

## CHINA: Students got help from Roundhouse Foundation

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entity. They work with public and private schools throughout the state that are offering Chinese as a part of their curriculum.

The HanBan provides library materials, grants, and resources for hosting visiting Chinese language teachers, as well as a visiting faculty member from Soochow University, PSU’s sister university located in Portland’s sister city, Suzhou, China.

Black Butte Ranch resident David Perkins has been an integral part of the Mandarin Chinese language program at Sisters High School. He and his wife, Paula, spent 25 years living in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

At a recent barbecue hosted by the Perkins, the students, their families, and the four Chinese teachers and interns who will be teaching in the Sisters schools this year gathered to meet and practice their “second languages” with one another. David’s fluency in both languages facilitated the exchanges.

Holly’s older brother Will, a 2017 graduate of SHS, also a Chinese language student, exhibited his fluency as a result of participating in the Chinese Flagship Program at the University of Oregon, living in Global Hall with a roommate from China. He is majoring in business with a minor in Chinese. The travelers met Will’s roommate Adam when they were in Beijing.

The students began their adventure in Beijing where they visited the Confucius Institute headquarters. The institute is a nonprofit public educational organization affiliated with the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, whose aim is to promote Chinese language and culture, support local Chinese teaching internationally, and facilitate cultural exchanges.



Hailey Chen, Liric Wu, Holly Werts, Dan Dan, Mattie Mynatt, Annie An and Brogan Petterson celebrated education in Chinese at a barbecue in Sisters last weekend.

Dan explained that the Mandarin they are learning in class is the formal version of the language and on the streets of China they were exposed to “street talk,” with more casual slang and idioms. There are different dialects in the cities they visited, much like if someone visited Dallas, Texas, and Portland, Maine.

In Beijing they visited the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, and the Forbidden City where they experienced long lines. In this city of 21 million people, the students weren’t able to venture out on their own. A ride on a

high-speed bullet train carried them through “National Geographic-like” countryside to Suzhou, a city of 10.6 million people, where they attended classes at Soochow University. The students reported feeling quite safe in Suzhou. They rode the subway from their hotel to class and were able to venture out on their own. The majority of their time in China was spent in this university town.

“I was surprised we were able to walk around and experience the back alleys,” Holly remarked. They felt very safe.

Dan mentioned how strong the influence of

Western culture has been on China. They both thought the Chinese infrastructure was “pretty amazing.”

Located west of Shanghai, Suzhou is known for its canals, bridges, and classical gardens, some dating from the 14th century. The students noticed the average citizen didn’t speak English;

rather only the well educated. The high school students they met were all learning English as well as many also studying French and Spanish.

The other three joined Brogan in needing to adapt to the hot and humid weather, especially coming from the high-desert dryness.

The traffic and the mopeds also impressed these students from their tiny Central Oregon town. Mattie described the mopeds as “traveling in clusters” and tour busses weaving through traffic in very close proximity to each other. Holly noticed no one wore helmets and they often carried their children on the front.

Holly indicated drivers’ licenses are obtained through a lottery system. She said to make the country look good, every four years a driver can update his car due to a good deal from the government. She thought the cars on the streets are nicer than here in the U.S.

Dan, the photographer in the group, made a short video that captures the essence of their experiences in China and plans to create a longer

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