

Beacon Hill International School News

A World of Learners

Published by the Staff and PTA of

Beacon Hill International School

2025 14th Avenue South (206) 252-2700

Dr. Susie Murphy, Principal

Maythia Airhart, PTA President

December 8, 2009



From Principal Dr. Murphy

There's no letter from Dr. Murphy in this issue of the newsletter. She's busy visiting China!

Visiting Chinese Teacher Xu Juan

BHIS has the pleasure of hosting a visiting teacher from China for the 2009/2010 school year.

Ms. Xu Juan (pronounced Shoo Jwen), arrived in the U.S. about a month before school started.

Ms. Xu and 90 other teachers from China first spent a week and a half at Stanford University in California, receiving orientation training to prepare for the differences between the Chinese and U.S. school systems. Four of the teachers are located in South Seattle. One is teaching at Graham Elementary in South Seattle, and two are in West Seattle. All four are from different parts of China, but have become good friends since meeting for this exchange program.

Ms. Xu is from Chongqing, in the Southern part of China, which is a municipality. At home she teaches English at the College level and is enjoying the opportunity to work with children in the U.S. Ms. Xu is originally from Sichuan province but moved 5 years ago to Chongqing. Ms. Xu communicates frequently with her parents and friends in China via her laptop computer. In the evening when she contacts them, it is mid-morning for them as they are 16 hours ahead of our time zone.

Ms. Xu has had 3 host families so far since being in Seattle. She spent several weeks each with the families of Nat, Grace, and Ford who each are in the first grade Mandarin immersion program. She will remain with Ford's family through the end of the semester and will then move to stay for the second part of the school year with the family of Lucy, 3rd grade, and Will, kindergarten Spanish program.

Ms. Xu teaches the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade classes at BHIS: each grade's students receive 40 minutes of Mandarin instruction twice per week. The Seattle Chinese teachers receive a stipend from Han Ban in China, room and board, and an Orca pass as their salary for the school year, so Ms. Xu also does extra tutoring after school and on weekends to earn spending money, and money to send home to her parents who are both retired and live with her in her apartment in Chongqing.

BHIS is very fortunate to have the opportunity to host Ms. Xu this school year. The Han Ban organization in China, which interviewed, selected, and sent the 90 visiting teachers, from among many hundreds of applicants, has the goal of sharing Chinese culture throughout the world. Ms. Xu and her fellow visiting teachers have been enjoying sharing information about their homeland, and learning about culture, customs, and the people of the United States. Meanwhile, Ms. Xu is writing articles for a Chinese newspaper about her experience in U.S. She wants to share her own teaching and life experience to more Chinese and American friends to let them know more about America.

Mr. Campbell is Back!

I would like to thank all the Beacon Hill International School community, staff, parents, and the kids for helping to get me through my injury. Your letters, cards, and e-mails of support meant so much to me while I was stuck at home, recovering from my Achilles tendon injury. I'm happy to report that as of Monday November 30th, I have been back in the gymnasium teaching.

Sincerely,

Otis E. Campbell

Physical Education Teacher



Volunteers of the Month

The Family Volunteer of the Month for November is **Leslie Stewart**. Leslie is in the first year of a two year commitment as our PTA Treasurer. Leslie is doing a wonderful job paying the bills and keeping our PTA finances in check. She was also a work horse with beginning of the school year PTA coordination, and she coordinated our new fund raiser, with sales of the Chinook Book allowing the PTA to support Powerful Schools at BHIS. Leslie is the wife of **Noah Kent**, who is a frequent volunteer at school. Their daughter, **Josephine Kent** is in first grade. Thank you, Leslie, for keeping us right on the money!

The Community Volunteer of the Month for November started volunteering at BHIS in October. **Meili Baker** volunteers in Ms. Baharloo's 2nd grade class 3 afternoons a week and helps in the Bilingual Homework Center after school on Mondays. Welcome Meili, and thanks for your help!

Welcome to the Wheel World Gets a New Face!

A big thanks to David Gackenbach, metal artist and father of Cedric, for using his tools and tricks to clean up the rusty tears that made our Bike Art Rack look a little sad.

Powerful Learning Centers

What an exciting session it has been as Powerful Learning Centers began our 5th year at BHIS. This session, almost all classes were full and great things are still happening as we wind down in our final two weeks. The last day of the current session will be Thursday, Dec. 17th. Our next session will begin on Jan. 19th, and we are finalizing our schedule with a variety of classes. Please look for the Winter Quarter class catalogs to go home upon our return from Winter Break on Monday, Jan. 4th. If you have any questions please contact the Site Coordinator, Shelly Bates, at sbates@powerfulschools.org.

Food Drive

Family Support Worker, **Natalie Long** and School Librarian, **Mary Thompson**, will once again head up a Food Drive for BHIS families who need assistance. Please bring donations of non-perishable food items to the library for distribution before Winter Break. Thank you.

School-Banking at BHIS

School Banking is now available at BHIS on Wednesday mornings, from 9:00-9:20 a.m. with **Washington Federal Savings Bank**. Banking Coordinator, **Doris Fuentes** will be right outside the cafeteria to accept deposits and assist students opening an account. Minimum amount to open an account is \$5, and Washington Federal will match another \$5 so you can start your account off at \$10!

- PTA News -

PTA Committee Vacancies:

We Need YOU! Join the BHIS PTA leadership team and lend your skills and enthusiasm to support and enhance our children's education!

If you are interested in a PTA leadership role, we currently have three openings. Please contact any of the officers listed on the BHIS PTA web page with any questions:

<http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/beaconhill/docs/PTAOfficerPhotos.pdf>

Nominating Chair: Works with the Executive Committee to identify and nominate others to fill committee vacancies. This position helps to ensure the continuity, effectiveness, and diversity of committee leadership.

Language/Ethnic Group Outreach Representatives: Works with the Executive Committee to reduce barriers to participation by the major non-English-speaking parent groups. Outreach Representatives will actively seek input from a particular group and periodically report to the Executive Committee.

Grant Writers: Works with the Fundraising Committee to identify and complete grant applications in target areas such as Green or ESL just to name a few examples.

Standing Rules to be Considered at January 19th PTA Meeting:

At the January 19, 2010 General Membership/Family Involvement meeting, the Beacon Hill Parent Teacher Association will consider the proposed PTA Standing Rules.

As an organization affiliated with the Washington State PTA, Beacon Hill PTA must abide by the WSPTA Uniform Bylaws. A PTA may adopt a set of standing rules, and even its own bylaws, that are tailored to that PTA, as long as they don't conflict with the state bylaws. A PTA's standing rules identify the PTA and define its relationship with its members.

The standing rules must be adopted by the members and should be reviewed and re-adopted

each year. The proposed BHIS PTA Standing Rules can be reviewed at: www.beaconhillinternationalschool.org. Please contact Maythia Airhart, PTA President at mthach@hotmail.com or Dave McGeoy, PTA Vice President at mcgeoy@cablespeed.com with questions, comments or suggestions!

Holiday Gift Idea: Chinook Book

With coupons worth hundreds of dollars in savings at a wide variety of local, eco-friendly businesses, **Chinook Book** is a great gift for just your holiday shopping list. **Chinook Book** is affordable at just \$20 - and \$10 of those dollars goes directly to the BHIS Parent Teacher Association to support school programs.

Coupons are valid through October 31, 2010. To purchase books or to see a sample book, stop by Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Fujimoto's office or contact Nancy at nkfujimoto@seattleschools.org or contact PTA Treasurer Leslie Stewart at noahles@q.com.

Currently we have sold 88 books, leaving us with just 12 more to reach our \$1,000 goal for this fundraiser. Help us reach our goal and get your holiday shopping done at the same time!

PTA Annual Giving Fund:

Hopefully you have received your Annual Giving Fund donation request letter. This is a simple way to help support the programs funded through our BHIS PTA. You don't have to buy anything – just make a donation! We hear a lot about the big ticket items, but there are many small, important programs assisted by the PTA: The childcare during PTA and Latino Family meetings, chess club support, classroom stipends for our teachers, books for our students, and funding toward Powerful Schools, are just a few of the lesser known programs. The Annual Giving Fund has a modest goal of \$3,000 and if each family could give \$10, we would more than surpass it. This fundraiser is a chance for the families to show their support for the many ways our PTA assists the BHIS students. Just write "Annual Giving Fund" on your check or envelope and send to school with your child. **Thank you!**

BHIS Chess Club Competes in Fall Tournament

Five members of the BHIS Chess Club competed in the Chessmates Fall Kick-Off Tournament on Saturday, November 14th at Ingraham High School. Each player played a series of five games against kids from other schools. **Miles McGeoy**, with three wins, is a candidate to compete in the state tournament! The chess club meets on Wednesday afternoons for 1 hour with coach Evan with the help of parent volunteer Angela Castaneda. Shown in the picture (from left to right): **Jay Zinschlag** (grade 1), **Ian McGeoy** (grade 4), **Miles McGeoy** (grade 2), **Ian Kapinos**, and Giordan Escalona.



Greetings From the Library

A lot has been going on in our busy library. Here's a sampling of all of our hard work:

Kindergarteners have been learning about fiction vs. nonfiction books and folktales/fairytales.

First Grade Research: Please admire our fabulous first grade research on China. The first graders have been taking notes about Bamboo Forests, South China Sea, and the

Himalayan Mountains. The research is in collaboration with their classroom teachers and art class. Check out their murals in the main hallways.

Second Graders have been comparing and contrasting various "Soup" stories to coincide with their classroom study.

Third Graders have been reading books and taking notes on the tropical rainforest.

Fourth Graders finished up a unit on different genres of literature, diving into research about the Oregon Trail (Westward Ho!), and beginning Global Reading Challenge.

Fifth Graders finished up a unit on different genres of literature and are beginning the Global Reading Challenge.

Family Check-Out – Thursdays: Did you know that all day every Thursday families are able to check out up to five books for you to share with your child at home? Please come in and get your own Beacon Hill International School library card (and cool bag too!). If Thursday doesn't work for your family, we are always open before and after school Monday through Wednesday.

Scholastic Book Fair: Our annual book fair was a huge success! We raised about \$1,200 for our library. The lines were long and kids were very patient! Many, many thanks to the fabulous volunteers: **Kevin Chan, Molly Hasson, Nancy Fujimoto, Lauren Rayment, Kam Yee, Ortencia Santana, Octavia Townsend, Sarah Ainsworth, Leslie Stewart, and Mary Howard Logel.** We couldn't have done it without you!

Global Reading Challenge: Our fourth and fifth graders have been invited to participate in a wonderful opportunity to read up to ten different books. We will have an in-school challenge where the students who choose to

participate are put on a team. As a team, students answer questions about the books, and the team with the most correct answers advances to the city final at the downtown library in April. This is going to be a lot of fun, and students who read at least one book can participate. The idea is to have as many students as we can participate. The books are selected by and donated from the Seattle Public Library. The books for this year are:

Archer's Quest by Linda Sue Park

The Year of the Rat: a Novel by Grace Lin

Yang the Youngest and his Terrible Ear by Lensey Namioka; illustrated by Kees de Kieft

Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis

Vive la Paris by Esmé Raji Codell

Clementine by Sara Pennypacker; pictures by Marla Frazee

Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

The White Giraffe by Lauren St. John; illustrated by David Dean

Becoming Naomi León by Pam Muñoz Ryan

Please feel free to drop by the library any time. Our collection of books is updated weekly!

Your library team,
Mary Thompson and Virginia Calvo

Family Literacy Night

Our BHIS **Washington Reading Corps** team proudly announces the first of two Family Literacy Nights, "Stories Around the Kitchen Table" on **Wednesday, December 9th**, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room. There will be a **potluck dinner** with food samples from neighborhood businesses, plus **Games! Books! and Prizes!** See you there!

December / January Calendar

Wed., Dec. 2: First day of school banking – 9-9:20 a.m. outside the cafeteria with Washington Federal Savings Bank. Every Wednesday thereafter.

Fri., Dec. 4: Last day of Penny Harvest.

Wed., Dec. 9: Family Literacy Night, 7-8:30 p.m. in Multi-Purpose Room.

Mon., Dec. 14: Report cards sent home.

Tues., Dec. 15 & Thurs., Dec. 17: Last days of Powerful School After School Enrichment Programs – Fall Quarter.

Thurs., Dec. 17: Latino Family Meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m. in Multi-Purpose Room

Fri., Dec. 18: Free Dress Day, 2:25 p.m. Early Dismissal

Winter Break: Dec. 21 – Jan 1: NO SCHOOL. Back to school on Jan. 4, 2010

Mon., Jan. 18: Martin Luther King Dr. Day, NO SCHOOL

Tues., Jan 19: PTA Family Meeting I Multi-Purpose Room.

Mon., Jan. 25: Newsletter deadline

Thurs., Jan 28: Free Dress Day

Fri., Jan. 29: Day Between Semesters, NO SCHOOL
BECOMING NAOMI LEÓN
BY PAM MUÑOZ RYAN

No January Newsletter

Due to the 2 weeks off for Winter Break in December, there will be no January newsletter. The deadline for the February 2010 newsletter will be Monday, January 25th. Submissions can be e-mailed to **Curtis Bonney**, BHIS Newsletter Editor at: bhinternationalnewsletter@gmail.com

Next PTA Family Meeting

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, January 19th**, for our next PTA Parent Involvement Meeting, to be held 6:30-8:30pm with childcare provided. Please bring a pot luck dish to share.