

P. C. P. D.

Penn Charter Professional Development

Published monthly by the William Penn Charter School
in the interest of its faculty and staff.



¡Cuba Excelente!: Lace Against the Sky

by Sarah Sharp

The trip to Holguín

With Penn Charter's support, I was very fortunate to go to Holguín, Cuba, this summer with other teachers who were participating in the George School's new Global Service Program (GSP). Ed Marks traveled with this same program to China, and you may have read his wonderful article in the October issue of PCPD. Some teachers, primarily Spanish teachers, were from Quaker schools; some were not. No matter, really, as we quickly formed an effective community of workers to assist in the renovation of a small Quaker church community in Holguín, a town near Cuba's Atlantic coast. Hurricane Ike had severely damaged this area in 2008. Whether we were shoveling rocks and bricks, attending services, sharing stories or eating meals, our friendship with the Cubans who were the focus of our project deepened each so, so, so hot day that we were together in July.

International Quakerism

After I returned from Cuba, I read Becca Tatum's article on Quakerism in Ghana a second time (Penn Charter, Winter 2008). One part of me wanted to sense what she saw and felt there, especially as Quakerism differed from her experiences here in the United States. Another part of me wanted to hang onto the international Quaker thread that connected me to another area of the world in a way that I was beginning to treasure and call my own. Very recently, I joined Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting, so my interest in how Quakerism came to Cuba automatically intrigued me. As it turns out, a group of Quakers from Ohio came to the eastern portion of the country early in the 20th century. The matter of how various faiths coexist with a political state that may not obviously

support such a part of Cuban society continues to fascinate me, challenging, yet again, stereotypes about such interactions and about the country.

What about "the commonwealth of life on planet Earth?"

When we listened to Pat McBee, director of Friends Center and our Hubben lecturer this year, talk about "the commonwealth of life on planet Earth," I was struck by her challenge to us that we raise the level of our commitment and action to heal the Earth. That's pretty big. Images of the built environment in Havana and Holguín pixilated on my mental screen. I linked scenes of our digging in the Iglesia Evangélica's churchyard to install a new sewer line and our painting the church's walls with photos from a book on the restoration of Old Havana's buildings from the colonial era. Cubans are renewing their community life as surely as they are renovating their political system with Raúl Castro's initiatives regarding economic activities that embrace more privatization and international business opportunities. Holguín residents use shells of warehouses as dance and music performance spaces. They are the ultimate recyclers.

Cubans also purposely cultivate a sense of human connection with others across national barriers. People can document this fact easily by visiting the medical research center in Holguín that is investigating cures for ataxia (a hereditary disease similar to Parkinson's that afflicts many people in eastern Cuba) with German and Canadian technical support, or by following the teams of Cuban medical personnel who travel to Honduras and the Gambia to care for patients.

Beyond these activities, however, I have considered the dramatic topic of sustainability as I thought more about international service. How does international

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Grace Fund Committee

Last year, Darryl Ford established and raised money for the Grace Fund, in honor of former overseer Grace Wheeler. He asked Erin Hughes to help administer the monies to students and families who were having trouble making ends meet (purchasing textbooks, paying for a class trip, renting a musical instrument, etc.). Some of that money comes from faculty and staff donations to PC's Annual Fund. Last summer, Erin and Darryl agreed to form a Grace Fund Committee, which they did with the help of Stephanie Judson. The committee members are:

Drew Jennings (Lower School)
Hannah Jacoby-Rupp (Middle School)
David Brightbill (Upper School)
Rafhia Foster (Admissions)
Allan Brown (Financial Aid)
Grace Sharples Cooke (parent, overseer, daughter of Grace Wheeler)

Ed Zubrow (former faculty/coach, overseer)
Erin Hughes (clerk)

The committee has met three times to consider past funding requests and practices, and for the time being, the guidelines and procedures for granting requests remain similar to those from last year. First, the committee is prioritizing requests for required expenses for students who are on financial aid. Second, the committee asks students to contribute something to the cost of the item or service requested. (In many cases this fall, for instance, students were able to pay for half of the cost of a \$240 class trip.)

Grace Fund request forms are in the Lower and Middle School offices and in the Upper School mailroom. They are also available through Google docs and from Erin Hughes. Please e-mail Erin Hughes with questions.

Kudos

Three colleagues have recently served on accreditation teams: **Judith Hill** served at Abington Friends School.

Jessica Bender served at Dwight Englewood School.

Jack Rogers served at Valley School of Ligonier.

Our **Upper School math colleagues** ran a successful TI-Nspire conference for a second year.

Two colleagues gave presentations at the National Conference of Teachers of English (NCTE). **Ruth Aichenbaum** gave a presentation on "Cognitive and Social Processes in the Composition in Social Texts," and **Catherine Ezzo** spoke about "Courageous Conversations: Talking about White Racial Identity and White Privilege."

Daniel Evans moderated a panel on "Highly Selective Admissions" during the Philadelphia National College Fair in November.

Jim Ballengee recently gave two talks at his church: one on George Ripley, a Unitarian, Transcendentalist Utopian, and the other on Roger Baldwin, founder of the ACLU.

Steven Wade will be giving a presentation titled "Inquiry Projects in the Elementary Classroom" for the National Science Teachers Association conference in Philadelphia in March 2010.

Professional Development

"**A Peaceable Kingdom: Creating a Multicultural Community,**" presented by the Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools (ADVIS), takes place at Penn Charter on Thursday, Jan. 7, 4:15-6:15 p.m. The program is for heads, trustees, administrators and faculty. Registration deadline is Jan. 2.

Oxbridge Academic Programs is looking for program deans in England, France or Spain in July 2010. Deans are responsible for disciplinary life and administration of a program. Interested candidates should contact Simon Dyton at dyton@oxbridgeprograms.com by early January.

John Russell is Penn Charter's new security guard, working 3:30-11:30 p.m. John lives in the Northeast with his daughter. He has nine children and "10-plus grandchildren," he chuckled. John retired from the Philadelphia Water Department and later worked at Quest Diagnostics in Norristown. He



appreciates the shorter commute to Penn Charter.

Faculty and Staff Announcements

Parking Tags

Be sure that you have your parking tag displayed; if it doesn't fit on the review mirror, put it on the dashboard. This will be helpful to the security staff to identify cars that are not supposed to be parked on campus during the day. Thank you.

Upper School

Upper School Band & Choral Concert

The Upper School winter concert is on Monday, Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. Please come and enjoy the many musical talents of our students, and remember that no major assessments can be given or made due for Tuesday, Dec. 15.

IPRs

The next set of IPRs for Upper School students is due on Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 8:30 a.m.

Winter Break Homework

So that Upper School students (and faculty) can truly have a break over winter break, please remember that any assigned winter break homework should be short assignments to remind students about what they are studying in each class. These assignments should be no larger than a regular nightly assignment, taking about 20-30 minutes at most to complete. Ideally, students might complete these assignments a day or two before returning to school on Jan. 4 so that they can refocus on the concepts they have been studying in various classes. Students who have chosen to be in AP courses, however, can be assigned longer assignments in those courses, so the pace of the AP curriculum can be maintained.

AP Government Class Trip

On Thursday, Jan. 7, the AP Government classes, taught by Jim Ballengee and Ed Marks, will travel to Washington, D.C. If you have any questions about this trip, please see Jim or Ed.

Art, Archaeology & Chemistry Class Trip

The Art, Archaeology & Chemistry class will take a class trip on Wednesday, Jan. 13. See Sandy Portnoy with any questions.

Mid-trimester 2

Mid-trimester 2 is on Friday, Jan. 15. The faculty workday for writing comments is on Tuesday, Jan. 19, and comments are due at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 20.

Christian Davenport Assembly

On Wednesday, Jan. 20, when we come back after the long weekend, the Upper School will have a special yellow Monday schedule with an assembly with Christian Davenport. Davenport is a staff writer for The Washington Post and author of *As You Were: To War and Back with the Black Hawk Battalion of the Virginia National Guard*. More information about Davenport can be found at www.christian-davenport.com. So that we can have a longer assembly with Davenport and time in advisory to discuss his presentation, the schedule for the day will be:

8:10-8:45	block 1
8:50-9:25	block 2
9:30-10:15	assembly with C. Davenport
10:20-10:40	advisory
10:45-11:20	block 3
11:25-12	block 4
12-12:35	block 5
12:40-1:15	lunch
1:20-1:55	block 6
2:00-2:35	block 7
2:40-3:15	block 8

College Counseling Coffees

During the week of Jan. 25-28, the College Counseling office will host morning coffees for ninth grade parents to answer questions about the college process. These meetings are in the Overseers Room, 8-9 a.m.

Upper School Faculty Meeting

Our next Upper School faculty meeting is on Monday, Jan. 25, 6-8 p.m. in the Gummere Library. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m.

Small Ensemble Concert

The Small Ensemble Concert is on Thursday, Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. at the Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd on The Oak Road. For members of the Quakers Dozen, the string ensemble, and the boys and girls a capella choirs, please assign minimal homework to participants and be flexible about assessments due on Friday, Jan. 29.

Kurtz Center Ribbon Cutting

The ribbon cutting for the Kurtz Performing Arts Center will be on Friday, Jan. 29. This will be a special schedule day for Upper School. Please do not plan major assessments for this day.

Daniel Pink Lecture

Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind* and the new book *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, will speak at Friends Select on Thursday, Jan. 7, at 7 p.m. The event is free; notify Stephanie Judson before winter break if you wish to attend. Pink's new book draws on four decades of scientific research on human motivation.

Service Learning News and Needs

by Jim Ballengee

Service opportunities

Several service opportunities have come up that could be done by any grade level or group within the school.

- Former PC teacher Betsy O'Neill at Nationalities Service Center (NSC) is looking for donations of blankets, comforters, bedsheets and pillows for the 375 refugees the agency serves each year.
- Maternity Care Coalition (MCC) is looking for a class/advisory/grade to "adopt" one of their MoMobiles in the northwest part of the city. This would involve collecting diapers, baby wipes and baby food for this agency, founded in 1980 when the infant mortality rate in Philadelphia rivaled that of developing countries.
- The new Elwyn site for Autistic Children, in the old MCP buildings, is looking for groups to paint and/or do murals in their long, bare hallways.
- Donna Bolno at Northern Home would love to have a group collect and put welcome baskets together for the teenage mothers in their program.

See me for contact information.

NPIHN moves

An increasingly popular service option at PC is the moving of the NPIHN (Northwest Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network) homeless families on Sundays throughout the year. The LaLone family participates almost every time, and some of our students help for four straight years in high school. We leave the front circle at 12:15 p.m. and are usually back by 2:30 p.m. It's a good workout and you get to see a variety of congregations. Faculty and staff are welcome to join us. Dates this fall/winter are as follows:

Jan. 3, Second Baptist to Mishkan

Shalom.

Jan. 17, Mishkan Shalom to Germantown Mennonite.

Did you know?

- Sandy Carpino, Pat Cunningham, Jim Ballengee and Elizabeth Coombs combine to take the leftover food from the Dining Hall over to St. Vincent's Soup Kitchen every Friday. Thanks to Budd Cohen and the kitchen staff for facilitating this each and every week.
- The third grade and tenth grade combined to bake dozens of pies and donated them to the Germantown Crisis Relief Ministry. Director Eileen Jones spoke to the third graders about the difference the pies made in the Thanksgiving baskets they hand out. Parent Marie Crawford was instrumental in this effort with her apple pie recipe and hard work. Thanks to all of the students and teachers involved! It's hard to describe the look on the faces of the recipients when we walked into a room (where one sad-looking pumpkin pie was sitting) with 60-plus freshly baked apple pies!
- This month, St. Francis Inn needs: oatmeal, coffee, tea bags, travel-size toiletries, men's undershirts (all sizes), men's and women's white socks. Any of these items can be brought to the service office (room 112) where they will be transported directly to the inn.
- The fifth grade has been working with Logan Hope School in a cooperative project at the Arthur Ashe Tennis Center. Logan Hope is a "street school" serving neighborhood children in the Logan section of the city. Most of the students' parents are Cambodian refugees who fled the genocide of the Killing Fields under the Khmer Rouge in the late 1970s. The dropout rate for Cambodians in

Philadelphia is over 70 percent.

Our group has been playing games, reading "Three Cups of Tea" and soon will learn tennis with the Logan Hope Middle School. Thanks to Ruth, Chris and Harvey for their leadership in this great service learning endeavor! If your class is interested in working in other ways with Logan Hope, see Jim Ballengee.

- Parent Brendan O'Malley contributed many boxes of Tastykakes for the Upper School Day of Service on Oct. 9. One big box was left over, and we took it down to the St. Francis Inn Soup Kitchen the following Monday. As we walked up the street from the van, Sister Leslie's face lit up as dessert had just arrived for hundreds of people when they had nothing else to supplement the evening meal that night! The nuns and friars prefer to think those Tastykakes were sent there by a higher power – whatever your explanation is, it was a great moment!

- Some great sites to look for service learning ideas are as follows: www.learningtogive.org
www.vermontcommunityworks.org
www.servicelearning.org (National Service Learning Clearinghouse)
www.nylc.org (National Youth Leadership Council)

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is Monday, Jan. 18

Penn Charter has participated in the MLK Day of Service since the very beginning. We have often featured one of our projects at the headquarters site that day. Stay tuned for projects and more information. We will definitely be working at our partner, the Widener Memorial School, painting a science classroom and cleaning and painting the lockers. We will also serve the evening meal at the St. Francis Inn soup kitchen.

Finding Inspiration in Cuba

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service sustain the human family? When we assist others, we do help to heal a tiny fragment of the Earth? When we allow others to help us, we do the same. Surely we nurture a sacred sustainability in these actions. The same is true, of course, of any type of service in nearby Germantown, Kensington or Fair Hill. We are not meant to choose between international and local service efforts; we need both.

Personal development

As a Cuban-American, I am eager to explain what I saw of the people and lives of this island. A few days after I returned, I saw a friend as we were both shopping at PathMark. I stopped her cold in one of the aisles and prattled on and on while she was probably trying to pick up what she needed for dinner. I just couldn't help myself.

In terms of my photography, I have been experimenting with a digital camera since I began traveling internationally in 2004. One of my more interesting results during this trip is an image of a group of pottery shards (found in the churchyard) that I scanned into one of the art department's computers using a black background. Sheila Ruen graciously taught me this approach. These fragments of dishes and statues made me realize that Cuba's past was never far below the surface. While walking the streets of Holguín shortly before my departure, I looked up to a rook of a house and saw a lace tablecloth on a laundry line. At once, I saw Cuban resilience and beauty imaged against the blue sky, and I captured this shot. It seemed so elegant and a lucky happenstance.

Also, this was my first language immersion trip. Thanks to assistance from David Brightbill, I was able to review some Spanish before I left. I went with the commitment to speak Spanish at every possible moment. By the end of the trip, I was actually making sense, apparently. For those of you who have learned to speak another language, you know the sense of personal triumph that this brings.

And the trip had very funny, certainly embarrassing moments. Probably the best one is the time that we were playing baseball with the church's boys team. The coach told me that I swung a bat like a Cuban machete. So much for my natural ability to play the country's favorite sport. Oh, well.

Curricular connections

During this fall trimester, I taught my social studies

elective focused on modern Caribbean history: Life in Castro's Backyard. There were several new elements that I expected to fold into this course, including new ideas gained at the June conference of ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), the availability of a digital art and photo archive that is part of ArtStor, films obtainable through inter-library loan, along with the new material that I gathered while in Cuba. What I hadn't dared to assume was the class's curiosity about Cuban politics, food, religion, health care and pretty much everything else. During the month that we focused on Cuba (including the revolution, Castro's career and writings, the relations with the U.S. and the Soviet Union, music and dance), students became quite comfortable with the challenge of reaching beyond stereotypes. By the last week of the course, the students and I were talking and eating with many different teachers and staff at PC who have ties to the Caribbean region.

I have sensed that there are many interlocking dimensions to extending and sustaining international contact. Certainly, for me at least, there is a spiritual element. And how do we understand and harness that energy that compels us to reach past our own cultural boundaries? But not fully developed yet are the curricular ideas about international service. What kinds of topics should we cover to prepare students to go? How do we go beyond packing lists and immunizations? What about the nagging uncertainty regarding what to teach the 21st century learner and global citizen? Traveling to Cuba to do service was a phenomenal experience. The prospect of assisting Penn Charter students to grow as much as I did is quite exciting. Hopefully, however, their luck with baseball will exceed mine!

The Art of Goal Setting

by Dana Toedtman

With the advent of trimester 2, now is the perfect time to reinvigorate the art of goal setting. To begin, encourage your students to reflect on their performance to date by asking themselves: "What is working? What is not? What shift(s) do I need to make?" By understanding the role and importance of goals, parents and teachers can assist students in learning more effective ways to help them become even more independent and successful learners.

Evidence from previous research about the merits of setting goals was related specifically to achievement. More recently, research has broadened the benefits of goal setting to include many different phases of self-regulation that include forethought, performance control, self-reflection and evaluation, motivation and learning.

It is important that an individual understands the process of creating a well-thought-out goal. Defining the intended outcome is important and best if it is a self-made goal that will be supported with energy, enthusiasm and effort. Commitment is key. Realizing that the pursuit of a goal is a journey and something worth achieving will help your student plan the strategy and begin to pursue the goal in incremental steps.

The outcome or result should be something the student can describe as real and unmistakable. Some of the qualities of creating a specific goal:

- A goal needs to be challenging but doable.
- A goal needs to be measurable.
- A goal needs to have a timeline with a deadline.

It is helpful to chart a long-term goal and divide it into sub-goals. Next, help students list the action steps they will need to employ to

reach their goal. It helps if the checklist of action steps cites activities that students can make routine as a daily practice. If they can check them off each day, they can better self-monitor their progress. At the same time, encourage them to seek the resources they will need to reach their goal(s).

For example, if your student chooses "to be better organized to get my homework in on time" as a goal, some of the action steps might include:

- To use the planner each day for each subject.
- Printing out each syllabus at the beginning of each week and storing it in the planner.
- Recording the assignments and due dates.
- Making adjustments to the assignments as necessary.
- Prioritizing and numbering the order for doing the homework.
- Estimating the time it will take. Completing the homework.
- Storing it in a homework folder
- And, finally, turning it in on time.

One of the challenges for students is presented when they attempt to accomplish goals in several areas, such as the social arena and other activities and endeavors that compete with time for academics. Be assured that multiple goals are possible as long as they are realistic. Verbal encouragement will help to motivate a positive outcome.

As students reach a successful conclusion to their goals, the reward is in the accomplishment and, hopefully, in a multitude of benefits, including better self-management and higher achievement. If not, then maybe the goal-setting exercise was not practiced consistently or effectively. Another attempt is in order: perhaps refining the goal setting or action steps.

Healthy Choices

Nutrition is a complicated subject. As the director of food services at Penn Charter, I advocate a simple, easy-to-understand policy about nutrition and healthy eating. Eat more fruits, veggies and beans (legumes). Eat leaner proteins and less meat in general. Eat more whole grains. Eat less concentrated sugars and refined starches.

Some examples of this theory in action are evident on every menu I design. "Menuing" has recently become a verb in the foodservice world. We actively menu almost everyday. I consider this food theory when I purchase products, display foods and guide my staff. All people can benefit from some food education. The food service staff at Penn Charter is consistently learning about new items and trying new products.

Some recent examples of this are the use of collard greens, pomegranate seeds, adzuki beans, tofu, red lentils, cage-free local eggs, multigrain baguettes, local turkey products and local hydroponic lettuces.

CulinArt at Penn Charter is moving toward these nutritional goals in the following ways. We offer multigrain sandwich rolls with every hot sandwich we serve. We continue to buy local seasonal products like apple cider, tomatoes, eggplant, apples, peppers, potatoes and corn. I have recently purchased, on an experimental basis, organic juices, veggie chips, local cheeses and yogurts, and new hot cereals. Please let me know if you have any ideas about other products we can offer. I love learning about new products and I will try just about anything to improve our healthy eating offerings.

—Budd Cohen

Winter 2009-10 Coaches

Upper School

BASKETBALL

Boys

Jim Phillips – varsity head coach
 Ryan Fitzpatrick* – JV head coach
 Steven Ford* – assistant coach
 Zane Major* – assistant coach
 Chris Rodgers* – third team head coach

Girls

Diana Caramanico* – varsity head coach
 Natasha Pronga – assistant coach
 Paul Hart* – assistant coach
 Andrea Egberg – JV co-head coach
 Meg Fifer – JV co-head coach

SQUASH

Boys

Geoff Shields* – varsity head coach
 Brian Duncan* – assistant coach

Girls

Ileana Novelo* – varsity head coach

WRESTLING

Jason Markey* – varsity head coach
 Malcolm Ford – assistant coach
 Jorge Parra* – assistant coach

SWIMMING

Boys

Kevin Berkoff – varsity head coach
 Ryan Kafer* – assistant coach

Girls

Paul Coleman* – varsity head coach
 Andrea Balise* – assistant coach

DIVING

Charlie Brown – varsity head coach

SUPPORT

Duke Martina* – weight room monitor

*non-faculty coach

Middle School

BASKETBALL

Boys

Chris Burnett
 Jim Fiorile
 Bobby Spears*
 Mike Falsetta*

Girls

Debbie White
 Stacey Brown*
 Trish Byrne*

SQUASH

Rose Weinstein*

WRESTLING

Val Erdmanis
 Tim Lynch
 Michael Obel-Omia

SWIMMING

Amanda Dunlap

China Connections Committee

As a recommendation of the Non-Western Language Committee last year, a committee has begun to meet to build an understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture at Penn Charter. Below is the mission of the China Connections Committee. The committee welcomes ideas, input and enthusiasm.

The mission of the China Connections Committee is to bring connections with Chinese culture, history and society into the Penn Charter curriculum and community to support and enrich the addition of Mandarin to the language department.

The goals are:

- To identify and pursue professional development opportunities for faculty in support of the overarching goal.
- To identify local resources (people, institutions and sites) in support of the overarching goal.
- To identify and bring to Penn Charter enrichment opportunities (speakers, presentations, performances).
- To provide additional support (beyond the administration and language department) for the new teacher(s) of Mandarin and to use those teachers as a resource.
- To explore opportunities to bring Chinese students and educators to Penn Charter and send students and Penn Charter educators to China.

Members of the committee are:

Alice Bateman
 David Brightbill
 Ed Marks, clerk
 Lisa Messer
 Sandy Portnoy
 Tom Rickards
 Maria Odilia Romeu

Testimony of the Month

Simplicity

We have a testimony about simplicity and we need to think about what that means in the world we're living in right now. What does it mean to be lean and disciplined and not dependent on our things?

– Kara Newell

Simplicity does not mean drabness or narrowness but is essentially positive, being the capacity of selectivity in one who holds attention on the goal. This simplicity is an appreciation of all that is helpful towards living as children of the Living God.

– Faith and Practice, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

Everything should be made as simple as it can be, but not simpler.

– Albert Einstein

Simplicity is not just simple clothes and a simple lifestyle. It's an organization of the mind that enables you to sort out the unimportant details that often clutter your thoughts.

– Sidwell Friends School seventh grader

Penn Charter Holiday Party

Save the Date:

Friday, Jan. 8, 6-9 p.m.



Head's Residence and Timmons House

Join your colleagues for good food and good cheer! Spouses and significant others welcome.

Watch for the invitation in your e-mail.

