

Centered

on TAIPEI

March 2010, Volume 10, Issue 6

COVER STORY

From High Tea to Low Key Exploring Taipei's Tea Houses

THE BEAUTIFUL CHINESE CONCEPT OF *YUAN FEN*

IN THE HEART OF TAIPEI, A SUBLIME TEMPLE TO
SICHUAN CUISINE

CREATIVITY:
THAT WONDERFUL ENERGY FROM WITHIN

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS:
IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

AN INTERVIEW WITH LISA FURTADO

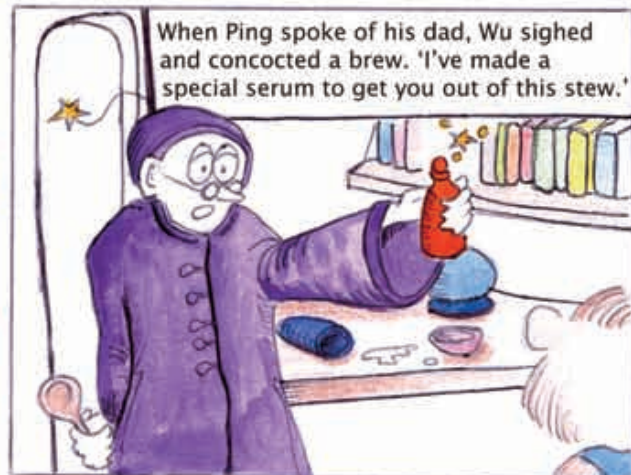
FOOD FROM AN ISLAND SHAPED LIKE A SWEET
POTATO

Ping's

ADVENTURE

IN Tai Wan

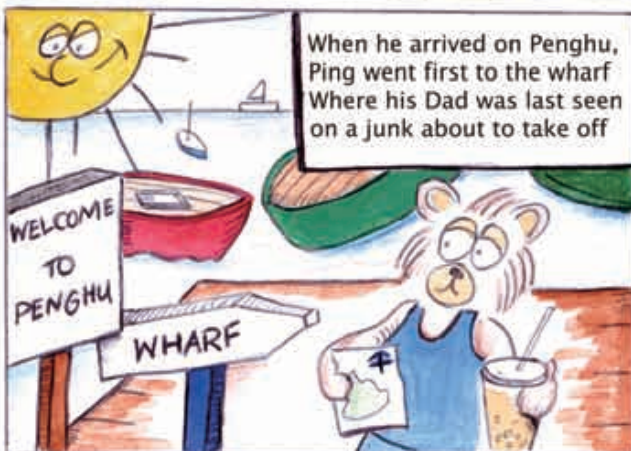
Part 2



Giving Ping the potion Wu waved him off with his hand
'Don't delay, just get out there and find your old man.'



Ping took the old Chinese herbs and went in search of his dad
He took clothes, bubble tea for energy and a note pad



But Ping was hungry and first grabbed some beef noodle soup
Drinking it up in one gulp before getting back to his snoop



'Ping's Adventure in Taiwan' has been written and illustrated by Amanda Gregan.
Look for a continuation of Ping's adventures in following issues of *Centered on Taipei*.

Centered

on TAIPEI

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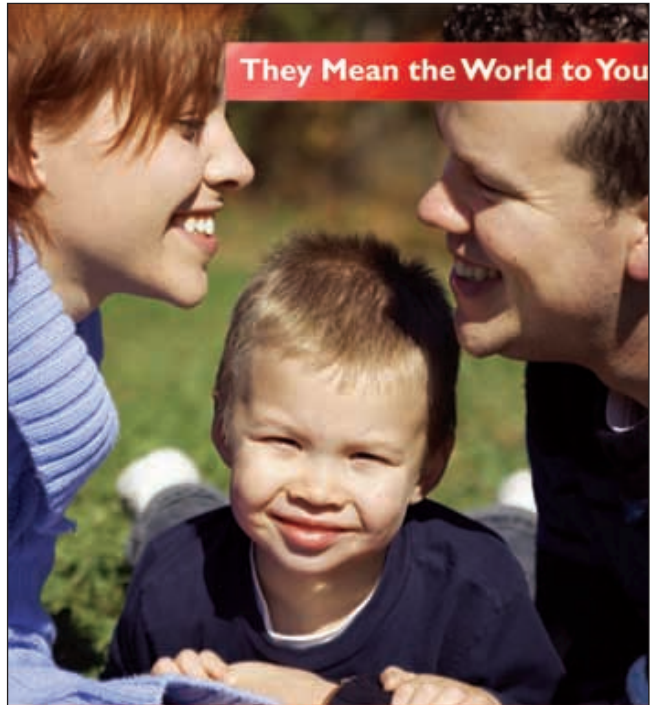


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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



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Dear Readers,

Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"

— Robin Williams

We are well into the new year of the tiger. While looking at my calendar for the month of March I noticed that this month is packed with important dates for many communities around the globe. Just as the New Year heralds spring, Indians celebrate the death of Holika, the demon of winter and welcome the spring with a festival of colors. Sikhs and Sindhis also begin their lunar new year in March this year, as do the Hindus. The Irish celebrate St Patrick's Day, and following the Spring Equinox is the Jewish New Year.

Taiwan is famous for its tea culture and recently, more contemporary-style tea houses have become quite popular. Jennifer Huang takes a quick round of three such cozy spots in Taipei. For those who prefer a good dose of chili with their food, Hanscom Smith's latest recommendation, the Chilli House, seems to be the hotspot for Sichuan cuisine.

This month Leon Vanderpol begins a three-part series on people who are imagining and creating change while Sue Babcock begins a new series of stories honouring 'creativity, that wonderful energy found within' that helps us think outside the box.

School-aged readers are invited to exercise their creative energy by entering the Taipei Living Photography Competition, which is still open for submissions. Use your imagination to capture the beauty of the Taipei that we live in by sending in your take of Living in Taipei. More details inside. Also in this month's issue the second part of Ping's Adventure is sure to appeal to our youngest readers.

Coming up next month is the second Teens Unplugged, which is scheduled for April 18th, 2010. This is a fun and useful open event for all teens in their junior and senior years who are contemplating going away to college, to help them prepare for life 'unplugged'.

Other not-to-be-missed events in April are the upcoming Taiwan International Orchid Show 2010 scheduled for March 6-15th, at Taiwan Orchid Plantation, Tainan and the Taipei Traditional Arts Festival (<http://english.tco.taipei.gov.tw/>)

The Center offers a great line up of courses to choose from each month. Our Wednesday coffee mornings are open for newcomers and old-timers alike. Drop by and say hello over a cup of coffee or browse the Gallery. If you would like to contribute to the magazine, whether with your creative writing or photography, please write to me (coteditor@community.com.tw). As always, we welcome your news and views.

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Correspondence may be sent to the editor at coteditor@community.com.tw. Freelance writers, photographers and illustrators are welcome to contact the editor to discuss editorial and graphic assignments. Your talent will find a home with us!

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Centered on Taipei is printed on 50% post consumer waste content stock. We have also replaced the glossy laminated cover with a softer aqueous based resin coating which makes it easier to recycle. By committing to post consumer paper stock we support the market for recycled fibers and reduce environmental impact. Recycling paper uses 60% less energy than manufacturing paper from virgin fiber. "Every ton of recycled paper saves enough electricity to power a 3 bedroom house for an entire year." (<http://www.greenseal.org/index.cfm>)

The Community Services Center (CSC) is a non-profit foundation. CSC provides outreach and early intervention through counseling, cross-cultural education and life skills programs to meet the needs of the international community in Taipei. CSC offers the opportunity to learn, volunteer, teach and meet others. Check out our website www.community.com.tw and drop by the Center to chat with us about our programs. You can also email us at csc@community.com.tw.



RICHARD RECOMMENDS

RICHARD SAUNDERS

The wait is over! The CKS Cultural Center has been a rather dull place for a good few months now, but in March it makes up for this with a veritable embarrassment of riches. The National Theater is working overtime this month with a quartet of major international productions vying for your NT dollars. Cloud Gate Dance Theater's brand new production, 'Listening to the River' gets its world premiere here on March 18th, plus there's a German language retelling of the Hamlet story and a pair of modern ballet productions in town.

The big event at the National Concert Hall this month, a performance of the Emmy award-winning music to the BBC/Discovery Channel collaboration 'The Blue Planet' has already been booked solid for several blue moons, but there's plenty of other good music on offer this month. This year marks Schumann's two-hundredth birthday, and on March 12th an intriguing program (titled 'Beloved Clara', after the wonderful film on the subject, released last year) highlights the composer's relationships, not just with his prodigiously talented wife (also a composer) but also with his younger contemporary, Brahms, in a program that couples songs by Clara with Schumann's *Piano Concerto* and Brahms' glorious *Third Symphony*. On the subject of great pianists, the young French pianist Alexander Tharaud is in Taiwan for two recitals, although his program is a rather 'safe' pairing of Chopin and Bach (where's the Rameau?)

As usual, the CKS monthly program this month is a happy hunting ground for amusingly silly titles and daft English translations. The laurels this month go to the concert of Russian orchestral music on March 13th, which for some reason goes by the splendid title 'Spirits on the Tip of Toes'. Certainly this kind-of works with the suite from Prokofiev's magnificent ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, but the fanciful soul who described the pounding whirlwinds of Prokofiev's intimidating *Second Piano Concerto* as like "notes transformed into the hopping elves from the tiptoe to the piano keys" has clearly not heard this music, which is of almost volcanic power. To round the program off we turn to the glittering fantasy of another ballet, Stravinsky's great breakthrough work, *The Firebird* for a little light relief, although pray let it be without an "uncoordinated chorus" (actually there shouldn't be any chorus at all).

In a similar vein, an extra 't' spices up another of the month's big concerts: a program of works by China's best-known composer, Tan Dun on March 26th. A concerto (for cello and erhu) fashioned by Dun from his richly evocative score for Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* takes pride of place, but perhaps the concert's most intriguing offering is Dun's Internet Symphony no. 1. Written – wait for it – the YouTube Symphony Orchestra, the symphony is actually very tuneful and fun (yep, you can listen to it on YouTube), but, according to my program, the work is graced with the alluring (and unique) title, 'Erotica'.

National Concert Hall & Theater

MARCH 2010

NATIONAL THEATER

Snow White

New ballet choreographed to the music of Mahler

March 4 – 6

Schwanengesang

Dance piece from Darmstadt, Germany

March 12 – 14

Listening to the River

Cloud Gate's new production: world premiere

March 18 – 21

Hamlet

New retelling of the classic story (in German with Chinese subtitles)

March 26 – 28

NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

The Blue Planet: Live!

Music to the award-winning BBC TV show

March 5 – 6 RR

Beloved Clara

Music by Clara and Robert Schumann, and Johannes Brahms

March 12 RR

Spirits on the Tips of Toes

Orchestral and ballet music by Stravinsky and Prokofiev

March 13 RR

Bach: St. John Passion

March 14 RR

Fanatical Wave of Orchestra

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*

March 15

Tharaud Piano Recital

Works by Bach and Chopin

March 18 RR

Drum Beat, Heart Beat!

Orchestral music by Kodaly, Avner Dorman and Mahler

March 19

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Tan Dun's 'Erotica' (or is it 'Erotica?') symphony

March 26 RR

Cello and Orchestra

Haydn's C major cello concerto and orchestral works by Mendelssohn and Bach

March 28

RICHARD RECOMMENDS: RR



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For full details, please log on to the Culture Express website at <http://express.culture.gov.tw> or take a copy of the monthly program from CKS Cultural Center, available from MRT stations, bookshops and ticketing offices.

Publication of the National Theater and Concert Hall schedule in *Centered on Taipei* is sponsored by Cathay Life Insurance.

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Amy's

Cultural Corner

The beautiful Chinese concept of *yuan fen*



Yuan fen (緣份) is a very beautiful Chinese concept, for which no direct translation exists in English. Perhaps the closest Western idea is ‘destiny’, but it is still not quite the same.

Yuan fen guides much of Chinese thought and action; it acknowledges the deeper meaning of how people are connected; it highlights the shared energy that brings people and events together in our daily lives.

So many encounters and meetings with people can simply be expressed as examples of *yuan fen* - that they’re ‘meant to be,’ so to speak. *Yuan fen* may seem difficult to understand for Westerners, so allow me to make this attempt. First of all, it is most frequently used to describe the relationship between two people. Secondly, it’s a term most customarily applied by the Chinese in meeting one’s Mr. or Mrs. Right, to describe a relationship that was meant to bring the two together. Thirdly, it has an indefinable, almost magical quality. When you have *yuan fen* you magically connect and like everything about the person; when you do not you can blame it on a lack of *yuan fen*.

‘Yuan’ can be described as a feeling of knowing, of connecting, and of liking someone when you first meet them. It’s a sense that both parties mutually share. This feeling is often inexplicable because you don’t know or hardly know each other; it’s a sense that comes from the gut, with no concrete reason to explain or

support it. However it’s not love at first sight; rather a deep sense of connection and knowing). ‘Fen,’ on the other hand is the continuity, the process that allows this connection to grow in this relationship or situation.

To further elaborate, you need ‘yuan,’ which can also be referred to as the cause, effect, reason, fate or destiny, to make the connection, and for it to last and work well you need *fen*, which means a share in working toward fulfilling that destiny together.

So, how is *yuan fen* used?

- In meeting one’s Mr. or Mrs. Right - The one that he/she is looking for as a life partner is believed to be somewhere waiting for him/her, and they are destined to meet and fall in love no matter where they are in the world.
- When one is not yet married, it is often said that his or her *yuan fen* has not yet matured. When time ripens, so will *yuan fen*. *Yuan fen* cannot be forced to come, and similarly when it arrives, no one can stop it. Perhaps it is serendipity!
- On the contrary, if two people get to know each other for example through online dating, but never end up meeting face-to-face, it can be described that their *yuan fen* is too weak.
- A Chinese proverb states, *you yuan wu fen* (有緣無份: one has the *yuan* but not the *fen*). This can mean that the couple indeed

have the fate to meet, but do not have the destiny to stay together. For example, if a couple date each other for a period of several years but then break up before marrying, it is said that their *yuan fen* has come to an end. Often times, merely stating that there is no *yuan fen* between the two people can be a good and quick explanation on why a relationship had failed.

Yuan fen can also be used in many other circumstances other than to describe a predestined relationship between a couple. Colloquially, you may hear your Taiwanese friends state that “We have the ‘yuan’ to become close friends.” Another Chinese proverb shares that, “*you yuan qian li lai xiang hui*”, (有緣千里來相會: *yuan* will bring two people together even when they are a thousand kilometers apart). There are so many people in the world, and many pass by you daily in your life; the ones you have the chance to meet and know are those you have *yuan* with in your life.

YUAN FEN - A KARMIC PHRASE?

Like so many things Chinese, *yuan fen* is indeed believed by many as a karmic phrase and that the driving forces and causes behind it are caused by actions committed in previous reincarnations. It decides the existence and fate of one’s current life. I’d like to describe it as recognition between two souls. Perhaps the people

you meet and connect with in this life are people you knew in a past existence; perhaps the significance of the meeting now is that yuan has not yet ended or that each still has something to teach the another, for which the two souls are brought back together again.

Families, for example, require a certain amount of yuan — your parents, brothers, and sisters share yuan. Friends also connect because of yuan, as it brings two people to meet from within the pool of billions of people worldwide to grow, learn and discover together. It is believed that family members and close friends connect in this life due to cause and effect from previous lives. Consequently, it interests many Taiwanese to learn from fortune-tellers or hypnotists who

can shed some light on who friends or partners were and their previous connection to each another.

The concept of yuan is also used to describe the relationship of a person with a place, or the energy that leads you towards a certain group of people and circumstances. For instance, buying or renting a property requires yuan. People buy a property they have yuan with. A landlord leases an apartment to a tenant with whom they have yuan. Without yuan one may search over a hundred properties and still not being able to settle on a comfortable abode. Once the perfect property has been identified, it is yuan that has brought the person to that specific location and property.

Yuan fen can seem abstract, mysterious or poetic. To me, it

is natural, free-flowing and is everywhere. It brings awareness that we don't quite control the course of events in our lives; on the contrary, events have a way of 'guiding' us, leading us towards certain people and circumstances.

We all know when an encounter is special and significant. We may not always know why; we may discover the true significance of the encounter later in life. Whether or not you believe in yuan fen, it is certainly a lovely concept. The Chinese appreciate people who they have yuan with, people whom they meet and share important moments in life, such as learning and growing together to make each others' lives more interesting and meaningful. Let's be grateful and appreciative to those with whom we have yuan!

March 2010 GALLERY



A percentage of all proceeds of items sold at the Gallery go to The Center, so please remember that by displaying and shopping here you are helping us to provide much needed services to the international community.

Lovely Taiwan Foundation Artworks

Founded to help preserve local traditions and promote native aboriginal artworks, Lovely Taiwan Foundation is showing several pieces at The Center including a carved wooden bear from Sanyi Township, beautiful hand-woven table runners and scarves from Nanjhuang, persimmon candles and decorative fans. These are wonderful local artifacts by which to remember your time in Taiwan.

Binifer Kaushal, Ratan Ltd.

Ratan Ltd. presents an exclusive range of shawls and hand-made evening clutch bags.

Ceramics from Masterpieces Merchandise

A selection of beautiful ceramic items, such as business card stands, candy jars, vases and decorative plates from Masterpieces Merchandise in Yingge. Also included in this display are bracelets made from various types of stone beads.

Chinese Brush Paintings by Lin Fu Long

Mr Lin, the owner of a traditional teahouse around the corner from The Center, is not only a friendly, warm and down-to-earth Taiwanese who shares delicious food and tea culture with others; he is also an artist who enjoys depicting his experience of daily life through calligraphy and painting. His paintings capture the simplicity of life, the emotions and feelings of daily experiences, and the freedom of mind and soul.

Truffles and cookies by Leah Zimmermann

Enjoy a moment of chocolate bliss - Simply Chocolate, Mocha, Almond, Provence and Berry Nutty.... They will capture your heart.



Word from the Director

I was out at dinner the other night and somebody asked me – as often happens – “What exactly does The Center do?” Of course I explained about the counseling, the newcomer orientation programs, the magazine and books, the coffee mornings, and all the courses that we run. And then the same person flippantly asked “is that all?”

Now, normally I am fairly tuned in to flippancy (I am an Aussie after all) but they really seemed interested, so I found myself telling them all of the *other* things that we at The Center are doing...

Here are a couple of the things you may not all know about that The Center is doing for the Community as a whole in 2009 and 2010

Organizing a Charity Golf Tournament, supporting local musicians by collaborating with the American Club on a 'Rat Pack' style Big Band Jazz Night, fostering local entrepreneurs, and supporting local charities such as Lovely Taiwan and Animals Taiwan through our Center Gallery, planning for an end-of-year Art Festival to aid Autism, organizing a new Center Book Club and developing a connection with the world wide Bookcrossing association, advising both the Singapore Manpower Institute and Taipei's Korean sister city, Daegu, on how to run programs for international citizens, facilitating programs for teens about to go abroad for study and life through Teens Unplugged, lobbying the government to improve conditions for all residents – local and foreign – through serving on the ECCT's Better Living Committee, supporting International and bilingual schools in Taipei, Hsinchu and Taichung with our counseling programs, putting on specialist seminars on various topics. And this is just the list of what we are actually doing RIGHT NOW. We hope to get to that wish list soon.

...world peace is booked in for 2011....

See you soon,

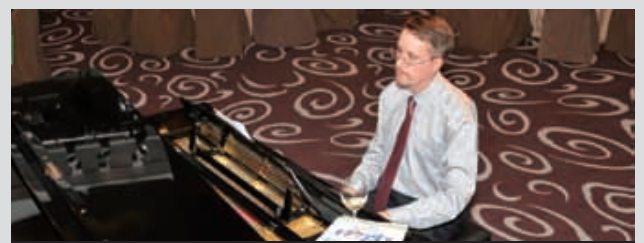
Steve



Calling all graduating seniors and all juniors:

Mark your calendars for the second Teens Unplugged, scheduled for April 18th, 2010. This is a fun and useful open event for all teens in their junior and senior years who are contemplating going away to college, to help them prepare for life 'unplugged'.

Email teensunplugged@teensunplugged@gmail.com for more details.



Richard Saunders Piano Recital

Richard Saunders will be giving a recital (postponed from December) of music ranging from Spain to Indonesia on Saturday 27st March at 7:30 at the Mazur Hall in Taipei. Featured on the program is the second book of Albeniz's magnum opus, *Iberia*, and three pieces from Leopold Godowsky's kaleidoscopic *Java Suite*, together with pieces by composers from Finland, Russia and England.

From High Tea to Low Key Exploring Taipei's Tea Houses

TEXT: JENNIFER HUANG IMAGES: JENNIFER HUANG, SMITH & HSU, THE ONE COMMUNITY



One of the many delights of living on an island that is renowned for its tea culture, discovering new tea houses is a familiar treat for many expats. Having a light meal in the afternoon, whether it be reading a book, gathering with friends, going on a date, or simply relaxing, is one of the reasons these places are so popular. Not only do they have a diverse selection of tea, both local and foreign, many also have their own unique ambience and character. Plus, of course, let us not leave out the other edible delicacies available at many to pair with your pot of tea. Part of the joy of taking afternoon tea in one of Taipei's countless teahouses is discovering new favorites, but before you start searching, allow me to make three personal recommendations.



Cha Cha Thé



Owned by renowned Taiwanese designer Shiatzy Chen, this chic teahouse ('Cha cha tea') is tucked away in an alleyway, where upon entering you'll be greeted by men dressed in traditional Chinese costumes. Calm your senses and let the historic and silent atmosphere of the space take you on a journey. Afternoon tea sets include two choices of dessert and a pot of tea, depending on the selection of tea you choose. Menus are priced at NT\$480 and NT\$580 (plus ten-percent service fee). Do try their black rice and vanilla tart!

Location:

23, Lane 219, Fuxing South Road
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(Afternoon tea 2:30 pm – 5 pm)

Phone: 8773-1818

Website:

www.chachathe.com



The One

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MRT Zhongshan station exit 2 or 4 or bus 218,
220, 224, 227 to Ambassador Hotel
(Guo Bing bus stop)

Hours:

11 am – 10 pm
(Afternoon tea 11:30 am – 7:30 pm)

Phone: 2536-2130

Website:

http://www.theonestyle.com/space_jhongsan.htm



Smith & Hsu

With two branches downtown already, James Hsu decided to open another branch in Tianmu last December. Inspired by Taiwanese and British tea culture and contemporary lifestyle, James decided to integrate his two passions and share them with others. Notice the simplicity and earthiness of the décor, the wooden chairs and the large black lamps that hang from the ceiling. Not only do they serve various varieties of tea displayed in small glass canisters, and delicious English scones with various jam selections, but you can also buy their products and scones to take home.

Smith & Hsu (Afternoon tea menu options)

1. **Tianmu shop:** 177, Zhongshan North Road, Section 6
(Take bus 220 or 285 to Tianmu Sogo, walk north. The tea shop is located after the Dexing Road crossing.)

2. **Zhongxiao shop:** 33, Zhongxiao East Road, Section 5

3. **Minsheng East Road shop:** 103, Minsheng East Road, Section 3

Hours: 10 am – 10:30 pm

Phone: 2838-1828

Website: www.smithandhsu.com

Jennifer Huang enjoys scouting out new hangout spots around Taipei. She is a certified Yoga instructor and is also certified in Plant Based Nutrition.



Orphanage Club

The Orphanage Club thanks all those who have supported the club by purchasing raffle tickets. With your support, we can continue to host our outings and other events.

Any questions? Visit www.orphanageclub.com. Alternatively, e-mail or call Mr Arnold [arnoldr@tas.edu.tw], Tel: 2873-9900 ext. 239], or Mrs Koh [weehueykoh@yahoo.com] and we will get back to you as soon as possible!

Kao Iwashita & Charlene Liao, TAS Seniors, co-secretaries of Orphanage Club.

Annual Book Sale March 13th, 10 am - 5 pm

Admission is free. There is a good selection of adult fiction, including Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prize and Nobel Prize winning novels. History, travel, business, and cookbooks are also in abundance, plus many titles on the subject of teaching and learning English. Parents will find children's books suitable for all interests and early ages, and there are thousands of books for young adult readers including many series such as "The Babysitters." The entire family will have fun browsing through the collection, and remember: proceeds from every purchase go to help needy children.

Cathwel Outing March 20th, 7:45 am - 5 pm

The Cathwel Outing is a wonderful experience as members play with the kids and have a delicious lunch. Members of the TAS community are welcome to join us.

Hunger Week March 29th to April 2nd

Fast and donate on April 2nd! You can also submit an artwork of any medium to the art department expressing your opinion on hunger. Go to www.thehungersite.com or www.freerice.com to donate just by clicking.

Annual Raffle Draw March 3rd, 9:30 am - 5 pm

Our annual raffle draw will take place on March 3rd. Congratulations to all of our lucky winners! You can claim your prizes either between March 3rd and 5th or on March 9th and 10, between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm. The last day to pick up your raffle prize is at the Spring Fair on April 10th.

Pallomusik String Quartet Farewell Concert

Time and Date: 7:00 PM April 2nd, 2010
Venue: TAS Auditorium



The Pallomusik String Quartet of graduating TAS seniors Justin Ho, Kao Iwashita, Charles Hsu, and James Kwak would like to invite you to their Farewell Concert. Initially founded to fulfill a community service requirement in 2006, the Pallomusik String Quartet has since become an actively performing ensemble appearing at numerous community events, such as hospitals and retirement homes, as well as weddings and parties. As they near the end of their journey, they would like to thank the Taipei community for its continued support over the past four years and to introduce the newly-formed freshman Nocturne String Quartet to the community. The concert selection includes well-known classical pieces and popular songs. Admission is free of charge, and refreshments will be provided.



Insomnia: A Taipei Story

TEXT: JANICE COOK

Ed: The following is one person's first-hand account of suffering through, and eventual triumph over, several years with a sleeping disorder. Lack of proper rest led to dependence on sleeping medication in order to get what many people take for granted: a good night's sleep. In that it is a personal account, the reader should understand that what worked for her might not be what is called for to address all, or any particular person's, problems. The only efficacious way to address such problems is by consulting a professional.

I woke up this morning and all the lights were on in my bedroom. I couldn't help but smile to myself when I thought about how I must have fallen asleep as soon as I laid down on the bed. Five years ago, my life was the exact opposite. I would lie in the dark every hour wishing and hoping I could fall asleep. I was desperate for even half an hour of sleep, so that my eyes and head would stop hurting; and hoping that for one day I could feel like my normal self again. My life was a waking nightmare as I struggled with insomnia and an addiction to sleeping pills that would last five years.

After a few weeks of irregular sleep patterns, I would become irritable with friends, family, co-workers and my boyfriend. I decided I needed help and turned to my doctor for guidance. As it turned out, the only thing he helped me to do was to develop a long-lasting addiction to the sleeping pill, Immovane.

After this initial, and very brief, visit with my doctor I left with a two week prescription of Immovane and the advice that I should "catch up" on some of the sleep I'd lost. Two weeks of sleep was amazing! I felt like myself again and was so confident that even without the sleeping pills I would be able to sleep again. However, I went without sleep for another week until finally in desperation I scheduled another doctor's appointment. After I told him I still wasn't sleeping, I suggested that another round of those pills would help me to cope and feel better. Each time I went back he would ask me if I thought I was depressed. I always said I wasn't. Then he would give me another two-week prescription and advise me to take them sparingly, and only when I really needed

them. It was so easy to get this medication that it never occurred to me that it would become so detrimental to my quality of life.

I took his advice to heart and took them only when I really needed them. It was the easiest advice to follow. In my mind, I had a thousand reasons why I "really needed" to take a pill each night. I always had the perfect excuse. The scary part through all of this was that I was missing the signs that could have stopped me forming this destructive pattern. I felt like a zombie in the mornings and had to wake up extra early so that I could pull my brain out of a very far away space before heading out for the day. I was straining my relationship with my boyfriend and I was obsessed about sleep. My health was deteriorating and all of it went unnoticed by me.

Eventually my dependence on pills and my continuing insomnia was consuming my life. I couldn't stop thinking about sleep and how important it was. At one point I was taking pills and still not sleeping at night. I was continuously becoming sick because my body was under so much stress from the constant worrying about sleep and ingesting pills. My eyes always seemed to ache. I couldn't watch certain TV shows before bed out of fear that they would stress me out, or make me think too much. Sadly, the area it affected the most in my life was my relationship with my boyfriend. He suffered more than I did and I still couldn't pick up on the signs. He spent many nights sleeping on the couch in the hope that I would have a good night's sleep. Some months he'd spend more time on the couch than in the bedroom. I had developed this strange belief that I couldn't sleep if

he went to bed first; so he would plan when to go to bed around my timetable. Sometimes he would ask me to take a pill because he was so tired and needed to go to bed, but he still had the love and patience to wait until I was asleep before finally retiring for the night. In one word it was 'absurd' and my daily obsession became a huge source of stress and unhappiness in his life too. The strain and pressure of our situation caused us to fight regularly, and I don't think either of us was able to truly recognize what was happening to us. Strangely enough I felt like I didn't have a problem. I interpreted my ability to continue with daily tasks (thanks to the pills) as a sign that everything was under control.

We moved to Taiwan and not surprisingly nothing changed, probably due to the fact that my Western doctor supplied a six-month prescription. I became involved with yoga and received daily acupuncture treatments to help with the pain of the constant headaches I was beginning to have. Luckily the acupuncturist kept telling me that the headaches weren't normal and that something was wrong with my mental health. The Yogi was constantly telling me I'd never be good at yoga if I didn't deal with whatever was bothering me. For the first time in five years I really believed I had a problem and it was frustrating because I felt it was something I couldn't fix. One night I crashed and after lying in bed hoping for sleep for several hours I got up, slammed the door to the bedroom, went to the couch and continuously hit it until I was so exhausted the only thing left to do was cry. I cried until my boyfriend woke up and tried to ask me what was wrong. I couldn't even communicate. I didn't go to work for the next week because I couldn't get myself to pretend any longer. I was a total mess and I needed help. After some research I sought help from a counselor at The Center. After our first few sessions, we decided that in order to help myself I needed to know who the real 'me' was: the one without pills. I was scared to death and any previous attempts to quit before had always failed miserably. I had tried homeopathic medicines, herbal teas, sleep clinics, and my own sad attempts at weaning off the pills. The only option left was simply to stop. My counselor said we would monitor my status closely each day (with options to consult a medical doctor as needed). I decided on my own that night to quit.

Quitting was only half the battle. I had to do a lot of work with my counselor learning to recognize and to accept things I was worried about, one of which

was that I was extremely anxious about sleep itself. This was where the counselor taught me specific tools for more effective coping techniques. With the use of progressive, muscle-relaxation tapes and other anxiety-coping strategies, I slowly learned what anxiety felt like in my body (where it was and where it wasn't). This was important because I had sometimes spiraled into a full-blown panic. I realized that I was constantly putting my body under stress which led to no sleep and illness. I learned to recognize the signs of anxiety and how to change my mind about my negative thoughts. I had to stop being a victim of insomnia, accept the fact, and let it go. I realized that I hadn't slept properly for the last five years, and yet I was still alive and functioning. Once I took away the importance of sleeping, sleep seemed to come more easily.

Another major help was a tiny, portable, biofeedback machine called the Stress Eraser. This device helps you learn to activate your body's natural relaxation response in minutes. I used this machine every day for two weeks, and although I wasn't sleeping at first, I felt so relaxed that I stopped having headaches and achy eyes; I found that my anxiety was even further decreased. I was learning how to breathe during stressful times and overall I was becoming more positive. Although I wasn't yet sleeping normally at that point, ultimately I was feeling much better. After three very long and sleepless months, I began to start sleeping on my own and for longer periods of time. Within six months I was sleeping 6-7 hours a night. Now, when I use the Stress Eraser I fall asleep within a couple of minutes. With the combination of being aware of anxiety, letting go of my obsession with needing sleep and the Stress Eraser I now sleep regularly each night. That five years was one of the most difficult times of my life. I still get stressed out and occasionally have nights where I can't sleep. It's just that now sleep doesn't control my entire life: I do.

For more about the StressEraser:
www.stresseraser.com

Janice Cook now lives in Ontario, Canada working as an Instructor to children with Autism and enjoying studying Chinese.



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In the Heart of Taipei, a Sublime Temple to Sichuan Cuisine

By Hanscom Smith

IMAGES: EMILY MCMURRIN



Chili House Restaurant
250-3 Zhongxiao East Road, Section 4
(忠孝東路四段250號之3)
Phone: 2721-6088 or 2772-1707.



Good food may make a memorable meal, but it's not enough to create a great restaurant. Reaching that exalted category requires a demanding combination of service, consistency, ambiance, and value for money. By that comprehensive standard, Chili House (四川吳抄手) is on my short list of genuinely great Taipei restaurants. As the name implies, Chili House serves up fiery Sichuan cuisine, and in fact originated in that province before making the move across the Strait after the civil war. Unlike some of Taipei's other warhorse restaurants, however, Chili House has updated its look. Although the crowded dining room fosters the *renau* (熱鬧) (raucous and bustling) atmosphere cherished by local diners, the ambiance is bright, clean, and modern.

For those less comfortable reading and speaking Chinese, Chili House's mammoth menu is bilingual, and includes photos of many popular dishes. The kitchen is apparently staffed by an army of chefs, as orders

invariably arrive with an almost ruthless efficiency. While I still haven't sampled the entire menu, several standouts have emerged after numerous visits: "Tender" tofu stir-fried with salty egg (鹹蛋豆腐), delicately seasoned and then fried to a soft, golden brown, makes converts of even the most tofu-averse. More classic, the 'mapo' tofu (麻婆豆腐) is somehow refreshing in its bracing onslaught of flavor. The decadent pork ribs (蔥燒嫩玉排), swimming





in rich brown sauce slowly absorbed by savory white buns, is a fantastic guilty pleasure. Balance things out with a helping of morning glory greens (清炒空心菜), enlivened with garlic and stir-fried until just short of soggy. Sichuan cuisine is relatively heavy on beef dishes, and a spicy boiled version brimming with broth (重慶水煮牛肉) almost evokes a Sichuan version of comfort food.

For me, however, pride of place on the menu belongs to the cold noodles with shredded chicken (雞絲涼麵). A sublime combination of thin noodles, peanut sauce, vegetables and shredded chicken, this piquant concoction unfolds on the palate with an extraordinary range of flavor and texture. Seductively filling, the noodles always lure me back, and often suffice as an entire meal.

Not all of Chili House's efforts are as remarkable. That Sichuan signature dish, 'gong bao' chicken (宮保雞丁) comes in an adequate but unexceptional rendering, minus the peanuts that many have come to expect. Try the sesame sweet-and-sour chicken (芝麻脆雞柳) instead, a

tangy stir-fry that oozes flavor. The deep-fried breaded shrimp balls (脆皮炸蝦球) may appear enticing, but are disappointingly dry and bland when tasted. In general, however, it's hard to go wrong when choosing from among the menu's many options. Meals are accompanied by a small complimentary dessert. Chili House is open for both lunch and dinner, and is almost always busy. Service is friendly, brisk, and attentive. Reservations are recommended; small

groups may sometimes be asked to share a large round table with other parties. Prices are moderate, and most entrees cluster in the NT\$ 3-400 range.

Hanscom Smith has lived in Taipei since 2006. In addition to his native United States, he has lived (and eaten) in France, the United Kingdom, Cameroon, Denmark, Cambodia, Thailand, and Afghanistan.





Chinese Kitchen

with Ivy Chen

TEXT & IMAGES: IVY CHEN



GYNURA BICOLOR 紅鳳菜 [hongfeng cai]

Gynura bicolor (or edible gynura) is one of the chrysanthemum family. There are two kinds: one that is green on both sides, and another with leaves that are purple on the top and green underneath. Both kinds are considered medicinal vegetables. Gynura bicolor is found throughout the year; however, winter and spring is the best time. Gynura is rich in iron and potassium, calcium, vitamin A, etc. Gynura bicolor is a 'cool' food, so the leaves are stir-fried with sesame oil and ginger (both 'hotter' foods) to achieve a balance. The stems and roots of the plant can also be made into tea by boiling with water. Choose leaves with few bruises and without black stains.



KOHLRABI 大頭菜 [datou cai]

Kohlrabi is one of the members of the turnip family, and a relative of the radish. The best season is winter. A good kohlrabi should weigh between half to one kilo. Choose kohlrabi with straight and green stems and leaves attached. Kohlrabi can be stir-fried, cooked in soup, pickled and stewed. Peel skin thickly, to remove the fiber underneath the skin.

PICKLED KOHLRABI 醃大頭菜 [yan datou cai]

Ingredients: 1 kohlrabi (about 600g)

Seasoning: 1/2t salt, 2t soy sauce, 1/2t sesame oil

Garnish: toasted sesame seeds

Directions:

1. Peel kohlrabi, cut into 1 inch slices about 0.5cm thickness. Rub with 1/2t salt and set aside for 20 minutes.
2. Squeeze the excess water from marinated kohlrabi. Add soy sauce and sesame oil, blend well and put in the refrigerator for 3-4 hours. Sprinkle sesame seeds over kohlrabi and serve as a starter.



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Small Change Makes a Change for the Better

TEXT: KRISTEN LOWMAN
IMAGES: TAIPEI AMERICAN SCHOOL

Taipei American School administrators, faculty, students, and parents participated in a change drive to raise money for the Haiti relief effort on January 21st and 22nd. TAS joined the well-known international relief group CARE to provide immediate financial assistance following the catastrophic earthquake. The Parent Teacher Association volunteered to oversee the collection process and the TAS accounting office counted all coins received and sent the contribution directly to CARE, an organization that ensures those in desperate need receive aid immediately. The generosity of the TAS community, and the care and concern of the students, resulted in a collection of more than NT\$520,000 (US\$16,000).

Reflecting on the TAS relief effort, Associate Upper School Principal John VandenBoom said, “For the second time this school year the TAS community has pulled together on very short notice to come to the aid of victims of a terrible natural disaster. The money that was raised for Haiti over the short two-day period gives testimony to the generosity of our community. It is heartwarming to see the TAS community at large exhibit such concern and kindness for those less fortunate. Overall, TAS students recognized that a terrible, devastating event occurred and that the people of Haiti are in desperate need of help.”

Upper school student Leah Grande commented, “I was really impressed by how fast the TAS community responded to the crisis in Haiti. Donating change was such a simple and easy way for TAS students to contribute to a very worthy cause.” Through this effort, our students felt they had the chance to reach out and make an immediate difference.

For two days everyone at TAS had the same goal: to give spare change generously to provide as much aid as possible. Just as after Typhoon Morakot, there are student organizations that are planning ways to continue to support Haiti. TAS Upper School clubs such as Emergency Relief Club and World Vision will make ongoing efforts to continue to provide aid to CARE.

Kristen Lowman works at Taipei American School as the Communications/Marketing Officer. She attended international schools as a child before graduating from Duke University and moving abroad again. She recently moved to Taipei from Shanghai with her husband, Andrew, and two children, Chloe and Kingston.



Creativity: that wonder

TEXT: SUZAN BABCOCK, M.ED., MIIM

Last week, while I was speaking to my mom (who is 89 years young) she began to reminisce about her life. After listening to one particular story about how hard it was to do laundry for nine children the time the outdoor well went dry I marveled, on the other end of the line, at how successfully she had dealt with and solved this problem of being without water. When I asked her how she thought up the idea of ‘bartering’ with neighbors to help with this situation until a new well could be dug, she reminded me that one must always “think creatively in life”.

CREATIVE THINKING

That conversation has lingered with me because it reminded me of one of the most important gifts that I received from my mom as I was learning how to grow up, and that was to think creatively for solutions: in other words, to think ‘outside of the confines of my immediate challenges’.

In using ‘creative’ thinking for decision making, I usually mull my choices over from as many different angles and possible scenarios as possible before making mindful choices. Seeking advice from others continues to serve me well, especially if I am tossing everything around inside my head, like a salad. Sometimes, the options for solving or working with challenges are not always ‘traditional’ solutions, but that is OK. If they produce win-win outcomes, why not try them?

SHUTTING OFF

However, when I like to use my imagination for, say, creating a new children’s story, a poem, a speech or some new culturally-fused recipes, I try to shut my mind ‘off’ and let the ideas flow in an unorganized manner. It takes discipline to leave the mind out of this process, because it wants to ‘order’ everything into neat little ‘thought folders’, but if it gets too involved the idea can get analyzed to death.

Convincing oneself that ‘idea day dreaming’ is not a waste of time is important when working on something creative. Allow yourself time, without stress, to knead the idea into different shapes. Doodle ideas or colors out on paper, embellish upon them, pulling out your talents for imagination, in order to create an image, a set of fragrant spices, dance movements, music or words. Give your imagination the free time it needs to play and then work the creative process.

ful energy from within

THE POWER OF IMAGES

Images are powerful things. They help us to see the world from different perspectives, ones that are new and refreshing. It seems that as we grow older, we can lose sight of seeing things in different ways. We tend to focus on things that are 'realistic' or one-way directional solutions. Our mind jumps in and readjusts things to the more familiar, resting on the premise that this is the way we have always done things. If you allow such scenarios to shut you down, you will be preventing yourself from discovering unique things about yourself.

A COMMONLY SHARED GIFT

How do you know if you are a creative person? There are tons of on-line sites that will give you a chance to take a creativity test. I took a couple and flunked them. They were concerned with word associations and professional situations that I had little or no experience with. After a little more searching, I found a couple of sites that used visual images to determine the level of my creativity. I did much better on those and was told that I was indeed a creative person. But these are what some educators call 'quick and dirty' tests. They give you a quick emotional high or low, and of course need to be taken with a sense of humor. Creativity is a wonderful energy that flows within each of us and with a little prompting, encouragement and self-motivation, it can truly influence the very essence of our lives.

There are many, many women in Taiwan who have used their creative abilities to address and bring about shifts or changes in their lives. These changes often create a positive 'ripple effect' for others, giving them role models to emulate.

Beginning with our next issue of *Centered on Taipei*, we will present a series of interviews with women who have remarkable stories to tell. They will share with us how their choices to think creatively or outside the box have influenced them and others. Additionally, it is our hope that readers will feel free to provide us with their own feedback.

Suzan Babcock has been associated with The Center since 1987, as a counselor, lecturer and contributor to Centered on Taipei. Her current interests include chasing her cats around the house, getting together with friends, short hikes, fusion cooking and enjoying the things that make Taiwan so special.

The pursuit of Happiness: It's all in the mind

"Change your thoughts and you change your world..."

— Norman Vincent Peale (1898 - 1993)

TEXT: WARREN CAREY

It is said "you are your thoughts" and indeed thoughts create your personality and your experience of life. Just like words, thoughts are energy and are sensed by others. Even though invisible, thoughts have a huge influence in communication and relationships. Doctors also recognize their effect upon health, often drawing a direct relationship between the quality of the patient's thoughts with the illness being suffered.

The quality of your thinking creates the quality of your life. They affect your health, relationships and prosperity. Let me describe some of the principles of how the mind creates your experience of life.

- The world is like a picture screen, upon which we 'actors' project our thoughts and attitudes, and these reflect back to us. We see all that we love and hate about ourselves in those reflections. The world does not give us happiness or sorrow; rather, it is our attitude and the reflection of it which creates our experience. For example, if your garden desperately needs water, a rainy day may give you

happiness, while if you have been planning an outdoor activity, rainy weather may be frustrating. It is our attitude that dictates our emotional response, neither the rain nor the sun.

- It is not the events of life, but our attitude to life, that give us happiness or sorrow. Happiness, love, peace etc. All are qualities of thoughts. Thoughts arise from within the mind, not from the physical or external world. It is we who can ultimately 'think' ourselves happy or sad.
- Happiness, love and peace come from within, not from the physical world. Happiness does not dwell in a new car. It does not live in money. It can't be found in a new hat, or a new house. It is not the object that gives happiness but the act of thinking happy thoughts!
- From a positive attitude come positive thoughts, emotions which lead to positive relationships, health and prosperity. Conversely, the seed of a negative attitude creates sorrow, sadness, illness and poverty. Considering the

above principles, the need to gain a positive attitude is very important. It's not hard to make the right choice if you have this comparison. Most importantly, realize that it is you who make the choice whether your attitude is positive or negative, not others.

Whether you are positive or negative is largely a matter of your conscious choice, or an unconscious 'programming'. The unconscious program (or character) is a collection of learnt behaviors that you have acquired in your life. Possibly you acquired attitudes from your parents, your peers, or even from the social norms advocated in the media. For example, maybe your mother was a compulsive worrier, so you too worry over everything. If your father was quick to get angry, so you too may have acquired that negative behavior. However, your conscious choice is greater than your unconscious programming. You can 're-program' your old negative attitudes and responses to become more positive ones.

When negative or sorrowful thoughts arise, you can check and change them. Reason with yourself,



Taipei Living Digital Photography Competition

INTRODUCTION:

Taipei Living, the Community Services Center's main information resource for the international community in Taipei is being updated to its 10th edition! To celebrate ten editions of *Taipei Living* we are holding a digital photo competition for school-aged children living in Taiwan to find the next cover of *Taipei Living*. We're looking for a photo that encapsulates "Taipei Living", a broad brief that will allow the entrants to use their creativity and imagination to capture the beauty of the Taipei that we live in.

DETAILS ON HOW TO ENTER THE COMPETITION:

Email tlcovercomp@gmail.com with the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Contact phone number
- The school you attend
- The name of your photo
- Description of your photo (including where it was taken)
- Why you think your photo captures the idea of "Taipei Living"

Attach your photo in both high resolution and low-resolution. The low resolution file will be uploaded by the competition administrator to the competition Picasa album. Entrants should check the online Picasa album 2-3 days after submitting their entry. If it has not been uploaded, they need to contact us directly to ensure that it was received.

To view the album of competition entries, please go to: <http://picasaweb.google.com/tlcovercomp/TaipeiLivingCoverPhotoCompetition?feat=directlink>.

COMPETITION RULES:

1. This competition is open to school-aged children living in Taiwan.
2. The entrant should provide the Community Services Center (herein referred to as "CSC") with their name, address, age, telephone number and e-mail details. CSC will only ever use these personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without the entrant's express permission.
3. Only one entry will be accepted per person and entries will not be returned. Entries must be submitted electronically in two formats: one high resolution and one low resolution (to be uploaded for judging to the competition Picasa album).
4. Deadline for receiving entries is 5pm on 12th March 2010. The winner will be notified by 19 March 2010.
6. If the entrant is under 16 years of age, they must obtain their parent or guardian's permission before entering the competition. By entering the competition it is understood permission has been granted.
7. The prize is having your photograph published on the cover of the 10th edition of Taipei Living. All entrants will receive a free copy of the published book.
8. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
9. The prize(s) may only be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. There will be no cash alternatives.
11. The entrant must supply full details as required above, and comply with all rules to be eligible for the prize(s). No responsibility is accepted by CSC for ineligible entries or entries made fraudulently.
12. By submitting your photograph to CSC you agree to grant CSC, free of charge, the right to publish all media as required.
13. Your entry must be entirely your own original work, not defame anybody nor breach any copyright.
14. If the photograph features any person or people, they should be aware they were being photographed and permission should be obtained from all involved (or their parents/guardians if under 16) for their photograph to be submitted in a competition. If it is clear that the people are not aware of their picture being taken or are embarrassed in any way in any entry we receive, CSC reserves the right to disqualify the entry.
15. CSC reserves the right to cancel this competition at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, and if circumstances arise outside its control.
16. If a winning entrant is unable to be contacted after reasonable attempts have been made to do so, CSC reserves the right to offer the prize to the next best entry.
17. CSC reserves the right to disqualify any entry which breaches any of these rules or to withhold a prize if in its opinion entries do not reach the required standard.

"Is this type of thinking going to give me and others happiness?" Your character is somewhat like a garden: you can pull out the weeds and plant flowers and fruit trees. In time, you can totally refurbish the 'garden of your mind' and then positive thoughts will naturally emerge. We are creatures of habit. We are forming habits all the time. Create positive habits which will lead to health, wealth, happiness and your highest good.

Being a positive thinker is not walking around with your head in the clouds. It's simply making the most out of everything, and seeking to see the silver lining in life's challenges. See the good within the bad, the benefit in apparent loss, and the virtues hidden behind the defects. This is the mind of one who is far sighted and broad minded and is loved by all as a true friend.

The author is Warren Carey, a Raja Yoga Meditation teacher who frequently visits Taipei. He plans to run a course at the CSC in April entitled 'Coping with Stress' (Contact the CSC for bookings) If you wish to contact him directly, email warrencarey@gmail.com



So how did Nelly Furtado's sister end up teaching in Kaohsiung, Taiwan?

TEXT: TRISTA DI GENOVA

Trista di Genova has an exclusive interview with Lisa Furtado, on the release of her new book.

I was tired of the routine of living in Victoria, BC and being in university. I finally graduated and was looking for a big change. The year before I graduated I met my husband, Charlie and he introduced me to the idea of living in Taiwan. He lived in Kaohsiung several years before I did. I intended on living in Taiwan for only six months for something new. And Taiwan hit me quickly. I fell in love with everything Taiwan and stayed for eight years. They say you are a changed person when you make the move here. That was very true for me. Now I get reverse culture shock going home.

What Do You Think Of Life Here?

I adore everything about this culture and country (on my good days!).

I especially love the warm weather, the friendly people and the convenience of living in a big city.

What do you think of Taiwan's culture?

It's lovely, I love everything about it. And I'm hoping in my next life I can come back as a Taiwanese person living in Taiwan. To come back as a movie director like Ang Lee, a clothing designer like Jason Wu, or a best-selling writer like Jiu Ba-dao.... Wouldn't that be something?!

Your favorite things to do here?

Riding around the city on my bike, and discovering new places or things to do. Getting lost is great — you see so many cool things!

What projects are you working on these days?

Lately, I'm interested in getting my online store together. I love clothing and fashion and after five years of searching I finally found an extraordinary seamstress who has a medium-sized factory. This Christmas I had made a copy of a Louis Vuitton dress from the Fall/Winter 2010

collection, and looking at the dress you can't tell it's not the original; it looks identical to the dress off the catwalk. [For more information on the store, visit <http://www.stars-rockets-unicorns.com>].

Also, I'm writing. Now I call it the 'gem collecting' phase, where I'm keeping a collection of insights, plots, characters for a book and once I'm ready I'll put it all together for my second book.

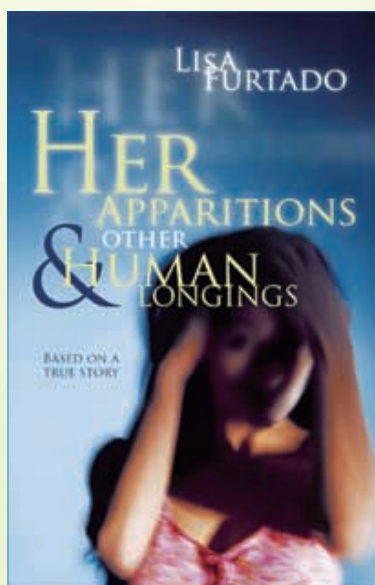
Can you tell us about your book?

My debut novel which I just released is based on a true story; it's called *Her Apparitions & Other Human Longings* (Available Amazon.com and through other book retailers). It takes place during the early 1980s and focuses on the psychological responses of a girl named Fatima, a teenager who is from Indiana, America who falls for an older married man, Laurence. She is convinced he is her soul mate, but he leaves for Bangkok, Thailand for a photography contract with the war remnants museum, in Saigon, Vietnam. She ends up following him, backpacking across Southeast Asia, getting involved with heavy drugs, and in the meantime she becomes schizophrenic. So for part of the book, you are in her schizophrenic mind rediscovering Southeast Asia.

I think I came pretty close to what it would be like having a mental illness and being lost backpacking throughout Southeast Asia myself. I have had people with schizophrenia contact me who have read my book and they told me that it freaked them out, because it reminded them of their schizophrenic episodes and how this illness can grossly distort reality.

I saw on Facebook you are into music and videos. Do you have any samples people can check out?

I love music; I spend far too much time listening to music and watching videos on YouTube. I have an endless stream of music which I listen to. And what I listen to always changes on a



weekly basis. I'm also a fan of Lady Gaga's videos and her artistic point of view.

Do you have other artistic ambitions as well?

My big love is writing. In my life I want to write lots of meaningful, uplifting books that will hold the test of time. But I have dabbled a lot in my life; I like trying different things.... I have produced or promoted live shows, and written or directed several movies and plays.

The tone of your Blog is uplifting. What are your intentions, motivations with that?

I'm an optimistic and a happy person. My intentions are to inspire and uplift people while promoting my artistic projects through my Blog [www.lisafurtado.pt.vu].

What was it like growing up in the Furtado family?

It was fun but difficult. I came from humble beginnings; my parents immigrated to Canada with no education and little English. What my parents have accomplished as a whole inspires me every day. My family had to jump endless impossible hurdles in Canada to achieve their dreams. A lot of hard work, vision, and determination. My family went through many heartbreaking and disappointing situations. So if my blog sounds uplifting it is because I evolved into that kind of positive person through hardship. There were few Portuguese people around, and my parents struggled financially. We didn't have babysitters or a nanny when my mother worked as a housekeeper at a motel six days a week. My dad was a self-taught mason - he worked very hard! My parents didn't have much time to be with us, so we were often alone. When we wanted to join swimming or gymnastics class my mother would tell us to look the number up in the phone book and call them ourselves". She wasn't being mean; she just didn't have the time to help us with these kinds of things, so we learned to be ambitious and independent at a very young age. We were taught to be independent at 6 or 7 years old. But it was fun because my brother, sister & I created stuff all the time and played a lot as kids. We stuck together, and dreamed a lot. A lot of our imagination and strong personalities evolved through our crazy childhoods and the result was that we were often chosen by teachers for plays, musicals, dance troupes and band groups.

Any chance of Nelly coming to regale Taiwan?

Yes, she has been here and loved it. She mentioned in a TV interview that Kaohsiung was one of her favorite places in the world. The host was stumped. I think he replied, " And where is Kaohsiung exactly?"

Trista di Genova

<http://www.thewildeast.net/news>

<http://www.youtube.com/digenovafilm>

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Food from an Island Shaped Like a Sweet Potato

TEXT: MISLIE BREE

On the east side of Asia, just miles off the southeastern coast of China, across the Taiwan Strait, lies an island shaped like a sweet potato. That's right, a sweet potato. Certainly, an island that is shaped like food does tell you something about its specialty.

Like the French, Italian, and Japanese who are world renowned for their cuisines, so are the Taiwanese.

Except the cuisine mentioned here does not feature the extravagant ambience, or the fancy names that just make your heart swirl through showers of confetti and your tongue swirl through the bouncy sounds.

Ambiente.
Bucca di Beppo.
Kabuki.

But here's what special and understated about Taiwanese food: food here is like the two extreme seasons of the year. The nuance is subtle and can slip by unnoticed or it can be pronounced.

Summertime in Taiwan is swelteringly hot and you just can't help but notice sweat trickling down people's faces. And so it comes as no surprise that the star of the summer is shaved ice, ice cubes mashed into tiny, chewable pieces, flavored with a myriad of toppings that are meant to quench the simmering thirst. Delicate peaches, and red beans that give a pastel feeling are among the many.

Wintertime, on the other hand, is oddly pleasant. Though there are no snowflakes that drift or icicles that hang, a crisp breath of air occasionally rushes into your mouth, robbing the warmth that has been stealthily kept. That's when the celebrated winter specialty in Taiwan, Chinese fondue, more commonly known as hot pot, comes in. All it takes is a simmering pot of soup with literally anything, from sliced meat to seafood; quite a simple yet satisfying dish, though



Shaved Ice



Hot Pot

the only challenge is to your gustatory nerve. And what more could be better than the motley of flavors escaping from the pots, carried by the bitter winter breeze through roads, lanes, and alleys.

Of course, like life, there are exceptions, and that's when the all-year-stars come in. Beef noodles that offer a concentrated shot of an amalgamation of ginger, vinegar, soy sauce, and beef juice that quench the plea for satisfaction; little meat buns with silent puffs; and even stinky tofu (the name says



Beef Noodles

it all!) whose bittersweet aroma drifts through every single stitch of the clothes of passers-by.

What's good always has a price, some people say. But this price is worth it: nothing beats food that is a mixture of the cold and the hot, the sweet and the bitter, the yin and the yang. Food from an island shaped like a sweet potato.

RESCUE

Here are a few of our most recent animal rescues. If you would like to foster or visit the rescued animals, please contact Lusan Tang, our Rescue Center Assistant Manager at

lusan@animalstaiwan.org or phone 2833-8820.



Kiki is a two-month-old kitten found near Shida University with a serious eye infection. He won't be able to use his eyes for the rest of his life. However, after receiving special treatment and care from the Animals Taiwan staff, Kiki is making a speedy recovery.



Eric was found near Formosa Fun Coast in Bali, where he was left on the side of the road unable to move after being hit by a car. The vet determined that Eric suffered from a broken pelvis and hind legs. Despite emergency treatment, Eric still cannot move his hind legs normally. He will undergo an operation soon to help him recover the use of his legs and to walk again.



Skal is a one-year-old beagle who was rescued from the side of the road after being hit by a car. The lower part of her body is paralyzed, so Skal now needs to be in a wheelchair for the rest of her life.



Milky was rescued with a severe neck injury. A collar was found on her neck, which may have been put on her when she was a puppy. As Milky grew bigger, the collar started to slowly cut into her neck. Milky has undergone surgery and is now recovering at the rescue center.



Wendy was caught in a leg trap, which cut off her front left paw. Due to the severity of her injury, her front leg has been amputated. Wendy is now staying at the rescue center for special care.

To find out more about adopting or becoming a volunteer with Animals Taiwan please visit our website at www.animalstaiwan.org.

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Changemakers

What is a changemaker? Someone who is imagining possibilities and moving to make them happen. Someone who is seeking to make a positive difference in our world. In a three-part series beginning this issue, a trio of Taiwan's changemakers tell their stories.

財團法人
朝邦文教基金會
CP Yen Foundation www.cpyen.org



The Art of Dialogue

An interview with Jorie Wu, Director of the CP Yen Foundation

TEXT: LEON VANDERPOL IMAGE: COURTESY OF JORIE WU

When you meet Jorie Wu, one of the first things you notice about her is the aura of stillness that she carries with her; a sense of a great spirit housed in a body of selflessness. I'm interested in connecting with this.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Jorie for many years. My experience of her is that she is a complex person, one who cares deeply about connecting people. And she is not beyond questioning herself, struggling with what she is doing and the directions she is compelled to go.

But the more I come to understand what it means to be a changemaker, the more I see that the realm of a changemaker is often clothed in swaths of uncertainty, confusion, and reflection. To coin M. Scott Peck, it is the road less travelled.

Yet the journey of a changemaker is an adventure of the unexpected, the unknown, the difficult, and the wondrous.

In this three-part series on Taiwan's changemakers, I've set out to explore the hearts and minds of the makers of change; those for whom the means of change is an expression of who they are.

For a few minutes here, let's walk down the road with Jorie Wu.

IMAGINE TAIWAN

The CP Yen Foundation Jorie oversees is a family foundation memorializing San Yang Metal Industrial's Chairman of the Board Mr Chao Pang Yen. During its early years, from 1999 to 2005, the foundation's work was framed by a singular question: Who within our community is seeing possibilities

and how can we support them to make those possibilities happen? The foundation held events using Open Space Technology to facilitate discussions around issues communities cared about.

By 2006 Taiwan was in political turmoil. As Jorie describes it, "Taiwanese people were feeling quite polarized at the time. I, along with other organizations, sensed a need. And so we thought about creating a space where people can talk about these issues. It could be healing space or a space for inspiration. So we just decided to do that."

The foundation initiated a series of public events under the banner of Imagine Taiwan with the intention of bringing people together to converse on their pressing concerns, respectfully and open-mindedly. As a grassroots, distinctly nonpolitical

initiative, Imagine Taiwan stood in sharp contrast to the shoe-throwing, brawling, media-fashioned theater that passed for discourse elsewhere.

“There was lots of very positive feedback,” Jorie recalls. When participants saw and heard that so many really do care about Taiwan and really want to make it a better society, they gained a sense of energy, a sense of strength amongst each other, or just got clear on what they could do for themselves, their family, or their community.”

“I remember an event in Kaohsiung,” Jorie says reflectively, “a lot of young university students came. At the end of the day they felt like, ‘Okay we can sit down and talk even though we are from different political backgrounds.’ It is the spirit of respecting each other and really listening to each other.”

THRIVING ON UNCERTAINTY

As the financial crisis dawned, Jorie became aware of a new destabilizing force — worry and concern over Taiwan’s financial situation and future. Uncertainty hung thick in the air.

Changemakers learn to live with uncertainty. It is the nature of the game when moving in uncharted waters, as uncomfortable as it may be. In true changemaker style Jorie spun conventional worry on its head, announcing the foundation’s theme for 2009 as Thriving on Uncertainty. And when people respectfully come together with the intent to identify opportunities for thriving in uncertain times, remarkable and unexpected things happen.

“After Typhoon Morakot hit Taiwan we held an Open Space [event] because it was a time when there were a lot of people who cared but who didn’t know what to do or how to help, aside from donating money. Unexpectedly, a group of aboriginal people came who were not from the disaster zone, yet because of their participation the level and quality of discussion was quite deep. As a result of that event they saw the power of Open Space Technology

and Dialogue. They asked me to help them initiate another one for the aboriginal people. [The result of that event] enabled them to better integrate their resources and networks and accomplish things which they long struggled to do within their community.”

DIALOGUE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

When people enter into mindful communicative spaces the outcomes are neither predictable nor linear. It’s about people experiencing how they can learn more through group wisdom.

For now Jorie is clear on the direction to take the foundation. “What we are really doing is building a culture of dialogue for sustainable community,” she says. “We are focused on cultivating Dialogue Practitioners. Physicist David Bohm (developer of the Bohm Dialogue) says that no discovery really comes out of one person. It comes out of a lot of insightful conversations. Dialogue is also one of the five disciplines that [author] Peter Senge says is critical to organizational learning.”

I personally agree that dialogue is a valuable leadership skill. In an organization it starts with the leaders, who set the tone and invite the culture and people to explore a different way to converse. Facilitators and coaches such as Jorie and myself work to help leaders experience the value of dialogue, because it’s not easy to enter into. To be open to my own assumptions, to perceive my own prejudices, and to really have no role to play when entering into dialogue is challenging.

Jorie continues, “Much of our conversation everyday is very polite. Our tendency is to talk and let people know what we know rather than listen. I think people just do not know that there is this other way of communicating. Dialogue asks us to go much deeper. If we keep talking we eventually come to a place where we find we have differences, and conflicts may arise. From that

place however, if I can let go of my own assumptions, I have a chance to move into true dialogue, where new insights rise, new mental models form, and we have more empathy. It’s a discovery journey.”

“I think that’s also why I enjoy it,” says Jorie. “I personally gain from having good dialogue with others. I’m not a really good talker, but I find that by listening to others and asking a few questions I can learn a lot. So why not do it?!”

THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE

One path the CP Yen Foundation sees as part of its future is spreading the discipline of Dialogue. Jorie notes, “Dialogue is a discipline, and I feel like this is part of my ongoing process of learning. It’s as simple as that. If more people can live in the spirit of dialogue, having that nonjudgmental, open-minded, listening-oriented, respectful way of conversation with each other I think the quality of discussions and of the decisions made will be different. If more people are in this spirit I feel this society is a very positive place.”

To learn more about Dialogue and the foundation’s work, contact Jorie at:

jorie@cpyen.org or visit <http://blog.yam.com/cpyen/article/21509606>

Leon VanderPol is a Taipei-based leadership coach. He works with executives, entrepreneurs, and creatives who are imagining possibilities with themselves and their organization but struggling to make them happen. He invites you to initiate a conversation with him on coaching and how it can be of benefit to you or your organization. Contact him at Leon@imaginallight.com or explore his site at www.UnusualLeading.com.

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Thursday March 18th
(RESCHEDULED FROM MARCH 4TH)
9 am – 12 noon
NT\$800
Meet @ Xinbeitou MRT Station Exit 2
Michelle Chiu

GUANDU NATURE PARK AND TEMPLE TOUR

Thursday March 11
9:30 am – 12 noon
NT\$600
Meet @ Guandu MRT Station Exit 2
Richard Saunders

TEA TASTING & TOUR OF THE OLD TEA DISTRICT

Tuesday March 16th
9:30 am – 12:30 pm
NT\$600
Meet @ ABC TEA
Jackson Huang

SANXIA OLD STREET & TEMPLE TOUR

Tuesday April 13th
9 am – 2 pm
NT\$1000
Meet @ The Center
Jennifer Tong

FOLK ARTS MUSEUM TOUR & LUNCH

Thursday April 22nd
10 am – 1:30 pm
NT\$1400
Meet @ The Center
Michelle Chiu

NORTHEAST COAST SCENIC TOUR & WALK

Thursday April 29th
9 am – 2 pm
NT\$1000
Meet @ The Center
Richard Saunders

CHINESE FOR COOKING & SHOPPING, PLUS, MARKET TOUR

Friday April 30th
9 am – 12 noon
NT\$600
Meet @ The Center
Ivy Chen

FAMILY & HEALTH >> MOTHER-DAUGHTER HEALTH TOPICS

Monday March 1st
12 noon - 1:30 pm
NT\$500
1 session @ The Center
Radha Chaddah, MD and Gabrielle Peterson, NP

KINDERMUSIK 1 (0 – 1 ½)

Wednesdays
Begins March 10th
9 am – 9:45 am
NT\$4500
7 sessions @ The Center
Jennifer Chau

MENOPAUSE AND CHINESE MEDICINE

Thursday March 18th
12 noon – 1:30 pm
NT\$500
1 session @ The Center
Dr. Dustin Wu

COPING WITH STRESS

Thursdays
Begins April 15th
9 am – 10:30 am
NT\$1800
5 sessions @ The Center
Warren Carey

WATCH YOUR BACK!

Thursday April 15th
12 noon – 1:30 pm
NT\$500
1 session @ The Center
Dr. Mark Griffin, DC

BEGINNING GOLF

Fridays
Begins April 16th
12 noon – 2 pm
NT\$4800 (Cost of practice balls @NT\$70 per bucket, not included.)
6 sessions @ Miramar Driving Range
Benjamin Lu

HOBBIES & SKILLS >> STYLISH SILVER JEWELRY

Mondays
March 8th and 15th
12 noon – 2 pm
NT\$1800
2 sessions @ The Center
Wen Da-Mu

CHAIN MAILLE

Wednesdays
April 14th and 21st
12 noon – 2 pm
NT\$1800
2 sessions @ The Center
Jennifer Chau

CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY

Tuesdays
Begins April 20th
12 noon – 2 pm
NT\$2500
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Jennifer Tong

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SURVIVAL CHINESE 2

Mondays & Wednesdays
Begins March 10th
10:30 am – 11:50 am
NT\$4900
14 sessions @ The Center

WHAT'S COOKING >>

JAPANESE FAMILY FAVORITES

Friday March 5th
10 am – 12 noon
NT\$1000
1 session @ The Center
Tomoe Nagashima and Ivy Chen

FRENCH COOKING A LA JULIA CHILD

Friday March 12th
10 am – 12 noon
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Laure Cornillon

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Friday April 16th
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Tel: 2598-1009 (office)
csc@agapeicatapei.org
www.agapeicatapei.org

Anglican Episcopal Church

Church of the Good Shepherd
509 ZhongCheng Rd., Shilin
Tel: 2873-8104, 2882-2462
www.goodshepherd.com.tw/english/

Calvary International Baptist Church

21, YangDe Blvd., Sec. 2, Yangmingshan
Tel: 2831-3458 Fax: 2838-5792

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

5, Lane 183, JinHua Street
Tel: 2321-9195, 0939-687-178

City Revival Church

B1, 210, ZhongXiao E. Rd., Sec. 4
Tel: 8921-8250 Fax: 8921-8272
doris.henry@msa.hinet.net

Friendship Presbyterian Church

5, Lane 269, Roosevelt Rd., Sec. 3
Tel: 2362-1395

Grace Baptist Church

90 XinSheng S. Rd., Sec. 5
Tel: 2362-5321 ext. 135

Jewish Community

For information call Ahrony Yoram on 0939-763-135

Living Word Church

B1, 304, ShiDong Road, Shilin
Tel: 2834-6549

Mother of God Catholic Church

171 ZhongShan N. Rd., Sec. 7, Tianmu
Tel: 2871-5168 Fax: 2871-7972
www.geocities.com/mother_of_god_church
vanaert@iplus.net.tw

New Apostolic Church

2F, No. 5, Lane 39, Keelung Rd, sec. 2, Taipei
www.nac-taiwan.org, info@nac-taiwan.org

New Life International Seventh-day Adventist Church

4th Fl. Health Center- Taipei Adventist Hospital
424 Ba De Rd. Sec. 2, Taipei 105
Pr. Robbie Berghan 0958-732-704
www.nlisda.org
email: rberghan@twcadventist.org.tw

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http://www.oasis.org.tw email: oasis@oasiscf.org.tw

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Zhongshan N. Road, Section 2, Taipei
www.slpcenglish.org

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Transforming Faith Church

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Location: Taoyuan County
Style: Organic Vegetarian, An-Hui province



May 14, Kyoto Chef
Price: NT\$2500 (including transportation)
Location: Shanzhi Township home
Style: Japanese

For specific details and registration, please contact

The Center at (02) 2838-4947, or email Amy C. Liu at amycliu@gmail.com or amycliu@community.com.tw

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Al-anon (English speaking)		alanonfamilygroup@hotmail.com
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Canadian Society	2757-6977	www.canadiansociety.org
Christian Salvation Service	2729-0265	www.csstpe.org.tw
Community Services Center	2836-8134	www.community.com.tw
Democrats Abroad (Tammy Turner)		democratsabroadtaiwan@gmail.com
Dutch Speaking Association (VNT)		www.vntonline.org
European Chamber of Commerce	2740-0236	www.ecct.com.tw
Gateway	2833-7444	gateway@taipeichurch.org
German Institute	2501-6188	www.taipei.diplo.de
German Trade Office	2506-9028	www.dwb-taipei.org.tw
Goethe-Institut Taipei	2506-9028	www.goethe.de/taipei
Indians' Association of Taipei	2542-8091	lalduru@seed.net.tw
International Community Choir	2533-4272	internationalchoir@gmail.com
La Leche League (Breastfeeding Support)		www.lalecheleague.org
lé le francophone		thefrancophone@hotmail.fr , http://thefrancophone.unblog.fr/
Lions Downtown Club Taipei, English speaking (Peter Wu)	2701-1811	www.tapeidowntowntw.lionwap.org
Oasis Youth Group	2831-0299	
Overseas Trailing Talent in Taiwan		TaipeiTalent@yahoo.com
Paradyme Youth Group	2833-7444	www.paradymeyouth.org
POW Camps Memorial Society (Michael Hurst)	8660-8438	www.powtaiwan.org
Republicans Abroad Taiwan	2592 2840	einhorn@ttn.net
Shilin District Office	2882-6200	www.sld.gov.tw
Tagalog Hotline	2834-4127	paultic@ispeed.com
Taipei International Women's Club	2331-9403	www.tiwc.org
TYPA (Taipei Youth Program Association)	2873-1815	www.typa.org.tw

SCHOOLS

Dominican International School	2533-8451	www.dishs.tp.edu.tw
Grace Christian Academy	2785-7233	www.gca.tp.edu.tw
Morrison Academy	2365-9691	www.mca.org.tw
Taipei Adventist American School	2861-6400	www.taas-taiwan.com
Taipei American School	2873-9900	www.tas.edu.tw
Taipei European School	8145-9007	www.taipeieuropeanschool.com
Taipei Japanese School	2872-3833	www.taipeijf.org

SPORTS

Biking site in Taiwan		http://www.cycltaiwan.com/
Hash House Harriers	0952-025-116	www.chinahash.com
International Golf Society of Taipei		www.taiwan-golf.com
Scottish Country Dancing (May Chen)	2706 3179	maychen321@pchome.com.tw
Taipei Women's International Golf Group (TWIGG)	2691 5912	twigggtaipei@hotmail.com
Tai Tai's Women's Touch Rugby	0981-180-020	blandm@tas.edu.tw
Taipei Baboons Rugby Club - Taiwan	0952 67 1995	bernierua@gmail.com
Taipei Shebabs Women's Touch Rugby	0913-602-071	johnnayoder@yahoo.com

COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES IN TAIWAN

COUNTRY	TELEPHONE	COUNTRY	TELEPHONE	COUNTRY	TELEPHONE
Argentina	2757-6556	Gambia	2875-3911	Oman	2722-0684
Australia	8725-4100	German Institute	2501-6188	Panama	2509-9189
Austria	2712-8597	Guatemala	2875-6952	Paraguay	2873-6310
Belgium	2715-1215	Haiti	2876-6718	Peru	2757-7017
Belize	2876-0894	Honduras	2875-5512	Philippines	2723-2527
Bolivia	2723-8721	Hungary	8501-1200	Poland	2757-6140
Brazil	2835-7388	India	2757-6112	Russia	8780-3011
Britain	8758-2088	Indonesia	8752-6179	Saudi Arabia	2876-1444
Brunie	2506-3767	Ireland	2725-1691	Senegal	2876-6519
Burkina Faso	2873-3096	Israel	2757-9692	Singapore	2772-1940
Canada	2544-3000	Italy	2725-1542	Slovak Republic	8780-3231
Chad	2874-2943	Japan	2713-8000	South Africa	2715-3251
Chile	2723-0329	Jordan	2871-7712	Spain	2518-4901
Costa Rica	2875-2964	Korea	2725-2324	Swaziland	2872-5934
Czech Republic	2738-9768	Malaysia	2713-2626	Sweden	2757-6573
Denmark	2718-2101	Mexico	2757-6566	Switzerland	2720-1001
Dominican Republic	2875-1357	Netherlands	2713-5760	Thailand	2723-1800
El Salvador	2876-3509	New Zealand	2757-6725	Turkey	2757-7318
Fiji	2757-9596	Nicaragua	2874-9034	United States	2162-2000
Finland	2722-0764	Nigeria	2757-6987	Vietnam	2516-6626
France	3518-5151	Norway	2543-5484		



Save the date

Saturday, April 17th at 7 a.m.

**ECCT/ICRT
Charity Golf Tournament
At Royal Kuan-Hsi Golf Club**

**More information
coming soon.**

Sponsored by Nokia Siemens Networks



Peace.

ALEXHOUGHTON

allosview@gmail.com





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