

The Asian Reporter

Volume 29 Number 1
January 7, 2019
ISSN: 1094-9453

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

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

Please send reader feedback, Asian-related press releases, and community interest ideas/stories to the addresses listed above. Please include a contact phone number.

Advertising information available upon request.

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**
News Service **Associated Press/Newsfinder**

Copyright 2019. Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.

Member

Associated Press/Newsfinder
Asian American Journalists Association
Better Business Bureau
Pacific Northwest Minority Publishers (PNMP)
Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Oregon

Correspondence:

The Asian Reporter welcomes reader response and participation. Please send all correspondence to:
Mail: 922 N Killingsworth Street, Suite 2D, Portland, OR 97217-2220
Phone: (503) 283-4440 ** Fax: (503) 283-4445
News Department e-mail: news@asianreporter.com
General e-mail: info@asianreporter.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (U.S. rates only)

Individual subscription (sent bulk rate):	<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$14	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$40
Individual subscription (sent first class mail):	<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$72
Office subscription (5 copies to one address):	<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$145
Institutional subscription (25 copies to one address):	<input type="checkbox"/> Half year: \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> Full year: \$180	<input type="checkbox"/> Two years: \$280

NEW SUBSCRIBER / ADDRESS CORRECTION INFORMATION FORM:

Subscriber's name: _____
Company name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, ZIP: _____
Phone: _____
Fax: _____
E-mail: _____

Mail with payment or Fax with credit card information to:
The Asian Reporter, Attn: Subscription Dept.,
922 N Killingsworth Street, Suite 2D, Portland, OR 97217-2220
Phone: (503) 283-4440 * Fax: (503) 283-4445

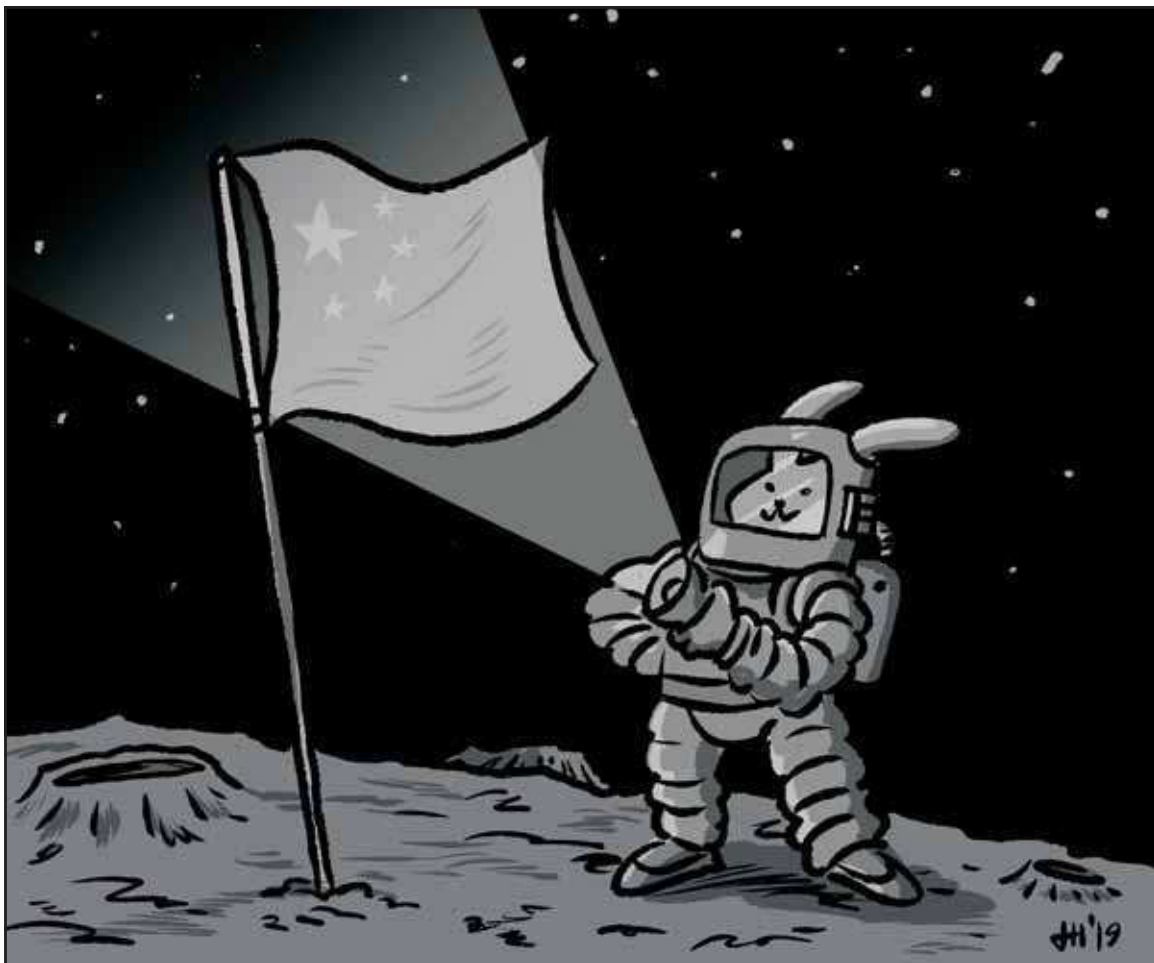
For VISA, Mastercard, or American Express payment only:

Name (as it appears on the card): _____
Type of card (circle): VISA Mastercard American Express
Card number: _____ Security code: _____
Expiration date: _____ Address of card: _____

The last four issues of *The Asian Reporter* are available for pick up free at our office 24 hours a day at 922 N Killingsworth Street, Suite 2D, Portland, Oregon.

Back issues of *The Asian Reporter* may be ordered by mail at the following rates: First copy: \$1.50 Additional copies ordered at the same time: \$1.00 each Send orders to: Asian Reporter Back Issues, 922 N. Killingsworth St., Portland, OR 97217-2220

The Asian Reporter welcomes reader response and participation. If you have a comment on a story we have printed, or have an Asian-related personal or community focus idea, please contact us. Please include a contact name, address, and phone number on all correspondence. Thank you.



MY TURN

■ Wayne Chan



Give me liberty or give me beef satay!

File this one under “Non-earth-shattering news.”

I’m headed home after a two-week journey to Hong Kong, Taipei, and Phuket. It’s been a great trip! I was able to visit with friends and family and sample food from different parts of the globe.

But there’s something I’ve often wondered about since starting the trip. Actually, it’s something I have always thought about when travelling to these countries.

Why do they have such awful English signage?

Now, before you start writing letters complaining that I’m a typical ugly American who thinks the world revolves around us, please give me a chance.

What I’m talking about isn’t your typical translated English rushed out to explain something to my fellow clueless Americans. What I’m talking about is major business signage. Allow me to give you some examples.

“Wooderful Life” — This sign is on a boutique in Taiwan that sells trinkets and wooden music boxes.

“What Do You Fab” — This one is for another gift store in Taiwan. It carries *no* products remotely resembling The Beatles.

“Meat Liberty” — I found this restaurant in Bangkok.

“DIKE” — This is a speaker company. I kid you not.

“Funkpeanuts Coffee” — Well ... It’s a coffee house.

“F.A.T.” — Far Eastern Air Transport. Yes, an airline.

“Gift Shop: We considerate more for you!” — I don’t really remember the place, but my guess is that it is a gift shop.

In each of these cases, the business owner came up with the name then presumably decided to spend thousands of dollars on professional signage above their store, in print ads, and on all of their stationary. They are not translated signs of a business named in their own language. They are the actual names of the stores. Apparently when they were brainstorming to think of an English name,

nobody thought, “Hmm, maybe we ought to run this past a native English speaker.”

But hey, what do I know? There are plenty of western businesses that, at first glance, seem nonsensical. I still don’t know what a “Starbucks” is supposed to represent. Maybe in the next couple

years we’ll all be saying “Let’s grab a cup of coffee at Funky P’s and talk about it.”

Maybe there’s some historic reference in Thailand related to protein and freedom. “Give me liberty or give me beef satay!” I admit it, I’m clueless.

The real reason I’ve been wondering about all this is that if I were starting a business in the U.S. and decided to think of a Chinese name, based on my Chinese speaking abilities, you better believe I’d take a moment and send a copy to a friend or colleague and ask, “Does this make sense?”

Why? Because I know right now what would happen if I didn’t. It would look something like this (Chinese translated into English, of course):

“Round Dough Smashed in Face with Fresh Wind” — I’ve always wanted to start an artisan pizza place. And who doesn’t like the smell or oregano?

“Foot Wrapped with Fresh Wind” — A shoe store where all the shoes are pre-scented with lavender. Who wouldn’t like that?

“Puncture Hole Dough” — We can always use more donut shops, am I right?

Actually, I think I’m starting to get the hang of this. Look out world! Freshly Wind, LLC, here I come!



I’ve often wondered why some of the English signage in Hong Kong, Taipei, and Phuket is pretty bad. I know if I created a business name in Chinese to use in the U.S., I would consult a friend or colleague and ask, “Does this make sense?”

TALKING STORY IN ASIAN AMERICA



■ Polo

Polo’s “Talking Story” column will return soon.

Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.