CAAM delivered lunch to homeless in St. Paul

By Zan Gao and Yingying Chen

Although the COVID cases surge in the state recently, the Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM) adhered to its tradition of more than 30 years to deliver a “Pre-Thanksgiving Free Lunch” at the Dorothy Day Place of Catholic Charities in St. Paul on Nov. 21. This was the second time CAAM served the homeless during the pandemic.

This meal delivery event was coordinated by Ping Wang, CAAM president, with the assistance from Vice President Guoqing Li, Secretary-General Zan Gao, Treasurers Lin Shu and Li Tang, Board of Directors Yanhua Wu (CAAM CDT representative of Chinese American Dance Theater), and Gang Ji (CAAM CLS representative of Twin-Cities Chinese Language School), as well as several volunteers (Xia Liu, Qiang Fang, Shi Peng). The 300 delicious Chinese meals were prepared by the Rose Garden Asian Bistro in Minneapolis.

Around 9 a.m., CAAM board members and volunteers arrived at the kitchen of Dorothy Day and started lunch preparations: washing and cutting fruits and vegetables. Around 10:30 a.m., the owners of the Rose Garden Chinese Restaurant delivered the ordered lunches. Board members packed and delivered some lunch boxes to the homeless people with compromised mobility.

At 11:40 a.m., doors were opened. The atmosphere was warm and lively. Under the careful arrangement of CAAM, this event provided a variety of delicious, nutritionally-balanced food, including vegetable spring rolls, fried rice with eggs, chicken noodles, salads, pears, cookies, etc. Approximately 250 homeless enjoyed a warm and delicious Chinese lunch.

Some homeless walked up to the volunteers to express their gratitude before leaving the center: “It was very delicious. Thank you very much!” “It was much better than American food!” The joy on their faces were contagious and all volunteers were inspired.

At the end of the meal, the administrator in charge of the charity center said that they prepare three free meals every day for the local homeless to help them survive the long winter. The Chinese food provided by CAAM offered them more food options. The leftovers were used as part of the dinner that evening. The charity center was very grateful for CAAM’s charitable offerings over the years.

Wang stated that CAAM aims to provide various Chinese cultural and artistic exchanges including training, education and services for local Chinese and Chinese-Americans and other friends who care about and love Chinese culture. These activities aim to promote friendship and mutual assistance. The event of delivering Chinese food to the homeless before Thanksgiving is also adhering to this purpose.
Publisher’s Pronouncements

We invite your input to determine the future publishing of ChinaInsight
Is this the end?

By Greg Hugh

As we turn the page on 2021, all of us at China Insight hope you were able to enjoy a great holiday season and we wish everyone a healthy and a prosperous 2022. As we resume our regular production schedule, we begin our 21st year of publishing and continue our mission of promoting cultural and business understanding between China and the U.S. along with providing a bridge between the Chinese and American communities of the Twin Cities area. However, we also are going to be making some hard decisions concerning continuing our mission or not. If we continue, what direction should we go?

Although ChinaInsight began as a free, printed newspaper back in 2001, it continues now to be available digitally at www.chinainsight.info. We are proud that during the previous 20 years to have been involved with the following:

• The St Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden, poetically known as 园 (Garden of Friendship), and Garden of Whispering Willows & Flowing Waters, is a community-based, volunteer-driven public garden developed through long-term collaboration among the Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society (MCFGSS), the St. Paul Department of Parks & Recreation, the Phalen Park neighborhood, and Twin Cities Hmong and Chinese communities. The city of Changsha is St Paul’s sister city in south China.
• In collaboration with the Chinese Heritage Foundation, established A Passage to China in 2008 which became an annual event at Mall of America that promotes Chinese history, culture and customs through interactive activities for all ages with over 40 organizations from throughout the Twin Cities communities participating as a FREE event for the general public
• Planned and hosted a forum on how to do business in China with speakers from Zhejiang Province
• Developed a relationship with a WTO Training delegation from Zhejiang, China to promote business relationships between Zhejiang and Minnesota
• Sponsored events held by the Chinese American Association of Minnesota, Asian Media Access, Dragon Festival and the China Center at the University of Minnesota
• Sponsored and partnered with the Minnesota Timberwolves to promote all Timberwolves and Houston Rockets games featuring Yao Ming since 2002 resulting in the Timberwolves’ sponsorship of a China Expo at the Target Center in March 2004
• Assisted and accompanied Governor Jesse Ventura on the trade mission to China in 2002

ChinaInsight is proud over the years to have been involved in initiating events such as these in spite of tepid support from the community that provides minimum communications or advertising support. Consequently we have relied on a dedicated volunteer staff which reduces our financial burden since this is what we have chosen to do to support the community.

That being said, as ChinaInsight begins its twenty-second year of publishing, we are soliciting comments from our targeted readers as to how our mission statement could be updated to better reflect current relations between the U.S. and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) which has become more confrontation on many fronts. We have typically remained neutral on most issues that affect these two countries over the years. The U.S.-China relationship is the most complex bilateral relationship for the United States. Over the last 30 years, Sino-American relations have undergone an impressive transformation from animosity and conflict to candid dialogue and constructive cooperation. These two vast and complicated countries have found limited common ground on issues of trade, investment and, more recently, security. But key issues remain unresolved, and the potential for troubling divergence is real as China becomes an economic powerhouse, a military force in Asia, and a potential rival to U.S. hegemony. What role should ChinaInsight take covering these future developments?

Although there is not too much we can do to change whatever trajectory is in motion, the Chinese community needs to become more proactive and become more involved as citizens by getting involved in politics, charitable giving and other activities to shatter the “model minority” label and work together instead as factions within their own communities.

Also, we would like to see ChinaInsight grow so would be interested hearing from those that would be interested in joining us as a staff member or as an investor or join us as a board member if that would be of any interest.

It is a popular tradition to set New Year’s resolutions at the beginning of the year, however we have been planning a revamp of our format over the past year and would welcome your input to assist us in continuing to make ChinaInsight as relevant as possible to our readers so we would appreciate it if you would make it a resolution to put this on your to-do list for 2022.

Please contact me directly at ghugh@chinainsight.info or 612-723-4872 with your comments.
Exited Hong Kong

Hong Kong’s national security law imposed by Beijing on June 30, 2019, has driven Amnesty International and similar human rights organizations out of Hong Kong. These organizations no longer feel they can work freely and without fear of serious reprisals from the HK government.

In a June 2021 briefing, Amnesty International documented the rapid deterioration of human rights in Hong Kong one year after the enactment of the national security law. “The pattern of raids, arrests and prosecutions against perceived opponents has highlighted how the vagueness of the law can be manipulated to build a case against whichever the authorities choose.”

Amnesty International has had offices in Hong Kong for 40 years carrying out research, advocacy and campaigning work. As of the new year, this work will now take place in offices outside of Hong Kong. It has operations in more than 70 countries and holds governments around the world “accountable to equal standards under international law.”

Guaranteed win

Hong Kong’s “election that wasn’t” took place on Dec. 19, held over from a year earlier (Sept. 6, 2020) because of the pandemic. It was the first election since “improvements to its electoral system” were made.

The “improvements” were supposed to create a new atmosphere that add to the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong.” They ensured only a slate of candidates that were deemed loyal to Beijing (aka “patriots only”) were on the ballot. Al Jazeera reported that some candidates chanted “guaranteed win” on stage at the central vote-counting center.

Mainstream pro-democracy parties did not participate because they “could not endorse any candidates for a poll that was undemocratic.” Pro-democracy activists, foreign governments and rights groups also described the election as undemocratic. The 2021 voter turnout, pegged at 30.2% of eligible voters, was at an all-time low. Compare that to the 71% turnout for the 2019 pre-National Security Law and pre-Beijing crackdown on democracy activists district council election.

The 2021 voter turnout, pegged at 30.2% of eligible voters, was an all-time low. Compare that to the 71% turnout for the 2019 pre-National Security Law and pre-Beijing crackdown on democracy activists district council election.

And what was HK Chief Executive Carrie Lam’s take on the dismal turnout? It’s a “show of support for the improved electoral system.”

To the Hong Kongers, the Beijing-vetted candidates do not represent them! Boycotting the election was the only way left to reject Beijing’s narrative that this election was a sign of democracy when other forms of expressions have been made illegal.

Onward to 2024

The Winter Olympics start next month, but for one Hong Konger, his sights are already set on the Paris Olympics in 2024. Kong Mun-chai is probably not a name known to the older set. But to the younger, hipper HK set, he is big news! The 34-year-old senior manager at a Hong Kong non-profit is also a breakdancing instructor. And for the first time, the street sport will be an Olympic event in Paris!

The self-taught breakdancer began in high school, initially getting tips from street performers and practicing the basic footwork sequence before progressing to the tougher acrobatic moves. He watched videos religiously, and took trips to the U.S. to learn from American gurus in New York City and Houston, and learned about the history and roots of hip hop and breakdancing. His breakthrough came in 2018 when he qualified for the prestigious World Bey Classic competition in the Netherlands.

However, his path to representing Hong Kong in Paris is challenging. He’ll have to self-fund his quest as well as seek access to physiotherapy sessions and world-class coaches. He also must rank locally at the various local try-outs and competitions, and qualify at the World DanceSport Federation Breaking competition in 2023. All the HK breakdance athletes hope to get financial funding so they can have more time to practice, not juggling a full-time job, fund-raising, and then practice.

With a little bit of luck and deeper understanding of what international judges are looking for, we may see this Hong Konger and a Hong Kong team in Paris in 2024! ♦

Jumping ship

Last June, there were rumours of defection by a high-ranking Chinese intelligence official to the U.S. The timing coincided with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) staging an unusual loyalty campaign within its 93 million members. Since Xi Jinping’s war against corruption began, it is believed many top CCP members have taken steps to plan their exit strategy. According to a 2012 internal survey by the central government, “at least 85% of officials within the CCP’s top management have exit strategies prepared for their families and finances,” reported The Epoch Times.

A CCP newspaper for rookie Chinese officials reiterated that “while some Party officials were physically present in China, they were mentally abroad.”

Data from 2019 (the most recent available) indicated there were approximately 7 million civil servants in China as of 2015. More than 3,200 were disciplined in 2014 for “corruption,” about 1,000 were denoted for not bringing their relatives who were living abroad back to China. This leads some analysts to speculate “anxiety among top echelon of the Party” and that “CCP officials have no confidence in the Party.”

A former lecturer at the state-run Beijing-based People’s Public Security University, an elite police training institution, said Xi’s emphasis on confidence in the Party “to be telling,” perhaps reflecting anxiety among the top echelon over Xi’s attempts to “correct” Party members’ wayward thinking.

A U.S.-based Chinese current affairs expert told The Epoch Times in November 2021 that “The Party media have revealed that CCP officials have no confidence in the Party, and Xi knows they could flee at any time.”

Slanted eyes

There’s trouble stirring in advertising land! Chinese consumers are criticizing the use of models and makeup that “do not conform to publicly accepted aesthetics standards” and the deliberate use of models with “slanted eyes” in commercials and advertising!

In the past, Hollywood and the western world have used the “slanted eyes” stereotype to portray Asians, usually in a derogatory way.

The recent backlash arose over luxury brands Dior, Mercedes Benz and even a Chinese food company. Their respective transgressions: Dior had to withdraw its handbag ads showing an Asian model with freckles and very dark makeup; both automaker Mercedes and the Chinese snack maker were attacked by netizens for using models with slanted eyes. These models, according to the companies, are selected to feed the stereotypical slanted eyes image, especially in the fashion industry.

One of the featured Chinese models who received numerous personal attacks online spoke out against the criticisms: “As a professional model, what I need to do is be photographed accordingly to what the client wants, I don’t know how this became about me humiliat- ing the Chinese people.”

She said. According to Global Times, her response on Weibo drew 330 million views!

There are also internet users who believe Chinese, in general, need to accept different forms of beauty and accept the differences in beauty represented by the many ethnic groups within China.

A makeup blogger said portraits of ancient Chinese women show them with long narrow eyes and, so, “an open mind, tolerance for many ways of expression,” is needed. And a professor of media law at the Communication University of China urged, “There’s no need to be so sensitive.”

China Insight
2022 holidays and observances in China

Source: TimeandDate | December 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Chinese New Year's Eve</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Jul 11</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Chinese New Year (Spring Festival)</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Spring Festival Golden Week holiday</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Aug 4</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3-6</td>
<td>Thursday - Sunday</td>
<td>Spring Festival Golden Week holiday</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Aug 12</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Lantern Festival</td>
<td>Observance</td>
<td>Sep 10</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Zhonghe Festival</td>
<td>Observance</td>
<td>Sep 10</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 8</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>International Women's Day</td>
<td>Half day holiday</td>
<td>Sep 23</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Arbor Day</td>
<td>Observance</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>March Equinox</td>
<td>Season</td>
<td>Oct 2-7</td>
<td>Sunday - Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Qing Ming Jie</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Oct 4</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1-5</td>
<td>Saturday - Wednesday</td>
<td>Labour Day</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Youth Day</td>
<td>Half day holiday</td>
<td>Dec 22</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Children's Day</td>
<td>Observance</td>
<td>Dec 25</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 3</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Dragon Boat Festival</td>
<td>National holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 21</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>June Solstice</td>
<td>Season</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Government & Politics

HK pro-democracy activists convicted, bleak future

By Elaine Dunn | January 2022

As 2021 wraps up, China has effectively brought Hong Kong’s pro-democracy movement to its knees.

Hong Kong pro-democracy activists 73-year-old media magnate Jimmy Lai, rights lawyer Chow Hang-tung, and former opposition politician and journalist Gwyneth Ho, were convicted on Dec. 2 for participating in a Tiananmen Square Massacre vigil in June 2020.

Hong Kong had, for 32 years, been the lifeblood of our civil society. What Mr. Lai, who was still the owner of Apple Daily at the time of his arrest on allegations of violating the national security law, is probably a targeted figure because of his paper, which is known for its criticism of the Chinese Communist Party. The paper was forced to cease publication in June 2021 after many police raids.

Beijing, through the Hong Kong Security Bureau, claimed these government actions “are based on evidence, strictly according to the law” and have nothing to do with an individual’s political stance, background or occupation.

June 4, 2021, a U.S. News and World Report’s headline read “China brazenly boasts of ‘aborted’ revolution” to mark the 32nd anniversary of the massacre. The article described the Chinese government compared the massacre to successfully quelling a revolution akin to “the uprisings in Eastern Europe and that it has been vindicated by its subsequent economic progress.”

The Beijing statements were targeted at English-language media in the Western world, outside of China and not for its own mainland citizens. It is China’s attempt to “distract Western media attention away from credible testimony from those who witnessed or endured the atrocities that took place in 1989 and those who are still oppressed.”

Under the guise of COVID-19 restrictions, all Tiananmen Massacre vigils were banned in Hong Kong and Macau. Despite the ban, thousands of locals gathered on June 4, 2020.

One of the last “arms” of pro-democracy activism is overseas activism. However, history bears out that performance of groups working outside of China and Hong Kong “has not been impressive,” said a former professor of politics at the City University of Hong Kong. Everyone working for democracy “will feel the threat,” he said.

A member of the League of Social Democrats pessimistically added, “If they (Chinese government) want to get rid of you, they will, and they can.”

Hong Kong, once considered the bastion of freedom, is fast fading away. ♦
By Elaine Dunn | January 2022

The November-December 2021 China Insight covered the Chinese beer industry, that bucked the market downturn trend during the pandemic. This month, we highlight another industry that’s also doing well: China’s pet food industry. Not only did it buck the trend, it enjoyed “notable” growth, and analysts predict huge growth potential for the entire pet economy ahead.

Pet ownership in China grew immensely between 2015 and 2019. Exposure to a western lifestyle, couples getting married later and having children later all are contributing factors to rise in pet ownership. No longer are modern-day Chinese only keeping canaries and goldfish as their ancestors did. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service reported dog ownership increased by 40% and cat ownership rose by 131% in China. The State Council of China reported approximately 73.55 million households own a pet, of which 46.1% own dogs and 30.7% have cats. Aside from dogs and cats, they also own more exotic species such as alpacas, birds, porcupines, reptiles, snakes, geckos, groundhogs, hedgehogs and reptiles!

Domestic and foreign companies are looking for opportunities in the pet food and pet snacks market in China. Already, there are many multinationals present and competing for market share. Major players are Mars Incorporated, Nestle Purina Pet Food, Bridget PetCare, Yantai China Pet Food Co. Ltd, Huxing Pet Food Co. Ltd, and Chengdu Care Pet Food Co. Ltd. They are investing in e-marketing and e-commerce websites, mergers and acquisitions, with new product launches to expand their presence in the country.

Norwegian Aker BioMarine, a biotech innovator, entered the Chinese pet food market for the first time in late 2020. It signed an important agreement with China’s leading producer of pet food, Gambol Pet Food Group and initiated partnerships with three other Chinese pet food companies.

Swiss food giant Nestlé invested more than US$160 million to expand its pet food manufacturing plant in coastal Tianjin. The facility will produce premium pet food products, including wet canned pet foods.

From 2018 to 2019, U.S. companies’ export of dog and cat foods to China increased by 88%, which represented only 16% of the annual US$307.6 million pet food market. With the removal of certain trade barriers, U.S. pet food exports to China increased 124% during the first six months of 2020, up from the same period a year earlier, with a dollar value of US$11.5 million. Goldman Sachs forecasts a 19% compound annual growth in pet food spending between now and 2030. As expected, the massive pet industry is concentrated in large urban centers where pet stores, groomers, photography studios, pet hotels and pet-sitters have sprung up. And when the precious pets die, they get extravagant send-offs. A white paper published in 2019 by Pet Fair Asia reported one bereaved owner paid up to US$53,000 to get their deceased pet cloned! This is a far cry from not too long ago when, under Mao Zedong in the mid-1960s, pet dogs were banned in most Chinese cities because of a serious rabies pandemic. By the mid-1990s, Beijing residents were allowed to own one dog per household, but would cost them a handsome “administrative fee” of US$708 per year. This exorbitant fee was reduced to US$157 per year in 2003. However, there were restrictions that had to be observed. Among them:

• The dog had to be under 14” in height.
• Owners and their pets were not allowed on elevators in peak hours.
• Owners had to pick up their pet’s excreta immediately.

The rules varied across the country. But in Beijing, an infraction would cost the owner between US$88 to US$90. In time, some of the older regulations were relaxed, but new ones became established. On May 1, 2021, the central government put dog owners on notice, forbidding unleashed dog-walking.

Regulations over the pet industry also are being introduced. In Zhejiang Province’s Hangzhou, the first cross-border pet industry experimental zone in the city’s Jiangnan District will pilot the reforms on regulation and approval of cross-border imports. The zone enables one-stop services and aims to enroll open, transparent, and smart pet food import channels and regulatory policies.

Who is driving China’s pet economy?

Those born between 1990-1999. Young millennials under age 30 and Gen Z accounted for 45.2% of total pet owners in China in 2019. And 89.5% are women. These young pet owners are simply replacing pets for babies. And not only are they giving up babies; many, 33.7%, also are giving up partners. The single pet owners claim partners bring problems, whereas pets are drama-free!

These new pet owners are different from their older counterparts who own pets for the simple sake of companionship. For the new young owners, animal welfare also is a factor in adopting a pet. Another difference: young “pet parents” devote a huge amount of money to their pets, from food to health supplements to veterinary care to grooming services to outlets!

The rapid urbanization and rise in income led to increase in demand for prepared pet food. Pet diet has shifted from family leftovers to processed, packaged pet food.

And, hold on … not only are they spending heavily on tangible products, they also are investing heavily on the romantic lives of their pets! Alibaba’s Idle Fish is a platform that encourages users to build communities with others with like interests. Pet parents are using it to find dates for their four-legged furry offspring! There were more than 800,000 pet profiles posted by March 2020 and 160,000 reported successful dates.

Last July, Shanghai saw its first pet restaurant open for business. On the menu for pampered dogs and cats are more than 20 fresh main courses, snacks and 10 desserts! Price range from US$3-31. The restaurant also offers customers free use of a Polariod camera to capture their pets’ eating-out experience.

What to expect for the Chinese pet industry?

Creative niche services such as funeral services, lost pet detective agencies, international pet transport, dead pet jewelry (from post-cremation ashes).

There is archaeological evidence of dog ownership in China more than 7,000 years ago. The way things look, it may continue for another 7,000 more years, but at a whole new different level. ♦

Strengthen your ties at home when you can’t be there yourself™

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**Chinese Language Corner (漢語角)**

**“Why” and “because”**

*By Pat Welsh | contributor*

In this lesson we will learn how to ask “why …?” and answer “because …”

In Chinese the word “why?” is often translated as “wèi shénme” (do what?, for what?). Frequently this expression is abbreviated to “wèi shèm.” This abbreviation is especially true in northeast China. As for how this expression is used, take for example the sentence,

> “Frequently this expression is abbreviated to "wèi shém." This abbreviation is especially

**Pronunciation reminders**

This system follows Chinese Pinyin with the exception that the letter “q” has two pronunciations. Sometimes it has the value of ū (“ee” as in ‘see’ with rounded lips). At those times we use the symbol “ü” instead of Pinyin “q.” In making this sound, it is most important that the vowel more resembles an “ee” sound in “see” and definitely does not sound like a “oo” sound in “moon.”

**Vocabulary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not correct, wrong</td>
<td>bùduì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to greet X</td>
<td>hé X dàzhāohū</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call, be called</td>
<td>jiào</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not, have not, there is not</td>
<td>méi fāi, méi fāi zhīdāo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no way to, cannot</td>
<td>méi yóu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not, have not, there is not</td>
<td>ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. oral question mark for who-what-why—when – where and how-type questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lit. read aloud book, here: attend school.</td>
<td>niúshā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so, therefore</td>
<td>suǒyì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. late. 2. evening</td>
<td>wăn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now, at this time</td>
<td>xiànzǎi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because, since it is so</td>
<td>yīnwèi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know (a fact), aware of, realize</td>
<td>zhīdáo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese spoken language</td>
<td>Zhōngguó huà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese written language</td>
<td>Zhōngwén</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**About Pat Welsh**

In 2009 while teaching English at Sichuan University, Welch was asked to give a speech where he was introduced to the audience as a “pioneer of Chinese American relations” as a result of his cooperative work in international banking during the Deng Xiaoping era. For more than 65 years, Welch has been learning Chinese and has used this knowledge both professionally and personally to enhance his understanding of Chinese and Asian affairs. He uses Beijing Mandarin most frequently when meeting with senior Chinese government officials when conducting business in China.

For 17 years, Welsh taught Chinese, German and Spanish in two local high schools. Now fully retired, he currently resides in Georgia where he used to lecture on China to a number of classes at Dunwoody High School.
Golden Valley Chinese American on a road less travelled by Asians: beauty pageants

By Elaine Dunn | January 2022

A 9-year-old from Golden Valley is currently basking in "golden girl" status! Alexandra "Allie" Wilcox, the third-grader at Breck, is the daughter of Elizabeth and Bill Wilcox. She was crowned winner of the age 7-9 division of the National American Miss (NAM) Minnesota Jr. Pre-teen 2021 pageant held on August 6-8, 2021. Over the weekend after Thanksgiving, she competed for the National title in Orlando, Fl.

No, she did not come away with the top title this time, but she placed 2nd runner-up and won a few NAM awards, including the inaugural iam Brand Ambassador Award and the NAM Alumni Essay Contest.

Don’t for a moment dismiss young Wilcox as "airhead" or "bimbo" because of her foray in beauty pageants – a path not frequently taken by Chinese or Chinese Americans. She is an accomplished chess player, figure skater, Latin dancer and an avid reader as well. According to her PR sheet, she was reading restaurant menus at the age of 3! The voracious reader is also gifted with a great memory – she retains all that she reads and is known as "the class Google" at school. Fluent in English and Chinese, she’s also studying Spanish at school. She hopes to create more awareness of cultural diversity through her pageant participation.

China Insight (CI): What and when did she get into the pageant circuit?

Apparently, mother Elizabeth did not realize how intense the pageantry business is. She signed her daughter up in 2019, thinking it would be a fun alternative to other camps. After all, the promotional flyer indicated the pageant focused on confidence building, not beauty!

(Mom) took me to the training session where we learned that I could win crowns, trophies and prizes while building life skills along the way," Wilcox said. "My mom thought it could be a fun thing to do for the summer break in addition to the sports and chess camps I usually went to. She completed the registration. My journey of pageant began!

At the training session, I heard "pretty feet" for the first time when I learned to place my feet at the 12 o’clock and 6 o’clock positions for a classic model stance. After a brief interview with the state directors, my mom and I went home. A couple days later, my mom got a text message congratulating me being chosen as a state finalist.

CI: How much practice does it take and what do you practice on?

I practice on a regular basis, once every couple of weeks. When the pageant is close, I will practice more often, maybe every week and even 20 minutes each day when the pageant is really close. I work on walking, speaking, and mock interviews. I work on a few stories, and each focuses on different areas of the competition.

About the pageant

The National American Miss Pageant is dedicated to celebrating America’s greatness and encouraging its future leaders. Each year, the National American Miss Pageant awards $1.5 million in cash, scholarships, and prizes to recognize and assist the development of young women nationwide.

The pageant program is based on inner beauty, as well as poise and presentation. Emphasis is placed on the importance of gaining self-confidence, learning new skills, learning good attitudes about competition, and setting and achieving personal goals.

Awards after the second pageant

Miss (NAM) Minnesota Jr. Pre-teen 2021, age 7-9 division of the National American Miss (NAM) Minnesota Jr. Pre-teen 2021 pageant

Remembering Robert Jacobsen, esteemed art curator, author, friend of MN Chinese arts and garden communities

By Greg Hugh | January 2022

Minnesota seems the last place anyone would go to for a glimpse of ancient China, but thanks to the late Robert Jacobsen, people come from all over the world to see 5,000 years of Chinese furniture, porcelain, jade and architecture at the Mia, formerly known as the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. A giant in the Asian art world and a champion of the Twin Cities art community, Jacobsen died Nov. 24, 2021, from complications of Alzheimer’s disease. He was 77.

As reported in a Star Tribune article by Mary Abbe when Jacobsen “retired” in 2010, he developed an excellent collection of Asian art and oversaw Mia’s expansion during his 53-year career there. As the museum’s curator of Asian art, Jacobsen expanded a 900-piece board of ancient bronzes and Japanese prints into a stellar collection of 14,500 objects, including a 400-year-old Ming-Dynasty scholar’s reception hall and a Qing Dynasty scholar’s study from 1797.

Jacobsen’s idea of showcasing objects in authentic rooms is what most distinguishes the institute’s collection. Museums in San Francisco, Kansas City, New York and elsewhere also have fine Chinese collections, but nowhere else are items shown in the very spaces where they were used, admired and displayed centuries ago.

"Representing the art of China in a museum is an enormous challenge," said James Lally, the premier New York dealer in Chinese art. With the historic rooms, Jacobsen "was able to create a context ... which really transformed everyone’s understanding of Chinese life in a way that no other museum in America or Europe has ever achieved."

Curators don’t just go out and buy art, of course. They need expertise based on years of study; in Jacobsen’s case, at the National Palace Museum in Taiwan and the University of Minnesota, where he earned a doctorate in Asian Art History.

His boldest move came in 1987-88, when he curated a major exhibition of contemporary Chinese artist Wucius Wong at Mia, a significant step for an American museum. At that time, for “a major U.S. museum to feature a mid-career, living contemporary Chinese artist’s work ‘when the ink is still drying’ was not the norm.

"Not too many people realize Bob’s foresight in doing so," said Pat Hui, director of the now-closed Hui Arts gallery in Minneapolis, which showcased artists from Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China.

After U.S.-China relations were normalized in the mid-1980s, interest in Asian art skyrocketed. He began working with Bruce Dayton’s team to expand the collection, especially in Chinese art.

"Bob was a mentor and trusted guide to my grandfather for decades as they worked together to build Mia’s collection of Chinese art into one of the finest in America," said Eric Dayton. "The museum’s extraordinary Jacobson with Wucius Wong during his art exhibit at Mia Asian galleries are a legacy of their friendship and serve as a lasting testament to Bob’s scholarship and expertise."

According to Linda Mealey-Lohmann, co-founder of the MN China Friendship Garden Society and board member, "Jacobsen, in addition to his role in creating a world class Asian Art collection at the Mia and writing many, many scholarly books, he was connected with US-China Peoples Friendship Association-MN, and Ruth Dayton to expand the collection, especially in Chinese art."

"Bob was a mentor and trusted guide to my grandfather for decades as they worked together to build Mia’s collection of Chinese art into one of the finest in America," said Eric Dayton. "The museum’s extraordinary development of young women nationwide.

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By Greg Hugh | January 2022

MCFGS-MN board Member.

Jacobsen, who grew up in Roseville, met his future wife, Patricia, in the late 1970s. They were married in a Buddhist-style ceremony. She recalls his travels to China, South Korea, Japan, Indonesia and the Silk Road through Afghanistan and Pakistan, some of which she accompanied him on. Patricia also wanted to clarify that Robert actually resigned from the Mia back in 2010 to concentrate on his interest in traveling, research and writing on Chinese art and culture. In 2012, Jacobsen worked with David Dewey on the book “Celestial Horses & Long Sleeve Dancers.”

The local Chinese and art communities have lost a great friend and supporter.

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The local Chinese and art communities have lost a great friend and supporter.
Chinese New Year: name and decorations

By Elaine Dunn | January 2022

Chinese New Year. Spring Festival, Lunar New Year. Whatever you choose to call it, it is China’s most important annual celebration and is celebrated for 15 days. This year, Feb. 1 will herald in the Year of the Tiger.

In 2000, Spring Festival was made one of three “Golden Week” holidays in mainland China. To mark each new incoming year, the largest human migration will take place beginning on the eve of Spring Festival. In 2022, that would be Jan. 31 through Feb. 6 when millions of Chinese in mainland China will be traveling home for family reunions and or taking vacations. According to Reuters, despite COVID-19, China expects more than 1 million passenger trips to be made on a newly opened high-speed rail link from Kunming, Yunnan Province, to Vientiane, Laos during the peak Lunar New Year travel period. In late-December, Beijing encouraged its city residents to stay put for the Golden Week holiday, but also said it would facilitate traveling of migrant workers and college students who “have a strong desire to return to their hometowns” for Spring Festival.

But why is Chinese New Year also known by Lunar New Year and Spring Festival? Lunar New Year is obvious – to differentiate it from the Gregorian calendar new year. In 1912, the Chinese government abolished Chinese New Year and the lunar calendar and adopted the Gregorian calendar, making Jan. 1 the official start of the new year. However, after the communists took over in 1949, Lunar New Year was reinstated and renamed it Spring Festival to avoid confusion with the Gregorian new year. In addition, as an agrarian nation, the Chinese observed the lunar calendar for practical agricultural purposes. Lunar New Year signifies the approach of spring, when farming activities such as ploughing and planting begin. The Chinese government made Spring Festival a nationwide public holiday.

Lunar new year, however, is not only celebrated in mainland China. It is also observed and celebrated by Chinese the world over. Any location with a large Chinese population such as Hong Kong, Macau, London, Taiwan, Toronto, Vancouver and, in the U.S., Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco all have their own parades and activities welcoming the new year.

And just like Christmas, no matter where the Chinese are, there are many decorations they put up for Chinese New Year. Traditionally, decorative items usually go up on New Year’s Eve. However, the times are a-changin’, and nowadays, decorations usually get put up a week before. Here are a few popular traditional items:

**Spring couplets**

Spring couplets are a combination of two-line verses/poems and calligraphy. Each verse usually has seven or nine words written in black ink (or gold ink if mass-produced!) on red paper. Each verse on its own vertical red strip of paper. These are affixed to the door or door frame. They express good wishes or what the residents wish for in the coming year, including harmony, prosperity and health.

Besides the front door, couplets can also be displayed indoors in living rooms.

Placing couplets on one’s door started around the time of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) but was popularized during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

The character “福” (fú)

Also often displayed on the front door or window is the character “福,” which means “blessing” or “good fortune.” However, many times the character is hung in an upside-down manner because “upside down” in Chinese sounds like “到” (dào), which means “arrive.” So, displaying the character upside down symbolizes blessing and good fortune have arrived.

**Red knots**

A very traditional Chinese icon is the red lantern. It is a symbol of reunions, prosperity, happiness and vitality. Hanging a lit red lantern in the doorway on Chinese New Year’s Eve brightens the doorway and signifies hope for the coming year. Besides, red lanterns are believed to ward off bad luck. They usually stay up until the 15th day of the first lunar month.

Another reason for hanging red lanterns is because they are supposed to light the way for the family’s kitchen god when he returns from making his report to the higher celestial deities. Therefore, whatever you do, do NOT hang the lanterns in the middle of the doorway or they’ll block positive energy from entering and negative energy from leaving the premises!

Nowadays, red lanterns are usually hung en masse overhead in open spaces instead of just above the door. They exude an air of festivity.

**Red knots**

The red woven knot is a traditional folk-art item. Chinese have used knots as decorations since the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-A.D. 220). The knot is tied and woven from a single length of cord into various shapes, each with its particular symbolic meaning.

The Pan Chang knot is the one usually displayed at Chinese New Year because it consists of eight loops and eight “ears” and we all know that the number eight is extremely auspicious in Chinese culture. Besides, the word “knot” in Chinese is “结” (jié), which represents harmony and unification. Therefore, the knots have come to symbolize and express happiness, prosperity and unity.

**Paper cuts**

A very traditional Chinese handicraft is the paper cut. Paper cuts are designs cut out of paper with scissors. Most designs are of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac. But there are also some depicting the three auspicious characters: good fortune, “福,” “富,” prosperity, “寿,” “长,” longevity, “禄,” “钱,” wealth. Other popular designs include the peach (symbolizes longevity), fish (represents abundance), the character for spring “春,” and in northern China these paper cuts are often pasted on doors and windows.

According to a paper-cut expert in Hong Kong, the artform dates back 1,500 years to the Northern and Southern Song dynasties and the majority of paper cut artists are women.

**Firecrackers**

Firecrackers

Firecrackers are usually bought at night markets on New Year’s Eve. Deck out your home in red and gold and good luck for the coming year with minimal effort!
Traditionally, in Chinese culture, red and yellow are considered lucky colors. For special occasions such as weddings and Chinese New Year celebration, lucky colors are used to attract good luck.

**Lucky colors for Chinese New Year**

Red: Happiness, passion and good luck. Red indicates happiness, passion, hope, vitality and good luck. Red has been a lucky color in China since time immemorial. According to the Theory of the Five Elements, colors are associated with the five elements of water, fire, wood, metal and earth. Red corresponds with fire.

During Chinese New Year, red is the most popular color in China, because folks believe that this color will bring in good fortune and scare away evil spirits. You will see all kinds of decorations in red, including red lanterns, couplets and paper-cuttings.

Meanwhile, people will wear red clothing and will fill the red envelopes with lucky money to give to their children and elders.

Yellow: brightness, hope, royalty and power. Yellow represents earth and symbolizes prosperity, hope, royalty and power. It is a prestigious color in ancient Chinese history and culture, it is the color reserved for the exclusive use of the emperor in his robes and other attire. Usually, yellow was widely used in building imperial palaces, along with red. The Forbidden City is the best example. Yellow is widely used in Buddhist temples and monk robes.

**Unlucky colors for Chinese New Year**

White: White corresponds to metal and is the color of mourning. It is associated with death and used in funerals.

Black: Black corresponds to water and is another color associated with mourning and death. Both white and black are unlucky colors for Chinese New Year.

It took three decades from legislation being introduced in Congress to the completed African American museum opening its doors to the public on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. So Asian American leaders who are pushing for an Asian American museum know not to expect miracles overnight.

Rep. Grace Meng (D-N.Y.) introduced a bill in May 2021 to establish a commission to study the feasibility of establishing a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture to preserve and celebrate the history and contributions of the Asian American Pacific Islander community – the fastest-growing minority group* in the country.

“Museums are gateways for Americans and the world to see the United States' rich history, challenges it overcame, and potential for greatness. Establishing this commission is the first step toward the creation of a national API museum. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation,” Meng said in one legislative session.

China Insight readers probably are familiar with various discriminatory actions against the Chinese (Sept. 2021, p. 11; July, August 2020, pp. 10-11; June 2014, p. 13) and the internment of the Japanese Americans during WWII, but not the less-known 1907 riots where hundreds of immigrants from India working in lumber mills were attacked, beaten and driven out of the city of Bellingham, Wash.

Meng said that the history and contributions of APIAs are “forgotten or ignored in the greater narrative of American history.” And given the wave of anti-Asian crimes since the pandemic, Meng told The Hill, “…it’s really important that in our nation’s capital we have something dedicated to helping more people learn about our history and culture.”

Watch Meng’s and Chinese American journalist Lisa Ling’s testimonials at the Natural Resources hearing last Dec. 7. (Meng comes on 28 minutes into the video and Ling, 45 minutes in.) “When the stories and histories of a people are excluded from a country’s narrative,” Ling said, “it becomes easy to overlook and even dehumanize an entire population.”

“For too long, Chinese Americans and the API community are seen as the perpetual stranger – strangers in our own homeland,” said Zheng Yu Huang, president of Committee of 100, a group representing 100 Asian Americans and Pacific Islander leaders. “As the fastest-growing ethnic group in the United States, Asian Americans deserve a place on the National Mall that is representative of our contributions to the fabric of America.”

The National Museum of African American History and Culture opened in 2016. Other museums, currently in various stages of planning and development to be located on the National Mall are the National Museum of the American Latino and the National Women’s History Museum. **Next steps**

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) need to carve out floor time for the bill this year. Meng urged for a vote on her bill to take place when the House Natural Resources Committee reconvenes this month.

As The Hill reported Dec. 29, “One big task for a commission would be how to pay for the museum. Just like the African American museum, half of funding for the Latino and women’s museums will be financed by the federal government and the other half by private donations. The Asian museum would likely follow that model should it be built.”

But Rep. Katie Porter (D-Calif.) who chaired the subcommittee hearing on Meng’s bill said she would like to see a future Asian museum receive a steady stream of federal funding to keep it running year after year.

There is a Chinese saying, “萬事起頭難, wàn shì qǐ tóu nán” meaning taking the first step is always the hardest. Now that the first step has been undertaken, let’s hope the API community will step up, unite and provide support in the completion of this museum. You can help by:

- Spreading the word about your community about the museum
- Becoming a friend of Friends of the Museum
- Continuing to help and / or visit your local API museums
- Asking your congressman to co-sponsor Meng’s bills
- Writing your senators to issue Senate bills for the National Museum of APIA History and Culture

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have contributed much to this country. They also have faced many unjust barriers. An API museum to preserve and present the trials and tribulations will ensure this history be recorded for coming generations.*

* According to U.S. Census data, there had been a 20% increase in the Asian American population since 2010, to a 24-million strong group in 2020.

**By Elaine Dunn | January 2022**

Jan. 31, 2022, deadline for CAAM-Stanley Chong Scholarships application

Looking for scholarships to help with tuition and cost-of-living expenses during undergraduate studies? Don’t miss the Jan. 31 deadline for submitting your application for the Stanley Chong Scholarship. Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM) provides scholarships to senior Chinese American high school students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, in the state of Minnesota, to support their cost of study and living during their undergraduate studies. The Stanley Chong Scholarships are merit- and needs-based.

The scholarship was established in the name of the second chairman of CAAM, Stanley Chong, who was a well-known Chinese American entrepreneur in the Twin-Cities.

Details of eligibility, evaluation criteria, application form and checklist are online at CAAM’s website. Scholarship recipients will automatically become members of CAAM with good standing after turning 18 years old.

“Shop Cats” of Hong Kong and China by Marcel Heijnen

Dutch photographer Marcel Heijnen lived in Hong Kong in the 1990s and left for Singapore around the Handover. When he returned in 2015, he was happy to see that some parts of the territory had not changed much. Sai Ying Pun (“Western”), the area where he moved, still enjoyed small mom and pop shops, many of which housed a resident cat or two. Heijnen captured dozens of cats in the vibrant photos that make up “Shop Cats of Hong Kong.” A second book, “Shop Cats of China,” is the result of travels to ten cities in the Mainland. “Shop Cats of Hong Kong” was pleased to see the same shop cat phenomenon as in Hong Kong. He traveled first to Guangzhou and was pleased to see shop cats there. Over four years he went on to travel to nine more cities in China, “some with more shop cats than others,” although the photos don’t indicate which city is which. But the Hong Kong book also doesn’t show which shop is in Sai Ying Pun and which is in Sheung Wan or other districts; Heijnen evidently prefers to focus on the cats and the aura of the shops, rather than their physical locations.

Both books show shops that have yet to be destroyed by mass development and gentrification. Through his carefully curated photos, Heijnen records these traditional ways of life that have remained constant over the years. Should these cities be bulldozed in the name of progress, the shops will be gone and the owners and employees may need to seek other forms of employment.

“The cats will move on, but to where?” ♦

Heijnen explains in the introduction of the Hong Kong book, shop owners like cats on their premises because they keep mice (and rats) away. Some owners have adopted cats, while some cats just showed up and stayed. The cats all seem to be well fed; some are even a little overweight. For one cat perched just in front of the Hong Kong book is Ah Dai, or Number One. He works at a rice shop, sometimes guarding the front door, other times resting on top of more than a dozen large white rice bags piled up almost to the ceiling. In another photo, Ah Dai stretches as if just waking up while the human owner reclines in another folding chair, feet propped up on a little stool. But not every human is sleeping in the Hong Kong book. In one, a man stands on his toes atop a wooden stool while his wife stands by. The cat in this dry goods shop is difficult to spot as it blends in with the items in the store. Other photos present similar issues: the cats are often difficult to spot as they camouflage into their surroundings.

The cats all seem to be well fed; some are even a little overweight. For one cat perched just in front of a shop’s entrance, Row writes:

Where did my youth go?
I once had style, grace and form
Now I’ve just got form

Heijnen explains in the introduction of the China book that he wondered if cities on the mainland also enjoyed the same shop cat phenomenon as in Hong Kong. He traveled first to Guangzhou and was pleased to see shop cats there. Over four years he went on to travel to nine more cities in China, “some with more shop cats than others,” although the photos don’t indicate which city is which. But the Hong Kong book also doesn’t show which shop is in Sai Ying Pun and which is in Sheung Wan or other districts; Heijnen evidently prefers to focus on the cats and the aura of the shops, rather than their physical locations.

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“The cats will move on, but to where?” ♦

Author: Marcel Heijnen
Publisher: Thames & Hudson
Publication date: (HK) April 2021; (China) September 2021
Hardcover: (HK) 160 pages; (China) 192 pages

Marcel Heijnen is a Dutch photographer, designer and musician. He uses his photography to explore beauty and expression that goes beyond realism.

Heijnen’s other books include “Spot the Shop Cat,” “Hong Kong Garage Dogs” and Hong Kong Market Cats.”

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If interested, please contact Richard at 612-987-6540 or rhe@chinainsight.info.

GLOBAL LEARNING ALLIANCE

About the reviewer

Susan Blumberg-Kason is the author of “Good Chinese Wife: A Love Affair with China Gone Wrong” and co-edited “Hong Kong Noir.”

As a child, she dreamed of visiting China and Hong Kong and eventually went to study Mandarin and received a Master of Philosophy in Government and Public Administration from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where she also researched emerging women’s rights. She’s a freelance journalist now based in the Chicago suburbs, where she is also an elected trustee of her public library as well.

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If you would like to contribute an article, please contact Greg Hugh at 612-723-4872 or email ghugh@chinainsight.info.
“A Clash of Steel: A Treasure Island Remix” of Hong Kong and China by C. B. Lee

Reviewed by Susan Blumberg-Kason | Asian Review of Books | Nov. 25, 2021

C.B. Lee is a Chinese-Vietnamese-American author based out of Los Angeles, California. Lambda Literary Award-nominated writer of young adult and middle grade fiction, her honest and compelling writing style appeals to teenagers. She is best known for her Sidekick Squad series, which follows a quartet of teenagers in a near-future world of superheroes and supervillains. Lee’s work has been featured in Teen Vogue, Wired Magazine, Hypable, Tor’s Best of Fantasy and Sci Fi and the American Library Association’s Rainbow List.

As a journalist, Griffiths has reported on the ground from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea, and Sri Lanka for publications including CNN, The Atlantic, and the South China Morning Post. His first book, “The Great Firewall of China: How to Build and Control an Alternative Version of the Internet,” was published in early 2019.

At a time when many classics are being rewritten with Asian characters in Asian settings, it was perhaps inevitable that “Treasure Island” would be recast as a Qing Dynasty tale involving two notorious pirates, Zheng Yi Sao and Cheung Po Tsai, and the loot of the entire Dragon Fleet has been rumored to be hidden somewhere in the South China Sea, but there are thousands and thousands of islands and inlets and coves. People have been searching for it forever with no luck, even former members of her crew. Zheng Yi Sao disappeared, but her treasure … For years and years, no one has ever found it.

A number of surprising revelations develop along the way. Lee’s writing is engaging and visual, with abundant sword fights, bustling city scenes, and, of course, rough patches at sea. Xiang’s early days at sea are full of rough patches at sea. Xiang’s early days at sea are full of challenges at sea after fleeing Vietnam in 1975 on a tiny boat that was at one point intercepted by pirates. Her father was also a Vietnamese refugee and both parents are of Vietnamese and Chinese ethnicity. Any English-language novel set in China must come to terms with the question of how to render Chinese terms and names. At the end of the book, Lee explains that she uses a combination of Cantonese, Wade-Giles, and pinyin romanizations. While there’s nothing inherently wrong with this (and Lee admits that pinyin is in particular ahistorical), her choice of personal names isn’t consistent with her statement that “The romanizations I have chosen reflect Xiang’s Cantonese perspective.” Xiang is itself a Mandarin rendering, while mother Shi Yeung’s family name (Shi, pronounced “sure”, not “shee” as Lee gives in her pronunciation key) is given a Mandarin pronunciation while her given name is spelled as it would be if pronounced in Cantonese. While this doesn’t detract from the story and probably won’t bother (or even register with) most readers, it’s something editors should be more aware of, now that Asian stories have become a relatively large presence in young adult literature.

About the reviewer
Susan Blumberg-Kason is the author of “Good Chinese Wife: A Love Affair with China Gone Wrong” and co-edited “Hong Kong Noir.” As a child, she dreamed of visiting China and Hong Kong and eventually, went to study Mandarin and received a Master of Philosophy in Government and Public Administration from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where she also researched emerging women’s rights. She’s a freelance journalist now based in the Chicago suburbs, where she is also an elected trustee of her public library as well.
CAAM Chinese Dance Theatre’s New Year performances return

Date & time: Sat., Jan. 29; 7 p.m. & Sun., Jan. 30, 2 p.m.
Location: The O’Shaughnessy, 2004 Randolph Ave. St. Paul
Tickets: https://oshag.stkate.edu/events/

With the exception of last winter, every year for almost 30 years CAAM Chinese Dance Theater has been sewing costumes, making props, taking photos, rehearsing, finalizing staging and designing lighting for its debut of a Chinese New Year show on the O’Shaughnessy stage. All these activities take place amidst finishing finals, purchasing gifts and assembling for family gatherings through the Christmas holiday season! And everyone involved is thankful the bustling of performance preparation has returned.

In the last few weeks Artistic Director Jinyu Zhou has been hard at work rehearsing all new choreography in costumes for lighting designer Kevin Jones and Stage Manager Shuling Lai to see at CAAM Chinese Dance Theater’s new studio located in the Midway Area of St. Paul. Dancers, too, start to see how the choreography they have been learning for months take on context and meaning. Excitement is building as more rehearsals are scheduled for the entire month of January before opening night on Saturday, Jan. 29.

“Songs of Home” feature original choreography by Zhou. It introduces its audiences to playful mythical animals, heroic figures and more, in an all-age performance. Set to the melodies of a millennia of beloved Chinese music. CAAM Chinese Dance Theater brings back to the O’Shaughnessy stage several world premier dances performed with zeal and artistry never seen anywhere in Minnesota.

“CAAM Chinese Dance Theater is back on the O’Shaughnessy stage with all its vibrant costuming, exquisite lighting and gifted dancers” says Zhou. “I am so pleased to present to the audience my original choreography for the first time in Minnesota, choreographed during some of the hardest of times, COVID. These performances are meant to bring joy and to celebrate the re-emergence not only of our Chinese New Year performances, but also to launch a specular beginning to 2022 — CAAM Chinese Dance Theater’s 30th anniversary.

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater Presents

Sons of Home
2022 Production
Saturday, Jan. 29, 7:00pm
Sunday, Jan. 30, 2:00pm
The O’Shaughnessy, St. Catherine University
2004 Randolph Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105
$25 at the door/$20 after promotion
$15 before Jan. 16/$20 streaming for whole family
https://oshag.stkate.edu/events/or by calling 651.690.6700

Twin Cities’ contemporary Chinese women restauranteurs

Date & time: Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022; 1-3 p.m.
Location: The Traffic Zone Centre for Visual Art, 230 3rd. Ave. N., Minneapolis or online

In 1980, Leeann and Laura Chin opened Leeann Chin Cuisine. The mother-daughter team quickly grew the business into a successful 50-location operation. The chain’s history and owners’ story will be featured in The Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends (CHFF) Sunday Tea series on the History of the Chinese Restaurant Business on Jan. 23. Board member Mary Yee and special guest Laura Chin will also talk about contemporary Chinese women restaurateurs in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Because of the pandemic, only 20 in-person attendees will be allowed. Masks and vaccination will be required.

Please RSVP using the following link or the following QR code:

Chinese Heritage Foundation Friends
6704 West Trail
Edina, MN 55439
www.chineseheritagefoundation.org