

## AMIDST UNCERTAINTY, ASIANS FIND “HOME” THROUGH GUNS

Photo from Colin Wong



Photo from Miriam Chung



Left: Miriam Chung, at a shooting range, is mulling a gun purchase. Above: Colin Wong tells his daughters, “First, walk away, then use pepper spray. Self defense is a state of mind.”

By Mahlon Meyer  
NORTHWEST ASIAN  
WEEKLY

The flat, cold metal grip was reassuring in his hand.

Xiaohu Qian had not touched a gun since college when the Chinese government, in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre, whisked students away to military camps for train-

ing. But living in the United States now, working as a Microsoft software engineer, he felt the brunt of the pandemic with the absence of government.

“Even Costco was out of water, rice, and toilet paper, and I knew that this was a sign that the government would not be there for us if it couldn’t even ensure a supply chain,” he said, asking for a pseud-

onym because of his work. “But guns were plentiful.”

Thus, like thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of Asians and Asian Americans in our region, he became a gun owner for the first time recently.

“They basically felt unsafe,” said one Chinese community leader, who knows a half-dozen individuals who recently purchased guns. She also asked for anonymity given privacy concerns.

At Low Price Guns, in Bel-

levue, where Qian purchased a Sig Sauer P320, the manager, who asked to go only by his first name, Rick, said that the clientele is usually 30% Asian. But during the first six months of the pandemic, that rose to 75-80%.

“There were lines out the door every day, it was a whirlwind,” he said. “We saw a huge uptick and sold thousands of guns. They cleaned us out.”

(see GUNS on 15)

## Talking trade with Ambassador Tai

By Janice Nesamani  
NORTHWEST ASIAN  
WEEKLY

Described as calm, respectful, and creative, it’s no surprise that Katherine Tai’s appointment to the position of United States Trade Representative (USTR) on March 18, 2021 was approved 98-0 by a usually-polarized Senate. However, what makes her appointment celebratory is that Tai is the first Asian American woman to serve in this position.

Calling the timing of her appointment challenging would be an understatement. Tai must broker deals that had spiraled into tariff wars under the previous administration while the U.S. prepares to recover from the pandemic and the Biden-Harris

government aims to Build Back Better. Tai’s job is to negotiate trade deals that open the U.S. economy to new opportunities, while safeguarding the interests of our workers.

On Aug. 5, 2021, Tai visited the Washington State University (WSU) Breadlab and met with labor leaders and union representatives to understand their needs that will inform the policies she crafts.

### Immigrant perspective

Tai’s parents were born in China, moved to Taiwan, and then immigrated to the U.S. She was born in Connecticut and grew up in Washington, D.C. Fluent in Mandarin, Tai graduated

(see TAI on 13)



Ambassador Katherine Tai

## Vietnamese American woman files suit against neighbor



Thi Pham (right) with her attorney, Jeff Campiche

Photo from PR INK, Inc.

Thi Pham of Shoreline says she has endured years of harassment and threats from her white neighbor—because of her race.

Now she has filed a civil lawsuit against Jan Myers, 72, who was arrested earlier this year after Pham recorded Myers, on April 5, using racially derogatory and threatening statements.

(see LAWSUIT on 11)



Kshama Sawant

Photo from Seattle City Council

## Push for recall Sawant effort

The Recall Sawant campaign is gearing up for its final signature-gathering push.

Last week, it said it hit a “significant milestone” with volunteers collecting more than 13,000 unverified signatures. The goal is to collect 14,000 signed petitions through August before submitting to King County Elections.

If it qualifies for the ballot, King County Elections will assign a date for the recall election, likely sometime between Nov. 11–Dec. 26.

“We know that Sawant will go to no end to protect her political career, but this campaign is about holding Sawant accountable for her record of legal and ethical violations while in office, and we will not be deterred,” the campaign said in a news release. ■

## ■ ASTROLOGY

# Predictions and advice for the week of August 21–27, 2021

By Sun Lee Chang



**Rat** — In trying to optimize the leverage that you currently have, keep in mind that timing is key.



**Dragon** — Your impatience grows this week as progress seems very slow. Thankfully, you won't need to wait much longer.



**Monkey** — Instant gratification is certainly tempting, but indulging too frequently could keep you from realizing long-term rewards.



**Ox** — Unless you are surrounded by mind readers, you must communicate clearly to push your agenda forward.



**Snake** — Regular maintenance can be somewhat tedious. That said, the trouble you avoid by doing it is well worth it.



**Rooster** — Are you talking to your partner, but not really hearing each other? Listen instead of trying to formulate your response.



**Tiger** — While plot twists might be interesting in movies, something decidedly different is likely more desirable in real life.



**Horse** — Staying on course could become difficult. Your strong spirit inspires you to solidify your resolve and redouble your efforts.



**Dog** — If you want to claim all the credit, then you must be willing to take responsibility and potentially take the blame.



**Rabbit** — Experience has taught you not to press your luck, even if it seems like the tables have turned in your favor.



**Goat** — Are you unsure how to interpret the latest news? Seek additional details to fill in the blanks.



**Pig** — Thinking about acting as a mentor? Sharing your knowledge will help another, plus you could gain valuable insights as well.

### WHAT'S YOUR ANIMAL SIGN?

**RAT** 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020 **OX** 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009 **TIGER** 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010 **RABBIT** 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011 **DRAGON** 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012 **SNAKE** 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013 **HORSE** 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014 **GOAT** 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015 **MONKEY** 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016 **ROOSTER** 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017 **DOG** 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018 **PIG** 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019

\*The year ends on the first new moon of the following year. For those born in January and February, please take care when determining your sign.

### (TAI from 1)

from Yale and taught English in Guangzhou before she began practicing law and joined the federal government.

As a second-generation immigrant growing up fully American, Tai thinks sometimes people like her, whose families came to America more recently, aren't looked at and not necessarily expected to have a strong voice or to exercise leadership roles.

"Over time, what that breeds in some of us—and should breed in all of us—is the desire to overturn people's expectations, to be perseverant, and to lead with your strengths, things that you are good at, your ideas and your voice," she said.

Tai said her immigrant roots are a strength in her role.

"It means to never give up and make sure you are heard in whatever room you find yourself, make sure that you work as hard as you can to deliver on the things that you know that you can deliver."

### Visit to Washington state

Calling the Breadlab a special place and inspiring, Tai said, "I had an enlightening experience learning about their research, origins, vision for sustainability, nutrition, pragmatism, and innovations for the farmers who produce wheat."

For Tai, the visit reinforced how special the U.S. economy is in terms of human capital, innovation, and a positive vision for how to make the world a better place.

"Just like everyone else in

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our economy, our farmers are looking for opportunities," Tai said. "What I heard from the farmers that I met with is a desire for an overall economic and trade environment that they can operate in with confidence and that is very much the thrust of the Biden-Harris administration's economic agenda—to create that environment for our stakeholders, including our farmers to prosper," she said.

The Biden-Harris administration's effort to Build Back Better is worker-centric, so Tai met with labor leaders and union representatives to talk and listen.

"We are working together with them to formulate our trade policies and make sure they work not just for our biggest economic stakeholders but also for the individual human beings who make up our economy," Tai said.

"All my meetings in the state are focused on reconnecting with America, with our economic constituents, and to make sure that as we are putting our trade policies together, they really reflect the interests, desires, and needs of our economy."

### U.S.-China policy

The USTR is currently reviewing its policy on China with businesses eagerly awaiting its release in the fall. Though she did not divulge details, Tai acknowledged that this issue was on everybody's mind and the USTR has spent a lot of time and energy focused on it.

"I feel a serious sense of responsibility for bringing a strategic vision to our relationship with China, in particular our trade given that this is my competency," Tai said.

While doing so, she is also ensuring the organization is working across the administration.

"It's to ensure that our strategy with respect to China is coordinated and ultimately effective in placing the American economy—our farmers, workers, businessmen, and fishermen on the strongest possible competitive footing as we can in the global economy—where we will be competing with China in the years to come."

Finding that balance is tough, but Tai's response is to make U.S. policies very rational.

"We have to define the challenge we are facing with China effectively. It is a very serious

### AMBASSADOR KATHERINE TAI

challenge," she said.

"We have to approach our problems and challenges and also the formulation of our solutions and strategies with coherence and sobriety because at the end of the day, we need to have very rational policies and a very clear vision in order to ensure that we can navigate our way to a really strong position while competing."

### Digital trade

With the modern economy and high volume of digital activity, many countries including the U.S. are grappling with how best to regulate this part of the economy and society.

"A lot of us are experiencing this through the pandemic, in particular, where the digital nature of our economy is fueling a lot of our ability to be active," she said.

"This is an area that we are actively working on with our partners to establish rules and have conversations that we need to establish mutually beneficial relationships and to figure out the best ways to create rules for our economic activity," Tai said.

"This space has implications for more than just our economic values but both our political

and societal values, and it is an area that we have been engaging robustly with a lot of our trading partners in Europe and in Asia-Pacific," she said. Tai feels the need for leadership and new thinking across the board in this area.

### Economic recovery

Trade will play an important role as the U.S. emerges from the public health and economic crisis that is both national and global in nature. Outlining her principle as she develops policies, Tai said, "One is that we stay very well coordinated with other parts of the economic policy apparatus as we develop our trade policies to ensure that we are aligned."

As an example, she refers to President Biden's \$1.2 trillion Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill that was approved by the Senate on Aug. 10.

"This is a tremendous opportunity not only for us as a nation but also for us in our position in the world. While our trade policies will be boosted by this initiative, our trade policies will need to support it as well."

Tai emphasizes the opportunity that we have at this moment.

"We are coming out of a couple of really difficult years, both economically and in life experiences, and have an incredible opportunity to build back better and renew our society and the economic underpinnings of America in the way that has a potential to set us up for the years and decades to come." ■

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