



# Renascentia Hall International

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## In This Issue

Basking on the Beach .....	1
4-H Comes to RH .....	1
Halloween Fun.....	1
Student Scholarships .....	2
New Student Orientation .....	2
4-H English Camp in China .....	2
Leadership Retreat .....	3
Student Spotlight.....	4
Host Family Training .....	4
Newest Partner School.....	4
Important School Dates.....	4
New Faces on Our Staff.....	5
Upcoming Events .....	5
Student Travel Policies .....	5
Host Family Corner.....	6
Happy Birthday Wishes.....	6
In Memory.....	6
Inspiration & Insight.....	6

## Halloween Fun

Pick a pumpkin at Filasky Farms during our Halloween celebration on Saturday, October 25. Host families and siblings are also invited to join in the fun from 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. in Middletown, DE. Pumpkins will be decorated (supplies are provided) and donated to The Mary Campbell Center as a community service project. Additional pumpkins and gourds can be purchased to take home. Costumes are encouraged and prizes will be awarded. Come explore the Soybean Maze and stay for dinner. Climb aboard the hay ride under the stars followed by a bonfire with s'mores! Bring your friends for just \$10 each. Host parents will need to provide transportation. Check your email inbox for details.

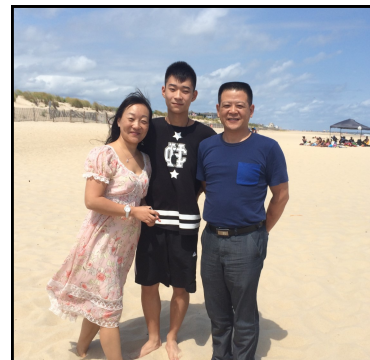


## Basking on the Beach

The August outing for international students was an excursion to the Delaware beaches. The first stop was DiscoverSea Shipwreck Museum in Fenwick Island, housing nearly 10,000 artifacts recovered both regionally and worldwide. The students saw gold medallions, silver bars, china, jewelry, weapons, and items used aboard sailing ships that had been brought up from the ocean floor. There were also seashells and marine life tanks to



explore. The charter bus then whisked the group of students, visiting parents, and host families to Tower Beach, a beautiful Delaware Seashore State Park near Rehoboth Beach. It was the first time many had ever seen the Atlantic Ocean. Some built sand castles, while



others were brave enough to splash in the water. After lunch at the park's concession stand, a few of the group took a walk on the beach while others enjoyed playing a sandy football game. Still others hid under umbrellas, afraid of getting too much sun. For sun worshipers and sun avoiders alike, the trip was a fun ending to the summer.

## 4-H Comes to RH

A new 4-H club for Renascentia Hall students was formed in September. Leader Monica Wamsley will hold club meetings every 2nd Sunday. The goal is to focus on leadership training through monthly meetings and enrichment activities. Monica will offer information about public speaking at the first meeting, and she hopes all students will consider entering the County Public Speaking Contest on Thursday, November 13 at 6 p.m. Participants will compete against other 4-H'ers in their age group. Those who win will advance to the state level contest. Speeches may be given on any topic of the participant's interest and must be 5-7 minutes long. This is a great opportunity to practice speaking in front of an audience. For more information and contest guidelines, come to the upcoming 4-H meeting on October 12 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the 4-H Extension Office located at 461 Wyoming Road, Newark, DE. Refreshments will be served.



## Student Scholarship

At last year's Annual Appreciation Dinner, Renascentia Hall announced an opportunity for students to earn scholarships based on their grades. Director Jerry Xiao said, "Our students have superior academic records and we want to recognize their hard work. These students are setting the standard for coming years with our program." Winners for the previous school year are:

**1st Place (\$1000 prize)**  
Ruilin Yang, Sanford School

**2nd Place (\$750 prize)**  
Yifei Li, Salesianum School

Feiya (Cassie) Wang, St. Mark's High School

**3rd Place (\$500 prize)**  
Shiyao (Jason) Ju, St. Mark's High School  
Chaoyun (Brad) Guo, St. Mark's High School  
Yiqiao (Aimee) Shao, St. Mark's High School

**Most Improved (\$500 prize)**  
Meilin (Amber) Lu, St. Mark's High School

## New Student Orientation

All new international students arriving in August were expected to attend an Orientation by led by Renascentia Hall staff members. Students arriving in mid-August participated in a 2-day program while later-arriving students had an abbreviated Orientation. In addition to meeting other international students, new students met the RH staff while learning about school and home life in the U.S. "The training was designed to be informative and fun," Kwasnieski said. "All of these students desire to be successful in school and want to understand how they can best adapt to the culture and customs here."

Switching between English and Chinese, RH Director Jerry Xiao offered tips for living in America as a high school student. He stressed the importance of school being the top priority for the students. Jerry gave pointers for good study habits, tutoring options, and preparing for college. He encouraged the students to adopt a motto "Be happy".

Clarice Kwasnieski reviewed the Student Handbook and discussed the expectations and rules for living with a host family. Topics included communication, spending money, cell phone usage, transportation, and manners. Kathleen Rutherford conducted a session on American Classroom Etiquette and Host Dad Carl Witte offered tips to help students integrate with their host family. Students also learned how to get involved with the 4-H program.

Students attending the first session were treated to the movie, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* at a nearby movie theater. RH would like to thank the New Castle County 4-H Office for allowing the use of their conference room for the Orientation programs.



**Welcome Meeting at the New Student Orientation**

## 4-H Camp Held in China

During the summer of 2014, Renascentia Hall opened a 4-H Camp for the first time in China. This initiative was successful thanks to a dedicated group of American teachers in charge of the English 4-H Camp. Aimed at middle and high school students, each two-week session encompassed a full day of learning at a middle school in Wen Zhou. This new 4-H English Camp was organized just like a summer camp in America. The campers attended formal classes in the morning, and then in the afternoon they had structured play and fun activities to practice their English. Included in the afternoon program were making arts and crafts and playing American sports and games.

Students specifically had workshops to learn about public speaking and leadership skills, both of which are an important aspect of belonging in a 4-H program in the USA.



Monica Wamsley was one of the ESL instructors and said the program was very valuable because it was language intensive. The mask craft (above) followed an animal story.

"While in China, we had the help of several Chinese interns as translators," she said. "One of them was Justin Zhou, a recent graduate of the Renascentia Hall program and current freshman at Rutgers University in New Jersey. We look forward to continuing the partnership next summer."



# Students Overcome Obstacles at Leadership Workshop Retreat

Renascentia Hall students attended a Leadership and Team Building Retreat at idyllic Camp Saginaw in Oxford, PA on Sept. 12-14. Realizing that students learn better when they are active, not passive learners, the weekend was planned to provide guided opportunities to discover these lessons for themselves. The weekend schedule was chock-full of presentations and activities meant to instill a leadership skills at an appropriate level for high school students.



A public speaking class and an exercise in cultural diversity, BaFa BaFa, helped students grow in appreciation of language barriers and cultural differences. Students learned the importance that good nutrition and sleep plays in their ability to learn and retain information. On Friday evening, students were initiated into the 4-H program with all students receiving their membership cards during a candle lighting ceremony. A celebration of the Mid-Autumn Festival followed with student talent performances and eating of a variety of flavors of moon cakes. The clear night sky offered budding photographers the perfect opportunity capture time-lapse celestial pictures using a camera on a tripod. To accentuate the various elements of working in a team-based atmosphere, including communication, cooperation, contribution, conflict management and creativity, male and female students were divided into groups for the Low Ropes Challenge Course and Wall Climbing Obstacle. New and old friends worked together to help their teammates succeed. During the afternoon, a rotation allowed everyone the thrill of Laser Tag, Archery and Rock Wall Climbing. Plenty of fun could be seen during the breaks, and many chose to spend their free time playing cards or challenging each other to games of ping pong, basketball, or soccer. A cozy, outdoor fireplace was the perfect spot to roast marshmallows for s'mores. The weekend allowed RH students a unique setting to forge friendships with students from different schools and hometowns.



## Student Spotlight

Kayla and Will Holland shared about their 2 sons in football: **Shiyao (Jason) Ju** is busy with football season in high gear right now at St. Mark's. His host brother, Foster, is a senior on the varsity team so they spend time at football practice and games together. Jason (#57) has also been invited to



spend time with other guys on the Varsity team with my son for birthday parties and social time. Jason is playing Junior Varsity, but suits up for Friday night Varsity games and has gotten to play on special teams a bit. Yuchen (Charlie) Zhou took this photo for the yearbook because he wants to write a feature story about the friendship between Jason and Foster both on and off the field.

## Host Family Training

Kicking off the new school year, Renascentia Hall welcomed 43 host families to the Cavalier Country Club on Sunday, August 10. The orientation session began with a delicious buffet of appetizers, entrees, and desserts. All new, returning, and potential host families were seated at tables divided by which of the 14 schools their students will be attending.

"We wanted everyone to get to know the other families in their academic community for support and making connections," explained Clarice Kwasnieski, Executive Director of Development. Parents listened eagerly to financial instructions, recipes, and tips about their upcoming duties as host families.

"The best way for things to go smoothly is to keep the lines of communication open," Kwasnieski said. "Our staff of American and Chinese personnel can assist with any matters that come up so the experience is comfortable for everyone. We sponsor field trips each month for the international students to develop special friendships within our organization, too."

(Host Moms:  
Rosanna Bernard  
and Susan Lubin)



## Newest Partner School

Rocky Bayou Christian School is the most recent academic institution to contract with Renascentia Hall to welcome international students. Located in northwest Florida (Niceville), the school was named one of the 50 Best Christian Schools in America. Since 1973, Rocky Bayou Christian School has provided a quality education that is Christ-centered and enables staff, students, families, and visitors to experience a Christian education that values both learning and the learner. Rocky Bayou Christian School is committed to a clear statement of values while challenging students with a core curriculum based on the liberal arts with curriculum designed to produce free men and women. Co-curricular programs supplement the overall education of students by broadening their educational experience and stimulating their interests. A Christian discipleship approach is employed with emphasis placed on the display of righteous attitudes during activities. The school is accredited by Florida Association of Christian Schools and Colleges (FACCS), National Institute for Learning Development (NILD), Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA), Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools (SBACS) and others.



## Important School Dates

*\*Please check your school website regularly\**

- October 4 — Roller Skating Party - Red Lion Christian
- October 6 — No School - Sanford School
- October 8 — Aspire Test - Ursuline Academy
- October 10 — Parent Conferences - Friends' Central
- October 10 — No School - Tower Hill, Wilmington Christian
- October 11 — Homecoming - St. Mark's
- October 11 — SAT Test
- October 11 — Red Lion Christian 5K @ Glasgow Park
- October 13 — Columbus Day No School - Tatnall, Sallies, St. Mark's, Wilm. Christian
- October 15 — PSAT test
- October 18 — PSAT - Friends Central
- October 18 — Upper School Film Festival - Friends Central
- October 18 — Homecoming - Salesianum
- October 18 — Homecoming - Tower Hill
- October 23 — Halloween Carnival - Ursuline Academy
- October 24-25 — Founder's Day & Homecoming - Tatnall
- October 25 — Homecoming - Red Lion Christian
- October 25 — ACT Test
- October 31 — Halloween: No School - Sanford

## New Faces on our Staff

Renascentia Hall is pleased to welcome **Candise Schmidling** as its new **Host Family Coordinator**. Candise has 20 years of experience in teaching and directing youth programs at the local, national, and international levels. She joined the staff this month after working as a tutor with Back to Basics Learning Dynamics in Wilmington.

"I enjoyed tutoring high school English and math students, and I have conducted many SAT and ACT prep classes," Schmidling said. "My special interest is with international students, and I have already met a few from the Renascentia Hall program." The Schmidling family is currently hosting Yichen (Johnson) Guo, who is a freshman at The Tatnall School.



"We have hosted other exchange students in the past, and I was an exchange student myself to Japan and England," Schmidling explained. "The opportunity to build international awareness is both exciting and challenging--for both the host and the student. We have found the investment of kindness goes a long way toward making many happy memories."

Candise and her family located to Delaware from Kansas City this summer. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Kansas State University, and a master's degree in international relations from the London School of Economics. Her duties will include the monthly newsletter, host family communications, and coordinator for student events and trips. "I am looking forward to getting to know all our families, and I want to offer them support throughout the coming year."

**Karen Poole** began working part-time as a **Host Family Recruiter** this spring. She assists with marketing and outreach efforts to meet the growing demand for host families. Karen has worked 38 years for DuPont in Delaware, including 18 years as a contractor doing Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). She is now serving remotely doing EDI for Toyota. Karen graduated with a bachelor's degree from Wilmington University.

Karen and her husband Doug have been a host family with RH for three years. Previously they hosted college students from the English Language Institute at UD. This year are enjoying Zhuohao (Tiger) Wang and Yilun (Michael) Zhao, who attend Salesianum School and Yifan (Rain) Sheng at Red Lion Christian Academy. "I am happy to hand to Renascentia Hall to achieve their goals," Karen said.



**Jingjing Liu** is working part-time for Renascentia Hall as an **International Student Coordinator**. She is the liaison for students attending Red Lion Christian Academy, Salesianum School, Sanford School, The Tatnall School and Tower Hill School. Her main responsibilities are assisting students with their concerns about school and life in America as well as communicating by monthly report to their natural parents. "I have a great deal of experience with children having lived in the U.S. or the past five years," said Jingjing, who is beginning to study for her MBA at the University of Delaware. She has a bachelor's degree in marketing from the Dalian Nationalities University in Dalian, China.

"I have worked as an au pair, so I can understand the difficulties and frustrations that may arise when international students are adapting to a new culture," she said. "I want to help kids when they are homesick or need to figure out the best way to do things in another country," said Jingjing.

**Monica Wamsley** will be working part-time as a **Leadership Program Coordinator** for RH. She is employed at the 4-H Extension Office where she instructs many county-wide and state-level 4-H camps and leadership workshops. She holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a master's degree in secondary education from West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. She holds her teaching certification in several states. Monica will be working with our international students to provide 4-H training in leadership development. She will lead monthly 4-H meetings that will offer new opportunities to gain skills that benefit all college-bound students. "I am excited to teach to a different audience and to discover new techniques to reach students, while learning about Chinese culture, food, and history," Monica said.



## Upcoming Events

### October 12

- ◆ 4-H Meeting

### October 25

- ◆ Community Service Project, Dinner & Hayride at Filasky Farm

### November 9

- ◆ 4-H Meeting

### November 13

- ◆ 4-H Public Speaking Contest

### November 28-30

- ◆ Thanksgiving Weekend Trip to Boston

## Student Travel Permission Reminder

**Students and Host Parents are reminded to consult their Handbook for instructions regarding student travel. To ensure the safety of students and appropriateness of travel, a Student Travel Permission Form must be submitted to the assigned International Student Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to the date of the trip to allow time to obtain the necessary approvals. Students traveling overnight must be accompanied by a chaperone who is at least 21 years old. Students who travel without permission will be subject to the minimum of Step 2 of the Disciplinary Procedures.**

## Host Family Corner

Gerry and Sandy McVey are first-year host parents with RH but they have previously hosted university students as well as high school students in the summer. Both come from large families and proudly report that all 11 siblings and 5 grown children live in Delaware. "Sundays can be a houseful," said Sandy, a technology trainer of Microsoft Office and Google for the University of Delaware.

The McVeys are hosting Thien (Jack) Do from Vietnam and Run (Kevin) Zhu from China, both studious juniors at St. Mark's High School. "The boys like all their teachers and are looking forward to the Homecoming Dance," Sandy said. "Fortunately, they can only speak English with each other and they want to talk with each other to become friends. They



Thien (Jack) Do and the McVey family

have a really good time together and with my husband."

After retiring from business, Gerry took a job with Wilmington Montessori School and loves working with kids at their summer camps. "Gerry is very athletic and the boys love

doing things with him," Sandy said. "He took them to a zip line course. He and Jack like to go bicycling. Jack has a bike from last year when he lived in South Philly with his sister."

The family likes to play cards since simple games make it easy to have conversations. "It gives us a chance to train our ears to the differing dialects of each boy," Sandy said. "They speak excellent English, and I can understand them."

Sandy likes to cook and takes the boys along to the market. "We try different foods, but the boys really like Gerry's meat-loaf the best and keep asking for him to make it again."

She said patience has been a useful tool during the initial transition of having teenagers in the house. "For example, Kevin wrote on his application that he didn't like dogs, and we were worried because we have three pets," Sandy said. "But when Kevin arrived, we talked more and he explained he didn't like dogs on his bed or in his room, which we could assure him wouldn't happen. On the other hand, Jack likes to keep our giant dog, which weighs 80-pounds, next to him while doing his homework each evening."

## Inspiration & Insight

"We cannot have full knowledge all at once. We must start by believing; then afterwards we may be led on to master the evidence for ourselves." —St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

## Happy Birthday 生日快樂



Run Zhu  
(Kevin)  
Sept. 19



Zikang Ling  
(Millo)  
Sept. 15



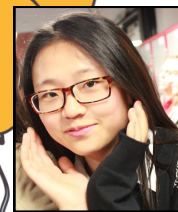
Jinhao Zhao  
(Chandler)  
Sept. 30



Rulin Yang  
Oct. 5



Jing Bi  
(Nancy)  
Oct. 10



Yiqiao Shao  
(Aimee)  
Oct. 31

**We wish a Happy Birthday to You!!**

## In Memory

We are sad to announce the death of Mark Manno, State 4-H Program Leader for Delaware. Mr. Manno was a huge supporter of international student programs and had been working with RH to bring the 4-H program to international students studying in the U.S. and in China. Most recently, he led a workshop at the Leadership Retreat in September. After Saturday's session, Mr. Manno attended the UD football game with his wife. Following the game, he collapsed suddenly from a heart attack. Students and staff learned of his passing on Sunday during the wrap-up session. Mr. Manno was soon to retire after 40 years of service in Cooperative Extension.



Mr. Manno attended the RH Host Family Orientation in August. He is seen here with Joyce Witte, host mom and Administrative Asst. in 4-H Development, and Dawn Shearer, host mom.