

Zurfluh Christmas Message 2008

It's always challenging each year to get your thoughts down on paper and reflect on the year. Last year, it seemed out of reach with a doctoral program fully engaged and many new initiatives on the table, but we couldn't let this year go by without a Zurfluh family update.

Jen

I still keep busy with volunteer work at the Community Center Shanghai and with my involvement in Cub Scouts. Work at SCIS still keeps me busy, however, as I moved from Deputy Head to Head of School on the Pudong side of the river during the summer of 2008. A change in the leadership structure provided this unique opportunity and it was nice to return to the building that started it all for us in Shanghai. I hired a crack team of principals and put them together with some talented VP's. The result is an amazing leadership group that has done well crafting the ongoing path for the Pudong Campus. We move into a new Upper School building in January that is currently finishing Phase I construction. Life in Shanghai never changes much in terms of energy, drive, and new projects. In August, after a summer of thought and contemplation, we decided that 7 years was enough at SCIS. Coming full circle back to Pudong made this seem like the right time to craft my departure and the board has allowed me to hand the reins to new leadership in June, 2009. So, I continue to look for my next adventure elsewhere in the world while also remaining willing to return to Washington if that's where fate and faith take us.

Emily

Emily continues to enjoy her assignment in Pre-School and is seen as one of the best with the little ones. She crafts a strong program for the youngest of our school and her talents keep her classroom full. She took on a new role this year as Early Childhood Technology teacher. She has been especially adept at crafting early introduction to computer skills to Pre-School, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade. Being a mom consumes most of the rest of Emily's time as she juggles the kids' calendars. As co-leader of the Brownies last year, Emily helped build the program and continues to assist where needed this school year. Emily has been getting into Yoga more and she still enjoys the occasional walk in our neighborhood when the weather is nice.

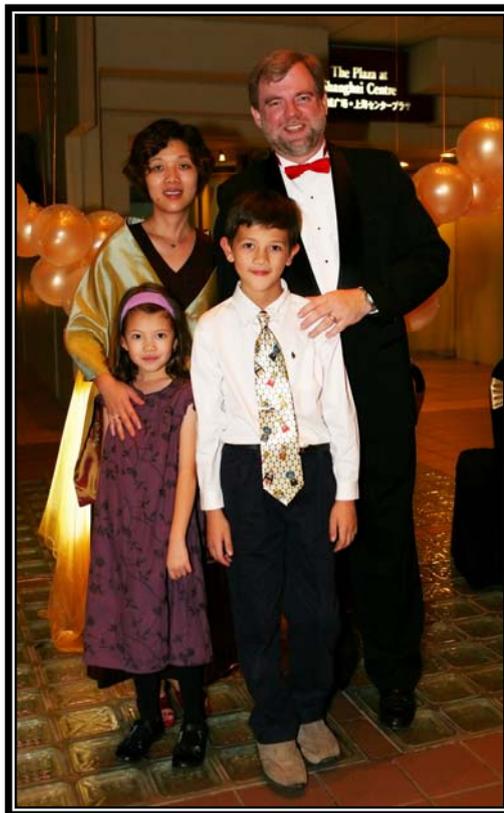
Jaisen

Jaisen started out having a tough year and got hit by some academic and emotional challenges toward the end of 4th grade. However, in his usual style, he pulled out a strong finish and has had a wonderful start to his 5th grade year. He has found a love for soccer and can quote stats and player histories with the best. He has shown some real skill on the field and, while he enjoys being goalie, his real talent is near the other team's goal where he is a consistent scoring machine. He's learned a lot about teamwork and sportsmanship in the recent season and has committed to an advanced league which includes practices 3 nights a week and games on Saturdays. He's done all of this while keeping his school work and piano practice on track – no small feat. He has also kept up with Cub Scouts and will complete his Arrow of Light transition to Boy Scouts in the spring. We'll try Pinewood Derby one last time and hope for a Win, Place, or Show this time around. Despite Uncle Jim's tutorials, we have yet to bring home a top prize. Time to get "Down and Derby."

Erin

What can I tell you about a 2nd grader with lots of "spunk and vinegar" keeping you on your toes every day? Despite the fact that she is currently toothless and singing "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth," our little girl continues to be a special joy and talent in our family life. Whether she is being part of the beanstalk in the school play, working hard on badges in Brownies, or just reading her heart out with her buddies, there is a special energy that emerges in all that she does. She is a talented actress and we look forward to big productions in her future. The cousins dubbed her "ribs" during the summer and, while she declares displeasure at the mention of this name, she is secretly proud of the title. Like her cousin Rachel, she is a beanpole in the making and while height still eludes her, energy is never lacking.

Wishing you all a joyous and prosperous Christmas Season. In the new year, may your spiritual life inspire you, your work life fulfill you, and your family life sustain you. Peace and love always! The Zurfluhs



At the Community Center fund raiser in November.