

YINGHUA ACADEMY

英 華 学 校



Red Envelope Campaign
See Page 3

CNY Performance Prep. Info.
See Page 5

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Sue's News

Sue Berg | Executive Director

Dear Parents,
I had the pleasure of starting my day with kindergartners and *Bedtime for Frances*, a delightful book by author Russell Hoban. Cozily clad in our pajamas and bathrobes, we enjoyed this tale about Frances the badger who is extremely adept at putting off bedtime. The children giggled as I suspect that they could relate to the various stalling techniques such as the forgotten drink of water, a last kiss, the need to use the bathroom, or those scary creatures in the dark!

Today and every morning that I read to our KG students in the library before school, I am reminded of the value of reading aloud to kids. The conversations that are spawned from the books we read are priceless. Books read aloud provide the opportunity to learn new vocabulary, to discuss different points of view, to predict what might happen next, to learn about unfamiliar cultures, times, or places, and to spark discussions about difficult or tender topics such as bullying, loneliness, or making friends. Although parents and teachers realize the benefits of reading to children from birth to the primary years, too often we stop once our kids learn to read. We should not and cannot!

continued on page 3

Curriculum Corner

Luyi Lien, Ph. D. | Academic Director

Dear Families,
Gongxi, Gongxi! Happy New Year of the Sheep!
As the Chinese New Year is celebrated at the turn of the lunar calendar, it generally falls between January and February. This year the first day of the New Year is on February 19. The New Year's Eve dinner is considered the most important meal of the year, especially for those with family members away from home.

At the Wednesday staff meeting this week, we had a special treat and shared our Chinese New Year experience. We asked the staff members to learn from each other by answering three questions:

1. Why do we hand out apples and oranges to all the students and staff?
2. Why are dumplings eaten during the Chinese New Year?
3. What does the character 圆(circle or round) mean in the Chinese culture?

The discussion was lively and everyone had something to say. It was fascinating to see how the topic of Chinese New Year generated so

much energy and excitement, even at the end of a long day! Afterwards we each received a glutinous rice ball filled with sesame paste - its round shape symbolizes fulfillment, oneness/unity, and perfection. Most importantly, it signifies the process of coming full circle.

As many of you already know, these two weeks we have a series of activities planned for the whole school to celebrate the Chinese New Year as a big family, such as distributing red envelopes, giving out apples and oranges, and eating dumplings. Every activity is an opportunity for us to introduce and pass on Chinese culture. It is so unique that our students

continued on page 3

Upcoming Events and Announcements

02

28

15

Chinese New Year Performance

03

2-3

15

CNY Holiday: NO SCHOOL



Brewer's Blog

Jeremy Brewer | Dean of Students

Hello Parents!

Last Friday was our second Spirit Day; the theme was Valentine's Day. The students and staff really enjoyed dressing in V-Day colors and ending the day with their class Valentines Parties. I heard that many students went home with a bag full of Valentines and candy! Lucky them! Or should I say, lucky parents! Reminds me of Halloween. I hope your children weren't too sugared up over the weekend!

Today was Pajama and Crazy Hair Day. I can't wait to share some pics with you next week! The students and staff really got into it this year. Everyone looked amazing!

A couple other quick Student Life updates to be aware of are:

- MS Spring Dance – Friday, April 10
- Grade 4 & 5 Activity Night – Friday, May 1
- Anti-Bullying Poster Campaign – April (Student Life will be making posters to put up around the school to promote bullying awareness.)

Also, we are in the process of planning our one Local and one Global community service project for the year. We have intentionally been waiting until after the CNY so things can settle down again. We plan to roll them out in April and May. Stay tuned for more details!

With that, I'll wish you a wonderful weekend!

Jeremy Brewer



Sue's News (continued)

Let me recommend the classic million-copy bestselling handbook on reading aloud to children, *The Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease. Parents and educators have turned to this author's beloved classic for more than three decades to help countless children become avid readers through awakening their imaginations and improving their language skills. It has also been a staple in schools of education for new teachers. "The updated 2013 edition of *The Read-Aloud Handbook* discusses the benefits, the rewards, and the importance of reading aloud to children of a new generation. Supported by delightful anecdotes as well as the latest research (including the good and bad news on digital learning), *The Read-Aloud Handbook* offers proven techniques and strategies for helping children discover the pleasures of reading and setting them on the road to becoming lifelong readers."

In Mr. Trelease's own words:

"As lumber is the primary support for building a house, words are the primary structure for learning. There are really only two efficient ways to get words into a person's brain: either by seeing them or by hearing them. Since it will be years before an infant uses his or her eyes for actual reading, the best source for vocabulary and brain building becomes the ear. What we send into that ear becomes the foundation for the child's "brain house."

Those meaningful sounds in the ear now will help the child make sense of the words coming in through the eye later when learning to read. We read to children for all the same reasons we talk with children: to reassure, to entertain, to bond, to inform or explain, to arouse curiosity, and to inspire. But in reading aloud, we also:

- build vocabulary
- condition the child's brain to associate reading with pleasure
- create background knowledge
- provide a reading role model
- plant the desire to read

One factor hidden in the decline of students' recreational reading is that it coincides with a decline in the amount of time adults read to them. By middle school, almost no one is reading aloud to students. If each read-aloud is a commercial for the pleasures of reading, then a decline in advertising would naturally be reflected in a decline in students' recreational reading."

We've made a renewed commitment in school to read aloud to all our students in grades KG through grade 8. I hope you'll join us at home in this important endeavor!

Snuggle up with your kids and a good book!

Warm regards,
Sue Berg

Curriculum Corner (continued)

are learning both American and Chinese cultures and that they celebrate festivals from both cultures. I think our students are extremely lucky!

See you at the Chinese New Year Performance on Saturday, February 28th!

Luyi Lien, Ph.D.

P.S. If you are interested in finding out the answers to the three questions we raised at the staff meeting, you can 1) ask any of our Chinese-speaking staff, 2) read the information provided by Hannah Easton, YACA Cultural Chair, or 3) ask your student.

Chinese New Year Marks the Start of the Red Envelope Campaign

By Sarah Whiting

Chinese New Year marks the start of the Red Envelope Campaign, an important part of Yinghua Academy's annual fund drive. It is named for the red envelopes (hong bao) filled with gifts of money that are traditionally given by adults to members of younger generations.

This year's Red Envelope campaign runs from 2/19 to 3/6. This is our biggest giving event of the year! Our goal is to raise \$40,000 from parents, grandparents, staff, alumni, board members, and friends to help provide the best immersion environment possible.

Proceeds from this year's event will be used to outfit our new building, for expenses such as window coverings for all the new classrooms, upgrades to the library collection, and more smartboards for the elementary classrooms.

You will soon receive a red envelope in the mail asking for your donation. We ask you to make a personally meaningful gift to support our students – gifts in any amount are appreciated! Thank you for supporting the world-class education that Yinghua provides in Minneapolis.



Happy Year of Sheep To All Yinghua Families!

By Hannah Easton

To provide a fun and educational experience for our students, Yinghua will continue its tradition of celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year. At 15 days, the Chinese New Year celebration is the longest Chinese holiday. During this time, Chinese families gather over meals of traditional foods and engage in activities that have auspicious and symbolic meanings in the hopes of bringing good fortune for the coming year. The Chinese animal zodiac is a repeating cycle of twelve years, with each year being represented by an animal and its reputed attributes.

This year is the Year of the Yáng (羊), which is generally translated as “sheep,” “goat,” or “ram” in English. Sheep were very important to the ancient Chinese and became to be seen as very auspicious animals, symbolizing prosperity. We look forward to another year of success for Yinghua, its students, and their families! Please note the following important dates for this year’s Chinese New Year activities at Yinghua.

February 20

Ms. Berg and Dr. Lien will hand out a red envelope (hong bao) with a gold-coin chocolate to each student this Friday. During the Chinese New Year, children and unmarried young adults often receive red envelopes containing money as a gift from their parents, grandparents, and even close friends and neighbors. It’s also not uncommon for adults to give red envelopes to their elderly parents.

February 23

Ms. Berg and Dr. Lien will go to every classroom to hand out an apple and an orange to each student and wish the student good luck and peace. The orange symbolizes good fortune, while the Chinese word for apple is píng (苹), which is a homonym of the Chinese word for peace: píng (平).

February 24th and February 25th

The school will serve dumplings to the students. Chinese dumplings—jiaozi (饺子)—is a classic Chinese food that is commonly served during Chinese New Year due to the fact that the dumpling’s shape looks like that of a traditional Chinese gold ingot and is therefore associated with wealth. Please note that your student can choose either a pork or vegetarian dumpling—or opt out—on the day of serving. Your student simply needs to let Helen, the Food Service Coordinator, know when the dumplings are served.

February 27th

On February 27th, the students will be treated to a traditional Chinese Lion Dance. In China, the lion signifies courage, stability, and superiority. A lion dance is performed by two dancers, one at the head of the lion and one at the tail. The lion dance is sometimes mistakenly referred to as a dragon dance. An easy way to distinguish between the two is that a lion is normally operated by two dancers, while a dragon involves many people in a long serpentine shape. Traditionally, the lion’s dance was performed to chase away ghosts and evil spirits. Therefore, clashing cymbals, a gong, and drums usually accompany this lively performance. The music follows the moves of the lion.

February 28th

On the day of the Chinese New Year performance at Bethel University, teachers will give each student a “lucky candy” as a treat. Eating sweets during the Lunar New Year is encouraged as it represents bringing sweet happenings to one’s life and it starts the new year on a sweet note.

Xie Xie! Special thanks to the following for making this all possible:

- Heather Fokken (parent of Anika Fokken, 1C)
- Jill Griffiths (parent of JiaXin, 5B)
- Tanya Hinton (parent of Madison Hinton, 2B)
- Ming Fong Ho (parent of Kaelyn Ng, 1B)
- Wynnee Igel (parent of Jacqueline Igel 2A & Caitlin Igel, 5C)
- Monica Seabloom (parent of John Seabloom 1C & Mary Kay Seabloom 4A)
- May Yang (Calista Yang 4A & Timothy Yang 8A)
- Bill Francois, Facility Manager
- Helen Hindrawati, Food Service Coordinator
- Ha Family Lion Dance Troupe
- May’s Market
- Panda Garden
- Sysco Asian Foods



Chinese New Year Performances on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2015, at Bethel University

By Wynne Igel

Happy Chinese New Year! Xīn nián kuài lè! It's time to enjoy all of the Chinese New Year activities and the performances. Tickets are selling fast: As of Feb. 18, 375 seats were left for the noon performance and less than 200 seats for the 4 pm performance!

Students will receive a flyer in their backpacks and via Classroom Coordinators with important reminders for rehearsal day Friday, 2/27, and performance day Saturday, 2/28. Noon performers should arrive by 8:15 a.m. and 4 p.m.-only performers should arrive by 2 p.m. Traffic and parking will be very busy after the noon performance and before the 4 p.m. dress rehearsal at 2 p.m.

Check the website for an updated Bethel parking map, Bethel classroom maps, schedules, and other information.

Usher training is at 5:15 p.m., Tuesday, February 24, or 8:45 a.m., Friday, February 27. Last but not least, don't forget to order your performance DVD by March 6!

Date	Activity
Feb. 18	Clean the school
Feb. 20	Distribute red envelopes
Feb. 23	Distribute apples and oranges
Feb. 24	Dumplings: Grades K-2
Feb. 25	Dumplings: Grades 3-8
Feb. 27	Full dress rehearsals and Lion Dance
Feb. 28	Performances
Mar. 6	Encore Kindergarten performance
Mar. 6	DVD orders due
Week of Mar. 23	Label and distribute DVDs

Spring Festival Characters and Their Meanings

By Jasmine Lu

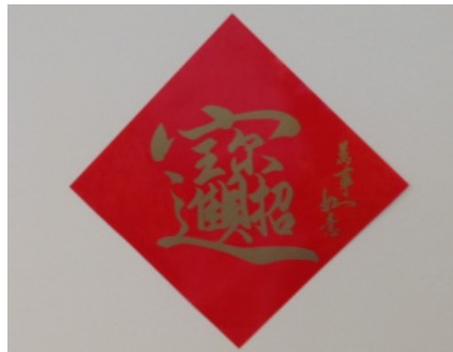
During Chinese New Year, you'll see many spring couplets. Some have many characters and read like a poem. Some have one to four words, like a short phrase. For example, "恭喜发财": gong xi fa cai.



You will see the Chinese character "福" (fu) - a blessing often used during Chinese New Year.



You might see this character upside down. Do you know why? That means that the blessings have arrived. The words "upside down" in Chinese sounds the same as "arrive". So, by posting "福" upside down, it means blessings have arrived. Posting "春" upside down means spring has arrived.



There are 4 characters, "招财进宝" (zhao cai jin bao) - "fortune comes to me" in one word. Can you see those characters in this photo? There are other spring couplets like this one, you just have to pay attention to them the next time you see one!



Minneapolis Lantern Fest



Join the Minneapolis Downtown Council and Heart of the Beast (HOBT) Puppet & Mask Theatre as they celebrate lighting the winter night in Downtown Minneapolis at the inaugural Minneapolis Lantern Fest!

The event will be a culmination of free workshops at various Minneapolis locations (including three at HOBT), at which participants of all ages and abilities will be able to create their own paper lanterns with the help and direction of HOBT teaching artists.

On February 21, teaching artists will mobilize giant lantern puppets inspired by constellations—including a bear, rabbit, loon, fox and crow—that will provide artistic light and lead the movement. Participants will pick up their own lanterns at Minneapolis Lantern Fest and follow their teaching artist during the movement of light beginning at 6:00 PM at Marquette Plaza. Participants may take their lanterns home afterwards.

Lantern festivals date back to Chinese dynasties as early as 200 BC. They have since become gathering events in Europe and across the world, where children and adults alike build their own illuminated lanterns, and come together as a community.

Minneapolis Lantern Fest is free and open to the public. Spectators and those who participated in workshops are encouraged to join us for the festivities, food, beverages and more (food and beverages available for purchase).

Minneapolis Lantern Fest is produced by the Minneapolis Downtown Council in partnership with Heart of the Beast Puppet & Mask Theatre.

For more information about Mpls Lantern Fest, visit www.downtownmpls.com/mpls lanternfest

Follow up on JumpStart Screening for K-5th Grade

By Health Office Staff

Our screening process went very well. The staff at MVNA, who performed the screenings, has returned the results for our students that participated. Participating children will be bringing these forms home on Monday, February 23, 2015, in their backpacks.

Original screening sheets along with any appropriate referral resources will be attached.

The staff at MVNA will follow up with a phone call within two weeks to families of children who had an out-of-range finding. They will offer local resources and answer any questions you may have.

In some instances, they will follow up with a second phone call for additional support families may need.

Thank you,

Wendi Harmsen-Health Para

Ginger Hao-BAN, MA,RN, PHN, Licensed School Nurse

Nina Flynn-RN, Health Para

