

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SHANGHAI COMMUNITY AND HANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

# COMMUNITAS

MARCH/APRIL 2011

**Featuring:**  
**Hangzhou**  
**International**  
**School**  
**Highlight**



**PLUS:**  
**Physical**  
**Education**  
**Specialists**

# Going Beyond

**Extra Curriculars and After School  
Learning Activities**

# Contents

MARCH/APRIL 2011



## ON THE COVER

- 05** Featuring: Hangzhou International School Highlight
- 12** Going Beyond: Extra Curriculars and After School Learning Activities
- 14** Physical Education Specialists

### System Administration

- 03** Superintendent of Schools
- 04** Director of Development
- 05** System Administration
- 06** Libraries
- 20** Director of Curriculum
- 21** Director of Technology

### Campus Highlights

- 08** Pudong Campus
- 10** Hangzhou International School
- 16** Honqiao Campus

### Community Pages

- 07** Community
- 19** Host Culture
- 22** PAFA
- 23** Partners



Communitas is the official magazine for the Shanghai Community and Hangzhou International Schools. It is the publication of all things learning and teaching in the SCIS-HIS system of schools.

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# Letter from the Superintendent

“Our strength in activities makes our schools such outstanding centers for learning and growth.”

Dear SCIS-HIS Community and Friends,

Kathy Niu is a seventh grade student of Hangzhou International School whose ability to spell words like “splenetic” and “catharsis” made her the big winner in the recent all-China regional Spelling Bee competition. “Big winner” might be something of an understatement since with it comes the honor of representing all of China at the World Finals in Washington, D.C. this summer (see page 10). Katherine’s accomplishment is truly remarkable and we are very proud that she will be representing SCIS-HIS schools in the US capital in a few months.

The Spelling Bee Clubs at SCIS-HIS schools are just one of more than a hundred co-curricular and extra-curricular activities organized or sponsored by our schools to provide students with opportunities to pursue academic and personal excellence. Our commitment to enhanced learning before, during, and after school is the theme of this month’s *Communitas* magazine as we are “Going Beyond”.

Providing students with robust program options and offerings that let them explore new skills and further develop talents is not an easy task. Each of our schools employs an Athletics and Activities Coordinator (AAC) whose specific responsibility is to ensure that students are provided with a well-organized slate of sports and creative programs.

Our teaching staff also puts in well over the minimum expectation of at least 30 hours of additional support to our extra-curricular programs. Why? Because we hire and retain excellent teachers who give more to their role than the school day and truly care about kids. And why do we do it? For as much as we believe in the core learning that goes on during the school day, we believe students learn valuable life skills and attitudes by engaging in sports, arts, and electives that allow them to take risks by trying things that are new, challenging personal talents they want to take further, or simply engaging in a club or activity that is fun!

Visit any one of our schools just after 3:00 pm and one will find a vibrant and bustling community. Our strength in activities makes our schools such outstanding centers for learning and growth. From musical and drama production rehearsals, ceramics, Chinese painting, Model UN, rocket club, girl/boy scouts, multiple team sports, swim team, robotics, origami, dance, gymnastics to mother tongue language programs and academic support networks to name a few, we take our mission to provide

opportunities within a nurturing community environment very seriously. Ask around town which teams dominate the ACAMIS division championships in sports. Year after year, SCIS-Pudong teams have brought home glistening trophies to put on display; SCIS-Hongqiao has won every men’s and women’s varsity championships it has participated in this year; and as always, HIS represents well in its tournaments, again taking several top honors this year.

As the Superintendent of Schools, I feel it is an honor and a privilege to witness how each of our campuses has become a town center for its communities. I am also proud to see how our network of SCIS-HIS schools extends its opportunities between sister schools such as the quarterly Dragon Cup, Invention Convention and Spelling Bee run-off. These events provide red, gold, and green dragons a chance to make new friends with those who may have similar skills or interests. Few educational organizations have such a unique and collaborative relationship within their vision.

If you are interested in hearing more about our efforts to go beyond learning within the classrooms, I encourage you to visit our Athletics and Activities Coordinators at any one of our campuses. Better yet, talk with any one of our students and I am sure you will find that one of the most difficult aspects of being an SCIS-HIS student is having so many options and ultimately having to make a choice. And if you are interested in coaching or volunteering at one of our campuses, we welcome our parent community to stay involved in sports and activities that once inspired their own childhood. We encourage you to “Go Beyond”.

**Jeffrey R. Stubbs**  
Superintendent of Schools



# Learning Opportunities Abound in Variety of Settings

by DANIEL ESCHTRUTH, Director of Development

With a shared vision of education and a common belief that students want to learn, create and discover themselves and their world, Shanghai Community International School (SCIS) and Hangzhou International School (HIS) form an established system of educational excellence within our two metro areas.

Extra-curricular learning and activities outside of the school day as well as curriculum provided within the school day offer experiences that ensure students and families are able to participate broadly within both the school's and our host country's community. It is within these unique experiences that our students learn the habits of mind and heart that will ensure they look beyond basic content knowledge and delve deeper or broader into ensuring they are accountable for their actions and that they hold others accountable to ensure the needs of the whole are met by the actions of the individual.

The expectations and principles that guide after school activities, athletic teams, fine arts performances, and academic clubs hold a critical role in the teaching and learning process at SCIS and HIS. Our faculty members are the foundation for providing these educational experiences and with their guidance as coach, trainer, cheerleader and proud parent they ensure students will gain an exceptional extra-curricular experience.

However, no opportunity or accomplishment would exist, no program offered, no discourse had without the greater community. The families that choose SCIS and HIS to be their educational home have committed to far more than simply saying farewell as the bus picks their child up and welcoming them back home as it drops them off. The Parents and Friends Association's (PAFA) across all three campuses support, lead, and encourage the wide variety of opportunities that our community offers while also creating and hosting their own. Groups like Passport Clubs in the elementary; major conferences like Model United Nations and the Student Film Festival; and the additional boost given to the academic and music programs through the Booster organizations allows and truly encourages all students to find a home for their interests and to get involved.

Utilizing the strength of these programs on offer, SCIS-HIS provides students with the chance to create a broad understanding and gain valuable communication skills, all while developing cooperative and teamwork skills. These skills and understand-

“The expectations and principles that guide after school activities, athletic teams, fine arts performances, and academic clubs hold a critical role in the teaching and learning process at SCIS and HIS.”

ings, when honed through the years of varied opportunities and activities, will become vital in the lives of these students as they move forward into universities and the workplace beyond.

A child who enters SCIS-HIS will discover an environment that is diverse and challenging because of the opportunity to learn in a variety of settings across their areas of interest. Teachers, Parents, and the Administration understand and support this reality because of the strength it provides to the school, the division, and the individual students that build up our community of schools.

“Going Beyond” - it's a phrase that truly embodies the SCIS and HIS schools in academics, in cultural awareness, and in providing the opportunities for success that will ensure each and every one of our students will find within them the spark that solidifies their love of learning and their wish to continue learning beyond the classroom and long after their formal schooling is over.

Whether you are a returning family or a prospective one, take the time to discover more about the opportunities that are available at SCIS-HIS. They are unique, they are strong, and they are what make us a Community that “Goes Beyond.”

# System Administrators Visit HIS

The February monthly system administrator meeting brought together our senior administration team to discuss opportunities and challenges facing our schools. The HIS school looks great, and after walking through a few classrooms and experiencing the learning environment, it feels great.

Once again, we can confirm that the new teachers for the 2011-12 school year will be of the highest caliber in teaching excellence. The lines for the SCIS-HIS counters at recruitment fairs are long as more and more teachers are hearing about how great our schools are.

The system administrators joined in a discussion of current issues and a review of our key strategic objectives. Much of our discussion centered on the development of the new website pages and the launch of our new curriculum mapping

software known as Atlas Rubicon. We invite you all to look at our new “face” at [www.scischina.org](http://www.scischina.org) or [www.hischina.org](http://www.hischina.org).

Also visiting the HIS campus were Danielle and Natalia Stubbs, Grade 2 and 3 red dragons from SCIS-Hongqiao, who joined Mrs. Fendt’s composite Grade 2/3 gold dragons for the day. In addition to classroom learning, their schedule included Mandarin, PE, Art, and Library Tech. Natalia summed up the day’s visit in one word, “great!” SCIS-HIS student exchange? Stay tuned...

Pictured here (photo credit to none other than HIS PAFA President, Francis Spiekerman): Superintendent of Schools, Jeff Stubbs; Director of Curriculum, Tammy Rodabaugh; Director of Development, Dan Eschtruth; Director of Technology, Chris McAnally; Heads of School – Pudong, Ryan Blanton; Hangzhou, Rob van der Eyken; Hongqiao, Mike Donaldson



## A Moment with Robert Van der Eyken, Head of School, HIS

### Where do you come from and what has been your journey bringing you to HIS?

I am originally from Canada. I first went “international” by attempting to travel around the world on two wheels, a combination of motorcycle and bicycle. Upon returning to Canada, I pursued teaching. I taught in Namibia, in remote native communities in Northern Canada and then in Mexico. In Mexico, I got married, raised a family as well as established my career as a teacher, an administrator and a community activist.

### What do you love about being a principal?

The best part of being a principal in a school is I work with kids. I am writing this while watching some third grade boys play soccer at recess. If I am not with the kids I may as well work in any other office. This is not a desk job, or if it becomes a desk job then it is no fun.

### What is your favorite time of year on campus or favorite event?

Halloween. Unfortunately, both here in Asia and in Latin American regional conferences usual coincide with Halloween which is sad because I love being able to ham it up with the kids, to allow them to see that just because you are a principal doesn’t mean you can’t be fun to be around.

### What is great about learning and working at HIS?

The kids. We have a really tight community here. I have never seen a school where kids just naturally get along with each other so well.

We are a small school which means everyone needs to wear more hats than in a big school but the advantage is that a small school more closely resembles traditional communities. HIS’ size and number of classes reflect an arrangement more like a small village.

### What is your favorite part of living in Hangzhou and / or China?

Hangzhou – Period. This is a clean, green, beautiful place to live. I can get up in the morning and ride my bike past thousand year old temples nestled in pine forests abutting green tea fields, and still get back to my apartment in time to shower and get ready for work. I sincerely recommend you consider Hangzhou as an excellent place to raise a family. We are wanting for nothing here. It is a city of six million. I live in a place that was considered somewhere between heaven and earth by the ancients and it is still closer to heaven than most places I know.





# International School Librarians Unite!

by MARGIE DE VILLIERS, Head of Libraries

Two years ago, several librarians in the Shanghai area decided to begin the Shanghai Librarian Association. We agreed to meet monthly at different international schools, including Hangzhou and Suzhou. This would give International School Librarians the opportunity for professional exchange of information and to build relationships.

We immediately established a Yahoo! discussion group and forum, but this was just the beginning. Over the past two years, we have seen our Association grow and our collaboration produce wonderful results.

For instance, through our collective representation, we are able to cooperate on such events as Visiting Authors, Illustrators and Artists. The many schools involved can share the costs of these visits and provide a full schedule with a wide and varied field of venues. In this way, the authors have an action packed schedule where they are reaching their intended audiences and the schools are able to provide an incredible experience for their children. Additionally, the schools can afford to provide more of these amazing experiences as the cost is shared amongst the associated schools.

Also, we have developed a database of suitable, reputable suppliers for books and all library-related supplies. This has become a time saving, efficient method of sourcing good books and online databases, and e-books for new as well as current librarians in our area.

Our collected pool of information has resulted in a database of shared resources. Not only is this a valuable tool for our current members but has grown to be an invaluable resource for



new librarians in the Shanghai area.

The never-ending changes in practice for school libraries are also shared through this Association. The emphasis on the librarian is shifting to be a knowledgeable and experienced educator rather than the infallible expert. We currently facilitate and collaborate with our users to be able to recommend and use multimedia resources, web links, film/digital, images (works of art, photos etc) and much, much more.

Through all these tools, we strive to enable lifelong learning through a focus on information literacy and research processes.

We are all proud members of the Shanghai Librarian Association which has become a network of support and inspiration to us all. Through this Association, we have found our voice, "made some noise" and set a new standard for collaboration!

## Story Teller Comes to Campus

ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR in our libraries is the PAFA and SCIS-HIS sponsored visiting author event. This year, we are welcoming international storyteller, Morgan Schatz Blackrose. Morgan was born at the foot of the Snowy Mountains in Australia, and has worked as a professional storyteller, writer and educator for the past 23 years. Her stories have taken her to schools, hospitals, libraries, homes, festivals, and conferences in Australia and overseas. Morgan says, "I tell stories to celebrate our diversity, impart a sense of wonder in our being, but also because storytelling is fun."

Morgan celebrates diversity and citizenship, and promotes literacy and tolerance through storytelling and art. She performs traditional folktales that celebrate humanity. Morgan's primary purpose is to get everyone sharing their stories. She is passionate about the role of folktales as a powerful teaching tool in fostering cultural identity and forging tolerance between cultures, in addition to being an entertaining medium for the transmission of global cultural values.



All of Morgan's programs include traditional tales from whatever country she happens to be in at that time. Her other storytelling focus is training early childhood professionals in storytelling so that their story times and language programs are inclusive, multi-cultural and interactive.

# March is Reading Month!

Contributions by PAUL WONG (HIS), KAREN TOGNERI (Pudong), MARGIE DEVILLIERS and Josh Balli (Hongqiao), Campus Librarians

All SCIS-HIS libraries are celebrating Reading Month throughout the month of March. While celebrating in its own unique fashion, each campus is united in tribute to and love of literacy.

All campuses are participating in the "Read Around the World" program. This program celebrates and promotes reading. Each campus has a goal of reading 40,000 pages – that's enough pages to circle the globe! The Pudong campus reached its 40,000 page in just the first week and set loftier goals of circling the globe multiple times.

Students can contribute to the page count totals by simply reading. Additionally, the students have been challenged to read a book from or about every continent. Upon reading these books, a child can collect stamps in their "passports" indicating the continents they have read from. A virtual global tour all through literary resources!

In Pudong, parents helped kick-off the "Read Around the World" program by taking photos of their children reading while on winter holiday. These pictures from all over the world including such destinations as Sydney, Paris, Malaysia, United States and Thailand have been posted on a huge map of the world outside the Pudong Lower School library.

The Hongqiao Lower School library was decorated through the efforts of all the elementary children. They participated in art based activities designed to illustrate something unique about a spe-

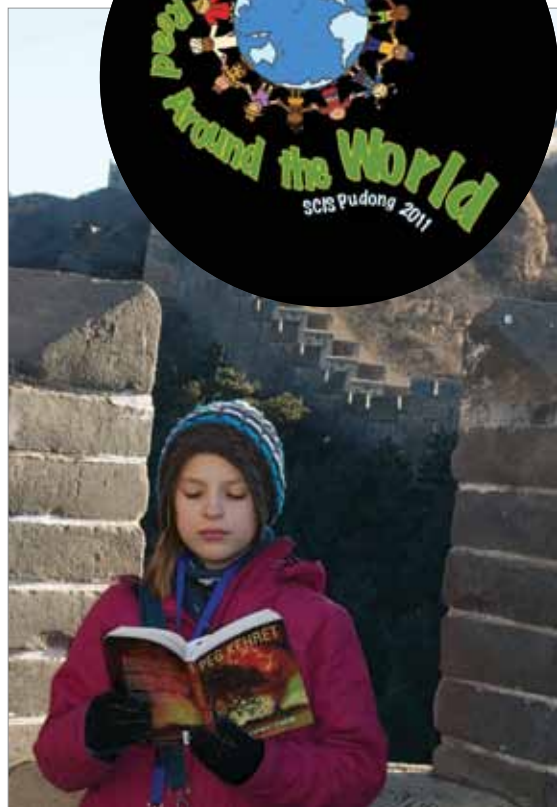
cific country or region. Hongqiao Upper School involved its older students in the Read-A-thon through a house competition. Will Water overcome Wood again or will Fire triumph over Metal and Earth?

All campuses are also holding drives to gather used books. Every child deserves a good book and a wonderful, inviting library to support their life-long love of reading. They will be re-circulating these books through Book Fairs and exchanges where they will be distributed across the SCIS-HIS communities. Books of every language are accepted.

Campuses held "guest reader" events where celebrities, such as parents and administrators, led the children in reading a book out loud to the group. For example, Andrea Miller (Pudong) read "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs," followed by a game of dodge ball! Dan Kerr (Hongqiao) read a modified version of one of Dr. Seuss's finest, calling it "It All Happened on Hongqiao Road"... maybe no zebras pulling a cart but plenty of other crazy stuff happens on the roads here!

Other activities on campuses include gathering in the gym to watch groups of students perform stories and poetry from around the world (Pudong) and "Character Day" where students were invited to come to school dressed as their favorite character (HIS, Hongqiao).

Thanks to students, parents, and teachers and all support staff, the days and the weeks of "Reading Month" were a stunning success! Children's global awareness as well of their joy of reading soared during the month of March.



# Education for All Provides Meaningful Service

by TY SMEINS, Upper School Vice Principal, Pudong

These days, many schools incorporate service work into the fabric of their culture. Without a doubt, community service is an essential element in creating world citizens. But what is the key to creating a quality service program? At SCIS-HIS, we feel we have discovered how to make this happen. We strive to create meaningful experiences that affect students to their very core.

We want our students to apply their life skills and their education in the “real world” long before they graduate from college. But that is only the beginning. Students today will have to solve an entire set of new world issues by the time they are adults. Are schools preparing them for this challenge? Are we *really* preparing them? As part of the vision, SCIS-HIS believes that the secret to compelling students to think of the world beyond them is ensuring that the students feel that they have a stake in their investment and are emotionally attached.

In an attempt to make this vision a reality, our Pudong service team sought out opportunities for its students with established NGOs and community service groups. When it was made clear that we did not simply want students doing fundraisers, but actually working hands-on, we were turned away. Our focus is getting our kids involved, having them excited about what they are doing and creating a positive experience that will foster the students’ interest in service work that continues for the remainder of their lives. Frustrated, the SCIS-Pudong campus has decided to create its own group. We have called this service based organization *Education for All*.

*Education for All* works with a local primary school for the children of Chinese migrants. These migrants have moved to the city of Shanghai for employment as laborers. This is not a new initiative as many schools and organizations throughout the city work with migrant schools. What makes *Education for All* different is that it is entirely student run. The group provides five educational services that are not fully provided at the migrant school. Our students plan, create and implement 45-minute lessons twice a week for the primary students in the areas of English, art, dance, choir and sport. In total, twenty-five students at SCIS-Pudong run the program.

The benefits of the program are twofold in that both sets of students gain from the experience. The migrant children experience programs that would not otherwise be offered at their school. Third graders create Chinese New Year cards with materials bought through the SCIS students’ fundraising efforts. Fifth graders practice their basketball dribbling and shooting skills under the direction of two SCIS eleventh graders while “*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*” can be heard being sung from a second grade classroom.

The SCIS students learn a thing or two from the experience as well. Sabhya Sachdeva, a high school student at SCIS-Pudong, has gained a whole new perspective on teaching and has reaped the benefits as well. “Teaching is a tough job. Forty minutes in the class-



room is really tiring, and I cannot imagine teaching in the classroom for a whole day,” said Sabhya. At the same time, he felt a sense of responsibility. “When we entered the classroom, the children were cheering like we were rock stars. We had to raise our hands and the whole class would be quiet. That was really cool. They look up to us. If you have good qualities, you are role models to them.”

*Education for All* has left a strong impression with the students involved, but does it meet the program’s goals of stoking students’ interest in lifelong service work? “Definitely,” exclaims Sabhya, “I was interested in doing service work before. Now that I’ve worked with kids, I know that there are many options for me where I can help out. I’m now interested in taking a gap year after high school to volunteer in locations like Bali and other places, too.”

SCIS-Pudong *has* created a meaningful, real world learning experience for its students that has them pouring their hearts and souls into the project. As the school looks ahead for what’s next, it seems the possibilities are endless. Each time our students work at the migrant school, it is just fuel for the fire. They understand that individuals can evoke great change. All it takes is one look around at the smiles on all the students’ faces. You can’t help but get excited about it and think we are doing something really special here. What can we do next?

# Raising Third Culture Kids

by DAN JUBERT, Counselor and Lower School Vice Principal, Pudong

**W**here are you from? A simple question like this can be a difficult answer for many of our SCIS-HIS students who have spent a significant time in cultures outside of their own. This unique subgroup is given the name of "Third Culture Kids," or TCK for short. There is no shortage of literature and research on children raised in an environment outside of their home country. However, many arriving on our campuses are new to the experience of an international life and may have never heard the term before.

Consider this example of a TCK from one of our lower school campuses: her father is American, her mother is Canadian, the child was born in Hong Kong and has now lived in China longer than anywhere else. Ask her where she is from, and you get a response much like the comic suggests. While the experience will be different for each family and depend upon many factors (where your child was born, how long you have spent outside of your home country, when you plan to return), TCKs share much in common.

For instance, TCKs usually come from successful, intact, and educated families. They generally speak at least two languages, and their families often value closeness with one another due to the dis-

tance from other family and friends. Because of their experience in multiple countries, TCKs are usually quite accepting of and open to cultural differences. Trying new foods, traveling to new places, and taking on new experiences are all part of the 'DNA' that separates TCKs from their same-age peers.

Unfortunately, life abroad can also bring on its own set of hardships. One such challenge is a sense of "rootlessness," where a child does not feel grounded in any one particular culture, and may have difficulty coming to terms with his or her own identity. Another challenge is the constant changing friendships and distance from extended family, causing a sense of frustration and instability.

Families of TCKs can help to offset these effects though the simple practice of staying in touch with family and friends through Skype and the internet. Consider, also, creating a special place within your home and putting in a few items that will remind your children of their cultural roots. Furthermore, you may want to

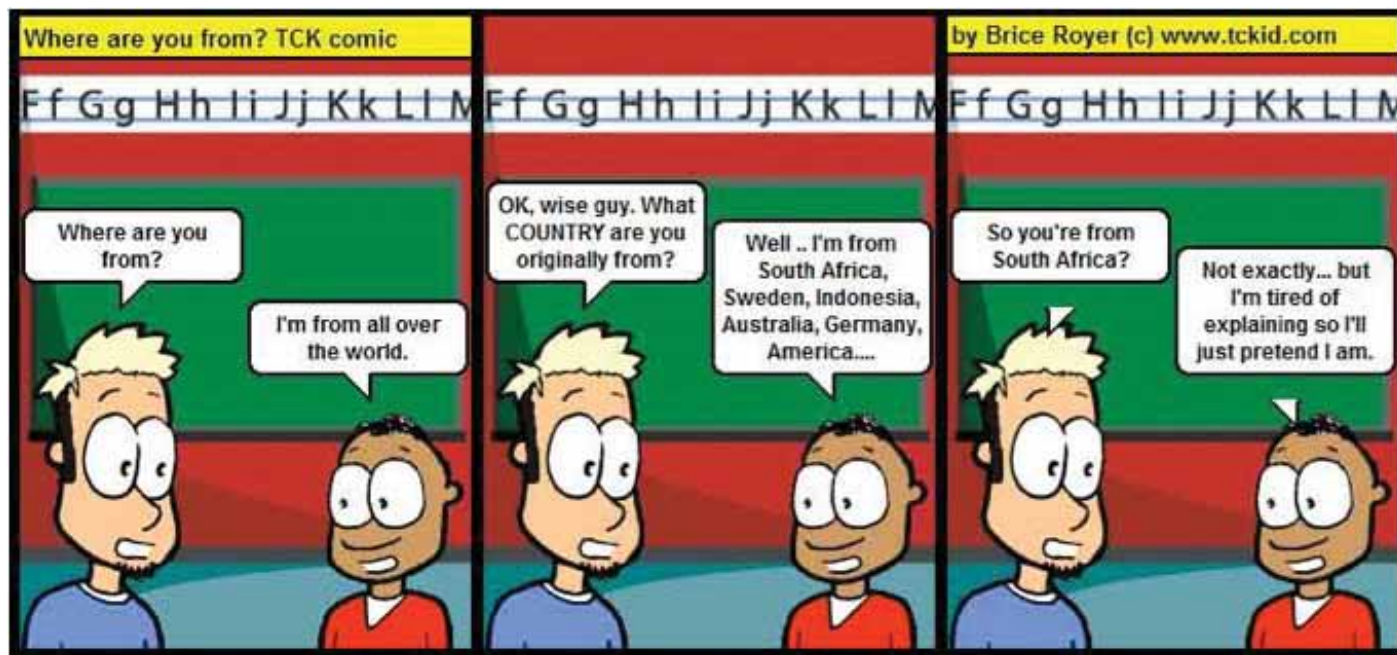


promote Global Awareness and a sense of ownership in your child about his or her unique opportunities and cultural identity.

Research on TCKs is overwhelmingly positive. Most adult TCKs report that their childhood experiences had positive and lasting effects on their development. As adults, these TCKs purposely teach and model the valuable and enduring message that differences among people are cause for celebration, exploration, and respect.

For further information on TCKs, check out these resources:

- *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds* by David Pollack
- TCK Website: <http://www.tckid.com/>
- US Department of State Website: [www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21995.htm](http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c21995.htm)



# Amazing Opportunities Available at HIS

by ROBERT VAN DER EYKEN, Head of School, Hangzhou International School

The feedback from the amplifier carries the last note from Black Sabbath's *Iron Man* across the gymnasium floor. It is Friday night and I am sitting by the weight room at the Hangzhou International School gymnasium with two students, a fifth grader and a ninth grader. They are at the gym as part of our Friday Family Fitness Fun program wherein we open the gym to Hangzhou International School families to come and enjoy healthy activities together such as badminton, shooting hoops, skipping rope, etc. This evening, a couple of the boys have even brought their electric guitars for some rockin' between badminton matches.

I asked ninth grader Isaac if he is returning to HIS next year, recalling that his parents were initially unsure if moving to China, specifically Hangzhou, was the best decision for their son. "Absolutely," responds Isaac. "This is a great school; I have so many more opportunities to do things here. My family has even moved across the street so I can stay after school for more activities without the transportation hassles."

Then Isaac says something that really underlines the strength of a small school in a tight-knit community like the expat community of Hangzhou. "I come from Stratford, pot smoking capital of Southern Ontario (Canada). If I were back home, I would not be in the school gym on a Friday night jamming on the guitar with the principal. I would be learning how to do drugs."

Isaac's words resound in my head a week after our informal jam session. Although beautiful Hangzhou has over 6 million inhabitants, the expat community here is rather small. As the Head of a relatively small school in a small community, I am often reminded of the opportunities students and parents perceive as "lost" when they compare our campus to schools in larger cities. These opportunities *lost* actually turn into opportunities *found* for our students.

I recall meeting a parent whose children attended a very large school (2,200 students) in Mexico and then came to HIS. She told me how in Mexico her son never played soccer as it was extremely competitive. In Hangzhou, he played every day and was a star on the school team. Upon moving here, I also witnessed firsthand how my own son has blossomed in the atmosphere of a smaller school where everyone is part of the same scene. This is a place where one can attend a music concert on Thursday night, a drama production on Friday and a basketball tournament on Saturday. You then realize that the same students were involved in all three experiences. That is the true indication of a great education, exposure to as many opportunities as possible to try new things.

The truth is, very few of our students will ever be professional athletes, singers or actors. That is not our goal. Our goal is to give them the opportunity to explore basketball, choir, drama etc, and challenge themselves to new levels of excellence. A smaller school is exactly the kind of place that allows students to



occupy more stages than they ever imagined possible. At times, it can also lead to excellence and recognition such as our girls winning the ACAMIS basketball tournament in Macao. However, even if they had not won, a greater percentage of the high school girls and boys at HIS had the opportunity to play in an international tournament than students at a larger school.

In the end, "lost" opportunities can turn into opportunities of a lifetime.

## HIS Spelling Champ off to Washington DC!

CAN YOU SPELL SPLENETIC? Well Katherine Niu can! Katherine is a grade 7 student at Hangzhou International School and she represented HIS in the China Regional Spelling Bee Competition. She competed with over 30 other students from all over China to win the championship.

The entire process took 4 hours and she battled with 1 other student for an hour (10 rounds) before she won the honor of representing not only HIS and the SCIS family of schools but ALL China at the world championship in Washington D.C. later this year.

Look for more details in next month's issue of *Communitas*!!



# “Date Night” Raises Funds for Service Project

by ESTHER KIM, Student, Hangzhou International School

Students from HIS involved in *Habitat for Humanity* recently held a fund raiser that not only raised funds for their worthy cause but resulted in a night out for local parents. Parents went off on romantic dates while their kids stayed at school and had fun under the watchful eyes of students in *Habitat for Humanity*.

*Habitat for Humanity* has been an extra-curricular club for HIS students for 3 years according to Habitat teacher sponsors, Mr. Milton and Mr. and Mrs. Jardin, with a membership of 20 students in grades 9-12. Approximately 15 students will be traveling to Chahe village, Ning'er district, Yunnan Province in May and are raising funds to help defray the cost of their travel and cover registration fees for the project. They will spend one week rebuilding homes of earthquake victims.

The “Date Night” took place on a recent Friday evening from 3PM to 8PM and included snacks and dinner organ-

ized by the Habitat students. Habitaters organized various activities for the kids to do, giving parents some free time, and the kids some fun time.

Kindergarteners through grade one students ran around joyfully in the ball room and the playground while students from grades two to five played dodge ball and capture the flag in the gym. Some children also enjoyed skipping and bouncing on the large bouncy balls.

After a light snack, it was time for some arts and crafts. Everyone went into the classrooms and made bunny fridge magnets and bunny fans to celebrate the Chinese year of the rabbit. The kids also played Wii while they waited for their dinner from McDonald's to arrive at school. After dinner, the students finished the night by watching a movie until their parents came to pick them up.



“I really liked making the bunny magnets this time. I went to many Date Nights and it is always fun to play with my friends after school,” remarked Alina Ti from grade two.

As the clock approached eight, holding the bunnies they made in one hand and their parent's hand in the other, the kids left school chattering about what they had done that evening. Habitaters are looking forward to having another Date Night fund raiser before their trip in the spring.

## PAFA Gave a Smile!

by FRANCIS SPIEKERMAN, PAFA, Hangzhou International School

THROUGH SPONSORSHIP FROM PAFA, the “Give A Smile” project delivered boxes of small gifts to a nearby school for migrant children.

Once we arrived, over 400 students suddenly came running outside from a relatively small building, trying to stand in line as quickly as possible to welcome their guests! After we exchanged some welcoming words, our students issued all the boxes we brought from HIS.

What an amazing experience! It's hard to truly appreciate our day to day circumstances until we stumble across another's situation that gives us a moment to pause and reflect. Our children are quite lucky to be in well outfitted classrooms, suitably heated and in gracious, spacious facilities. By looking at the faces

of our students, I think they realized this as well.

The following are some reflections from some of our HIS students who participated in the project:

“I think that going to the migrant school made me feel good. ... you can't help smiling when they get their presents!” -Michaela from Grade 5

“I definitely enjoyed being at the migrant school because it surprised me how warm it felt to see the smile on the kids' faces as we handed (out) the gifts. The kids held them to their chests as if they were treasures to them. That really touched me. After looking at their conditions, I also realized how fortunate we are to be able to study in nice classrooms with



heating.” -Vicky from Grade 8

“I never thought twice! Each morning that I sat down in my heated homeroom, took out my MacBook, and reviewed all my work. But when I walked into that room with broken windows, children sitting with little notebooks, shivering in their jackets, I couldn't help but feel blessed. ... I realized how ungrateful I was, taking everything for granted.” - Florine from Grade 8

# Going Beyond

A collection of snapshots reflecting the benefits and enjoyment that pervade the extra-curricular activities on each of the SCIS-HIS campuses.



## Film and Animation Club

Paul Witzel, Technology, Pudong Lower School

I glance around the classroom. A group of three students are putting the finishing touches on their storyboard for a live action film about a student who gets sucked up into a digital camera and cannot escape. Another student is sharing her initial production plan with the club co-coordinator. Another production team is gathering the camera and tripod that they will need to begin filming. A team is already filming in the library. All of these budding filmmakers have one thing in common: a desire to express their creative ideas visually, through video or animation. The Shanghai Student Film Festival After School Activity gives them the opportunity to make their ideas come to life.



“For the child of today, looking at nature is still a fascination and a joy. This... reaffirms in their minds the value of such an activity.”

## Service Club

Jan Brumby, Language Arts, Hongqiao Upper School

SCIS believes that our school should be deeply involved with the relationship between the culture of China and the surrounding cultures of Asia and the rest of the world. Students can understand and respect themselves and others through an awareness of, and an appreciation for, cultures, cultural diversity and global interdependence. Students can learn to “think globally and act locally”. Every Tuesday at 1:10, Service Club meets to try to devise ways to help others or the environment. This year, the members of the club wanted to focus on one major initiative and then follow that throughout the year. The initiative chosen was to spread the word about the environmental damage caused by shark finning – a method used to remove the fins from live sharks for the making of shark fin soup. The two founding members of this year’s club, Lou Salome Chou and Daniel Barnes (later drafting in Amy S), have been very proactive, visiting Lower School classes, talking in assemblies and developing bulletin boards to raise awareness. Many classes in the Upper and Lower School have since signed the pledge not to eat shark fin soup, and also to let others know about how shocking the process of shark finning is. The club has grown this semester, and we look forward to working with our new members to continue to promote awareness.

### Rock Band

Bret Miles, Social Studies, Pudong Upper School

Rock Band began with a handful of students, but within just a few weeks it became evident that this niche would grow and thrive! Word spread that this was more than a group of kids interested in the merits of the guitar; they wanted to be a Band and they wanted to perform. As a result, life long memories and friendships continue to develop as each musician moves from the closet to the stage. Cellos, violins, and pianists continue to join the band.

Today, Rock Band consists of several dedicated students whose talents continue to soar through weekly meetings and hours of at home practice. These students learn how to mix passion with discipline and how difficult it is to be and play as a band versus performing solo within the confines of a bedroom. Each year our performance list continues to expand and currently includes the Variety Show, Family Fun Day, Coffee House venues, and the upcoming Razzmatazz show. Wherever possible, our group tries to accompany and accommodate the sonorous sounds of rock music. As always, at SCIS, we hope to meet all student needs, even those *who love to rock*.



### Nature Explorers

Thomas Robinson, Science,  
Hangzhou International School

The Nature Explorers club encourages children to bond with their school environment. Using writing, photography, and a few shovels, the students observed the natural world and the new life brought by the spring season.

In a world increasingly dominated by electronic technology, we are all deficient in terms of the amount of time we spend interacting with the physical, three-dimensional world. Nature Explorers take time to watch changes in shape and color more subtle than those found in any screen-saver. They make contact with slow processes, like walking, watching plants grow, or examining soil formation. For the child of today, looking at nature is still a fascination and a joy. This club reaffirmed in their minds the value of such an activity.

Perhaps the greatest excitement came from digging the soil. 'We get to dig!' said one of the girls, excitedly telling her friend about the after-school activity. The discovery of a large millipede also generated a great amount of excitement.



### Aboriginal Art and Dreamtime Stories

Sue Bisby, Grade 3, Hongqiao Lower School

In Aboriginal Art and Dreamtime Stories lower school students explore Australian culture through literature and creative activities. They enjoy books such as *Possum Magic*, *How the Kangaroo got his tail* and *Edward the Emu*. They also focus on general knowledge about Australia through mapping activities, fact sheets and games like, 'Who am I?' This journey into Australia captivated the students and is another reflection of SCIS' aim at diversity and world knowledge. The students recounted eagerly all the things they had learnt and experienced, through this collection of stories and fun.

“Students can understand and respect themselves and others through an awareness of, and an appreciation for, cultures, cultural diversity and global interdependence.”



# Elementary PE Full of Movers

by CLIFF HULL, Lower School Physical Education, Hongqiao

The benefits that a balanced, structured and non-competitive Physical Education curriculum brings to bear on student learning have been widely researched and well documented. With this in mind, the SCIS Hongqiao Lower School PE department of Cliff Hull and Mike Brumby has a close eye on how best to capitalize on the natural inclination and enthusiasm that young students have for being physically active.

One of the highlights of Grades 3-5 is the quarterly sets of Personal Best activities. These have been instrumental in offering students the opportunity to set goals and improve their individual benchmarks. Our Personal Best Wall of Fame in the LS gym is set up to recognize individual records as well as the best improvements made each quarter. It is to the credit of all of the students that they readily acknowledge and applaud the efforts of their peers!

Looking ahead for students in Grades 3-5, is the second Aquatics Unit, amongst other units. The children have had one

Aquatics session this year where they developed their individual competence in breathing techniques and three basic swimming strokes. We look forward to our second swim session in April, in which students will learn to play Water Polo and other games.

Under the skilled eye of Mike Brumby, students in Grades 1-2 have enjoyed a similarly fun-filled and varied program designed to develop gross motor skills, coordination and build confidence in execution

As the year progresses, students can look forward to their second session of swimming, in which the emphasis will be on confidence and the development of the correct techniques for freestyle, backstroke and breaststroke. Additionally, Grade 1 students will build competence in manipulative movements whereas Grade 2 students will be introduced to games such Floor Hockey, Kickball and Basketball.



Visit the Lower School PE website at <http://hq.scisdragons.net/lspe> which showcases the students and the PE department.

## Varied Curriculum in Upper School Physical Education

MIRO BRUAN, Upper School Physical Education, Hongqiao

THE SCIS-HONGQIAO UPPER SCHOOL this year welcomes 5 new teachers into the P.E. Program. With such varied talent resources, we have tremendous opportunities for students to learn different kinds of sports, dance, and other types of fitness disciplines.

Giovanni Bello is our Aquatics Coordinator in charge of all the Swimming, Water Safety and Rescue Techniques we teach in our P.E. Program. MeLinda Tatum Kaiser and Sarah Bailey specialize in Dance and Movement. They will be teaching Yoga/Pilates/Anatomy as well as Aerobics/Cardiovascular Fitness.

Miro Bruan, Zach Winter, Rachel Landman-Tyrie, and Ricardo Meza teach a great variety of sports, including not only Basketball and Volleyball but Touch Rugby, Weight Training, Aquatics, including Water Safety and Rescue Skills, and Rock Wall Bouldering and Climbing, amongst others.

We have a Health rotation for 7th and 10th graders headed by Rachel Landman-Tyrie. Rachel has addressed many different Health topics, including Peer Pressure, Target Heart Rates for Exercise, Personal Physical Training, and Sex Education to name of few.

The Physical Education Program works hard to offer SCIS students a wide variety of sports, fitness and movement experiences. It has been a strong year so far and is only getting better.

## Preschoolers Play to Learn

by ZACK SMITH, Preschool Physical Education, Hongqiao

Across Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten PE classes, there is a common emphasis on fitness and motor skills, teamwork and sportsmanship, along with inter-disciplinary learning. Students come to PE ready to exercise their bodies but end up working their brains as well.

Making patterns with colored hoops, skipping across spots in alphabetical order, and exploring time concepts in games like "What Time is it, Mr. Wolf?" help to develop classroom skills in a fun, energetic way.

One of the most exciting aspects of our ECE PE curriculum is the time we spend in the pool with Mr. Bello. Students explore the water in a safe, non-threatening environment. Classes are differentiated so that the experienced receive the extra challenge they need to improve, while newcomers can become more comfortable in the pool.

In ECE PE, we are learning to play and playing to learn.



# Motion a Fundamental Life Skill

by HEATHER COUCH, Physical Education, Hangzhou International School

As a PE teacher, my goal is to inspire kids to love sports and movement for the rest of their lives. By providing a safe and supportive atmosphere, I hope that each child feels confident to explore new movements with their bodies. Many children who have bad experiences in elementary or middle school PE grow up never having the confidence to even go to the gym as an adult! By introducing students to a range of different types of movement, the aim is for each child to find something they enjoy and excel in.

As we all know, we are teaching and raising “digital natives.” Their fingers and thumbs get more exercise than the rest of their bodies! They spend countless hours playing video games and on the computer. As a PE teacher, it is my responsibility to provide supportive instruction for my students, but as parents, it is your duty to make sure your kids are moving. I know it’s difficult sometimes in China, a concrete jungle, to find opportuni-

ties for your kids to play. However, everyone needs to make sure your kids are outside climbing, skipping, running, and exploring. This is such an important part of a child’s development and it is evident in PE that most children are not doing enough of this.

As a child, I remember my mom forcing my brother and me to go outside to play. All we wanted to do was play Nintendo (yes, the first one!) but she told us she was locking the screen-door for an hour. Looking back, I am so grateful to my mom for doing this to me. At the time it felt like torture, to be forced outside, but now I realize she did it because she wanted us to be healthy and active. When I remember my childhood I remember climbing trees, swimming, swinging from vines out of trees, playing baseball, dribbling around the tree in the middle of our homemade basketball court, and playing cops and robbers on my bicycle. These are precious memories to me. What I don’t remember is my score on Mario World.

## Highlights from Pudong’s PE Classes

by ANDREA MILLER AND MIKE DENEFF, Physical Education, Pudong

“NEWTON’S FIRST LAW OF MOTION states that a body at rest will remain at rest... and a body in motion ... will remain in motion.” One of the goals of the middle school P.E. is very simple: keep kids moving. Due to the increased P.E. class time afforded by our block schedule it has been possible to implement regular ‘circuit training’ into the P.E. class plan. Circuit training is the practice of getting a full-scale workout by doing different exercises in sequence. Our circuit ‘plan’ consists of pairs of students rotating through multiple stations arranged around the gym. These station exercises consist of strength, endurance or flexibility activities that students participate in for 45 seconds; students then have 15 seconds to move to the next station. By utilizing the circuit at the beginning of class, we help students elevate their heart rates, increase blood flow to muscles and dynamically stretch and move their bodies. We are taking ‘a body at rest’ and warming it up so it will ‘remain in motion’. Happy moving!

**Splash, Splash.** A popular addition to the High school Physical Education program SCIS PD students are overjoyed under the water. In the swimming unit

students learn proper technique for the four competitive strokes (Front crawl, Breaststroke, Backstroke and Butterfly) as well as self-rescue skills. Some students learn to enjoy the aquatics environment through games like water polo while others find success learning new skills like diving. Over all, students have learned quickly that swimming is a great cardio work out as they all leave the pool exhausted.

### **TAG, You’re IT!!!**

Having *all* the kids moving is the goal of a P.E. Teacher; we do that through playing an assortment of tag games at the elementary school level. While playing these games, we are working on evading, dodging, following, and body control. We are also having fun through moving, working up a sweat with smiles on our face, and building a positive team atmosphere. After we have warmed our bodies up, we work through stretching our bodies, learning the names and functions of our muscles and the



bones that support those muscles. Once our muscles are warmed up, we use them for great activities like baseball, badminton, track and field, climbing, soccer and gymnastics. We continue to learn about how our bodies move and bend, and how we move our bodies to strike or throw.

# Where True Leadership is Found

by DAN KERR, Upper School Vice Principal, Hongqiao

A day long Leadership Conference was held recently for the Hongqiao Upper School. What an amazing day with over 100 students, parents and teachers in attendance to take part in, and to take ownership of, an opportunity to move our school forward. It was so incredibly inspiring to see students from grades 5-12 interacting with parents, faculty members, administrators and professional leadership consultants with the sole purpose of building a stronger SCIS community.

Our presenters talked about the many different leadership styles that have been identified, the many ways that leadership can manifest itself within an individual, and we heard people's opinions on what leadership truly is. Among the fascinating ideas were the notions of being authentic and true to who you are, which in my opinion is where all great leadership starts, and the essential component of leadership, which is taking action. Both of these, as we all know, are easier said than done but at the very least, everyone left the conference with the challenge of identifying an area where the leader in them can have a positive impact on our community at large.

Educators, whether we like it or not, are all in leadership positions, and we all want to make a profound difference in our students' lives. In order to accomplish this however, we need to create opportunities for our students to lead, and create situations that allow them to identify their leadership potential. Many times when schools look for ways to improve their community and culture, they neglect to ask for, or listen to, the input of their student body. If this conference was any indication, it's the students who truly have their finger on the pulse, and it's the students who are truly astute beyond belief as to where community is lacking, and where it needs to go.

We saw student driven ideas such as weekly student podcasts to help with communication, welcome committees for new students to help with community, a mentoring program to help with transitions, an on-line database for student to student tutoring to help with academic success school wide, and culture club



presentations to help celebrate and highlight our wonderful student diversity. It's fair to say that every adult in that room will never take the power, creativity or intellectual capital of a student body for granted again. It was a telling reminder to many of us that just when we thought we had all of the answers as educated adults, the true inspiration lies with the kids!

The most compelling lesson that came out of this event was that leadership, in one form or another, lies down deep in all of us. Once we recognize this and find a way to share it with the world, our lives and the lives of those around us are profoundly impacted for the better.

# Compassion Starts Young

by KATIE LAWRENCE, Pre-school, Hongqiao

THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON, instead of exchanging gifts with each other in pre-school, I decided to see if even children this young could understand the joy of giving without expecting something in return.

The organization, *Braille Without Borders*, was introduced to me a couple of years ago through a visit to my Pre-Kindergarten class at SCIS.

After some correspondence with Kyliia at the Kiki kindergarten in Tibet, she sent me some photos. Through these photos, I introduced the students to the idea that there were some children who needed our help. They were very enthusiastic in their response; quickly warming up

to the idea that as a class we could make some presents.

Parents then took their children shopping, allowing them to take part in the decision of what soft toy they would like to give. One of the parents brought in shoe boxes and together with their parents, the children decorated each box in their own special way; after this hands-on experience, they were even more aware of what they were taking part in.

Then came the long awaited visit to our classroom by Nicolette Ypma, a long time parent at SCIS and a supporter of this cause. She talked to the class about how blind children also love to read and write



but that they use special "bumpy" letters. The students were very impressed by all this and handed over their gifts with

enthusiasm; proving to me, once again, that 3 and 4 year olds are indeed capable of great compassion and sharing.

# Transition Team Eases Jitters

by SHAWN KNUDSON, Lower School Vice Principal, Hongqiao

This time of year is full of nervous anticipation among our grade five students as they prepare for that life changing experience we call middle school. Some students handle this stress well while others seem to have more questions than answers. Will there be more homework? How will I find my classes? Is it hard to open a combination lock? What kind of clubs and activities are there? I remember asking these same questions when I was their age, and feeling absolutely terrified about middle school despite the best efforts by my parents to ease my concerns.

While working with a group of grade six students who were having a difficult time transitioning into middle school, it became clear that we had to establish a plan to better prepare students and their parents for this transition. Thus the establishment of the Hongqiao Faculty Transitions Team comprised of Mr. Dan Kerr (MS Vice Principal), Mr. Mark Wisner (Upper School Counselor), Mr. Joe Raushenbach (Lower School Counselor), Mr. Eddie Zevallos (Upper School Technology Teacher) and myself (Lower School Vice Principal).

Through parent/student surveys and bimonthly meetings, we identified key areas of concern and worked to provide stu-

dents and parents with the information they needed. The creation of a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Transitions blog allowed us to connect with students, parents and faculty to provide online information about activities, events and general information related to middle school. A "Mingle Forum" was developed so that grade five students could post questions to our grade six-student leadership team. Video tutorials about Power School, iCal, and Moodle were also added and "mini technology lessons" taught by visiting grade six students. More recently, a group of grade eight students from Mr. Zevallos' technology class have been working with grade five students on how to develop e-portfolios.

The response thus far from students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive. This means we are accomplishing what we set out to do as a team back in August. It also means that students are becoming more informed and worrying a bit less about the rigors of middle school. This brings me to my most recent conversation with a grade five student from Ms. Batley's class. I asked him if he was still nervous about next year. He took a minute to answer and then looked at me and said, "Yeah, but only about the kind of snacks they are going to serve in the café." I told him that if that is his biggest concern, he is going to be just fine.

## Gravity Plus Eggs = ?

by BERNIE LAWRENCE, Fifth Grade, Hongqiao

"OH NO! ANOTHER EGG IS BROKEN!" The cries arose from the crowd! Were the Famous Fives making omelets that Friday morning in February? No - they were tossing their special Egg Landing Crafts off the top of the Performing Arts Theatre staircase, four stories down to the concrete below.

As part of our Invention Convention process, the Famous Fives were trying to conquer this challenge: design a landing craft, no larger than 15 cm, which could withstand the force of being dropped from a tall building. We studied the concept of cushioning, how tiny airspaces act as shock absorbers to collapse inward and then spring back out. We even took a look at terminal velocity, the maximum speed an object can reach. The students were quick learners: over half of the eggs survived!

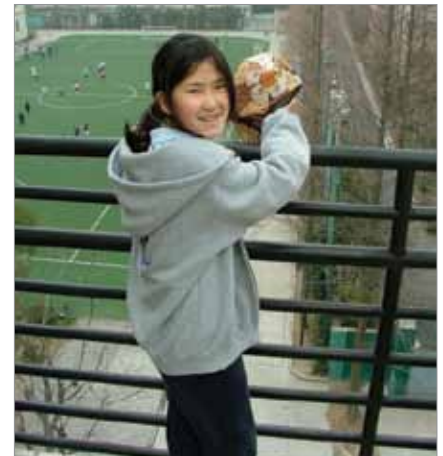
The culminating activity, for six landing crafts which survived the first drop, was a 25-storey plummet from the apartment roof next to the school. Astonishingly, another half of the eggs - emerged intact

after the drop, although one of them might have actually landed in Suzhou!

These "practice challenges" are intended to help students hone



their design skills, in preparation for the Invention Convention on April 28 at our Pudong campus. Next up - bottle rockets!



# Small Tree Production Big on Fun

by DIANNE WATT, Fifth Grade, Hongqiao

Things aren't always as bad as they seem! The Short Tree discovers this as she realizes life isn't so dreadful in SCIS-Hongqiao's Lower School production of "The Short Tree and the Bird That Could Not Sing", a play by Dennis Foon.

Seven weeks of biweekly rehearsals culminated in our performance on March 17th at the Hongqiao Performing Arts Theater. The beauty of choosing this story for our Lower School production is related to the sense of friendship, community and acceptance that are central themes in the play. During the performance, the Short Tree meets and interacts with many interesting and diverse characters, including a bunch of runaway balloons hiding in the clouds, the North Wind, the Big Dipper, and, of course, the bird that cannot sing.

Putting this together as part of the after school activities program for Grade 4 and 5 students has been quite an undertaking. On reflection, all of the students, staff, and parents involved agreed that the experience was rewarding and "tons of fun".

The aspect that I have enjoyed most about this experience is watching the kids' courage and self confidence grow as they started to feel comfortable and part of a team. I can certainly say that the play has given a number of them a huge boost to their self-esteem and sense of being within the community. Being part of the theater is a wonderful way for children to



develop a sense of themselves through having the courage to connect with many different characters. It is also a great way to make friends.

The hard work that went on behind the scenes from many teachers and parents made this performance possible. There are too many to name individually but they all have our thanks.

I think it's best if I allow the student's words to tell the story...

Tammy (Fish and Big Dipper) - "I learned about teamwork and I enjoyed playing lots of games at rehearsals."

Andrew (Lumberjack) - "Everyone knows me now and I feel proud."

Robert (Lumberjack and Snow Minister) - "I enjoyed rehearsal and getting more courage to be on stage. I wanted to stop being shy so I decided to take the step up and be on stage."

Chang Hung (Red Balloon and Lumberjack) - "I learned to be patient."

Max (Musician) - "I learned about teamwork, that we all need to put in effort to have a good play."

Alma (Artist) - "I learned how to mix colors and make better colors and I got new friends."

Felicia (Aragula, the Snake Woman) - "The best parts were acting my lines and hanging out with my friends. I learned about using more expression."

Jamie (Blue Balloon and North Wind) "I learned how to act with expression and I enjoyed watching Morgan as the Bird."



# Qingming Festival Arrives with the Spring

by SUSAN CAO, Mandarin, Hangzhou International School and HOLLY XI, Mandarin, Pudong

**A**n annual spring holiday celebrated in China is the Qingming Festival or Tomb Sweeping Day. This is one of China's 11 national holidays and as a legal holiday, one day off of work is granted.

This festival is spent by honoring the dead, which is one of many ways good Confucians demonstrate filial piety. According to the folk religion, the spirits of deceased ancestors still live under the ground and look after the family; the tombs are said to be their houses. Thus, it is very important to keep the tombs clean. On this day, people visit their family graves to remove any underbrush that has grown, wipe the tombstones and decorate the tombstones with fresh flowers.

Part of honoring the dead is to make sure that they are well-provided for -- even after death. Not only is food offered to the dead, but also, material goods are needed in the land of the dead. Until the Sui Dynasty (581-618), genuine articles were burnt as offerings. Eventually, people thought this practice was wasteful. It was also said that there was word from the dead that where they resided, counterfeits were just as good as the real thing. So a paper house offered by fire was just as good as a real one. Nowadays, paper gifts to the dead may even include paper money, houses, lawn furniture, TVs, VCRs, stereo systems, refrigerators, and even cars.

Qingming Festival time is also a time for families to enjoy various outdoor activities. One of these is kite-flying. This has been a longtime Chinese pastime. Records about kite-flying date back as far as 2,500 years ago. Kite making has become a craft because of this love of kite-flying. Artisans design and create kites of all sorts of shapes, sizes and colors that can be seen flying during the Qingming Festival.

Picnicking is another outdoor practice observed during this holiday. This is based on the tradition of "cold food days" from the story of Jie Zhi Tui.

Legend has it that Chong'er, Prince of Jin, had to endure many hardships while traveling around the Warring Kingdoms. Jie Zhi Tui helped him a lot at that time.

Later on, when Chong'er became King of Jin, he ordered a search for Jie Zhi Tui and invited him to work for him. Since Jie Zhi Tui had no political ambitions, he refused the invitation and hid. Rumor reached the ears of Chong'er that Jie Zhi Tui was hiding in the mountains with his mother and ordered for the mountains to be burned to force him out. Unfortunately, the fire ended up killing both Jie Zhi Tui, and his mother.

Because Jie Zitui had been killed by a fire, it became a tradition to abstain from lighting fires on the day of Qingming, when people could only eat cold foods that had been prepared the day before. Today, the occasion for eating cold foods translates into a picnic for the family.

Like any holiday, special foods are associated with the Qingming Festival.



The sweet green rice ball is a food popular in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces. It is also a must-have offering at ancestral rituals in the south of the Yangtze River. The custom of making sweet green rice balls dates back to the Zhou Dynasty

over 2,000 years ago.

Another traditional food during the "cold food days" is refined green rice, which is a variation of the sweet green rice ball. It is made of a mixture of glutinous rice powder and green mugworts or brome grass juice and stuffed with sweetened bean paste. This snack has been around for over 100 years. It is used as an offering in ancestral rituals, but more of a fresh festive food. Sweet green rice balls are jade-green in color, glutinous in taste and sweet in aroma. What's best about the snack is its sweet-but-not-cloying and fatty-but-not-greasy taste. (Per <http://www.kunshan.travel/fd4.htm>)

The most well-known sweet green rice balls are those made in Zhengyi Town of Suzhou. Zhengyi sweet green rice balls are known for holding their shape and color even after seven days of storage. The balls fresh from steamers are as green as jade and as shining as emerald. The snack was listed as a festive tribute to the imperial court in the late Qing Dynasty.

The QingMing Festival is a festival both of joy and sorrow as one remembers the dead yet celebrates the return of spring.



# Making Life Connections: Benefits of Joining Activities Outside the Academic School Day

by TAMMY RODABAUGH, Director of Curriculum

Learning opportunities, whether at home, at school or elsewhere, are essential for children of all ages to develop the attitudes, behaviors, and skills necessary to flourish as adults. Parents have a huge burden of responsibility when sifting through the myriad of choices related to learning opportunities.

The following outlines a few considerations when choosing activities.

## Expectations

Both parents and children benefit from having a clear idea of the purpose for joining a particular activity and should consider expectations related to commitment and skill development. (See Table) A mismatch between the expectations of the parents or students and the realities of the activity can lead to conflict, stress and an unsatisfying experience for all involved.

Students wanting to explore a new skill or social outlet should enroll in an activity with low skill development expectations. Choose a low commitment activity for a little sample (e.g. an arts and crafts class, an exercise class) and a high commitment activity for a more involved exploration (e.g. taking beginning music or language lessons, joining an intramural sports team).

Parents should keep in mind that a high commitment required on the part of the student often means a high commitment required on the part of the parent, especially for younger students.

Low commitment with high expectation might include such activities as a homework help session. The time commitment with the instructor may be low but the expectations for results might be high.

High commitment with high expectations are for the serious individuals (e.g. advanced musical training, preparing for a high stakes entrance exam) or the serious team player (e.g. joining a competitive sports team, a performing theater group).

If parents and students find themselves arguing about activity, there is likely a mismatch in expectations. It is advisable to determine where the mismatch lies. If it is a mismatch between the expectations of the family and the intended outcomes of the activity, then it is suggested that the student drop the activity. It is not advisable to try to get the activity organizer or leader to change the activity to suit your individual needs unless it is a one-to-one type of activity, such as individual tutoring. However, activities that are high commitment co-dependent, such as being on a competi-

tive sports team or in a drama production should be continued, if at all possible, until the end of the season or performance.

## Focus and Balance

When deciding what activities to join, it is wise to consider the options in light of the needs of the whole child. Excessive focus in one area can lead to excessive neglect in another. Long range considerations should be taken into account as well as short term rewards. It is generally advisable that children have a balance in regards to challenges and successes as well as intensity and relaxation, among other factors.

What constitutes balance is subjective and there are different cultural perspectives on the issue. In general, it is advisable that parents maintain the guiding hand in regulating participation, regardless of the age of their children. It is not uncommon for older students to become over involved or withdrawn, neither extreme is recommended.

## Benefits

Joining activities outside the regular school day with consideration of the aforementioned is highly recommended. Known benefits include development of skill transferability, improved self-confidence, improved social development and opportunities to discover talents and interests.

For more information check out the following websites:

- Kidshealth.org: There is a section for both kids and teens.
- CollegeBoard.com/student/plan/high-school/113.html
- Educationworld.com

Through matching expectations with experiences, exploring a variety of focus areas and maintaining a balanced approach, students can enjoy greater opportunities for developing the skills, attitudes and behaviors that will serve them well beyond their years as students.

		SKILL DEVELOPMENT EXPECTATIONS	
		Low	High
COMMITMENT EXPECTATIONS	Low	Commitment is generally contained to the allotted activity time.  Attitudes, behavior and skills developed through general participation. Exposure and enjoyment of the experience is generally the focus.	Commitment is generally contained to the allotted activity time.  Attitudes, behaviors and skills are developed through focused attention on specific strategies and techniques. A singular purpose is generally the focus.
	High	Commitment extends beyond the allotted activity time.  Attitudes, behavior and skills are developed through general exposure, often involving event attendance/participation in addition to the activity times.	Commitment extends well beyond the allotted activity time.  Attitudes, behavior and skills are developed through intense focus on specific strategies and techniques, generally a completed product of high quality is the focus.



# Learning Opportunities Outside of School

by CHRIS MCANALLY, Director of Technology

School is not the only place children learn. Indeed most learning occurs at home, on the playground and out in the world. Shanghai and the Internet have a broad selection of activities to engage in with your children.

## Learning Chinese [www.chinesepod.com](http://www.chinesepod.com)



ChinesePod is a Shanghai-based site that teaches Mandarin (with some Shanghai hua lessons as well) through a series of Podcasts. You can download the audio and PDF lessons onto your mobile device or your computer and practice your Mandarin. It's a great way to review topics and keep your child's Mandarin fresh outside of school. There are free beginner lessons and a paid service (\$249 for 1 year). Additionally, the site offers full courses in Mandarin from teachers by Skype. The Podcasts are a great way to learn Mandarin, but for a course, I would recommend a live tutor or after school course.

## BBC Online Chinese Course

[www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real\\_chinese/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real_chinese/)



The BBC has its own online Chinese course. The course, while small, includes videos from Chinese TV series and several mini-games to practice. It's a good free site for review and a bit of fun.

## FUN & GAMES Chess 4 Kids [www.chess4kids.com](http://www.chess4kids.com)

Chess4kids.com offers a number of tutorials and chess-puzzles designed to help kids master the game and improve concentration. It includes a free demo, on which kids can practice the exercises and see how well they did.



## Shanghai Performing Arts Academy

[www.shanghaiperformingartsacademy.com](http://www.shanghaiperformingartsacademy.com)

The Shanghai PAA is a great way to have your child tutored by a local musician in any number of instruments. It includes private lessons, group lessons with online sheet music and audio recordings.

## Children's Technology Workshop

[www.ctworkshop.com.cn/](http://www.ctworkshop.com.cn/)



The Children's Workshop is a club in Shanghai that specializes in engineering-based projects. They offer a summer iCamp. The Technology Workshop icamp offers children aged 7-14 the chance to design their own day camp experience and expand their creative horizons. Children complete applied-technology projects that are customized to their skill level and tons of fun! Activities occur both on and off the computer with a focus on Engineering & Robotics,

Video Game Creation, Animation and Digital Art.

On the first day of camp, children select from theme-based "adventures". They will then explore and complete them during their session. Please note that some adventures are geared towards older children due to their technical nature.

## FunBrain.com [www.funbrain.com](http://www.funbrain.com)



Funbrain is a collection of educational games online. It runs with flash for the most part (sorry! no iPads), but it has some great Math games. It also sorts by grade level K-8, and for parents it includes online Sudoku. For reading, there are a series of online webcomics like the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

### JJTreehouse

[www.jjtreehouse.com.cn/](http://www.jjtreehouse.com.cn/)

The JJTreehouse provides primarily Mandarin speakers with English lessons from a western staff. It serves a great many age levels and skill levels, and they can customize lessons to your needs. It also provides SAT & TOEFL preparation. Be aware the site is Chinese language only.



## Learn-English-Online

<http://www.learn-english-online.org>

This site is a non-profit free site with a variety of free English lessons. The site depends on donations and is entirely run by ESOL teachers in their spare time.

**S**CIS and HIS are fortunate to have a parent organization called the Parents and Friends Association or PAFA. PAFA coordinates parent involvement with the school. SCIS and HIS parents are by definition members of this organization and other adults with an interest may also join.

PAFA conducts various activities, from community events to charity fundraisers to volunteer support for teachers and students. Each campus has a PAFA board who works closely with each campus' administrators to plan events that help to make our schools a unique experience for families, faculty, and students alike.

PAFA serves as a way parents can communicate ideas for the betterment of the school to the administration and Board. SCIS and HIS are proud of the high level of parent participation in our schools and value our partnership with the parent community.

## PAFA News Hongqiao

FEBRUARY HAS BEEN A BUSY MONTH for PAFA at our Hongqiao campus.

Bingo Night, sponsored by the Upper School Booster Club (supporting academics, arts & athletics), was a great night with around 450 in attendance. Many thanks to Mr. Dan Eschtruth our emcee, Mr. Andrew Powell, Mr. Dan Kerr and Mr. Greg Schellenberg for calling the numbers. Thanks to Chris Flynt (Chair) and the many volunteers.

February 28th was the kick off for PAFA's Annual Teacher Appreciation week. Massages, muffins, lunches, amongst other events for the teachers and administration, showed our school's sincere appreciation for their hard work with our children. Thanks to Danielle Foley (Chair) for organizing the week.

A popular event on campus has recommenced in March due to the fairer weather. Market Days are back! We invite local merchants on campus grounds on Fridays to sell their wares and we designate one charity to be a beneficiary of a portion of the profits.

PAFA and SCIS-HIS hosted Morgan Schatz Blackrose in guest appearances on all of our campuses. Morgan is a wonderful storyteller who had the students listening and joining in the stories as an extra special celebration of Reading Month. For more information please contact Angela Anderson, [angelia\\_marlin@hotmail.com](mailto:angelia_marlin@hotmail.com), or Gayle Thams, [thamsmgr@mac.com](mailto:thamsmgr@mac.com).

## PAFA News Pudong

PAFA'S HARD WORK ORGANIZING PAFA's biggest fund-raising event of the year paid off! The annual Art Auction was a rousing success. Along with the live auction of student art and a silent auction with items donated by individuals and companies, there was also a champagne reception, walking buffet and live music. Thanks to all those who contributed to this wildly popular annual event.

PAFA will assist a student-led charity event for Interact: "Razzmatazz and all that Jazz", a 50's style diner concert in late March.

In lower school, every child in lower school received a large shoe box (donated by Ikea) and filled them to the brim with necessities, toys, clothes, books, and candy. This was all for a charity named "Maitian". We were able to send out to our sponsored migrant school over 210 boxes for children just in time for an added Chinese New Year surprise.

We are always welcoming new members! Please contact us at:

Lower School PAFA Chair - Renae Darling, [darlingfam@yahoo.com](mailto:darlingfam@yahoo.com)

Upper School PAFA Chair - Karla Quartuccio-Kluessendorf, [karlygirl@hotmail.de](mailto:karlygirl@hotmail.de)

## PAFA News Hangzhou

THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE is organizing HIS PAFA Idol (Karaoke Sing Along Party). All parents are invited. It is requested that you bring a dish (potluck) to share and join in this chance to sing and socialize. It is going to be fun!!

We are also organizing a group to hike through the wonderful fields of Xixi Wetlands. We will meet at the entrance to the wetlands and from there we will hike under guidance of one of our parents. We will need a couple of hours so bring some snacks and drinks with you and think about appropriate clothing.

The Upper school will organize an International Day. Part of the event will be a talent show for the entire school. The activities will all take place after school with the talent show open for all Upper School students to participate.

At our next book club meeting, we will discuss Miss Chopsticks by Xinran (also author of The Good Women of China). The book club meets on a regular basis and we enjoy reading about Chinese culture and the way of living.

We hope there is something interesting for you to join and look forward to seeing you at one of our events. Also parents visiting from Shanghai are always welcome to join our events if you are in Hangzhou. Please contact us!

Please check the announcements section on the PAFA part of the school website ([www.hischina.org](http://www.hischina.org)) for regular updates. Contact us directly at [pafa\\_hz@scischina.org](mailto:pafa_hz@scischina.org).

# ActiveKidz Shanghai

by EUGENIA YEN, Board Member, Active Kidz Shanghai

**A**KS was founded in 1999 by parents from the American and Canadian consulates to enable children to play sports in a fun, community-based setting. In that first year, about 250 kids participated in soccer, basketball, baseball, and ballet. The growth of AKS has paralleled that of the expatriate community, and today, more than 1700 kids per year participate in AKS activities at venues all over metropolitan Shanghai.

Throughout it all, AKS has remained true to its core mission to promote healthy physical and social skills and sportsmanship. "The rules of the sport are the great leveler," says AKS General Manager Miia Kauppila. "The rest is social education that is priceless." A nonprofit organization since its inception, AKS relies on a committed volunteer board of directors and a small office staff to handle logistical operations.

International schools see AKS as a natural partner and generously provide athletic facilities. "By hosting AKS sports, we are in many ways connecting our SCIS

community to our surrounding environment," says SCIS Upper School Vice-Principal Dan Kerr. SCIS Hongqiao hosts the winter basketball league, as well as field hockey in the warmer months. SCIS-Pudong is the venue for the annual AKS All-Star Basketball Tournament, which brings kids from all over Shanghai for a day of healthy competition.

For families, AKS stands apart as a cornerstone for community involvement, evident in the weekend team leagues, almost entirely coached by parent volunteers. That spirit "keeps AKS from being a mechanism for parents to just sign their kids up to fill an hour or two," notes Lance Brownsworth.

Kerr, too, coaches his 6-year old son Max's soccer and basketball teams. "I coach because my wife and children are the most important things in my life, and any opportunity to share in their lives is something that I will never pass up."

Thanks to its mutual relationships with families and international schools, AKS looks forward to a future as a valu-



able community resource. Says Kerr, "If SCIS claims to be a true community school, then our partnership with AKS needs to be fostered for the overall benefit of our children."

# Sport For Life

by NATALIA DURANINA, General Manager, Sport For Life

SPORT FOR LIFE (SFL) is an expatriate sport coaching company established in 2004. We run sports programs for children and adults at international schools and residential compounds throughout Shanghai and Suzhou.

Sport for Life's mission is to allow our customers to experience the physical, social and psychological benefits that sport can offer. For us, this is the true "Joy of Sport" - helping children develop holistically whilst playing our favorite sports.

Our instructors are all professional, talented and dedicated coaches from all over the world including the UK, United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. They are internationally qualified and experienced, and conduct lessons in English. Our coaches are passionate and

proud about what they do and continually improve themselves and the programs.

SFL started delivering after school sports classes at SCIS in 2006 with just soccer and volleyball classes. The program grew from year to year involving more and more students and offering a wider variety of activities. Right now over 150 children are enjoying afterschool sports with us at SCIS.

All this would not be possible without great support from the schools' management team, athletics director, teachers and parents! We are pleased to be SCIS sports activities partner and look forward to delivering the best programs.

Sport for Life is also seeking cor-



porate sponsors for its programs. To get involved, please contact [mabel@sportforlife.com.cn](mailto:mabel@sportforlife.com.cn). Check out our website at [www.sportforlife.com.cn](http://www.sportforlife.com.cn) or call us at 6282 1762 and join us!

Practice, dedication, determination define  
the **SCIS Dragon**



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