

The Asian Reporter

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Forgotten Island is a trippy ode to friendship set against rich Filipino folklore



FANTASTICAL FOLKLORE. This image released by DreamWorks Animation shows Batiba, voiced by Jenny Slate, in a scene from *Forgotten Island*. Of all the magical portals that transport you to another world, *Forgotten Island* may have the cutest. It's not a brick tunnel like *Spirited Away* or a hidden door like *Coraline* or even C.S. Lewis' famous wardrobe. In this movie, it's a sand dollar. Written and directed by Joel Crawford and Januel Mercado — the same team behind *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* — *Forgotten Island* creates a fantastical universe for things like an eight-foot-tall, 200-year-old demon baby with three eyes; an obnoxious, shallow merman with singing nipples; and a legion of adorable mushroom warriors. See story on page 15. (DreamWorks Animation/Universal Pictures via AP)



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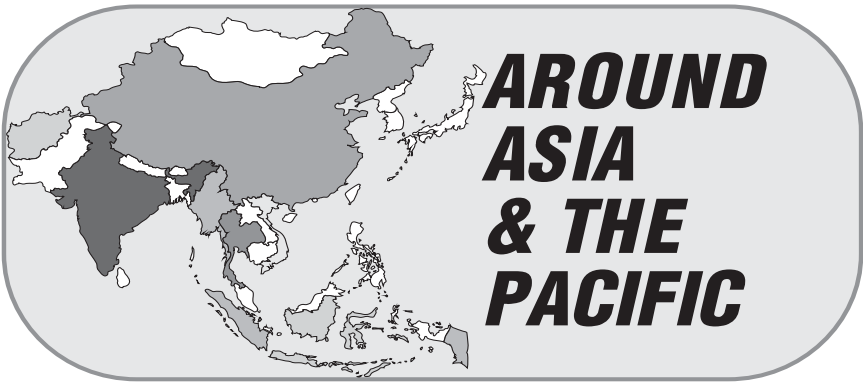
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Luxury facility inside prison for favored inmates razed

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesian authorities ordered the demolition of a luxury compound inside a prison that was allegedly providing preferential treatment for favored inmates. Workers removed furniture and appliances including large flat-screen televisions, air conditioners, gym fitness equipment, sofas, and refrigerators from the Cibinong Prison in Bogor, near the capital of Jakarta, and several of the prison’s buildings were demolished. The facility holds more than 1,800 inmates, making it one of the most heavily populated prisons on Java Island. It has come under intense scrutiny after an investigating commission from the government’s Ombudsman office reported finding luxury facilities during a surprise inspection on September 23. The deputy commission chairman, Sugiat Santoso, said the buildings should be torn down immediately to prevent further misuse. The discovery of the deluxe facility has drawn renewed scrutiny of Indonesia’s prisons, which have faced prior allegations that wealthy or well-connected inmates can obtain preferential treatment.

Nepal rescue teams search for 12 missing after avalanche

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Rescue teams searched for a dozen people swept away by an avalanche that killed at least four on a Nepalese mountain during severe weather. Rescuers from the Nepal National Mountain Guide Association, which is leading the efforts, said they recovered two more bodies in addition to two others who were found the previous weekend. Twelve are missing. Eight experienced mountain guides from the association took advantage of improving weather to dig through the snow that had covered tents at base camp. Ten people were rescued from Mount Himlung, a 23,380-foot peak in north-central Nepal, after the avalanche hit. All those killed or missing were Nepali nationals.

Legal protection granted to human voices in AI clone case

TOKYO (AP) — A Tokyo court has awarded legal protection to the human voice in a landmark case in which a popular Japanese anime voice actor demanded that TikTok close an account over its unauthorized use of an artificial intelligence (AI) clone of his trademark baritone. The Tokyo District Court’s decision was the first acknowledgement of the right to one’s voice in Japan. The ruling was good news for many anime voice actors at a time when they are increasingly concerned about the use of AI-generated versions of their voices on social media. The plaintiff, Kenjiro Tsuda, is an actor best known for his “lustrous and deep” voice in starring characters such as Kento Nanami in “Jujutsu Kaisen,” a popular anime series. In his lawsuit, Tsuda said that the anonymous operator of the TikTok account “Nanami” wrongfully profited by attracting viewers with his voice narrating in more than 180 videos about urban legends and paranormal phenomena, and asked for the material to be deleted. “The human voice is symbolic of individual personality, just like one’s portrait,” presiding judge Aya Takahashi said, according to a court document seen by The Associated Press. It is appropriate to consider the unauthorized use with an obvious intention to take advantage of the commercial appeal of Tsuda’s voice “an infringement of publicity rights,” Takahashi said. As of November 2025, the account had more than 200,000 subscribers, with viewers often noting the similarities between the narrator’s voice and Tsuda’s. The defendant argued that the videos used an AI-generated voice that sounded like Tsuda’s but was not his, and that the videos did not damage the actor’s reputation as a voice actor. The ruling dismissed Tsuda’s demand that all the videos using his voice be deleted, because the account had already been closed. The decision comes at a time of growing concern among Japanese voice actors about the AI cloning of their trademark voices in anime. In 2024, OpenAI announced plans to halt the use of one of its ChatGPT voices after *Her* actor Scarlett Johansson said it sounded “eerily similar” to her own. Last year, Oscar-winning actors Michael Caine and Matthew McConaughey made deals with voice-cloning company ElevenLabs to allow its AI technology to replicate their voices.

Beijing bans drone possession after efforts to tighten rules

BEIJING (AP) — Beijing is banning the possession of drones within city limits in new rules that further tighten its regulations on drones, which already include a May ban on sales of the devices. The ban on possession will come into effect in mid-November. Beijing has barred unauthorized drone flights, citing security reasons, and has designated the city’s administrative area as restricted airspace. The latest revised rules come after a fatal accident in late June when a small aircraft crashed into a Beijing skyscraper, killing the pilot and injuring 13 others. Under regulations approved in March and which came into effect May 1, existing drone owners in Beijing had to register their devices with their real names and identities, but owners have been allowed to keep their registered drones under strict requirements. However, according to the revised regulations approved in September, which will be effective from November 15, the possession or storage of drones or key components within Beijing’s city limits will also be banned. Authorities can confiscate the drones of those who do not comply and can impose fines on individuals and companies. Beijing authorities will be offering subsidies for existing drone owners to sell their devices at designated buyback locations, according to the state-owned newspaper *Beijing Daily*. Drone owners can also consider scrapping and recycling their drones with a small subsidy provided, or shipping them outside of Beijing before the new rules come into effect. Drone users can still fly drones outdoors in other parts of the country, but real name registrations are required. Beijing, the Chinese capital, often has more stringent security rules than other parts of China. Bringing drones into Beijing from outside the city, including by tourists, is already prohibited.



HERO PILOT. A teacher from Gurukul School of Art paints a portrait honoring Smit Machchhar, an Indian pilot with FlyDubai, in Mumbai, India. The Indian airline captain who helped thwart an apparent attempt to crash a FlyDubai flight described last Friday how he fought for his life in the minutes after his co-pilot stabbed him and the plane began a steep descent. (AP Photo/Rafiq Maqbool)

“I was fighting for my life”: Indian pilot hailed as hero recalls FlyDubai cockpit attack

By Sheikh Saaliq
The Associated Press

NEW DELHI — The Indian airline captain who helped thwart an apparent attempt to crash a FlyDubai flight described last Friday how he fought for his life in the minutes after his co-pilot stabbed him and the plane began a steep descent.

Capt. Smit Machchhar, recovering in an Abu Dhabi hospital, told Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a televised video call that he knew he had to get back on his feet to save his passengers.

“I had so many wounds. I had fallen down,” he said from the hospital, his head bandaged and tubes in his nose, before breaking down as he recalled the attack.

“I was fighting for my life. At one point, I realized that if I didn’t get up ... then passengers would lose their lives,” he told Modi.

Machchhar, who is from Mumbai, was seriously injured in last Wednesday’s attack, but managed to open the cockpit door, allowing passengers to enter and restrain the attacker as the Boeing 737 descended sharply, witnesses and Israeli authorities said. He has been hailed as a hero, with world leaders saying he helped avert a disaster.

The flight, carrying 182 people from Dubai to Tel Aviv, was diverted to Tabuk in northwestern Saudi Arabia for an emergency landing. FlyDubai said Wednesday that the jet was secured by on-duty crew members “who diverted and landed the aircraft safely.” A regional official said the crew members were

pilots in training.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacker, an Omani national, was arrested in Saudi Arabia and was undergoing interrogation there. The motive for the attack was not immediately clear.

Modi told Machchhar his “courage, patience, and presence of mind” saved many lives.

Machchhar said his flying experience allowed him to sense the plane’s steep descent even after he was knocked down by the attacker.

“I have been flying planes for 17 years and serving as a captain for the last 11 years. I can sense exactly what is happening with the aircraft even with my eyes closed. When I was down, I could feel that the aircraft was plummeting,” he said.

Machchhar said that during those difficult moments, he recited the Hanuman Chalisa, a Hindu devotional hymn dedicated to Lord Hanuman, the monkey god, and traditionally recited as a prayer for strength and courage.

“Lord Hanuman gave me courage,” he told Modi.

Machchhar, who is married and has two children, has worked for FlyDubai for about four years, according to his LinkedIn profile. Before joining the airline, he spent 11 years with SpiceJet, an Indian low-cost carrier, where he served as a senior commander and line training captain. He logged more than 9,750 flying hours with SpiceJet.

Philip Kean, CEO of Mainland Air, the New Zealand flight school where Machchhar

Continued on page 4



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

News page advertising deadlines for our next two issues are:

November 2, 2026 edition:

Space reservations due: Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 1:00pm

Artwork due: Thursday, Oct. 29 at 1:00pm

December 7, 2026 edition:

Space reservations due: Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 1:00pm

Artwork due: Thursday, Dec. 3 at 1:00pm

Asian Currency Exchange Rates	
Units per U.S. dollar as of 10/02	
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Papua N.G. Kina	4.37
Philippine Peso	62.748
Russian Ruble	83.5
Saudi Riyal	3.75
Singapore Dollar	1.2796
South Korean Won	1359.6
Sri Lankan Rupee	330.7
Taiwan Dollar	31.81
Thai Baht	33.596
Vietnam Dong	25987



PRECOCIOUS PUZZLER. In this photo taken from video and re-leased by YouTube@cuberootme, six-year-old Lian Yunzhi reacts after solving a Rubik's cube at a World Cube Association-certified competition in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in China's Hubei province. (You Tube@cuberootme via AP)

Six-year-old Chinese girl sets women's Rubik's Cube speed record

BEIJING (AP) — A six-year-old Chinese girl has set a new women's world record by solving Rubik's cubes at an average pace of just over four seconds per cube.

Lian Yunzhi first broke the record in early September with an average time of 4.52 seconds at a World Cube Association-certified competition in the central Chinese city of Wuhan and improved to 4.27 seconds at another race in the southern city of Guangzhou, state broadcaster CCTV reported. She became the only female speedcuber to achieve an average below 4.5 seconds, it said.

The association listed Lian on its website as the record holder for the fastest women's average time solving the 3x3x3 cube.

Wearing a red hairband with a bow, Lian looked serious as her small fingers moved quickly during the Wuhan competition. She smiled proudly and clapped after one attempt took her only about 3.54 seconds.

CCTV said Lian first tried to solve a Rubik's Cube when she was four years old, and it used to take her 90 seconds to solve it. She initially lacked the confidence to compete, but became more enthusiastic about the puzzle as her results improved and she gained recognition. That encouraged her to train harder and persevere through challenges, it said.

"She was an introverted kid. Now, she is very confident wherever she goes," her mother Lin Yangxi was quoted as saying.

CCTV said Lian has mastered more than 1,300 solving formulas and recently spent roughly two to three hours daily on training. Her parents also brought her to Shanghai to learn from top coaches, it added.

Associated Press video producer Liu Zheng in Beijing contributed to this report.

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South Korea embraces a huge shark slowly circling a canal in the country's biggest port city

By Kim Tong-Hyung
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — A huge gray shark named Bukangi has become an honorary mascot in South Korea's biggest port city while slowly circling a canal where the animal has been trapped for about two weeks.

Officials in Busan have embraced the attention brought by the shark, which has drawn thousands of tourists and now shares the Korean name for the city's North Port, where it was first spotted September 18.

The shark, which officials say is about 11.5 feet long, has become a social media sensation, but guiding it back to open water has proved tricky.

Officials have deployed five vessels to the waterway. They sprayed streams of water from tanks while attempting to herd the shark toward the open sea, an effort closely watched by huge crowds on site and broadcast on YouTube.

The crews gave up hours later after the shark repeatedly swam past or dived to avoid the boats, remaining inside the canal.

Kim Won-ho, a Busan City official, said authorities will make another attempt to free the shark, which experts say is important for its safety and long-term health.

The state-run National Institute of Fisheries Science is producing a specially designed net 54 yards long



CANAL CAPTIVE. People gather to watch a trapped shark at North Port Waterfront Park in Busan, South Korea, on September 29, 2026. The huge gray shark named Bukangi has become an honorary mascot in South Korea's biggest port city while slowly circling a canal where the animal has been trapped. (Son Hyung-joo/Yonhap via AP)

or bigger to be stretched across the waterway by boat to channel the shark toward the exit. Another boat will spray water from behind to drive the shark in that direction, according to tentative plans, he said.

"We're adapting our response to the situation on site," Kim said.

Officials have not detected any clear signs that the shark's health has deteriorated while stuck in the canal, but they still consider its release to the open sea as crucial, he

said.

About 600,000 visitors have flocked to the North Port to see the shark since counting began September 19, including nearly half a million during the Chuseok holiday break, the Korean Thanksgiving, city officials said.

"Bukangi has naturally become a new part of Busan's story with the interest and love of the city's people," Busan mayor Chun Jae-soo said in a statement.



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Inside Malaysia’s gambit to make its pungent durian the most wanted

By **Kanis Leung**
The Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Malaysia is pushing to take durian, whose powerful smell delights its lovers and repels its haters, beyond its roadside stalls and family orchards to convince fans of the spiky fruit that its varieties are worth seeking out.

Devotees savor durians like wine. For Malaysian ones, the taste of their rich and creamy flesh varies widely across types. Some are prized for their sweet custard and fruity notes, others for a hint of bitterness, an alcohol tinge, or even a peanut butter flavor.

Malaysians’ efforts to elevate the industry can be found in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, at a center devoted exclusively to the fruit and the growing variety of products made from it.

At the Kuala Lumpur Durian Experience Centre, near the landmark Petronas Twin Towers, visitors venture into a replica durian orchard to discover the fruit’s culture and history. In another room, a theater show draws laughter. Downstairs, visitors enjoy platters and egg tarts crafted from it.

Launched this summer after an investment of nearly \$2 million, the two-story center spans about 20,450 square feet and is open daily. Its durian shop welcomes guests from morning to midnight.

Its founder, Edison Ang, said the center targets both local customers and tourists, especially those from China, the world’s biggest durian importer. He said Chinese palates have long been influenced by Thai durian culture.

“What we actually hope for now is not to get people who don’t eat durian to start eating durian,” he said. “Instead, we hope consumers who are already eating durian from other countries will switch to Malaysian durian.”

Rising demand presents challenges

In 2025, China imported 1.87 million tonnes of fresh durian worth \$7.5 billion, with volume jumping over six times in the past decade, according to its customs data.

Thailand’s earlier entry helped it secure over half that market by value in 2025. Malaysia, which began exporting fresh durian to China in 2024, was dwarfed. But for the first half of 2026, the value of China’s fresh durian imports from Malaysia quadrupled compared with the same period last year, pointing to rapid growth.

Unlike their rivals, Malaysian growers typically do not harvest early, instead collecting only naturally ripened fruit caught in nets or ropes as they fall.

That’s the industry’s biggest advantage and also its biggest weakness, Ang said, as sellers have to race against time because the fruit’s shelf life is at most two to three days. Any delays would affect its quality. When his stock was held up for several days during customs checks, his refund rate climbed, he said.

Durian sales are also sensitive to economic conditions, said Leron Yee, founder of DKing, whose business covers both export and domestic markets. When the Chinese economy performs well, his business improves, but if the buying power of Chinese consumers falls, he needs to find



alternative markets, he said.

“It is a luxury, not a necessity,” he said.

Going beyond the fruit itself

Businesses are finding opportunities in what the fruit can become. Yee’s business sells durian paste, durian-flavored chocolate, and mochi — and even mooncakes ahead of the Mid-Autumn Festival.

DurianBB founder Adrian Choy’s company offers durian ice cream, desserts, and dried durian at a café, alongside coffee flavored with the Musang King variety and other items. His brand also offers guided farm tours.

In July, Choy’s brand went a step further and launched a durian flower perfume that smells sweet and floral.

Choy said branching into other products is important because it will add value to the food itself and differentiate his business, even when others compete on price.

What to know about USAID and the deadly impacts of U.S. foreign aid cuts

By **Kristen Gelineau**
The Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal — The foreign aid landscape has changed dramatically since U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration dissolved the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), once the world’s largest humanitarian donor.

Here’s a quick look at USAID, the impacts of its dissolution, and what foreign aid looks like today:

USAID’s roots and purpose

U.S. President John F. Kennedy and Congress started USAID in the early 1960s. Beyond the belief that the U.S. has a moral obligation to help the world’s most desperate, supporters of USAID say the agency was a crucial tool of soft power diplomacy. Supporters say USAID directly benefitted the country by engendering immense global goodwill toward the U.S., helping prevent the spread of diseases that could threaten American lives, and providing stability in foreign countries that could otherwise pose a threat to U.S. security.

The U.S. typically spent around 1% of its federal budget on U.S. foreign assistance.

A study published in *The Lancet* credited USAID programs with preventing 91 million deaths — including 30 million deaths of children under age 5 — in the first two decades of this century alone.

Critics of the agency, including Trump, say it was wasteful and poorly run.

U.S. foreign aid cuts affect communities worldwide

The U.S. foreign aid cuts have been devastating for millions of the world’s most vulnerable people. The Associated Press has documented widespread severe hunger, shortages of lifesaving medicine, and spikes in child marriage, kidnapping, and trafficking of children — consequences that are all linked to the funding cuts. Experts say the true impact won’t be measurable for years, because the repercussions of issues like malnutrition and untreated diseases take time to manifest. And the full extent of the damage may never be known, in part because the funding cuts eliminated the jobs of scores of frontline workers who collected mortality data.

Deaths linked to U.S. foreign aid cuts

Despite the Trump administration’s repeated insistence that no one has died as a result of its dissolution of USAID, The AP has documented deaths across the world linked to the funding cuts.

In Nepal, The AP found that cuts to programs that ensured uneducated, impoverished pregnant women got proper nutrition and prenatal care have led to more babies and pregnant women dying. The AP also found that children in Myanmar, Nigeria, and Somalia have died after cuts to food rations and nutrition programs.

Because of global cuts to foreign aid, the Gates Foundation has predicted that 2025 will be the first year

STINKY SNACK. A man smells a durian at a durian stall in Petaling Jaya, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Malaysia is pushing to take durian, whose powerful smell delights its lovers and repels its haters, beyond its roadside stalls and family orchards to convince fans of the spiky fruit that its varieties are worth seeking out. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

“Food is food,” he said. “You cannot sell it like 50% more because your branding is different.”

Tasting it in Malaysia

Across China, durian specialty shops have mushroomed, with some specializing in Malaysian varieties. In Beijing, the Jiang Sir durian shop sells platters priced roughly between 300 and 1,000 yuan (about \$44 to \$150), depending on the weight of the pulp and the varieties chosen.

Its employee, Hou Yuxin, welcomed the growing number of similar shops and brushed off pressure from competition, saying it would help boost the market for Malaysian durians. She noted many people now want to enjoy durians during their trips to Malaysia.

Back at Ang’s center in Kuala Lumpur, Henry Zhang was one of them. Zhang, a visitor from Shanghai who started eating durian during his university days, saw a durian no bigger than his palm for the first time.

He said Malaysian ones were creamier than those from Thailand and had different flavors. He was impressed by the center offering more than just the fruit.

“I may still eat durians from other countries. But after eating them, I may miss Malaysian ones even more,” Zhang said.

Associated Press photographer Vincent Thian and video journalists Olivia Zhang and Wu Jia in Beijing contributed to this report.



CUT CASUALTIES. Sonam Mukhiya, left, lies next to her three-year-old brother, Yubraj Mukhiya, in their home in Gaur, Nepal, in this May 19, 2026 file photo. The foreign aid landscape has changed dramatically since U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration dissolved the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), once the world’s largest humanitarian donor. (AP Photo/Bram Janssen, File)

this century where child deaths will increase.

Trump administration defends its decision

In a statement to The AP, the U.S. State Department said the Trump administration had reinvigorated its assistance programs to focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and partnership. The department also said the U.S. spends more on health and humanitarian assistance than any other country.

“The rest of the world needs to contribute more and share the burden,” the department said.

U.S. foreign aid today

The Trump administration’s new foreign aid strategy is more limited and is targeted toward initiatives that government officials say will further the United States’ interests. With health aid, for example, the U.S. is increasingly bypassing NGOs in favor of bilateral agreements with foreign countries. This means the money goes directly to foreign governments in exchange for concessions to the U.S., such as access to a country’s health data, which could be used to help detect outbreaks of infectious diseases. The Trump administration says this model is more efficient. But some countries have pushed back, particularly over privacy concerns for their citizens’ medical records.

Indian pilot: “I was fighting for my life”

Continued from page 2

trained, said pilots are taught how to take over if a fellow crew member becomes incapacitated. But the training does not typically prepare them for a stabbing attack by a colleague, he told The Associated Press.

“I don’t think there’s much in the handbook for being stabbed,” Kean said.

“You’re friends and you’re flying together,” he said. “Nobody would expect ... a person to have a go at you like that.”

Associated Press journalist Charlotte Graham-McLay in Wellington, New Zealand, contributed to this report.

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The centuries-old Japanese art of ikebana draws those seeking calm

By Yuri Kageyama
The Associated Press

TOKYO — Ikebana, the Japanese art of arranging flowers, is a form of expression that dates back more than 500 years. It continues to blossom, quietly, not only with traditionalists but also with newcomers who find its blend of creativity and mindfulness to be restorative.

Ikebana can be a bit like solving a puzzle, except there's no fixed answer. Because each flower, and human individual, is different, there are multiple solutions.

"There's a 'detox' purifying factor, and a healing," says Hiroyuki Okada, 40, who began taking lessons in ikebana about seven years ago. He now teaches Ikenobo, the oldest of three major ikebana schools.

Okada, who also teaches backflips to anyone who wants to learn, usually wears silver chains and jeans, but he wears a nice kimono when he formally demonstrates his arrangements. He considers himself typical of those drawn to ikebana today, people looking for joy, purpose, or solace from the daily grind or pain of modern life.

"In arranging (flowers), you are dealing with the life that is there, the beauty, of course, but you find what's in your heart," said Okada. "You come face to face with yourself."

The Kyoto-based Ikenobo school, which is rooted in Buddhism, now has chapters around the world.

Okada's previous job at a nonprofit involved talking to people from around the world, and he realized how different — and alike — people were. When he switched to his current job, at a flower shop, he decided to take up a pursuit that was Japanese, so he could explore that aspect of himself, and one that could be done for a long time, alone.

Observing how flowers and plants grow is part of the art

Ikebana involves interacting with nature, although on a small scale — usually in a little vase.

"It is about the relationship of the creator with the flowers," said Senko Ikenobo, headmaster-designate of the Ikenobo school.



BLOSSOMING ART. Pictured in photos released by Hiroyuki Okada are free-style Ikenobo ikebana arrangements in Tokyo. Ikebana, the Japanese art of arranging flowers, is a form of expression that dates back more than 500 years. (Hiroyuki Okada via AP)

Her family dates back generations to the originators of the art. Her father is the current headmaster.

Jeannette Haviland-Jones, professor of social psychology at Rutgers University, says studies have shown "that flowers and even flower scents promote happiness in people. We suggested a coevolutionary theory for this in which flowers became the 'pets' of the plant world."

Besides a flower's beauty and fragrance, the feel of its petals and leaves to the touch is crucial, like petting a kitten or a puppy, according to Okada.

Ikebana can be for everyone

There are toddlers who do Ikenobo, copying their moms, and there are devoted centenarians. The headmaster-designate says she has seen ikebana help women who are juggling work and motherhood, or taking care of aging parents.

Ikebana has a healing effect similar to that of yoga, meditation, or play, says Mayu Shimizu, who works for an online educational service and has been taking lessons from Okada for about three years.

"I like this moment of nothingness when you are

concentrating on the flowers before you," she says. "My mind feels clearer. I feel more at peace, and gentle."

Flowers portray the stages of human life and connect people

One traditional Ikenobo arrangement is shoka shofutai, which attempts to arrange the flowers, leaves, and branches as they might look in nature, reaching toward sunlight or bending in the wind. The vase, sometimes crafted from wood or pottery, also becomes part of the arrangement's vision.

Yet the overall look is pure and simple, expressing the life cycle of flowers — from blossoming through withering — through three main elements:

— **Shin**, the tallest element, is arranged first, representing one's core, reaching up toward the sky.

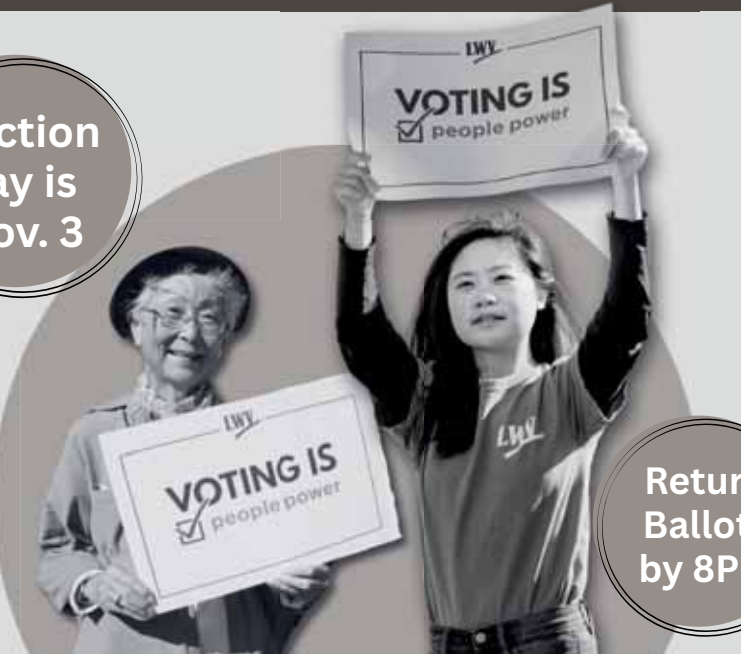
— **Soe**, which is trimmed to about two-thirds the height of the shin and is placed at the side, expresses the flower's individuality. The leaves might be slightly faded, representing the later stages of life.

— **Tai**, the third element, is the future. Choose a blossom or fresh small leaves — things that are being

Continued on page 10

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AP-KFF poll finds rural MAHA followers say Trump hasn’t improved health of their communities

By Ali Swenson, Sarah Jane Tribble,
and Linley Sanders

The Associated Press and KFF Health News

WASHINGTON — About half of rural voters identify with Make America Healthy Again (MAHA), a sprawling political movement championed by the Trump administration, but most said President Donald Trump’s healthcare policies have not benefitted their communities, according to a new poll from The Associated Press in partnership with KFF.

About 8 in 10 rural voters — an important voting bloc for Trump and fellow Republicans — said the Trump administration’s policies have had a negative effect or no impact on the health of people where they live. Most MAHA supporters, 68%, also feel this way, according to the national survey of more than 2,000 rural registered voters.

The findings signal an apparent disconnect between the Trump administration’s MAHA-branded policy priorities and rural America’s perception of their reach and effectiveness.

Iowa pastor Mike Jager, 58, is a registered Republican and considers himself part of the MAHA movement. The Trump administration’s health policies have had “minimal” impact on the health of his community, Jager said, but he added that Trump’s health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., is moving the needle “in the right direction.”

“It’s a beginning,” Jager said. “It’s a big ship to try and turn around and course-correct.”

Kennedy has used the MAHA label to support various agendas, including abandoning long-standing vaccine guidance, researching ultra-processed foods, and investing in regenerative agriculture.

Jager lives in Sumner, Iowa, “less than a quarter mile from where the corn ends and the city begins.” He’s seen family members and neighbors develop diseases that he believes resulted in part from exposure to agricultural chemicals and consumption of unhealthy, processed foods.

In the June Republican primary for governor, Jager voted for Zach Lahn, a businessman and farmer who ran on a MAHA platform and beat out Trump-backed U.S. Rep. Randy Feenstra. He plans to vote for him again in November.

Many rural voters are prioritizing health issues

About two-thirds of rural voters who support MAHA said it’s “extremely” or “very” important to them to vote for a candidate who does, too, while only 4 in 10 rural voters overall said the same.

Trump sought to seize on MAHA support during his campaign for another term two years ago. Now, amid tight midterm races, Kennedy has campaigned to galvanize the movement’s support.

In May, he attended a MAHA bill signing with Iowa Republican Governor Kim Reynolds, and in August, he went fishing with Lahn, posting about it on social media.

Yet the survey indicates voters are noticing “this weird split in the Trump administration” between what Kennedy messages and what Trump says and does, said David Peterson, a political science professor at Iowa State University.

In Iowa, concerns about what’s causing rising cancer rates are “a big deal,” he said. For many people who identify with MAHA, being healthy includes taking on corporate agriculture and pharmaceutical companies that they think cause cancer, he added.

In the poll, views on healthcare access and costs largely diverged along party lines. Most Democratic and independent voters said the Trump administration’s healthcare policies have had a negative impact on their healthcare costs and the health and wellbeing of people in their communities. Republicans were likelier to say there hasn’t been an impact.

Talking on the phone from her 200-acre farm in Carroll County, Iowa, 71-year-old Donna Klocke said that her husband had died from cancer and that she has neighbors who also have cancer.

“It’s just very prevalent,” Klocke said. “We’re in a farming community. We use chemicals and pesticides and all kinds of things that aren’t necessarily good for us.”

Klocke, a Democrat, said the MAHA movement is a good idea because she cares about being healthy, but she does not consider herself part of it and will not be voting for a candidate who represents the movement.

Kennedy, who was an anti-vaccine activist before entering politics and has sent mixed messages to Americans about getting the measles vaccine, scares her.

“Measles are coming back and polio,” Klocke said. “It’s the measles that really gets me. It’s like, do you not understand how dangerous it is?”

Survey reflects angst over healthcare

Nearly half of rural voters said their communities don’t have enough doctors or other healthcare providers, and even more said there aren’t enough mental health workers specifically. The share of rural voters who said their community does not have enough hospitals increased to 35% from 21% in a similar question asked in a KFF-Washington Post survey in 2017.

And as with the general population, healthcare, gas, and grocery costs are top pain points. At least 6 in 10 rural voters said they were worried about healthcare costs.

The level of worry varied based on coverage, with

Continued on page 19

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A childhood rite moves indoors as kindergartners learn to ride bikes in school gyms

By Cheyanne Mumphrey
AP Education Writer

For generations, kids have learned how to ride a bike — a quintessential childhood milestone — in driveways, on sidewalks, and in neighborhood streets. Now, they’re learning in school gyms and playgrounds.

On a recent September day, kindergartners at Terra Vista Elementary School in Rancho Cucamonga, California, were fitted with helmets and assigned a black-and-white balance bike. Off they went, propelling themselves with their legs and practicing gliding on the pedal-free bikes. The kids started and stopped on a circular path outlined by orange traffic cones, with adults watching and directing nearby.

For every nervous face, there was another with a smile. For every squeal, there was a laugh.

All Kids Bike, a program within a nonprofit organization, has brought a learn-to-ride curriculum into nearly 2,000 U.S. elementary schools. They’ve made bike-riding part of physical education for children who might otherwise have to wait for an adult or older sibling to teach them — or whose neighborhood and socioeconomic status might stop them from getting the chance.

When schools apply for the program, All Kids Bike can pair them with donors that fund the costs. In Rancho Cucamonga, the city provided \$45,000 to gift the equipment and the curriculum to Terra Vista and four other schools.

The eight-lesson curriculum gradually moves children from simply walking with



and getting comfortable on a properly fitted bike to balancing with both feet off the ground. Then, adults add pedals and the students progress to full-fledged cycling.

Riding bikes teaches kids confidence

The activity is perfect for kindergarten physical education classes, says Drew Raney, a P.E. teacher in Wasco, California. For schools’ youngest students, gym class focuses on exploring movement, learning to share space and equipment, following directions, and having fun. The learning can happen with rainbow parachutes, scooter boards, Hippity Hops — and now, bicycles.

For Raney, who teaches the All Kids Bike program at his school, some of his favorite moments come when students

begin lifting their feet and riding in stop-and-go spurts.

“Once you see students start to kind of glide around, that’s when you can start to see that confidence shoot up because they’re taking those first steps and they’re putting themselves out of their comfort zone,” he said.

In Seattle, district physical education manager Lori Dunn sees learning to ride a bike as more than simply mastering a recreational skill. The process requires balance, core stability, sequencing, and body awareness, she said, with each step building on the one before it. She compares it to typing or keyboarding: Once children learn the skill, it’s easier to pick it up later, with practice.

The process can also teach children how to handle frustration as they wobble or fall.

ALL KIDS BIKE. Students participate in a learn-to-ride program at Terra Vista Elementary School in Rancho Cucamonga, California. For generations, kids have learned how to ride a bike in driveways, on sidewalks, and in neighborhood streets. Now, they’re learning in school gyms and playgrounds. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

Hopefully, bike riding will someday be “just like basketball or dodgeball or whatever other sport there is,” becoming such a basic skill that it is simply part of P.E., said Lisa Weyer, executive director of the Strider Education Foundation, which operates All Kids Bike.

Biking P.E. gives kids access to lifelong skills

Some schools also pair the curriculum with other programs to teach road and pedestrian safety and expand access for children with disabilities.

For example, Seattle Public Schools also participates in Let’s Go, which serves third, fourth, and fifth grades, and includes adaptations for students with additional mobility and cognitive needs. Students in the district also learn how to cross streets, make eye contact with drivers, and recognize unsafe behavior. “Traffic gardens” on school playgrounds give students a chance to practice navigating intersections, stop signs, roads, and parking areas, giving them skills they can use as pedestrians, cyclists, and eventually drivers.

The program can also give children a sense of freedom and independence, Weyer said, while getting them away from screens and into active play.

“We want them to be able to have that sense of freedom and independence,”

Continued on page 12



Connect with nature.

Whether it’s a family hike, a volunteer planting, or a guided birdwatching tour – Metro parks offer plenty of reasons to get out and explore this fall.

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Under Trump, census eyes sweeping plan to omit immigrants, race data

By Terry Tang
The Associated Press

The Trump administration is proposing a dramatic overhaul of the once-a-decade U.S. Census head count that could leave out millions of immigrants based on status and key racial and ethnic data, jeopardizing the allocation of resources and the country's voting map.

The potential changes, announced in September, would exclude undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and anyone without permanent status. Certain demographic questions from the traditional questionnaire would also be eliminated.

It echoes Trump's previous idea to add a citizenship question to the 2030 census.

The U.S. Census Bureau, in a post on the Federal Register website, argued "illegal aliens (among others) should not be included in the apportionment count, as they are not true inhabitants, members of the body politic, or persons with a 'usual residence' in the United States due to their lack of a sufficient tie and allegiance to the United States."

The census also "should be colorblind and should not be distorted in any way by questions about immaterial personal characteristics, such as race," the agency said. It also is considering nixing questions related to people who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.



These changes would harm the quality of the data, said Beth Jarosz, a data researcher and vice president of the Association of Public Data Users. She called the proposals "unprecedented."

"Not counting all of the people who reside here is actually where the real threat is," Jarosz said. "If you think about all of the ways that census data are used."

Census figures are traditionally used for an "apportionment count" to determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. That count also determines the number of votes in the

Electoral College.

"You can imagine if we have undercounts or if we have people counted in the wrong place," Jarosz said. "Then their political power or their political representation gets diluted."

Immigrants of every status have historically been counted

Historically, the decennial census has not sought to conduct a full count of people by citizenship status, she added. It may come up in the Census' periodic American Community Survey.

Getting an accurate count of immigrants of various statuses is useful when assigning resources for public health emergencies or natural or human-made disasters.

"If you don't have a count of everyone who's there, you're not going to have the resources you need," Jarosz said. "And that puts everybody at risk."

Why race and ethnicity census data matters

Race-related questions have been on the once-a-decade census since 1790. Starting in 2000, the U.S. census began allowing people to identify by more than one race. A

CONTROVERSIAL CHANGES. Immigration activists rally outside the Supreme Court as the justices hear arguments about the Trump administration's plan to ask about citizenship on the 2020 Census, in Washington, in this April 23, 2019 file photo. The Trump administration is proposing a dramatic overhaul of the once-a-decade U.S. Census head count that could leave out millions of immigrants based on status and key racial and ethnic data, jeopardizing the allocation of resources and the country's voting map. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

2015 Pew Research Center study found that multiracial people in the U.S. were growing at a rate three times faster than the general population. By 2020, 33.8 million people in the U.S. identified as being more than one race, according to the census.

Race and ethnicity data is essential for researchers who gauge discrimination, crime rates, and wealth gaps in communities of color.

Manjusha Kulkarni is co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate and executive director of AAPI Equity Alliance, two advocacy groups that rely on census counts of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The proposed changes would have tremendous impact on the populations they serve, she said.

"It also seeks to exclude important demographic data from millions that enables lawmakers, healthcare providers, public safety officials, and community advocates — really anyone who cares about the health, safety, and wellbeing of all Americans — from having the necessary data to keep us safe and healthy," Kulkarni said via text message.

Dropping race and ethnicity data as well as some immigrants sends a message that these communities don't matter, she added.

Collecting data for the 2030 Census with all these missing elements would be detrimental, Jarosz said.

"These changes are like trying to land an airplane when you are in thick fog and someone has thrown paint across the front window and your instruments are also not working," she said.

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Judge overturns Trump's decision to fire court-appointed U.S. attorney in Seattle

By Gene Johnson
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — A judge in early October overturned President Donald Trump's decision to fire the court-appointed top U.S. prosecutor in Seattle, the latest development in a legal tug-of-war over the administration's efforts to control who occupies the powerful Justice Department posts.

The 17 active and senior judges in the Western District of Washington unanimously named Roger Rogoff, a former judge and veteran prosecutor, U.S. attorney in July, after Trump failed to fill the post with a nominee confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

The president fired Rogoff less than an hour later. Rogoff sued, and in a ruling last Thursday, U.S. District Judge Stanley Bastian found the termination unlawful and reinstated him.

Bastian noted that when presidents fail to fill a U.S. attorney post with a nominee confirmed by the senate, federal law authorizes the judges of that district to appoint someone "until the vacancy is filled."

"It does not say 'until the president fires the person selected,'" Bastian said.

He concluded: "Mr. Roger Rogoff is the United States attorney for the Western District of Washington and has been the rightful holder of that office since July 15, 2026, when he took the oath of office."

The Justice Department said in a written statement it disagreed with the

decision and would appeal.

Rogoff is the latest in a series of judicially appointed U.S. attorneys to be ousted by the Trump administration, and he is believed to be the first to sue over the removal, setting up a direct legal battle over the issue.

Presidents normally appoint U.S. attorneys, the top federal prosecutor in each judicial district. The positions require senate confirmation, except in temporary appointments, which can last up to 120 days. When temporary appointments expire before a nominee is confirmed, the judges in a judicial district can name a U.S. attorney.

But under Trump, the Justice Department has sought to leave unconfirmed prosecutors in their positions indefinitely, often through novel personnel maneuvers. Trump named Charles Neil Floyd, who previously served as an immigration judge, interim U.S. attorney in Seattle in October 2025 but never forwarded his nomination to the senate.

When Floyd's time as interim U.S. attorney expired, Trump simply shifted his title, a tactic the administration has also tried in other federal judicial districts: It named him first assistant U.S. attorney, while leaving the top post empty.

Trump nominated Pete Serrano, the first assistant U.S. attorney in eastern Washington, to be the U.S. attorney in Seattle. But Serrano has not been confirmed, and his nomination is opposed by Washington's senior Democratic senator,

Continued on page 12

Learn the signs of stroke

ohsu.edu/befast

B

BALANCE

Did they suddenly lose balance or coordination?

E

EYES

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

F

FACE

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

A

ARM

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

S

SPEECH

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

T

TIME

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

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Fast food from the U.S. & China catches on in both countries

By Dee-Ann Durbin and Chan Ho-Him
AP Business Writers

China and the United States are divided on many issues, from tariffs and technology to Taiwan. But there is one thing tying them together: fast food.

American restaurant and beverage chains are expanding rapidly in China, drawn by the potential customer pool in a country with four times the U.S. population. China's languishing economy and cutthroat industry competition, meanwhile, have Chinese chains trying their luck in the U.S., turning crumbs and straws into a two-way cultural bridge between the two superpowers.

The bilateral trade in burgers and bubble tea is business- and consumer-led gastrodiploacy in action, said Yaling Jiang, the founder of ApertureChina, a market research company with headquarters in Shanghai and London. In China, recent American arrivals like Popeyes and Five Guys are seen as a guilty pleasure, she said, while the increasingly international palates of Americans have created space for Chinese brands to serve as their nation's unofficial ambassadors.

"Consumerism builds a safe, introductory channel for contemporary Chinese culture and can be a great way to elevate China's soft power," Jiang said.

American fast-food companies are expanding their presence in China

Last month, Chinese customers lined up in the rain for the opening of the first Church's Texas Chicken in Shanghai. Church's plans at least 600 more across China. Wendy's says it anticipates opening 1,000 restaurants there over the next decade.

Established players are deepening their reach as well. McDonald's plans 1,000 new Chinese restaurants this year and 10,000 total by 2028. Burger King, which arrived in China in 2005, says it expects to triple its store count to 4,000 by 2035.

"Despite political tensions between the U.S. and China, Chinese actually still go crazy for American brands," said Shaun Rein, founder and managing director of the Shanghai-based China Market Research Group.

KFC became the first major American fast-food chain to enter mainland China when it opened a Beijing



GASTRODIPLOMACY. A customer holds an ice cream cone outside a Mixue store in Sunnyvale, California. China and the United States are divided on many issues, from tariffs and technology to Taiwan. But there is one thing tying them together: fast food. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)

alongside custardy egg tarts and congee, a savory rice porridge.

"They need to operate like a Chinese company but deliver American menus that incorporate Chinese values, eating habits, and tastes," Park said.

Chinese fast-food chains seek new opportunities in the U.S.

Mixue, one of the world's largest fast-food chains with more than 53,000 locations, opened its first three U.S. stores in December. Mirroring the Shanghai crowd outside Church's Texas Chicken, New York customers waited in the cold to sample soft-serve ice cream, fruit teas, and milk tea with toppings like coconut jelly and taro balls at a store in Herald Square.

Mixue has announced at least two dozen more planned locations across four states. At least nine other mainland Chinese chains have made their U.S. debuts since 2023, all but one specializing primarily in drinks and snacks. They include Heytea, with 40 U.S. locations, and Luckin Coffee, which overtook Starbucks as China's biggest coffee brand and has 20 stores in New York.

Wallace, a chain founded in 2000, grew to more than 20,000 restaurants by selling American-style chicken and hamburgers in China. In California, where the second U.S. Wallace opened in September, the company tweaked its chicken sandwich recipe to appeal to American diners.

Before entering the U.S., many major Chinese food-and-beverage chains expanded in Southeast Asia. A real estate slump and weak consumer spending made growth harder to find at home. The average life span of China's 16 million restaurants and chains was expected to fall to 15 months last year, according to a U.S. government report.

The American restaurant industry is considerably smaller, with 1 million locations, according to the National Restaurant Association. Jiang, of ApertureChina, sees another advantage for Chinese brands: a social media trend called "Chinamaxxing," in which westerners adopt Chinese lifestyle habits or

Continued on page 12

Julia Brim-Edwards.

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Marcus Mariota starting for Washington Commanders against Colts in London

By Ken Maguire
The Associated Press

WATFORD, England — Commanders quarterback Marcus Mariota is scheduled to get his second straight start in place of the injured Jayden Daniels when Washington faces the Indianapolis Colts at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Head coach Dan Quinn announced the decision after practice last Friday at the team’s luxury hotel accommodations outside London.

Daniels returned to practice after dislocating his elbow in Week 2 against the Dallas Cowboys. He’s been wearing a protective brace and expressed no concerns about further damage.

“He had a great week. It was awesome to have him back on the field in a limited fashion,” Quinn said. “He’ll be out. Marcus will start.”

Quinn called Daniels’ return to practice “a huge positive step for us and for him.”

“We’ll assess where we are ... when we get to a full week of practice all the way through,” the coach said.



Mariota threw three touchdown passes in the 33-31 win over the Seattle Seahawks.

It’s the second elbow dislocation for Daniels, who missed most of the second half of last season with the same injury.

The third-year quarterback, who led the Commanders to the NFC championship game in his rookie season, said he was preparing mentally to start against the Colts and wasn’t worried about re-injuring the elbow.

“That’s what the brace is for,” Daniels said.

FOOTBALL IN LONDON. Quarterback Marcus Mariota (#8) of the Washington Commanders passes against the Dallas Cowboys in the second half of an NFL football game in Arlington, Texas, last month. Mariota is scheduled to get his second straight start in place of the injured Jayden Daniels when Washington faces the Indianapolis Colts at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London, England. (AP Photo/Julio Cortez)

The Commanders host the New York Giants on Sunday, October 11. The team has a bye in Week 7.

“Certainly, anytime you can practice, that’s a big deal,” Quinn said. “So for him to get back, that was a big step for us. Typical for him, he’s more ready than you’d expect. That’s just kind of how he is.”

Quinn was asked what he needs to see to put Daniels back on the field.

“It’s really just like an entire group medical performance. Where he’s at, the practice part was a big piece of that today ... we’re planning on for him to get a full week of practice. That would be a big deal for us.”

Editor’s note: The game between the Indianapolis Colts and the Washington Commanders in London is scheduled for Sunday, after our press deadline.

The centuries-old Japanese art of ikebana draws those seeking calm

Continued from page 5

born.

There are also freer, spinoff styles that look more like casual, western-style bouquets than the stoic, textbook-oriented shoka shofutai. That may feel easier, and more fun, for beginners.

Just as ikebana connects a person with flowers, those who practice the art say it’s also about the passing of the art over generations, connecting people.

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

News page advertising deadlines for our next two issues are:

November 2, 2026 edition:

Space reservations due: Wednesday, October 28 at 1:00pm
Artwork due: Thursday, October 29 at 1:00pm

December 7, 2026 edition:

Space reservations due: Wednesday, December 2 at 1:00pm
Artwork due: Thursday, December 3 at 1:00pm

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Asian Games are a proving ground for young athletes, from skateboarding to esports to swimming

By Stephen Wade
AP Sports Writer

NAGOYA, Japan — Kamus Wong competed as a 12-year-old skateboarder from Hong Kong at the Asian Games. She has no illusions of being ready yet for the Olympics.

“I hope, but like — I need to skate better because now, I don’t think I skate good enough to go to the Olympics,” she said. “So I need the training, and like training really hard.”

Here’s the thing: Wong wasn’t even the youngest competitor at the two-week Asian Games. That goes to Yuki Kurihara, an 11-year-old from Japan in esports. And they both make Yu Zidi, the 13-year-old Chinese swimmer who has won three gold medals, look like an old timer. In fact, Yu turns 14 on October 16.

The Asian Games, similar to the Pan Am Games in the Americas, are a proving ground for young athletes.

Shin Ohashi, a 17-year-old Japanese breaststroker, set a world record about the same time Wong was skateboarding. He’ll be a threat at the Los Angeles Olympics in two years. And at 17, he’s absolutely ancient.

Wong’s role model is Sky Brown, who won a bronze medal at 13 for Britain in the Tokyo Olympics, which were delayed until 2021 by the pandemic. She landed another bronze medal two years ago in the Paris Olympics.

“I like her style and she’s really happy and she skates really good and fast,” Wong said of Brown.

Wong, who would be in school if she wasn’t competing in Japan, said she started skating about six years ago.

The upside of skateboarding, Wong said, is landing her tricks.

The downside? It’s easy to guess.

“If I fall really hard — hurts really much,” she said. “But sometimes I’m really happy if I land a trick and it’s really fun skateboarding. Sometimes.”

Asian Games closes in Japan, heads to Qatar in 2030

By Stephen Wade
The Associated Press

NAGOYA, Japan — The Asian Games were a blur, a sports kaleidoscope of 45 countries and regions. The games featured about 11,000 athletes — more than the Summer Olympics two years ago in Paris. And now they head west to Doha, Qatar, in 2030.

Amid the whirlwind of 43 sports — there were many regional specialties featured like kurash, kabaddi, and sepaktakraw — the games provided a glimpse at many top athletes who will compete again in two years at the Los Angeles Olympics.

China topped the medal table as it has for decades with 169 gold and 341 overall. Japan was second with 83 gold and 269 overall. South Korea (39, 150) was next followed by India (21, 85), Uzbekistan (21, 70), and Iran (19, 52).

Forty of the 45 countries or regions won at least one medal. The bottom four won only a single bronze medal: Bangladesh, Brunei, Laos, and Syria.

Japanese organizers put on what they termed “sustainable” games — no athletes village, lodging for athletes on a cruise ship, in hotels, and in temporary containers. The transportation system was also stressed by venues that stretched from Nagoya, the host city, across central Japan. Swimming was in Tokyo with some soccer in Osaka.

Organizers planned for 15,000 athletes and officials, but they said 17,000 arrived through late registrations.



YOUTHFUL GAMES. The Asian Games, similar to the Pan Am Games in the Americas, are a proving ground for young athletes. Pictured are Kamus Wong, left, a 12-year-old skateboarder from Hong Kong, and Yuki Kurihara, right, an esports competitor from Japan.

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Global customers crave texture, challenging companies to make crispier, gooier, chewier foods

By Dee-Ann Durbin
AP Business Writer

Texture is having a crunchy, gooey moment in the food and beverage industry. For many people, the way a menu item or packaged snack feels in the mouth has become as big a draw as flavor, although consumers don't always recognize the part texture plays in their cravings for crispier takeout, frothier coffees, and juicier candies, according to industry experts.

The importance of "mouthfeel," a food science term for oral sensation, has inspired new products like Starbucks' Aerocano, an air-whipped iced espresso; PowerCrunch, a waferlike protein bar; and Trolli Gummi Pops, which are frozen but still soft and chewy.

"Texture drives consumer behavior. It plays a key emotional role in the eating experience, shaping satisfaction, perception, and repeat interest," Ingredion, an Illinois-based ingredient provider, said in a recent report.

The company, which has 35 food labs around the world, said the trend is a global one. Stretchy yogurt is a fast-growing seller in China, while Swedish confectioner Cloetta just released Sprinkled Foamies, which have a crunchy coating and a marshmallow center. Parisian bakers are experimenting with new pastries like the crookie, a crispy croissant with a melty chocolate chip cookie inside.

"It's not just about flavor anymore. People are thinking about the whole experience," said Tana Davila, the chief marketing officer at Dutch Bros Coffee. The drive-thru U.S. beverage chain lets customers customize their drinks with toppings like the Soft Top, a sweet and creamy



CRAVING CRUNCH. Nerds Gummy Clusters candies, left photo, are displayed in Los Angeles. Texture is having a crunchy, gooey moment in the food and beverage industry. Pictured in the right photo is a Dutch Bros drink with Poppin' Boba. (AP Photos/Jae C. Hong)

whipped foam, and juice-filled pearls that pop when bitten into.

Interest in texture goes back centuries and extends beyond food

Texture is so integral to the act of eating that people often describe how a food feels when they're asked how it tastes, said Patrick Kalotis, the executive vice president of texture and healthful solutions at Ingredion.

"You know, 'This drink is fizzy' or 'I love the creaminess of the yogurt,'" Kalotis said. "They think they're talking about taste, and of course the texture helps propagate the taste, but they're actually describing texture."

Food makers have long played with consistency. Pillowy Japanese mochi and stretchy Turkish ice cream date back centuries. Bubble tea, with its chewy tapioca boba pearls, was invented in Taiwan in the 1980s. In the 1990s, high-end European restaurants whipped up culinary foams flavored with things like truffle oil or lobster broth.

But interest in texture has exploded in recent years, said Jenny Zegler, the principal strategist for food and drink at market research company Mintel. It's reflected in toys like squishy NeeDoh cubes and beauty products like jelly cleansers. With food, qualities like chewy, soft, gooey, and melt-in-the-mouth are seeing fast-rising demand in online product searches, according to Mintel data.

Zegler thinks the craze around the Cronut — a doughnut-shaped pastry with a crispy fried outside and an airy, buttery inside like a croissant — started a fascination with food textures about a decade ago. Multilayered products like Dubai chocolate and sound-enhanced social media videos of influencers breaking crackly peanut brittle and slurping creamy noodles heightened the interest.

"Consumers are gaining new expectations for the experience of a product, and texture is the perfect way to deliver that," Zegler said.

Nerds Gummy Clusters and the pandemic led to more complex candy

The coronavirus pandemic elevated interest in texture because COVID-19 caused many people to temporarily lose their sense of smell and taste, said Shannon Weiner, senior director of consumer insights at candy company

Judge overturns Trump's decision to fire court-appointed U.S. attorney in Seattle

Continued from page 8

Patty Murray.

"Today's ruling is an important victory for the rule of law and the people in Western Washington who deserve a U.S. attorney that answers to the law, not Donald Trump," Murray said in a written statement.

Bastian is the chief judge in eastern Washington. He heard the case because the judges in western Washington were recused.

In December, Alina Habba resigned as the top federal prosecutor for New Jersey after an appeals court said she had been serving in the post unlawfully.

Lindsey Halligan, who pursued indictments against a pair of Trump's adversaries, left her position as an acting U.S. attorney in Virginia after a judge concluded her appointment was unlawful and that indictments she brought against James and former FBI Director James Comey must be dismissed.

The judges there named James Hundley, who had handled criminal and civil cases for more than 30 years, but the administration fired him. It also fired a court-appointed U.S. attorney in northern New York.



Ferrara. In 2020, the Chicago-based company debuted Nerds Gummy Clusters, a sweet round gummy coated in crunchy Nerds candy.

The hit product led to other innovations in the candy aisle, like crispy freeze-dried Skittles. Gummi Popz, Continued on page 14



FAST-FOOD EXPANSION. People line up to enter a McDonald's restaurant in Beijing in this August 20, 2025 file photo. KFC became the first major American fast-food chain to enter mainland China when it opened a Beijing restaurant in 1987. McDonald's and Pizza Hut arrived in 1990. (AP Photo/Andy Wong, File)

Fast food from the U.S. & China catches on in both countries

Continued from page 9

wellness practices.

Not every brand makes its origins clear. Wallace's U.S. website and social media pages do not mention the brand's Chinese ownership or headquarters in southeastern China's Fujian province. The company didn't respond to an e-mail from The Associated Press.

The U.S. carries both potential rewards and risks for Chinese chains

American and Chinese chains alike have an appetite for opportunities across the Pacific. But Chinese brands remain largely unproven stateside. Even chains with thousands of locations elsewhere are testing whether novelty can translate into loyalty.

The U.S. is too lucrative a market to ignore, said Aaron Allen, founder of restaurant consulting firm Aaron Allen and Associates. It accounts for one-third of global restaurant revenue despite having only around 4% of the world's population, he said.

"The grass is always greener somewhere else in the world," Allen said.

While American brands can carry a premium image in China, many Chinese brands compete heavily on price. At a Mixue in Hollywood, a medium matcha latte costs \$6.83; a nearby Starbucks sold the same drink for almost \$1 more. Wallace sells three full-size chicken sandwiches for \$10.

"The Chinese can build stuff cheaper and faster. Why would that not apply to food?" Allen said.

But Allen said Chinese brands could face customer backlash or higher tariffs if they undercut U.S. rivals with low-cost Chinese imports. Like other Chinese companies, restaurant brands also could face U.S. scrutiny over their collection and use of customer data, he said.

Luckin Coffee co-founder and CEO Jinyi Guo told investors in February that the U.S. "represents one of our important long-term opportunities" and the company was proceeding "with great patience and discipline."

Durbin reported from Detroit. Chan reported from Hong Kong. Associated Press writer Fu Ting contributed from Washington.



LEARNING A LIFE SKILL. Teachers help students put on their helmets during a learn-to-ride program at Terra Vista Elementary School in Rancho Cucamonga, California. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)

A childhood rite moves indoors as kindergartners learn to ride bikes in school

Continued from page 7

Weyer said. "That's a life skill. It's like swimming."

The lessons can stick with students long after the bikes are put away, Raney said.

"I have now third graders that are running up and they still remember three years ago, 'That's our bike teacher!'" he said. Some students still remember the chants from the end of the lessons.

"On three, we're gonna say, 'We can ride.' What are we gonna say?" he asks his students.

"We can ride!" they shout.

Jae Hong contributed reporting from Rancho Cucamonga, California.

The Associated Press' education coverage receives financial support from multiple private foundations. AP is solely responsible for content.

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Betty Liu’s Sesame-Cumin Chicken is double-fried for flavor and crispiness

By Betty Liu

Voracious

Deep-fry (zha), a well-known technique where the food is fried in a pool of hot oil, which both cooks it and creates a crispy exterior, is used throughout the “Frying” chapter in my cookbook *The Chinese Way*.

When deep-frying, I use a thermometer, aiming for 350° Fahrenheit to 375° F. Another way to gauge the temperature is to stick a wooden chopstick in the oil, and if tiny bubbles float rapidly up around it the heat is adequate.

Deep-frying often involves a double-fry technique. That method has been traditionally used in Shanghai for shrimp and fish steaks, and it works especially well for chicken.

An initial fry at a low temperature seals in the juices and sets the exterior, creating a light coating. Then a second fry at a higher temperature cooks the chicken through and amps up the crispiness.

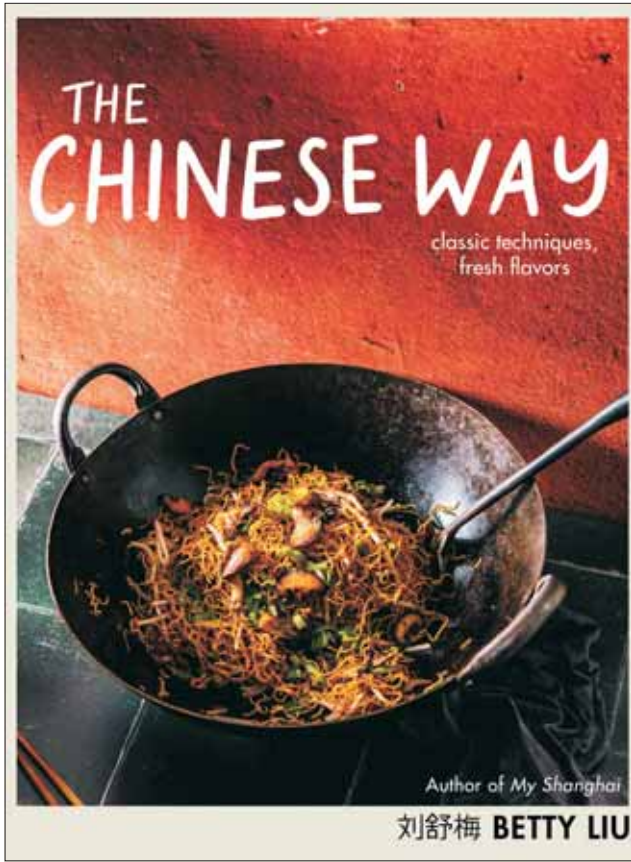
The coating here is seasoned with cumin and gets the texture from crushed sesame seeds.

Betty Liu is a cookbook author, photographer, and doctor completing her surgical residency. An avid home cook who writes about Chinese home cooking on her award-winning blog, she published her debut book, My Shanghai, in 2021, and it was named one of the best cookbooks of the year.



CRISPY CREATION. Pictured is Sesame-Cumin Chicken, a recipe from the “Frying” chapter in Betty Liu’s *The Chinese Way*. (Betty Liu/Voracious via AP)

Excerpted from *The Chinese Way*, by Betty Liu. Copyright 2024 by Betty Liu. Used with permission of Voracious, an imprint of Little, Brown, and Company. New York, NY. All rights reserved.



Sesame-Cumin Chicken

Serves 4

- 2 scallions, roughly chopped
- 3 large garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 tablespoons Shaoxing wine
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
- 1½ to 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- ¼ cup white sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¾ cup potato starch
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin

Cumin salt:

- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon smoked paprika

Lemon mayonnaise:

- ¼ cup Kewpie mayonnaise
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Neutral oil, for frying

Directions:

Marinate the chicken:

Cut the chicken into 1½ to 2-inch chunks. Combine the scallions, garlic, ginger, salt, white pepper, Shaoxing wine, sesame oil, and soy sauce in a medium bowl. Add the chicken and toss to coat.

Cover and marinate in the fridge for at least 4 hours or overnight.

An hour before cooking, remove the chicken from the fridge and bring to room temperature.

Meanwhile, make the breading: Crush the sesame seeds with the sugar using a mortar and pestle, or pulse in a food processor, until a coarse powder forms. Mix the sesame seed mixture with the potato starch and cumin in a shallow bowl. Set aside.

Make the cumin salt:

Stir together and set aside.

Make the lemon mayo, if using:

Combine the mayo, lemon juice, and garlic in a small bowl. Refrigerate until you’re ready to serve.

Fry the chicken:

Heat 2 inches neutral oil to 335° F in a large, deep, heavy pot. Set a wire cooling rack inside a baking sheet, and line a large plate with a few layers of paper towels.

Prepare another one for after frying.

Working in batches, remove the chicken from the marinade, letting any liquid drip off each piece, and place the chicken in breading mix. Flip to coat thoroughly in the breading, then set on first prepared wire rack.

When the oil reaches 335° F, gently coat the chicken with more breading mixture, then carefully slip it into the hot oil. Fry for 90 seconds or until the chicken is pale golden and slightly puffy, then transfer to the second wire rack using a slotted spoon.

Repeat the breading and frying process with the remaining chicken, allowing the oil to reach 335° F between batches and using a slotted spoon to remove any loose breading from the oil.

Once the initial frying is complete, increase the oil temperature to 350° F.

Fry each batch again for 3 to 5 minutes, gently turning occasionally, until the chicken is evenly golden brown and has an internal temperature of at least 165° F.

Place the fried chicken on the paper towel-lined plate to drain, then sprinkle with the cumin salt.

Serve with the lemon mayonnaise if desired.

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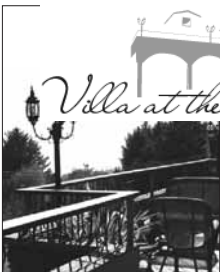
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The Korean thriller *Hope* is a creature feature to the tilt

By Jake Coyle
AP Film Writer

Na Hong-jin makes chase movies and it can be incredible where they go. His latest, *Hope*, is his biggest and wildest movie yet. But despite its heft in scale and run time, it rarely pauses to take a breath. Though some of Na's contemporaries are better known in the west, the South Korean writer-director has for two decades been a must-see filmmaker for breathless spectacles laced with pointed satire and scruffy humanity. His appropriately titled 2008 debut, *The Chaser*, focused on a pimp and former police officer trying to find a missing sex worker in a helter-skelter search through nocturnal Seoul. Since then, the headlong pursuits of Na have grown more expansive and extreme. A gambling-addicted taxi driver on the run (2010's *The Yellow Sea*). A police officer hunting down the cause of a disease outbreak in rural Korea (2016's *The Wailing*). The scope of *Hope*, his first film in a decade, is so vast that Na spent two years in post-production toiling over it before premiering it at the Cannes Film Festival in May — in a slightly different cut than is now arriving in theaters. As if a 156-minute run time wasn't enough, it was also made with a sequel in mind. But through those two-and-a-half-plus hours, *Hope* hurtles its way through genres the way the Kool-Aid Man crashed through walls. It is not always a smooth ride. The CGI in *Hope* won't win any awards. And the movie is overlong, sapping some of its momentum. But it is often thrillingly shape-shifting: a gloriously unwieldy spectacle that fuses monster movie and science fiction into a blistering and bonkers saga of otherness — human and otherwise. Signs reading "Protect the nation against infiltration" can be seen in the town of Hope Harbor on the South Korean side of the Demilitarized Zone. There, the local police chief Bum-seok (Hwang Jung-min) is investigating a mysterious animal attack. The best guess of a group of hunters led by Sung-ki (Zo In-Sung) is that a tiger has made it through barbed wire fields from North Korea. Bum-seok, though, is soon on the trail of something



evidently much larger and more destructive than a loose tiger. Long before he — or we — get a look at what's running amok, he chases through the rubble wake with increasing trepidation. Expletives make up almost all his breathless dialogue. It will be almost an hour before we get a look at what he's after. Once we do, it's a bit of a letdown. The CGI makeup of the creature — a towering but lean and sinewy alien that sometimes stands tall and sometimes runs on all fours (played in motion capture by Cameron Britton) — is a little schlocky in design. But it's telling that Na's movie turns on a slow-motion close-up, when Bum-seok recognizes something like pain in the eyes of the marauding monster. Na's movies have never been particularly kind to the authorities; they're usually shown as either incompetent or corrupt. In *Hope*, they're mostly bumbling or way out of their depth. But Bum-seok is at least charging forward, albeit not with as much panache as his fellow officer Sung-ae (Hoyeon). She joins the chase midway, elegantly speeding into the fray in a squad car while shooting out the window. This is the big-screen debut of Hoyeon, of "Squid Game," and, from the very first moment, she's winning. After the chase — which runs for the better part of an hour — Bum-seok and Sung-ae begin trying to investigate

ALIEN INFILTRATION. This image released by Neon shows Hoyeon, foreground, and Hwang Jung-min in a scene from *Hope*. Director Na Hong-jin makes chase movies and it can be incredible where they go. His latest, *Hope*, is his biggest and wildest movie yet. (Neon via AP) what they've encountered. It's probably the baggiest part of the film but it's also when Na is at his most mischievous. There is, for example, the medical examination of the alien's corpse, carried out not with calm precision but with a chain saw. And then there's the unforgettable eyewitness account of a villager who's seen the aliens in the forest — while terrified, crouching in hiding, and trying to hold back diarrhea. In vain, it turns out. You could chalk up such digressions in *Hope* to the devilish hijinks of Na. But they also reflect Na's insistence on making a human-scaled movie — a funny, farcical, ridiculous one — even in increasingly sci-fi extremes. That sensibility makes *Hope*, shot handsomely by cinematographer Hong Kyung-pyo (*Parasite*, *Burning*), very much its own, unpredictable thing despite its familiar genre setup. The film, meanwhile, shifts to the separate, ongoing search in the woods by Sung-ki and the hunters. There, we learn more about the extraterrestrial visitors. In a cross-species leap of empathy, *Hope* begins shifting to their perspective, too. The leading figures are played by a trio of Hollywood stars (Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander, Taylor Russell) though they're unrecognizable under so much CGI-rendered alien skin. Well into the movie, their sounds get subtitles of their own, and the empathy of *Hope* begins stretching into the cosmos. Whether Na's film, said to be the most expensive Korean film ever made, gets a follow-up remains to be seen. But for now, we get the movie's grand, galloping finale. Up until then, *Hope* is mostly a cluttered film. Production designer Lee Hwok-young delights in the debris of destruction. Yet *Hope* clears out for a sensational, open-road, wide-expanse chase scene that's one of the most exhilarating and ludicrous sequence of the year. Should Na continue this saga? That final sequence has you hoping. *Hope*, a Neon release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for strong bloody violent content and language throughout. In Korean with English subtitles.

Global customers crave texture, challenging companies to make crispier, gooier, chewier foods

Continued from page 12 chewy bite-sized squares filled with fizzing candy, went on sale earlier this year. Ferrara-owned Brach's plans to introduce jelly beans with a crunchy exterior for Easter next year. Weiner said layers of texture create contrasts, which heighten people's perceptions of indulgence and quality and encourage them to pay closer attention to what they're eating. "It's a world of overstimulation that we're living in, right?" Weiner said. "Oftentimes, if consumers are snacking as they're scrolling or going through these mindless activities, texture can help break

through and help stimulate and offer a sensory engagement." **Delivered meals and a desire for healthier foods are expected to keep texture in focus** Meeting consumers' texture demands and preferences is a growing challenge for the food industry. McDonald's, which released new McCrispy chicken strips in May 2025, changed the recipe this year after customers said the strips weren't crispy enough. The rise of meal delivery has left restaurants searching for ways to ensure food retains its texture while it's in transit, Kalotis said. Ingredion has developed

potato starch-based coatings that can keep french fries crispy for 30 minutes; it's working on extending the time to 45 minutes, he said. Food companies are trying to find ways to make products healthier or more affordable by changing ingredients without disturbing familiar textures. For example, Ingredion makes additives that help keep reduced-sugar yogurt creamy. Zegler, at Mintel, sees a lot of innovation ahead for texture. She expects companies to explore the texture needs of different populations, like older people. Snack foods will keep getting more layers, she said.

Ferrara last year brought out Nerds Juicy Gummy Clusters, which added a liquid center to the original two-layer candy. In the meantime, Kalotis said, food companies need to do a better job of illustrating and explaining textures on product packaging. Mintel found that 59% of packaged foods introduced in the U.S. this year had no textural claims on their labels despite customers actively seeking out foods with novel physical properties. "In a lot of ways, texture is one of the most powerful and yet somehow underrated parts of the food experience," Kalotis said. "It makes a snack more satisfying."

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Forgotten Island is a trippy ode to friendship set against rich Filipino folklore

By Mark Kennedy
AP Entertainment Writer

Of all the magical portals that transport you to another world, *Forgotten Island* may have the cutest. It's not a brick tunnel like *Spirited Away* or a hidden door like *Coraline* or even C.S. Lewis' famous wardrobe. In this movie, it's a sand dollar.

That humble beach staple is the key to unlocking what surely is the richest, busiest, and trippiest animated movie of the year, one that leans into Filipino folklore to tell a story about friendship. Our advice to moviegoers? Pick up the sand dollar.

Written and directed by Joel Crawford and Januel Mercado — the same team behind *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* — *Forgotten Island* creates a fantastical universe for things like an eight-foot-tall, 200-year-old demon baby with three eyes; an obnoxious, shallow merman with singing nipples; and a legion of adorable mushroom warriors. It's recommended that you not attend this stoned. (Or maybe you should?)

All this is drawn from the mythology of the Philippines, clearly fertile soil that will stun the uninitiated. Pair these creatures with a cinematic style that's ultra-kinetic — mixing elements of anime and manga, along with 1990s street art, video games, and classic Hanna-Barbera — and you get a visually arresting buffet with fart jokes. It makes *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* look as quaint as *Up*.

The plot is established early: Two slightly unhinged schoolgirls — Jo, pure fun-seeking, and Raissa, responsible, determined, maybe too determined — meet after being sent to the principal's office and realize they both share a fascination with Nakalimutan, the mythical island where all the creatures of Filipino folklore live.

We watch this deep, quirky friendship grow — “You had me at disembowelment,” one says to the other — until a fateful night when the now-young women must part. Raissa's going to Caltech in America and leaving Jo, a wannabe artist who toils in fast food mascot jobs. “How can a rocket fly with a boulder attached to it?” Raissa's disapproving mom says to her daughter.

Their friendship — measured by the massive number of charms attached to their friendship bracelets, each one representing a shared adventure — faces its sternest test, and that's when they find the sand dollar. It sends them to Nakalimutan.

Jo (voiced by the singer-songwriter H.E.R.) and Raissa (Liza Soberano) wake up in this very foreign land with their memories wiped. Raissa weirdly has half her hair shaved off and a pair of wings, while Jo has a strange tattoo and a crown. They have to piece together what happened, like a *Memento* for middle schoolers. Then they



WEIRD & WONDROUS. Pictured in these images released by DreamWorks Animation are (clockwise from top left) Jo, voiced by H.E.R., left, and Raissa, voiced by Liza Soberano; Manang, voiced by Lea Salonga; and Jo, sitting on a beach, in scenes from *Forgotten Island*. (DreamWorks Animation/Universal Pictures via AP)

have to find a way back home.

The voice cast also includes Jenny Slate as a memory stealing demon, Ronny Chieng as the deliciously named King Truffle Wuffle, Joy Koy as the leader of tree giants, and Lea Salonga as a fearsome vampiric creature with yellow cat eyes who can detach her torso from her lower body. Dave Franco also plays an anxious, bro-ey were-dog whose loyalty isn't always clear.

Forgotten Island is sort of a mess, in the best way. There are jokes about Tom Cruise, Will Smith's Oscar slap and, weirdly, footage of Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Predator*. It incorporates the Tagalog language, energy drinks, and flaming Cheetos; Post-its, a score with indigenous Filipino instruments, boisterous karaoke as well as Journey's “Don't Stop Believing”; and INXS' “Never Tear Us Apart” — twice! It's a world where “Who Let the Dogs Out” mixes with Filipino pop and a large wooden chicken posing as a Trojan Horse. It can be a lot.

They might be in their mind-blowing childhood paradise, but Jo and Raissa haven't resolved their adult differences and inevitably fight — “You have a future. I don't,” says Jo. The final third of the movie is them struggling to recapture their memories, including the ones they've built together.

Forgotten Island is a movie about forgetting as much as it is about remembering and you'll likely walk out wanting to text your bestie, asap. Do it. Let a sand dollar reconnect you.

Forgotten Island, a DreamWorks Animation release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for “animated sequences of scary action, language, rude humor, thematic elements, some violence, and brief tobacco imagery.” Running time: 95 minutes.



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3						2		6
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Difficulty level: Medium

#32621

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 #52738 (Easy)

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

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

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Events calendar

“Boundless: Stories of Asian Art”

Currently on view, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Seattle Asian Art Museum (1400 E Prospect St, in Volunteer Park, Seattle). View “Boundless: Stories of Asian Art,” a display highlighting themes central to arts and societies of Asia, such as worship and celebration, visual arts and literature, and clothing and identity. The museum’s south galleries feature art inspired by spiritual life and the north galleries show art inspired by material life. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 654-3210 or visit <www.seattleartmuseum.org>.

I-5 Southbound 24/7 closure

Through Oct 16, I-5 South near the Rose Quarter. I-5 South though the Rose Quarter corridor is currently closed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for safety and congestion improvements where I-5, I-84, and I-405 converge and for the reconnection project of the Albina neighborhood. The construction closure is expected to continue through roughly October 16. (The actual I-5 closure dates are subject to change.) For info, call ODOT at (503) 470-3127, e-mail <i5RoseQuarter@odot.oregon.gov>, or visit <www.i5rosequarter.org>. To submit noise complaints, call (503) 276-7808.

“TITANIC: The Artifact Exhibition”

Through Oct 18, 9:30am-5:30pm (Tue-Fri), 9:30am-7pm (Sat), 9:30am-5:30pm (Sun), Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (1945 SE Water Ave, Portland). View “TITANIC: The Artifact Exhibition,” a display of more than 100 authentic artifacts recovered from the wrecksite of the famous ship that embarked on her first and final journey in April of 1912. The exhibit reveals science and engineering in the early 20th century; a glimpse into the lives of the people whose journeys were forever changed by her voyage; and the contemporary effort to recover artifacts and conserve the wrecksite. In a first for West Coast audiences, the exhibit features a sweeping Immersive Gallery that brings the ship to life by pairing cinematic visuals with audio reenactments of passenger and crew accounts of *Titanic*’s grandeur, society, and tragedy. An optional VR tour immerses guests in the sights, sounds, and emotions of *Titanic*, including historically accurate views of previously unseen areas of the ship. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 797-4000 or visit <www.oms.edu>.

“Standing for Justice: The Japanese Americans Shaping Oregon”

Through Oct 25, 10am-4pm (Wed-Sat), 11am-4pm (Sun), Japanese American Museum of Oregon at the Naito Center (411 NW Flanders St, Portland). View “Standing for Justice: The Japanese Americans Shaping Oregon,” an exhibit reflecting on two milestones in U.S. history — the nation’s 250th anniversary and the 50th anniversary of the termination of Executive Order 9066 — and what does democracy mean when it is denied, challenged, and ultimately restored. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 224-1458, or visit <www.jamo.org> or <www.oregon250.org>.

Shima Star: “Dance With Color”

Through Oct 31, noon-5pm (Thu-Sat); Oct 24, 4-6pm (reception); meet & greet (Oct 31, noon-4pm); Gallery 110 (110 Third Ave S, Seattle). View “Dance With Color,” an exhibit by interdisciplinary artist Shima Star that celebrates unity in community through an iterative cycle of painting, photography, digital transformation, printing, collage, and gestural mark-making. As an observer of social dynamics, Star uses layering, reinvention, and continuous transformation to explore how personal narratives, cultural traditions, and human relationships intersect and evolve, illuminating the potential for deeper connection and collective unity across diverse communities. A meet & greet with the artist is scheduled for October 31 from noon to 4:00pm. For info, call (206) 624-9336 or visit <www.gallery110.com>.

MAiZE at The Pumpkin Patch

Through Oct 31 (daily), 10am-6pm, The Pumpkin Patch (16525 NW Gillihan Rd, Portland). Get lost in a maze made of maize at the popular annual Sauvie Island event in which a labyrinth is created in a field of tall corn. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 621-7110 or visit <www.portlandmaize.com>.

“Lion Reborn”

Through Nov 1, 10am-5:30pm, Lan Su Chinese Garden (239 NW Everett St, Portland). View “Lion Reborn,” an exhibit by local artists Joshua Sin and Lark Pien that explores the rich and layered history of one of China’s most enduring traditions: the lion dance. Attendees learn about the martial arts roots of the traditional Chinese lion dance before wandering deeper into the garden taking in the art pieces. Through various mediums, Joshua Sin and Lark Pien interpret well-known Chinese cultural



MIN JIN LEE. A talk featuring Min Jin Lee in conversation with journalist and author Mitchell S. Jackson takes place on October 9 at the Patricia Reser Center for the Arts in Beaverton, Oregon. (Photo courtesy of the author)

practices, philosophy, and symbols — from kung fu and qigong to relationships and spirituality. On Fridays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, visitors are invited to watch artist Joshua Sin build a traditional Chinese lion head from scratch during a live demonstration. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 228-8131 or visit <www.lansugarden.org>.

“Honoring Oregon’s Chinese American Veterans & Active-Duty Service Members”

Through Nov 15, 11am-3pm (Thu-Sun), Portland Chinatown Museum (127 NW Third Ave, Portland). “Honoring Oregon’s Chinese American Veterans & Active-Duty Service Members,” a current project at the Portland Chinatown Museum’s Memory Lab, is a temporary display of community knowledge of Chinatown’s past and its community. As part of celebrations honoring the 250th anniversary of America, the Memory Lab is seeking military portraits (formal and informal, in uniform) of Chinese American veterans and all active-duty servicemen and women from Oregon, including veterans of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War / Operation Desert Storm, the War in Afghanistan, and the Iraq War. For info, or to contribute to the exhibit, call (503) 224-0008 or visit <www.portlandchinatownmuseum.org>.

“Anish Kapoor: Dissolving Margins”

Through Dec 5, 11am-5pm (Tue-Wed & Fri-Sat), 11am-7pm (Thu); Oct 22, 4pm (reception); Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA) at Portland State University (1855 SW Broadway, Portland). View “Anish Kapoor: Dissolving Margins, From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation,” a decade-spanning survey of the artist’s printmaking practice featuring more than 150 unique works. The free exhibit, Kapoor’s first retrospective survey dedicated to his printmaking, reflect his long-standing interest in iteration, variation, form, and color — all of which are central tenets of his artistic practice. For info, call (503) 725-8013 or visit <www.pdx.edu/museum-of-art>.

“DISplace”

Through Jan 4, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sat), Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). View “DISplace,” an exhibit featuring visual art by regional Native Hawaiian creatives; family stories and ephemera; historic photographs; and archival objects that honor these histories and reclaim the narrative through the voices of families and individual descendants today. Co-curated by Native Hawaiian artist and kapa-maker Lehuauakea and artist and educator Kanani Miyamoto, the display sheds light on the often-overlooked histories and movement of people who connect Hawai‘i and the Pacific Northwest. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

“The Sky Is a Diasporic Space”

Through Spring 2027, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). View “The Sky Is a Diasporic Space,” an exhibit by YouthCAN exploring collective memory through art. In response to ongoing attacks on migrant communities, students created original works while learning how creativity has supported solidarity movements globally. The display features block prints, kites, oral histories, and more. These personal mementos and works by the youth experiment with the world-building possibilities of cataloguing our own lives and the importance of our own stories. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

“Ten Thousand Things”

Through Spring 2027, 10am-5pm (Wed-Sun), Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (719 S King St, Seattle). View “Ten Thousand Things,” an exploration of the objects that shape our identities, histories, and cultural narratives curated by podcast host and former civic poet Shin Yu Pai. Museum visitors are able to explore objects highlighted in the podcast alongside newly collected artifacts and stories from local communities. Featured artists include Pai, Anida Yoeu Al, Etsuko Ichikawa, Susie Kozawa, Serena Chopra, Tomo Nakayama, Stewart Wong, Paul Miyahara, and many others. For

info, or to purchase tickets, call (206) 623-5124 or visit <www.wingluke.org>.

“Finding Home: The Chinese American West”

Through Sep 5, 10am-5pm (Wed & Fri-Sun), 10am-8pm (Thu), Tacoma Art Museum (1701 Pacific Ave, Tacoma, Wash.). View “Finding Home: The Chinese American West,” an exhibit by artists Monyee Chau, Zhi Lin, and Mian Situ about the history of racism and violence against the Chinese in America — specifically Tacoma’s exclusionary past — in addition to the artists’ views of Chinese immigrants finding a sense of home and hope and persevering despite hardship. The display explores the spiritual, the mythical, and the laborious path of these seekers of the American dream in a counter-narrative to the conventional picture of America’s history. The featured artworks were created in the 21st century, though they imagine the time of 1785 (when the first Chinese immigrants arrived) to 1912 (the end of the American frontier period). For info, or to purchase tickets, call (253) 272-4258 or visit <www.tacomaartmuseum.org>.

Watanabe Sadao

Through Sep 26, 10am-5pm (Tue-Sun), Portland Art Museum (1219 SW Park Ave, Portland). Experience the artistry of Watanabe Sadao (1913-1996), who developed a unique stencil printing process based on traditional Japanese textile dyeing techniques. Tracing Watanabe’s distinctive methods and expressive power over several decades, the exhibit explores the artist’s alignment with the twentieth-century mingei (folk art) movement, which emphasized the beauty of handmade, everyday objects created from natural materials. Works on display will rotate halfway through the exhibit’s run. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 226-2811 or visit <www.portlandartmuseum.org>.

International Walk + Roll to School Day

Oct 7. Join the fun at International Walk + Roll to School Day, a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and rolling to school on the same day. For info, call (503) 823-4000 or 311, e-mail <saferoutes@portland.oregon.gov>, or visit <www.portland.gov/transportation>.

Tet Trung Thu

Oct 7, 5-7pm, Midland Library (805 SE 122nd Ave, Portland). Celebrate Tet Trung Thu (the Mid-Autumn Festival), one of the oldest holidays in many parts of Asia at which families gather in harmony and unity from thousands of miles apart. Festival activities include music, crafting, performances, and more. For info, call (503) 988-5123 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

Min Jin Lee

Oct 9, 7:30-9pm, Patricia Reser Center for the Arts (12625 SW Crescent St, Beaverton, Ore.). Attend a talk with Min Jin Lee, the author of beloved novels *Pachinko* and *Free Food for Millionaires*, about her new book, *American Hagwon*. The event features the author in conversation with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Mitchell S. Jackson. For info, call (503) 227-2583 or (971) 501-7722. To purchase tickets, visit <www.literary-arts.org> or <www.thereser.org>.

Repair Café

Oct 10, noon-3pm, Leaven Community Center (5431 NE 20th Ave, Portland). Repair PDX is holding a Repair Café in northeast Portland. Volunteers are on hand fixing small appliances and jewelry, mending garments and textiles, sharpening tools and knives, and repairing bikes on a first-come, first-served basis. For info, or to let volunteers know in advance what items you might bring in, call (503) 893-9656, e-mail <RepairPDX@gmail.com>, or visit <www.RepairPDX.org>.

Mid-Autumn Festival at Midland Library

Oct 10, 2-4pm, Midland Library (805 SE 122nd Ave, Portland). Celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, a beloved holiday across many parts of Asia that honors time together with family and friends, by attending the festivities at Midland Library. For info, call (503) 988-5123 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

Indian classical instrumental music

Oct 10, 7pm, First Baptist Church (909 SW 11th Ave, Portland). Attend an Indian classical instrumental music concert presented by Kalakendra. The performance features Vinay Desai on santoor, Jai Gandhi on Hindustani flute, and Vikas Yendluri on tabla. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 308-1050 or visit <www.kalakendra.org>.

OBT Sukiyaki Bazaar

Oct 11 (deadline to preorder food). Preorder food for the Oregon Buddhist Temple’s (OBT) annual Sukiyaki Bazaar, scheduled for October 25 from noon to 3:00pm at the Oregon Buddhist Temple (3720 SE 34th Ave, near SE Powell Blvd, Portland). Options include sukiyaki, rice, and tsukemono. For info, call (503) 234-9456, e-mail <obtwebmaster@gmail.com>, or visit <www.oregonbuddhisttemple.com/fallbazaar>.

Deadline to register to vote in Oregon

Oct 13 (last day to register to vote in Oregon). Oregon residents must register to vote by Tuesday, October 13 in order to participate in the November 3 election. To be eligible to register, a potential voter must be a resident of Oregon, a citizen of the United States, and at least 16 years of age. Counties in Oregon begin mailing ballots to active voters on October 14. To learn how to register, visit <www.oregonvotes.org> or go to your county elections office.

Great Oregon Shakeout

Oct 15, 10:15am, Washington, Idaho, California, and British Columbia. Join the Great Shakeout earthquake drill on “10/15 at 10:15.” The simultaneous drill, which aims to emphasize the importance of emergency preparedness at home, school, and the workplace within the Cascadia Subduction earthquake zone, encourages participants to “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” for one minute. For info, call (503) 378-2911. To learn more, or to register a group for the shakeout, visit <www.shakeout.org/oregon> or <www.oregon.gov/oem>.

Portland Timbers 2

Oct 16, 7pm, Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison)
Continued on page 17

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TheAsianReporter>.**

Events calendar

Continued from page 16

St, Portland). Watch Portland Timbers 2 (T2), the Timbers’ MLS NEXT Pro affiliate, compete against St. Louis City 2 in Western Conference quarterfinal playoff action. 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>.

“Steep & Paint”

Oct 16 & 30, Nov 13 & 20, Dec 4 & 18, Jan 8 & 22, 1-4pm, Lan Su Chinese Garden (239 NW Everett St, Portland). Attend the “Steep & Paint” series at Lan Su. In partnership with Oregon Botanical Artists (OBA), the immersive afternoon experience invites guests to slow down, look closely, and connect with plants through tea, conversation, and hands-on art-making. Each session weaves together horticulture, tea culture, and botanical art. All materials are included. For info, or to purchase tickets (required), call (503) 228-8131 or visit <www.lansugarden.org>.

Portland Timbers

Oct 17 & 24, 7:30pm, Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch the Portland Timbers take on the Colorado Rapids (Oct 17) and Charlotte FC (Oct 24) in Major League Soccer action. Both matches include celebrations in honor of the 100th anniversary of Providence Park. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.portlandtimbers.com>.

VSO: Piano Extravaganza

Oct 18, 3pm, First Presbyterian Church (4300 Main St, Vancouver, Wash.). The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO) is beginning its 2026/2027 Nien-Wei Hsiao Chamber Music Series with a Piano Extravaganza program. The concert features pieces by Robert Schumann and William Bolcom. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (360) 735-7278 or visit <www.vancouversymphony.org>.

KAIDAN

Oct 22-24 & 30; Oct 22-24, Seattle Open Arts Place (S.O.A.P.) (1406 18th Ave, Seattle); Oct 30, Hugo House (1111 East Olive, Seattle). Attend KAIDAN, a fusion of traditional Japanese storytelling with American physical theatre presented by Za Trans-Pacific Productions. The frightening yet melancholy stories of the unseen world that reflect the culture and history of Japan are recommended for patrons age 13 and older. Performances on October 22, 23, and 30 begin at 7:30pm; a 2:00pm matinee takes place October 24. For info, or to purchase tickets, visit <www.ztpproductions.com>.

Indian classical instrumental music

Oct 23, 7pm, First Baptist Church (909 SW 11th Ave, Portland). Attend an Indian classical instrumental music concert presented by Kalakendra. The performance features Indradeep Ghosh on Hindustani violin with Gourisankar Karmakar on tabla. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 308-1050 or visit <www.kalakendra.org>.

Portland Thorns FC

Oct 23, 7pm, Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch Portland Thorns FC take on the Houston Dash in the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL). The Thorns FC squad features Sam Hiatt and others. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.thorns.com>.

Joe Kye & Shannon Stewart

Oct 23-24, 7:30pm, Reed College, Greenwood Theater (3203 SE Woodstock Blvd, Portland). Join Joe Kye and Shannon Stewart for a double-header of boundary-pushing pieces about history, identity, politics, and the importance of experimental art in telling stories, presented by Risk/Reward. The Greenwood Theater is located off the West Parking Lot on S.E. 28th Avenue between S.E. Woodstock and S.E. Steele Street. For info, or to purchase tickets, visit <www.risk-reward.org>.

“Free Day Series”

Oct 25 & Dec 13, 10am-4pm, World Forestry Center Discovery Museum (4033 SW Canyon Rd, Portland). Take advantage of free admission during the World Forestry Center’s 60th-anniversary year. During the center’s “Free Day Series,” visitors of all ages are invited to explore the museum, participate in hands-on activities, and connect with partners focused on forestry, wildfire preparedness, and environmental education at no charge. For info, call (503) 228-1367 or visit <www.worldforestry.org>.

Deadline to register to vote in Washington

Oct 26 (last day to register to vote in Washington). Washington residents must register to vote by October 26 (eight



RISK/REWARD. Joe Kye (pictured) and Shannon Stewart are performing a double-header of boundary-pushing pieces about history, identity, politics, and the importance of experimental art in telling stories at Reed College’s Greenwood Theater on October 23 and 24. (Photo courtesy of Risk/Reward)

days before Election Day) in order to participate in the November 3 election. To qualify to register to vote in Washington state, a potential voter must be a U.S. citizen, not be disqualified from voting due to a court order, not currently serving a sentence of total confinement under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections for a Washington felony conviction, not currently incarcerated for a federal or out-of-state felony conviction, and more. To learn more about voting eligibility, visit <www.sos.wa.gov/elections/voters/helpful-information/current-election-information>.

The American Story Live: 250 Years of Becoming

Oct 30, 7:30pm, Patricia Reser Center for the Arts (12625 SW Crescent St, Beaverton, Ore.). Attend *The American Story Live*, an evening of storytelling and music in celebration of America’s 250th anniversary. The event is co-presented by the Immigrant Story and the Patricia Reser Center for the Arts in collaboration with the Portland Opera. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (971) 501-7722 or visit <www.thereser.org>.

Oregon Koto-Kai Fall Concert

Nov 1, 2:30pm (concert), 2pm (doors open), Portland State University, Lincoln Performance Hall, Room 75 (1620 SW Park Ave, Portland). Attend the fall koto concert of Oregon Koto-Kai. For info, e-mail <info@oregonkotokai.org> or visit <www.oregonkotokai.org>. To buy tickets, call (503) 725-3305 or visit <https://portlandstate.universitytickets.com>.

Portland Timbers

Nov 1, 6:30pm, Providence Park (SW 18th Ave & SW Morrison St, Portland). Watch the Portland Timbers take on the Houston Dynamo in Major League Soccer action. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 553-5555 or visit <www.portlandtimbers.com>.

Portland Book Festival

Nov 2-8, South Park Blocks & other venues (Portland). (Portland). Attend Literary Arts’ Portland Book Festival, a city-wide celebration of books and stories. Held on ten stages at partner venues in downtown Portland, the festival features author discussions, music, visual art, workshops, and culinary experiences. The festival’s main gathering on November 7 includes more than 100 local, regional, and nationally acclaimed authors, workshops, pop-up readings, an exhibitor fair, and more. For info, call (503) 227-2583. To purchase tickets (required), visit <www.pdxbookfest.org> or <www.literary-arts.org>.

Hung Dance

Nov 5-7, 7:30pm, Patricia Reser Center for the Arts (12625 SW Crescent St, Beaverton, Ore.). Watch a performance of traditional Chinese arts — including tai chi, Peking Opera, and classical Chinese music — with current dance techniques and electronic music by Hung Dance. “Birdy,” choreographer Lai Hung-chung’s signature work for Hung Dance, moves between suspense and explosive energy, between the weight of tradition and the pull toward something new. The show, which is

presented in partnership with the Patricia Reser Center for the Arts, runs 60 minutes with no intermission. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (971) 501-7722 or visit <www.thereser.org>.

Chrysanthemum Festival

Nov 5-22, 10am-4pm (daily), Lan Su Chinese Garden (239 NW Everett St, Portland). Celebrate the beauty and cultural significance of chrysanthemums at the 2026 Chrysanthemum Festival. The flowers hold a rich and storied history in Chinese culture, symbolizing traits such as longevity, nobility, and endurance. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 228-8131 or visit <www.lansugarden.org>.

“Diwali: Lights of India”

Nov 7, Seattle Center (305 Harrison St, Seattle). Enjoy “Diwali: Lights of India,” presented by Seattle Center Festál in partnership with NorthWest Share. Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is a major cultural celebration observed throughout India every fall. The event features music; classical and folk dances; visual arts galleries and workshops; spice-making and roti-making; face painting; a puppet show; demonstrations; and more. For info, or to obtain hours, call (206) 684-7200, or visit <www.seattlecenter.com> or <www.nwshare.org>.

Seattle Hmong New Year

Nov 14, Seattle Center (305 Harrison St, Seattle). Attend the Seattle Hmong New Year, a free cultural festival highlighting presentations, performances, intricate clothing, dance, food, and more. The event, which celebrates the end of the harvest season, is presented by Seattle Center Festál in partnership with the Hmong Association of Washington. For info, or to obtain hours, call (206) 684-7200, or visit <www.seattlecenter.com> or <www.hmongofwa.org>.

Indian classical instrumental music

Nov 14, 7pm, First Baptist Church (909 SW 11th Ave, Portland). Attend a Carnatic saxophone concert presented by Kalakendra. The performance features Prasant Radhakrishnan on Carnatic saxophone with Shiva Ramamurthi on violin and Rohan Krishnamurthy on mridangam. For info, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 308-1050 or visit <www.kalakendra.org>.

Portland Taiko

Nov 14-15, 7pm (Sat), 2pm (Sun), Portland State University, Lincoln Performance Hall, Room 75 (1620 SW Park Ave, Portland). Attend the fall concert of Asian-American drum ensemble Portland Taiko. The theme for the performance, which features the big drums, is *kaeru*. In Japanese, *kaeru* has multiple meanings — to return home or to transform, and also, frog. The show includes pieces inspired by the Pacific Northwest, the city of Portland, and the idea of home. To pay by check or to purchase tickets with ticketing fees, e-mail <info@portlandtaiko.org>. For info, call (503) 28TAIKO (288-2456) or visit <www.portlandtaiko.org>.

The Outsiders

Nov 17-24, Keller Auditorium (222 SW Clay St, Portland). Watch *The Outsiders*, a musical adapted from the seminal novel and iconic film that won the 2024 Tony Award for Best Musical. The production, which is presented by Broadway in Portland and is recommended for attendees age 10 and above, runs 2 hours, 30 minutes with one intermission. Children younger than 5 years old are not permitted. The show contains flashing lights, periods of darkness, loud noises, theatrical haze, and herbal cigarettes. It also includes scenes involving suicide, domestic abuse, and violence. For info, showtimes, or to purchase tickets, call (503) 248-4335, or visit <www.portland5.com> or <www.broadwayinportland.com>.



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BIDS, SUB-BIDS & PUBLIC NOTICES

INVITATION TO BID

CITY OF MILWAUKIE
SEWER LINING PROJECTS

Bids due: October 14, 2026

City of Milwaukie is seeking sealed bids from qualified and experienced contractors for rehabilitating approximately 2500 linear feet of Sanitary Sewer Pipe. The work includes providing all labor, materials, machinery, tools, equipment and other means of construction necessary and incidental to the completion of the work shown on the plans and described in specifications including but not limited to:

- Approximately 2500 Linear feet of Sanitary Sewer Pipes will be rehabilitated using Ultraviolet Cured-in-Place-Pipe Lining technologies.
- All work must be completed by March 31, 2027

City’s engineers estimate for this project ranges from \$934,000 to \$1,090,000.

City utilizes Euna Procurement Bonfire for its electronic procurement system. To access the solicitation documents, be added to the distribution list for this solicitation’s automatic notices, and to submit bids and other required documents electronically, please visit <<https://milwaukieoregon.bonfirehub.com/>> to login or register.

This project is a public works project subject to the State of Oregon prevailing wage rates under ORS 279C.800 to 279C.870. No bid will be considered unless the bid contains a statement by the bidder that the provisions required by ORS 279C.838 or ORS 279C.840, as applicable, pertaining to prevailing wages, shall be included as part of the awarded contract. Each bid must contain a statement as to whether the bidder is a resident bidder, as defined in ORS 279A.120.

All bids must be submitted in the prescribed form and said manner outlined in the solicitation. Bids shall be accompanied by a certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond made payable to the City of Milwaukie in an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the total bid amount.

Bids will be received until 2:00pm PDT on Wednesday, October 14, 2026. Bids submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. The public opening of bids will be held by videoconference.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

RFQ 48-26: FOURTH PLAIN BLVD. MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Notice is hereby given that the City of Vancouver, Washington is interested in receiving proposals from consulting firms with expertise in design and engineering, environmental compliance, utility coordination, right-of-way (ROW) services, assistance with the public involvement process and other related professional services for the Fourth Plain Blvd Mobility Improvements Project. The agreement will be for approximately five years in duration with the option for the City to extend it for additional time and money if necessary.

The City reserves the right to amend terms of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to circulate various addenda, or to withdraw the RFQ at any time, regardless of how much time and effort consultants have spent on their responses.

Project description:

The City is soliciting the services of a qualified consultant team to perform design and engineering, environmental compliance, utility coordination, right-of-way (ROW) services (including acquisition when ROW funding becomes available), assistance with the public involvement process and other related professional services for the Fourth Plain Boulevard Mobility Improvements Project.

Professional services will include:

- The design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Geotechnical investigation and structural design (walls)
- Surface water and stormwater design
- Traffic signal design, lighting design
- Landscape design
- ROW plan development for permanent and temporary acquisition, pre-acquisition services, property owner coordination
- Final ROW services such as negotiations, acquisition and coordinating final payments to property owners
- Environmental evaluation and documentation
- Utility design and agency coordination regarding relocation
- Assistance with public involvement
- Design services during construction

The Consultant will provide a final plans, specifications and estimate (PS&E) package.

Evaluation Criteria:

*Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the following criteria:
Each proposal shall include:*

1. Required Forms

- a. Certification of Restrictions on Lobbying
- b. Non-Collusion Affidavit
- c. Certification Regarding Ineligible Contractors
- d. WSDOT Audited Indirect Cost Rate Approval - In order to qualify for this RFQ the prime consultant & all subconsultants (if any) must have WSDOT audited indirect cost rate approval and fill out, sign/date and submit the Audited Indirect Cost Rate Approval Confirmation sheet with their submittal. Failure to submit the Audited Indirect Cost Rate Approval Confirmation Sheet from the Prime and subconsultants (if applicable) will render your submittal non-responsive. You will be asked for proof of current WSDOT approval later in the selection process for your firm and any subconsultant (s) you have listed in your

submittal. The WSDOT approval letter with the approved rate on it will suffice as proof from the prime and each sub-consultant. A current letter from WSDOT allowing a provisional temporary rate will also suffice. It must be in force at the time the contract is executed. Do not submit the WSDOT letter(s) with your response. Note: No hourly rates, costs or fees, whatsoever, may be submitted with your submittal. *Current audit letter must be within the past two years.

2. Project Approach and Understanding

Information under this section should include, but not be limited to, your understanding of the City’s requirements, and a proposed project schedule and your firm’s approach:

- a. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the project by providing a concise, description of how you propose to resolve the issues identified in this RFQ.
- b. Provide a detailed description of the proposed services and the means and methods to be used to accomplish the tasks identified in the Scope of Work section. This work plan will detail team assignments and narratives of work approach and work force, and schedule of activities with time allocations.
- c. Provide a detailed description of the firm’s approach to overall project management, allocation of resources, and integration of all activities required by the Project Scope.
- d. Provide details describing lines of authority and responsibility, and how your firm will respond proactively to problems and changes to the Scope of Work.
- e. Provide a Project Schedule with, at minimum, the following:
 - Start date
 - Dates of anticipated Project events
 - Date of preliminary design completion (30% design)
 - Date of starting the final PS&E
 - Date of draft environmental evaluation completion
 - Date of initiation of right-of-way acquisition activities
 - Date of 60 Percent design documents
 - Date of 90 Percent design documents
 - Date of anticipated environmental approvals
 - Date of right-of-way acquisition completion
 - Date of 100 Percent design documents

3. Proposer Capabilities and Qualifications

Provide an overview of the Proposer’s organization, size and experience; major clients; areas of expertise; approximate number of staff assigned to the project; unique qualifications of the proposer; and other matters that the proposer feels would assist the City in the evaluation process.

- a. Provide company description; include number of years in business, size, specialties, etc.
- b. Provide name, title, brief description of duties, years of pertinent experience and availability for each staff member that will be assigned to this contract.
- c. Describe other resources your firm intends to commit to provide the required services under this contract.
- d. Describe how your firm, and the personnel assigned to this project, will perform the work required while also working on other on-going projects.
- e. Provide a list of best practices your company utilizes when making recommendations.
- f. Provide information describing previous experience with governmental agencies, preferably cities, for similar

contracts that best characterize your firm’s capabilities and work quality.

g. Provide the name and address of any sub-consultant that may perform work under this contract and what services they may provide. Include information about their pertinent experience and the name, title and brief description of duties and years of related experience for each staff member that will be assigned to this project.

4. Public Process and Coordination

The proposed approach to working with citizens, Neighborhood Associations, stakeholders, property owners, utility owners and operators and other agencies and businesses alongside City staff leading these efforts.

5. Format and Clarity of the response

The structure, accuracy, and clarity of the proposal.

The City reserves the right to conduct interviews of a short list of proposers. If the City decides to conduct interviews, the interview sessions will be evaluated in a manner similar to the proposals. Topics covered in the interview session shall include the topics listed hereinbefore under the “Submittal Criteria” section plus any additional, relevant topics which may arise during both the formal presentation and the question and answer portions of the interview.

Submittals:

Please submit one original of your Submittal online at: <<http://cityofvancouver.bonfirehub.com/>> **no later than 3:00pm, Pacific Local Time on October 21, 2026.** Submittals will not be accepted after that date and time. Any questions regarding this project should be directed to Michael Woods at <michael.woods@cityofvancouver.us>.

Title VI Statement

The City of Vancouver in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252,42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

Equal Opportunities and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

The City of Vancouver is committed to providing equal opportunities to State of Washington certified Minority, Disadvantaged and Women's Business Enterprises in contracting activities. (Section 4 of Chapter 56, Laws of 1975, 1st Ex. Sess., State of Washington).

The City of Vancouver in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), commits to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability, in all of its programs and activities. This material can be made available in alternate format by e-mailing Sr. Procurement Specialist Michael Woods at <michael.woods@cityofvancouver.us> or by calling (360) 487-8430.



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AP-KFF poll finds rural MAHA followers say Trump hasn't improved health of their communities

Continued from page 6

rural voters enrolled in employer plans or Medicare less likely to be worried. The survey found that 80% of working-age rural voters on Medicaid were very or somewhat worried about healthcare costs. Last year, Republicans passed a tax and spending bill that cut over \$900 billion in projected Medicaid spending over a decade and mandated new eligibility requirements.

In the tiny community of Lipan, Texas, west of Dallas, Kim Solis and her husband have a handyman-and-home-remodel business and get their insurance on the marketplace. Since Trump returned to office, their premium payment jumped from zero to \$166 a month. Their copays went up, and their deductibles each increased by \$2,000.

Solis, 62, said she worries what will happen if they get a big medical bill.

“Certainly, we’d be in a world of hurt trying to take money out of savings or getting it out of our 401(k) just to be able to do something about it,” she said.

Most MAHA voters are also MAGA — but not all

Like the general population, rural voters said they trust their own doctors and healthcare providers for health information over government agencies or officials, according to the poll.

Trust in Kennedy and Trump fell largely along partisan lines. About 10% of rural Democratic voters reported having a “great deal” or “fair amount” of trust in Kennedy, compared with 74% of rural Republican voters. About 5% of rural Democrats and 69% of rural Republicans said they trust Trump a “great deal” or “fair amount” for reliable health information.

While Make America Great Again and MAHA identities are “linked in a lot of ways,” the rising costs of healthcare and groceries pose a challenge for those committed to the MAHA principles that Kennedy promotes, said Peterson, the Iowa State professor.

Buying healthy food “becomes, ‘I can’t afford to do that because of Trump’s policies,’” he said.

In Stamping Ground, Kentucky, Alma Johnson, 65, works night security at a horse farm.

Johnson voted for Trump in 2016, 2020, and 2024 and said she “pretty much” likes how Trump is running the country. But she said she is not a MAGA devotee, preferring to “think for myself.”

MAHA, however, is an easy sell for Johnson because, she said, she doesn’t think people should be able to buy junk food in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

Still, she said she hasn’t seen much impact from the Trump administration’s healthcare policies, including the new food pyramid.

“It takes a long time to change people, their habits, their thoughts, or the things they do,” Johnson said.

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The Asian Reporter

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Mark your calendar!

The Year of the Sheep begins February 6, 2027.

Display advertising space reservations for our special Year of the Sheep issue are due Monday, January 18 at 5:00pm.

In China’s Taoist martial arts schools, fighting is only part of the lesson

By María Teresa Hernández
The Associated Press

SHIYAN, China — There was a time when Chinese master Yuan Shimao thought martial arts were all about punching and kicking. As a young practitioner, he focused on speed and strength.

“I trained that way for many years without becoming still enough to search within myself,” said Yuan, who founded a kung fu academy in central China in 2004.

“But as you gradually settle into stillness, you begin to understand what the scriptures mean by spirit,” he added. “You can begin to rediscover yourself.”

That process is known as “entering the Dao” in martial arts. It is a guiding principle at Yuan’s academy in the sacred Wudang Mountains, where disciplines like kung fu and tai chi draw on Taoist thought.

Practitioners like Yuan start by strengthening the body. As they progress, the mind becomes more resilient and willpower develops.

“The body is a vehicle or vessel within which the spirit resides,” Yuan said. “You therefore need a healthy body capable of carrying your spirit.”

A search for healing led to a deeper martial arts practice

Yuan began practicing martial arts in the 1980s. Boxing and the Chinese combat sport of sanda attracted him at first.

He heard of Wudang later that decade. As his body ached with rheumatism, Yuan read an article claiming Taoist practices could heal him. So he packed his bags and moved to the mountains. There he became acquainted with Taoist temples and embraced practices such as standing meditation.

He came to understand that movement and stillness are interconnected, rather than opposites. That physical activity can help practitioners quiet the body, allowing them to become calm and grounded.

“I slowly became interested and eventually I benefitted from the practice myself,” Yuan said. “That process was very profound for me.”

Yuan now seeks to share that knowledge with local and foreign students enrolled in the three programs at his academy.

One is a five-year course offering in-depth martial arts training. The second is focused on health and wellbeing, helping adults exercise and cultivate their minds. The third is a summer camp for children seeking exercise during school breaks.

Taoism has a long history at Wudang

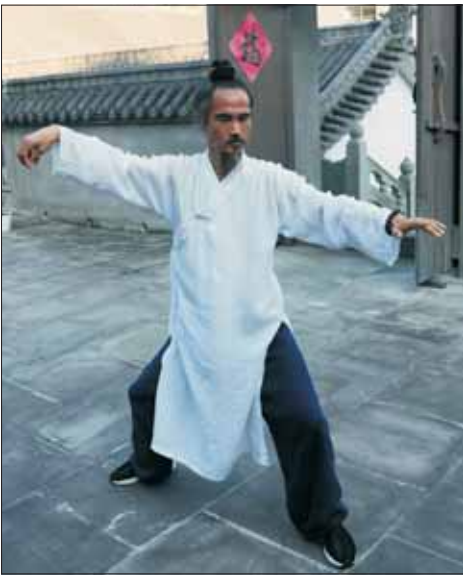
Chinese philosopher Laozi is believed to have passed on teachings foundational to Taoism to his first student more than 2,500 years ago. That disciple settled on the mountain and helped spread his master’s ideas.

“It did not develop into a collective religious faith until after the Qin and Han dynasties,” said Shu Chenghai, director of social education at Wudang Museum.

Wudang lay between present-day Xi’an and Luoyang, two major political centers in ancient China. That made it easier for practitioners to seek seclusion while remaining within reach of major population centers.

“The Taoist tradition was therefore never entirely about withdrawing from the world,” Shu said.

Wudang’s importance as a Taoist religious center came later. During the Tang era, prayers for rain at the mountain were believed to have been answered. Its standing continued to grow under subsequent rulers, reaching its height under Ming emperors.



ENTERING THE DAO. Yuan Shimao, founder of Wudang Taoist Traditional Kung Fu Academy, performs on the grounds of the academy near Wudang Mountain in Shiyan city in central China’s Hubei province. There was a time when Chinese master Yuan Shimao thought martial arts were all about punching and kicking. As a young practitioner, he focused on speed and strength. In the right photo, students practice at the Wudang Taoist Traditional Kung Fu Academy. (AP Photos/Achmad Ibrahim)

Taoist philosophy shapes Chinese martial arts

Guo Xinyi is a Chinese student who began training at Yuan’s academy five years ago. She knew of his decades-long commitment to preserving and passing down traditional Taoist martial arts. That made her feel she could trust him.

Within Chinese martial arts, teachers like Yuan are known as “Shifu.” The closest English translation is “master.” But the Chinese term includes the character for “father.” Guo, therefore, thinks of Yuan not merely as a mentor, but as a father figure.

When she first came to his academy, she struggled with conflict with her parents. Her tai chi lessons, though, taught her to approach confrontation calmly.

“I invited Master Yuan to have tea and talk with us,” Guo said. “During that conversation, the conflict somehow seemed to dissolve almost invisibly.”

Yuan eased her father’s anxiety, tension, and excessive concern for her, she said, adding that the conversation resembled a tai chi lesson.

“When we encounter conflict, our physical instinct is to resist or attack, to move forward and meet what is coming at us,” Guo said. “But tai chi does something different. First, you release tension. Then you sink. Only afterwards do you rise.”

Masters adapt training for today’s students

The number of students from China and abroad studying at Yuan’s academy has increased in recent years.

“In the past, most learners were middle-aged or elderly, but the student population has gradually become younger,” he said.

Among that younger generation is Jake Pinnick, an American practitioner who arrived at age 20 and, 16 years later, calls Wudang home.

Pinnick grew up in the U.S. watching kung fu movies and playing sports that relied on competition. What he found in China forever changed his life.

“I came here for martial arts, but I stayed because of this philosophy,” said



Pinnick, who also became a martial arts master and recently opened his own academy in Wudang.

Yuan said teaching methods have evolved to adapt to younger generations.

Physical training is less demanding and corporal punishment has been eliminated. New ways of motivating students have been introduced instead. Among them is the chanting of slogans aimed at building physical and inner strength.

“Faith in your heart, light in your eyes, and a smile on your face,” is one his students’ daily chants.

Routines at his academy vary depending on the program, but training can begin as early as 6:00am. After breakfast, students practice fundamentals before splitting into groups for specific martial arts

training. Their schedules also include theory classes and meditation.

Yuan believes learning in Wudang means immersing oneself in the Taoist culture that has shaped its martial arts tradition. That environment, he said, can help students cultivate harmony with nature, with others, and within themselves.

“Consider how deeply this nourishes the human heart, mind and spirit,” he added. “If practicing martial arts can nourish you to such an extent, what more could you ask for?”

AP video journalist Wu Jia contributed to this report. Associated Press religion coverage receives support through The AP’s collaboration with The Conversation US, with funding from Lilly Endowment Inc. The AP is solely responsible for content.



Mark your calendar!

**The Year of the Sheep
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