

P. C. P. D.

Penn Charter Professional Development

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Transformative Service in Zhongba

by Ed Marks

N*i Hao!* This Chinese greeting will soon be echoing through the halls of Penn Charter because Mandarin is coming to the Penn Charter curriculum. Last year, the administration constituted a diverse committee with faculty, administration and overseer representation, and charged it with recommending a non-western language for inclusion in the foreign language curriculum. After several months of research and discussion, the committee's recommendation of Mandarin Chinese gained the endorsement of the administration and Overseers. The committee also spent time considering ways to begin to establish additional connections to Chinese history, culture and society to support Mandarin language studies and for that reason included faculty members, like myself, from other departments.

To support our committee work, Assistant Head Stephanie Judson brought to my attention the Global Service Program, which had just been established by the George School and was designed to create and support international service opportunities for high school students. In the first year, two groups of educators were to be trained, then sent off on international service trips, one to Cuba and the other, of which I was a part, to China.

Our group of 15, with educators from eight different states and including three Chinese nationals fluent in Mandarin, left Newark airport in early July and touched down in the Chinese city of Shanghai 15 hours later. All together, we spent two days in Shanghai and another three days at the end of the trip in Beijing. Both cities offer tourists an amazing kaleidoscope of sights, sounds and smells. Some stereotypes of China melt quickly away and others are reinforced. You go from the 21st century to Ming Dynasty

China and back in mere hours. China is a crazy, happening place!

But we weren't in China primarily to be tourists. Our goal was to do service and forge a relationship so that high school students could follow us in future service trips. Our ultimate destination was the remote village of Zhongba in Sichuan province in southwest China, a village that suffered heavy damage in the great earthquake of May 2008. After a two-hour flight from Shanghai to the provincial capital of Chengdu, we boarded two minibuses for the three-hour ride to the village. On its surface, Chengdu is a modern city with high rises and expressways, but that modern exterior quickly fades. The roads get more primitive and the cars become virtually non-existent as one drives into the mountains. As we approached the village, the earthquake damage was more and more visible: huge cracks in the roadways, piles of rubble everywhere, entire sides of mountains scarred with rock slides, temporary bridges where permanent bridges had once spanned rivers.

We finally reached literally the end of the road, Zhongba village. Of the 600 villagers, about 30 had been killed in the quake and about half saw partial or complete destruction of their homes. The homeless live in a tent city by the river, deemed the flattest and safest place should another earthquake strike. The fear of another quake was palpable and with good reason. We experienced two major tremors in our three weeks in Zhongba. Unfortunately, during our second week in the village a torrential rain, the worst in 10 years, pushed the river over its banks, flooding the temporary tent village.

We did most of our service work – hard construction work – under fairly primitive conditions, at the

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Get to Know PC's Facilities and Grounds Staff

The Light Side of a Big Responsibility

Housekeeping

David Wright (not the Mets third baseman), has been here for 24 years and loves working with the people at Penn Charter. David has a Maltese named Muffin, a Pitbull/Lab mix named Lucky, a cat named Fluffy and a girlfriend named Tiffany. **Athena Pithis**, or YaYa to many here, with her trademark twinkle, chided Wright for not listing Tiffany first. Athena has worked at Penn Charter on the maintenance staff for 16 years. She has three grandchildren, and "that's my life." **Terry Plummer**, who has been with PC for 18 years, rides his bicycle and plays softball in his spare time. He's also the self-proclaimed biggest Eagles fan in Philadelphia. Terry's fellow second baseman Chase Utley will be happy to hear Terry is a big Phillies fan, as well.

Maintenance

Bill Whitehead enjoys fishing off Cape May when he's not at Penn Charter. He has a daughter who is a U.S. marshall, a son who is about to be a lawyer and another son who is a pharmacist. **Larry Markey** has lived in East Falls his whole life and has been at PC for 17 years. He has three sons and five grandchildren. He likes to golf and thinks he could use more practice to improve his handicap. **Perry Bonner-Fennel**, married to Bridgette, Upper School administrative assistant, and father of John, who is in second grade at PC, is the drummer, director and co-founder of the band Blue Train and has performed at events such as the West Oak Lane Jazz Festival.

Security

Ed Jones has been with the PC security team 11 years and this fall switched from the night to the day shift. Ed has five children, all college educated, six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Jones is happy to be on the day shift because now he can take his wife of 59 years, Josephine, out to dinner or just relax and watch TV with her. **Carl Nyzio** joined PC this year to take the nighttime security shift. Carl is an even-keeled guy, and he said not much has changed since he was profiled in the last PCPD. **Jerald David**, PC security officer for 10 and a half years, is at home with his wife, Janice, watching any kind of game when he's not at PC. Football and baseball are his favorites, and when he goes to games, he sits in "the best seat I can get!" **Bill Davey** provides security for Penn Charter in the dead of night. He comes in at 11 p.m. and leaves shortly before school begins. We'd call to talk to him, but we'd hate to wake him up. In a select few of the PC languages, *gracias, merci, shukran, xie xie, toda, mille grazie* and THANK YOU, Bill!

Groundskeeping

Phil Palkon and his crew are the ones behind Penn Charter looking as beautiful as it does. Phil has been at PC for almost 24 years, and last year he was made an honorary alumnus. "I have no hobbies," Phil reports, "I'm here all the time." He lives with his wife, Denise, and his golden retriever, Lou. **Chuck McCloskey** has coached football at PC for 14 years and has been full time with the groundskeeping staff for eight. He enjoys watching all sports and has season tickets to the

Eagles, though he'll make no predictions about the year. "You never know; your QB might get injured early and have to sit out a month."

Dante Lumpkin has been with PC for nearly two years. He lives in Mt. Airy and plays football with his cousins on the weekends. His grandpa drives Bus 6 at PC. **Jerome Allen** is a big basketball player and likes to make people laugh. He lives in the Northeast, is married to Charlotte and they have a daughter named Autumn, who is nine years old. Sitting across from Dante, an Eagles fan, Allen announces proudly he's a Giants fan. He also will make no predictions on the year: "I just let my team do the talking."

Levi Giddings works on the grounds and is a PC bus driver. His grandfather, James Giddings, also drives a bus at PC. After work he typically picks up his wife, Rena, from work and takes his son Tariq to football practice. Levi and Rena and their other children, Levi, Nature and Shakira, watch Tariq's games on Saturdays. Sundays Levi gets together with his buddies to watch The Game – the Eagles, of course. **Maurice Giddings** is Levi's uncle and is on the grounds and transportation teams, as well.

Maurice has five children, and time away from PC is spent attending his sons' sporting events. For anyone keeping track, there are three generations of Giddings men working at PC. "I work with my nephew and my dad. It's pretty cool," Maurice said.



David Wright
Housekeeping



Athena Pithis
Housekeeping



Terry Plummer
Housekeeping



Bill Whitehead
Maintenance



Larry Markey
Maintenance



Perry Bonner-Fennel
Maintenance



Ed Jones
Security



Carol Nyzio
Security



Jerald David
Security



Bill Davey
Security



Phil Palkon Hon. 1689
Grounds and Transportation



Chuck McCloskey
Groundskeeper



Dante Lumpkin
Groundskeeper



Jerome Allen
Groundskeeper



Levi Giddings
Groundskeeper



Maurice Giddings
Groundskeeper

Special Project Supervision Offered

In the spring of 2009, the Department Chairs Group approved a supervision cycle option for experienced teachers who are actively involved in professional development and for whom a special project, in their supervision year, would support their growth and contributions to the Penn Charter community and beyond. This academic year, 2009-10, is a pilot year for this supervision option.

What is a special project?

A special project is one that 1) relates directly to classroom teaching and 2) has a significant final product. Examples of a final project include but are not limited to:

- publication in a journal
- presentation at a national conference
- a lecture or workshop to faculty on a faculty in-service day

How do I apply for a special project alternative to supervision?

If you have already had at least one four-year, team supervision, you may talk with your department chair and/or division director about your idea for a special project supervision option. If he/she encourages the idea, you would meet with a special project committee (which includes some department chairs as well as a member of your division) This committee would support you in framing the project and would give you the go-ahead to proceed. Stephanie Judson would call this special project committee together, and she gives final approval to the special project.

How is the process different from a regular supervision?

Instead of the regular supervision team and focus questions, there is a peer review of the product of your special project. Examples of a peer

review group can be: department members, an interdisciplinary group, a local/national professional organization, a group of teachers from Penn Charter and other schools.

How is this the same as a supervision process that is scheduled every four years?

There will still be classroom observations from your department chair and/or division director. If you are a Middle or Upper School faculty member, the Student Faculty Feedback Forms will still be administered.

Questions?

See Stephanie Judson, Marianne Master, Sheila Ruen or Sarah Sharp, who formed a small committee of the Department Chairs Group to think more fully about the special project supervision.

If you've gotten Jill Brotman and Jennifer Brown mixed up, you are not to blame: Jill's photo accompanied Jennifer's description in the September PCPD. With apologies, here are the correct photos.

Jill Brotman teaches kindergarten; working with Joel Eckel in the newly-created classroom. Jill comes to us from the Anna Silver



and a master's in early childhood and elementary education from

School for Technology and the Arts, P.S. 20. Jill has a BA from the University of Wisconsin

New York University, and has had experience with the Columbia Writer's Workshop and Everyday Math. Jill has recently moved to Center City.

Jennifer Brown teaches Latin in the Upper School and also works on the Mirror, the school newspaper. Jennifer taught for five years at the Tower Hill School, and comes to us from teaching Greek and Latin at Episcopal Academy.



She has a BA from St. Olaf College, a master's in teaching from the University of Massachusetts

and is working toward her doctorate in classical languages at Bryn Mawr College. Among her accomplishments are leading a student trip to Italy and helping to organize the Tower Hill junior prom.

Faculty Change

Michelle Friedman is teaching Upper School English for the 2009-10 year, and is coaching Middle School field hockey. (We apologize for the omission in the September PCPD.)

Faculty and Staff Announcements

Upper School

College Workshop

On Thursday, Oct. 1, 7 to 9 p.m., the college office will host the seniors and their parents for their fall college workshop. Please keep homework assignments light for seniors on Thursday evening, and no major assessments should be due for or given to seniors on Friday, Oct. 2.

Upper School Day of Service

The annual Louis Savino Day of Service for the Upper School is on Friday, Oct. 9. The day will begin with keynote speaker Anne Mahlum, founder of Back on My Feet. We will then travel to our service sites across the city for several hours of service. At the end of the day, we will close with Meeting for Worship together. No major assessments for students may be due on this day. See page 6 for more information about this day.

Senior Rec Letters

Senior recommendation letters are due to the College Counseling office on Thursday, Oct. 15

MCRC

Also on Thursday, Oct. 15, the Multicultural Resource Center is hosting a student event at the Haverford School, 9:30-12:30 p.m. Kip Fulbeck, an artist, slam poet and filmmaker, will speak to students from the MCRC member schools. Raghia Foster and Cheryl Irving will be organizing our students for this trip.

Mid-trimester 1

Friday, Oct. 16 is mid-trimester 1. Monday, Oct. 19 is an Upper School faculty workday and comments are due on Tuesday, Oct. 20 at 8:30 a.m.

Benefit Concert

The Class of 2010 will host a benefit concert to raise funds for ASTERA Foundation, founded in memory of Tony Thomas, and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society on Saturday, Oct. 17, 7:15-9:30 p.m. in the old gym. Local artist Jesse Ruben will perform. Please see Travis Larrabee if you have questions about this event.

Photography Class Trip

On Tuesday, Oct. 20, the Photography class will travel to the Philadelphia Museum of Art to view the museum's photo collection. Sheila Ruen will be leading this trip.

Ninth Grade Retreat

The annual ninth grade retreat is Wednesday, Oct. 21 and Thursday, Oct. 22. The students will travel to a camp in Doylestown for a few days of class activities and adventures with their ninth grade advisors. No major assessments may be due on Friday, Oct. 23 for freshmen. If you have questions about the retreat, please see David Brightbill or Elizabeth Coombs.

Outdoor Education Class Trip

On Thursday, Oct. 29, the Outdoor Education class will travel to the Pine Barrens in New Jersey to practice their canoeing skills. If you have questions, please contact Kevin Berkoff or Rick Mellor.

Upper School Faculty Meeting

The next Upper School faculty meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 29, 6-8 p.m. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m.

Halloween

The month of October will end with the annual Halloween parade on Friday, Oct. 30. The witch and Eamon Ronan, the president of the Class of 2010, will lead the parade,

which begins at 8:30 a.m. As the Lower School students, accompanied by members of the class of 2010, parade through the halls of the buildings, Upper School classes are invited to line the hallways to enjoy the parade. Seniors are excused from their block 2 classes for the parade.

Kudos

Darryl Ford will receive the Friends Select School 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award at a ceremony on Thursday, Oct. 22.

Michael Roche has illustrated *Zimba*, a children's book written by Joyce Wright-McAdoo. The African American Museum in Philadelphia held a storytelling and book-signing session on Sept. 26.

Liz Jones was a speaker on a blog talk radio show on Sept. 23 on "Married Women in Leadership," hosted by Milandra Coleman.

Back to the Farm

I am lucky. Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting three local farms, each with its own personality and specialized products, with James DeMarsh, general manager of Common Market, a not-for-profit goods distribution company. The Penn Charter dining hall serves a variety of products from the three farms and from Common Market.

My grandfather owned a farm and, in my childhood, he dragged me across Berks County in search of whatever was in season. That experience, combined with my background as a chef, gives me a different perspective than most. I'm aware of the whole process – from the field to the plate. In a sense, part of my work is to advance the local-food movement, but truthfully I have a much simpler motive. Food is the most basic thing on earth. Every living thing needs food. We all have that in common. I realize now that is what motivated my grandfather, too. He wanted good food for his family, and he got pleasure from providing it. Like my grandfather, I find visiting farms and meeting farmers is fulfilling and educational.

When visiting Frecon Orchards, I learned something new about the process. Some small farmers face difficulties when scaling up their participation in the local food movement, namely the regulations and certification requirements established by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The agency has taken this action in order to standardize the market and ensure public safety as small farms are increasingly supplying large chain supermarkets, like Whole Foods. I see this as one of the positive results of the local food movement.

I visited Frecon Orchards, Butter Valley Harvest and Elvin Burkholden Farm in August, all in Berks County. Butter Valley is a one-year-old and very high-tech operation. They produce using only hydro-ponic methods. Frecon Orchards grows apples, pears, peaches and nectarines. They are located on hilly property near Boyertown in Berks County and though they use less technology, they are still driven by science. Frecon uses farming methods such as integrated pest management. Elvin Burkholden's farm in Fleetwood uses much more traditional, simple, Pennsylvania Dutch techniques, but still manages to stay current. He is well versed on modern practices, such as no-till farming and integrated pest management.

I know most people would not consider visiting farms a fun way to spend their vacation, but again, I say I am lucky.

– Budd Cohen

Louis Savino Day of Service

Friday, Oct. 9 is our 11th annual Day of Service in honor of Louis Savino, a former Penn Charter student who died while practicing with his Yardley-Makefield Soccer League in October 2000. Lou's sudden death has led to a movement to install Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) in every school. We have grown from 10 projects to close to 30 today. All mentors and advisees should have received their project location by now, so this is just a final reminder! Thanks for your help.

Schedule

- Advisories at 8:10 a.m. for attendance, bulletin and schedule.
- Assembly Room at 8:20 a.m. for keynote speaker Anne Mahlum of Back on My Feet.
- All students to busses by 9 a.m.
- Service from 9:30 to 1:30 p.m.
- Short Friends meeting from 1:50 to 2:15 p.m. to conclude the day. All students with "away" sports dismissals head to field house right away when we get back from the service projects.

Notes

- Advisors can pick up crates marked *drinks only* – all teachers will be provided with a lunch as well.
- Students bring their own lunch and a snack if needed.
- Dress appropriately for where you are going to be.
- Ninth grade mentors will generally be outside, and there are several other outdoor projects.
- Enjoy your day serving others in our community – the true mission of our school, which, as William Penn notes, "...excites our endeavors to mend the world."

– Jim Ballengee

Serving in Zhongba

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construction site next to the village where the government is building homes for those made homeless by the earthquake. Cranes were in use, but not much else in the way of equipment, mainly because roads are inaccessible except for the smallest vehicles. Almost everything was done with human labor.

The villagers, many of whom worked alongside us at the construction site and lived among us in the village, enthusiastically welcomed us into their lives. We spent most evenings playing games with the village children, trying to learn a few Mandarin expressions, playing card games and Mah Jhong with some of the village adults, and, of course, eating. Sichuan cuisine is among the spiciest on the planet, and the kitchen in the farmhouse where we stayed served up meal after meal of simple peasant fare, which assaulted one's taste buds in a most delicious way. Someone out there please open an authentic Sichuan Hot Pot restaurant in Philadelphia!

Our three weeks in the village left me with many contradictory images: magnificent mountain countryside, heavily cultivated with corn and other vegetable fields going right up the steepest mountainsides, plastic bottles and bags strewn everywhere (garbage trucks and Dumpsters are too big for the road into the village), smiling faces reflecting the wrinkles and scars of a hard life frequently punctuated by tragedy, only one four-wheeled vehicle in the entire village but hundreds of cell phones and dozens of television satellite dishes everywhere. One foot in the 21st century, the other in the China of the Ming Dynasty.

So, how will all of this help to enhance Penn Charter's educational mission? Why travel halfway around the world when there is plenty of service work to be done right in our own backyard? Quakers have understood the importance of international service for decades. Before he became president of the United States, Herbert Hoover, a Quaker, organized the post World War I relief effort in Europe and was credited with saving thousands of lives. The George School sent a group of students to Belgium after World War II to do relief work. We live in a truly global community where interactions and connections are growing everyday, and international service helps to establish those connections. The Global Service Program hopes to send high school students to Zhongba in future summers. Hopefully, some of those future participants will be Penn Charter students who will not just improve their Mandarin but also experience the transformative effects that international service can bring.

Any faculty members who would like to join the China Connections committee, please contact Ed Marks.

Look for Sarah Sharp's article about her trip to Cuba in a forthcoming issue of PCPD.

Professional Development

The Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia is offering a workshop titled "**Multicultural Fluency and Anti-Racist Activism**" on Oct. 17, 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Rittenhouse Square. This interactive workshop promotes anti-racist activism and multicultural fluency in the lives of participants, their families and their friends. There will be special emphasis on helping whites become more effective and confident allies in anti-racist work. Anyone, of any racial and ethnic background, is welcome to attend. This workshop is free; reservations are suggested. Call Joan Bradley at 215-735-3456. *Note: The PC open house begins at 2:00 the same day.*

Friends Council on Education offers many 2009-10 Peer Networks, including admissions, development, diversity, humanities, service learning, technology and early childhood educators. See the full list and dates at friendscouncil.org.

Contact Eva Tierno for details on the above, as well as for professional development forms for events that charge a fee.

Upper School Representative to Head's Advisory Committee Needed

There is an opening for one Upper School faculty member to serve on the Head's Advisory Committee. Bring the concerns of your anonymous divisional colleagues to the attention of Darryl Ford. Contact Stephanie Judson if you are interested in joining this important committee – and enjoying a great dinner at the end of the year!

Responsible Communications Using the Penn Charter Network

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and the Faculty Handbook (Section I, page 24) provide the framework for communicating with colleagues, students and families. With classes fully underway, please familiarize yourself with the AUP and Faculty Handbook (see referenced documents below for information on how to access these documents). Below are a few reminders about responsible communications:

- Communicate responsibly with students, parents and colleagues by making sure that the **content** and **context** of our communications are professional.

- Unsolicited mass mailings to faculty and staff are wasteful of network resources and our colleagues' time and attention. Faculty members wishing to send an e-mail to a large group of faculty and staff must first get permission from a school director or, for staff, from their supervisor. Likewise, chain letters, mass cross-postings and forwarding or replying to "contests" or "fast cash schemes" are wasteful and prohibited from use through the Penn Charter network.

- Using a social networking page on a site such as MySpace or Facebook for communicating with students and parents is prohibited. It is also prohibited, as well as inappropriate, for a Penn Charter employee to "friend" a Penn Charter student or to accept a student as a "friend," or to use a Penn Charter e-mail address (username@penncharter.com) to register with Facebook, MySpace or other social networking systems.

Referenced Documents

The AUP can be found online in the academic section of the Penn Charter website, under Technology. The Faculty Handbook can be found online in webclass. If you have questions, please contact your division technology coordinator. If you feel you have a situation which warrants an exception to these policies, please contact Michael Moulton, director of educational technology.

Testimony of the Month Service

I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.

– William Penn

Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak.

– Britain Yearly Meeting

Love is the hardest lesson...but for that reason, it should be most our care to learn it.

– William Penn

The more merciful you are, the more mercy you will receive.

– William Penn

Be the change that you want to see in the world.

– Mahatma Gandhi

Unless someone like you
Cares a whole awful lot
Nothing is going to get better.
It's not.

– Dr. Seuss