

## The Beijing Connection of 2008

By Crystal Ge



It was a great pleasure for me to be a part of the 2008 Beijing Connection. Working as a helper gave me a different perspective of understanding the Beijing Connection because I got to see what was going on behind the fabulous Beijing Connection. I saw how excited the Grade one students were when they were climbing the Great Wall, sitting on the live elephant, screaming while the pirate ship was swinging, clapping their hands when they were watching the amazing Kungfu show, etc. I realized that was how

I acted when I attended the 2005 Beijing Connection because I saw myself in them.

This year we encountered the heaviest snow ever on our trip to Xi'an. Just a couple days before we were heading to Beijing, the weather began snowing. It made the trip to Xi'an harder because we were going to take the bus. The snow got heavier and heavier on our way to Xi'an. Most of us were excited to see such heavy snow, especially for the students who are from the south of China. While we were excited about the snow-covered view, we were worried, too. We would miss the train if we could not get to the Xi'an train station on time. Not only the students, but also our teachers were upset. However, for the students the only thing they could do was wait and expect a miracle would appear. For the teachers, they were trying to find ways to solve the obstacles. I remembered how our bus No. 2 leader Angie encouraged us. I remembered everyone cheered up when she told us even though we missed the 6:30 train, we would take the 9:30 train to Beijing. It was hard to believe the 6-hour long bus ride to Xi'an took 14 hours this time. Anyway, we made it. It was a part of the memorable 2008 Beijing Connection, which was different from the previous ones.



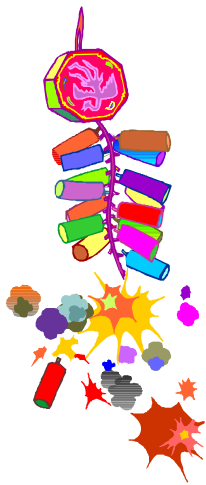
There is no doubt that the annual Beijing Connection not only offers a great opportunity to every first year student to visit the capital city of China with their teachers, and other unknown Americans who became friends later, but also get to learn more knowledge through the Language Project activities. I think the Beijing Connection is like a web, which links the people from different places and backgrounds together. It opened up new horizons for the students and let them set their life goals.



I enjoyed my second Beijing Connection a lot, I hope the Grade one students enjoyed it, too.

## Spring Festival Experience

This spring festival is a little bit different from the others we've had before because of the snow storm. Actually, it did not really affect us, but our hearts have been knotted with it. As we felt sorry for the disasters, we knew how lucky we were. Did you treasure your time with your family? Did you do something fun? Enjoy their stories below and see if you experienced the same.



The most significant thing for me during the Spring Festival is that I could reunite with all my family members. Maybe you think this is so ordinary. Do you remember the snow storm during the Winter Holiday? There were thousands of people who work in the south of China who couldn't go back home to celebrate the Spring Festival with their family members. I don't know how you will think about that. I have a kind of strong feeling about homesickness when it's time for Spring Festival which is the most important festival for Chinese people. Nearly all of us want to get together with family members. However, I only could go home two days before it and I also needed to leave home very early, so I felt homesick whenever I heard the sound of firecrackers. Compared with those people who couldn't go home, I was so lucky. I was grateful for this chance.

—Tina Tang

So many classmates asked me the same question that was so funny. "Lori, why is your hair growing so fast?" I answered, "Because my mother's cooking skills are so good. My mother cooked dishes that had so much nutrition that was good for my hair. Do you want to go to my home to taste?" Ha-Ha (laugh). In fact, my hair was burned by fireworks on the New Years Day. When I saw the fireworks popped in the sky, I jumped, laughed loudly, and yelled happily, I didn't pay attention to my hair. I think this thing was not a good thing to happen. But I still like to play with fireworks. I want to warn everybody— if you play with fireworks on the festival day, security is more important than play.

—Lori Wang



The most unforgettable thing during the spring festival was to help my mother to clean the windows because it is China's custom to make everything new and clean. At first, I thought it was too easy and the only tools we needed were a basin of water and a rag, but after I tried, I realized my thought was completely wrong. It was exceedingly cold, especially when I cleaned the outside of the window. Suddenly, my eyes were full of tears because I felt sorry for my mother. I have never thought about how my mother does this year after year and she never complains. Even though this is a small thing

that we always neglect in our life, it shows how great a mother's love is and to all the mothers in the world—thanks for caring and giving us a perfect life.

—Emily Song

## About the Hays

By Angel Zhang



Mr. Doug and Ms. Linda are the new teachers who joined us this quarter. They are teaching Science to both Grades. Science is a new course this year. Even though they will stay here only for one quarter, we are eager to know them and are appreciative and thankful for their input and fabulous abilities.



They come from the Tacoma Washington city in the northwest corner of the United States. Both of them had wonderful work experiences. Ms. Linda retired from teaching a year ago and Mr. Doug retired this year from managing a group of statisticians and mathematicians for a forest product company. Some of the hobbies they have in common include working Sudoku puzzles and crossword puzzles, traveling, and playing cards with friends. Ms. Linda likes to read and discuss books, sew, paint and draw and drink coffee with friends. Mr. Doug enjoys fixing things around their home, making things with wood, working

on their computer (especially with Excel), and eating breakfast with friends in his spare time.

They heard about OTC through a friend and they have also known Katie Schiller's parents for many years. (Katie was at OTC last year) Last June, Mr. Doug and Ms. Linda met with Ms. Heather and Mr. Dennis to discuss the possibility of teaching here. Then, they visited OTC last August during their tour of 11 provinces in China. At last, they decided to come because they have always wanted to do something like this when they retired. Over the past five years, they have looked at other places to work after they retired. A year ago, they had not even thought about coming to China. However, over the past year, they have found that the idea of coming to OTC became more and more interesting and exciting and now they are here.

They like the restaurants in PL and enjoy seeing all of the people at the markets. They have enjoyed getting to know the students, interns and staff and happy to see students progress in their ability to think carefully about scientific things. They said all of this experience will be worthy for their life. They expect that the students will continue to grow to be quality people who are able to think clearly, work ethically, and enjoy life fully.

## The Easter Egg Hunt

By Angel Zhang

On March 21, 2008, OTC had a celebration of Easter, which is an American holiday. We had more participants, more eggs, and more spacious area this year than any previous year.



A couple days before the celebration, the teachers and interns bought and boiled 400 white real eggs, and put candies into plastic eggs. The students took turns coming over to the Oasis to decorate the eggs during their study hall time. For most of the students, the most interesting portion was the egg hunting itself. This year, I got a chance to hide the eggs and we tried our best to find some invisible places to put the eggs in, but the students were really good hunters. They did not miss any corner of Happy Park which is a roomy place that we asked to use for our hunt this year. After the

## My Precious Possession

— By Regina Peng



My most precious possession is the wealth I gained from a pile of old magazines and children's books, which I borrowed from one of my neighbors during the unforgettable summer when I was eleven years old. Those old and tan books gave off a fascinating ink smell and drew me into the world of imagination, which I entered eagerly. I had not read any books except for school books before. The entire world around me was the huge cruel mountains that embraced our village firmly and those endless zigzag roads around them. This made the sky over our head always look like a lid of an immense "wok". All of the people around me were busy in working repetitively in the fields day in and day out. The usual way that I spent my holidays and spare time after school was to dig potatoes, collect firewood, cut wild-plants for pigs, etc. I did not know what a fun life was except for the interesting stories my grandma told us and some snacks my parents bought for us occasionally. In that summer when I was eleven-year old, something was transformed stealthily. One of my neighbors lent me a pile of old books. I read them everywhere when I had free time, even under the shadows of trees in the fields. Those interesting stories and characters always brought my soul into a fascinating world that I had never known before. I absorbed all new things and ideas from those books. I became a part of the wonderful and amazing world in the books. I must go outside to touch the wonderful world! While the happy singing of the insects and birds were breaking the quietness of the village in that summer, a great dream began to sprout in my naive heart secretly with the nourishment of the borrowed pile of old and tan books.

## Angel's Angle



A few days ago, I watched a TV program of a performance for the 2008 Olympic games on CCTV-3. One interesting portion of the performance was when the host introduced a special guest who was an American man with the Chinese surname Wang. He has a unique job which is traveling around Beijing to find and correct all the wrong English translated signs, menus, posts etc. I think all of us are familiar with these kinds of wrong translations and usually we call them "Chinglish." From my point of view, his work is extremely important and needed since more and more foreigners will visit

China because the Olympic and the Paralympic Games are going to be held in Beijing. First impressions are the foundation for our reputation with foreigners, so to have the right English translations in the public not only can show the sincere welcome that the whole nation will give to the people from around the world, but also will provide convenient and useful help to the visitors and make them regard China as their home.

We are Chinese and we are proud of China getting the right to hold the games. Even though we will not be the torch passer, the athletes, or the volunteers, we still can do something for the Olympics. For instance, study English hard so one day we can help correct more wrong translations to contribute to our motherland and thank our teachers.

