

Dog rescue welcomes 26 dogs from China



Jill Stewart, China Rescue Dogs founder



Crates with rescued dogs from China prepare to fly from Seattle on Alaska Air to their new forever homes around the country.

By Janice Nesamani
NORTHWESTASIANWEEKLY

In the early hours of June 6, 26 dogs traveled from China through Vancouver, Canada to Seattle. They are the latest pack to be rescued by

China Rescue Dogs, a nonprofit that conducts international rescues exclusively from China—bringing dogs, destined to be killed, to the United States where they can live out the rest of their days with their forever families.

The organization was founded in July 2019 by Jill Stewart, who is also president, after she adopted a disabled Golden Retriever from China. Meeso was found wandering

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Omar Lee turns to nostalgia in new venture



Ribbon cutting ceremony at The Lodge

By Mahlon Meyer
NORTHWESTASIANWEEKLY

No one would suspect that inside the massive brick structure, the size of a hospital but with religious statuary and crosses over the entryways, there resides an inner cool and peace. Walking down the long hallways, the thick brick walls muffle out all sound from outside. And the original wooden doors shine like brown mirrors in the soft

light. Built a century ago as a Catholic seminary, the building has been transformed into a hotel, but it retains much of its original trappings. “When I stayed there during the opening, it was like I was traveling back in time,” said Omar Lee, one of the investors in the hotel, which is called The Lodge at Saint Edward State Park. Lee has never really wanted to go

back, until now. Born and raised in Hong Kong, he spent his childhood looking at pictures of the Queen that were ubiquitous in the British colony. As the child of a father who had fled China in 1949 and became a newspaper editor, the identity of a colonized Chinese never quite fit. “I never had a sense of belonging,” he said during an interview.

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“Invisible” course at Bellevue College highlights AAPI advocacy



Nan Ma

By Mahlon Meyer
NORTHWESTASIANWEEKLY

One day in April, Nan Ma, a senior associate professor at Bellevue College (BC), found that the course she usually teaches, Introduction to Asian American Studies, was not listed for next year. Other ethnic studies courses were listed, however. So she and a colleague tried to get in touch with faculty leaders and administrators. Encountering difficulties, she submitted a petition. Eventually, she contacted OCA Asian Pacific Advocates of Greater

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THE INSIDE STORY

“NOT THE RIGHT MINORITY”???



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EDITORIAL

Make self-care a priority

By now, you’ve heard that tennis star Naomi Osaka withdrew from the French Open after being fined \$15,000 for refusing to speak to the media.

It marked the first time a major star walked away from a major tournament without an injury—at least one that’s visible.

On the last day of Mental Health Month, Osaka stated the press conferences showed “no regard for athlete[s] mental health.”

“The truth is that I have suffered long bouts of depression since the U.S. Open in 2018 and I have had a really hard time coping with that,” she wrote on Twitter. “I’m gonna take some time away from the court now, but when the time is right I really want to work with the Tour to discuss ways we can make things better for the players, press and fans.”

Osaka’s willingness to be fined rather than participate

in news conferences that exacerbate her mental health issues was a request for reasonable accommodation to which tennis’ governing authorities should have agreed.

Instead, not only did the president of the French Tennis Federation not agree, he persuaded the heads of the other three Grand Slams—the U.S. Open, Wimbledon, and the Australian Open—to publicly release the contents of a letter they wrote to Osaka in which they threatened to disqualify her from all four tournaments.

Athletes are human, too and while it may be their job to play, they do not exist solely for our entertainment.

In a given year, nearly 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience some type of mental health condition, according to the American Psychiatric Association. And more than half of that population doesn’t get treatment.

Kudos to Osaka for taking care of herself.

When she defeated Serena Williams in 2018 in her first

Grand Slam tournament, the crowd booed her, and she was forced to cover her head in humiliation. She even apologized during the trophy ceremony while Williams told the crowd to stop booing and give Osaka credit for a game well played, and won fair and square.

We are all human beings and it is OK to be vulnerable. Let’s push for a society that prioritizes self-care and mental health, not one that ridicules it.

If you or someone you care about is in crisis, seek help immediately.

Call 911. Visit a nearby emergency department or your health care provider’s office. Call the toll-free, 24-hour hotline of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Crisis Text Line also provides confidential text access from anywhere in the U.S. to a trained crisis counselor. Text HOME to 741741. ■

NATIONAL NEWS

Asian San Francisco officer attacked in possible hate crime

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A San Francisco police officer responding to a call about a man making threats to people in Chinatown was attacked by the suspect, who was later arrested on assault and hate crime charges, authorities said.

Surveillance video shows the female officer, who is

of Asian descent, approach Gerardo Contreras on May 28 and tell him to turn around and put his hands on his head.

The 33-year-old turns around, but while the officer puts on plastic gloves before patting him down, he turns back to face her, shoves her, then wrestles with her on

the ground.

The video first made public by the San Francisco Police Officers Association shows four men rushing to help, hitting Contreras and trying to pull him off the

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Seattle, formerly known as Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA-GS).

Last week, BC President Gary Locke said the delay in listing the course was based on a misunderstanding—it would be offered in the spring. The holdup, he said, was because the Cultural and Ethnic Studies Department was waiting to hire a new faculty member.

“Last year, we had the Asian American Studies course in the fall, but with the new hiring that we’re making, the new addition to the program, we thought that when we offer that course, it should be influenced by the new faculty member,” he told the Asian Weekly. “If that faculty member is an Asian American Pacific Islander, does that person want to teach it in the fall or does that person prefer to teach it in the winter or spring?”

Still, the advocacy of Ma and others reveals the unique character that those who teach and support ethnic studies believe their courses should have. It also highlights the challenges colleges and universities face balancing full-time and adjunct faculty.

Ethnic studies began in the late 1960s after the Civil Rights Movement. Supporters stormed academic offices and staged sit-ins and protests for new courses that were not Euro-centric.

The courses were not only meant to reflect the experiences of people of color, they were meant to challenge the traditional knowledge shared in classrooms, which advocates said kept in place oppressive structures both in the United States and abroad.

“The kinds of stories that are told and shared in an Asian American studies class and in ethnic studies classes in general...tell students, especially those who come from marginalized backgrounds, that their own stories, experiences, and voices matter,” said Ma. “I also want to point out that the stories are not only about suffering and victimization, they also show minority individuals and communities as resilient, creative, innovative, resourceful, abundant actors, and agents of change.”

To students enrolled in the course (it is currently being taught by another faculty member) and those who’d



Janet Ha Andrews

taken it before, news that it was not listed for next year was a shock.

Janet Ha Andrews, 33, the daughter of refugees that fled the Vietnam War, is pursuing a second degree at BC while managing a small online business.

She was upset and felt “compelled to speak up” when she heard the class was not listed.

“Anti-Asian violence and hatred has been a part of U.S. history since before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, from the violent expulsion of the Chinese in the 1885 Tacoma riots, the stolen independence of the Philippines in the 1898 Treaty of Paris, to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II,” she wrote in an email. “My outlook is that Asian Americans should not be fearful, instead we must learn and educate others on our history so we can never let these things happen again to anyone.”

The course also raised questions about race and identity for students from other backgrounds.

Ma and her colleague, Tony Vo, an adjunct faculty member, were concerned that the lack of visibility of the course would lead to fewer students signing up.

“We explained that the College has moved to an annual schedule and since registration begins on May 10, students were already looking at the schedules to make their academic plans for the year,” wrote Ma in a letter to the diversity caucus on May 19. “While the intent may be that the class will be scheduled after the new hire comes in, we emphasized that the impact is racial as this class is connected to Asian American identity.”

One response she received underlined changes in the structure of academia over the past several decades. Even a quarter century ago, graduate students entering higher education still had a fair chance of achieving a

tenure track position. Today, the majority of teaching positions across the nation are held by part-time faculty who in many cases live below poverty level or have to moonlight at multiple universities.

The response in question was from an administrator who told Ma that since she and her colleague were adjunct faculty, the department did not need to consult with them about scheduling decisions.

“This sentiment that we are adjunct faculty and therefore are not [cultural and ethnic studies] faculty and do not need to be consulted...and that the chair and the full-time faculty are the decision makers for the department...does not uphold the College’s commitment to inclusion and furthers the disparities between full-time and adjunct faculty.”

Ma and others contacted OCA-GS, and Connie So, the chapter’s president, wrote a letter to Locke on May 28.

OCA-GS was “dismayed” that the course seemed to be singled out for exclusion.

“We understand that while the offerings of African American Studies, Latinx Studies, and Indigenous Studies are maintained, only Asian American Studies has been eliminated,” she wrote. “We strongly support the maintenance of these important disciplines, but we resent the obvious attempt to employ colonial divide and conquer tactics to weaken us all.”

On June 1, Locke called her and assured the situation was being resolved and the course would be offered. So told the Asian Weekly that she encouraged Locke to offer two courses for each area of ethnic studies.

“OCA-GS adamantly believes that having more Ethnic Studies offerings is particularly important considering current events,” she said.

For his part, Locke said he had a “good conversation” with So.

“In fact, she pointed out that there are so many other community colleges in the region that don’t even offer an Asian American Studies course,” he said. “The University of Washington doesn’t even have an Asian American Studies course this coming fall.” ■

Mahlon can be contacted at info@nwasianweekly.com.