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December 2020

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OF CHINA

December 2020

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## Giving Back

Who, What, and Wherefores

WOMEN OF CHINA Beijingkids

《中国妇女》

Beijing's essential international family resource

December 2020





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### ON THE COVER:

Vivienne Rush and family opened up their home and hearts to Lost Puppies of Beijing

Photographed by Dave Hansen of Dave's Studio





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
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Tim first came to China in 2001 and has made Beijing his home for the last 10 years. He specializes in new market development for the world's most iconic consumer brands, previously helping luxury brands enter and expand in China, and now helping a Chinese technology company build their global business. He enjoys outdoor adventures with his two young children, and time permitting, vlogs in Chinese under the moniker of "Kangaroo Daddy".



### 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, an 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.



### Tara Gillan

Tara is from England, UK, and been in China over 14 years where she is raising third culture, bilingual kids. She has a passion for education in China, and is a lifelong learner still trying to master Mandarin. In between, work, study and being a mum, you will find her looking for her next adventure!

### 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.



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Alessandra's Beijing adventure began in 2010 when she arrived here with her local Beijinger husband and two children. She is originally from Brazil and has also lived and worked in Argentina and New Zealand. With a passion for working in multicultural environments with international students, Alessandra worked for nearly nine years at The University of Auckland English Language Academy, and is currently at AISB-Hope International in Beijing. You can contact her at azambuja.alessandra@hopeintschool.org

### 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](http://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 other parts of Asia. 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.



## A NOTE TO OUR READERS

"Giving back" is such a loaded term. We say it all the time, yet the phrase itself assumes that you have more than you need, and then it feels like only something the very rich and privileged can do. But the world holds many ways that people can give back to their communities, and in this holiday issue, we cover the most important topics to Beijing families.

First, there is simply the generous philanthropic spirit of our capital city. We have eateries that give back, both with food specials and job training (p. 18), and Feast at East Hotel that offered our student writer Qinglan Du and her mother, fresh out of quarantine, a joyous culture shock after such a difficult year (p. 16). You may have heard of Beijing's blind massage parlors and wondered if they're real or legit. Contributing Writer Robynne Tindall looks at their history and also tries one herself, learning how what some see as a disability actually helps the masseuse go deeper in their work to help people relax (p. 26).

Giving goes beyond simply nonprofits and charities, however. Beijing has teachers who use their talents in geography to show kids their place in the world (p. 28), and art educators who help students express their whole selves through artistic expression, as our Harrow Beijing students demonstrate (p. 30).

I know when it comes to my children, it's hard to reconcile the consumerist messages they get around the holidays with the values of gratitude and generosity we want to instill in them. Resident Early Education expert Julie Wolf shares some excellent ways to counter the societal need for gifts with new holiday traditions that leave everyone satisfied (p. 34), while many local families tell their own stories of giving back together, and how that's affected the ways their children view the world and their own privilege

(p. 22). I tend towards books to open pathways for us to discuss complex subjects and chose some of my favorites for gift giving this year (p. 36).

Finally, Beijing mom Vivienne Rush shares her family's "foster fail" story, when they jumped into fostering for Lost Puppies with all their heart, soul – and perhaps a little too much attachment to the sweet pup Kamina on our cover (p. 40).

We hope this issue can be *beijingskids'* gift to you: we wish for everyone reading to feel a bit more hope in our world, in the great and generous people who contribute to it, to learn of more places where you can eat, enjoy, and volunteer as a family. We hope you can find a few more ways to instill both the kindness and responsibility needed in our children to make sure that 2021 is better than 2020, and beyond.



Cindy Marie Jenkins



# What's New

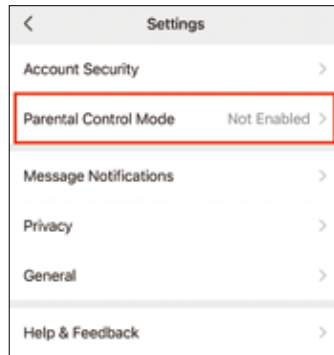


## A Very LEGO Set New Year!

If you are a fan of LEGO bricks and struggling to figure out what to get your loved ones or even yourself as a Christmas and New Year's gift, look no further than LEGO brick's new collection, set for release in the China on January 1! The sets are part of a special new holiday collection, including the LEGO DUPLO Town Happy Childhood Moments Chinese Culture Lunar New Year Set, Spring Lantern Festival, and The Story of Nian. These would make a perfect late Christmas present, and are always well worth the wait.

## WeChat Releases More Parental Control Options

In case you missed it, in early October, WeChat unveiled its iOS 7.0.17 update, complete with all the goodies we usually enjoy on this multipurpose app. But of most importance to parents was the new parental control feature, which allows parents to not only monitor their children's activities while on the app, but also limits access to certain pages, mini-programs, and contacts. Currently however, this function is only available to iOS users and some Android users.



# ChiFan For Charity 2020 Extravaganza!

If you are new to Beijing then you might be new to this fabulous party. This year, ChiFan for Charity, an annual cross-town event that brings together well over 600 people to dine for charity, took place on November 21. The event attracted some of Beijing's favorite eateries, with Beijing's international community rallying to raise funds for a worthy cause. This year's beneficiary of the ChiFan For Charity event was Shepherd's Field, an orphanage. If ever there was a worthy cause to eat and make merry, it would be this one.



## Beijing Issues Yellow Alert Due to Poor Air Quality

Mid last month, the Beijing Municipal Ecology and Environmental Bureau issued a yellow alert to Beijing due to the poor air quality. The bout of bad air was meant to last for no more than three days. Nonetheless, Beijing's residents were expected to take adequate precautions. The yellow alert is only ever issued when the AQI (air quality index) is above 200 points for three consecutive days.





# SAY HELLO TO BEIJING'S SMALLEST

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photos of babies born  
in the last 12 months



**Aria Rui Han Jin**

American. Born on Oct 19  
to Mina Yan and Billy Jin  
at AmCare Women & Children's Hospital



**Chloé Binaux**

Chinese/French. Born on Apr 29  
to Zhang Xiuli and Romain Binaux  
at Oasis International Hospital



**Ryan Fady Bawatna**

Palestinian. Born on Jan 20  
to Nina Moqbel and Fady Bawatna  
at Oasis International Hospital

**Jasmine Fady Bawatna**

Palestinian. Born on Jan 20  
to Nina Moqbel and Fady Bawatna  
at Oasis International Hospital



**Savannah Danielle Sun**

Chinese/Australian. Born on Nov 18  
to Grace Sun and Leo Qin  
at Beijing United Family Hospital



**Mia Oré**

French/Russian. Born on Oct 2  
to Svetlana & Carlos Oré  
at Beijing United Family Hospital





# ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS SILVER!

How This Punk Rock Working Mom  
Got a Tinsel-Inspired Cut and Color!

*By Mark Allan Karanja*





### Too Miranda Priestley

Jenkins admitted to having silver streaks in her hair from when she was in her early twenties and has never found the need to rinse them out or dye her hair. This lends a very cool punk look to the otherwise sweet and somewhat shy Jenkins. And now, silver hair is all the rage, firmly put on the fashion scene by Meryl Streep's character Miranda Priestly in the iconic *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. Since then, celebrities of all ages have lined up to embrace their grey, with some like Sharon Osbourne ditching her signature auburn color for a full head of glorious grey.

### A Job Half Done

The initial plan had been to take Jenkins' stylish grey streaks and transform them into a full ice grey fantasy, but the lifting process would have proven too damaging and require far more maintenance than is convenient for this full-time working mom. So, a compromise was reached, with the stylist deciding to even out the streaks across Jenkins' hair, plus an updated cut to pull the look together. He started by sectioning off her hair, applying bleaching cream and foils to selected sections, before letting it sit and process for about 45 minutes, then rinsing. This was followed up with a toner to counteract the harsh brassiness of a bleaching service. As with every treatment, it is important to repair any damage caused by the bleach's stripping properties, so an Olaplex treatment was applied to reconstruct the hair.

After this, Jenkins was now ready for the cut! The stylist started by trimming the top third of Cindy's hair, adding layers, and transforming her growing out phase into an asymmetrical bob. This was followed by a faded undercut, enhancing the punk-rock girl-chic feel. And finally, the hair was blown out with a large round bristle brush to create volume and effortless-looking waves to complete the ensemble. This is certainly an outside the box Christmas look that is one for the books. To put the icing on the cake, Jenkins rocked a bold frosted cat-eye to ring in the festive season. Her high-impact, low maintenance hair is just what this amazing Beijing mom needed from Santa for Christmas!



### Winter Haircare Tips

- Wear a silk or satin-lined hat to prevent the dry weather from robbing your hair of its moisture. Cotton and wool fabrics also suck up your hair's moisture.
- Avoid heat styling on a regular basis and opt for air-drying your hair instead.
- Do not leave the house with wet hair to avoid freezing and breaking it. Use a microfiber towel to ensure a quick and safe drying time.
- Deep condition at least once a week. This is the time to invest in good moisture-intense deep conditioners to maintain your hair's protein-moisture balance through the winter.
- Use an oil-based leave-in treatment like Argan oil to revitalize dry damaged tresses, and provide a protective and lubricating barrier for your hair.

### Mommy's Day Out

Between the pressures of working as a full-time writer and editor, and managing two young kids, Jenkins has not had much time for anything close to a beauty day. After being stuck in the United States when borders closed last March, then finally returning to the country this summer, a haircut was low on her priority list. A visit to Laurent Falcon Salon, Beijing's premier hair salon, was long overdue for this working mom.



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三里屯北街南43号楼  
www.laurent-falcon.com  
6409 4243



# GIVING WITH GRATITUDE

The Archer Family Volunteers  
as a Normal Part of Life

By Cindy Marie Jenkins

**T**he Archer Family – Caleb, Rebecca, Neriah, 9, Levi, 7, and Malachi, 6 – always look for ways to serve the community, whether in mobile soup kitchens, youth groups, building mobile libraries for rural communities, or community building. As educators, Rebecca and Caleb help to develop service programs in schools through both the Duke of Edinburgh International Award, and the IB Service as Action programs. They believe that giving back as a family encourages gratitude for what we have and a desire to share their resources to make the world a better place.

## Levi, 7

I like it when we pick up rubbish because then it makes the environment very clean and healthy for all of us. We plant lots of trees so they can help to take away the pollution and make more and more plants.

## Caleb

Giving back increases our understanding that we are in a place of privilege to be able to help others when we could easily have been born into a situation where we would be on the receiving end. It also makes us more thoughtful of how we spend our money.



**Rebecca**

The Clothing Auction Network has been my biggest volunteering project. It provides community to women, raises money for charities, and promotes sustainable fashion. As part of WellWomen, we give generously in our WeChat community groups to support, encourage, and inspire people, which has been so important over the last year.

**Neriah, 9**

I enjoy helping other people and hanging out together while we do it. It makes people happier. Sometimes hard jobs seem easier when you have a good time.

**Malachi, 6**

I planted lots of plants. It made me feel good because that place might not have enough trees. There were also hot dogs.



# BECOME BEST BUDDIES WITH SENIA-BEIJING

Bridging the Special Education Gap

By Cindy Marie Jenkins



Participants at SENIA-Beijing's 2019 conference. This year's conference was virtual.

Everyone struggles to make friends in a new place. The older you are, the harder it is, but moving as a child can be both exciting and challenging. Some people have had the same friends their whole lives and aren't as open to new people joining their circles. Add in the additional challenges of social or learning differences, and many students can easily feel isolated in their new city.

That's where SENIA-Beijing and their Best Buddies program comes into the picture. According to their website, Best Buddies is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

But to Janice Bareng-Pineda, organizer of the volunteer Best Buddies program lead by Harrow Beijing and Rong Ai Rong Le (RARL), it means much more than that to all the students involved. "Volunteering with Best Buddies not only gives kids and families time to do something more for the community but

[is] also an eye-opener of what special needs is about. [Volunteering is] a great opportunity for special needs awareness."

While talking to Bareng-Pineda, I kept asking what it is Best Buddies actually does, but the truth of the matter is that it is simply about friendship, companionship, and having fun between children who may not otherwise know one another. While for many schoolchildren, smiling or saying a word happens all the time, every day of their lives, for many of the kids helped by Best Buddies, that can be a milestone. One of the student volunteers sent this after one such successful day:

"I am so grateful for this afternoon! After I said goodbye to you, I met [my Best Buddy] and I asked him how did he feel this afternoon. Unbelievable! He replied with a Chinese work *kaixin* which means "happy." He said it! It was the first time he said a word to me since I met him in June. It means a lot to me."

Finding programs like Best Buddies is not easy in Beijing, especially when few schools,

local or international, have any special education resources, and if they do, the additional costs are too burdensome for families on top of tuition. Another hindrance is that one student's approved and proposed therapeutic plan, usually received by a family after months and sometimes years of evaluations, does not always translate well to another country.

That's part of the gap that SENIA-Beijing has been filling since 2011. Dr. Gerald Anthony, Chairman of SENIA-Beijing, explains how the organization works to help local and international families when they move to Beijing: "One of the fundamental reasons that SENIA-Beijing began was to coordinate people and organizations for those linked to special education with an external expertise listing. This was created with the thought of listing things that are available to parents, teachers, and the local community. Our external exper-

Best Buddies International is a dynamic and growing organization, thanks to the people that



help advance its mission every day. From the Board of Directors to the summer interns, everyone on the Best Buddies team shares their energy and enthusiasm as they work to enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

[www.bestbuddies.org](http://www.bestbuddies.org)

## SENIA - BEIJING BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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tise listing that goes out to all our members free of charge includes the contact information of Beijing-based specialists in mental health and special educational needs."

We know that in China, WeChat is life, and so SENIA-Beijing takes their mission where the people need it. As Dr. Anthony describes it, "The WeChat group allows our members to have several interconnected communication channels that give access to resources, organized local events...links to SENIA social media platforms and professional development opportunities such as our current Bridging the Gap virtual conference ([www.seniainternational.org](http://www.seniainternational.org)) December 4-6 of this year."

In the SENIA-Beijing WeChat group, rarely does a question go unanswered. Resources, spreadsheets with therapists and specialists of all kind are shared freely, and you won't find any one of the 400+ members offering help that sounds "salesy" as one finds in many groups of this nature. Everyone who is there is there to help.

That is how someone might also come across programs like Best Buddies. Harrow Beijing began including Best Buddies in their Leadership in Action enrichment activities in 2019. Students from Year 5 through Year 13 can join the program, engaging the IDD community with all sorts of fun activities like reading, games, arts and crafts, and more. Because of the lack of schools available for this community, many IDD students study in isolation at home or rarely venture into social situations with students their own age. Best

Buddies fills that gap and more for them.

Christina Wang is a Year 10 student at Harrow Beijing, who was paired with Zhichao Gao. She recalls that at first he wasn't sure what they were doing as Best Buddies, yet she "knew he was trying very hard to be in the same place with other people. He tried to join in arts and crafts and played games with us. Sometimes he would run off because there were many people in one room, especially when we had our end of year party. He did not want people touching him but one afternoon, when we were sending them off for home, he crossed his arms with me. I thought it was such a kind gesture."

Even during the COVID-19 quarantines, Best Buddies found a way to thrive through a new e-Buddies program, as Bareng-Pineda described to *beijingkids* last April: "There were 30 youths with IDD paired with volunteers participating in the e-Buddies program. They had video calls every day via WeChat. The program team also prepared different topics for those peers to talk and work out together via video calls. For example, they talked about topics like why we have to stay home, what is COVID-19, how to wear masks and how to wash your hands, and also some action songs the peers could work out at home, like physical activities, dance, handcraft, drawing, and cooking. At the end, we held an online KTV party as a culminating activity."

What an extraordinary opportunity to tie together empathy, socializing, generosity, and gratitude for all families in Beijing.



*The smallest gesture means everything when you're buddies.*

#### What are ways that people can volunteer?

- Join the Best Buddies Program through Harrow Beijing.
- Check the new events calendar at <https://seniainternational.org/beijing> for many events that promote outreach and education.
- Reach out to their list of partners or to any of the local organizations to arrange visits as an individual family or a school.



*Best Buddies engage in all kinds of activities together!*



SENIA-Beijing has the same mission as their parent organization, SENIA. As an association of educators, professionals, and parents, their mission is to advocate for and provide resources and supports for differently-abled individuals. Their vision is to live in an inclusive world where every individual is supported, resources are accessible, potential is maximized, and action is inspired.

# Strict Holiday Traditions Are Overrated

Adapting Western Holidays to Fit Our Beijing Lifestyle

*By Mina Yan*







*Mical, Anna and Oliver enjoy their time together no matter the location*

**The year was 1995 and my family had just moved from China to California.**

We were determined to learn the American culture, so when the end of the year rolled around it meant time to decorate and buy all the stuff we've only seen in holiday movies. We got the tree even though the idea of cutting down a perfectly good tree just to bring it indoors to wilt didn't make sense. In China, our indoor trees were potted and alive. A wreath on the door also seemed odd. Funerals in China always have wreaths and my seven year old brain associated them with death, but our neighbor explained that in American they did not mean there was a death in the family, so we got over that too. We drank the holiday drink with the unappealing name that turned out to be delicious — eggnog, who would have thought drinking raw eggs would be good? And we ate something delightful called stuffing that turned out to be bread that was cooked inside a turkey's rear end. Seriously, if you didn't grow up with these traditional foods, they're absurd for a first timer.

When the second year rolled around, my mom had had it with sticking to traditions. The ceremonial Christmas tree turned into "just put lights on the potted plants" and drinking eggnog turned into "get cranberry juice, but be sure to water it down because you don't need to drink that much sugar." We had tried the American holiday traditions, and now it was time to adapt it to fit our lifestyle.

**Fast forward a little over a decade later, to life in Beijing.**

Every year when the holiday season rolls around I look on social media, see the over the top festivities of my friends, and can't help but feel a bit down at my own lack of Christmas cheer.

You can't just stroll to any old mall parking lot and pick up a tree here. So how do we keep

the holiday spirit alive, especially this year when the pandemic has added even bigger hurdles for us?

Like with schools, holiday concerts, and gatherings, this holiday season is all about infusing virtual attendance into our everyday habits. "Last year we went back to the US in late December to celebrate the holidays, which for us is both Hanukkah and Christmas, and to spend time with our family on the West coast. We usually split our years between the West coast and East. This year, because of COVID-19 we cannot travel, so it was just time spent on Skype and Zoom with different family members," Mical G and Anna M, parents to two-year-old Oliver, tell *beijingkids*.

**For many families, while we can still stick to the holiday traditions we have back in our home countries, we need to amend them just a tad for our lives here in Beijing.**

Those whose holiday traditions revolve around cooking together as a family might find themselves in search of a new hobby, since many of us have smaller kitchens than we're used to back home and not as many extended family near us. As expat mom Kelly O'Hara tells us, "We've only had two Christmases here. The last Christmas I took the kids back to see my family, so I feel we don't have a trend yet. But our first Christmas here was also the first time we ordered in a Christmas lunch of turkey rather than cooking or having

a cold lunch of seafood and ham (it's usually sweltering hot in Australia at this time of the year). It was a novelty and treat not to cook and have minimal clean up."

**But what is the holiday season really about anyway? Tradition? Food? Presents!?**

Yes, yes, and yes. But the most importantly thing is the intangible — turning moments with those you love into treasured memories that'll last a lifetime. "My husband and I were never really into the traditional Christmas. We used to indulge in a full day's viewing of *Lord of the Rings* until we had kids. We got more into the traditional celebrations once our kids got older, but being in Beijing has made it more about our small family using the time to collect ourselves, take a breath together to evaluate how life is going, and where we want to go. We spend quality time with each other and our friends, without the pressure to visit relatives or indulge in the commercial side of the holiday, and we keep the gift giving to a minimum. We always say that our home is wherever the four of us are together, and that can be anywhere," says Cindy Marie Jenkins.

Gone are the days in the 90's when uniformity was cool. As we usher in 2021, it's all about creating experiences that are unique. So if traditions don't need to be so strict and stiff, and the commercial side of the holiday season is merely a bonus, then perhaps our Beijing adaptation of the holiday season is exactly what we need. That said, happy holidays and celebrate this time of the year the way you like. Like they say, you do you!



*The Jenkins Family once turned Boxing Day into a new tradition of making castles out of gift boxes*

# A FEAST of Flavors

Mother-Daughter Bonding Time  
at East Hotel's International Brunch

*By Qinglan Du*





"Mother-daughter bonding time" is probably my mom and my favorite phrase. We say it every time we go out for dinner, shopping, or road trips. But when we were introduced to Feast (Food by East), this phrase has never been more fitting. Since its opening in 2012, Feast has offered unique semi-buffet brunches on weekends.

### Brunch With a View

Located on the second floor of the luxurious East Hotel, one side of the restaurant is composed of wall-length windows, and the other is where the buffet is served. We picked a table next to the windows and were awestruck by how the view was practically parallel to that of sky dining. Not only were tall buildings and flourishing trees in sight, but the midday Beijing sun shone through the glass onto our plates and created a warm, comfortable atmosphere.

After settling in, we ordered our main courses: garlic grilled king prawns for my mom and creamy smoked salmon linguine for me. While waiting for them to arrive, my mom and I browsed the buffet, eagerly filling up our plates with everything from macaroons to chicken nuggets. All the main courses, buffet, and free-flow drinks are included in the entrance fee, which is RMB 328 per person, RMB 164 for children from ages 7 to 12, and free of charge for kids 6 and under.



### A Bonding Buffet

Walking from one end of the buffet to another felt like the International Day lunches my school hosts. We started with Japanese sushi and sliced raw salmon, arguably one of my favorite dishes. I just couldn't get enough of it. Then we passed through the desserts section, which was an explosion of flavors and colors. I dived into the cream puffs, jelly beans, and mocha cake. Even my mom and her dessert-free diet couldn't resist the temptation. She bit into the mocha cake expecting

to be bombarded with excessive sugar yet was delighted to find it to be just the right balance of mocha flavor and cream, tinted with a light sweetness.

Right at the center of the buffet was a Chinese section consisting of bamboo steamers and even the popular street food *Jianbing-guozi* (煎饼果子 jiān bǐng guǒ zi). At this point my mom exclaimed that she'd been meaning to try one ever since we first returned to Beijing a month ago, but never found the chance.

### Seafood Is For Sharing

We made our way back to the table and were still savoring our treats from the buffet when the main courses arrived.

My mother's king prawns were delicately arranged, using their natural curved shapes to form a spiral. Hand in hand, my mom and I squeezed droplets of lemon juice across the prawns. My mom cut me a piece and I immediately noticed the exceptionally flavorful combination of spices. Sprinkled with just the right amount of red peppers to make us crave more, the plate became empty in no time.

For my salmon linguine, the linguine was coated in a rich layer of herbs, creating a powerful contrast with the creamy, mushroom sauce. The smoked salmon was scattered across the dish and intertwined with the linguine, ensuring every bite was accompanied with at least one small piece of salmon.

By this time, the restaurant was already brimming with customers gleefully chattering away. I looked around and saw that a large portion of the customers were international, often families with young children. I watched as a little girl nibbled away on a chocolate donut and her parents and

siblings all gathered around.

### Giving Back Love and Good Food

Feast truly is a place of bonding. My mom and I have been enjoying "mother-daughter bonding time" every day for the past two years. We lived in Israel where she worked as a journalist and I attended secondary school. Exploring the nature reserves and historical sites of a foreign country was the type of bonding we were familiar with.

Stepping into Feast felt like a reverse culture shock to us. We seldom visited res-



taurants in Israel, plus the past nine months of tackling COVID-19 had made such a sight unbelievable to us: tables and tables of people with no masks and no fear, just amazing food and meaningful conversations.

Every day for the past two years, I've watched my mom tinker away in the kitchen, racking her brain to cook up something new for dinner. That's just one of the countless things she's done for me. She drove me to other cities so I could attend the events I wanted to, she had the brightest smile in the audience at my school concerts, and she always asked me if I was hungry first thing when I got home from school. A mother-daughter bonding brunch was the least I could do to give back to her.

Good food means the world to every Chinese, even if you are far away from home and lacking half the spices; even if you are in a hurry and about to be late for school, even if you are exhausted and not in the mood for a deep talk over dinner. Good food can change all that. Good food is even the secret to the best "mother-daughter bonding time."

### Feast (Food by EAST)

2/F, EAST Beijing, 22 Jiuxianqiao Lu  
朝阳区酒仙桥路22号东隅北京酒店2层  
8414 9820

# FEEL GOOD *Foods*

## Beijing Restaurants Serve Dishes that Keep On Giving

By Kirsten Harrington

What could be better than a night off from the kitchen or a fantastic lunch with friends? How about eating well and giving back to the community at the same time? Between fundraising to educate girls in rural China, to providing jobs for the blind, these Beijing eateries have the heart to give back.

At a time when succeeding in business is harder than ever, these places find that satisfying diners' desires for a great meal while serving the community is a recipe for success. So ditch the apron and head for one of these local restaurants. Eat a meal you can feel good about!

### Miam Miam – Love is Blind

*Bridget's smile lights up her face when she talks about her job.*

"Making juice is my favorite. I like making coffee too, but sometimes the cups are too hot," said Bridget, who is visually impaired and has worked at Miam Miam for about three years.

"Bringing blind people into hospitality opens another opportunity for them," said Managing Director of Groupe FLO Asia Jimmy Loh. He explained that Bridget works full-time, lives in a dormitory, and takes the bus to work.

"Hiring handicapped people is relatively new in China. You have to create an environment for success," explained Loh, who installed a fully automatic coffee machine for Bridget to use. She has since graduated to a semi-automatic machine, and dreams of becoming a barista one day.

In addition to hiring Bridget, Miam Miam partners financially with the non-profit Bethel China to support children with visual impairments by donating a portion of sales from three popular menu items.

"I tell my team to treat her like everyone else. She has the best attitude, and now my staff complains less and enjoys work more. They realize how blessed they are," he said.

"Charity should be from the heart, not just a marketing gimmick," said Loh. "Bridget is the glue that holds us together. She brings out the best in all of us."



**Address:** 40, B1, Ground Floor, Fenghuanghui Shopping Center, 5, Shuguang Xilijia  
曙光西里甲5号凤凰汇购物中心地下一层B1 40号  
**Hours:** Daily, 10am-10pm  
**Phone:** 8436 7501

### Moka Bros – Eat Well, Feel Good

*"Being involved in the community is part of our DNA." -Anna Lin Yip*



**Address:** Sanlitun, 1/F, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Lu  
朝阳区三里屯路81号那里花园1层  
**Hours:** Sun-Thu 11am-10.30pm, Fri-Sat 11am-11.30pm  
**Phone:** 5208 6079

It's easy for your taste buds to be satisfied after feasting on power bowls, salads and wraps, but with four locations across Beijing, Moka Bros gives customers something else to warm our hearts. Their list of do-good deeds is as colorful and varied as their menu:

- Power Up smoothie sales benefit Smile Angel, a charity that helps kids with cleft palates regain their smiles.
- Wooden cutlery sales from takeout orders generate revenue for Roots & Shoots' tree planting project.
- A special Lanzhou Power Bowl provides schooling for girls in rural China.
- Even natural disasters have a silver lining. In the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, Moka Bros donated half a day of income from all locations across China to disaster relief. Now that's something to smile about.



## Hulu by TRB – A Helping Hand

*Being involved in the community has been the core value for Hulu since the beginning.*



**Address:** 3/F, Taikoo Li South, Sanlitun

朝阳区三里屯太古里南区三楼

**Hours:** Sun-Thu 11am-11pm, Fri-Sat 11am-midnight

**WeChat:** HuluBeijingOfficial / ilovehuluforever

"Including my guests or being included in their charitable events allows me to have a deeper connection and better understanding of what our guests truly need," said Ignace Lecleir, owner and founder of Hulu/TRB Hospitality Group.

Attend just about any citywide event and you're likely to see Hulu's presence, from WAB's Winter Charity Bazaar benefitting Migrant Children's Foundation to ChiFan for Charity, where Hulu/TRB is donating this year's grand raffle prize: a 12-course wine dinner for eight at TRB Forbidden City, valued at over RMB 20,000.

"I'm trying my best to cover as many topics and [have] as much diversity as possible," said Lecleir, whose hospitality group has supported animal rescue, library projects, and Wild Women on the Wall (WWOTW), a group of women who raise money for charity through fitness endeavors.

"Ignace has been extremely generous," says Désirée de Wit, Head of Fundraising for WWOTW. "He supported our spin-a-thon with canapés and cocktails and sponsored us with sparkling wine for our celebration at the end of our three-day run/hike on the Great Wall last year."

"I personally enjoy giving back in any form. Knowing those in need are being helped and taken care of is a good feeling indeed," Lecleir said.



## Side Street – Showing the Love

*This year's Burger Cup Champion believes it's just good karma to give back.*

Side Street changes things up by letting patrons take over the kitchen twice a week. Chef Mannu cooks up Venezuelan Arepas on Saturdays, and Chef Hakan rolls out Turkish Pide on Thursdays.

"It's a special thing. We're offering something unique," said Uday Phalgun, one of Side Street's partners. "They have quite a following. It helps them out because they share in the revenue, and it brings us new customers."

But it's not just humans that get the love; Side Street has a big heart for furry friends. In July they hosted Pints for Pups, a fundraiser for Lost Puppies of Beijing which cares for rescue dogs. Feline companions have something to purr about thanks to Side Street's "Cocktails for Cat Tails" events, which donate a portion of vegan burger and cocktail sales to cat welfare charities.

"These events are about giving back to the community, but since more people hear about us, it promotes our business too," Phalgun said.

That's a win win in our book – and stomachs.



**Address:** 113-02 Jiaodaokou Dongdajie, Dongcheng District

东城区交道口东大街113-02

**Hours:** 11.30am-late

**WeChat:** SideStreet街旁

# *A Yuletide Surprise!*

How to Turn Common Household Items  
into a Reusable Yuletide Calendar!

*By Mark Allan Karanja*





Few things truly mark the festive season quite like a Yuletide calendar. The prospect of waking up each morning to a tasty surprise behind each day's window is enough to turn even the Grinchiest of holiday season kill-joys into a fun and festive person. The trouble with Yuletide calendars is they can be quite expensive and are not reusable. Once the festive season is past, that year's calendar is disposed of, and another bought the next year.

This month on Maker's Corner, we learn to upcycle common household waste into a beautiful, original, and reusable Yuletide calendar! And to show us how it is done are Priscille Joyce Eneme, Grade 2, and Owen Kennedy, Grade 5 from AISB – Hope International, with their art teacher Chloe JooYeong.



1. Colored art paper (green, red, brown, yellow, and silver)
2. 30 tissue rolls
3. Small boxboard for stars
4. Popsicle sticks
5. Color markers or crayons

6. White, silver, and gold pens
7. Scissors
8. Double-sided tape
9. Hot glue gun
10. Paper clips



#### Step 1:

Arrange the 30 tissue rolls to create a Christmas tree shape. Be sure to have a 'tree trunk' below the tree shape. Use paper clips to hold the shape in place as you work on the rest of the details. Flip over once all the rolls are secured. Be sure to use extra clips if necessary.



#### Step 2:

After the rolls have been securely clipped in place and the project has been flipped over, place the 'Christmas Tree' on green art paper and trace out the shape before cutting it out and sticking it to the back of the tree. Feel free to use the marker pens and crayons to decorate the tree as desired.



#### Step 3:

Use the round end of a tissue roll to trace and cut out 26 circles which will work as date flaps for each Yuletide hole. Decorate each number with colored markers. Use white, silver, and gold pens to make the numbers more festive.



#### Step 4:

Use the hot glue gun to attach the background paper, and attach a string from which you will hang the tree. Use red art paper to cover the sides of the tree. You can either use your glue gun or double-sided tape to complete this step.



#### Step 5:

On a yellow piece of art paper, trace and cut out two star-shaped pieces. Use double-sided tape to join both sides before sticking onto the popsicle stick. Cover the popsicle stick with silver paper. Cut a small hole large enough for the popsicle stick at the top of the tree and stick it through before securing with glue.



#### Step 6:

Once your star is secured at the top of your tree, feel free to fill each Yuletide hole with your favorite treats and enjoy!



# Small Acts of Kindness

## How to Get Kids Interested in Charity Work

By Robynne Tindall

In a season that often ends up being more about getting than giving, it's important to take a step back and think about how we can contribute to and engage with the communities around us. While parents might have a history of charitable

activities under their belt, how can they encourage kids to follow in their footsteps and develop an understanding of the importance of charity? Thankfully, life in Beijing presents plenty of opportunities to help out.

### Start Small

In the wake of the social and economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever that we support those in need, and it doesn't take much to do your part. It could be as simple as getting kids to help with decluttering around the house (make it a competition to see who can come up with the most items) and then taking them with you when you go to the donation point.

#### **Ideas include:**

- Roundabout recently organized a 'Backpack Drive,' with the backpacks donated going directly to schoolchildren in Qinghai. As Deputy Manager Cindy Marie Jenkins noted in a blog about the drive, "When your kids think about how they would feel if they didn't have something so essential as a backpack for school, it could very well cause them to look around their rooms and notice other items to donate."
- Another mom told us that she includes specific "donation" money in her teenage kids' allowance and that the family sits down as a group a couple of times a year to decide where to send the money.

### Where You Lead, They Can Follow

Peipei Wang, development officer at Stars and Rain, a non-profit institution that specializes in educational services for autistic children and their families, described how volunteering can be passed down from parents to children.

Back in the mid-2000s, a mother brought her five-year-old daughter to the organization's school during the summer holidays. One decade later, that same girl still visits Stars and Rain every year with creative ways to raise awareness for the school.

#### **Ideas include:**

- Collecting donations of unwanted books from her elementary school classmates
- Collecting well-wishes from famous local artists and compiling them into a book for the students.



## *Make It Clear Who They're Helping*

"Charity" can seem like a bit of an abstract concept, especially to younger kids. That's why it's important to find ways for kids to engage on an emotional level with the people they are helping. It can also be helpful to find charities where your kids can see and understand the direct benefits.

### **Ideas include:**

- Volunteer or raise money for organizations that work with children such as Stars and Rain, as kids may be more likely to connect with the problems of people their own age.
- The company Mantra, in partnership with non-profit Education in Sight, donates a pair of prescription glasses to a child in rural Yunnan for every pair of sunglasses sold. This "buy one, give one" model is easy for kids to understand.

## *Encourage Them to Use Existing Skills*

Taking part in charity activities doesn't necessarily have to mean traveling to a distant province or stepping too far out of your comfort zone (although we do encourage that, too). Wendy Lu, director of Roundabout's cooperation and development department, told us about a Year 12 student from Dulwich College Beijing who spent her summer leading a tennis training program in her compound, using her years of experience in the game. After taking part in Roundabout's reading club last year, she decided to donate the money she raised from her lessons to Roundabout, who used the money to support an 11-year-old girl in Gansu Province.

### **Ideas include:**

- Budding Mozarts could hold an impromptu concert
- Future Great British Baking Show stars could bake treats and sell them to their classmates (always check with the school beforehand).

## *Just Get Involved!*

Ultimately, there's no wrong place to start when it comes to getting children involved in charity. Many charities and organizations around Beijing put together events specifically targeted at children, such as performances or art auctions, but you can also encourage your kids to come up with their own ways to contribute by having them think about what they're good at and what social issues they are interested in, perhaps in relation to something they have been studying at school.

### **Follow the organizations mentioned in this article:**

#### **Roundabout**

WeChat ID: Roundabout666

#### **Stars and Rain**

WeChat ID: xxy19930315

#### **Education in Sight**

WeChat ID: 点亮眼睛



Scan here to learn where you can donate toys and clothes in Beijing

# GROWING UP *In a Gentler World*

## Encouraging Kids To Be Kind

By Mark Allan Karanja

With travel restrictions, our worlds suddenly got much smaller. Among the doom and gloom blaring out of social media, there's a feeling that there is far less kindness in the world. This has been blamed on multiple factors, from the pace of life becoming unbearably fast, to technology replacing face-to-face human interactions to something as mundane as not smiling at people when we see them these days. The masks might have something to do with that, but is it really as bleak a future as they say?

Some hope can be found from scenes across the world this year. After COVID-19 forced countries into lockdown, global citizens rallied to help in whichever way they could. In some places, people fundraised

to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for frontline workers. Hundreds of etsy shops were born out of the need for masks, practical and fanciful and fitting children. Others organized rooftop concerts to boost the morale of those stuck at home. Even therapists began to offer free online consultations to those who were most in need of mental health services.

Clearly there is hope. But how do we ensure that the future generation moves through the world in a far more generous way without being prompted by a global pandemic? How do we raise our kids to be nicer, kinder people? We've collected some key suggestions, and they all begin in small ways.

*"If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours."*

*-Dolly Parton*

### Baby See, Baby Do

It is hard for kids to fully comprehend the importance of charity if they do not see the effects of what helping can do. Taking kids with you to volunteer so they can directly witness the impact of helping might be a good place to start. Sometimes it's not as direct, such as fundraising for cancer research, yet kids can understand getting sick. They understand feeling poorly then feeling better, and some illnesses require more than an over-the-counter medicine. They will surely want to help more if they understand the real life effect they can have on people's lives.



*"Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them."*

*-A.A. Milne*

### It's Yet Another Skill

Parents of young children might be far more focused on their children's functional and cognitive development in their first few years of life. But while skills such as reading, writing and creative play are being honed, this might be the perfect time to engage toddlers in play that mimics generosity and empathy in real life. A good example is "one for you, one for me" or "taking turns," which emphasize sharing. Ages 3-5 are when kids start to feel empathy, or understanding the feelings of another person. Taking them to see live theatre, and interactive music or dance classes with children in their age group, are proven ways to nurture empathy in young minds.







*"A bit of fragrance clings to the hand that gives flowers."  
-Confucius*

### Be The Change You Want To See

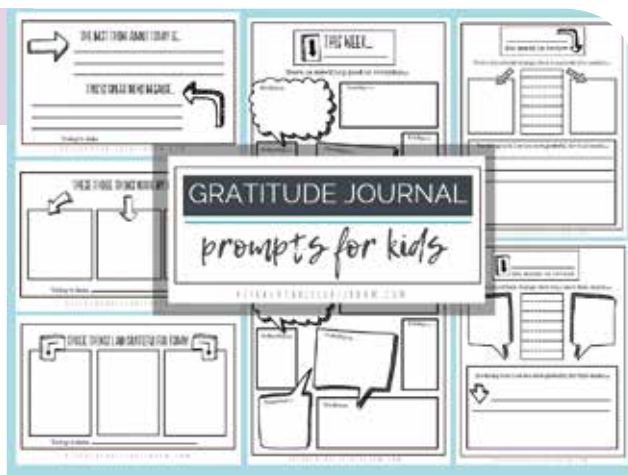
It can be easy for us to say the world is far less kind than it was before. It is also easy to say we fear our kids won't have enough positive role models while growing up. But there is a simple and unpleasant question we have to ask ourselves. Are you modeling the behavior you wish to see in your child? Are you as charitable as you wish for your kids to be? Are you always looking for the kind words to say, or do you rely on snark and joking about people that can easily sound like you're teasing them? It's hard for adults, but we must do our best to show them how to be as kind as possible in our daily actions, not just our monthly charity work.

*"Try to be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."  
-Maya Angelou*

### Always Live In Gratitude

Sometimes it is important to write down the reasons why we are more privileged than others. Teaching kids how to put down their reasons to be grateful could create great contrast between them and the less fortunate. Writing a gratitude journal doesn't have to be a daily chore but could be part of the family bonding rituals. Or even something to be added to your New Year's resolutions list.

There are many free printable gratitude journals or prompts for kids, and we found some excellent ones via Kitchen Table Classroom. Here is one example of simple ways to prompt your children into an understanding of just how much they have.



*"If you want to lift yourself up, lift someone else up."  
-Booker T. Washington*

### There is No Pass or Fail

In a bid to try and make their kids more charitable, some parents might decide to take on the challenge as some sort of exam, both for them and their kids, and in so doing, force their kids into "charitable activities" that do not quite encourage lasting change in the child. This might also be because charitable works look good on a college application or might help the child get into a better school.

Better to start with something the child wants to change, or help, or do. Point out injustices or inequities and help them find a way to make change. It will mean much more if it comes from your child's own heart.

# Seeing Beyond the Surface

## A History of Blind Massage in Beijing

By Robynne Tindall



**A good massage can be a boon for both body and soul, but can it benefit others, too?** If you have spent any time in Beijing or other cities in China, you probably noticed buildings advertising “blind massage” (盲人按摩, *máng rén àn mó*), and wondered a) why there are so many, and b) if the people giving the massages are actually blind. It turns out that in the latter half of the 20th century, massage became a preferred profession for people with limited vision.

According to the World Blind Union Asia Pacific, as of 2018, there were more than 17.5 million people with limited vision or blindness in China, making up one of the country’s largest disabled groups. Although disabled people in China receive official legal and governmental support, and many industries have introduced diversity and inclusion policies, blind or low vision people still lack access to employment opportunities.

To a certain extent, blind massage has become a route out of poverty and unemployment for some visually impaired people.

In China, massage as a career specifically targeted at the blind dates back to the 1950s. Massage practice was codified in the 1990s, when the China Massage Association of Blind Practitioners was established in 1996. Following the growth and opening up of China’s economy in the 1990s, massage parlors both blind and otherwise sprung up in cities across the country as people gained more disposable income and leisure time, and the China Disabled Persons’ Federation encouraged the establishment of training facilities and licensing procedures for blind masseurs.

**Despite many having recognized qualifications from institutions such as Beijing Blind Massage Guidance Center, for the**

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK



**longest time, even qualified blind masseurs were unable to work in medical institutions.** In 2016, the Law of the People's Republic of China on Traditional Chinese Medicine changed the prospects for many masseurs, offering recognition of their professional skills and allowing some to substantially increase their income.

The massage practiced at blind massage parlors is usually a form of 推拿, *tuīná* (literally "push and pinch"), a traditional Chinese massage technique that is used as an "external" treatment in traditional Chinese medicine (as opposed to "internal" treatments like tonics and medicines). The massage is done over the clothes and is more of a medicinal treatment than a relaxation technique — no cucumber water, soft lighting, and essential oils here. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean you won't leave feeling relaxed.

**It is claimed that people who are blind are better masseurs, due to the lack of visual cues stimulating their ability to feel out areas of tension.** This is particularly key for *tuina* massage since it involves such a wide range of tactile techniques, including kneading, pinching, and stretching. Certainly, at my local massage parlor, the masseuse was instantly able to home in on my wonky shoulders from years of carrying my laptop around in unsuitable tote bags. He manipulated the knots in my muscles with ease, and once I had come down from the ceiling — this is not necessarily a pain-free experience — he explained that massage is all about restoring balance, both externally, like my uneven shoulder muscles, but also internally, focusing on the flow of energy around the body.

Blind massage has, to a certain extent, created more balanced access to employment opportunities for blind people in Beijing, but there

is still a way to go before this group can enjoy the same freedom of work and daily life as people without disabilities. That being said, it is definitely worth visiting your local blind massage parlor to see if you notice a difference in the technique of the therapists, but be sure to check that it is above-board and licensed (if in doubt, ask, and check their Dianping reviews).

### Where to go

#### Beijing Massage Hospital

7 Baochan Hutong, Xicheng District  
北京按摩医院: 西城区宝产胡同7号  
(6616 8880)

#### Qingsong Manxing Blind Massage

Daily 10.30am-11.30pm. 1/F, Building 3, Shuiduizi Beili, Chaoyang District  
轻松漫行盲人按摩: 朝阳区水碓子北里3号楼底商  
District (6505 7727)

#### Taihe Massage

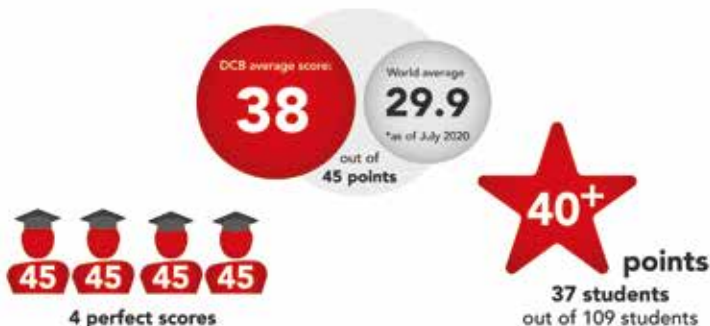
Daily 10am-11pm. 2/F, west side of Lvju Hotel, 12 Hepingli Dongjie, Dongcheng District  
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# CHARTING THE WAY TO A KINDER WORLD

## A Geography Teacher Navigates Teaching Through Love

By Mark Allan Karanja

Beyond raising happy, healthy, intelligent children, most parents hope for their children to become kind, generous, and giving people. Now more than ever, parents are focusing on growing their children's emotional intelligence, focusing on empathy to counteract the increasingly self-centric attitude to life that seems to be the norm. Empathy is evidently on the decline, according to a 2009 study of American college students in The Atlantic. Between 1979 and 2009, students grew far less likely to be concerned by the situation of those who were less fortunate than them, and even worse, appeared to feel less bothered by seeing others being treated unfairly.



### Not All Heroes Wear Capes!

This is where Sharon Ringrose, a Geography teacher at Harrow Beijing steps in. After holding this position for eight years, Ringrose knows not only about the physical geography of Beijing, but also the philanthropic lay of the land, and strives to guide her students through it. "I have always loved Geography and feel that it is important to teach children about the world around them," says Ringrose. Recalling my own time in school, I remember Geography as being one of those polarizing subjects, right up there with the hard sciences. One either adored it or abhorred it. So how does a teacher deal with this possible polarizing effect of the subject about which she is passionate? "I try to make learning fun and lessons interesting," is Ringrose's response, also adding, "If a teacher is enthusiastic about what they are teaching then it is easier to engage students and get them to work hard."

### In A World Of Our Own

As foreigners living in Beijing, it is easy to exist in an expat echo chamber, insulated from the world beyond our social circles. This also goes for children from international families. Granted, they attend culturally diverse schools, but their potential social status in a country like China might mean they are isolated from those who are not as fortunate as they are. So how does one rectify such a situation? Ringrose has devised a unique way to combine charity and school resources. As she explains, "I have volunteered at Alenah's Home [a home for orphans with special needs] for seven years. This has included taking students to the home every week and running a swimming program on Saturdays in the Harrow swimming pool. Going swimming was often the highlight of the week for the children."

### A Little Goes a Long Way

As a teacher and parent herself, Ringrose feels doubly obliged to encourage her students to not only start but continue sustainable charitable initiatives. "I also encouraged my students to organize and run fundraising initiatives such as making and selling hot chocolates and cookies to raise money for local charities," explains Ringrose. But beyond extending generosity to those outside of their classrooms, Ringrose also encourages kindness in her classroom. As Ringrose explains, "I encourage students to be kind to each other; this might be through buddying with new students or group work."

### A Future of Kindness and Geography in Beijing

Ringrose admits to having utterly fallen in love with Beijing. "I love living in Beijing, there are always new restaurants to go to and places to see. I love the fact that we are close to the mountains for skiing in the winter and the fact that there is so much history to explore within the city," says Ringrose, revealing her affinity for history as well. What the future holds for Ringrose in Beijing, only time will tell, but she hopes to continue doing what she loves – teaching Geography and helping create a kinder, more compassionate generation of learners. As she puts it, "Kindness inspires kindness. In the last eight years, I have worked with many wonderful students who have inspired me to be kinder and more patient."

**Learn More about Alenah's Home and how to support their mission:**

**Website:** [www.childrenshope.net](http://www.childrenshope.net)

**Ph:** 6431 8202

**Email:** [chif@childrenshope.org.cn](mailto:chif@childrenshope.org.cn)



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# Giving Yourself to Art

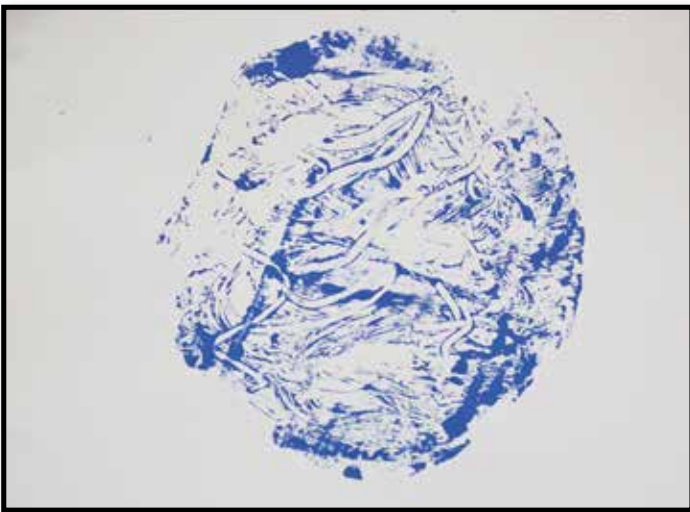
Students From Harrow Beijing  
Use All Their Tools  
for Creative Expression

*By Mina Yan*



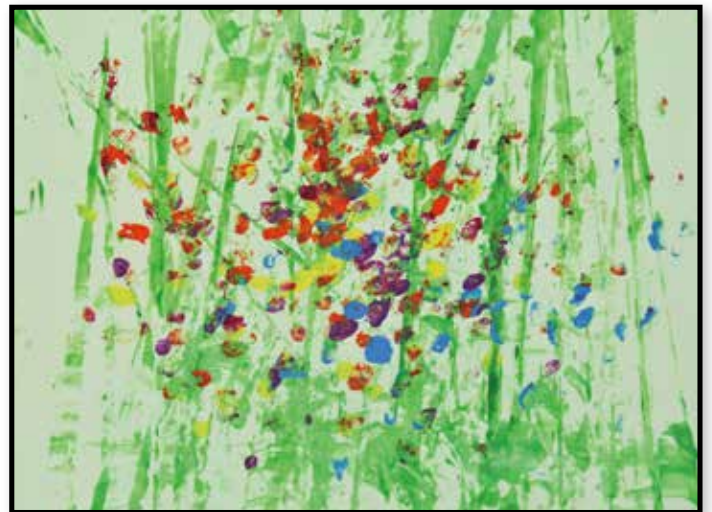
**Teresa W (Year 2)**

"I really like the colors in Autumn.  
This is my Autumn scene."



**Eric H (Year 2)**

"I made my print with blue paint. I painted the waves in the sea."



**Flynn H (Year 2)**

"I like my grass and flowers. I used my fingers!"





**Chelsea L (Year 2)**

"I like the colors. I used a sharp tool to make my face and I printed it!"



**Anne L (Year 2)**

"We followed instructions and learned how to draw the alien Beegu."



**Hannah W (Year 2)**

"I really enjoyed using my fingers and pens to make my picture."



**Asha W (Year 2)**

"I made a blossom tree. The brown is the branches. The red and purple are the opened blossoms."

# FAMILIES GIVE BACK AS THEY GROW UP

Families From Different Cultural Backgrounds Share Their Views on Community Service

By Mina Yan

**Do you do any philanthropic work together as a family? If so, how did you get started?**

Our family began to participate in public welfare activities in 2016. At that time, it was through the school where Hannah was studying. It arranged a Lei Feng Day homework for the students, requiring them to complete an activity related to public welfare. I took my two daughters and their classmates to a hearing rehabilitation center to perform for a group of deaf and hard of hearing children from rural areas around Beijing. Since then, my family has become volunteers for these children.

**What are the causes that you and your family are passionate about? Why?**

Our family have accompanied deaf and hard of hearing children since 2016. In 2017, we launched Rainbow and Angel Coffee Shop and started to teach them to make snacks for free. In the beginning, they had no idea how to make them, but they were very brave and overcame the obstacles of their hearing loss. Today, they have become professional bakers and their products are loved by many people which makes us feel very proud.

**Do you prefer to give to one particular organization or to multiples?**

I prefer to give to one particular organization. I believe that only by deeply understanding the people I am helping can we give them the help they really need.

**Was philanthropic work a part of your life growing up?**

I used to be a financial analyst in the financial industry with a good social status and salary conditions. However, I left the financial industry and devoted myself to public welfare because I saw a greater power than money which is love. Love can bring influence beyond imagination. Love can change a person's life. This is the truth that I will never understand and feel in the financial industry.



Mom Felicia Li and her family moved to Beijing in 2011 for husband Barry's new job. The couple has two daughters, Hannah, 13, and Ann, 10.

**Do you think it's important for children to learn the importance of giving back to the community? Why or why not?**

It is very important to teach everyone to give back to the society. I think that everyone can really exert the greatest influence in life only after learning to be grateful and giving back.

**What motivates you and your family to continue your philanthropic work?**

Public service can bring a family together in a positive way. This cannot be learned in school or books. I regard public service as a very core lesson in family education. This is the main reason why I insist on taking children to do public service.

**What do you think helping others who are less fortunate teaches your children?**

It helps my children learn to be more grateful and cherish what they have.

**What's the most rewarding part about doing philanthropic work together as a family and would you recommend it to others?**

I think the biggest gain is that we witnessed how the power of love has changed the lives of these deaf and hard of hearing children. Seeing the changes in these children in person makes my children not only feel the great influence of public service, but also feel the upward power of life from these brave youth.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FELICIA LI





Jood Q and her family moved to Beijing from Saudi Arabia. Dad Mushahab is the VP of Marketing at Aramco Asia and mom Mona is an entrepreneur. Their four children Jood, 17, Sadeem, 14, Mohammed, 9, and Nourah, 7, are all students at the Canadian International School of Beijing.

**Do you do any philanthropic work together as a family? If so, how did you get started? Was philanthropic work a part of your life growing up?**

When we lived back in Saudi, mom Mona was a part of the administration for a charity that raised money for families in need through charity balls, bazaars, charity membership fees, etc. During the bazaars, the kids would book booths and sell homemade traditional snacks that Jood and her mom made together.

**What are the causes that you and your family are passionate about? Why?**

Giving to the people that need it most. We're a Muslim family; giving to others is actually one of the five pillars of Islam, therefore, we make sure to plant it within from a young age.

**Do you prefer to give to one particular organization or to multiple?**

If we [run] a charity we let [our children] handle where the fundraised money will go.

In 2016, the year we first came to Beijing, our school had started a new community called "Days for Girls". I joined and participated in every fundraiser I could join. This academic school year is my fifth year joining DFG, and I am now the student leader for the past two years where I get the privilege to spread awareness about all the unfortunate girls around the world that don't get to have the benefits that I have, such as sanitary menstrual health tools to aid with their monthly periods.

**Do you think it's important for children to learn the importance of giving back to the community? Why or why not?**

Definitely! It is important because giving back not only benefits the people, but it plants love and generosity within our children!

**What motivates you and your family to continue your philanthropic work?**

Giving back restores my faith in my religion

and makes me more aware of everything I have been blessed with. Giving back makes me aware of my privileges and provides me with a reality check.

**What do you think helping others who are less fortunate teaches your children?**

Giving back teaches us and our children to care for one another when times are hard for some. It also teaches us all to acknowledge our daily privileges, from being able to eat breakfast every day to simply walking down the street safely.

**What's the most rewarding part about doing philanthropic work together as a family and would you recommend it to others?**

The most rewarding part is when your children continue to give back to others without being instructed to do so; it makes me feel like I did my job of raising my kids well to care for others and give back. It's truly an amazing feeling. I definitely recommend teaching children to give back from a young age so they can continue to do so by themselves.

# TURN HOLIDAYS ON THEIR HEADS

Raising Grateful Kids in a Commercial World

By Julie Wolf

Several years ago, one of my longtime parents, who I will call Susan, came back from winter break with her toddler. I asked how her holiday was. She replied, "It was the worst Christmas ever!" and proceeded to tell me their story.

Her kids had been vibrating with excitement for weeks. Nights spent writing wish lists, hours online to see "the real Santa" and whole days lost in stores trying to find the toys they "had to have" had built up a sense of anticipation not just for the kids but the whole family. They were excited to give their kids the best Christmas ever!

The big day finally came and a 20-minute free for all of flying boxes and squealing delight ensued. When the last of the tissue paper had settled, her eldest looked over the piles of new shiny toys and asked, "Is that it?"

Susan told me, "I have never felt like more of a failure as a parent! This ends now!" To her credit, the next year she had a battle plan to combat what she called "the gimmes". I think it's brilliant and hope it helps make your holidays richer and more meaningful.

## *Gifting Not Getting*

Susan encouraged the kids to put more thought into making gifts for other members of the family -- whether that was a family portrait in crayon from the 3-year-old or the now 8-year old's handmade friendship bracelets. Each child used their talents to make other people happy.

Every person has something they can do that is special. Something that they are, or should be, proud of. This is true of our kids too. By helping them identify their skills, and using them to make others feel good, you are telling your child that they matter, that their actions, words and decisions have value. Let them get creative with their talents and watch what it will do for their self-esteem.

## *Gratitude Every Day*

Each night at dinner from Thanksgiving through the New Year, she asked each member of the family to share one thing that they were grateful for. She said it helped give them all perspective during a season where they were bombarded with messages that they needed more "things" to be happy.

Gratitude is a step we so often skip with our kids because it feels complicated (entire self-help anthologies have been written on the subject!) but it's really acknowledging the little things that make us happy. Kids are naturally good at that. Gratitude reminds us we have enough, we are safe. We can give some of it away so others feel safe too. And that is important for the next step in Susan's holiday rehab...

## *Make a Difference*

Susan asked each child to purchase a gift for a child they had never met, who otherwise would not have a holiday present. She neither picked nor paid for the gifts. Instead the kids did chores around the house to earn the money for the gifts and chose a present to drop in the Toys for Tots donation box.



### *Make Gift Opening an Event*

Let's be honest, you're never going to convince your kids that presents don't matter at all, and frankly it's really fun to give them the things they want! Susan and her husband decided to keep the tradition but make a few minor changes. Wish lists had to be three items or less.

And rather than everyone ripping into a million presents at the same time, the family took turns watching each other open gifts. This made each package special and since the kids had taken the time to contribute this year, they got a lot of joy watching their siblings and parents open the present they had made. This kind of practical mindfulness can enhance any experience!

### *Make Thank You Cards*

It all came full circle back to gratitude. Before anyone got to play with a new toy, they had to make a heartfelt thank you card for the person who sent it. Susan laid out construction paper, crayons and stickers to help the kids express their gratitude in a creative way!

Getting a gift is fun no matter your age and receiving a sincere thank you card always puts a smile on someone's face! By taking the time to start and end the process with a thank you, you add so much more meaning to everyone's experience.

### *Keep the Holiday Spirit Alive*

This particular story revolves around the holiday season, but gratitude and service can be a year-round part of your family's life. If your family loves the dinner time gratitude share, keep it! Did your child like volunteering at the animal shelter? See if they want to make it a monthly commitment. You might find that these little things add another layer of joy to your already joyful life and set really positive habits for your child.

### *It's Not About the Money*

There will be points in every person's life when they can't make a monetary donation, but that doesn't mean they have nothing to offer their community. Help them identify other ways they can give back. Children are passionate, so start with the things they care deeply about.

- Do you have a little environmentalist? Help them organize a park clean up.
- Is your child very concerned with world hunger or animal rights? Maybe a local soup kitchen or animal shelter could use some help on weekends.
- Do they love pets? Perhaps you can foster a puppy in need of adoption.

This goes back to teaching them that their actions matter. And people who believe they matter make different choices. They build healthier, stronger, and more just communities.

Susan and her family took back the holidays by making them about others! Our kids have so much to be grateful for and spreading the love only helps make their life richer and fuller! So, whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice or just the literal transition from shorter colder days to longer warmer ones, Happy Holidays. May your hearts be warm and may we all move towards the light together!

#### **About the Writer**

Julie Wolf is the Director of First Five Early Education Centers in New York and Director of International Education for Newhatten Early Education Centers in China. She has been working with children and parents for over 18 years as a teacher, arts integration specialist, curriculum designer and staff development expert.

# HABITS FOR HUMANITY

Books to Nourish Gratitude in Children

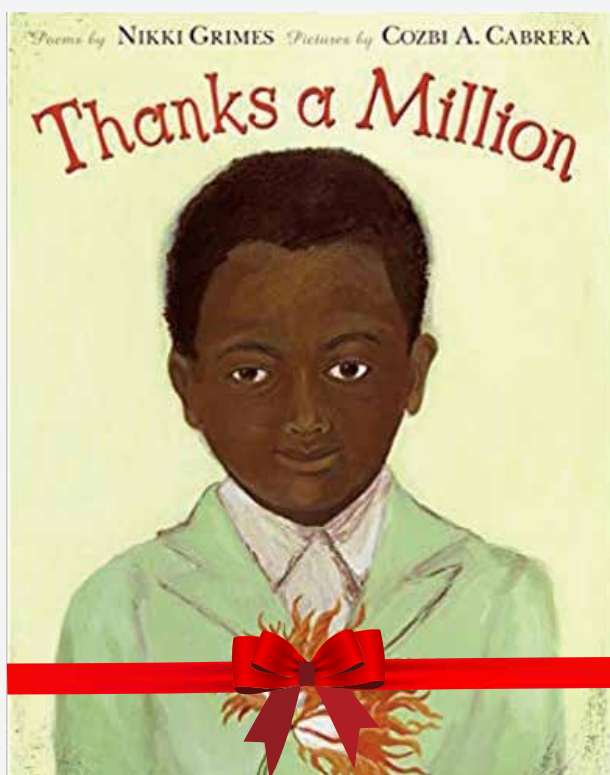
By Cindy Marie Jenkins

## ► Is There a Book For That?

That's always my go-to when I have a parenting need. Kids ask about death? There's a book for that. They need a lesson in kindness? There are so many books about that. Kids ask about life, the universe, and everything? Well, then we need a trip to the bookstore.

But it's well known that if there's a good story, they're more likely to listen, and if they listen then they may remember. If they remember the lessons we want them to learn, they'll probably practice these good deeds in their daily lives.

Here are some lovely stories that introduce gratitude, kindness, and appreciation through entertaining stories.



*Appreciate Poetry*

### **THANKS A MILLION**

By Nikki Grimes, Illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera

We always want children to say "thank you," but how can you explain when they should say that magical phrase? In a series of quiet yet dazzling rhymes, Grimes offers up ideas on what could prompt kids to be thankful. They'll certainly open their eyes to a new world after reading her verses!



*Appreciate Nature*

### **BECAUSE OF AN ACORN**

By Lola M. Schaefer, Adam Schaefer, Illustrated by Frann Preston-Gannon

Plant the seed of appreciation for every small thing in your child's mind. This beautiful picture book shows how much we owe to the life of an acorn. You can expect them to tread carefully on the grass and perhaps look at trees differently after enjoying this story book.



*Appreciate Differences*

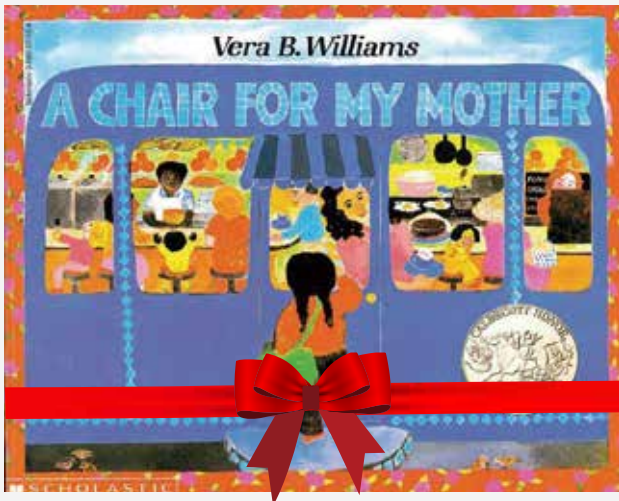
### **EAST DRAGON, WEST DRAGON**

By Robyn Eversole, Illustrated by Scott Campbell

Two dragons live across the world from each other, fearing the stories they heard about one's "great fire" and another's "mighty roar." It isn't until they must work together to save "the silly knights" that East Dragon and West Dragon learn to appreciate the other's differences, and not be so scared of what they do not understand.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PUBLISHERS





*Appreciate Essentials*

## *A CHAIR FOR MY MOTHER*

Written and Illustrated by Vera B. Williams

A young girl, her mother, and her grandmother diligently save up for a comfortable chair after losing most of their possessions in an apartment fire. Grandma bargains, her mother waits tables, and your child will be on the edge of their seat to see if the coins they collect can ever save up for something as simple and necessary as a chair.



*Appreciate the World*

## *GRATITUDE SOUP*

Written and Illustrated by Olivia Rosewood

Watercolors, collage, and cooking combine in this fanciful story of the Purple Fairy who finds gratitude in the whole world surrounding her. She takes it all in appreciation and proceeds to make gratitude soup. But how does it taste? You'll have to read it to find out!



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# THE FOSTER FAIL PUPPY

This Beijing Family Finds Value In Lost Puppies

*By Vivienne Rush*







**M**y family was lucky to return to Beijing in March, but after nearly two months of isolation and social distancing, I was scratching at the walls. Then it hit me: what better way to spend this time stuck indoors than with a little bundle of fur that requires all my time and attention? An internet search brought up Lost Puppies of Beijing (LP) and their noble mission to rehome as many stray dogs as the city could churn out (an infinite number it seems, though dwindled by some 150 thanks to this organization).



*I quickly signed up to be a foster parent.*

I would be a temporary caregiver for strays fresh off the street. An LP volunteer interviewed me through WeChat and explained that LP would cover all medical care and essential pet supplies, all I had to do was to feed and care for the fur-baby. It was also strongly encouraged to begin basic obedience training, potty training, and crate training for the puppy.

*Perhaps the most significant duty of a foster parent is to show the dog what it is to be loved.*

Within a week of applying, I had been approved by LP to foster. I was ready to give my time, heart, and soul, to a furry companion who would fill my long days. There were so, so many puppies that needed a home, and I was just waiting for the right one.

The "Fabulous Five" was a litter of five puppies who had been found, just days old, in a tied up garbage bag in the trash. They were at the veterinarian until they were eight weeks old — the age when you can traditionally separate the pup from its mother. A poster featuring the five made its way into the LP WeChat group and I instantly fell in love with them. I even contemplated fostering the entire litter to keep the family together. Alas, three of the five died while going through the deworming process at the vet and only two were left — a boy and a girl.

*They were named Simon and Kamina when they were rescued.*

In the DiDi ride home, I sat calmly with the box in my lap, trying not to laugh as one of the puppies licked my fingers through the small opening in the lid.

I returned to my apartment and peered into the box - Simon was wearing what a beloved Pixar film coined as "the cone of shame" due to a skin condition and was still fast asleep. So the puppy who had been licking my finger was Kamina. She looked up at me, eyes shin-

ing with adoration, and began to wag her tail, smacking her brother in the face several times, though he did not stir. I lifted her from the box with just one hand, feeling her tiny heart race. It dawned on me that this was the first time she had skin to fur contact, because the vets always kept rubber gloves on while handling them. She licked my toes, my clothes and just about anywhere she could get her little pink tongue on. She was sheer happiness dressed in a fur coat. Kamina and I bonded while her brother slept.

*Everything she did was magic.*

She licked my son's nose - magic; she drank out of the bowl we carefully chose for her - magic; she pooped - even that felt magical. She was tiny, helpless, and new; she could do no wrong. Simon eventually woke up and it became clear that he was the runt of the litter, especially next to his playful, curious sister. He was a perfect lap dog, and I mean that literally - he would clamber into any available lap and stay there, perfectly content.

The magic of the pups' newness slowly dissipated over the next few weeks, and it all but disappeared when I discovered they had... worms! Remember, these little guys had survived through the deworming process, so that meant they should be worm-free, right? Well, it turns out that worms are a constant and never-ending battle in any dog's life, and they had been infested with a particularly nasty case of them. So I dewormed them again, and again. I'll spare you the gory details and skip to the end where they are, and hopefully will remain, free of worms.

*Fostering the puppies was as rewarding as it was exhausting.*

A growing sense of responsibility took root in my family. We were proud when the puppies learned to sit (30 minutes of your undivided attention and lots of treats); we were overjoyed when they eventually managed to go to the pee pad 8/10 times (a great success rate for puppies). Most of all, our hearts almost burst when they curled up in our laps and slept, showing us trust and the beginnings of love.

*Simon was the first to be adopted in early August.*

Our hearts ached when we saw how well he had taken to his new family, but we were happy for him. Then down came the axe for the final blow - a family wanted to adopt Kamina. "This was my mission as a foster parent," I told myself unconvincingly. My son protested, as he had also done with Simon's departure, but I steeled myself and set up a visit. The family came to our place and met us downstairs in the garden. They instantly wanted Kamina. In a daze, I didn't quite realize until after they had left that I had agreed for them to return in just five days to pick her up for a trial adoption. It was in that moment that I heard a ping in the vicinity of my heart. I quickly texted LP that I could not go through with it and that I had decided to adopt Kamina myself. The potential adoptive family was understandably upset, and if they should ever read this, I can only beg for their forgiveness and hope with all my heart that they found the right four-legged addition to their family.

*As for my family, we have welcomed our newest member with open arms and open hearts.*

Kamina, or our "little pucky," takes our love and returns it exponentially every day. I smile to hear the pitter patter of her paws down the hallway as she seeks us out just so she can be near us. I can't help but feel we are destined to be together since a line of gray hairs appeared down her back before she was six months old, echoing my very own premature graying. She is our loveable furry companion who fills my days, (now shorter and fuller with regular walks and cuddles) and keeps my feet warm in these cold winter nights — our very own foster fail puppy.





Information courtesy of [www.LostPuppies.cn](http://www.LostPuppies.cn)

**WeChat:**  
mind\_meandering

## *Responsibilities of a Foster Parent*

As a foster, you will play a vital role in helping our dogs find a loving home – from socializing, to bringing them to events, to sometimes just showing them what it is to be loved.

### THE BASICS

- You must be 21 years or older
- You must have a stable residence, where everyone living there is in agreement to have a dog. This includes landlord approval.
- You must be able to transport your foster dog to scheduled medical appointments, adoption events, or training classes.
- You must be financially stable enough to provide your foster dog with basic living expenses, including bedding, good food, toys and even find them boarding solutions while you are on holiday.

### HERE'S WHAT'S EXPECTED OF OUR FOSTER PARENTS:

- They provide nutritious food, plentiful water, adequate shelter, and control of external parasites (fleas and ticks).
- They provide the dog with exercise, basic obedience training and house-training. Proper training greatly increases a dog's chance of being adopted and we can pair you with some of our more experienced fosters for guidance.
- They are responsible for the safety of each foster dog that comes into their care, and for the safety of other dogs and people the dog comes into contact with. They never let their foster dogs be a nuisance to other people or other animals.
- They always keep a collar with the Lost Puppies ID tag on the dog at all times, just in case the dog runs off. If the tag is lost they immediately contact us for a new one.
- They keep foster dogs on their leash when they're outside of a house or securely fenced yard.
- They keep any fostered dog safely confined in a fenced yard, kennel run, or inside a house or garage when the dog is not with them or a family member. Crate training is highly encouraged. At no time are foster dogs placed outside on a tie-out (in a yard, in front of a café, store etc.) Our fosters immediately notify us in the event of a missing, injured, or sick dog.

广告

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Western Academy  
 of Beijing  
  
[www.wab.edu](http://www.wab.edu)

# A GIFT TO *Experience*

## 8 Ways to Give More Meaningful Presents



By Cindy Marie Jenkins

I don't know about you, but I dread the question that every grandparent asks right around Thanksgiving: What do the kids want for [insert December holiday here]?

It's a tricky tightrope act to allow grandparents the chance to show their love in some physical way while also retaining your family's goal of making the holidays about being together and appreciating what we have and what we can give. It's hard enough to promote the idea that the holidays are not about getting more "stuff" when every movie and TV show stresses the presents. It's even harder when you live far away from relatives and they want to send your kids the equivalent of a hug inside a gift.

This is why we love asking for experiences instead of physical

gifts. It started one year when our oldest kid's birthday coincided with finding an outdoor class we couldn't afford. Enter his grandparents who bought it for his birthday. As a thank you, we took photos of his adventures in the class and made them a little album. It was perfect: our son got a cool experience and our parents got a physical item that meant so much to them.

Beijing is no stranger to very exciting outings, so try to steer your kid's gifts towards a fun activity or class. It will take a little time for both the grandparents and kids to get used to it, but how cool will it be to say that Papa and Nana got them a super cool science camp? Bonus: these presents won't get stuck in Customs.



### ***Go See a Show***

Experiencing emotions in the same room as others is an excellent way to nurture a child's empathy. Whether it's the thrill of an acrobat show, the mystery of shadow puppetry or a traditional *bian lian* (face changing) performance, children love seeing live theatre, and it's sure to activate their imaginations as well as be an exciting night out!

### ***Take Part in a Winter Camp***

Since we can't travel very far this year, keeping the kiddos happily occupied is even more important. There are a plethora of cool camps on offer this year, with everything from physical training to science experiments to learning about Chinese culture through the arts. Scan the QR code for all the latest winter camps listed on the *beijingkids* website.



PHOTOS: CANVA





## ***Cooking Class With Friends***

These are always a treat for birthday parties, so why not include friends in your kid's gift? Whether it's baking and decorating a cake or learning how to make traditional Chinese dishes, you have your choice of local favorite The Hutong, as well as mall offerings for unique cooking classes that all ages enjoy!

## ***Make-Your-Own Pizza Dinner***

There's no reason to reserve this kind of party for birthdays, either. Rent a table at one of the local pizza joints like Domino's or Pizza Hut that also has a chef helping kids to build their own pizza. And you never know: if they get to choose their own ingredients, they may just try toppings other than pepperoni for once.

## ***Flyover China***

If your kids are more into taking flight than tight spaces, this could be a great excuse to finally try Flyover China. You take a ride across China without ever leaving the projection room. Special sensory effects with your feet suspended in mid-air work with the ride's motion to make you feel like you've traveled for miles, even if you're stuck in Beijing. The ride is only 10 minutes, but pair it with a day out at Shijingshan Amusement Park for some fun memories.



## ***Ice Skating Lesson***

Another cool (pun intended) outing to share with friends is an ice skating lesson. There are well-known rinks at Solana and China World Mall, or find an instructor for private group lessons at Shichahai, Kunming Lake at the Summer Palace, or the Bird's Nest (aka Beijing National Stadium)!

## ***Virtual Santa Visit***

Since kids are so used to making memories over video chat, why not extend that to Santa this year? If you missed one of the Santa sightings sprinkled throughout Beijing, just take a look at Kringle Mingle (<https://kringleminglefun.com>) or Jingle Ring ([www.jinglering.com](http://www.jinglering.com)), the two that work best internationally. What better way to end such a Zoom filled year than a screen selfie with Santa?



## ***Explore an Escape Room***

Teenagers will love one of the many escape rooms in our city. From horror themes to ice castles, Harry Potter to tattoo parlors, the birthday teen will get locked in a room with their closest friends and solve puzzles or make the right choices that lead them to an escape – if they're lucky - and smart!

# SCHOOL NEWS



## Welcoming Back BWYA Alumni

Now in their 20th year of education, BWYA has seen over 1,000 graduates pass through their classrooms, and recently welcomed a few alumni back onto campus. With time to see both old teachers and friends, and explore the new facilities now available, the mini reunions were a joyful occasion for all.



## Swiss School Beijing Welcomes New Teacher Linda Ninio

The Swiss School Beijing is pleased to welcome Linda Ninio to the team. This is Ninio's second time living in Beijing, and she comes on board bringing the latest know-how of "Curriculum 21" - Switzerland's standard curriculum that focuses on competency. It is based on helping students successfully apply the knowledge and skills they acquire at school. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on linking knowledge and skills for the development of the students' capabilities. Passionate about teaching, Linda sees herself as a learning guide through content-rich and challenging tasks, to encourage them to think by themselves.



## 3e School Introduces New Art Teacher Mr. Olivier Yang

Mr. Olivier Yang has joined 3e International School as their new Art Teacher. Fluent in English, Chinese and French, Olivier graduated from CAFA (Central Academy of Fine Art) with a master's degree in oil painting and mural painting (both tempera and fresco). Professionally trained in a wide array of artistic mediums, Yang brings to 3e an extensive background working with students of all ages, a resourceful and imaginative teaching style, and talent for instilling art appreciation to inspire his students. His main passion is to foster creativity and open-mindedness into children's everyday life.



## Aidi School Hosts Qi Pa Shuo inspired debate competition

Aidi School invited Hu Jianbiao, the training tutor of *Qi Pa Shuo*, a debating TV show which is very popular among young people, to introduce the fashion culture of their students' favorite talk show, and bring a *Qi Pa Shuo* debate competition to the school. Both students and parents alike were inspired by the performances.



## The Deputy Head of Harrow Beijing on Educational Panel at JISE

Mr. John Barker, the Deputy Head of Harrow Beijing, delivered a speech at the forum of the 2020 Jingkids International School Expo (JISE) Beijing on October 24 to share Harrow Beijing's experience during the period of online learning during the school closure. He stressed that school vision and values underpin everything in teaching and it is important to be research led.



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

### Harrow Beijing Year 3 Holds Book Swap in a Temporary Rainforest Café

Harrow Beijing Year 3 have been learning all about Rainforests this term and are helping to save trees by bringing in old books to swap with other classes and year groups instead of buying new ones. Children read and swapped books together in the learning zone after Year 3 changed it into a Rainforest Café.



### BSB Announces House Football Competition Winners!

At The British School of Beijing (BSB) Shunyi, all students belong to a House — either Saxons (Green), Vikings (Yellow), Romans (Blue), or Normans (Red) — and participate in a broad range of sports. The Overall Winner for this Football Competition is the Saxons. Encouragement is given to students to realise their full sporting potential, lead healthy active lives and develop a lifelong love of sport.



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

### Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) Elementary School Holds Its Annual Celebration of Diversity

WAB's annual week-long learning event included in-depth, impactful learning experiences promoting investigations into inclusion, explorations of culture, and discussions about open-mindedness. For the final day, called Identity Sharing Day, children were encouraged to share aspects of their identity by wearing traditional dress.



### Dulwich College Beijing Worldwide Academy 2020 Launch Event

X Museum welcomed the 2020 Worldwide Academy (WWA) launch event in November. A panel of experts was hosted by their students to share views on the theme of "no aspiration too big, no inspiration too small" to an audience of students and parents. Panelists shared accounts of their journeys of aspirations and inspirations, failures and successes. They gave advice about the importance of experimenting to maintain one's motivation through continuous learning and self-improvement. They all emphasized how learning from failures leads to success, that the journey to success requires strong personal values, and resilience and constant adaptability while maintaining one's focus on what matters.







### YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten Wins A+ Awards

Architizer, the largest online community of architects in the world, announced the winners of the 8th Annual A+ Awards, known as the "Oscars in Architecture." The YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten won the 2020 Popular Choice Winners Award in Institutional (Kindergartens) category. Informed by the latest findings in the international education practices and research, the YueCheng Education experts sorted out many education-based requirements and characteristics for learning spaces design, and worked closely with Master Ma Yansong and his MAD firm Architects to ensure that every detail of building the kindergarten was aligned with its education philosophy.



### International School of Beijing (ISB) Holds Time Capsule Ceremony

On the 40th day of ISB's 40th anniversary year, students reached out to future generations as they laid a time capsule to be opened on the 50th day of the 50th year. It was a proud moment to celebrate four decades of learning, especially for their Grade 2 students, who will be graduating seniors in ten years' time.





**Mom's favorite place in Beijing is** Lama Temple. It captures Chinese culture, but it does so in such a beautiful and spiritual way. It was also one of the first temples we went to as a family.

**Dad's favorite thing about mom is** how she takes full responsibility and organizes all of the family vacations. She always makes them really enjoyable.

**Nika's favorite thing about Dad is** his creativity and how he truly amazes her. When he was younger, he made his dream of forming a band come true, writing most of the songs, and now as a LEGO brick enthusiast, he builds fascinating and incredible works. He even composes music, and has a great collection of DVD and CDs from many artists he admires.

**Mom's favorite thing about dad is** that he's willing to try new things. At first glance, he isn't the type of person to just say yes to many new things. After some talking though, he always ends up trying it out anyways and enjoys whatever it was he was avoiding.

**Dad's favorite place to go in Beijing is** Tuanjiehu Park. It was one of the first places he visited in Beijing that wasn't necessarily a tourist attraction or a place where you'd go as a daily necessity.

## Family Favorites!

*Photography by Uni You*

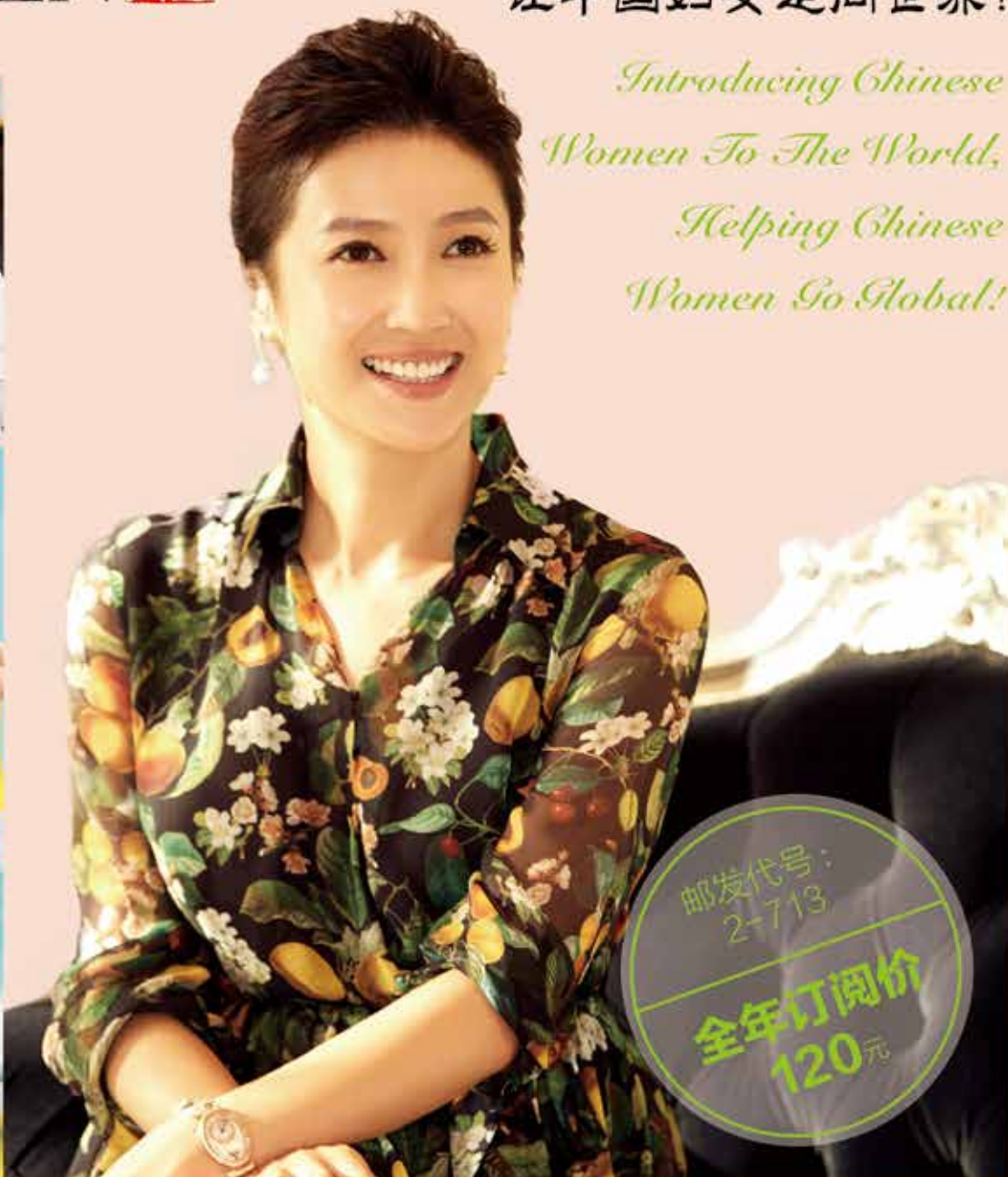
**T**he Fabrio family has three members: Mom Bisera, Dad Mario, and 14-year-old Nika Fabrio, who is currently a student at Canadian International School of Beijing. Bisera works as a diplomat for the Croatian Embassy and dad is currently the family manager. They moved from Croatia to Beijing five years ago and have been living in (and loving) Beijing since.



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