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# beijingkids

December 2018



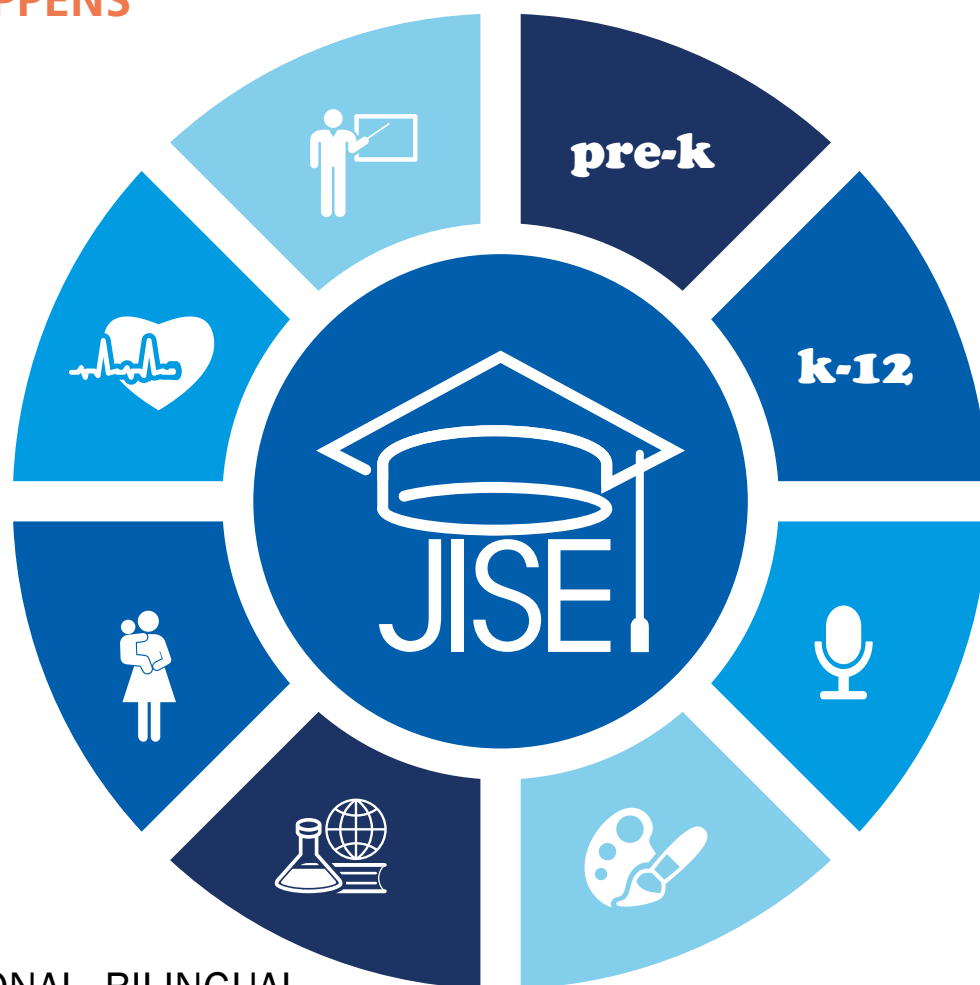
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CHARITY

THE GIFTS THAT ARE ALWAYS IN SEASON



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《中国妇女》英文月刊

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### AJ Warner

Proud parent of two boys, AJ Warner has been helping Chinese families for the past 13 years in Beijing. He guides Chinese applicants through the complicated process of getting accepted to US boarding schools and top universities. He is also the former Beijing Chapter President of the Entrepreneurs Organization (EO). WeChat: ajwarner, Email: ajwarner@touchdown.education



### Mike Signorelli

Mike Signorelli arrived in Beijing in 1994 as a student and has called China home ever since. He has held several senior management roles over the past 20+ years, including his last corporate job with NBA China. Mike is the founder of Signature Wine, China's first independent subscription wine club. Contact him at mike@sigwine.com.



### Marianne Daquet

In Beijing for 12 years, Marianne Daquet has always been passionate about art and education. She founded Atelier Art School 6 years ago with the mission to pass on her strong belief that creativity can change the world. She and her French husband have two daughters. You can reach her at Marianne@atelier.cn.com.



### Dominika Mejia

Dominika is career diplomat with a foothold in three continents. She shares a taste for food with a passion for books and travel. She is the author of the bilingual culinary blog D-constructed. While she is full of hope to master Chinese while writing her PhD, she's also the mother of a two-year-old daughter.



### Caroline Nath

Caroline Nath moved to Beijing as a teenager after having grown up in the US, Canada, France, and India. She is a filmmaker, radio host, Parent Effectiveness Training teacher, founder of Bonne Nani Jams, and an organic food promoter. She has two multi-ethnic and multi-lingual children. Contact her at kulfidoll@gmail.com.



### Elisabeth Koch

China's milliner, Elisabeth Koch, arrived in 2007 and hit the ground running with her hats. This TCK has three children who were born in Beijing. While her creations adorn famous heads on the covers of international glossies, Koch gives hat-making workshops in her studio and is kept busy by the kids. Find out more information at www.ElisabethKoch.net



### Lise Floris

Lise Poulsen Floris is an EU official turned blogger. Since leaving her native Denmark in 1998, she has lived in Italy and Belgium before moving to China with her family. She writes about life in Beijing on her blog ninemillionbicycles.com, aiming to tell "the big story through the small story." Her work has been published in the *South China Morning Post*, *Global Times*, and *Point of View International*.



### Juliet London

After seven years in Beijing, market researcher, branding consultant and writer, mother to two teenagers, Juliet 'Lady' London continues to be fascinated by this ever changing city. British by birth, she has also lived in Australia and Hong Kong. Her work primarily focuses on education research, leaving less time than she would like to take exercise, walk her dog, and snap up bargains at local markets.





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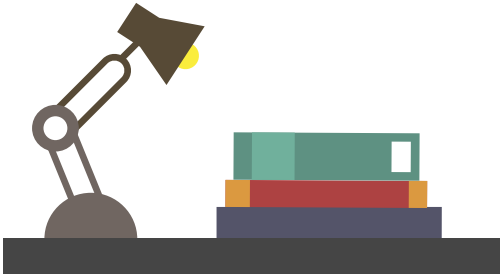
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### ON THE COVER:

YCIS Beijing students Elise Friia (Year 3) and Molly Woods (Year 4) show us how the holiday season is more than just about gifting and gorging yourself on delicious food. This time of year is equally about spreading goodwill and making this world a better place for everyone. Photos were taken by Fang Yifei.





# Time Is the Ultimate Gift

In the spirit of the holidays, the *beijingkids* editorial team decided to explore the charitable efforts that are being made to help promote giving and community in and around the capital. On our journey, we met many kind and thoughtful people who share the important sentiment that it is more rewarding to give than to receive. This is a difficult concept for many, in a world that can seem very often “me first”.

Time is one of the most important gifts you can be giving this holiday season. No, we aren’t talking about going out there and buying a wall clock and gifting it to all of your acquaintances in Beijing. That would actually be a big no-no, and not bring the cheery effect that you are likely shooting for. The gifting of a clock symbolizes that you crave the untimely demise of your chosen recipient. The gift of actual time, however, whether it be your attention or your physical and emotional presence, is something that will be remembered and can be given easily to family members or people in your community if you just put forth the effort.

How many times have you heard that cliché phrase “time is money”? How often do you scroll through inspirational messages on social media stating how time is the one thing that money can’t buy back, so you need to make full use of it? While these statements are definitely saying the obvious, time is too often wasted on menial things that don’t really matter in the long run.

While we support you running off to the nearest orphanage on a regular basis to help out and donate much-needed supplies, the gift of time is also something that can begin at home. As many parents already know, undivided attention is one of the essential things you will need to be providing if you want to maintain healthy relationships with everyone in your family. We all know how easy it is, especially after a busy day in the office, to just plop down in front of a TV and shut your brain off for a few hours while binge-watching your favorite shows. Frequently, we also let work get in the way of precious moments in the evening or weekends meant for family, as we are all only a WeChat message away from the office at any given moment. Do yourself a favor and make a concentrated effort to find a balance in the upcoming new year.

This issue of *beijingkids* is focused on charity and goodwill in the capital, and the people who decided to sacrifice their precious time to show that they care and to help improve an area of life for people that are being neglected or falling through society’s cracks. This holiday season, plan your time wisely and make being present a priority over those big presents that will eventually pile up and slowly fade into disuse. Use the weeks ahead to get closer with your friends, family, and community, and finally, make memories instead of shooting off to the nearest mall to shop for them.



*Kipp Whittaker*

Kipp Whittaker  
Chief Content Manager



# What's New



## Iconic Toy Store to Open in Beijing

Toy-lovers of all ages are rejoicing at the news that FAO Schwarz is opening a branch in China World Mall. The iconic New York store is best known from the movie *Big*, in which Tom Hanks famously dances on its floor piano, but the Fifth Avenue location closed down suddenly in 2015. Now it's reopening, not only in the Big Apple, but also in Beijing and Shanghai. The store is expected to be in business by March 2019, so start practicing your "Chopsticks"!

## Disaster for Dolce and Gabbana in China Racism Row

Chopsticks were the cause of a disastrous PR snafu for fashion company Dolce and Gabbana. An ill-judged advertisement depicting a Chinese model struggling to eat pizza with chopsticks caused some offense, but it was comments allegedly made by founder Stefano Gabbana on his Instagram account when asked about the advertisement that triggered a major backlash. A fashion event in Shanghai was canceled, and D&G products have been removed from stores across China. While they engage in a damage limitation exercise, a Beijing hotel manager has also been forced to apologize, after a post complaining that Chinese men missed the urinal was taken amiss. It's worth remembering that anything posted on the web is public, and whatever frustrations we might occasionally feel about life in the capital, any venting is probably best done in private.



## Welcome Nicole, and Happy Holidays to Our Readers!

We're very pleased to welcome Nicole Bonnah to the *beijingkids* team, as our new Associate Content Planner. You may know her as the entrepreneur behind delicious Halo Hummus, and you can read about her perspective on life as a busy Beijing mom on our website, [www.beijing-kids.com](http://www.beijing-kids.com). From Nicole and from all of us, whatever festival you may be celebrating this midwinter, we wish you a joyful and peaceful holiday season.



PHOTOS: UNI YOU, KIPP WHITTAKER, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, FLICKR



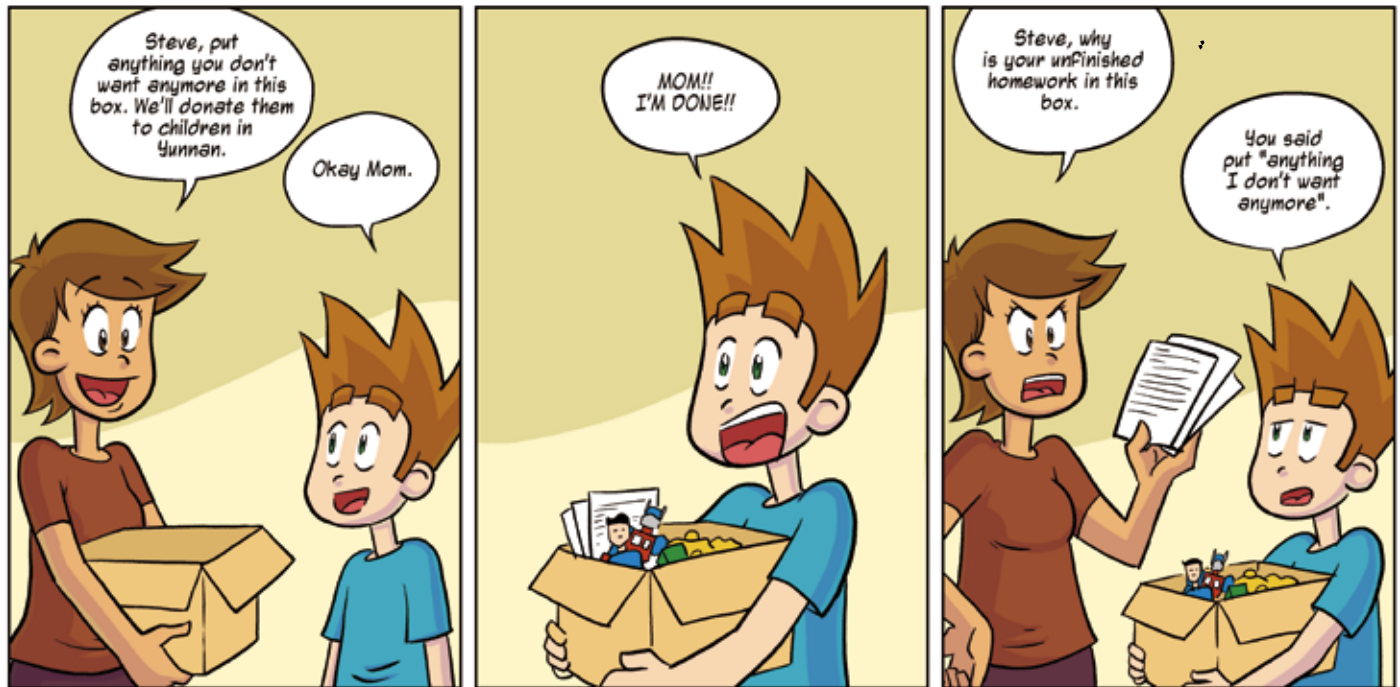
## Beijing Authorities Close City Farms and Gardens

Following the Brickening which closed so many cafes and bars in the hutong area, the latest government clampdown has been on city farms and gardens. In October, Green Cow City Cafe was ordered to get rid of all its livestock. This was followed by the news that Thomas Holly, known as the Herb Whisperer, has lost his botanical garden due to compulsory purchase by the government. In the south of the city, the owner of The Roots western restaurant, Antoine Mansuy, was devastated to lose 80 percent of the herb garden he had lovingly grown on waste ground to supply fresh herbs for his kitchen. The reason given was that the owners of the mall needed to run pipes through the land. However, the closures come in the wake of a clampdown on polluting urban pig farms, and at a time when African swine fever has been discovered in Beijing pigs. If the disease spreads it could be devastating for China, which produces half of the world's pork. However as so often, we might applaud the good intentions, while wondering if a more nuanced approach could have produced better results.



# Harmony and Steve

By Jin Chan Yum Wai



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- Comment from the joint IBO, NEASC, CIS and NCCT accreditation teams, Sept 2018

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# DECEMBER EVENTS



Promote your family-friendly event on the *beijingkids* website!

Submit your activity details before **December 12** to be considered for our January listings.

## A BAD MOMS CHRISTMAS SCREENING AT RAMO

Dec 7

Beijing Mothers Guild is hosting a night of fun and bonding while watching *A Bad Moms Christmas*. This film screening takes place at Ramo in Lido and is exclusive for moms! Note: Tickets are non-refundable, but can be passed to another mom if the buyer can't make it to the movie night. Adults. RMB 70. 7pm. Ramo. (WeChat ID: paulus155)



## THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE OCEANWIDE CAMPUS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Dec 8

See children rock a Christmas performance at The Children's House Oceanwide Campus. Feel the Yuletide vibes with arts and crafts for kids, and holiday shopping for parents and adults. The Children's House has also invited a very special guest visiting all the way from the North Pole! All ages. Free admission. 9am-noon. The Children's House Oceanwide Campus. (info-oceanwide@montessoribeijing.com)

## POLISH CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Dec 8

Meet Santa Claus and enjoy delicious food and hot drinks, mulled wine, hot chocolate, sweets, and baked goodies, while dancing to the tune of holiday music. Shop from various vendors offering Christmas gifts like ceramics, jewelry, decors, and many others. There will be craft activities for the young ones too. All ages. Free. Noon-6pm. Roundabout, Cathay View Plaza, No.2 Xiangjiang Beilu, Chaoyang District. (Wendy Lu: 138 1111 7756, wendylu2010@yahoo.com)



## THE HUTONG WINTER FAYRE

Dec 8

The Hutong continues its tradition of hosting a lively holiday bazaar, and this year, they decided to make the cold days warmer with piping hot cups of their own mulled wine. And with Christmas just around the corner, pick that rare find for your friends and loved ones. All ages. Free admission. 11am-4pm. The Hutong.

## CAROLS FOR A CAUSE: THE MCF AND RIVIERA CHRISTMAS FAYRE 2018

Dec 9

Head to Beijing Riviera Country Club and sing along at Carols for a Cause 2018, a charity fair and holiday market hosted by Beijing Riviera Country Club and the Migrant Children's Foundation (MCF). The market takes place from 11am to 4pm on December 9, with activities including carol singing for both kids and adults. All ages. Free admission. 11am-4pm. Beijing Riviera Country Club.

## INKBEAT ARTS CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

Dec 9, 23

InkBeat Arts' Creative Workshops are for students who want to develop creative skills through self-expression. The workshops are delivered in English and Chinese for students ages 8-18 and are led by experts in creative writing, drama, visual art, art therapy, design, architecture, and dance. In these workshops, students will find their own voice, gain self-understanding, and feel empowered through self-expression. Ages 8-18. 2-3.30pm. Crossboundaries. (RSVP: 185 1979 1662, simon@beijingyouthlit.com)





## THE BOOKWORM CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND MARKET

Dec 9

The Bookworm hosts a Christmas concert and market with Jing Sing on December 9, featuring 35 vendors offering handicrafts, home decor, Christmas gifts, arts, and many more surprises. The Bookworm offers a Happy Hour discount all day long too. The free concert starts at 8pm. All ages. Free admission. 4.30-9.30 The Bookworm. (JC Zhang: 158 1071 3743, mr\_j.c.zhang@hotmail.com)

## 2018 CHRISTMAS FACTORY AT ATELIER

Dec 9

Atelier Art School transforms into a Christmas Factory where visitors can celebrate the holidays with artsy-craftsy activities, mulled wine, and French crêpes, and also discover the works of Atelier students. All ages. Free admission. 3-6pm. Atelier Art School Sanlitun. (WeChat ID: atelier\_apas, 6416 1614, contact@atelier.cn.com)



## DULWICH COLLEGE BEIJING CHRISTMAS BAZAAR AND CONCERTS

Dec 10-11

Soak in the festive flavors with seasonal roasts and drinks at the Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) Christmas Bazaar, happening on December 10-11. Spend the afternoon browsing through crafts and wares from local vendors and student entrepreneurs, whose products will give you the most unique holiday gift ideas to impress your friends and family. After that, sing along to the tune of holiday classics at the "Carols by Candlelight" concert, presented by talented junior and senior DCB student bands and choirs. All ages. Free admission to the bazaar, RMB 50 for the concert. Bazaar: 3.30-7pm; concert: 7-9 pm. Dulwich College Beijing. (rsvp@dulwich-beijing.cn)



## YCIS BEIJING CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Dec 11

Yew Chung International School of Beijing (YCIS Beijing) invites everyone to their annual festive community event, the YCIS Beijing Christmas Bazaar on December 11. The bazaar is run by the YCIS Beijing student body, enabling them to raise money for their chosen charities. Parents will be organizing additional gift stalls, and some of Beijing's best vendors will provide delicious food and drink. All ages. Free admission (scan QR code to register). 10am-1pm. Yew Chung International School of Beijing. (8585 1825, info@bj.ycef.com)

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## HELLO FUTURE KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSE

**Dec 12 and 18**

Hello Future Kindergarten welcomes families of 0-6-year-olds who are interested in touring the campus and learning more about their philosophy and the programs available for children as young as 5 months old. At the monthly Open House, you can meet the Principal, observe classes in action and have your questions answered. Adults. Free but RSVP required. The open house dates are Dec 12 (Wed) and 18 (Tue) at 9.30-11.30am. Hello Future Kindergarten. (Rebecca Archer: 130 7116 2353, marketing@hellofuture.com.cn)

## HELLO FUTURE CONVERSATIONS: CREATE A MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY SEASON

**Dec 13**

Hello Future Kindergarten's Conversation series topic this month focuses on what is important this holiday season: gratitude and connection, thinking about others, consumption, and how to create meaningful traditions that your kids will remember. Join Principal Christine Jensen and Rebecca Archer for an informal talk, followed by question and idea sharing time. Adults. Free but RSVP required. 9.30-11am. Hello Future Kindergarten. (Rebecca Archer: 130 7116 2353, marketing@hellofuture.com.cn)



## HEALTHY HOLIDAYS WITH PAULINE'S CUISINE

**Dec 13**

The holidays are full of delicious but unhealthy food. Fight back this year with some seasonal favorites that taste as good as they make you feel good. Chef Pauline will teach you how to make Christmas chicken salad, lemon brussel sprouts, roasted sweet potatoes, and spicy salmon. Adults. RMB 420. 10am-1pm. V-Etiquette. (WeChat ID: paulus155)

## TIS THE SEASON: MOKA BROS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

**Dec 15-16**

Moka Bros celebrates the most wonderful time of year with a Yuletide fête for the whole family. Merry activities for all ages are available: sip hot chocolate while decorating a gingerbread man, or help Moka Bros staff adorn their Christmas tree. All ages. RMB 40. Noon-3pm. Moka Bros Shuangjing event on Dec 15. Moka Bros Solana event on Dec 16. (norris@mostobj.com)



## NOTES FOR CHARITY

Jan 19

Culturally and musically diverse artists, bands, and performers in Beijing are teaming up for Notes For Charity, a fundraiser concert for the benefit of disabled orphans in the city. The headline performance will be also the debut of The Niu Boyz, a newly developed boy band composed of well-known singers in Beijing. All bands will perform fun and upbeat cover songs suitable for dancing. All ages. RMB 100 (at the door), RMB 80 (early bird price). 9pm. Yue Space.



## LITTLE CHEFS AT DOMAIN: GINGER-BREAD HOUSE MAKING CLASS

every Sat until Dec 22

Join Domain's weekend kids' cooking classes and enjoy quality time with your family. Every class includes a glass of free juice for the kids. In this series, kids will enjoy constructing and decorating gingerbread houses, a great decoration to bring home for the Christmas season. All ages. RMB 328 (RSVP needed). 2pm. Domain. (8414 9830)



### INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BEIJING

#### LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, January 16. Scan QR code to register.



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## CISCA ANNUAL GALA PERFORMANCE OF THE NUTCRACKER

**Dec 15-16**

Join the Conservatory of International Style and Cultural Arts (CISCA) in their gala performance of The Nutcracker. Student performers showcase their technical skills to give the audience an unforgettable experience. The gala aims to raise funds for the Tian Art Foundation, which helps highly talented, but underprivileged children in their development within the performing arts. All ages. RMB 280-1,000. 2-5pm. Canadian International School of Beijing. (188 8883 2623, becky@cisca.com.cn)

## TREASURE TROVE: LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS MARKET

**Dec 22-23**

Get your last minute gifts at the Treasure Trove Christmas Market, held in partnership by Cultural Keys and Yoollee Plaza. This Christmas market stays open late for everyone to get some holiday shopping done. All ages. Free admission. 10.30am-9.30pm. Yoollee Plaza, north of Worker's Stadium.

## CHRISTMAS CAMP: DISCOVER CHINESE ARTS AT ART+798

**Dec 24-28**

Looking for a different way for your kids to celebrate Christmas? Art+798 International Education Center holds a five-day Christmas camp, wherein kids get a chance to immerse themselves in various Chinese arts like painting, drama, shadow play, as well as ancient architecture. The camp also includes two field trips to the 798 and 751 Art and Design Districts and the Forbidden City. All ages. RMB 5,800 (including materials and lunch). ART+798 International Education Center.

## ATELIER WINTER ART CAMPS

**various dates in Dec**

The Atelier team has created a special series of holiday-themed workshops mixing art, architecture, painting, culture, and history. Discover Venice and its Carnival, explore a revolutionary artistic movement or step into the world of Native Americans. Workshop 1: The Blue Rider (Dec 17-21) Discover Expressionism, Cubism and abstract art by different artists and artworks related to The Blue Rider including Kandinsky and Franz Marc. Workshop 2: A Journey to the World of Native Americans (Dec 24, Dec 26-29) Learn how to draw animals, make Native American totems and animal symbols, and create teepee models. Workshop 3: Venice and Its Carnival (Dec 31, Jan 2-5) Create a mask inspired by the Venetian masks and learn to sketch a landscape (veduta) with perspective. For ages 5-7: 10am-noon, RMB 2,000. For ages 8+: 1-3.30pm, RMB 2,500. Atelier Sanlitun and Shunyi. (www.atelier.cn.com)

## PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOP: BECOME POSITIVE DISCIPLINE-CERTIFIED

**Jan 26-27**

Jill Stanhope, a teacher specializing in early childhood social and emotional learning, holds a workshop for educators where they can learn how to teach parents the concept of positive discipline. This is an English-language training, and its tuition fee covers all materials and lunch. Adults. RMB 3,500. 8.30am-4.30pm. Daystar Academy. (WeChat ID: Marjo\_70, 152 1032 7189)





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Note that we will only publish  
photos of babies born  
in the last 12 months



**Ella Ohanna Suter**

British. Born on March 27  
to Sarah Sayers and Richard Suter  
at OASIS International Hospital.



**Lillian Maxine Harwick**

American. Born on October 30  
to Tiffany and Kevin Harwick  
at Amcare Women and Children's Hospital Lido.



**Ettalane Wu**

American. Born on October 18  
to Caitlin Cecil and Wu Weiyl  
at Beijing United Family Hospital.



**Isla Kareena Bajwa**

Australian. Born on June 1  
to Kiranpreet Kaur Bajwa and Gavin Bajwa  
at Glengarry Private Hospital.



**Mitsuki Kitamura**

Japanese. Born on August 29  
to Midori and Kazuhisa Kitamura  
at Ekisaikai Hospital.

# MISTLETOE & HOLLYWOOD

A Christmas Indulge  
steeped in the Golden Age

*By Nicole Bonnah*







**N**othing screams nostalgia like Christmas, which is why this issue's Indulge column pays homage to the classic era of 50's Hollywood. Understated glamour, glitz, and a Ho, Ho Ho lot of festive fun!

Mother of two Rose Scott has been living in Beijing for three and a half years, with her husband and super cool kids, four-year-old son Charlie and one-year-old daughter Hazel. When Scott is not on momtrepreneur ventures with either her Yoga classes at Taozi Tree Yoga or children's classes at Blossom Montessori and Let's Play, you will find her and the family biking around the city together.

Scott is a mom who likes to dress up for a night out on the tiles with husband Charlie or friends, but rarely has the time to don dresses and make-up with her growing family and work schedule. She told us about the first time in a long while she had the chance to put on glitter eyeshadow for her wedding anniversary. But Scott loves glitz and glam, and this was the perfect opportunity to remind her of why!

It's Christmas season and with this festive period comes not only mulled wine, cocktails served in vintage glasses, and mince pies, but also parties galore. It's a time to indulge in good food and good company, and ultimately a time to put on the gladrag and sport your favorite lipstick. There is no better era than the golden era of Hollywood to get one into the nostalgic celebratory mood, and indulge in all things glamorous.

Christmas is all about going back: back to visit and spend time with family and loved ones, revisiting your favorite recollections during cold winter nights in, and the partaking of dishes that open the floodgates of childhood memories. So we went back, way back, and left no glamor stone unturned.

Scott's transformation into 50's Hollywood



goddess began with a golden, platinum blonde color treatment on the hair. The inspiration for her look of course began and ended with Marilyn Monroe; however, Scott brought her own unique edge to her styling and look. Her wonderful openness and kindness reflected in her smile and eyes, as stylist and color technician Ken from Catherine de France Salon worked his magic on her tresses. Ken is a seasoned professional at the salon, and knows his way around styling and color. Scott's blonde was softened with a toner, blow-dried, and wrapped around medium sized curlers. The look was finished with backcombing and careful fixing with holding spray.

Monroe was known for her natural demure look, made to pop with her signature red lips, and eyes that laughed beneath bold lashes and the flick of black eyeliner. The salon's in-house makeup artist was simply shown the look we were going for as inspiration and was able to help Scott embody the Monroe aesthetic.

The wow factor – the red cocktail gown kindly loaned to us by LOVA Weddings – added the glitz we were looking for, and handmade jewelry by Antonia Sampson the class. Award-winning jewelry designer Sampson chooses the best pearls for her discerning customers. Each pearl is hand selected and carefully picked out from some of the best suppliers in Asia. Scott beamed in pearls on the ears, wrist, and neck, and was Christmas cocktail party ready! Then we were off to a swanky,



nearby cocktail bar named Herbal to take some glamour shots.

Hard-working moms need respite from their daily obligations and responsibilities; a chance to transform from everyday mom to celebratory woman. This look was styled not only by way of paying homage to a never-forgotten era, but to pay homage to moms all over the world who have hidden goddess vibes simmering under the surface.

## GET THIS LOOK

### HAIR AND MAKEUP:

#### Catherine de France Salon

East Avenue Building G/F 10 Xin Dong Lu, Chaoyang District. [www.catherinefrance.com](http://www.catherinefrance.com). (8442 5120)

### JEWELRY:

#### Antonia Sampson

Wechat: AntoSamp

### DRESS:

#### LOVA Weddings

[www.lovaweddings.com](http://www.lovaweddings.com)

### VENUE:

#### Herbal

Shoukaibojun South District Building, 41-021, 12 Xindong Lu, Chaoyang District



# THE GREEN PAGES

Sustainable Lifestyle News in the Capital

By Rebecca Archer



Jade Gray (front) and Kerry Lim (back)

## Eco-Eats for the Whole Family – Gung Ho! Pizza

It's the third time in six years that Gung Ho! Pizza has been crowned Beijing's Pizza Cup Champion, after taking out the 2018 trophy in November. The family-friendly restaurant is not only unique in terms of its pizza offerings, but also for its dedication to sustainable and fair trade practices as well as. We asked Gung Ho! Pizza what it really means to have 'good' pizza.

**BJK: You've won the cup three years out of six. Why do you think you are so popular among the Beijing crowd?**

**Gung Ho!:** At Gung Ho! we try to ensure the basics are solid – food standards and food safety – but the rest we like to keep fresh and moving with the times. Whether it's what toppings go on our pizzas, our marketing campaigns or the more environmental stuff, we understand that if we don't keep innovating, we can quickly become irrelevant. And whilst good food is the basis to attracting a crowd, there's a growing wave of consumers that buy in to what a company stands for too. We were lucky to have the incredible support of the vegan community since we launched our house-made vegan cheese in March, as well as the social enterprise crew that gave us their votes because we're a B Corp-certified company. For us, it opened up an interesting debate:

how do you judge the quality of a product? On taste alone? Or should the way a product is made, the welfare of those who make it, the impact on the environment and the influence on the community also be taken into account?

### What makes your menu special?

Typically, pizza has a bad rep'. Lots of dough, lots of cheese with subpar toppings! But at Gung Ho! we've always felt that it doesn't have to be that way. From the start we were all about sourcing better ingredients such as quality whole-wheat flour for the dough and premium ingredients for the toppings. Our antibiotic free, grass-fed New Zealand lamb pizza for instance has always been a best seller. Over the years, through personal choices but also through listening to the market, we've made our menu even more inclusive by introducing gluten-free and dairy-free options. The trick was to make these menu items seriously good and prove that even with the most of common foods – pizza! - you can eat healthier or in a more Earth-friendly way without comprising on taste. It's also been incredibly gratifying to have people thank us, saying that they can now share a table with their friends, regardless of what dietary restrictions they may have.



### You are the only B Corp certified restaurant in China – what does that mean?

B Corp is a certification that applies to any for-profit venture that meets strict environmental and social standards, from employee welfare to governance, environmental impact to influence on customers. B Corp stems from the belief that we don't have time to wait for governments to solve all of the world's issues and that business and consumers alike have a joint responsibility in creating healthier societies, communities and natural environments.

### Your Green Gift Guide

Deck the halls and jingle those bells, Christmas is here, and what's not to love about it? The tinsel, the trimmings, the sparkles, the mulled wine, time with good friends, and family and all that food! Yet it's also a season heavy on consumption with the latest toys and gadgets flying off the shelf. Christmas doesn't have to be a burden on the planet, and with a little imagination and effort, we can celebrate the season while caring for the earth and the people in it.

- **Buy less.** Make an agreement with your spouse and kids to limit the gifts to one or two items. If you can't limit it that much, consider the 4 Gift Christmas Challenge: "Something you want, something you need, something to wear, something to read."

- **Buy local, handcrafted products** from small, local businesses, individuals and charities. Items sourced and made here cut down the carbon emissions resulting from transportation costs and well as provide an income to the vendor. Get yourself along to any of the Christmas bazaars, Farm2Neighbours, Rumble in the Jungle, or other fairs such as Yosemite or Riviera Chic, where you can find expats and locals who are making their own products. Think gorgeous homewares and linens, natural beauty products, handcrafted jewellery, artisan foods, and more.

- **Services and experiences.** Most people really have the material possessions they need, so services and experiences which they may not spend the money on themselves can be a fabulous gift. Massages, language or local handicraft lessons, cultural tours, ice-skating, concerts, shows – Beijing has so much to offer, check out the *beijingkids* blog for ideas.



### Can you tell us about your other initiatives in the Beijing 'Green Scene'?

For the last 5 years, we've partnered up with Beijing Hikers to organize what are now known as the "Great Wall Clean-up Hikes", where a large group of us pick up trash left on the trails by unconscientious hikers. We also have an annual Earth Day festival that we started in 2016 with our all-time hero Patagonia, as well as more "behind the scenes" initiatives such as working with large third party delivery companies (who come to us by the way) to share ideas and work on packaging innovation solutions (still in the works!).

### What are Gung Ho!'s hopes for humanity and our relationship with the planet?

We hope that one day being a B Corp business or a responsible citizen isn't something out of the ordinary, or even "praised" for that matter, but the absolute, most fundamental norm. We hope we all remember that everything we have the privilege of consuming or coming into contact with comes directly from nature and that we should treat it with utmost respect and gratitude.

### Oh Christmas Tree!

Although plastic Christmas trees can be used from year to year, they are made from petroleum products and use up resources in manufacturing and shipping. After repeated use, they stop looking so beautiful, and end up in the landfill where the plastic content lasts forever.

Live trees, on the other hand, are a renewable resource grown on tree farms especially for Christmas and replanted regularly. They contribute to air quality when growing, and can be recycled into mulch. They are also usually grown and sold locally, cutting down on transportation pollution. Support your local tree farmers and choose a live tree this Christmas.



### Lower Your Winter Energy Consumption

It's easy to keep living green over the winter, you can prepare your house for the winter chills and lower your energy consumption and decrease your carbon footprint.

- **Put on a sweater and warm socks inside**, and lower your thermostat or heating by a few degrees.

- If you haven't done it already to improve your indoor air quality, **seal the leaks around your doors and windows** to stop the cold air coming in.

- **Use your washing machine on cold wash**, and consider drying clothes in a warm space rather than the clothes drier.

- As it's darker and we use more lighting, **change your light bulbs to LED bulbs**. They last longer and are more energy efficient than regular bulbs.

- **Turn off your electronics at the wall when not in use.** Appliances like your TV, printer, microwave all continue to use power when in sleep mode.



# MAKING STYLE AND GIVING YOUR MANTRA

The buy-one-give-one story delivering the gift of better vision to rural Yunnan students

By Kipp Whittaker



Andrew Shirman, co-founder and Chief Giving Officer of Forbes 30 Under 30 fashion company Mantra Eyewear and related nonprofit organization Education in Sight, really loves Yunnan. “It is so culturally rich, and such a bottomless well of inspiration,” says Shirman. From the colorful traditional clothing of minority cultures in Dali, to the mind bogglingly diverse natural geography of rice terraces, snowy mountains and azure lakes, these inspirations are clearly shown in the innovative frame designs manufactured by his nonprofit.

Both Mantra and Education in Sight were founded by the American duo of Sam Waldo and Shirman. The company’s motto, or mantra if you will, is simple: for every pair of stylish sunglasses you buy, an eye exam is given and another prescription pair of glasses is donated to a child who needs them in Yunnan. This lofty goal has resulted in thousands of rural Chinese students being able to more confidently participate in class. But these stylish sunglasses didn’t precede their charitable drive towards helping these students. Here is the story of their journey from discovering a need in rural Yunnan, and how through their business acumen they were able to develop it into a successful enterprise.

PHOTO CREDITS: COURTESY OF MANTRA SUNGLASSES AND ANDREW SHIRMAN





Shirman first came to China in high school during his senior year, and it was his first trip to Asia, which contrasted greatly with his native Illinois. "I went to China and it just blew my mind. In Illinois, you point to a direction and I'll tell you everything you're gonna see for a hundred miles, but (in China) every time we turned a corner there was something new that I would want to wrap my head around."

An obsession with understanding the culture, as many of us can relate to, sent him to live abroad in 2010 for two years in Yunnan as part of the Teach for China program. Along with 29 fellow Americans, Shirman volunteered his time to teach textbook and examination focused lessons to give his rural students a leg up on *gaokao* testing and eventually university placement.

At the beginning of this teaching abroad experience, something bothered Shirman right away. "I noticed the eyesight problems my kids had within the first two weeks of class, it was just super

apparent." He estimates over 20 percent of the class could not see the board clearly. Because of this, students' grades would drop, and out of frustration or boredom, they would act out and misbehave. Dropout rates were sometimes high.

"In my second year, I really wanted to do something about this," Shirman explained, "It's not like we have to get these kids surgery, they just needed glasses." So with the help of his friend and business partner Sam Waldo, the pair raised over USD 3,000 and teamed up with a local optometrist who agreed to assess the students. 1,644 eye exams later, 331 pairs of glasses were delivered to students in 2012, at the end of Andrew's stint in Yunnan.

Even after returning to work in the US, Shirman still wanted to help those students that left such an impact on his life. So after working a fulltime day job and organizing Education in Sight at night for two years, he moved back to Beijing for good in 2014 and has been here ever since.



Education in Sight's founders, Sam Waldo (left) and Andrew Shirman (right)



Initially upon returning to China, there were some funding setbacks. A concert organizing company based in Chengdu was looking for a charitable project to endorse, so Andrew and Sam's mutual friend had made an introduction to the CFO. The Chengdu company stated they wanted to make a USD 50,000 donation and they wanted to share Education in Sight as their charity partners at all of their concerts. But as time passed and the promised money still hadn't been donated, Sam and Andrew started producing marketing material and the needed eyewear themselves hoping to soon procure the fifty grand. Suddenly and shockingly, Andrew was informed via text message from an underling at the concert organizing company that the actual funding would not be given. "I've never been angrier in all of my life," said Shirman. Prior to dropping out of the deal, they had already filmed sentimental footage in schools and used the materials, cynically, to present themselves as charitable when they actually contributed nothing. Luckily, the setback was short and they were able to raise the money needed through charitable donations from friends and family. A lesson was learned.

The idea of Mantra, based on similar philosophies of company's like Tom's Shoes, started nameless. Originally it was called "Metropolis," but later they decided it was hard to pronounce and translate for native Mandarin speakers. A new company and product line name had to be created. "We were in Shangri-La visiting schools in October, and it was cold, but we left the hotel and decided that we couldn't come back until we came up with a name for our business. We had a constraint because of the M related materials and marketing, and came up with Mantra."

With a successful business model, hard-learned lessons, and an achievable charitable goal coalesced. To date, Mantra and Education in Sight have helped thousands of children. "We are in the middle of implementation for this semester, so not counting this semester, we are at 210,000 eye exams and almost 30,000 pairs of eyeglasses. You gotta go big in China."

If you are interested in learning more about Mantra Eyewear or maybe picking up a pair for yourself or someone you know check out their website at [findyourmantra.com](http://findyourmantra.com), or follow their official WeChat account (WeChat ID: [findyourmantra](https://www.wechat.com/p/findyourmantra)).





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# THE CHRISTMAS BLUES

How to support those  
who may suffer from  
seasonal isolation

By Nicole Bonnah

Christmas has always been my favorite time of the year. The giving and receiving of gifts, reuniting with loved ones, and of course boozy dinners and parties with copious amounts of delicious food! 'Tis the season to be jolly after all, but what of the forgotten and destitute of company, left on the periphery? How can seasonal isolation affect them?

*beijingkids* spoke with Psychologist Dr. Bojun Hu of Beijing United Family Hospital (BJU) to find out more about seasonal isolation and depression, and how we can help combat these psychological issues. The "Winter Blues" Dr. Hu describes as usually occurring during the fall season and continuing into the long winter months, "Colder weather, and in Beijing smoggier weather, can make people not want to go outside to socialize and engage in activities," she said.

Seasonal depression can last longer during the festive winter period, according to Dr Hu, as "there is less social feedback and fewer occasions to experience different parts of oneself, one who is more social, more engaged and more involved in social life."

Normal sadness can be exacerbated by these conditions, and prolonged isolation can result in this form of depression becoming more of a long-term problem.

Expat life brings all kinds of ways to connect people; acquaintances become family, and many an adventure can be discovered with strangers who become fast friends. However, with the winter season approaching, some are making arrangements to travel home while those who are left behind may be suffering from isolation. While you might have friends celebrating the holidays in Beijing with whom to spend cozy nights in and roaring nights out, we should remember to reach out to the many who don't.

There are various reasons why expats here in Beijing may fall victim to isolation during seasonal holidays, especially Christmas. Seeking adventure, new experiences and the like are usually the catalysts of building and embracing life and work abroad; however for some expat life provides respite from estranged family members, challenging working environments, broken relationships, and the need to re-evaluate life.

English teacher and student, Yolanda Ajak from Canada moved to Beijing in the winter of 2015 and found that the biggest trigger to the onset of her depression was being away from home. "Not having the network that I had back home with close family friends that I trusted," she said, added to her feelings of isolation. "In Beijing you're surrounded by people but are also very much alone, especially as a new expat."

Dr. Hu says that for expats the winter months are often marked by special occasions such as Christmas celebrations at home. The flood of celebratory social media pictures and messages can heighten feelings of loneliness and being left out. "The contrast between the relative lack of celebration in China and celebrations at home can bring sad feelings," she said.

Ajak described what it was like for the first two years in Beijing. Despite trying to mask her troubles with work and social events, "I felt empty, restless, anxious, but I wasn't sure what I was quite anxious about." Her first Christmas in Beijing had exciting elements of novelty, however, Ajak still wished she could

PHOTO CREDITS: ADOBE STOCK, COURTESY OF TAOINSTITUTE.NET





be home. "I was becoming unhappier and decided it was time to face myself, by first admitting that there was in fact a problem with my emotional health."

When asked what kind of coping mechanisms she adopted to deal with feelings of anxiety and isolation, Ajak spoke of connecting with others. "I joined a meditation group and also started to meet people who were either having similar experiences or were able to point me in the right direction."

People who have no one and nothing to return to during special seasonal occasions are also unlikely to have a strong network of people to stay behind with. "Seasonal depression affects people equally. However when there is no adequate social support, whether that is in one's workplace or in one's life, then the person is more likely to feel isolated, sad, and lonely," Dr. Hu said, when asked if expats were more at risk of suffering from seasonal depression or isolation. The key, according to Dr. Hu, is to reach out.

Goodwill could just be a seasonal phrase that comes out of hiding for one month out of the year, used superficially to add nostalgic

value to our Christmas festivities, or we could do our best to add weight to its meaning by reaching out, drawing in and giving to those who need it the most. The biggest gift to someone could be a kind gesture, and there are lots of them. Give one of these a go!

- Make a date to go out with a friend or even an acquaintance
- Simply enquire about festive plans and offer to celebrate with someone in need
- Acknowledge the difference between celebrating in China, as well as the longing to be in the company of friends and family
- Eat customary foods
- Do more of what you and your friends enjoy, even if it's just a walk in the park
- Have a conversation. Simply asking "how are things in your life right now?" can feel supportive and be a remedy for ongoing problems with isolation.

We at *beijingkids* wish everyone happiness, health, and friendship during this festive period, and encourage everyone to open their homes, arms, and hearts.



Dr. Bojun Hu

# CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Fat is not the enemy

By Melissa Rodriguez

For decades low-fat diets have been recommended to help protect our hearts and curb obesity, but recent studies and new research are questioning that line of thinking.

Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the number one cause of death in the world. Every year more people die from heart attacks, strokes, and congestive heart failure than from any other causes. In China, about one in six people are afflicted with this condition. The traditional recommendation has been to incorporate dietary changes avoiding saturated fat and fat in general. These have been followed since the 1950's and since then the number of deaths due to cardiovascular disease have continued to rise. Even though we've been eating less fat, obesity is now at an all time high, and it's considered a global epidemic. In China obesity rates are on the rise. One in four Chinese children age 7 or above will be obese in 2030, according to a report issued by Peking University's School of Public Health. So how can we protect ourselves from this global killer? Read on!

It is well understood that most cardiovascular diseases can be prevented by addressing lifestyle factors. Helpful recommendations include avoiding tobacco use, eating a wholesome diet, achieving a healthy body weight, becoming physically active, and avoiding the harmful use of alcohol. Simple right?

Let us focus on the wholesome diet part. Hopefully you're asking yourself, what exactly does "wholesome" mean? In our desire to avoid saturated fats (these fats are solid at room temperature, and are more plentiful in a food like butter), we created hydrogenated oils containing harmful trans fats. The process of hydrogenation makes oils that are liquid at room temperature, solid. For years naturopaths maintained that these artificial fats were harmful, and now we have evidence that they are. Trans fats create inflammation and stiffness in the blood vessels, thus contributing to atherosclerosis, another CVD. It also decreases the amount of HDL in the blood, what we often refer to as the "good" cholesterol. And even more interesting, trans fats contribute to weight gain, specifically abdominal obesity, which is a known risk for CVD. Going back to the word wholesome, a whole foods diet is the best choice to maintain health and prevent disease, including CVD. When people switched to a low-fat diet, they replaced fats with processed foods and excessive simple carbohydrates including sugar. Fats naturally enhance the flavor of food, so once you remove them you must use sweeteners and other often artificial additives

to give a similar texture or flavor. Now we're starting to understand the harm that excess carbohydrate intake can cause, leading to obesity, fatty liver, and diabetes. The take away message here, is to eat real food; nuts, seeds, a moderate amount of whole grains, good sources of protein and to keep it plant based. Good fats should be incorporated into the diet because fats are needed for hormone production, healthy skin, hair, and nails. They give us a steady source of energy and can help maintain balanced blood sugar. Healthy fats from natural sources include avocados, nuts, olives, fatty fish, and they can even be found in grass fed beef.

When it comes to diet, moderation is the name of the game. Wholesome, natural foods are the answer. And no, fat is not the enemy.

## Got a question?

Melissa Rodriguez is a naturopathic specialist and mother of two. To find out more, check out her website at [drmelissarodriguez.com](http://drmelissarodriguez.com)







# FIT FOR PURPOSE

The co-founder of Fitness 4 Hope tells us about volunteering as a road to health and happiness

*By Andrew Killeen*

**I**n contemporary China, the relentless focus on academic success risks depriving children of healthy exercise and outdoor play. This problem is sometimes masked by the country's sporting success, but that is largely based on the early identification and intensive training of budding talent. A better guide to general levels of fitness might be the rising incidence of obesity and myopia in Chinese teenagers (given the growing evidence that a lack of natural sunlight hugely increases the risk of near-sightedness).

Now two young men with a passion for fitness and volunteering have decided to do something about the problem. We talked to Pablo De Arriba about Fitness 4 Hope, the charity he co-founded.

"Ever since secondary school I have been involved with volunteering," De Arriba told us, "and have worked with children since graduating from university."

"Happiness consists in giving and in serving others"

De Arriba was born Spain but grew up in England, and first came to Beijing four years ago to work for Disney.

"I started volunteering with schools and orphanages in the area," he said, "and consequently I was awarded the 2016 Volunteer of the Year in China by the Disney Corporation, and became the Beijing representative of the Volunteers Leadership Council. After leaving Disney last year I wanted to continue helping and working with these schools and orphanages, and so we started what is now Fitness 4 Hope."

The charity was co-founded by De Arriba and his friend Kodi Shiflett.

"We are both really into fitness and sports," De Arriba said, "and so we wanted to find a way to combine that with helping children in need. We started initially by of-

fering free weekly boxing and fitness classes, open to parents and children. After the class parents had the option of donating



Kodi Shinnett (right), co founder of Fitness 4 Hope

any amount they liked towards helping the disabled orphans of Our Learning House. These classes served numerous purposes – they gave parents and children the opportunity to stay fit and learn new skills, whilst helping orphans and creating a culture of giving.

“From there we wanted to expand the program to try and help all parents and children, since we realized two things: many parents are extremely busy and therefore don’t have time to exercise regularly, and children nowadays spend up to six and a half hours every day staring at screens. Therefore, we had the idea of making Fitness 4 Hope, an international community that can connect parents from all around the world.”

The new venture meant expanding beyond just the classes, to reach a wider audience.

“As well as continuing to do fitness events throughout Beijing, we are now creating online content. We have a program called ‘Getting Back to Nature,’ in which we make videos that are intended to motivate watchers to spend more time outdoors and get fit, and which highlight the beauty and culture of the location we’re filming. And our second series are fitness videos that we make to give parents ideas for exercises they can do with their children. But more

importantly, parents can send in their own videos. So far we’ve had submissions from all over the world of parents sending in their fitness videos with their children, and this is great because not only is it educational, but it also promotes cultural awareness and a sense of community on an international level.”

We asked why fitness was so important to them.

“Because it’s something we love,” De Arriba answered. “Growing up, we would both spend all day outside with friends, playing sports, swimming, and hiking, and all this was very formative for the both of us. So we wanted to do something that gave less-privileged children that same opportunity to grow up healthy, happy and full of hope. Also we both feel like with the development in technology in the last 20 years, children are becoming very disconnected with nature. And finally, because we firmly believe in the unifying power of sports and fitness for families and the community in general. You have but to look at the World Cup to see that sports is one thing that can bring people together regardless of race, gender or belief.”

Fitness 4 Hope are keen to expand their community and activities, De Arriba said.

“First and foremost, we want to get parents and children involved! They can



PHOTOS: : COURTESY OF PABLO DE ARRIBA





Pablo De Arriba (right), founder of Fitness 4 Hope, with guest coach Richardson Manzol

subscribe to our account and send in their videos, or simply follow and learn. Also if there are sport coaches, instructors or teachers that want to volunteer some time to give a free class that would be wonderful too."

For De Arriba, volunteering is as important as fitness when it comes to living a happy life.

"To use one of my favorite quotes: 'Happiness consists in giving and in serving others,' and I truly believe this. The people that are happiest are not the ones that have the most money or possessions, but the ones that give the most. And I think the most valuable thing we can give is our time. But it has to be done in a loving and non self-interested way... you shouldn't volunteer just so you can take a selfie to put on your Instagram page so that you can show everyone how 'kind' and 'giving' you are. Go, give, and help others, and the happiness you receive in return will be more fulfilling than any amount of 'likes' you could ever receive on social media."

To get involved, add ID: fitness4hope on WeChat.



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# *Feast at East*

*New weekday dinner menu for families who like to dine*

*By Nicole Bonnah*

PHOTOS: UNI YOU





The Ellison girls came fully prepared to try the delicacies awaiting them at East Hotel's FEAST in Lido. On the second floor in the ambient-lit dining space, Lola and Eva beamed with excitement as voyeurs of an array of international dishes on display under the spotlight in the buffet area. From candyfloss to steamed dim sum, the girls were truly spoiled for choice and loving the prospect of defying the limitations that one sets on the appetites of little girls.

While parents, Mark and Vanessa checked out the new weekday menu, the girls were keen to check out the play area, conveniently located at the back of the room and fully equipped with age-specific play and toy options. This significantly adds to the family dining experience at FEAST, particularly on the weekends when an Ayi supervises the area.

The Ellisons had the option of choosing between a number of dishes on a generous but concise dinner menu that included free-flow tea, coffee, and soft drinks for RMB 245. The menu included a hearty steak and burger, mushroom risotto, pan-fried salmon, spicy chicken parm, and crispy pork belly.

The options on initial review may not seem child-friendly, but mom Vanessa pointed out the positive aspect of the menu allowing the girls to try something new. Margherita pizzas and carbonara pasta are usually the call of the day for the girls. However, Lola exclaimed that rice would be her choice of meal, so risotto it was. Eva happily accepted the suggested wagyu burger while mom and dad opted for the salmon and steak dishes.

There were smiles all round and real family-style dining with the sharing and trying of one another's dishes around the table. The backup a la carte menu for the girls wasn't needed, and everyone tucked in. Eva thought the burger was "so nice!" but was unsure, at first, about the red chopped beetroot nestled at the bottom. Despite Eva's weariness over the "red stuff," the burger was almost completely demolished, and while Lola banished the spicy rocket that garnished her risotto to the side, she happily tried generous mouthfuls of perfectly al dente rice and mushrooms without complaint. In the end, Lola's eyes couldn't help but find their way to her mom's plate of food. After mom welcomed Lola to try her pan-fried salmon it was all over and time for swapsies around the table! "Yummy" cried Lola, consuming every single morsel of salmon on the plate.

Mom Vanessa pointed out that the salmon option could be the perfect dish for those dining out when avoiding carbs for the night. The dish was hearty and filling without the usual side of potatoes that was liberally substituted with a bed of



creamy scrambled eggs, spinach, and tomatoes. Lola not only ate what was least likely to be a choice for a young child, but also gobbled up all the spinach to her mom's delight.

As the sharing of dishes continued, the fries on Eva's plate were a massive hit with dad. Mom said she would definitely order her choice of meal again and the steak was a good-sized portion for dad. All in all; the dinner menu went down without a hitch.

On to the buffet it was! Copious amounts of delights from different regions decked the marble surfaces of the buffet area. The parents were surprised at the dinner menu, which included all you can eat trips to the buffet. They gasped at how all this choice was such value for the money, while the girls ladled perfectly portioned mini dessert slices of cheese, pasta, and salad on to their plates.

To enjoy what truly can only be described as a FEAST in modern surroundings loosen your pants, skip on lunch, and bring the family on down to East Hotel. Don't just leave family dining to the weekends, mix it up and add some variety to the week ahead. RMB 245 per person includes free-flow beverages.

### FEAST (Food by EAST)

Daily 6am–10.30am, 11.30am–3pm,  
5.30–10.30pm (weekend brunch  
11am–3.30pm). 2/F East, Beijing No.  
22 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang Dis-  
trict. (8414 9820)  
朝阳区酒仙桥路22号东隅北京酒店2层



# New Year's Dishes from Around the World

*The beijingkids editorial team bring you dishes to kick-off the new year*

The holidays are an amazing time of year filled with festive fun and feasting. Living in China, we have the great honor of residing in a place that is a melting pot of cultures. While not everyone celebrates Christmas or the handful of other seasonal celebrations that coexist this time of year, everyone celebrates the arrival of a new year, albeit at different times due to the solar and lunar calendars.

With this, we wanted to explore the dishes that make these family-oriented holidays homely and warm, and what better way to do so than ask an international team of food lovers like your *beijingkids* editorial team? Hailing from three continents, we present to you what our rag tag group of editors crave most come New Year's Day!



## Ingredients

- 2 cans of fruit cocktail
- 1 cup lemon juice
- 200g cheddar cheese, diced
- Bananas and apples, sliced into thin pieces
- 200g coconut meat, shredded
- 250g seedless grapes
- 2 cans of condensed milk

## Instructions

1. Drain the fruit cocktail and set aside its juice. Put all contents into a large bowl. While we don't need the cocktail syrup, you can add water and drink it.
2. Slice the fruits of your choice into thin pieces and add them into the bowl. The more circular the fruits, the better! For the coconut meat, I used a special shredder to slice it into spaghetti-like strands, but you can also use a blender.
3. Dice 200g of cheddar cheese. After that, squeeze two lemons to get their juice.
4. Add the condensed milk to the fruit cocktail, and then the lemon juice, and finally, the cheese cubes. Mix them until all fruits are coated with milk.
5. Refrigerate it for at least two hours. It's best served chilled!



**Andy Penafuerte III**

## *Holiday Fiesta Fruit Salad*

Our *media noche* or New Year's Eve dinner in the Philippines is always very festive and full of tradition. While *media noche* means "midnight" in Spanish, many of the indulgent dishes served on our holiday table are influenced by Chinese customs, such as having noodles for long life, sticky desserts for closer family ties, and 12 round fruits for wealth in the upcoming 12 months.

These round fruits brighten up our dinner table, but my mom makes a separate dessert – a fruit salad – because she knows I and my siblings gobble up New Year's Eve dishes even before midnight! Her recipe is very easy to do, so it's something that I always have every New Year's Eve to make me feel home.





Kipp Whittaker

### *Miss Lacey's Black-eyed Peas*

Every New Year's Day, without fail, this would be served in my house. I had to check out why, because the reasons had never really been explained to me. Through doing a bit of research, I came to the discovery that the reason dates back to the American Civil War. At that time, black-eyed peas were primarily used as animal feed. On January 1, 1863, The Emancipation Proclamation went into effect and the only items that the freed American slaves had to celebrate with were black-eyed peas. From then on, on every New Year's Day these peas were eaten. Also, the fields of black-eyed peas were ignored as General Sherman's troops destroyed or stole other crops during their famous raid, thereby giving the humble, but nourishing, black-eyed pea an important role as a major food source during that time.

#### Ingredients

- 3 cups of dried black-eye peas
- 4 Italian sausages
- 1 onion
- 4 cups of beef broth (homemade is best)
- 5 cups of spinach
- 3 cups of cooked rice
- Chopped baked ham to taste

#### Instructions

1. Soak three cups of dried black-eye peas overnight.
2. Brown your sausages and remove from sauté pan to drain.
3. Remove most of the grease and sauté a diced onion.
4. Put peas in with a box of beef broth, then let it simmer with the meat back in.
5. Once the peas are about ready, add spinach and chopped ham, then let it cook on low for about 10 minutes.
6. Mix in about three cups of cooked rice, and take off the stove and cover.
7. Finally, top with some Tabasco Sauce and serve with sweet cornbread.



### Ingredients

- Short-grain glutinous rice
- Chopped ground pork (the meat should not be too lean, ideally 80 percent lean and 20 percent fat), or you could use chicken breast for healthier meatballs
- Chopped mushrooms
- Cornstarch
- Sesame oil
- Sea salt
- Minced scallions
- Minced ginger



### Instructions

1. Soak the glutinous rice in a bowl for about two hours. Then drain, and discard the excess water.
2. Combine the ground meat, a pinch of cornstarch to make it sticky, a few drops of sesame oil, chopped mushroom, minced scallions and ginger, and sea salt for seasoning. Stir it until it becomes cohesive.
3. Use a tablespoon to form a meatball, and coat the meatball with glutinous rice, rolling with your palms to make sure the rice sticks well and evenly.
4. Using a steamer, or a pot with steamer, steam for about 20-25 min (the duration should be adjusted according to the size of your meatballs).
5. You can also make a plate of dip for the meatballs with some soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, minced garlic, and cilantro. to give them more flavor. Time to serve and slurp up!



Huang Chenkuang

### *Pearl Meatballs with Sticky Rice* (珍珠糯米丸子)

Pearl meatballs is one of the staple foods for Chinese New Year in South China provinces such as Jiangxi, Hubei, and Hunan. It got the name because the sticky rice resembles small pearls after being steamed into near transparency. Just like 汤圆 (tang yuan, a type of traditional food for Lantern Festival), Pearl meatballs also signifies union and happiness.

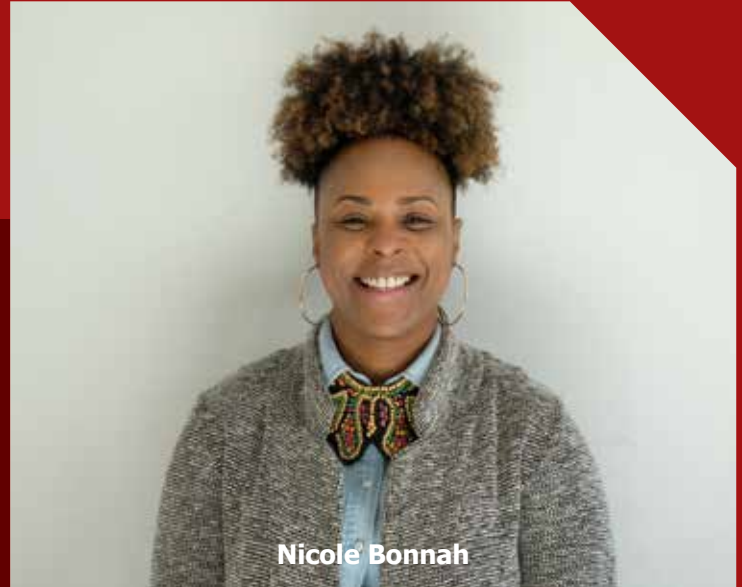
Featuring meatballs soaked in savory juice from the seasonings, this dish is not only a feast for the eyes but for the taste buds as well.





### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup of butter
- 1 cup of white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract or 1 vanilla pod
- 1/2 cup crushed candied pecans (Honey glazed works)
- 1/3 cup of unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup marshmallows
- 1/2 cup chocolate covered sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup candied pecans



Nicole Bonnah

### *Candied Pecan Chocolate Brownies*

Everyone loves brownies, and in my family we like to liven it up by throwing marshmallows and candied pecans into a traditional brownie mix.

For New Year dinner parties, these delicious brownies can be cut into bite-sized morsels, and served with a sprinkle of chocolate covered sesame seeds and whole pecans for decoration and added bite! Or why not cozy up with someone this New Year and partner your brownies with a cup of steaming hot chocolate! Yum!

New Year's just isn't the same without something chocolate flavored, gooey and oh-so-simple to make.

### Instructions

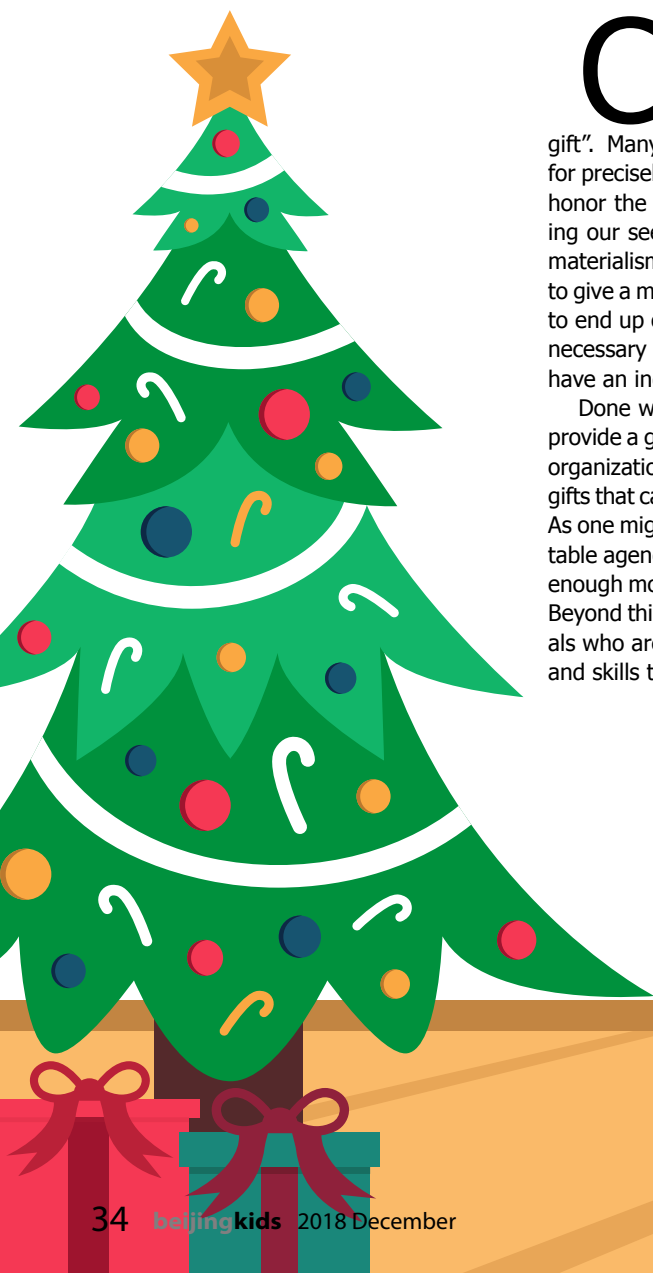
1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees Celsius and grease an 8-inch square pan.
2. In a large saucepan, melt 1/2 cup of butter. Remove from heat, and stir in sugar, eggs, and 1 teaspoon vanilla or the inside of 1 vanilla pod.
3. Beat in 1/3 cup cocoa, 1/2 cup flour, salt, crushed pecans, marshmallows, and baking powder.
4. Spread batter into prepared pan.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes on 180 degrees. Do not overcook. Surface should be a little bouncy when light pressure is applied.
6. Leave to cool before cutting with a clean, sharp knife. Then sprinkle chocolate covered sesame seeds and pecans over brownies and serve!



# THE GIFT OF TIME

Unwrapping volunteering opportunities in Beijing

By Pamela Djima



Christmas is the time of year which has grown synonymous with wasteful spending and stressful fretting over finding “the perfect gift”. Many have grown cynical of the season for precisely this reason, but is there a way to honor the spirit of giving without perpetuating our seemingly innate inclination towards materialism and overspending? Is it possible to give a meaningful gift which is not destined to end up on some pile of unwanted and unnecessary items? Can an intangible gift really have an indelible impact?

Done well, volunteering is a great way to provide a gift that is heartfelt and helpful. The organizations below work tirelessly to bestow gifts that cannot be valued in monetary terms. As one might expect, for many of these charitable agencies, a primary need is to generate enough money to finance their running costs. Beyond this, they are also in need of individuals who are willing to give their time, energy and skills to an extremely meaningful cause.



## New Hope Foundation

New Hope Foundation exists to nurture and arrange medical treatment and palliative care for orphans with disabilities. The foundation has five centers spread across China and tends to the needs of over 250 children. Hope Foster Home is the Beijing facility and is located in Shunyi. It has the capacity to be a home for 54 children.

### Volunteering opportunities:

- Long-term volunteers (a month or longer) are needed to live on-site and teach preschool classes.
- Short-term opportunities differ based on a person's availability and skills.
- Visitors are welcome to come and play with the children, but it is most helpful if people can commit to coming regularly in order to provide consistency for the children.

### Other needs:

- Sponsor a child program - Participants of this program donate USD 40 a month. The money is used to help pay for a child's food, diapers, minor medical expenses, and other daily needs.
- The foundation is always in need of basic items such as food and child care products. A “Needed Supplies Wish List” can be found on their website.

### Contact:

Email: [beccashook@newhope.foundation](mailto:beccashook@newhope.foundation)  
Web: [www.newhope.foundation](http://www.newhope.foundation)  
WeChat: NewHopeFoundation





愛與希望  
LOVE & HOPE

## Love & Hope

Love & Hope is a non-profit organization devoted to educating and developing the children of migrant workers. Love & Hope operates a Shunyi based boarding school which provides vocational training courses to children aged 14-20. The goal is to provide the youngsters with practical skills that improve their career prospects and give them more options in life. At present, there are 60 young people enrolled in these training courses.

### Volunteering opportunities:

- Teachers of the following subjects are required - English, computer skills, videography, fashion design, and sewing.
- It is preferable if volunteers are available during the day. However, there are also opportunities to volunteer in the evenings and at weekends.
- Love & Hope students produce bags and other textile creations. Volunteers are needed to help with the marketing and selling of these products.

### Other needs:

- Donations of groceries are always appreciated. Rice and oil are examples of items which are used in large quantities.
- Products produced by students include bags, aprons, and cushion covers. These items can be purchased at various bazaars and fairs around Beijing. They are also available from the Love & Hope WeChat shop.

### Contact:

Email: lovehope1004@sina.com  
Phone: 186 0006 3292  
WeChat: qht0471



## Bethel China

Bethel runs four projects for blind orphans in China. The children at Bethel come from orphanages across the country, to receive individual care, education, life skills, and livelihood opportunities. Through the outreach program, Bethel's work extends to different parts of China. Workshops are regularly facilitated to train orphanage staff, teachers, and parents of blind children.

### Volunteering opportunities:

- A 3-12 month internship opportunity to be a part of the Bethel team on a full-time basis. Opportunities include:
- Teaching positions:** preschool/primary school, English, English braille, orientation and mobility, early childhood development, early intervention (babies/toddlers)
- Therapy positions:** speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counselling
- Medical positions:** pediatrician, nurse, nutrition specialist
- Development:** fundraising, photography/video, translator, website support, adoption advocacy
- There are also part-time opportunities for volunteers willing to come on a regular basis.

### Other needs:

- Bethel has a list of items that are required on a regular basis, such as school supplies, diapers, cleaning products, fruit, milk.
- Child sponsorship program: Through a monthly or annual donation, sponsors are matched with a child and receive updates on how they are developing. Sponsorship is USD 35 or RMB 300 per month.

### Contact:

Email: allie@bethelchina.org  
Web: www.bethelchina.org



## Roundabout

In addition to being a fundraising retail store, Roundabout is also a donation and distribution center that connects those who wish to give to those in need. This social enterprise is headed by volunteers and was the first charity store in China when it opened back in 2008. Roundabout now supports 48 charitable organizations in Beijing and many more throughout China, Inner Mongolia, and Mongolia.

### Volunteering opportunities:

- Multimedia: Photography, video work, IT support
- Administration: Document drafting, translation, data entry, poster design
- Retail: Sorting donations into categories, visual merchandising, pricing
- Fundraising, community bazaars and events, visiting partner charities
- After initial training, volunteers can work the hours that suit them. Roundabout prefers people to volunteer on a regular basis to ensure continuity.

### Contact:

Email: chowlilyzhou@yahoo.com  
Phone: 150 1018 7653  
Web: www.roundaboutchina.com  
WeChat: CHOWLZHOU

# SHAMMERING MAGIC

A winter wonderland... in a jar!

*By Huang Chenkuang*







**H**omemade snow globes are great decorations at any time of the year, while the miniature wintry scene makes it an especially great gift for Christmas, for both the young and the young at heart. Our 6-year-old maker, Kim Ju Ah, along with her art teacher, Veronika Kotova from Art+798, gave an impressive demonstration of how to make your own snow globe, using Kim's favorite Hello Kitty figurine as centerpiece.

All the materials are easy to get, and almost any jar works for this project, so wash out your empty marmalade or olive jars, and follow our step-by-step instructions below, plus your own imagination, to create a winter wonderland in your jar! Complete with a special date or message, these snow globes make a lovely gift for any recipient.

## Instructions

Paint the jar lids in seasonal colors (white for Christmas for example). Use glue gun to glue the inside of the lid, wait for the glue to dry before putting the figurine in center.

Add distilled water to the jar, filling it almost to the top. Add shimmering powder of whatever color and amount you'd like, and a few drops of glycerin according to the jar size. Use a stick to stir and make the glitter float instead of sticking to the bottom. Add ornament tips to the figurine for more decoration.

Screw on the lid tightly (be careful not to dislocate the figurine). Turn the jar over and give a little shake, and enjoy the inside snow!



## What You'll Need

- Glass jars
- Ceramic or plastic figurines (metal ones are prone to rust in the water)
- Distilled water
- Liquid glycerin (available at drugstores)
- Glitter (shimmering powder)
- Glue gun (or you can use clear-drying epoxy as alternative)
- Ornament tips (available at many floral-supply stores)
- Oil-based enamel paint

# Fresh Start

Students from the Migrant Children's Foundation show their excitement and New Year resolutions for 2019

These works of art are courtesy of students from Migrant Children's Foundation (MCF), a non-profit organization that works with migrant communities in Beijing. These young artists are taught by Korean International School of Beijing (KISB) students every Saturday morning as part of the MCF Kids' Club Program, whose goal it is to connect international school students with disadvantaged students in Beijing thus giving both sets of students learning opportunities through sharing their time, skills, and interests.



**Na, (11)**

"I went to Lijiang in Yunnan with my parents this summer holiday. Surrounded by mountains and rivers, the city is like a paradise on earth."



**Jingzhe, (11)**

"The three things I really want to do next year is have more time for playing, more time to gaze at the stars, and more time to read books. I especially want to read more books, because books make me smarter."

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MIGRANT CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION





**Haiyang, (11)**

"I painted a book and a ping pong table because reading books and playing ping pong are my favorite hobbies. I want to read more books and improve my ping-pong skills next year."



**Aoyu, (10)**

"There are two things I really want to do next year, and they are swimming and reading books. I have wanted to learn how to swim for a long time, and I hope I can realize my dream in 2019."



**Yuanyuan, (11)**

"My favorite activities during the New Year season are watching shining stars and beautiful fireworks. I am looking forward to seeing them next year and I am so excited!"



**Tianmei, (9)**

"Next year, I am going to study very hard in order to get better grades on my exams. I hope I can see the number '100' on my exam paper!"

# GIVING THEIR ALL

How doing good inside and outside the classroom is shaping students beyond school

By Patrick Flanary

There's something about the holidays that brings out the annual giver in us.

Yet for many of Beijing's international school students, the season of giving and goodwill is not confined to the calendar. In fact, this perennial act of helping those in need, inside the classroom and outside their city, is as essential to the curriculum as their courses are.

Xia Ze Jin, who will turn six in January, has been welcomed and surrounded by this level of warm, enthusiastic support at home since October - even if her home also happens to be her school. Here at Mammolina Children's Home, a bilingual Montessori kindergarten, she is a one-of-a-kind student: Xia Ze Jin is a special needs orphan, one of an estimated 50,000 living in China today.

Beginning at birth, the genetic disorder Apert Syndrome slowed the growth of Xia Ze Jin's skull, which enlarged her eyes and diminished her other facial features. It has affected her in both subtle and obvious ways, including the speed at which her brain develops. Last year, she flew to Singapore for brain surgery; the trip and procedure were arranged by Mammolina partner Blue Sky Healing Home. This private medical foster facility, next door to the school, provides orphans with access to treatment and rehabilitation, while Mammolina covers the tuition costs.

Without outside support for these critical procedures -- reconstructive surgeries for hearts, bladders, and cleft lips and palates -- "these kids don't have a chance at all of getting adopted because they are so ill," says Sasha Gigliesi, whose organization Mammolina Children's Home has since 2005 adopted at least two children a year into the school. "After their operation, they have a lot better opportunity."

Now, fully recovered from her surgery, Xia Ze Jin is waiting for a family to adopt her. In the meantime, though, her classmates continue to treat her "truly like family," Gigliesi says. "The children realize we are all different. And it's OK"

At the same time, the students have also been inspired by one of the most physically playful classmates they've ever known -- he just happens to get around school in a wheelchair. And the children recently rallied around another boy as he gradually learned to write with the disfigured hand he almost lost in a fire. Children possess a level of compassion for each other despite their obvious differences, Gigliesi says, an instinct that often does not require teaching.



Xia Ze Jin

The true education comes when training staff to teach the concept of independence to students like Xia Ze Jin, specifically the skills involved in eating and using the bathroom without assistance, two milestones essential to achieve ahead of adoption. "It takes a lot of work to get them integrated," Gigliesi says, "and to realize that they are wanted and they are loved."

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MAMMOLINA CHILDREN'S HOME, YCS BEIJING



The philosophy of giving within the walls of Mammolina Children's Home reflects how students at one international school understand and demonstrate goodwill inside the classroom. Elsewhere, at Yew Chung International School of Beijing (YCIS Beijing), students are learning firsthand how their charitable work can change the lives of children outside of class, and their city.

YCIS's biggest annual project involves all 20 schools within the organization. Together they support Kids International Ministries near Manila, Philippines. Students travel five hours south of Beijing, where they spend a week building a secondary school in a foreign country and learning the finer points of facility construction and food distribution. Above all, interacting with the locals - playing basketball, talking with them, sharing a meal - underscores the mission of the trip. "At first some of them were scared; they didn't know what we were doing," remembers Year 8 YCIS student Angela Wang, of last year's trip. "But then they realized we were there to help them."

In 2016, the government passed a law regulating charities, which allowed organizations to apply for public fundraising status for the first time. This eliminated some of the red tape that inevitably comes with the founding of nonprofits. After the law went into effect, Wang Zhenyao, president of the China Global Philanthropy Institute, made a bold prediction. "A decade from now," he told the Asia Foundation, "China could become the leading country in global philanthropy."

Maybe so, but the numbers indicate a long path toward achieving that goal. The UK-based Charities Aid Foundation reported in 2015 that China was among the "least generous" for giving internationally, ranking the country below 144 others.

Globally speaking, donations tend to skyrocket following a tragedy, and often trigger involvement from faraway nations, especially in the age of the hashtag. In the West, the charity model has often skewed toward celebrity telethons and benefit concerts following natural

disasters like hurricanes, tsunamis, and wildfires. In the immediate aftermath of destruction, money flows to rebuild — until that capital suddenly stops.



Take China over the last decade. Immediately following the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan province, which killed some 80,000 people, domestic donations to the government and charities topped RMB 70 million, an amount not surpassed in the years since.

At the same time, many of Beijing's international schools have long embraced philanthropic projects locally and around the world. One program that has only grown since the deadly earthquake is YCIS's Seeds of Hope, formerly known as Sichuan Earthquake Educational Development, or SEED. For 10 years now, the project has helped pro-



YCIS Beijing students in Manila, Philippines





vide money and hands-on assistance to YCIS sister schools throughout China -- and even built a new one far away in Manila.

As part of that effort, YCIS schools distributed thousands of QR code-branded piggy banks as a creative way to collect donations for the construction of the school.

Angela recalls being surprised by what she saw when she first arrived in Manila with her classmates last year. The locals lacked adequate food and clothing, which wasn't entirely unexpected. What caught her off guard were the circumstances she had never encountered back home in Beijing; she remembers some families living among piles of garbage. Still, Angela says her biggest awakening happened when she came face-to-face with expectant mothers at a local pregnancy clinic. Some of them were Angela's age. At that time, nine percent of Filipino teenage girls were already mothers, according to Philippines National Demographic and Health Survey. That was about twice the global rate for teenage pregnancy.

Angela looks forward to returning to Manila with her class next summer, and helping guide the younger students through the experience. "They're new to this," she says. "Together, we'll make the local people live happier."

Two years ago, Seeds of Hope expanded its charity scope to include broader local outreach, to organizations like Help a Child Smile, Educating Girls of Rural China, and A Voice for Animals. The latter rehabilitates mistreated dogs, cats, and livestock, an effort that has reinvigorated Kersi Pastakia's spirit for activism and giving.

As president of the YCIS Beijing student council, Kersi remembers watching dogcatchers throw a wounded stray into a truck, a moment that forever shaped his perspective.

"People don't really realize that animals need our help as well," the Year 13 student says. "We need to make them understand that these animals are also mistreated, being slaughtered and fed to people, which is wrong."

How does this model of philanthropy shape a student's pursuit of doing good in the world after graduation?

In Kersi's case, the future includes plans to study law and one day provide indigent clients with fair legal representation; in short, doing good in the name of justice.

"That's what I've been taught," he says, "to be humble for what you have, and try to help out others without being too proud. What if one day I am in desperate need of help, and everyone walks away?

That's what motivates me to help people."

"We want the students to understand not to feel guilty about the community they were born into," says Casey Fanning, who leads the school's character and moral education development. "But to realize that it's a blessing, and we can do something with that. We want to be agents for change and have influence positively."

Whether organizing a book fair to promote literacy, defending the rights of animals, or financing a life-changing surgery for an orphan, the act of students giving back has become even more ingrained in the cultural fabric of Beijing's international schools.

These service-focused projects illustrate what students can accomplish when they work together toward the greater good. More than ever, curriculums are enabling students to look beyond school and toward society as a whole. By aiding the neediest, students realize this level of help goes beyond satisfying an academic requirement. Instead, these experiences help shape a student's character as they pursue a career that emphasizes giving back over getting something in return.

"Once people see that they themselves as individuals can make a difference, they want to join in and participate," says Kersi. "I believe in that. Which is why I keep helping others."







# TRANSLATING PLEASANTRIES

Expressing thanks goes beyond the barriers of language

By Ember Swift



## About the Writer

Ember Swift is a Canadian musician and writer who has been living in Beijing since late 2008. She has a daughter called Echo (国如一) and a son called Topaz or "Paz" (国世龙).

I am raising two kids here in Beijing as the only foreigner in the family dynamic. That means I represent the "foreign language" (English) and all of the "foreign ways." Over the years, we have found a harmonious balance between Eastern and Western traditions, and now that their dad and I have split, my Chinese in-laws and I do a pretty great job of taking great care of Echo (7) and Paz (5). I'm eternally grateful to them.

I have noticed, however, a difference in etiquette standards, particularly verbally. My kids bark to their grandparents to get them water or to make certain foods and their doting Yeye and Nainai bounce up to their every whim. In Chinese culture, they argue, there is no need for niceties; i.e. such words as "please" or "may I" or "excuse me" contradict the natural intimacy that exists between family members. It creates awkwardness.

I'm not so sure I buy this. Surely acknowledging what people do for us ("thank you") extends across cultures. And since I can't fully drop my Canadian tendencies, I thank my in-laws when I feel genuinely grateful and it seems to please them—no awkwardness.

Nevertheless, when this carries over into English with the kids, it doesn't work. Kids barking orders at their mother? No "please"? No "thank you"? Uh-uh. It's not the way I was raised; these two children are learning that when switching a language, you also have to switch a set of cultural norms.

So recently, when my daughter said this to me, I was truly touched. My education is working:

"Thank you, Mommy, for the yummy dinner!"

"Oh, honey," I said. "Thank you for thanking Mommy! That really warms my heart!" With this, I put one hand on my chest and gave her a loving smile.

She looked at me for a moment, frozen. Then she stood up, walked over and placed her hand on my chest too.

"Oh," she said, eyes wide. "It is warm! Wow, your heart is warmed up now! Come didi! Feel mommy's heart! Is yours warm?" (Hand on didi's chest) "Nope, not as warm as mommy's, look! Touch it! I made it warm!"

I watched this scene silently, completely amused and immeasurably moved. And, remembering this moment made me smile for days.

A couple of weeks later, we were outside walking and witnessed a child picking something up for an elderly man. I used the expression again ("heartwarming") and my daughter immediately looked up at me, excited.

"Can I feel it, Mommy? Can I feel your heart?"

I stopped walking and turned to her. "You can close your eyes and feel what 'heartwarming' means in your own heart, honey, without your hands." She didn't quite get this. I went on to explain. "When we do nice things for people, say nice things, or just act politely and kindly, it makes people feel good...right here!" I poked her in the chest and then kissed the top of her head.

She nodded, "Yeah, me too!" And she pointed to her heart. It had made sense to her.

"Exactly," I said. "The kinder we are to people, the more we make people feel that nice feeling makes us feel nice too. So, everyone's heart is warm on the inside!"

That night, with a giant, dramatic "xie, xie nai nai!" my daughter spontaneously thanked my mother-in-law for dinner. Her grandmother beamed and praised her for being so grown up.

Then she looked at me and said this in English before throwing her head back with a giant kid laugh: "That's a Chinese heartwarmer!"

# HELPING OUT

Parents from different cultural backgrounds talk about their children's experience of voluntary work

by Andrew Killeen and Jolie Wu

**"A**sia," says Claudine Boucaud, "is a great place to raise children, because they get to stay children longer." She and husband David left Florida 13 years ago, and since then have lived in South Korea and Malaysia. Because of her Jamaican-Chinese heritage Boucaud always wanted to live in China, but the push to move to Beijing came from her children, Esat (17) and Tsehai (15), who wanted to live in a big city. David, a student and writer, homeschools the kids while Claudine teaches at a bilingual international school.

**Have you ever been a volunteer? If so, what did you do? How old were you when you first volunteered?**

I never had the opportunity to volunteer as a child. It was not a common practice for children to volunteer in my community. I first started volunteering as an adult, as a peer counselor for La Leche League. I have also served as a Disaster Relief volunteer for the Red Cross.

**What kind of voluntary work do your children do?**

All of their recent volunteer experiences have been related to books! My teenagers currently volunteer at a local charity. Here, their main responsibilities involve quality control of donated books. They also sort and box books for upcoming book fairs. In the past, they have volunteered by reading English stories to Grade 1 students weekly in a "reading club". Last year, they helped to create a trilingual library at a local school. At this school, they digitally cataloged, labeled and shelved at least 2,000 books.

**Did the idea of volunteering come from you or your children? How did it come about?**

Whilst the initial idea came from me, they were always eager to volunteer. I have always encouraged my children to value volunteering because of its many benefits: learning new skills, finding passions, and giving back to others; and volunteer hours are highly appreciated on university applications.



**What kind of challenges or problems have they encountered while volunteering?**

Finding opportunities in Beijing have been challenging. The first place I checked was the science museum; It was near our house and my children love science. I was shifted from department to department, and eventually I was told children (teenagers) were not welcomed as volunteers, as the museum policy refuses to risk hindering the student's education. The first place that accepted my daughter as a volunteer was a pet shelter. After two weeks, she begged me to stop going because they limited her ability to help, especially when the tasks they provided her so greatly differed from what was outlined. They only wanted her to sit and hold puppies; they said having a foreigner would attract customers. She was very disappointed, because she wanted to be able to do something more meaningful.

**How do your children balance volunteering with the demands of schoolwork?**

My children attend school virtually; therefore, they have a more flexible schedule than others. They currently volunteer at a fixed time for three hours weekly.

**How do children benefit from volunteering?**

My children have gained an increased sense of responsibility. When asked, they always say that the most important lesson they learned is that they "learned to help for moral benefit, not financial gain."

**What other charitable activities have your children been involved in?**

They have participated in voluntary peer-tutoring and marathons. As a family, we have participated in park clean-ups.

**Do you have any advice for other families who might be considering volunteering?**

My main advice for any families considering volunteering is that they make sure that it actually fits into their schedule. Several people want to volunteer, however they don't realize the amount of time dedicated. Furthermore even if you do have the time, it substantially helps if you find something that you are actually excited about, as the emotional drain of doing something unenjoyable week after week has damaging effects on one's desire to help. Overall, volunteering, especially as a family, is a wonderful way to give a little back to the world that has done so much to help and you and to truly make a difference: just remember not to rush into it without thinking of the best approach.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CLAUDINE BOUCAUD / COURTESY OF DANIEL WANG



**D**aniel Wang is a programmer for an Internet company, and his wife Ivy Yang is the founder of 3i Art Center. Their daughter Lucy Wang, currently in Grade 7 of Beijing World Youth Academy (BWYA), has always loved animals. She has kept dozens of different kinds of animals, starting with an injured stray dog which the family saved, and her ambition is to become a zoologist. Although the family members have different hobbies and interests, they are all devoted to helping others.

**Have you ever been a volunteer? If so, what did you do? How old were you when you first volunteered?**

In 2013, I did tutoring for parents for a year, at FEL (Family Education Love Center). By chance, I got to know about their family education tutorial, and as a father of a seven-year-old child, I was impressed. FEL is committed to improving the education of migrant children and their families, bringing children and parents closer together, promoting reasonable and effective discipline for children, and improving family members' mental health. The curriculum is geared towards parents, mainly sharing methods and case studies, and encouraging parents to take action to improve relationships with their children.

My wife has been volunteering since she was 16, using her artistic skills to paint murals for schools and communities. After years of working in art education, she founded 3i Art Center in 2006, hoping to give more children access to quality art education. In 2015, our daughter came into contact with HOPE equestrian rehabilitation institute when she was learning to ride. Using trained horses, HOPE provide equine therapy to autistic and disabled children from care homes. 3i Art Center later became one of HOPE's sponsors.

**What kind of voluntary work does your child do?**

From the age of 3, my daughter began to help people with her art works. When she was 11 years old, she participated in a charity sale organized by HOPE. She spent over ten hours on a horse head sculpture, and donated the money raised at an auction. In 2018, as a volunteer translator for the parents' union of BWYA, she was recognized and appreciated by teachers and parents. In October this year, she organized and participated in an art environment design project of Grade 7 students at the school, and she has volunteered at art exhibitions multiple times.

**Did the idea of volunteering come from you or your child? How did it come about?**



In the beginning, we as parents took her with us when volunteering, so she could get a feel for it. She's gone from watching from the sidelines, to participating, to making her own choice of volunteer work. Lucy loves animals, so it was a natural progression from riding a horse to becoming a volunteer for equestrian rehabilitation.

**What kind of challenges or problems has she encountered while volunteering?**

My daughter has encountered different challenges in each volunteer activity, such as teamwork, division of labor, and how to develop the self-esteem of others. She needed to constantly learn and improve. In the process, she encountered problems such as insufficient materials and temporary personnel changes, and dealing with emergencies. All these were very important to the experience.

**How does your child balance volunteering with the demands of schoolwork?**

In fact, planned volunteering does not affect academic performance. Improving her abilities in various aspects through volunteering will also help with her studies.

**How do children benefit from volunteering?**

The obvious gains include achievement in school service, improvement in social ability, recognition from parents and neighbors, besides this the gains are teamwork, problem

solving, rising to challenges, persistence, communication skills, and other abilities have also improved. Less tangible impacts include greater understanding of the world, appreciating different cultures, paying more attention to human nature, respect for others, and understanding social values.

**What other charitable activities has your child been involved in?**

When she was 3 years old, she participated in a charity sale for children with cerebral palsy; at 9 years old, she participated in a charity sale for a school for orphaned girls.

**Do you have any advice for other families who might be considering volunteering?**

The parents should take the lead. Instead of teaching the children big words, you should let them know and feel that the world is very big, people's living conditions vary greatly, and you can help others through small actions. A parent leading by example will give a child more motivation to accept and take part in volunteer work from the heart. Don't rush the child into a big commitment. It's enough to let them start with doing something helpful to others within their capabilities in daily life. You also need to consider the cost. Let children fully realize that volunteering costs money or time. There is no return, but rather through perseverance and teamwork, to do what they enjoy and what is worthwhile.



*Giving Is Better  
Than Receiving!*





# NOT SO FAST NOW

Fact-checking and best practices  
for doing good on social media

By Lise Floris

**T**he race has begun. December is around the corner and we are being bombarded with messages about charitable initiatives and calls for support. According to Forbes, many charities say they receive more than half of their total contributions for the year between the months of October and December. But charity is not only about giving or donating; it is also about sharing information. Those of us who are active on social media have probably, at some stage, shared a post about a missing child, the urgent need for a specific blood type donor, or even stray dogs who are in need of a new home. We believe we do good in sharing – but is that always the case?

Recently there was a story in the US about a seemingly charitable couple who took to social media to post the touching story of how homeless veteran Johnny Bobbitt had spent his last

USD 20 to help Kate McClure when she ran out of gas. They launched a GoFundMe campaign in order to “pay it forward” and raised a whopping USD 400,000. But Bobbitt and McClure were not strangers. They did not meet for the first time at the gas station – but had merely taken a picture there together in order to get potential donors’ sympathy. The scam had been carefully planned for weeks – and was unveiled only after Johnny Bobbitt sued McClure and her husband for not sharing the donations with him as promised. Instead, they spent it on gambling, expensive holidays, luxury handbags and a new BMW. The three people involved all risk up to 10 years in prison. However, there is at least some good news for the 14,000 donors who contributed to the campaign: they will all get reimbursed by GoFundMe.



Paying it Forward

Share

Tweet

17k shares

**\$248,170** of \$10.0k goal

Raised by 8,384 people in 12 days

Donate Now

Share on Facebook

Created November 10, 2017



Kate McClure

Charity

BORDENTOWN, NJ

Recent Donations



\$25

Natasha Kerst



But not everyone is that lucky, and this is just one of many examples of people using a social media-driven campaign for their own nefarious gain.

There is a number of checks which Beijingers can carry out before sharing or giving – rather than simply perpetuating the torrent of spam that can be disguised as goodwill.

## FAKE OR GENUINE? CHECKING FOR AUTHENTICITY

In 2017, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) told *The Independent* that sharing pictures of missing children on social media can do more harm than good. The child in the pictures might not be lost – but rather hiding for his/her own safety – or the picture may be posted by a parent who is in dispute with the child's other parent. This was the case last year when a Chinese father from Hangzhou reported his child missing on social media, while the child was, in fact, with his American mother the whole time.

The police also advise citizens to verify the picture circulated in missing people's ads: "If the image did not originate from a confirmed police source or from a reputable media outlet showing that officers are actively searching, the post is 'likely not legitimate.'"

## IS IT REALLY CHARITY?

You have probably come across posts like this one in your social media feed:



No child should go to bed or have to wake up hungry. Please click "Like" if you agree and want to help. 35 million Americans go to bed hungry every single day. Will you help us change that?

We are not asking you for anything but your click, comment or share. That and your belief that no child should ever wonder where their next meal is coming from.

We've partnered with our good friends at The Salvation Army to help fight the growing hunger problem in America, and it's very easy for you to help.

For every "Like", Comment" or "Share", we will donate \$1 to The Salvation Army. Help us raise \$50,000 in our ongoing effort to end hunger! #PapaJohnCares



A critical article posted on the media platform Adweek lined out the three tools used in this type of campaign:

- a. a positive message
- b. an aggressive call to action
- c. an emotionally manipulative stock photograph

The term "slacktivism" is used to describe the types of campaigns where people are made to feel that they are making a difference merely by clicking "like".

Judging by the comments this particular post got, it was clear that readers were not impressed. In fact, they saw this mostly as "shameless self-promotion disguised as charity". Conditions and terms are usually a big red flag and in the case of the Papa John's post, the conditions led to a number of questions. What happens if the post does not get 50,000 likes? Will Papa John then not donate USD 50,000 to The Salvation Army? Could the company not have donated the USD 50,000 themselves, then posted a picture and spread awareness that way? Could it simply have highlighted stories of children helped by The Salvation Army?

## NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH INFORMATION

In the case of the boy from Hangzhou reported missing by his father, some people were sharing the call for help as they, understandably, identified with the horror of losing a child. But there was an equal number of parents questioning what exactly was going on. Despite having spread like wildfire on WeChat, the ad lacked details and vital pieces of information such as the fact that the boy's parents were separated and the child was with his mother. The lack of details in this call for help made it unclear whether or not the father was acting in good faith when he reported his son missing.

When it comes to the best practices of sharing as much information as possible, we turn to the UK where the NHS (National Health Service) has been praised for its social media campaigns for blood donations. In 2015 they managed to triple blood donor registrations, and part of their success was due to a particularly informative social media campaign. The NHS successfully managed to create a number of educational, witty, and positive threads about blood types, and they were able to anticipate their followers' questions rather than launch a campaign and wait for an avalanche of questions and negative comments.

As social media users, we should expect nothing less than very informative posts before we rush into sharing initiatives such as calls for blood donations.



Follow

So, people keep asking - why do we need more black blood donors? Isn't everyone's blood the same? You're racist! ISSA  
THREAD:

9:23 AM - 7 Nov 2017

## TRANSPARENCY

Most social media users have come across calls for donations to cancer charities. There are hundreds of charities with "cancer" in their names, but do we know what they do and how they spend these donations? Transparency is key when we look into which organizations to support, and we should always be able to find clear information in their social media posts and on their websites. In the case of cancer charities, it should be clear whether the organization is doing research, whether it provides services to those suffering from cancer, or if they share information to help us live healthier lives. But, just as importantly, financial reports should always be publicly available. As Ben Summerskill wrote in a 2015 article for *The Guardian*, "Transparency should be a charity's priority, not a reluctant requirement."

## BEST PRACTICE — SUPPORTING ONE CHARITY A MONTH VIA A WECHAT SPLIT BILL

In China, WeChat tends to be the platform of choice for sharing and caring — and one particular Shanghai-based group is getting it just right.

When Sabrina (who wishes to remain anonymous) moved to China, she started doing various types of volunteer work. When a friend one day approached her to say that she had some extra income that she would like to donate to a charity, but didn't know how to find the right cause, Sabrina started to look up suitable charities online. It turned out to be a time-consuming task that often lead to dead ends with little information available, or charities that were not "China equipped" and only accepted payments by foreign credit cards. Sabrina came up with the idea of creating a WeChat group where members make a monthly contribution via the split bill function in WeChat, and collectively decide which charity to support that month.

## HERE IS HOW IT WORKS:

All group members commit to a RMB 100 donation per month. Sabrina then provides a list of three selected charities and members of the group decide by online voting which cause they would like to support. Voting is not mandatory, so members are free to leave the decision up to the other members of the group.

The basic requirements for eligible charities are that they must be reputable and trustworthy — and for logistical reasons, they must accept donations via WeChat or Alipay.

Around the second week of the month, the results of the vote are announced and a split bill is sent to members who have one week to make their contribution of RMB 100. At the end of the month, the money is donated and members receive proof of payment in the group chat.

"This was such a simple idea to come up with and virtually anyone could start a similar group," says Sabrina. "It's a China-friendly and relatively easy group to manage — even for people like me who have full time jobs. I hope that other people follow suit and that this model will be used more and more, in order to allow us to support worthy causes through something as simple and brilliant as WeChat."

Methods of giving to charity and sharing good initiatives have evolved rapidly in recent years. Whether it be Ice Bucket Challenges or simple online payments, this convenience also means that we need to be vigilant, and make sure not to perpetuate the actions of some who wish to take advantage of the good-natured people hoping to make a difference.





# CAPITAL KINDNESS

Stories of simple acts of spontaneous altruism from the streets of Beijing

By Andrew Killeen

*Let's be frank: Beijingers don't exactly have a reputation as the most helpful people. But is that reputation deserved? For this charity issue, we asked our friends on social media to tell us about times when a stranger was there to help them. These are some of their stories.*

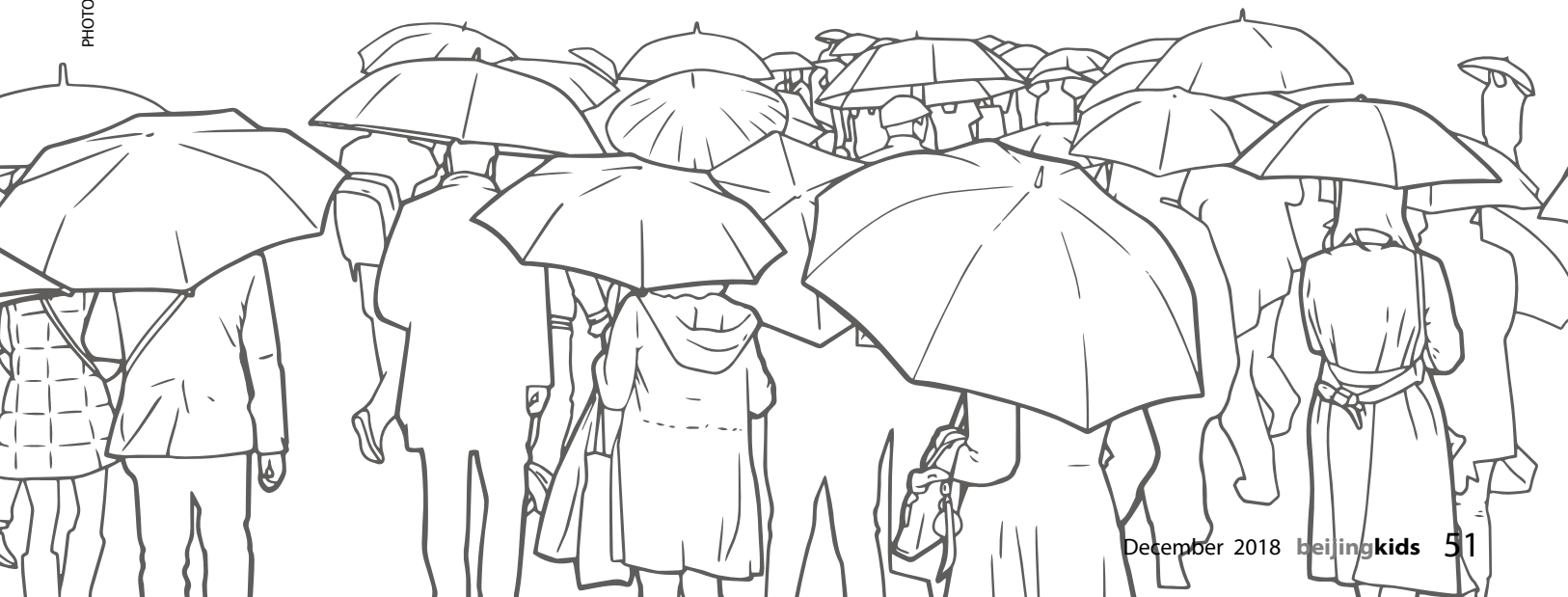
## KNIGHT IN A SHINY BLACK TAXI

"Last year I went out for dinner with my friends, then it started raining. I tried to take a taxi from Sanlitun to Qingnianlu. First no taxi wanted to stop, which is very frequent here, then the rain started to get really heavy. I kept waiting for an hour in the rain, and when they stopped they were asking me to pay RMB 150 for a ride that usually costs RMB 28, and they saw I was all wet and shivering but still no one cared... I stood for an hour and a half in the rain, but still everyone was just trying to take advantage of the situation.

"Then a car stopped and asked me if I needed help. I thought it was a black taxi, so I kept saying, 'No thanks, I don't want a black taxi.' Then the guy said, 'Sorry, I'm not a black taxi. We are an organization that helps people whenever there is heavy rain or heavy snow because we know that normal taxis won't stop.' So this guy and his friends use their own cars to take people back home in such circumstances.

"I was very surprised, and felt happy that people actually do such things. He could be home with his family, but he chooses to help instead of resting, and he was telling me that he feels bad that normal taxis are doing this to foreigners. He actually made my day, I forgot how wet and cold I was! He even asked me if I needed a coffee and if I needed an umbrella. So when we got home I wanted to give him money, but he refused. He said that helping others is his duty. It touched me a lot."

PHOTOS: ADOBE STOCK



## KEEPING WATCH

"Last October, after living for a month in a hotel we were finally moving to our apartment. A van picked us up with all of our stuff – we had a bunch of stuff and we barely fit in the van. Once we arrived and couldn't park in front of the building, the driver drove a bit further, unloaded all of our stuff and just drove off!

"While my husband and I were trying to figure out how to move everything, two girls with a little dog approached us and offered to look out for our things while we took everything in the building.

They patiently waited while we were running in and out. Once we'd finished, we spoke a bit and got to know they were from Israel. Anni, if you're reading this: Thank you! Hope to run into you again!"

## I WAS LOST

"My first week here I was in Shunyi. I was trying to find my way home but I couldn't find it because my phone had died. All I had was my key, and I knew how to get home from my school. I asked a stranger, but the first problem was the language barrier. So he gave me his phone, and I typed in my school's name. But it was an English name, and his phone could not find it, so he started to ask around. Finally, we found it, and when he realized how ill I was feeling he drove me back to my apartment."

## SAINT FRANZISKUS

"We were new in Beijing, our second day, and we walked with our little baby in the carrier to Jenny Lou's. After shopping there we wanted to call a taxi, but there weren't any taxis on the street. Nobody in the shops wanted to call one for us. And we couldn't install Didi, and hadn't got a bank account yet, so no card, no WeChat! Just cash and a credit card.

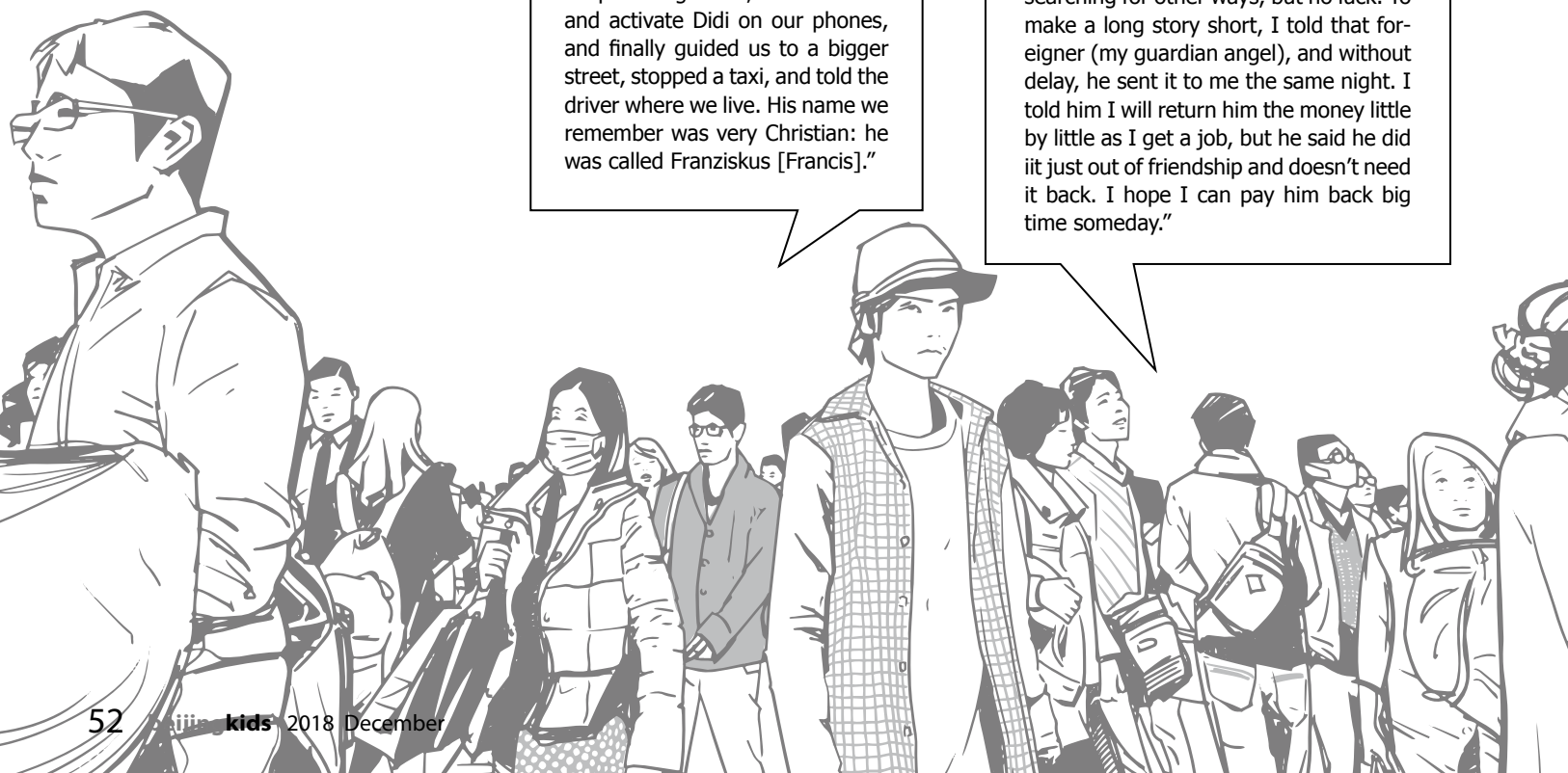
"Somebody on the street – a Chinese person who spoke German – helped us. He went into the shops asking for us, tried to install and activate Didi on our phones, and finally guided us to a bigger street, stopped a taxi, and told the driver where we live. His name we remember was very Christian: he was called Franziskus [Francis]."

## THE BENEFACTOR

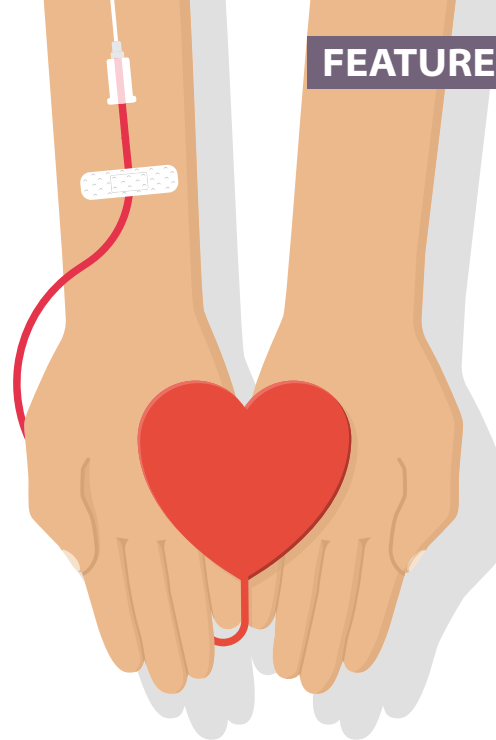
"I've made many friends here in China, many of whom made me realize that life here is not as bad as the media shows. Being a friendly person I've made so many friends, and that's what's needed to survive in China. There was one act of kindness that I experienced which made me get on my knees and thank God with tears in my eyes.

"At the end of the last semester I realized my scholarship had been canceled, as I wasn't able to achieve the necessary grade point average. Originally I came to China because of the scholarship, but as I've only a year to get my degree it was a breaking point for me. I wasn't the only one who lost his scholarship, but most of the others had degrees from their home country, or could finish it in a year or two after returning. I asked many of my friends for some cheap universities, or some scholarships that I could apply to, but it was at the time when all the scholarships were closed. I asked some of the well-known established companies which I had helped before.

"As it was almost time for me to go, a boss of one of those companies, a foreigner whom I had only met once, out of the blue told me that he could help out with my tuition for one semester. I was shocked, a ray of hope rose in my heart, but still as it was a very big thing for me I told him I would tell him if I needed it. And with a smile in my heart I kept on searching for other ways, but no luck. To make a long story short, I told that foreigner (my guardian angel), and without delay, he sent it to me the same night. I told him I will return him the money little by little as I get a job, but he said he did it just out of friendship and doesn't need it back. I hope I can pay him back big time someday."







# PANDA BLOOD AND GUARDIAN ANGELS

How Beijing's international community rallied round to save a little girl's life

*By Andrew Killeen*

**"Y**ou must find more A negative blood for tomorrow." This was the stark message given to Marie and Paul Klein Bog as their daughter Julia lay critically ill in hospital. Only days before they had been celebrating her first birthday, with no idea of the nightmare that was about to confront them. We talked to them about how "Guardian Angels" and social media saved their daughter's life, and what every parent in Beijing needs to learn from their horrific experience.

Julia was "made in China", Marie says proudly. Marie, who is French, met Paul from the Netherlands when they were exchange students at Peking University. They settled in the city and married in 2016. Julia Rose was born the following year.

The crisis began one Thursday night, four days after her first birthday party. Julia began vomiting, and was sick all night.

"Even a drop of water was not staying in," Marie says. "So on the Friday morning, I decided to bring Julia to Beijing United Family Hospital (BJU) for a check-up, because she was still vomiting. After a quick consultation she was given some medication, and we were cleared to go home.

"At home she had a bottle of milk and went straight to sleep for her afternoon nap. She seemed abnormally tired, but I still thought she was alright. Later in the afternoon however after waking up she started vomiting again, showing a brownish color this time, together with severe diarrhea. I called my husband immediately and we took her back to BJU, because this time we thought something was definitely wrong."

At the hospital, Julia was given medication to stop the vomiting, and



put on a drip to rehydrate. Later that evening, she seemed to have recovered, and was discharged again.

"However, as we were walking through the corridor on our way out, Julia started vomiting again, this time with a greenish color – very scary," Marie says. "Julia was admitted again immediately and brought back to her room. BJU then called for a pediatric surgeon to come in, who asked to do an ultrasound of her abdomen, which showed a 'mass' of some kind.

"The doctor finally arrived near 2am, and checked Julia's status and ultrasound results. While we were talking to the doctor I turned around and saw Julia shaking – she had gone into an epileptic seizure. The seizure lasted for just under one minute, where she stopped breathing for 50 seconds."

These were the longest seconds of their lives, Marie tells us.

"We could see the doctors and nurses went into a panic and started running up and down the corridor, entering and leaving the room, giving emergency treatment to Julia and trying their best to save her. They finally were able to bring back her breathing and stabilize her situation."

But the nightmare was just beginning.

"After a night without sleep, we continued doing blood tests all through the next day. With every result that came out, Julia's condition was worsening. Her red blood cell count was dropping, her white blood cells went extremely high and at the end of the day she started showing signs of kidney failure. What was extremely challenging for us during this time is that the doctors at BJU didn't speak English well, and we had a hard time getting a conclusive diagnosis on our daughter's condition. In broken English, we were told



Marie and Paul Bog with their daughter Julia after the treatment



on the Saturday night, that Julia was having kidney failure. She had at this time turned anemic, had stopped producing urine or stool and had become bloated all over her body.

"Only then was she diagnosed with hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). This is a condition caused by the abnormal destruction of red blood cells. The damaged red blood cells clog the filtering system in the kidneys, which can lead to life-threatening kidney failure. Julia was showing all the symptoms and BJU advised us to make an emergency hospital transfer, because she required more intensive care as well as dialysis, something BJU does not have the facilities for. HUS is caused by the bacteria *E.coli*, which is typically spread by eating contaminated food. However, to this day we still don't know the origin.

"By emergency ambulance, Julia got transferred into the PICU (pediatric intensive care unit) at BaYi Children's Hospital, affiliated to the Beijing Military Hospital. My husband took Julia to the doors of the PICU and there had to hand her over to the medical team. Its PICU is a closed unit, meaning we were not allowed to see her once we admitted her into their care. After a grueling interview with the doctor, in which we had to explain in detail what may have caused her condition, they started intensive treatment consisting of blood transfusion and dialysis. This happened early Saturday morning. This was when Julia's doctor asked us to recruit blood donors, as her blood type A negative is extremely rare in China, and they were low on supply."

Because Julia had never been ill before, the Klein Bogs had no idea that their daughter had an unusual blood type. Although A type blood is relatively common, the Rhesus negative factor is so uncommon here that it's known as "Panda blood," after China's most famous endangered species. And communication difficulties made an already harrowing situation even worse.

"The doctor who did the intake interview for Julia at the PICU at first was quite cold and intimidating. Especially after having had to hand over Julia and the doors being closed, this was extremely challenging. What we found out later is that this specific unit is where they handle the most serious cases, and this was in fact a trauma ICU, which is why the unit is closed, because their approach is very much focused on the emergency rescue of the admitted children. It was hard for us therefore to get a clear understanding of the situation, as communication with parents is limited."

Faced with the challenge of finding blood donors for their daughter, the Klein Bogs didn't know where to turn.

"They simply told us 'you must find more

A negative blood for tomorrow,' which was very scary. We didn't know how to contact the blood bank, where it was, or what the procedure was. It turned out we had to recruit people to come directly to a particular building at the hospital where blood could be taken. This seems to be a specific issue for the military hospital, as they are not in direct connection with Beijing's central blood bank, like the other public hospitals are."

Marie describes this situation as "crazy". Fortunately however, Beijing's international community came to the rescue.

"It started with a phone call I made on Sunday afternoon to my best friend Mathilde, who lives in Wuhan, explaining our situation and that we needed blood. She told me she had



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MARIE KLEIN BOG



The Bog family following their move to the Netherlands

a well-connected friend in Beijing who maybe could help. This friend put me in touch with Marianne, who started a whole community on WeChat to find A negative donors. Our other very good friends who were by our side in Beijing, Bibiana, Natasha and Corentin, joined forces together with Marianne, and helped to coordinate the WeChat groups to recruit donors. The way that the community rallied for our daughter was simply unbelievable. A negative is much more common among foreigners, which is why we needed the help of the expat community.

"My husband and I at this time were in a state of shock, and therefore relied completely on our friends to organize and coordinate the donation sessions: sending maps on WeChat, checking people's blood type, informing people about the donation procedure, and after people came to give blood, offering water and snacks to help them recoup. This group, that we called Julia's 'Guardian Angels,' have been our biggest support during these trying times, by helping us stay distracted, helping with language obstacles in communication with doctors, or simply offering a place to sleep, because sleeping at home was too difficult. Having a strong community of friends you can rely on during these times is extremely important, as you realize you are very much in a strange country when things go bad."

We ask Marie what other parents can learn

from her experience.

"Have a plan ready for when the worst happens," she says. "An international hospital like BJU is a good start, and most of the time they will be able to deal with minor incidents or illnesses. But have some understanding of what the best Chinese hospitals are in town. Make sure you have insurance which is able to cover medical costs to Chinese public hospitals through a local agent – direct billing does not exist in the Chinese public healthcare system. Have someone by your side who is fluent in Chinese for any conversations with doctors; this will help to take the edge off as they are quite harsh in their communication, especially when trying to speak English.

"And in the end, listen to your kid. When something out of the ordinary is going on and you have a weird feeling, take them to see a doctor immediately. As a parent, you know when things are not right."

Julia is now recovering well, and Marie is full of gratitude to all concerned.

"We would like to thank Doctor Yu Bang at Bayi Hospital, who with his medical team saved Julia, by giving her the emergency rescue that she needed. The skill and expertise of the Bayi PICU is world class; however they could work on patient and parent communication, which seems to be a bigger priority in the medical system in Holland (where we are now) and the West.

"Next to the medical care our daughter received, it has really been the tremendous support of our relatives and close community of friends that pulled us through as a family. We are indebted to Julia's donors forever, they are real heroes. Julia is also now a superhero as she has had new blood from France, the US, Ukraine, Brazil, China (one Chinese A negative donor came!), Germany, Canada, Russia..."

Thanks to all these people, the story has a happy ending.

"We are now in Holland for follow-up care," Marie tells us. "Julia is doing very well and has shown great resilience throughout the whole process. She is a happy little girl again, and we can focus on her having a normal healthy life."

Whether or not you have "panda blood", Beijing hospitals always need blood. You can donate blood in Beijing at the Red Cross Blood Center, on the North Third Ring Road, near Anhuaqiao subway station on Line 8. Or you can join a community of blood donors by searching for Bloodline Beijing on WeChat.



# SCHOOL NEWS



## New Basketball Coach Brings Olympic Experience to WAB

Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) welcomes the newest member of their basketball coaching staff, Song Xiaoyun. Song is a three-time Olympian and has won gold medals at the 2002 and 2006 Asian Games. She will be contributing her playing and coaching experience to the Tigers' girls varsity team.



## BSB Wins 2nd Place in Nord Anglia Global Games U14 Football

The British School of Beijing (BSB) Shunyi's Boys and Girls Team both won 2nd place at the Nord Anglia Global Games U14 Football tournament. This is part of the Nord Anglia Regional Events and Activities that offers students in their 10 China region schools the opportunity to learn through sport.



## Harrow Beijing Well-Being Week

From October 29th to November 2nd, Harrow Beijing held its first Well-Being Week, aiming to promote the focus of World Mental Health Day 2019: "Youth in a Changing World." During the week, students, staff, and parents participated in a variety of wellbeing activities.

## DCB Presents Bernstein's Young People's Concert

To celebrate Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday, Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) Symphony Orchestra hosted two interactive performances of "Young People's Concert," licensed after the great maestro's famous series. Local elementary students were invited to the second performance, marking the first time this concert was presented in Chinese. Each orchestra member received personal thanks from Jamie Bernstein.





The Circuit is a chance to check out what's happening in the Beijing community. Want to see your event on these pages?



#### BIBA PTA Santa Shop

For one week in December, the Beijing International Bilingual Academy (BIBA) PTA put on a "Santa Shop" for all BIBA staff, students, and community to purchase various different Christmas toys and knickknacks. The entire profit of the week's sales is all donated to charity.



#### Daystar Sanlitun Campus Celebrates Harvest Festival

On October 21, the Daystar Sanlitun Star Parent Organization and school staff hosted the second annual Harvest Festival which, included many fun-filled activities like face painting, pumpkin rolling, tug-of-war, and a series of races to get kids and families excited for fall.



PHOTOS: DAYSTAR SANLITUN, HOK, BIBA, BWVA



Send an email with the date of your event, a brief description, and high-resolution photos (at least 1MB each) to [webeditor@beijing-kids.com](mailto:webeditor@beijing-kids.com) by **December 12**



#### United Nations Day at BWYA

On November 2, Beijing World Youth Academy (BWYA) was filled with an international atmosphere celebrating United Nations Day. With a theme of "Building Bridges Over Borders", students decorated their classrooms with props from different countries, along with food, games, and quizzes based on their chosen country's history and culture.



#### Howl-oween at House of Knowledge

As the Beijing days become chilly and nightfall begins to come earlier, the students at House of Knowledge (HoK) were in for a real 'Trick or Treat' this Halloween. To get students into the Halloween spirit, HoK was bubbling like a witch's cauldron filled with lots of spooky activities for the children and their parents.







### Halloween Fun at 3e

3e International School students and teachers celebrated a week of creative activities to help broaden the students understanding of Halloween traditions. On October 31, kindergarten parents attended the annual costume parade, and elementary students participated in Halloween activities with French International School of Beijing (LFIP) students.

### Kindness Week at ISB

International School of Beijing (ISB) had a very special visitor this month, when the high school members of the Psychology Club organized for a therapy dog to come to campus to help relax their fellow hard-working students and to boost student wellness during ISB's Kindness Week.







### Harrow Beijing Early Years Spooktacular Celebrations

On October 31, Harrow Beijing Early Years held its Spooktacular Celebration. Parents and pupils enjoyed spooky sensory activities, spooky phonics, and craft making.



### WAB Students Do Autumn Artwork with Migrant Kindergarten

As the season's colors changed and leaves began to fall on the Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) campus this autumn, a group of high school students saw an opportunity to learn and have fun with children from a local migrant school.





### BCIS Running the Marathon of Hope

The Beijing City International School (BCIS) community gathered to celebrate the life of the inspiring Terry Fox, who at 19 was diagnosed with cancer. Far from falling into despair over his illness, he embarked on an amazing feat of sporting solidarity with his "Marathon of Hope."



### CISB Grade 3 Hutong Field Trip to The Hutong

Canadian International School of Beijing (CISB) Grade 3 students recently went to The Hutong to connect to their marketplaces unit, How We Organize Ourselves. Students applied what they have been learning over the past several weeks to act as both producers and consumers throughout the day.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF CISB, BCIS, BSB SHUNYI, DCB





### Real World Business at Dulwich College Beijing's Enterprise Fair

Seventeen student start-ups showcased their products alongside 25 local vendors at the inaugural Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) Enterprise Fair on November 3. Funded by a micro loan, Year 10 STEM students used their skills in product design, marketing, and finance, while Year 11 Business Studies students were responsible for event promotion, logistics, and finding sponsorship.



### BSB Choir Delighted Audiences at The British Ball 2018

The British School of Beijing (BSB) Shunyi's Year 5 and 6 choir gave performances matching the British Ball's theme "A Knight's Tale". The students had a fun evening singing medieval songs dressed like kings and queens with crowns, capes, and scepters.





# FAMILY FAVORITES

*Tidings of Joy from the Nirwonagize-Fernandes Family!*

Text by Andy Penafuerte III, photos by Uni You



**I**t's a tradition for the Fernandeses to hold a Christmas feast for friends where they prepare different Yuletide dishes from their home countries. Mom Josephine Nirwonagize is Belgian of Rwandan descent and prepares a special cake for dessert called *buche de Noel*, while Dad José Joaquim Fernandes brings to the table the Danish traditional dessert of *riz al amade*, or sweet cream rice with almond.

The couple describe their twin princesses Laura Maria José and Sophia There Thérèse as very international. "They were conceived in India, born in Belgium, and now live in Beijing," Josephine says, and that's because her career as a Belgian embassy officer has allowed the couple to enjoy the cultures of New Delhi, Mumbai, Brussels, and Beijing. Jose, who's an aviation engineer, is a proud stay-at-home dad who prepares the meals and takes care of the household.

**During the weekends, we...**

*We walk in Chaoyang park.*

**That holiday that we always look forward to:**

*Summer holidays with grandma in Lisbon.*

**Daughter 1's favorite class:**

*Drawing and reading*

**Daughter 2's favorite activity:**

*Puzzles and cycling*

**Where dad and I spend our date nights**

*Beijing Duck restaurant*

**No. 1 house rule:**

*No outdoors shoes inside the house*

**Personal mantra:**

*Don't regret the things you do in life and do things you won't regret*

**The first thing I do in the morning...**

*Running along Liangma river*

**When dad's home, he usually...**

*Cooks dinner*

**My advice to new families in Beijing:**

*Download wechat app.*

**House chore that my kids enjoy:**

*Baking homemade green cake.*

We know that Family Favorites is not just your usual *beijingkids* column: it's very personal and every moment captured during our photo shoots is a treasure for the families who grace this page! Want your family to be featured here? Email us at [webeditor@beijing-kids.com](mailto:webeditor@beijing-kids.com).



# Sir Joseph Banks Scholarship

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# Commitment to Excellence



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55+ Different Nationalities  
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