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Please send all correspondence to: The Asian Reporter
922 N Killingsworth Street, Suite 2D, Portland, OR 97217
Phone: (503) 283-4440, Fax: (503) 283-4445

News Department e-mail: news@asianreporter.com
Advertising Department e-mail: ads@asianreporter.com
General e-mail: info@asianreporter.com
Website: www.asianreporter.com

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Publisher **Jaime Lim**
Contributing Editors

Ronault L.S. Catalani (Polo), Jeff Wenger
Correspondents

Ian Blazina, Josephine Bridges, Pamela Ellgen, Maileen Hamto, Edward J. Han, A.P. Kryza, Marie Lo, Simeon Mamaril, Julie Stegeman, Toni Tabora-Roberts, Allison Voigts

Illustrator **Jonathan Hill**

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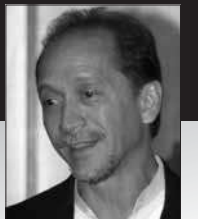
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TALKING STORY IN ASIAN AMERICA

■ Polo



A Wall for our Americas

Come close. I want to tell you something. Pero please, not a word of this to mi familia or my facebook friends. Not a whisper to my Mexican or Muslim best buds. Nor to our Filipino or Chinese neighbors. Okay?

Here goes: I submitted a bid to build The Wall. That \$20-billion wall. Sure, big U.S. and Mexican contractors submitted theirs. But mine will win, because my Wall will dwarf China's Great Wall. Mine'll divide the Americas in a way that will put Israel's awful Wall to shame. Remember that ugly thing that cut Germany in two? — Forget about it.

Forget all that old-school history, my Wall is cool, what's more, it's practical and cheap.

The Border Wall must be cool because, as any fifth-grader will tell you, our executive branch can propose whatever it wants, but only congress can fund it. And congressional approval requires cool.

To please establishment GOPers, my Wall has swinging doors — the kind harried waiters hip-bump dashing between steamy kitchens and hungry eaters. Willamette Valley farmers, Clatsop County dairymen, and Beaverton suburb builders love this feature. I asked.

Ask chambers of commerce, coast to coast. They're not shy about articulating just how far behind the ball D.C. has been in lowering the blackberry bramble of federal regs, appellate board decisions, federal court rulings, and presidential orders that in the awful aggregate gets called "immigration law."

Sure, our angry neighbors insist "those illegal aliens gotta wait in line," like their ancestors waited at Angel Island or Ellis Island. But N.E. Broadway's café owners and Silicon Forest chipmakers will say: "What line?"

For both our demand and supply sides, there is no system to meet their needs. Business big and small has waited for decades. Analogize this to running trains or busses. Imagine TriMet's sleek MAX or my morning bus without their handy ticket outlets or those hip smartphone apps. My Great Wall will have tidy turnstile ticket machines, miles and miles of them. Pling-pling.

Liberal Demos will love my bid too. My Wall

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includes cool passage for the healthy grazing and happy mating of Mexican jaguar, West Indian manatee, pronghorn antelope too. It's chest high where our Pacific Northwest monarchs and Chapman Elementary chimney swifts have always crossed. Not cool is dividing our love for bugs and birdies from our love for human families, each doing what each has always done everywhere, across our precious planet's well-worn face.

Because my Wall will be less about walling out necessary and natural phenomena, my Wall is cheap. Say, 70 percent less to build — less the proceeds from ticket sales to those 10 million shamelessly ambitious Mexican men and women already working real hard here. And, add to the "plus" column, lease proceeds for 1,000 spidery cell towers I'll raise to keep up with expanding markets for the great ideas, for Amazon deliveries, and for the digitalized dollars these families spread across our Americas.

Sure, getting zippy chimney swifts and grumpy jaguars to pay for passage will be harder, but not really necessary. Big Wall talk is actually not about barrier building. The former USSR tried and tried to divide Europe, but now chunks of Berlin's Wall are on eBay. China tried it too, but today's Great Wall crawls with tourists. It's really more about national theater. And that won't cost \$20 billion.

Bottom line of my no-drama bid: Dollars and goods move, people and birdies move, Depoe Bay's beloved gray whale families move. This movement has always been necessary and natural. Beautiful. Only borders are new. And tall Walls are dumb.

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