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What qualities must be in place for any program, or any person to experience personal success — success that transcends fame, fortune, power, status or even luck?

—Jonathan Borden, HS Principal, Pudong campus

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COVER: Pudong campus students hike up a mountain shoulder of scree and talus in the Hailua Glacier Park during their Sichuan Panda-omium CHINA ALIVE trip led by Lucinda Edmonds, Benton Crowell, Kipp McDaniel, Mark McVean and Alena Koota. **EAGLE** cover photo by Lucinda Edmonds. For all China Alive stories, see pages 4-9.

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- February 11: Deadline, February 1
- March 12: Deadline, March 2
- April 9: Deadline, March 31
- April 23: Deadline, April 13
- May 7: Deadline, April 28
- May 21: Deadline, May 11
- June 4: Deadline, May 26



Let's talk about prizes for a few minutes.

Nobel prizes.

First, let me say that I am "surprised and humbled" that I myself was thought to be under consideration for a Nobel prize nomination this year.

I know this comes as a shock, and of course I am not talking about the Nobel *Peace* Prize. But I was sorta expecting a nomination for my research in quantum psychics during the 1970s, research which studied the motion of psychic straws in the H-Street bars of Chula Vista, California, not to speak of the seminal work I did at the same time developing origami roses out of bar napkins. If you will pardon my immodesty—truth be told, I amassed an impressive

body of work in the 60s and 70s which, I must also add, has been sadly and repeatedly ignored by the poindexters in Oslo.

Last week, the recipients of several Nobel prizes were announced, including the surprising choice for the Peace Prize, U.S. President Barack Obama. So now Americans have a former president (Bush) who had a dusty shoe thrown at him by a disgruntled Iraqi journalist, and a current president (Obama) who has a Peace Prize dropped into his lap by a remarkably grunted Peace Prize committee. In the States, a debate now rages among the punditocracy as to whom is more deserving of their respective "awards."

But of more interest to us here in China was the announcement of the prize in Physics which went to the Shanghai-born Charles Kao. The former Vice Chancellor of the Chinese University in Hong Kong was awarded the prize for his work in the 60s in fiber-optic technology.

If you sent an e-mail today, or texted someone, you can thank Kao. His discovery that by removing the imperfections in the fiber of fiber-optics the transmission of data could move at lightning speed helped to pave the way for the e-world as we now know it.

Here's what I am thinking: What if we were to award prizes this week for "extraordinary" service to the goals and mission of Shanghai American School? On whom might we bestow these awards?

It's a dangerous slope on which to be sliding, but I could nominate Margaret Keefe, head of the 2009 International Fair committee, and Karen Chow, the Puxi campus PTSA President. Read about the recent International Fair in this issue, beginning on page 10.

Or I might nominate the scores of teacher chaperones who fanned out into China with about nine groups of Pudong campus high school students on the China Alive trips. Read about their heroics beginning on page 4.

Many others deserve mention, of course. But I will leave it to you to read through the issue and make nominations of your own. Send your picks a congratulatory e-mail. Charles Kao would be pleased.

Right now, I am continuing my work on psychically bending a 1¥ coin. Very slow progress.

—*Timothy Merrill,*
 Editor, **The EAGLE**

STUDENT DIRECTORIES: Coming soon!

Next Issue: OCTOBER 30
Deadline for next issue:
 Tuesday, October 20

Shanghai American School has a rolling admission process. If you know someone who is interested in becoming part of our Shanghai American School International Community, please send an e-mail to: admission@saschina.org.

NASA Commander Eileen Collins argues that there are ...

Three Pillars of Success

By Jonathan Borden, High School Principal, Pudong Campus

The first day of school opened with excitement as students crowded into the gym for our annual High School Welcome Back Assembly. The anticipation was palpable as new students looked around anxiously trying to find a familiar face from Orientation the day before. Ninth graders were excited — they had finally made it to high school! Older high schoolers were happy to see friends and talk about the summer. Faculty were relieved to have orientation completed and looked forward to having kids in their classrooms after a long summer. Everyone looked ahead anticipating a SUCCESSFUL year.

I greeted the students with a few reminders about school rules and summer changes, and the faculty was introduced by our new Vice Principal, Tom Burgess. I then took a few minutes to challenge our students to think about SUCCESS — how we defined it, what it was, what it wasn't. After all, if we looked forward to a successful year, we needed to know what we were looking for!

I began by looking at the news of the summer — the death of Michael Jackson, the sentencing to jail of one-time Chairman of NASDAQ Bernard Madoff — then other measures of success: Power, Status, Luck, Fame.

Looking at the childhood and adult pictures of Michael Jackson instantly begged the question: If Michael Jackson had looked back on his life on the day he died, would he have said he had lived a successful life despite the unbelievable *Fame* and money he earned? Deep down inside, what did Michael Jackson think about himself and his life? Was it meaningful, or tinsel?

Or how about Bernard Madoff, who became one of the richest men in the world by tricking trusting investors out of 65 billion US dollars? Do these riches constitute *Success*, even if he is to "spend" the next 150 years behind bars?

Or how about Kim Jong Il, the man who has unquestioned *Power* over 16 million North Korean souls? Does his unrestricted power of life or death spell *Success*?

Is success driving a Lamborghini or winning the lottery? Or not?

Armed with my powerpoint I posed these questions to a quiet and attentive gym full of SAS high schoolers. As they looked back on their summer and ahead to the year ahead — to their life ahead — how would they measure success?

I recalled to them how last March at an educational conference in Orlando I had had the privilege to meet and hear Eileen Collins,

Commander of the Space Shuttle Colombia on flight STS-93 in July of 1999. She related to the audience how, after the January 2003 Colombia disaster NASA had struggled with itself to figure out what went wrong in its human systems that allowed the actual mechanical malfunctions to occur.

Reflecting on NASA's lessons, Success, Commander Collins stated, rests on three pillars, all of which must be in place for any program, indeed for any person, to experience true personal SUCCESS, beyond fame, fortune, power, status, or even luck. These three pillars apply equally well to the job of being a student as they do to commanding a space shuttle.

Technical Knowledge. Students must learn the "stuff and skills" of school. Whether it is memorizing Chinese characters, developing internet research skills, performing a chemistry experiment, or learning how to make an iMovie, students need to learn information and skills; it is imperative in order to move forward in life. Not only that, Commander Collins stressed, you need to know and learn more *than you are required to know and learn*. It's not enough to just get by to be successful — either as a student, or as an adult in the workplace — you need to move beyond the learning goals set out for you.

Communication Skills. You might think you know everything there is to know about a subject, but if you cannot communicate it to others and work collaboratively with them, then that knowledge is like a tree falling in the woods with no one to hear it. Students need to be able to write, to speak, to listen, to cooperate, to work in teams, to have the personal skills to negotiate various personalities with differing priorities. Without those skills, a Ph.D. from the most prestigious university in the world is worthless both to him or herself and to the world. The truly successful seldom work alone.

“ Integrity includes knowing who you are and being comfortable with that; knowing what you stand for — your values and inner core — and knowing what you won't stand for.”



Integrity. Going beyond simple honesty, integrity includes knowing who you are and being comfortable with that; knowing what you stand for — your values and inner core — and knowing what you won't stand for — those things that regardless of pressure or friendship, you cannot ignore or condone.

We can have tremendous knowledge and enjoy wonderful communication and interpersonal skills — but if we have no integrity to hold it together, it is worthless. Some of the greatest tyrants of all times were smart and had amazing communication skills, yet they were not successful as humans beings. Integrity is the fuel by which we contribute to leaving the world a better place than we found it.

All of us want our students to succeed this year, and in every future year. However, sometimes our definition of what constitutes a successful young person preparing for a successful life gets lost in the rush to build a strong GPA or high SAT scores, or earn entrance into a prestigious university. All of these are noble goals, but we should also challenge our young people to ask — to what end? Fame? Money? Power?

Young people struggle every day to find meaning in their lives beyond the imposed identity of being a student, always preparing for some mysteriously successful future. Let's work together — parents and teachers — to challenge our children to define for themselves what type of success they are working so hard to attain.

If we can help them to learn knowledge and skills, to communicate and work together, and finally to have the inner integrity to give meaning to it all, then we have truly led our children to a successful year, indeed into a successful life beyond schooling.

*Hiking, rapelling, camping, rafting, studying
Chinese culture ... don't be misled:*

CHINA ALIVE— beach



S

tep by step, we trudged up the mountainous path. The sun smiled down at us; sweat dripped from our backs.

We hiked on and on, wondering when it would ever end. Our stomachs growled and our mouths were dry; it was long past our scheduled time to eat and rest.

As we walked on, the trees opened to a clearing. Entering, the sunlight spilled through, lighting up the otherwise dark forest. Next to the narrow path, deep gorges cut through the mountains, and far off mountaintops outlined the clear blue sky. The view was breathtaking. A cool breeze blew by, send-

no run on the

Hainan-Sanya
CHINA ALIVE
Trip

COVER STORY

ing chills through our bones, and we walked onwards.

The Western Guizhou China Alive trip was filled with thrills and exciting adventures: hiking to admire beautiful views, rafting on a river, and visiting local villages to experience the local cultures were just a few of the highlights of the trip. Every day was a new adventure, and everyone was able to find something that they enjoyed in each day's ac-

tivities. Overall, the trip was very educational as well as enjoyable, and everyone was able to take something from the trip to last them a lifetime.

Though there were many memorable aspects of the trip, one of the most unforgettable experiences was visiting a local village and interacting with the children there. When we arrived at the village, we were greeted by many enthusiastic local people

By Cynthia Sun, G10



who performed several dances for us, and served us “rice wine” (which, in actuality, was Sprite).

This series of dances led us to the place we were to eat dinner that night. Before dinner was served, the local people showed us how to make sticky rice by “beating” white rice with long club-like things. All of us also had a chance to pitch in and help make the sticky rice, which we later ate. The dinner that we ate that night was one of the best dinners of the whole trip, and after dinner, we had a chance to play with the kids.



Western
Guizhou
CHINA
ALIVE
trip



Zhongdian
Wilderness
Backpacking CHINA
ALIVE trip



All of the children were very enthusiastic and happy to see us. Their faces radiated with joy when we talked to them and played with them. Seeing how happy we made the kids filled our hearts with warmth and exuberance. Since the children lived in a local village in Guizhou, they probably haven't had many chances to interact with people from far away. This probably added to why they were so excited to see us. By the end of the night, we were all very reluctant to leave, but we left with many memories.

Another memorable part of the Western Guizhou trip was all of the hiking that we did. Though the hiking was very tiring, the views were all worth our mild suffering. During our hikes, we visited waterfalls, mountaintops, and many other landmarks. While standing high up on the mountain on the hiking trail, we were able to see the land below us. The rivers, fields, far-off mountains, and everything else that we could see from our high elevation made us realize how small we were compared to nature, and we were able to truly appreciate its beauty. There are probably few places in the world that have as striking and awe-inspiring views as Guizhou.

Overall, the Western Guizhou China Alive trip was a trip of a lifetime, and I believe that I also speak for many others when I say that it was undoubtedly one of the best school trips I have ever been on. Every part of the trip was unforgettable and simply amazing.



**Zhongdian
Wilderness
Backpacking
CHINA ALIVE trip**

Sichuan

By Lucinda Edmonds, HS English Teacher, Pudong Campus

The Sichuan Panda-monium trip blended a trip to the opera, strenuous exercise, community service, a trip to the 2008 Earthquake Museum, and panda keeping, all in five short, intense days.

Day One began auspiciously, with everyone remembering both their passports and their airport — Pudong, not Hongqiao. We landed in Chengdu, and were met by our guides from TerraTribes, Xiao Sun, Zhi Zhi and Boer, who have worked with SAS on this Sichuan trip for three years. After getting settled at our hotel, we went to a Taoist temple for some tai chi lessons, then out for Sichuan hot pot, and finally watched backstage while members of the Sichuan cultural performance put on their make-up and costumes. Some students even had their own faces made up as Sichuan opera stars!

On the second day we travelled to Moxi, in Western Sichuan, and realized that we were on the only route to Lhasa, Tibet, resulting in frequent stops by the police, and a frustratingly long day on the road. We reached Moxi at about 5pm, and made it to the elementary school to build bookcases and share gifts and sports equipment with the children. Building the bookcases became a cooperative effort,

with the small children holding nails for our SAS kids as the building took place. The end result: two grand bookcases, carried by both Moxi children and SAS students to the front of the school. Special thanks go to Xiao Sun, Zhi Zhi and Boer for organizing this.

How did this affect our students? According to Marisa Costa, Grade



Background Photo: Students hiking in Hailuo Glacier Park; **Top:** Billy Lomanson with a friend; **Inset:** Olivia Dillon feeding the pandas; **Right, top:** Helena Lin building a bookcase; **Right, bottom:** Timothy Young as a Sichuan Opera star. *EAGLE photos by Lucinda Edmonds.*

Panda-monium

9, "the experience of being with the children really made me think about how much I have and how much so many other people in the world have that they are not grateful for. When I think about how much I complain about my life I feel SO selfish! These kids didn't have much, and yet they were so happy. They weren't complaining or whining because it was too cold or the chairs were too hard. They were actually having fun and enjoying what they did have . . ." Afterward, all children big and small played volleyball, basketball and Frisbee together until it was dinner-time. The squat toilets in the Moxi hotel were a challenge, but students reminded themselves that they, unlike the kids whom they had just visited, were experiencing them for only one night. China Alive is an all-star, not a five-star experience!

On the third day, we continued west, and had an all-day hike in the Hailuo Glacier Park, a seldom-visited but beautiful national park. Many students were stretched to their limit in completing this hike, but a supportive atmosphere helped to make it a success for all. From the glacier we had gorgeous views of Minya Konka, an amazing peak that has never been scaled.

On the fourth day, we got back on the bus to return to Chengdu. Along the way we visited the 2008 Earthquake Museum, just outside of Chengdu. Many students were moved by the experience, especially as they connected what they saw to the fund-raising efforts put forth by SAS last year to help these earthquake victims. Mimi Liu, Grade 9, reflected on her

experience:

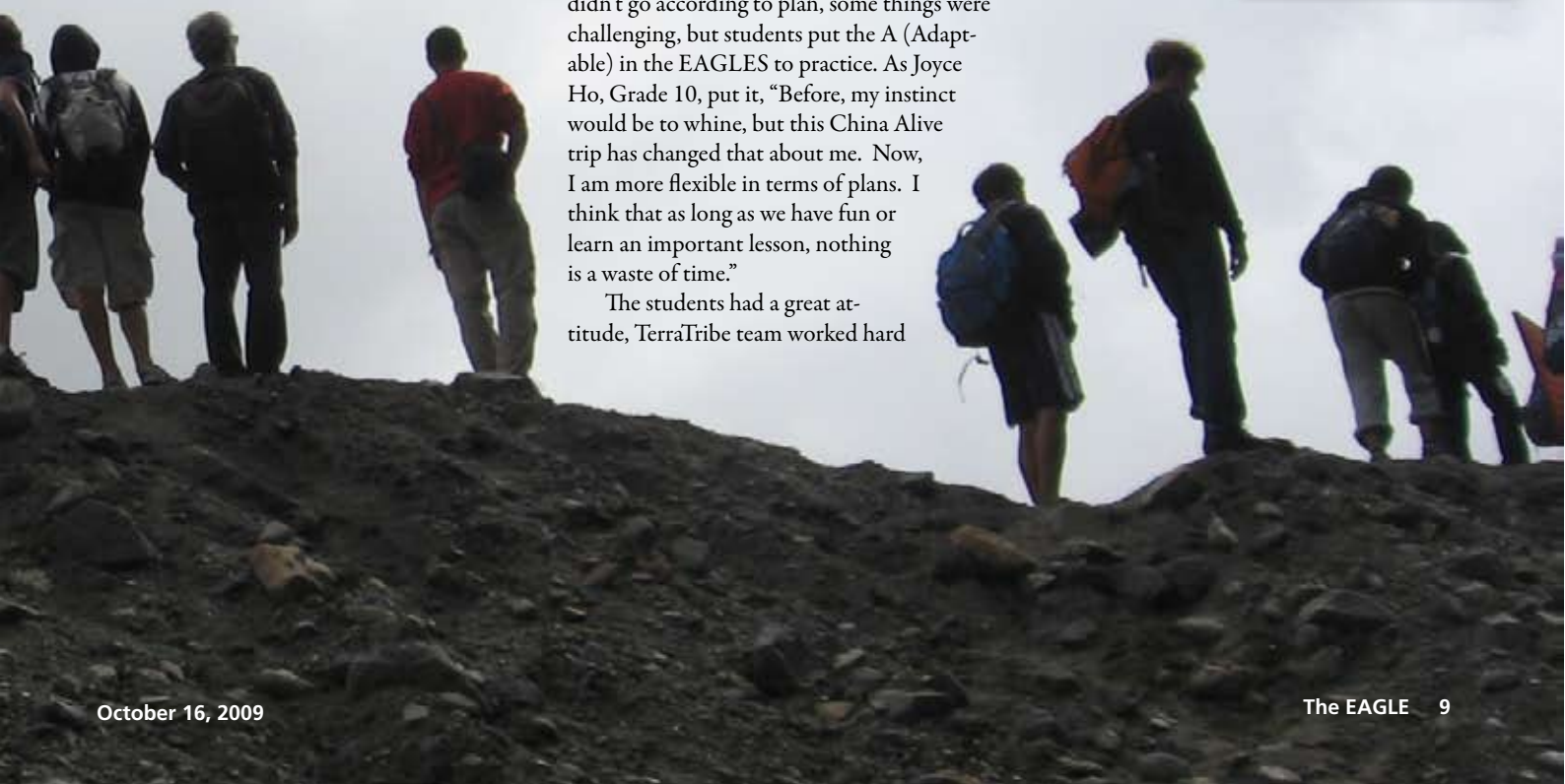
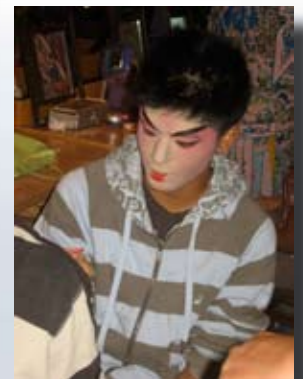
"My mom and dad had donated 13,000 RMB (for the Sichuan Earthquake relief effort) and at that time I thought it was WAY extreme. I thought how ridiculous they were and how they'd given all that money to strangers for free rather than give it to my brother and me. But during the museum visit, I felt so sorry for the people and saw everything in a new light. I imagined myself in that situation and couldn't help but suffer. I was grateful for my life and for having a nice home and a complete family. Each picture had a story that I'll forever remember . . . I was deeply moved and felt that the Museum was very significant. I realized that no matter how much money is donated, the victims would still want things back the way they were before, and would want to have their family whole. The money is only to help them mend, but nothing more."

Our final day was spent at the Chengdu Panda Breeding Center, where students served as volunteers. Working in shifts, students were able to record panda behavior, give the pandas showers, feed pandas apples and panda-cakes from chopsticks, spread new bamboo shoots around the enclosure, and yes, pick up panda poop with super-duper panda pooper-scoopers! Students were able to see pandas and their keepers in a way that a tourist never could.

Returning to Shanghai after my third China Alive trip to Sichuan made me reflect on how much the attitudes of students, chaperones and local guides contribute to having a positive experience. Some things didn't go according to plan, some things were challenging, but students put the A (Adaptable) in the EAGLES to practice. As Joyce Ho, Grade 10, put it, "Before, my instinct would be to whine, but this China Alive trip has changed that about me. Now, I am more flexible in terms of plans. I think that as long as we have fun or learn an important lesson, nothing is a waste of time."

The students had a great attitude, TerraTribe team worked hard

and planned well, and Steven Shi, our travel agent was super as were the teacher chaperones, who worked long days to make sure our students were safe, happy and productive.



Shanghai American School International Fair ...

Celebrating cultures of the world

By Margaret Keefe,
2009 SAS PTSA Puxi Campus International Fair Chair

The SAS International Fair is an annual event that celebrates the wonderful variety of cultures that make up the SAS community. For 15 years the SAS Puxi campus PTSA has enjoyed playing host to this event that brings students, parents and SAS staff together for a day of good food, fun, entertainment and shopping.

As our school has grown so has the Fair. This year, despite having the Fair three weeks early, the high school clubs came through with over 45 inventive and amusing games that kept Fair visitors busy throughout the





EAGLE photos by Zhonghua Jian and Jerry Koontz



The FAIR offered exciting activities and events for everyone — children, parents, the young and the old

day. While the children were playing games, the adults enjoyed a variety of regional cuisines lovingly prepared by many of our parent groups as well as several local restaurants. To complement the dining experience, the Fair entertainment this year included the high school and middle school bands, choirs and orchestra as well as two delightful dance groups from the elementary school. And it didn't stop there. Before the day was over the Fair audience was treated to a special tribute to the Jacaranda school and a teaser from the upcoming HS musical, *Mulan*.

One of the most anticipated attractions at the Fair is the outside market area and this year we had a record number of vendors participate, offering everything from carpets to purses to outdoor furniture and water from Iceland. On top of the variety of outside vendors, we had the added benefit of shopping in the new SAS Eagle shop that opened its doors the day before the Fair.

When the PTSA puts the Fair together each year, the committee tries to offer activities that the whole family will enjoy. Fortunately, we have a very supportive activities office that lends a hand. So if the shopping didn't interest you, there were rugby games, baseball games and volleyball games going on all day long to add the thrill of competition to the day.

The SAS Puxi campus PTSA Fair has grown to be a phenomenal event that the PTSA looks forward to every year. However the Fair does require an incredible amount of manpower to plan, set-up and run. The PTSA and the Fair committee are thankful for the support of the SAS Support services group, headed by Christina Lye and the SAS Security and Safety department, lead by James Linder in assisting us in putting on an event that the whole community can enjoy. The PTSA would also like to acknowledge and thank all the wonderful parents, students and SAS staff that volunteered their time and effort to put on another memorable SAS Fair.

The SAS Puxi Campus International Fair is an important event on the school calendar not only because it is a great way for the community to come together at the start of the school year but it also serves as the main Puxi Campus PTSA fundraiser. All of the profit, that is 100%, generated at the Fair returns to the school in some shape or form. The PTSA funds from the Fair support school activities including the Passport Club in the elementary and the Friday night open gyms in the middle and high school. The PTSA happily supports the school drama productions (upon request) and provides travel bags for all varsity level sports and clubs. Funds are also used to provide assistance with

The following merchants generously donated prizes for this year's Fair raffle.

- Apple
- Carrefour
- Barefoot Portraits
- Kathleen's 5
- Coldstone Creamery,
- Shanghai Racquet Club
- Thai Table
- City Shoppe
- Philips
- David Leadbetter Golf Academy
- Children's Technology Workshop
- Pudong Shangri-La Hotel
- Illy Cafe
- Grand Hyatt Shanghai
- Chi Life Studio
- Rendevous Cafe
- Electronic Arts
- Adidas
- Papa Johns
- Dragonfly
- Pudong Renaissance Hotel
- Beansprouts





visiting authors and special guests like Marie De Silva as well supporting community service efforts in the nearby migrant schools and the many other requests that come to the PTSA from the school community during the year. Additionally, the Fair provides an opportunity for HS and MS student clubs and class councils to raise funds for the student club activities during the year.

The Puxi Campus PTSA lends support to our parents by organizing the annual Parent Information Fair in August, sponsoring the HS/MS parent teacher socials and grade-level networking meetings for

parents throughout the year. The PTSA is very happy to be able to support the school in this way and the Fair provides us with the means to do this.

For all of us involved in planning the Fair, the best part is bringing the SAS community together for an entertaining day out. We hope you all enjoyed your day at the Fair.

International Fair 2009 Sponsors

The Puxi Campus PTSA International Fair 2009 is sponsored in large part by several local businesses. Shanghai American School would like to thank the following companies for their corporate sponsorship this year:

Gold Sponsor



Platinum Sponsor



Bronze Sponsor



The new Eagle Shop opens on Puxi Campus

by Karen Chow, PTSA President, Puxi Campus



On Friday September 25th (just in time for International Fair) the PTSA cut the ribbon on the new Puxi Campus Store “The Eagle Shop”. In no time at all the store was flooded with students, staff and parents eager to see what this new place was all about.

How this new store came to be

The school and PTSA have wanted to create a new store for many years now but of course funding such a project is always a consideration. SAS was most fortunate to be the recipient of a donation a few years ago from “the Starr Foundation”. However the funds donated were to be used specifically for a capital building project for both Puxi and Pudong campuses. While the funds were most generous they were not going to be sufficient to build say a pool on each campus or other major building. Our previous Superintendent, Dr. Larkin, suggested that the funds be used to build a new school store on each campus. He really wanted to see the stores have a greater campus presence. So through the efforts of Dr. Larkin, the Board and the Facilities Task Force, SAS Staff and the perseverance of the PTSA to make sure the project was on everyone’s radar that we now have this beautiful new store.

Huge thanks need to go to SAS parents, Lisa Wallis and Lily Zhang (Store Manager) and their team of volunteers who worked very hard to get everything in place in time for the opening.

Why the new name?

The name, “The Eagle Shop”, reflects the increased number of logo items we hope to offer to promote school spirit. We are after all the SAS Eagles. In addition, both campus stores have the same name reinforcing not only how closely the two store teams have been working together but also in keeping with the one school two campuses philosophy of SAS.

Come in and see what’s new

Next time you are on campus drop in and have a look around. See what The Eagle Shop has to offer and watch for the many exciting new products we will introduce over the next few months.



LEFT: CFO David Leung, MS Puxi Campus Principal Brad Latzke, Finance Office Manager Rosanna Lee, and Advancement Director Fred Rogers attend the Grand Opening. **ABOVE:** Puxi Campus President, Karen Chow, and Lily Zhang cut the ribbon. **EAGLE** photos by Cindy Wang.

Rotation project earns praise from students

By Brian Li and Kendrick Tan,
ES Student Reporters, Puxi Campus

Imagine being a person who immigrated to America 100 years ago, or learning marching drills soldiers in the American Civil war learned. Imagine mixing a lot of different ingredients together to make an exploding chemical, learning all about Elvis Presley in the 50s or making a model of a new car you've designed. These are the things students get to try during 5th grade "Rotation."

Rotation is where students in fifth grade get ready for middle school by learning Science Social Studies, and Health in different classes with different teachers. The students rotate through seven sections throughout the course of the year. Each section has 20 lessons per rotation and each lesson is 40 minutes long.

Lorelee Sealey's unit is about the *American Civil War*. In this unit, the students are divided into northern and southern soldiers. They pretend to be the actual people in the war — writing letters home, re-enacting battles, and even learning drills. There are four groups of the North, and two groups of the South, with approximately three people in each group. Sealey deliberately gave the North more groups because at that time, there were more people in the North than in the South. "Each group has an item to represent themselves, such as a headband, wristband, symbol, so on," said Sealey, who hopes that the kids will understand the causes of the Civil War, the challenges of being a soldier, and the importance of cooperation and compromise.

Karen Campbell teaches the students about *Immigration*. She reveals a Web site where students can search for real people who have been through Ellis Island, which is an immigration center for people coming to the United States. The students must first choose a person they would like to be and then do some research on him/her. Students will write journal entries about the character from a first-person point of view. This unit teaches the student about immigration in the United States during the twentieth century.

Clayton Hanlin is teaching the *20th Century Decade* project. Students are divided into nine groups, and each group is assigned a decade. The students do research on their decade, studying the main events, inventions, new technology and more. They then use the information they gained to create a three-to-five minute presentation to give to the class. The kids can do a PowerPoint, write a play, or make a poster — anything they want to give the presentation. The students really seem to enjoy the activity, especially creating PowerPoints. According to Hanlin, "In addition to learning about the decades, the students learn how to do basic research skills using textbooks as well as technology, and how to create and read a time line."

The unit *Mixtures and Solutions* is taught by Louise Hughson as part of the Science part of rotation. In this class, students discuss the

difference between mixtures and solutions. "It's really a chemistry unit," says Hughson. "Chemistry is the study of structure of matter and transformations that take place in it. Learning

about the makeup of substances gives the students knowledge about how things go together and how they can they can be taken apart." In this unit students investigate things and find out how things work. Hughson has been teaching this subject for 11 years and has a strong interest in teaching science.

Timber Monteith teaches the unit *Models and Designs*. The students always work with a partner when they are building a model, whether it is a go-cart, Lego, etc. The students also have a chance to work with electricity-powered machines, and can also use them in their Lego so that they will learn how levers, gears, and pulleys work. Monteith has been teaching this subject for four years and is also very "straight-forward" about this subject.

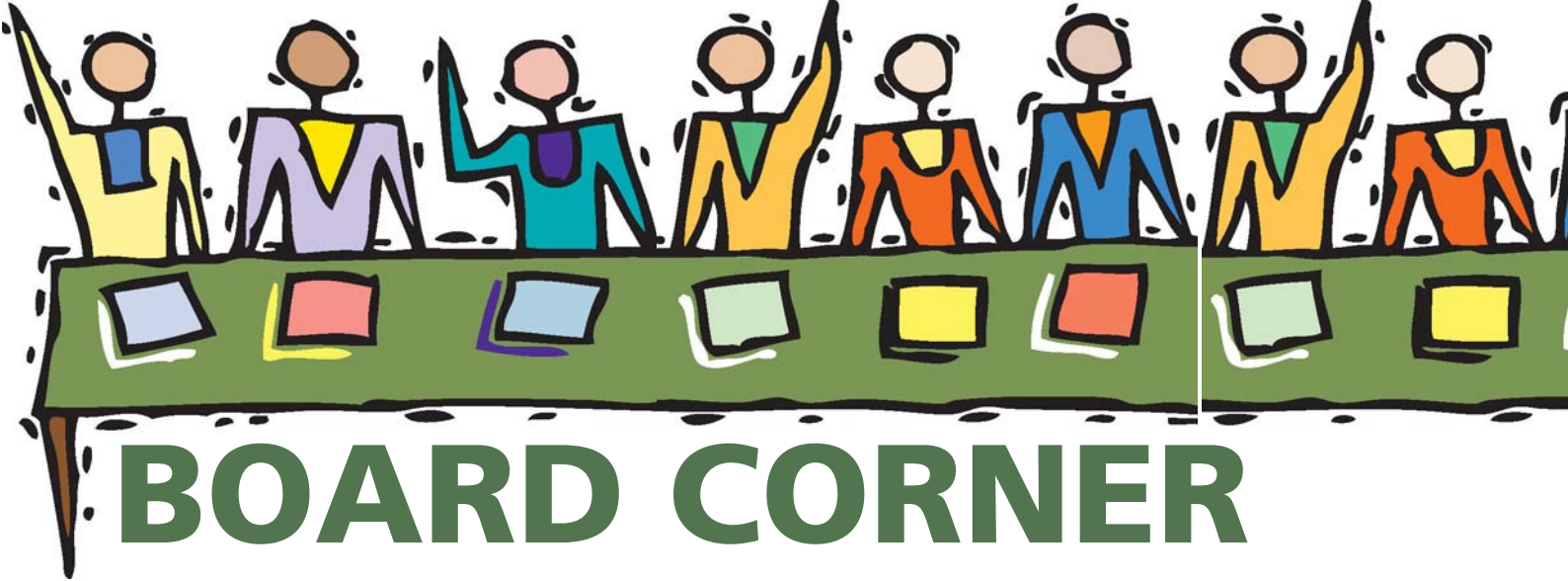
Noreen Croyle is teaching a *Health* unit where students learn to choose their meals and how to exercise. The kids run a mile twice during the unit, as well as complete other fitness tests to better understand their fitness level.

They also learn more about the food pyramid and the amount a fifth-grader should eat in one day. On one of the days students get to make healthy smoothies adding all kinds of tasty ingredients, like strawberries and yogurt. Students also get a chance to visually experience how someone feels when they eat only McDonald's food for one month by watching the movie *Supersize Me*.

Last, Lynette Kyle teaches the students the rotation unit *Landforms*. The unit covers a variety of things from geography, to understanding how landforms develop, using stream tables to help the students understand how erosion and deposition happen. The students watch a few videos explaining how the earth is formed. They do three different investigations with the stream tables. The students seem to enjoy the last investigation the most because they get to create their own experiment in order to observe how rain and flooding move the sand. The stream table is a large plastic container that has a hole at one end so the water can drain out. The water then pours into a basin. The stream tables use sand and clay along with smaller containers to form landforms inside. "Another thing the kids enjoy," Kyle said, "is they like to get sandy and wet!"

Fifth Grade Rotation is a really fun way for Grade 5 students to experience and learn about all kinds of different things in Social Studies, Science and Health. Through Rotation, the teachers of the fifth grade ensure the students have a lot of experiences in every unit.





BOARD CORNER

Board launches School-wide Communications Task Force

At its September 22 meeting, the SAS Board of Directors—as part of a restructuring of its committees—approved the creation of a task force to review and make recommendations for the school’s communications. Board members Stephanie Kao and Mery Montgomery will serve as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

The task force held a half-day in-person retreat on September 28 to propose its goals for Board approval at its next meeting on October 27. As drafted, the goals are:

■ Review and restructuring

1. Inventory all existing school communications channels and vehicles.
2. Propose a structure of responsibility delineating all-school versus divisional (or other) spheres of interest in communicating information.
3. Create an easily accessible guide to direct community members to key school communications resources for topics of interest and information.

■ Dissemination

Develop a strategy for informing the school community of communications responsibilities and the availability and accessibility of informational channels and vehicles.

■ Community input to school decision-making

Create a format through which the Board of Directors and the SAS administration may receive comments, opinions and suggestions from community members, including:

1. Town Hall meetings: Unstructured, open-topic conversations with Board members and administrators.
2. Community Forums: Focused discussions of specific topics selected by the Board.

Following its retreat, the School-wide Communications Task Force will meet by videoconference

twice monthly through November, with a final meeting in December, a self-evaluation in January, and an implementation assessment in May.

In describing the work of the task force, Chair Stephanie Kao noted that “the Board of Directors is committed to ensuring clear lines of communication between the school and its community members. Finding the right balance between too much communication and not enough is the challenge every great school faces.” She added, “I am pleased to be joined by wonderful representatives from across both our campuses. We pledge to work hard to develop a strong communications plan for SAS to follow.”

Comments or questions may be directed to the task force at schoolboard@saschina.org.

School-Wide Communications Task Force Members

Stephanie Kao, Puxi parent and Board member, Chair

Mery Montgomery, Pudong parent and Board member, Vice-Chair

Mina Chang, Puxi parent

Karen Chow, PTSA President, Puxi campus

Katie Ferguson, PTSA President, Pudong campus

Mary Lane, Principal, Elementary School, Puxi campus

In Young Lee, Pudong parent

Bing Li, Pudong parent

Connie Lowry, Puxi parent

Harlan Lyso, Superintendent

Fred Rogers, Director of Advancement

Ron Roukema, Principal, Middle School, Pudong campus

Jayelene Warner, Pudong parent

LETTER FROM DAVID LIU, BOARD CHAIR

Dear SAS Community Members:

A two-day Shanghai American School Board of Directors retreat held in early September focused on strategies to maximize the school’s effectiveness and responsiveness during the current school year. The retreat was led by John Ritter, an international school consultant who has worked with school boards around the world.

During the retreat, the Board drafted a series of **Essential Operating Agreements**, established Board goals for the year, and began forming the Board committees and task forces that will assist the Board this year. At its first official meeting on September 22, the Board confirmed its goals and officially authorized the committees and task forces necessary to achieve them.

In addition to carrying on its regular business throughout the year, the Board will focus on the following three strategic goals:

1. We will develop a multi-year strategic plan.
2. We will achieve a successful leadership transition.
3. We will improve communication between parents, the school and the Board of Directors.

The Board re-established the Trusteeship Committee, the Human Resources Committee, the Finance Committee, the Advancement Committee (previously called the “Development Committee”), and the Facilities Task Force. To ensure a clear

—See **LETTER** on next page