



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2

NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

JULY 2012

Inside this issue

A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

Community Pride

Afterschool Program Pics

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UPCOMING DATES

Events - located at 900 E. Howell Street, 19149 unless otherwise indicated:

- Summer Camp Arts and Enrichment Program, Jun 25-Aug 3: 9am-3pm, Mon-Thurs
- Adult Education Classes, Jul-Aug: 6-8:30pm, Tues. and Thurs. (additional classes on website)
- Flea Market, 2nd Saturdays in Jul-Sept, - 8am-2pm
- Back to School Day, Sep 8: 12-4pm
- Board Meeting, every 2nd 1st Tuesday: 7:00-9:00pm

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I've been inspired lately by the courage it takes to live boldly for Christ. Yushan who was with us this past year through Mennonite Central Committee's IVEP program came here from China, knowing no one and having never worked with children. In spite of this, she came boldly and courageously to a new place and a new experience. Our adult education participants are an inspiration as well... the courage it takes to go back to school after many years to finish a GED, the courage to learn a new language as an English as a Second Language student. As I reflect on it (inspired in part by my husband's recent sermon), I realize that we are all called to live a life of risk-taking. That our purpose as Christians is to demonstrate the life of Christ, to be "little Christ's" as our heritage as

Mennonites states. That taking these risks in spite of our weakness is what allows Christ to be displayed.

'The Message' states it better than I can in 2 Corinthians 4: 7-12. If you only look at us, you might well miss the brightness. We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives. That's to prevent anyone from confusing God's incomparable power with us. As it is, there's not much chance of that. You know for yourselves that we're not much to look at. We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized; we're not sure what to do, but we know that God knows what to do; we've been spiritually terrorized, but God hasn't left our side; we've been thrown down, but we haven't



broken. What they did to Jesus, they do to us—trial and torture, mockery and murder; what Jesus did among them, he does in us—he lives! Our lives are at constant risk for Jesus' sake, which makes Jesus' life all the more evident in us. While we're going through the worst, you're getting in on the best!

So I invite you... be courageous... find ways to be a risk-taker for Christ!

--Anita Lyndaker Studer
OCCDA Executive Director

(Below: OCMC members and City Year volunteers help spruce up Houseman Recreation Center)





A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

By Yushan
IVEP participant

Not until I went through more than 3,000 pictures I've taken since I came to the U.S., did I realize how many interesting things I've done, how many amazing people I've known and how many wonderful memories I've had just in 10 months. It seemed much longer than that with so many things squeezed in and it went too fast to prepare myself to say goodbye.

Last week, we had the year-end celebration for the after school program. It was one of the most important parts of my life this year. When I saw all the students and volunteers during the party, so many things appeared in my mind mixing hardship and happiness, challenges and success, tears and laughter. There are so many highlights in my service year from work, host family and the IVEP family, but staying with 1-6 graders everyday as a "one-child" Chinese is a most special part, more challenging than enjoyable at the very beginning. Though I should be the adult to handle all kinds of situations, to some degree I'm the child who knows nothing and needs to learn everything. Not only are my co-workers and volunteers my teachers and supporters, the students are my best teachers (not just for English). They inspire me to learn to talk in the way

they would listen to, they make me keep thinking about how to improve the program to deal with every-day "surprises" and they also remind me of simple joy, forgiveness and pure friendship. I've never thought I could be so close to so many kids before, maybe without this chance I would still escape from the kids with my stereotypes, but through this years' experience, I found my passion for children after really getting to know and care about them.

Before I came I thought a lot about what I would acknowledge from this program and what I could bring to my placement. I did gain many skills from work, learned much more about the real American culture, and also shared a lot about China and my hometown. But what is the most meaningful is not knowledge or skills; it is more about people. I got to know so many amazing people with their interesting stories. It is a blessing that they are willing to open their heart to get to know about me, to give up the stereotypes and to enjoy the differences. I'm grateful I have a very interesting and successful cross-culture experience, not just because of the continuous curiosity or the optimism about facing possible failure, but because we treat each other with love as family. I really appreciate everyone who appeared in my life this year, you are my angels. Thank you, goodbye, I love you ☺ and will miss you.

Community Pride: The Lehman family



In April, my family and I attended the service day at Houseman Recreation Center organized by Fels High School City Year volunteers. Since it was Spring break week for the Philadelphia Public Schools, my son had off and we were excited to have a service project that we could do together. The City Year volunteers were well-prepared with jobs for various skill levels all over the rec center. We worked with our children to paint their hands and then "stamp" them all over the park benches. The end results were some very brightly-painted benches with our personal hand-signatures. My husband and son also helped to paint some asphalt games (hop scotch, etc.) beside the basketball courts. We were also able to help with some weeding. The morning ended with a group picnic and picture. It was a great way to bring community members out to help take care of our rec center and a great way to partner with organizations, like City Year, to help make our neighborhood a brighter place.

--Jennifer Leaman

Reaching Our Potential Everyday!



OXFORD CIRCLE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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*To extend
healing and hope in the
Oxford Circle community,
believing that God's
purpose of reconciling
all people to Jesus
leads us to minister
on spiritual, physical,
social & economic
levels.*



NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

We have the following ministry and resource opportunity opportunities and welcome your participation!

Prayer needs: Contact Anita Lyndaker-Studer @ occcda@verizon.net or (267) 265-1709 for more information.

- Please join us in praying for our summer camp that the participating children would know the peace and joy of Jesus both at OCCDA and in their families. Please pray for our summer staff and that we find the needed volunteers and funding to support these programs. Please contact us if you would like to be a prayer partner or sponsor for a child/family.

- Please pray for strength as our adult programs have continued to grow, especially our GED/ESL classes. Also please pray for wisdom as we look to start a Bridge of Hope program (1 year intensive support program for homeless women and children) this fall. We need prayer both that we reach the families in need of these ministries and that they would know the love of Jesus through participating. We also need your prayers to find the staff, volunteers, and funding needed to support these programs. Additionally we are looking for donations of 10 wireless capable laptop computers and a media storage unit on rollers to hold them.

Human resources:

- Adult Education Tutors and instructors – Contact Joe Beech @ ajataylor1@yahoo.com

- After School Volunteers—Contact Chantelle Todman-Moore @ chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com or (215) 288-8504

Board of Directors

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