leader's chair didn't last nearly as long.

Liu, who last year captured the first world title by an American woman since 2006, was perfect from her opening triple flip to her closing combination sequence. As the last bits of Donna Summer's version of "MacArthur Park" faded away, and the roar of the fans filled the void, Liu gave a casual flip of her ponytail as if to say, "So what?"

Her coaches, Phillip DiGuglielmo and Massimo Scali, were a little more rambunctious. They punched the air, gave each other a big hug, then headed over to greet their star pupil when she stepped off the ice to await her score.

The score that ultimately would give her an Olympic title and end a long drought for U.S. women.

"I don't need this," Liu said of the gold medal hanging around her neck, "but what I needed was the stage, and I got that. So it was all good, no matter what happened. I mean, if I fell on every jump, I would still be wearing this dress. So it's all good."

## Snowboarder Su Yiming delivers China's first gold of Winter Olympics

By Joseph Wilson  
The Associated Press

LIVIGNO, Italy — Su Yiming sat in the snow at the bottom of the snowboarding course, tears rolling down his cheeks. So close to winning China its first gold at the Milan Cortina Games, he still had a long wait to endure.

Luckily for Su, one by one his rivals either fell or came up short of his winning score.

Another Olympic medal for Su in the Italian Alps, another victory in an incredibly successful and still young career for the former child actor.

Su celebrated his 22nd birthday with a second career gold medal and fourth overall. He was the winner of an error-prone men's slopestyle final, when he was the only one of the 12 finalists to complete his three runs through the course's big rails and tightly bunched jumps without any falls or major errors.

"There's no better gift for myself for my 22nd birthday," Su said. "I'm just really, truly proud of myself."

In the women's slopestyle final, Zoi Sadowski-Synnott became the most decorated snowboarder in Olympic history with her fifth career medal after taking silver behind winner Mari Fukada of Japan.

For Su, the tension seemed almost too much after he failed to improve his best score of 82.41 points on his third run. Knowing that he had left the door open, he wiped his cheeks while watching seven



opponents each take their final shot — and fail to better his mark.

"I just started realizing this is my last run of the Milan Olympics," Su said. "Then I started to realize today was my birthday, my parents are here to supporting me, and my coaches, everybody out here supporting me ... The emotions just came and I just can't help to stop crying."

Moments later, those turned to tears of joy when he stepped onto the top spot on the podium.

Su burst onto the Olympic stage when he won gold in big air and silver in slopestyle at the Beijing 2022 Games. He then took two years off to recover from what he called fatigue. Then came recurrent ankle

injuries that required him to compete with painkillers to get back into form for these games.

He took bronze in big air in Livigno as a prelude to his slopestyle gold.

In Su's words, "It's all paid off."

**Mari Fukada**

In the women's slopestyle final, the 19-year-old Fukada proved unbeatable with a score of 87.83 while fellow Japanese rider Kokomo Murase took bronze.

That brought Japan's massive medal haul at the Livigno snowboarding park to nine, as of February 18, including four golds. Murase added the bronze to her gold in big air.

"I still can't believe it," Fukada said after

**WORTH THE WAIT.** Su Yiming of China competes during the men's snowboarding slopestyle finals at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Livigno, Italy, on February 18, 2026. Su sat in the snow at the bottom of the snowboarding course, tears rolling down his cheeks. So close to winning China its first gold at the Milan Cortina Games, he still had a long wait to endure. Luckily for Su, one by one his rivals either fell or came up short of his winning score. (AP Photo/Lindsey Wasson)

her victorious Olympic debut.

**Sadowski-Synnott sets "insane" record with 5th medal**

Sadowski-Synnott was off the podium when she dropped in for the final's last run and pulled off a big score to grab her record-setting silver.

The 24-year-old New Zealander also won silver in big air at these games, adding to a big air bronze in 2018 and big air silver in 2022. Four years ago in Beijing she became the first Kiwi to win a gold medal at a Winter Games when she triumphed in women's slopestyle.

On hearing of her milestone, she said, "It feels pretty insane, to be honest."

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# Chloe Kim falls short of Olympic three-peat, but passes the torch to a protégé from South Korea

By **Eddie Pells**  
AP National Writer

**L**IVIGNO, Italy — Some might say the seeds of an Olympic-sized surprise in snowboarding were planted more than a month ago. That's when Chloe Kim went skittering down a halfpipe in Switzerland, smashing her shoulder and turning her run for a third straight gold medal into a less-than-perfect scramble.

Kim herself saw it coming years ago. One of her favorite kids and protégés, Gaon Choi of South Korea, kept showing up at halfpipes for practice earlier than anyone else. She kept trying tricks no one else would dare.

Even with Kim at less than 100 percent, and with the halfpipe slowed by a steady light snow that turned that Thursday night into an Italian-Alps postcard, and with the hype, and pressure, of making history hovering over everything — Kim wasn't going to just give it away. Someone would have to take down the sport's best rider.

That person was Choi. The 17-year-old overcame a brutal fall at the beginning of the night to post the highest score in the third and final round. Then, in an even bigger surprise, Kim had a chance to top her, but couldn't.

If the new silver medallist was sad about that, it didn't show.

"She's my baby," Kim said of Choi, who is the same age she was when she won her first Olympic title eight years ago in South Korea. "Now I think I know how my mentors felt when I came on the stage."

## Choi's potential sprouted years ago while Kim tried to rediscover her passion

It was never inevitable that Kim, now 25, would win this contest. Since her last Olympic victory four years ago, Choi and a few other riders from Asia in the final have been steadily upping the difficulty on the halfpipe.

Kim, meanwhile, fell out of love with a sport that was growing too repetitive, too predictable.

"Doing the same thing over and over and winning didn't feel good," she said. "I started to resent snowboarding."

Then, she fell back in love — heartened by the prospect of trying new things. There were double-corks and 1440-degree spins in her repertoire, all ready to be spread out like Christmas presents with the whole world watching when the Olympics came

## Buzz of the Olympics: How drone cams deliver high-pace visuals and add a new dynamic for TV viewers

By **Andrew Dampf and Steve Douglas**  
AP Sports Writers

**C**ORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Standing on a tower overlooking the cliffs of the Cortina downhill course, there was someone who was just as involved in the biggest skiing races of the Winter Olympics as Mikaela Shiffrin and Breezy Johnson.

Martin Bochatay was the drone cam pilot for the money shots inside the iconic Tofana schuss, the narrow chute between two walls of Dolomite rock.

He was part of a team in control of the buzzing machines that were flying right behind Olympians as they went for gold at the Milan Cortina Games, offering stunning and high-pace visuals to TV viewers back home.

"In my mind, I'm not flying a drone. I'm flying with the skiers," Bochatay told The Associated Press before the Olympics. "It's an immersive thing. ... The skiers don't see us. But I'm right there with them. You become the drone."

Drone cams have become ubiquitous in



**SNOWBOARD SHAKEUP.** From left are silver medallist Chloe Kim of the United States, gold medallist Gaon Choi of South Korea, and bronze medallist Mitsuki Ono of Japan celebrating after the women's snowboarding halfpipe finals at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Livigno, Italy. Kim was competing for a third gold medal in the event, but was bested by Choi, one of Kim's favorite kids and protégés. (AP Photo/Lindsey Wasson)

to land in a contest last year and that hardly anyone else can do.

It put her in the lead and when Choi and the rest struggled in Round 2, this looked like it would play out like Kim's other two Olympic victories: A win secured and a chance to put on a show.

With the lead and nobody pushing her, she tried not one, but two double corks in her second run but fell.

It turned out to be her last, best chance.

Choi's winning run in Round 3 was a technically precise marvel. It included three 900-degree spins, all approaching the wall from different directions. The landings were smooth. At the bottom, Choi covered her face with her mittens. A gasp rang out when her score was posted: 90.25 — 2.25 more than the champion.

Right about then, the snow picked up.

And then, about 10 minutes later, came something nobody had seen on an Olympic halfpipe: Kim, the last rider to drop, facing an all-or-nothing run that would be the difference between a dynasty and an upset.

"I noticed the wall started to get a little sticky, but that's part of the competition," Kim said of the intensifying snow. "No excuses here. I should've made that mental note when I made my first" jump of the last run.

Kim didn't make it past her first double cork. She skidded down the halfpipe, bounced back up, dusted herself off, and rode down. She hugged bronze medallist Mitsuki Ono of Japan, then rushed over to Choi to join a swarm of Korean coaches who were hugging the new champion.

"I'm a winner because I was able to persevere and fight through," Kim said.

Even though her protégé got the gold, the former champion said that felt like a win to her, too.

"I'm so damn proud of her," Kim said. "Although we are in an individual sport, it means so much to me to know I've inspired a whole new generation. I'm aware that I can't do this forever."

Associated Press writer Joseph Wilson contributed to this report.

around. The shoulder injury in Switzerland changed all the math. It cut down on Kim's practice time. It made her vulnerable, questionable. She wore a brace on the shoulder. She revealed she would need surgery when she returns home.

"It was really scary for me to come back," she said. "I was telling my coach and my therapist, I wished I'd fallen doing a trick, because when I do a trick, I know I can fall. However, when I dislocated my shoulder, I was in the flat bottom, and for some reason, I was so scared of riding through the damn flat bottom."

## Snowboarding still looking for an Olympic three-peat

The strain on Kim's psyche and her limited practice time certainly played a role in all this.

Then, there's snowboarding itself.

That week at the Livigno Snow Park, two other women had a chance to become the first snowboarders to three-peat for the first time since the sport joined the games back in 1998.

Ester Ledecka, the world's best in parallel giant slalom, flamed out early in her contest.

Anna Gasser watched a new generation of leapers beat her in big air.

Four years ago, the bad vibes from COVID-19 put a damper on Jamie Anderson's attempt in slopestyle.

In 2014 in Russia, Shaun White tried for his own three-peat and failed.

He, along with Kim's boyfriend, Myles Garrett, and Snoop Dogg, wearing a USA jacket with Kim's face plastered on the

front, were at the bottom of the pipe, waiting to watch some history.

An hour after the contest, White, who has seen a lot over the years, was still trying to sort out what happened.

"It's a wild sport," he said. "You can get injured. Someone can learn a new trick overnight. There's a lot of variables. It's never a sure thing."

It did not, in White's eyes, diminish Kim's impact on snowboarding.

"She's a legend. She's got two golds. She's no stranger to pressure. It just wasn't her night, I think," he said.

## What seemed like a sure victory turned into a wild surprise

But it sure did start out as her night. Choi, whose "1" on her bib signified her ranking on the points list this season, was widely viewed as the biggest threat to a Kim dynasty.

But on her first run, she lost her bearings on a leap above the halfpipe and her board slammed harshly on the deck. Her knees collapsed and she skidded limply to the bottom. The music stopped and the festive crowd fell silent.

About five minutes passed and a stretcher came out. But suddenly, Choi popped up and rode to the bottom.

"I cried and clenched my teeth and started walking and felt the energy came back into my legs," Choi said. "I thought, I can keep trying and I could get back into these games."

Kim's first run, meanwhile, was a technical masterpiece that included a Cab double-cork 1080. That's two flips with a twist, a trick she became the first woman

## At the Olympics and beyond, women's sports media outlets are writing their own playbooks

Continued from page 10

translated to record engagement and viewership. TOGETHXR reaches more than 4 million users across platforms, a 17% increase from 2024, according to Robertson. It produces newsletters, docuseries, and podcasts, including "A Touch More" with Olympic champion and co-founder Sue Bird and soccer star Megan Rapinoe.

Streaming platforms — Netflix, Amazon, Apple among them — are also creating more opportunities to consume women's sports in an industry no longer

tethered to traditional linear television networks, according to Danette Leighton, CEO of the Women's Sports Foundation. But the work towards building that growth started many years ago.

"It takes generations to make generational change," said Leighton, whose own organization was founded by Billie Jean King in 1974, two years after the passage of landmark equality law Title IX. "This is really a tipping point."

The Associated Press' women in the workforce and state government coverage receives financial support from Pivotal Ventures. AP is solely responsible for content.



**HIGH-PACE VISUALS.** A drone follows Lin Qinwei of China during a men's skeleton training session at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy. Drone cams have become ubiquitous in showcasing the speeds and angles of Winter Olympians. (AP Photo/Aijaz Rahi)

showcasing the speeds and angles of skiers, lugers, snowboarders, ski jumpers, and other Winter Olympians at the games.

"The skill of those drone pilots is just phenomenal," U.S. bobsledder and flag bearer Frank Del Duca said. "It gets a really unique perspective."

Viewers have noted the humming noise coming from the machines, sparking the

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Space reservations due: Wednesday, April 1 at 1:00pm

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# Eileen Gu in tears after defending her Olympic halfpipe title, learning of her grandmother's death

By Pat Graham and Eddie Pells  
AP Sports Writers

**L**IVIGNO, Italy — By taking chances, Eileen Gu is building a sport. She's winning medals. Yet on a sunny Sunday at the Olympics where she defended her title on the halfpipe, maybe the best prize of all was knowing her grandma would be proud.

That's why her tears flowed freely. Not long after the victory gave her a record-breaking third Olympic gold medal in freeskiing, Gu learned her grandmother, Guozhen Feng, had died.

"She was a steamship," Gu said. "This woman commanded life, and she grabbed it by the reins, and she made it into what she wanted it to be."

It's the way Gu, the 22-year-old — born in America but competing for her mother's homeland of China — likes to approach skiing, school, life, and everything she touches.

"She inspired me so much," Gu said. "The last time I saw her before I came to the Olympics, she was very sick, so I knew that this was a possibility. I didn't probably say that I was going to win, but I did promise her that I was going to be brave. She's been brave."

## Gu knows she has naysayers and knows what to say to them

Gu has had to exhibit a certain amount of bravery, too, over her young life.

There's bravery on the mountain, where she puts her health (and her life) on the line with every jump. Then, there's the will of steel she needs to deal with her world off the slopes.

Barely a day has passed at either of her two Olympics when Gu doesn't get asked about the country she competes for almost as often as her freeskiing.

Not a day passes, either, where she



doesn't lean into the same message she's been delivering for years: "If people disagree with me, if they have other skill sets, which I'm sure they do, then I encourage them to direct it elsewhere," she said. "To make the world better in their own way."

At her post-victory news conference, the well-spoken Stanford student handled all the questions — about geopolitics, her brain power, the future of skiing — head-on, but always bringing the conversation back to the reason she has captivated an audience in a sport that doesn't always do that.

"The difficulty of competing in three events, making finals in three events," she said. "I had to compete six times. I kind of liken it to a marathon, with the pace of a 100-meter dash. ... I took a big risk in trusting myself, and I'm glad that I did."

By trusting, and winning, Gu has become the most decorated freeskiier in the short history of the sport at the Olympics.

Beyond the medals, she is growing the

sport. She cited a Chinese government study saying more than 300 million people in China have tried snow sports for the first time since she captured her three medals there at the last Olympics.

"There are girls in China whose lives are going to be touched by the beautiful and wonderful power of sport," Gu said. "That, in and of itself, is absolutely measured impact that I think I had always wanted."

## A life after skiing focused on "global beneficial impact"

Asked what her life after skiing might entail, Gu stayed with the broad theme of "global beneficial impact" but said her pillars right now remain skiing, sports, and fashion. She planned to be at a fashion show in Milan.

Things could change down the road.

"I think it's more assessing your individual skill set and trying to say, 'OK, what is the way that I can as a person do the most good in the world?'" Gu said. "Right now, I'm young. I'm energetic."

## Competitors catching up?

Indeed, when Liu launched a comeback two years ago, she did it her way. She would only spend as much time at the practice rink as she wanted. She would be involved in every decision when it came to designing her programs. She even had a say in her dresses, with her favorite being the glittering gold ensemble that fit the moment so perfectly that night.

"Honestly, it was more than just work, it was experience," Liu said. "The last time I was skating, it was so rough. I genuinely can't begin to start on it. It took a lot to get to this point, and studying psychology has really helped. I love psychology."

"All I want in my life is human connection and, damn, now I am connected with a hell of a ton of people."

That includes women like Tenley Albright, who won Olympic gold at the 1956 Cortina d'Ampezzo Games, and was

**HIGHS & LOWS.** Eileen Gu of China competes during the women's freestyle skiing halfpipe final at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Livigno, Italy, on February 22, 2026. Gu earned a record-breaking third Olympic gold medal in freeskiing at the Winter Games. (AP Photo/Julia Demaree Nikhinson)

She'll need it.

The example she has set for skiing has made this a better sport. Four years ago, when Gu closed out those Olympics with a gold on the halfpipe, there was a tinge of resignation among the other skiers. "A machine," Canada's runner-up Cassie Sharpe said back then. And American Carly Margulies agreed that Gu was skiing at "a level that's pretty unattainable for a lot of us."

Now, there's a sense they're catching up. Britain's bronze medallist Zoe Atkin actually jumped higher out of the halfpipe than Gu. China's Li Fanghui finished second and had she tried six tricks instead of five, who knows what might have happened?

"She's a great skier, and she raises the level for everyone else," said Canada's Amy Fraser, who finished fourth and is the lone skier to beat Gu over the past four years. "But she's not unbeatable."

In a way, that's exactly what Gu wants.

"If I went to a middle school and beat everybody at freestyle, it's not exciting for anybody, right?" she explained.

Once her news conference was over, she exited out a side door then climbed a grandstand for a few more pictures, a few more hugs. Her grandma didn't see this victory. But Gu couldn't have done it without her.

"That's why I keep referring to this theme of betting on myself and being brave and taking risks," Gu said. "It actually goes back to that promise I made my grandma. I'm really happy that I was able to uphold that and hopefully do her proud."

## Alysa Liu walked away from skating. Her fresh outlook when she returned helped her win Olympic gold.

Continued from page 11

sixth at the Beijing Games as a 16-year-old prodigy, but she might as well have finished last. She was so burned out by figure skating that her prevailing thought after that Olympic free skate was relief that it was over, rather than pride in what she had accomplished.

She was the kid who'd get dropped off at the rink in the morning and picked up at night. Her childhood revolved around practice, and not of her own choosing. When she became the youngest U.S. champion at 13, and defended her title the following year, it only upped the ante among those who saw her following in the footsteps of Kristi Yamaguchi, Michelle Kwan, and Tara Lipinski.

Liu was trying to fit the mold that everyone wanted for her.

So, she quit. Walked away. Abruptly decided to retire after the Beijing Games, leaving all of that mental strain behind her.

For two years, Liu did what she wanted, which had little to do with skating. She went on backpacking trips with friends and began studying psychology at UCLA. She got the frenulum piercing that shows across her front teeth when she smiles. In short, she became her own person, one whose individualism has made her a hero to the alt, emo, and punk crowd.

She broke just about every mold for a figure skater.

"I love that Alysa is showing the entire world, and especially our skating world, that there is more than one way to win," said Johnny Weir, the two-time Olympian, who along with Lipinski called her free skate for NBC.

## Buzz of the Olympics: How drone cams deliver high-pace visuals and add a new dynamic for TV viewers

Continued from page 13

question: Is it putting off the Olympians in the biggest moment of their lives? Norwegian downhiller Kajsa Vickhoff Lie said that's not an issue.

"No, you just maybe hear them on the start, but you don't hear them when you ski," she said.

### The drones are tiny and zoom beyond 100 mph

Drone cams made an inauspicious impact on Alpine skiing 11 years ago when a primitive, massive machine came crashing down from the sky and nearly smashed into Austrian great Marcel Hirscher during a slalom race.

These days, the drones are agile, tiny — they weigh around half a pound (250 grams) — and can easily accelerate to speeds beyond 100 mph (more than 170 kph).

In all the sports, there are rules preventing the drones from overtaking the athletes, and they must keep a safe distance behind the competitors.

### Pitch, roll, and yaw: How to fly a drone

The drones actually contain two cameras. There's a high-quality camera for broadcast purposes that is

actually controlled by the TV production unit in a truck below the course.

"They can adjust whether it's too bright, the balance, without us doing anything," Bochatay said.

Then there's a lower-quality camera that the pilots use to see where they are going. Those are the images that the pilots see in the goggles they wear to fly the drones.

The pilots have a remote control that requires two hands to hold, and contains two main switches to input the flying commands of pitch (front-to-back), roll (side-to-side), and yaw (vertical axis); plus throttle (up/down or altitude control).

"There's always these four," Bochatay said. "It's not like you move one then the other. It's everything at the same time."

There's also a low-tech issue: the batteries for the drones need to be changed constantly — and kept in warming cases due to the cold temperatures — requiring a "pit stop crew" to quickly sub in new batteries between runs.

### Flying footage can be "nauseating" but beautiful

Two things were important to Olympic broadcasting officials: Showing off both the beauty of the venues and the point of view of the athlete.

And the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is delighted with the results as they look to bring viewers closer to the action. Maybe too close.

"Looking at the screen in the downhill, I almost feel motion sickness," said Pierre Ducrey, the IOC's sports director. "That's how much we are able to project ourselves thanks to this new way of broadcasting the sport."

U.S. bobsledder Elana Meyers Taylor agreed.

"I'm not concerned about the drone or anything like that," she said, "but I will say I was watching the luge footage the other day and I was like, 'This is slightly nauseating.' I don't know if I could watch this all the way down the run."

Lie, the Norwegian skier, likes how the drones showcase a key aspect of skiing: It's cool to see the speed a little bit more for the spectators."

AP Sports Writer Tim Reynolds contributed to this report.

# Alpine skier Tallulah Proulx becomes the first Filipina to compete at the Winter Olympics

By Andrew Dampf  
AP Sports Writer

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Tennis player Alexandra Eala was a fan favorite at the Australian Open. Gymnast Carlos Yulo won two gold medals at the Paris Olympics.

And now Alpine skier Tallulah Proulx has become the first female athlete from the Philippines to compete in the Winter Olympics — and at 17, the youngest ever from the Southeast Asian country.

“This is a new era for the Philippines and sports on the global stage and I really am grateful that I get to be a part of it,” the U.S.-born Proulx said as she finished 50th in the slalom at the Milan Cortina Games after carrying her country’s flag during the opening ceremony.

She was 52nd in the giant slalom.

Proulx grew up skiing at the Sierra Tahoe resort in California, then moved at age 7 to Iowa and raced at tiny Sundown Mountain before moving on Colorado and then settling in Park City, Utah, where she now resides.

Proulx’s father is from the Eastern Samar province in the Philippines’ Eastern Visayas region.

“And I have a lot of relatives, family back there, and honestly the response has been so heartwarming,” Proulx said. “Filipinos are just such warm and welcoming people. ... I think that’s what makes us really strong and I’m so grateful that I get to be the first Filipina because I show that others can follow in my footsteps and hopefully get more involved into winter sports, which I know is quite hard in the Philippines.”



AP Photo/Abbie Parr



AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty

**PINOY PRIDE.** Athletes from the Philippines, left photo, walk during the Olympic opening ceremony at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Livigno, Italy, on February 6, 2026. Alpine skier Tallulah Proulx has become the first female athlete from the Philippines to compete in the Winter Olympics — and at 17, the youngest ever from the Southeast Asian country. In the right photo, Proulx speeds down the alpine ski course during the women’s slalom race in Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy, on February 18, 2026.

Proulx was slated to visit the Philippines for the first time a few years ago before her trip got cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, she has immersed herself in the country’s culture, thanks to her grandmother.

“Me and my brother grew up with her cooking — all of course the delicious

Filipino food and sharing her culture,” Proulx said. “Unfortunately, last year she passed away. ... I really wanted to push for this and wanted to represent such an important part of my heritage, both for her and for myself.”

In Cortina, Proulx traded pins with American slalom standout Paula Moltzan

and got a picture with slalom gold medallist Mikaela Shiffrin.

“It’s amazing being around these people that I’ve looked up to my whole life,” she said, “and then realize I’m skiing that course next.”

Next up for Proulx: a trip to the Philippines.

## Japan’s Traditional kimono are being repurposed in creative and sustainable ways

Continued from page 20

traditional Japanese instruments koto and shamisen, often performs wearing flashy dresses made of recycled kimono. The idea of sustainability is deeply rooted in Japanese culture, she says, noting that the ivory and animal hide used in her musical in-

struments are now hard to obtain.

She calls it “the recycling of life.”

“The performer breathes new life into them,” says the New York-based Kaneko.

“In the same way, a past moment — and those patterns and colors that were once loved — can come back to life.”

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## Events calendar

### “New Years All Year Round”

Currently on display, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). View “New Years All Year Round,” a fun, family-friendly exhibit that looks at the origins of New Year traditions, colors, cuisine, and more, including lion dances, drums, and firecrackers. The display features new works from artist Nina Vichayapai, new community-submitted stories, and a refresh honoring the Year of the Fire Horse. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

### Lunar New Year at Lan Su

Through Mar 8 (daily), 10am-4pm, Lan Su Chinese Garden (239 NW Everett St, Portland). Ring in the Lunar New Year — the Year of the Horse — with lion dances, cultural performances, festival decorations, family craft activities, and more at Lan Su Chinese Garden. On the weekend (March 7 & 8), there are performances at noon & 2:00pm; family crafts from 10:00am to 3:00pm; and lion dances at 1:00pm & 3:00pm. On March 6, a mini horse meet & greet takes place from 11:00am to 1:00pm. Another highlight of the celebration is Music + Lantern Viewing Nights, which are held from 5:30pm to 7:30pm between March 4 and 8 (separate admission tickets are required). For info, or to obtain a complete schedule of activities, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 228-8131 or visit <www.lansugarden.org>.

### Young Dragon: A Bruce Lee Story

Through Mar 22, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Eve Alvard Theatre (201 Thomas St, Seattle). Watch *Young Dragon: A Bruce Lee Story*, a play that traces the life of Bruce Lee and reveals the man behind the legend. The action-packed, soul-searching story follows the Young Dragon as he navigates a new country and finds his voice. Through movement, magic, and heart, viewers meet the human behind the icon — flawed, fierce, and full of possibility. Bruce learns to clear his brain by mimicking the white noise of water and begins fusing martial arts with philosophy. From street fights in Hong Kong to teaching self-defense and chasing big dreams, his journey reminds everyone that finding your way means first figuring out who you are. *Young Dragon: A Bruce Lee Story* shows how Seattle shaped Bruce into a flexible, fluid, and flowing master — and also how he reshaped the world. The show runs approximately 75 minutes with no intermission. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 441-3322, e-mail <tickets@sct.org>, or visit <www.sct.org>.

### “Roots and Resilience — Chinese American Heritage in Oregon”

Through Mar 29, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Museum of Natural and Cultural History (1680 E 15th Ave, Eugene, Ore.). View “Roots and Resilience — Chinese American Heritage in Oregon,” an exhibit that explores how Chinese immigrants helped shape Oregon history. The display traces Chinese American communities across the state, showcasing artifacts recovered from archaeological digs at sites such as the Ah Heng mining site in the Malheur National Forest and a historic shop and restaurant in Eugene. Objects on view highlight the craftsmanship and expertise of Chinese workers who played vital roles in Oregon’s railroad, mining, and canning industries. For info, call (541) 346-3024 or visit <https://natural-history.uoregon.edu>.

### “Lay Your Burden Down”

Through Apr 13, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Seattle Asian Art Museum (SAAM) (1400 E Prospect St, in Volunteer Park, Seattle). View “Lay Your Burden Down,” an installation created by artist Carina del Rosario, recipient of the 2025 Constance W. Rice Fellowship. The original piece, which was commissioned by the museum, is on view at SAAM through April 13, 2026. The installation is a communal act of care — a community-based project that invited people to share their burdens, convened sewing circles to tend and bolster those burdens, and then turned the embroidered pieces into pillows that are on display on a luxurious hammock. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 654-3210 or visit <www.seattleartmuseum.org>.

### “Anila Quayyum Agha: Geometry of Light”

Through Apr 19, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Seattle Asian Art Museum (1400 E Prospect St, in Volunteer Park, Seattle). View “Anila Quayyum Agha: Geometry of Light,” a display that invites viewers to become part of the art. Agha, a Pakistani American artist, animates spaces with her large-scale sculptural installations. Suspended from the ceiling, the steel cubes are laser-cut with intricate designs that project geometric shadows onto the visitor. She draws on both the light and dark of her own life, using South Asian art practices to convey the gender discrimination she faced growing up as a young girl in Pakistan. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 654-3210 or visit <www.seattleartmuseum.org>.

### “Minidoka on Our Minds”

Through June 14, 10am-4pm (Wed-Sat), 11am-4pm (Sun), Japanese American Museum of Oregon at the Naito Center (411 NW Flanders St, Portland). View “Minidoka on Our Minds,” an exhibit celebrating 25 years of preservation of the Minidoka National Historic Site, where many Nikkei from Oregon and Washington were forcibly incarcerated during World War II. The display features artwork by survivors, descendants, and Japanese American youth that highlight the park’s history and its importance as a site of memory. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 224-1458 or visit <www.jamo.org>.

### “The Yasui Family: An American Story”

Through Sep 6, 10am-5pm (Mon-Sat), noon-5pm (Sun), Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). View “The Yasui Family: An American Story,” a display that tells the story of the Yasui family, who were among the millions of immigrants who came to the United States seeking new opportunities during the late 1800s and early 1900s. They established roots in Oregon, started families and businesses, and shaped the social and economic fabric of the communities where they lived. Following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, the U.S. government forcibly removed more than 110,000 Japanese Americans — including U.S. citizens — from their homes and imprisoned them in internment camps, often in harsh, remote areas. After the war, many members of the Yasui family returned to Oregon, although some incarcerated chose not to



**MINIDOKA ON OUR MINDS.** The Block 22 barracks are seen at the Minidoka National Historic Site. “Minidoka on Our Minds,” an exhibit celebrating 25 years of preservation of the Minidoka National Historic Site, where many Nikkei from Oregon and Washington were forcibly incarcerated during World War II, is on view through June 14 at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in northwest Portland. (Photo/Stan Honda, courtesy of the National Park Service)

return home due to persistent racism in their communities. While the Yasui family endured racism and incarceration, they also shared a commitment to equal justice through engagement with the local, state, and national forces that determined — and withheld — their civil rights. Through photographs, personal journals, documents, and objects, the exhibit explores how one Japanese American family’s story reflects the complexity of the American story. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <www.ohs.org>.

### “From Highway 101: Images of Oregon’s Most Iconic Highway”

Through Sep 20, 10am-5pm (Mon-Sat), noon-5pm (Sun), Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). View “From Highway 101: Images of Oregon’s Most Iconic Highway,” an exhibit highlighting how Oregon’s Highway 101 is more than a road. The stretch connecting California to Washington runs through breathtaking vistas of the Pacific Ocean, where rocky shorelines neighbor green forests, and vibrant communities are connected by the major thoroughfare — from Astoria to Brookings. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 101 being designated a federal highway. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <www.ohs.org>.

### Lunar New Year Dragon Dance Parade & Celebration

Mar 7, 10am-1pm, Portland Chinatown (NW Davis St & 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 10:00am in Chinatown with lion dancers, drummers, performances, and a 150-foot dragon, followed by a parade (11:00am to 12:30pm) that marches under the China Gate and through downtown Portland along SW Third Avenue to SW Jefferson & Park St, then ends at the Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). Plucking of the greens occurs at select locations along the parade route. 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>.

### Hina Matsuri & Cherry Blossoms Storytime

Mar 7, 10:30-11am, Portland Japanese Garden (611 SW Kingston Ave, Portland). Attend a community storytime celebrating Japanese culture and the power of nature to spark curiosity and wonder. The storytime theme for March honors the strength and creativity of girls in celebration of Hina Matsuri (Girl’s Day) and anticipates the arrival of cherry blossoms in the weeks ahead. The event features a selection of stories aimed at children between three and eight years old, but all ages are welcome. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 223-1321 or visit <www.japanesegarden.com>.

### Lone Fir Cemetery art engagement event

Mar 7, 2:30-4:30pm, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (317 NW Davis St, Portland). Members of the community are invited to attend a free art engagement event with artists working on the memorial project at the historic Lone Fir Cemetery in southeast Portland. The artist team — Qi You and Sophia Xiao-fan Austrins — aim to build upon previous engagements. Opportunities to make offerings out of clay and listening to community input about the special approaches to the east entrance are the current focus. For info, call (503) 797-1700, e-mail <lonefirgarden@oregonmetro.gov>, or visit <www.oregonmetro.gov/lonefirgarden>.

### Chamber Music Northwest

Mar 7, 7:30pm, The Old Church (1422 SW 11th Ave, Portland). Watch violinist Soovin Kim and pianist Ieva Jokubaviciute perform three of Beethoven’s most profound sonatas as part of Chamber Music Northwest’s (CMNW) current season. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 294-6400 or visit <www.cmnw.org>.

### Portland Timbers

Mar 7 & 22; Mar 7 at 7:30pm; Mar 22 at 1:30pm; Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch the Portland Timbers take on the Vancouver Whitecaps (March 7) and the L.A. Galaxy (March 22) in Major League Soccer action. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.portlandtimbers.com>.

### Japanese American Remembrance Trail Tour

Mar 7 & 14, Apr 11 & 18, 11:30am-1pm, Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). Learn about the history of Seattle’s Japantown — Nihonmachi — at a Japanese American Remembrance Trail Tour. The approximately one-mile walking tour introduces participants to Nihonmachi in the early 1900s — stretching from 4th Avenue South to 23rd Avenue South — which was a bustling enclave of family homes and independently owned shops, grocery stores, and entertainment venues. In the aftermath of Pearl Harbor came Executive Order 9066 in 1942, which forcibly imprisoned all persons of Japanese ancestry into incarceration camps during World War II. Nihonmachi never fully recovered. The tour takes visitors through Nihonmachi past and present. General admission to the museum is included with a tour ticket purchase. For info, or to book a tour, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

### “Enduring Impressions: Contemporary Woodblock Prints”

Mar 7-June 15, 10am-5:30pm (Wed-Mon), Portland Japanese Garden (611 SW Kingston Ave, Portland). View “Enduring Impressions: Contemporary Woodblock Prints,” an exhibit featuring the art of mokuhanaga, a Japanese style of woodblock printmaking that uses wood, water-based pigments, and paper made from plant fibers. The display reveals how the centuries-old tradition is experiencing a contemporary revival as artists around the world use the quiet power and unique characteristics of woodblock printmaking to create captivating works of art. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 223-1321 or visit <www.japanesegarden.com>.

### Portland Timbers 2

Mar 8 & 23; Mar 8 at 1pm; Mar 23 at 7pm; Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch Portland Timbers 2 (T2), the Timbers’ MLS NEXT Pro affiliate, take on Whitecaps FC 2 (March 8) and Ventura County (March 23). Attendance to T2 games is free. Tickets (required) are available through SeatGeek. For info, or to reserve tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.timbers.com/t2>.

**Winter Season**  
10am-2pm on Sundays  
@ SE Stark & 76th

November-December 21:  
Every Sunday

January 4-April:  
Every other Sunday

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Sign up for text reminders

# Events calendar

Continued from page 16

## Michael Luo

Mar 10, 7pm, Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall (1037 SW Broadway, Portland). Listen to Michael Luo, an executive editor at *The New Yorker*, as part of the Mark O. Hatfield Lecture Series. The series brings together our nation's top historians and award-winning authors for thought-provoking evenings of history. Luo published his first book, *Strangers in the Land: Exclusion, Belonging, and the Epic Story of the Chinese in America*, in April 2025. It tells the story of a people who, beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, migrated by the tens of thousands to a distant land they called Gum Shan — Gold Mountain. Americans initially welcomed these Chinese arrivals, but, as their numbers grew, horrific episodes of racial terror erupted on the Pacific coast. In a captivating debut, Luo follows the Chinese from these early years to modern times, as they persisted in the face of bigotry and persecution, revealing anew the complications of our multiracial democracy. The lobby opens at 6:00pm and the theatre opens at 6:30pm. For info, or to purchase in-person or virtual tickets, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <[www.ohs.org/events/michael-luo.cfm](http://www.ohs.org/events/michael-luo.cfm)>.

## The Notebook

Mar 10-15, Keller Auditorium (222 SW Clay St, Portland). Watch *The Notebook*, a musical based on the best-selling novel that inspired the iconic film, *The Notebook*. The show, which uses flashing lights, periods of darkness, and theatrical haze, tells the story of Allie and Noah, both from different worlds, who share a lifetime of love despite the forces that threaten to pull them apart. The production, which is presented by Broadway in Portland and is recommended for attendees age 10 and above, runs 2 hours, 20 minutes with one intermission. For info, showtimes, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 248-4335, or visit <[www.portland5.com](http://www.portland5.com)> or <[www.broadwayinportland.com](http://www.broadwayinportland.com)>. To learn more, visit <[www.notebookmusical.com](http://www.notebookmusical.com)>.

## Gem Faire

Mar 13-15, Mar 20-22 & Mar 27-29; noon-6pm (Fri), 10am-6pm (Sat), 10am-5pm (Sun); Mar 13-15, Westside Commons (801 NE 34th Ave, Hillsboro, Ore.); Mar 20-22, Washington State Fair Event Center (110 9th Ave SW, Puyallup, Wash.); Mar 27-29, Lane Events Center (796 W 13th Ave, Eugene, Ore.). Browse an assortment of jewelry, beads, crystals, gemstones, minerals, fashion accessories, and more at Gem Faire. Jewelry repair, cleaning services, and ring sizing are also available. For info, call (503) 252-8300 or visit <[www.gemfaire.com](http://www.gemfaire.com)>.

## DisOrient Asian American Film Festival

Mar 13-22; Mar 13-15 (live screenings) & Mar 16-22 (virtual screenings); Mar 13-15, Eugene, Ore. View portrayals of the Asian-American experience and support Asian-American artists at the 21st annual DisOrient Asian American Film Festival. The 2026 event features live screenings, virtual options, short film programs, question-and-answer sessions with filmmakers, and more. For info, to purchase advance tickets, or to obtain a schedule of events, e-mail <[info@disorientfilm.org](mailto:info@disorientfilm.org)> or visit <<https://disorientfilm.org>>.

## Shinobue flute, Tsugaru shamisen & piano performance

Mar 13 & Apr 17, 1:15-2:15pm, Portland Japanese Garden (611 SW Kingston Ave, Portland). Attend a shinobue flute, Tsugaru shamisen, and piano performance by Yumi Torimaru and Nozomi Imade of Maïdo Mind at the Portland Japanese Garden. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 223-1321 or visit <[www.japanesegarden.com](http://www.japanesegarden.com)>.

## “Forced Detention: A Guide to the Forced Assembly Centers”

Mar 14, 2pm, Epworth United Methodist Church (1333 SE 28th Ave, Portland). Attend “Forced Detention: A Guide to the Forced Assembly Centers,” a talk with Sharon Yamato, Stan Honda, and Brian Niiya. The event is held in conjunction with “Minidoka on Our Minds,” an exhibit currently on view at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon (411 NW Flanders Street) in Portland. For info, call (503) 224-1458 or visit <[www.jamo.org](http://www.jamo.org)>.

## Indian music concert

Mar 14, 7pm, First Baptist Church (909 SW 11th Ave, Portland). Attend Sham-E-Ghazalk, an Indian music concert presented by Kalakendra that features Shivani Joshi accompanied by Rohan Misra on sarangi, Binay Phathak on harmonium, and Satish Tare on tabla. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 308-1050 or visit <[www.kalakendra.org](http://www.kalakendra.org)>.

## Portland Japanese Garden cultural activities

March 14, 15, 21, 25 & 28; April 3, 4, 8, 10, 12; 1:15-2:15pm, Portland Japanese Garden (611 SW Kingston Ave, Portland). Attend afternoon cultural activities and performances held at the Portland Japanese Garden. Scheduled events feature a tea ceremony (March 14 & 25, April 3, 4 & 8), Oregon Koto-Kai (March 15 & April 12), an Ikebana demonstration (March 21 & April 10), a koto



**THE YEAR OF THE FIRE HORSE.** *The Year of the Fire Horse began February 17, 2026 and ends February 5, 2027. Upcoming events celebrating the Year of the Horse include the Lunar New Year Dragon Dance Parade & Celebration in Portland's Chinatown on Saturday, March 7. The event kicks off at 10:00am with lion dancers, drummers, performances, and a 150-foot dragon. The parade then travels through downtown Portland to the Oregon Historical Society Museum. At Lan Su Chinese Garden, Lunar New Year events continue through March 8, including special programming — cultural performances, family crafts, and lion dances — on the weekend. At the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience in Seattle, the “New Years All Year Round” exhibit is also on view. Pictured is “Fire Horse,” an image made from video during a recent Fire Walk. (Photo/Tammy Stanfill)*

and violin performance by Masumi Timson and Fumino Ando (March 28), and more. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 223-1321 or visit <[www.japanesegarden.com](http://www.japanesegarden.com)>.

## Oregon Sinfonietta

Mar 15, 3-5pm, Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church (10501 SE Market St, Portland). Attend a free concert by the Oregon Sinfonietta featuring Kaylee Nah, a junior at Sunset High School, performing Sibelius' Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 47, and Dvorak's Symphony No. 7 in D Minor, Op. 70. For info, call (503) 285-7621 or visit <[www.oregonsinfonietta.org](http://www.oregonsinfonietta.org)>.

## Portland Thorns FC

Mar 20 & 28; Mar 20, 7pm; Mar 28, 1pm; Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch Portland Thorns FC take on the Seattle Reign (March 20) in the squad's home opener in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL). On March 28, the Thorns take on the KC Current in its Cherry Blossom Day match. The March 28 game is also televised nationally on CBS. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <[www.thorns.com](http://www.thorns.com)>.

## “Cherry Blossom Day”

Mar 21, 10am-2pm, Oregon State Capitol, Capitol Mall (900 Court St NE, Salem, Ore.). Every spring, Oregonians welcome the reemergence of the delicate pink blossoms that pop up around Oregon. The blooms signify the beginning of spring and once they peak, they can be enjoyed for just a few days. The Capitol Mall in Salem is home to approximately 150 Akebono cherry trees. “Cherry Blossom Day” at the Capitol, enacted in 2017, this year falls on March 21. The free, family-friendly celebration features a taiko performance; a kimono fashion show; a martial arts demonstration; games; educational displays and activities; and more. Another scheduled event is Yozakura — nighttime viewing of the cherry blossoms amongst Japanese lanterns and lights. The trees will be illuminated in the evening from March 21 to April 4 until 10:00pm. For info, call (503) 986-1388 or visit <[www.oregoncapitol.com](http://www.oregoncapitol.com)>.

## “Minoru Yasui Day”

Mar 28, 1-3pm, Oregon Historical Society Museum (1200 SW Park Ave, Portland). Attend “Minoru Yasui Day,” an event honoring Yasui, who courageously stood against unjust government orders. The year 2026 marks two significant milestones — the 10th anniversary of Oregon's designation in perpetuity of March 28 as Minoru Yasui Day and the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, rooted in the principle of no kings and the belief that power belongs to the people. Join speakers and special guests in honoring the legacy of Oregon's only Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient. The free event may be attended in-person or viewed online. Also on display at the Oregon Historical Society Museum is “The Yasui Family: An American Story,” an exhibit that tells the story of the Yasui family, who were among the millions of immigrants who came to the United States seeking new opportunities during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Admission is free all day (10am-5pm). For info, call (503) 222-1741 or visit <[www.ohs.org](http://www.ohs.org)>. To learn more, visit <[www.minoruyasuilegacy.org](http://www.minoruyasuilegacy.org)>.

## Les Misérables

Mar 31-Apr 5, Keller Auditorium (222 SW Clay St, Portland). Watch *Les Misérables*, a musical that tells an enthralling story of broken dreams and unrequited love, passion, sacrifice, and redemption — a timeless testament to the survival of the human spirit. The show features favorites such as “I Dreamed a Dream,” “On My Own,” “Bring Him Home,” “One Day More,” and more. The production, which is presented by Broadway in Portland and is recommended for attendees age 10 and above, runs 2 hours, 55 minutes with one intermission. For info, showtimes, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 248-4335, or visit <[www.portland5.com](http://www.portland5.com)> or <[www.broadwayinportland.com](http://www.broadwayinportland.com)>. To learn more, visit <[www.lesmis.com](http://www.lesmis.com)>.

## Holi – The Festival of Colors

Apr 4-5, noon-4pm, Pioneer Courthouse Square (701 SW Sixth Ave, Portland). Celebrate the coming of spring with one of India's biggest festivals, Holi – The Festival of Colors, an event featuring food, music, dance, and unifying color throws. (Color throws are held at 1:00pm, 2:00pm, and 3:00pm.) Participants are encouraged to dress in white and get covered in color. Color powder, food, and beverages are available for purchase. For info, call (503) 223-1613, or visit <[www.thesquarepdx.org](http://www.thesquarepdx.org)> or <[www.portlandholi.com](http://www.portlandholi.com)>.

## Free Food Pantry

¡Despensas de comida gratis!  
Бесплатные продовольственные кладовые!

Open to ALL Evergreen Public School Families!  
¡Abierto para TODAS las familias de las escuelas públicas Evergreen!  
Открыто для ВСЕХ семей государственных школ Evergreen!

<p><b>BURTON</b> 1:30 - 2:30</p> <p>OCTOBER 1, NOVEMBER 5, DECEMBER 3, JANUARY 7, FEBRUARY 4, MARCH 4, APRIL 1, MAY 6</p>	<p><b>PIONEER &amp; FRONTIER</b> 11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>OCTOBER 2, NOVEMBER 6, DECEMBER 4, JANUARY 8, FEBRUARY 5, MARCH 5, APRIL 2, MAY 7</p>	<p><b>IMAGE</b> 1:30 - 2:30</p> <p>OCTOBER 8, NOVEMBER 12, DECEMBER 10, JANUARY 14, FEBRUARY 11, MARCH 11, APRIL 15, MAY 13</p>
<p><b>SILVER STAR</b> 11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>OCTOBER 14, NOVEMBER 14, DECEMBER 9, JANUARY 13, FEBRUARY 10, MARCH 10, APRIL 14, MAY 12</p>	<p><b>RIVERVIEW</b> 12:20 - 1:20</p> <p>OCTOBER 15, NOVEMBER 19, DECEMBER 17, JANUARY 21, FEBRUARY 18, MARCH 18, APRIL 22, MAY 20</p>	<p><b>SIFTON</b> 1:30 - 2:30</p> <p>OCTOBER 15, NOVEMBER 19, DECEMBER 17, JANUARY 21, FEBRUARY 18, MARCH 18, APRIL 22, MAY 20</p>
<p><b>ORCHARDS</b> 11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>OCTOBER 16, NOVEMBER 20, DECEMBER 18, JANUARY 22, FEBRUARY 19, MARCH 20, APRIL 23, MAY 21</p>	<p><b>ENDEAVOUR</b> 11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>OCTOBER 21, NOVEMBER 18, DECEMBER 16, JANUARY 20, FEBRUARY 17, MARCH 17, APRIL 21, MAY 19</p>	<p><b>MILL PLAIN</b> 1:30 - 2:30</p> <p>OCTOBER 22, NOVEMBER 19, JANUARY 28, FEBRUARY 25, MARCH 25, APRIL 29, MAY 27 (NO DECEMBER PANTRY)</p>
<p><b>HARMONY &amp; PACIFIC</b> 11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>OCTOBER 28, NOVEMBER 25, DECEMBER 15, JANUARY 27, FEBRUARY 24, MARCH 24, APRIL 28, MAY 26</p>	<p>SCAN TO FIND FREE FOOD SITES</p>	

To find free food sites, visit [www.clarkcountyfoodbank.org/foodfinder](http://www.clarkcountyfoodbank.org/foodfinder)

**For timely information about upcoming events, visit <[www.facebook.com/TheAsianReporter](https://www.facebook.com/TheAsianReporter)>.**

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BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

WAIT LIST OPENINGS



Notice is hereby given that Vancouver Housing Authority will open the following HUD Multi-Family waitlists on Wednesday March 4, 2026 through March 25, 2026.

**ARBOR RIDGE APARTMENTS:**

HUD Multi-Family  
Located at 9503 NE Hazel Dell Ave.,  
Vancouver, WA 98665

These 1-bedroom units are in a non-smoking building that is designated for person(s) age 62 and older. Income of households must be less than \$43,450 for a family of one or \$49,650 for a family of two.

**FORT VANCOUVER:**

HUD Multi-Family  
Located at 2509 Columbia Street,  
Vancouver, WA 98660

These 1-bedroom units are in a non-smoking building that is designated for individuals who are chronically mentally ill. Income of households must be less than \$43,450 for a family of one or \$49,650 for a family of two.

Applications will be available online beginning March 4, at 9:00am ending on March 25, 2026 at 4:00pm. You can access our applicant portal by going to our website at <[www.vhousa.org](http://www.vhousa.org)>.

Paper applications are available upon request at our office located at 2500 Main Street, Vancouver Washington from Wednesday, March 4, 2026 until March 25, 2026. Our offices are open Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 4:00pm. You can drop off completed applications at our office or mail them to us at the address listed above.

Units are offered to qualified applicants based on the date and time of application. For more information, visit our website at <[www.vhousa.org](http://www.vhousa.org)> or call (360) 694-2501.

Vancouver Housing Authority welcomes qualified individuals/families of diverse backgrounds and, in accordance with various Federal and State laws or regulations, does not discriminate against anyone based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, familial status, creed, veteran's or military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Vancouver Housing Authority will make reasonable accommodations to individuals whose disabilities require accommodation in order to enjoy full and equal access to our programs and services. This includes the application process, the informal hearing process and the residency period. Please contact a staff member if you need a reasonable accommodation.



Equal Housing Opportunity

Read The AR online at <[www.asianreporter.com](http://www.asianreporter.com)>!

BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

INVITATION TO BID

OREGON METRO  
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER/  
GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
FOR BLUE LAKE REGIONAL  
PARK RENOVATION

RFP 4558

Metro, a metropolitan service district organized under the laws of the State of Oregon and the Metro Charter, located at 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232-2736, is hereby requesting bids for Blue Lake Regional Park.

Electronic bids are due no later than 2:00pm, March 12, 2026. Bids must be received through BidLocker at <<http://bidlocker.us/a/oregonmetro/BidLocker>> no later than the date and time indicated on the RFP cover page. Attention: Deanna Podbielan, Procurement Analyst, RFP 4558.

PRE BID MEETING

A voluntary Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for all potential prime and sub-contractors on February 17, at 9:00am at the Project Site, Blue Lake Park, 21224 NE Blue Lake Road, Fairview, OR 97024. Per Metro's Subcontractor Equity Program, Contractors that submit a bid for this project must solicit a sub-bid from ALL COBID certified businesses who attend the pre-bid conference.

A second voluntary Pre-Bid Conference for viewing purposes only is scheduled for February 25, 2026, at 9:00am at Blue Lake Park, 21224 NE Blue Lake Road, Fairview, OR 97024. Attendees will be recorded so that any COBID certified business that attends can be reached by Contractors who submit bids.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE WORK

Metro is seeking proposals for a Construction Manager/General Contractor to provide preconstruction and construction phase services to assist with implementing phase 1 park renovations at Blue Lake Regional Park. A design consultant team led by Range Studio is working with Metro's internal project team to determine basis of design and sustainability outcomes for the project. The project is currently in the early Schematic Design phase. The CM/GC will be integrated as part of the project team during the preconstruction phase.

FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT BIDS

All bidders submitting a bid for public improvements over \$50,000 certify that they will pay and comply with the minimum prevailing wage requirements of ORS 279C.800-279C.870 and if applicable 40 U.S.C.276a.

WHERE TO FIND DOCUMENTS

Bidding documents can be viewed and downloaded from BidLocker at <<https://bidlocker.us/details/4558>>.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Metro may accept or reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, or waive irregularities not affecting substantial rights if such action is deemed in the public interest.

Metro extends equal opportunity to all persons and specifically encourages minority, women-owned, emerging small businesses and service disabled veteran owned businesses to access and participate in this and all Metro projects, programs and services. **Metro Local Contract Review Board Rules require all Bidders to follow and document a specific outreach effort to State-certified Minority, Emerging, Women-owned and Service Disabled Veteran owned Businesses. Certification of good faith compliance and a declaration of any actual utilization pursuant to both programs are required at the time of Bid Opening.**

Metro and its contractors will not discriminate against any person(s), employee or applicant for employment based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, political affiliation or marital status. Metro fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, see <[www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)>.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND HEARING ON

DRAFT 2026 ACTION PLAN  
Washington County, City of Beaverton  
and City of Hillsboro

The Consolidated Plan is a strategic planning document resulting from 18 months of planning and public participation, which sets local strategies and priorities for allocating the federal funding over the five-year timeframe. It acts as a combined plan and application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for federal funds available to counties and cities under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) formula programs. Washington County, the City of Beaverton, and the City of Hillsboro each receive an annual CDBG entitlement grant. In addition, Washington County annually receives HOME and ESG program funds on behalf of the entire county. Action Plans are annual components of the Consolidated Plan that specifically describe how Washington County and the Cities of Beaverton and Hillsboro will invest federal resources over a one-year period for activities serving low- and moderate-income persons, the homeless, and persons with special needs.

The Draft 2026 Action Plan is available for public review and comment from Wednesday, March 11 through Thursday April 9, 2026. Copies can be found during regular business hours at the City of Beaverton's Community Development Division located on the 4th floor at "The Beaverton Round" at 12725 SW Millikan Way in Beaverton, or the City of Hillsboro City Manager's Office at 150 E Main Street in Hillsboro. Copies of the draft plan documents can also be obtained from Washington County Office of Community Development, located at 328 W Main, Suite 100, in Hillsboro or by calling (503) 846-8814. In addition, you may download a version of the plan via the County's website:

<<https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/commdev/annual-action-plan>>

A public hearing will be held on the draft plans in a virtual format and information regarding connection to the meeting will be available on the Office of Community Development website:

Thursday, April 9, 2026 - 7:00pm

<<https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/commdev/annual-action-plan>>

Please notify the Office of Community Development at least 72 hours before a meeting or hearing if special accommodations (equipment or interpreting service) are needed. If you have a disability or are hearing impaired and need assistance, please plan ahead by calling (503) 846-8814 or TTY relay dial 711 or 1-800-735-1232.

You may comment on the 2026 Action Plan the public hearing, or by writing to

Shannon Wilson, Program Manager  
Washington County Office  
of Community Development

328 W. Main Street, MS7, Hillsboro, OR 97123  
Phone: (503) 846-8814 + Fax: (503) 846-2882  
or e-mail: <[cdbg@washingtoncountyor.gov](mailto:cdbg@washingtoncountyor.gov)>

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

April 6 issue: Friday, April 3, 1:00pm

May 4 issue: Friday, May 1, 1:00pm

June 1 issue: Friday, May 29, 1:00pm

July 6 issue: Thursday, July 2, 1:00pm

For more information, call (503) 283-4440, e-mail <[ads@asianreporter.com](mailto:ads@asianreporter.com)>, or visit <[www.asianreporter.com](http://www.asianreporter.com)>.

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Lao Vieng Market
1032 N Killingsworth
St., Portland

Hong Phat Supermarket
11655 SW Pacific
Hwy., Tigard

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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REAL ESTATE For Sale/For Lease

BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

SURFING THE WEB?
Check out our last two issues, jobs, news, lists of community groups, past stories, and more on our site: <www.asianreporter.com>

HOME ENTERTAINMENT INSTALLATION
Need stereo & HDTV set-up for the perfect home theater surround sound? We can do it! Great prices, expert service! Please contact Digital Connections at (971) 853-2576.

BETHANY MEADOWS,
an affordable apartment community in Washington County, is currently accepting applications for the waitlist. This beautiful community is located off Highway 26 near Bethany & Cornell and offers spacious 1 & 2 bedroom units affordable to individuals and families earning 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Amenities include washer/dryer in units, pool/spa, fitness center, onsite management, ample parking, and optional garage spaces. Water/sewer/garbage included. Property is located near shopping, restaurants, and parks. Section 8 vouchers are welcome. Income restrictions apply. Equal Housing Opportunity. For more information, please call (503) 533-1000, e-mail <bethanymeadows@bridgehousing.com> or you can visit our website at <www.bethanymeadowsapartments.com>.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

METRO MEDICAL MONITORING RFP 4537

Metro is seeking proposals for Medical Monitoring. Bids are due on March 5, 2026 at 2:00pm. Proposals are to be submitted electronically ONLY to <http://bidlocker.us/a/oregonmetro/BidLocker> A voluntary pre-proposal conference will be held on Zoom on February 19, 2026 at 10:00am. Interested proposers and subcontractors are encouraged to attend the conference in order to gain information about the RFP requirements. Metro Procurement is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87480331298?pwd=WxUaUQwYdZFYbFTxMTztaEi3INa1.1> Meeting ID: 874 8033 1298 Passcode: 014162 Metro may accept or reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, or waive irregularities not affecting substantial rights if such action is deemed in the public interest. Metro extends equal opportunity to all persons and specifically encourages minority, women-owned, emerging small businesses and service-disabled veteran owned businesses to access and participate in this and all Metro projects, programs and services. Metro and its contractors will not discriminate against any person(s), employee or applicant for employment based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, political affiliation or marital status. Metro fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, see <www.oregonmetro.gov>.

FOR SALE Farm-raised livestock

PORK FOR SALE
Pigs raised on our family farm in Newberg, Oregon, are for sale. Meat is available in half or whole pig and processed by our butcher in Portland, Oregon. For pricing & details, please call (503) 980-5900.

FREE Packing material
PACKING MATERIAL
FREE used-once packing material. 6" plastic bubble pockets available. Please leave a voice message at (503) 283-4440, ext. #, or e-mail <news@asianreporter.com>.

GRASS-FED BEEF FOR SALE
Cattle raised in Yamhill County at our family farm in Newberg, Oregon. Beef is available in 1/4, 1/2, or whole cow & processed by our butcher in Portland. For pricing & details, please call (503) 980-5900.

SUBSCRIPTION COUPON
Have The Asian Reporter delivered directly to your home or office and receive a \$4.00 discount. See page six for subscription options and an order form. Expiration date: March 31, 2026. Discount applies to new subscribers only.

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Northwest Job Market/Bids & Public Notices section
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## Japan's traditional kimono are being repurposed in creative and sustainable ways

By Yuri Kageyama  
The Associated Press

**T**OKYO — The kimono, that elaborate, delicate wrap-around garment worn by geisha and samurai from centuries back, is getting a vibrant remake, appreciated these days for a virtue that's more relevant than ever: sustainability.

A genuine silk kimono, which literally means “worn thing,” lasts a hundred years or more. In a Japanese family, it's handed down over generations like heirloom jewelry, artworks, and military medals.

It never goes out of style.

The design of the kimono and accompanying “obi” sash has remained basically the same since the 17th century Edo period depicted in Akira Kurosawa samurai movies.

But today, some people are taking a different creative approach, refashioning the traditional kimono, and also taking apart and resewing them as jackets, dresses, and pants.

“I noticed that a lot of beautiful kimono is just sleeping in people's closets. That's such a waste,” said Mari Kubo, who heads a kimono-remake business called K'Forward, pronounced “K dash forward.”

Hers is among a recent surge in such services, which also turn old kimono into tote bags and dolls.

The most popular among Kubo's products are “tomesode,” a type of formal kimono that is black with colorful, embroidered flowers, birds, or foliage at the bottom.

She also creates matching sets, or what she calls “set-ups.” A tomesode is turned into a jacket with its long, flowing sleeves



**REPURPOSED RELICS.** Dolls dressed in miniature kimono made by designer Tomoko Ohkata from recycled kimono are pictured in Tokyo. The kimono, that elaborate, delicate wrap-around garment worn by geisha and samurai from centuries back, is getting a vibrant remake, appreciated these days for a virtue that's more relevant than ever: sustainability. (AP Photo/Yuri Kageyama)

tailored in tiny sizes to fit the dolls. They sell for 245,000 yen (\$1,600) a pair.

### The art of putting on a kimono

The original old-style kimono is also getting rediscovered.

“Unlike the dress, you can arrange it,” says Nao Shimizu, who heads a school in Japan's ancient capital of Kyoto that teaches people how to wear a kimono and how to carry oneself while wearing it.

“In half a year, you can learn how to do it all by yourself,” she said, briskly demonstrating several ways to tie the obi to express different moods, from playful to understated.

Besides its durability, said Shimizu, that versatility also makes the kimono sustainable.

Younger Japanese are taking a more relaxed view, wearing a kimono with boots, for instance, she laughed. Traditionally, kimono is worn with sandals called “zori.”

Although it requires some skill to put on a kimono in the traditional way, one can take lessons from teachers like Shimizu, like learning a musical instrument. Professional help is also available at beauty parlors, hotels, and some shops.

Most Japanese might wear a kimono just a few times in their lives. But wearing one is a memorable experience.

Sumie Kaneko, a singer who plays the

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intact, and its intricate patterns placed at the center in the back. She then takes a kimono with a matching pattern to create a skirt or pants to go with the top. Sometimes, an obi is used at the collar to add a pop of color.

Kubo said many of her customers are young people who want to enjoy a kimono without the fuss.

A remade kimono at K'Forward can cost as much as 160,000 yen (\$1,000) for a “furusode,” a colorful kimono with long sleeves meant for young unmarried women, while a black tomesode goes for about 25,000 yen (\$160).

### Reuse and recycle

What Tomoko Ohkata loves most about the products she designs using old kimono is that she doesn't have to live with a guilty conscience, and instead feels she is helping solve an ecological problem.

“I feel the answer was right there, being

handed down from our ancestors,” she said.

Recycling venues in Japan get thousands of old kimono a day as people find them stashed away in closets by parents and grandparents. These days, Japanese generally wear kimono just for special occasions like weddings. Many women prefer to wear a western-style white wedding dress rather than the kimono, or they wear both.

Many of Ohkata's clientele are people who have found a kimono at home and want to give it new life. They care about the story behind the kimono, she added.

Her small store in downtown Tokyo displays various dolls, including a figure of an emperor paired with his wife, who are traditionally brought out for display in Japanese homes for the Girls' Day festival every March 3. Her dolls, however, are exquisitely dressed in recycled kimono,

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