



## PIGEON POST

## Celebration of Lord Krishna open to public

CULTURE

The International Society of Krishna Consciousness invites the public to take part in its annual celebration of Sri Krishna Jannmashtami at Taipei Artist Village on Aug. 16. The event is one of the largest gatherings of Indian nationals in Taiwan each year and honors the appearance of Lord Krishna, who is worshipped by Hindus, the organizer of the event said. The event is free and will feature traditional Indian culture, including music, dance, theater, yoga, cuisine, a market and henna decorations. For more information, contact Dayal Nitai das at dayal.nitai.tkg@pamho.net.

## President wants university programs in English

STUDIES

Taiwan will move toward offering complete university programs in English and increasing the number of scholarships for students from its diplomatic allies, President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) said on Thursday. Ma made the announcement after meeting St. Lucian Prime Minister Stephenson King at the Presidential Office. Ma said that after visiting allies in the Caribbean and Latin America recently, his administration decided to provide more educational opportunities to students from that region. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education will work to create English-language university programs and increase funding for Taiwan Scholarships to students from allied countries, he said. "We look forward to forging permanent relationships with our allies, not only through trade, but also through cultural and educational exchanges," Ma said.

## 'Fun Taiwan' seeks co-host

JOBS

The hostess of Discovery Channel's *Fun Taiwan*, Janet Hsieh, is looking for a travel buddy to co-host the show. Men and women of any nationality between the ages of 18 and 35 are welcome to submit a resume and photo, along with a one-minute to three-minute video clip in English and Mandarin introducing themselves. For more information, visit [www.travelandlivingasia.com](http://www.travelandlivingasia.com).



PHOTO COURTESY OF DISCOVERY CHANNEL

STAFF WRITER, WITH CNA

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## Professor finds Taiwan in poems

**ROAD LESS TRAVELED:** Professor Amie Elizabeth Parry has taken on the difficult, modernist poetry of Hsia Yu, something many Taiwanese would have trouble doing

BY FLORA WANG  
STAFF REPORTER

Amie Elizabeth Parry's journey of learning about Taiwan and its culture began in the early 1990s, when she visited Taiwan with a friend who was studying Mandarin.

Later, Parry returned to Taiwan to study on a Fulbright scholarship.

"I made some Taiwanese friends six months after I arrived in Taiwan. I found that people in Taiwan had a certain understanding of the US' history, society or culture, but I knew nothing about Taiwan," Parry said in fluent Mandarin. "Our high school or college history textbooks did not mention much about Taiwan, either."

"In fact, there has been a significant relation between the US and Taiwan since the Cold War, but the general American public still has limited knowledge of this relation, no matter whether they hold a college degree or not," she said.

That inspired Parry to learn more about Taiwan and to study Chinese.

But Parry took the road less traveled to explore Taiwanese

culture — poetry. The language barrier posed a challenge, but did not discourage Parry from reading Chinese poems.

Her years of research into contemporary poetic works led to a book published by Duke University Press, *Interventions into Modernist Cultures: Poetry from Beyond the Empty Screen*, which recently won her the Book Award in Literary Studies by the Association for Asian American Studies and was praised for advancing Taiwanese literary research.

Josephine Ho (何春蕤), a professor at National Central University's Center for the Study of Sexuality, said the award is given for major contributions to promoting the visibility of Taiwanese culture among international academic circles.

"Generally speaking, it is more difficult to understand a poem than to understand a novel, not to mention that I chose to study avant-garde modernistic [Taiwanese] poetry," Parry said.

"Take the poems of [contemporary Taiwanese female poet] Hsia Yu (夏宇) for example. Many friends in Taiwan wonder how I can un-

## BARK helps Kaohsiung strays

**NEW ON THE SCENE:** Established in April, BARK began in the backyard of Chris Leroux and Natasha Hodel. The organization says it has since helped more than 200 animals

BY JENNY W. HSU  
STAFF REPORTER

With a quick motion of the hand, a spoken command and a stern look, Chris Leroux had the undivided attention of his pack. With all eyes fixed firmly on their leader, not one of the ex-strays moved a muscle as they waited for the next instruction.

Then Leroux turned his back and started to walk away. The dogs remained motionless, waiting patiently and confidently for him to come back. One word — "come" — and the dogs scurried towards Leroux, hopeful that they would be rewarded for their behavior.

Leroux is an English teacher from Canada whose passion for animal welfare has motivated him and his partner, Natasha Hodel, to put most of their earnings and savings into establishing the animal rescue organization BARK in Kaohsiung City.

"It is heartbreaking, what you see on the streets sometimes — especially knowing some of these animals were abandoned by their

owners. But getting mad isn't the solution," he said as he stroked the back of one dog's ears.

Homer, a healthy black dog, was emaciated and afflicted with a skin disease when Hodel and Leroux found him.

Homer and Chief are two of the dogs that have been lucky enough to find a new home, adopted by a friend of Leroux and Hodel. But many of the organization's other ex-strays remain up for adoption.

Established in April, BARK began operations in Leroux and Hodel's backyard. Just a few months later, the couple say things are running smoothly and they are making progress helping some of Kaohsiung's strays escape life on the streets.

BARK not only tries to find shelters for animals in need, it works to educate the community and raise public awareness about the stray population.

One method that could help reduce the stray population is the Catch-Neuter-Release (CNR) method, Leroux said.

CNR is an option because there aren't homes for every stray on the street, so animals are instead spayed or neutered and released where they were found.

The method is widely supported by animal welfare societies around the globe and some local governments in Taiwan as the most humane and sustainable way to deal with the stray population.

So far, with the help of volunteers, BARK has rescued and helped more than 200 injured and abused cats and dogs. BARK tries to offer hurt animals the best medical care possible.

"We make it very clear that we are not a dumping ground for unwanted animals and we will not accept animals whose owners simply don't want them anymore," said Leroux, who said he has been invited to various locations to promote CNR and responsible pet ownership.

Sometimes, when he receives calls about animals on the streets, Leroux said that rather than rushing out the door with a net and a cage, he tries to coach the caller on helping the animal. This way, Leroux says he can pass on his

"It is heartbreaking, what you see on the streets sometimes ... But getting mad isn't the solution."

— Chris Leroux, cofounder of BARK

knowledge of animals, while helping with animal rescues.

Hodel and Leroux care for a handful of animals at home, while many of their other rescues are placed temporarily with families until a permanent home is found.

On the day of the interview, in addition to a group of dogs in the backyard, three palm-sized tabby kittens huddled with their mother in an oversize cage in the house. Another two rescues, a pair of grown cats, wandered around in the basement.

Leroux reached into the cage to comfort the nervous mother cat as she hissed.

"For some strays, once they get acclimated to humans, they can become wonderful house pets. You just need to be very patient with them," he said.

As Hodel told stories about the cats they had rescued, it was clear she thought of them as part

of the family. Hodel remembers where and when each cat was found, what cuts and wounds they had and how each interacted with humans.

BARK may have plenty of heart, but it needs more volunteers and resources. To offset mounting medical bills and food expenses and to attract anyone interested in adopting a rescued stray, BARK holds an adoption day and flea market fundraiser at a pet store in Kaohsiung City each Sunday afternoon between 3pm and 7pm.

Helping BARK help animals is easy, Hodel said. Anyone is welcome to rummage through their home and donate what they no longer need or want to the flea market. Proceeds go toward caring for the animals, she said.

For more information, visit [www.atkaohsiung.org](http://www.atkaohsiung.org). The Web site features pictures of animals in need of adoption.



## RUCKING ABOUT

A group of rugby fans from the Philippines enjoy a match at the Kaohsiung World Games on Saturday. Kaohsiung City's Labor Affairs Bureau gave free tickets to around 100 foreign workers to the Rugby 7s event.

PHOTO: HOU CHENG-HSU, TAIPEI TIMES

## Taipei government celebrates one year of Citizen Hotline

**THERE TO HELP:** The 1999 Hotline offers English and Japanese for foreigners and receives 150,000 calls a month on average about a wide variety of matters

BY MO YAN-CHIH  
STAFF REPORTER

The Taipei City Government on Friday celebrated the one-year anniversary of its 1999 Citizen Hotline, reminding local and foreign residents to call the line for tips on solving a variety of problems.

The 24-hour hotline, launched by the city government in July last year, receives about 150,000 calls a month on average, Taipei City's Research, Development and Evaluation Commission said.

## MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The majority of calls are inquiries about municipal affairs or requests for city services such as waste disposal, traffic light repairs or towing illegally parked cars, department head Emile Sheng (盛治仁) said.

The hotline is not only for local residents.

Foreign nationals like Elissa Russell, who has lived in Taipei for eight years, said she found the service helpful.

Since learning about the hotline from a Taiwanese friend, Russell said she has called five or six times to ask for information including the National Immigration Agency's new location and how to dispose of large furniture.

## 'QUITE USEFUL'

Russell said that although not all of the hotline staffers speak English, she always got her questions answered in the end.

"I think the city government should try to advertise more because we [foreigners] don't know that the hotline is quite useful," she said.

Taipei resident Lin Chuan-chong (林傳宗), on the other hand, has used the hotline to report malfunctions of traffic lights and street lights.

"I call 1999 if I find traffic lights or street lights not working, and this is my way to help Taipei become a better city," he said.

## WORKING ON IT

The hotline offers services in Japanese and English and Sheng said the commission would step up training to provide better services in these languages.

Taipei Mayor Hau Lung-bin (郝龍斌) has also promised to further improve the service.



PHOTO: FLORA WANG, TAIPEI TIMES