Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year

Christmas is for parties and there are often too many of them!! This year, the Resident Committee has decided to make a change!! Instead of having a X‘mas Party, they will be organising a party around Chinese New Year in Feb 2007. Let’s wait and see!!

Graduate House High Table (Nov-06)

In the November HighTable, we have invited many international guests who were gathering in Hong Kong for an open Forum on "Measuring Creativity, Happiness and Wellbeing" which is organized by the Home Affairs Bureau of the HK Government, UNESCO and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, HKU.

We were extremely honored to have the UNESCO Regional Advisor in Culture for Asia and Pacific, Dr Richard Engelhardt as Guest of Honour, Rajeev Sethi, Chairman and Founder Trustee of the Asian Heritage Foundation from India, representatives from other UN agencies and the Consul General of Spain at the head table as well. It was an enjoyable evening for all of us!

Refrigerators in Bedrooms

Recently I have received numerous enquiries on the provision of refrigerators in individual bedroom and I would like to take this opportunity to inform all residents on the progress of this issue.

A tender exercise was conducted in September this year and quotations from two suppliers were received. The Student Representative, Mr. Kenneth Ho, at the time was asked to consult residents on the models they preferred. Feedback was obtained from some residents and a proposal was drafted for the consideration of the Graduate House Committee of Management. Since the budget for purchasing the refrigerators is not included in the current fiscal year, approval of the Committee has to be sought.

The Committee was supposed to have its meeting in October every year. However, due to the change of the secretary of the Committee, whose identity remained confidential for quite a long while, the meeting was postponed until further notice. It was only until recently that I contacted the new secretary and she has started to prepare for the next meeting. Yet, upon checking of the member's list, it was noted that the membership of a few members had expired and they are now waiting for re-appointment by the Senate of the University. Thus, the soonest that the next meeting could be held would be in January or maybe even February 2007. As soon as approval from the Committee is received, we will place order immediately. You may thus expect to have personal refrigerator for use around April or May, depending on stock availability with the supplier.

Mr. Rocky Tang
Manager
RC Election

Personally, I don’t like politics and I don’t like Election Campaigns. Yet in GH, it is a bit different!! It is part of my job to help the Resident Committee to set up their new Executive Committee. There are a few things that I enjoyed for this annual event:

(1) To set up a barricade that “forced” everyone to walk pass the election table. Believe me! I am perfecting it every year!
(2) To be able to greet everyone in GH. I have screened all the application forms before all residents moved in but it is always on the Election Day that I started to tie names to faces

To be honest, it is not easy for me to be sitting around from 8am to 10pm. I hope the RC will grow bigger and bigger and there will be less job for me – the restless Tigger!

Helen Law
Resident Fellow

06/07 Members of the Resident Committee

谢里欧 XIE Liou (Student Representative)

• 福荣奈津子 Natsuko FUKUE (Nat)
• 何健宇 Kenneth HO (Ken)
• 王晶 WANG Jing (Crystal)
• 楊文 YANG Wen (Vicky)

Messages from new members

I’ve been living in Graduate House for one year. I like my life here. You can always run into someone in the lift and make new friends; you can always meet your friends in the lounge and organize some activities if you like, such as small gathering, playing cards, or having a hot pot party; you can always get the help you need; you won’t forget to clean your room once a week, ’coz you’ve got someone to help you; …… I believe you will find more advantages other than these after some time. Now, I would like to offer my help to make GH a better and more comfortable place to live.

Liou XIE
Urban and Economic Geography

You can call me Jingjing or Crystal. I am a lively and optimistic girl born in Anyang, He’nan Province, the capital city of the Shang Dynasty and home of the oracle bones. I am a pure vegetarian who believes in Buddhism strongly. I am from Beijing, where I earned my bachelor’s and master’s degree from the China University of Politics and Law. As a law student, I always pay much attention to the welfare and rights of all around us, and hope to make things better. As a friend of yours’, I’d like to communicate with everyone and share the experience of each other, including delicious food made by me. As an energetic girl, I am interested in many fields such as cooking, playing badminton, swimming, meditation, enjoying music, shopping, and so on. Life with me will be pretty colorful! As a Buddhist, I hope every one of you are healthy, happy and having a meaningful life. Meanwhile I will do my best to achieve these goals

Crystal WANG
Law

Hi! This is YANG Wen from Social Work, Call me Vicky! I will try my best (feel goose bumps) to make all the residents as well as the management like a family--do some activities together, share the happiness and sadness, most importantly, feel somebody is always there to support you. As a fanatic sports fan myself, I’m glad to organize sports and creative activities with other RC members. It is the most relaxing time to communicate, even without words. Besides, creating some publications with your voice in it is not a bad idea. My experience of being an editor might help a little. I hope we will enjoy our precious postgraduate time together and, have fun!

Vicky YANG
Social Work
Tribute to Dr. Henry Y T Fok

Dr. Henry YT Fok, DSocSc, honoris causa 1995, passed away of illness on the 28th of October, 2006. Dr Fok was a long-time supporter of HKU and had made generous donations to our activities and facilities e.g. Henry Fok Swimming Pool, Graduate House and Henry Fok Professor in Infectious Diseases.

On behalf of Graduate House, the Resident Fellow has joined the Vice Chancellor and the Senior Management Team to pay homage to Dr Fok at his funeral.

We are indeed very grateful to Dr. Fok’s donation to our University.

Japan Night II

Where does the Chrysanthemum Lead Us?
Mon, 4 December
at 20h45 – 21h45
Place: P1

To most foreigners’ eyes, Japan may look “weird”. Is Japanese culture so different from other cultures? Do you find difficult to understand Japanese way of communication?

In addition, Japan seems to want to be a “normal” country in order to participate in war. What is in mind of conservative JP politicians?

Come to Japan Night to find out the answers!
“Japanese snacks and tea will be served”
Organizer: Natsuko FUKUE

Creation@Graduate House

Finally!! Artworks submitted by Graduate House Residents are on exhibition in P4!

Again, we would like to thank all the participants for their submission. It has been a difficult task for our Master, Dr. Desmond Hui, to select some entries for the Exhibition. All works are indeed very impressive!!

We would also like to thank Dr. Hui’s students from the Department of Architecture, who have kindly helped us to mount and hang the Exhibition in P4.

We hope to make this an annual event of GH!

In - out Board

A warm welcome to ...
Farrahnaz Peerzada, Fu Bei Rong, Fu Yong Xiao, Hong Tat Yuen, Sha Sha, R.A.P.M. Perera, Sun Xiao Yin, Wang Ning, Wang Yong Qiang, Wu Tai Ping, Xie Jian Ying, Yao Yi Hong, Zhou Jun Hua.

A fond farewell to ...
Chan Ka Wang, Chen Fei, Coorey Shaleeni B.A., Gu Min, Hu Yue Qing, Huang Ye Dan, Li Fang Wei, Li Shu Da, Lu Heng, Pei Yu Xin, Sae-Pang Jeam Jang, Tang Hoi Ching, Xiao Liang.

To find out who is living around you, please join our activities or check out the notice board in the lounges!
Have Fun Friend Searching!!

Please apply 3 months ahead if you would like to be considered for the (24+12) policy!
How many people that you can call for a cup of coffee?

---From the heuristic perspective of social capital

Several days ago, I participated in the workshop of CIIF (Community Investment and Inclusion Fund) project in central and the hostess asked us a question that ‘how many people from different career or background can you call up together and have a cup of coffee?’ And I began thinking seriously.

This question was not a question when I was a new career woman but it is a question for a five-year academic career woman now. Five years ago, just a few calls, thirty people showed up and gathered at my rented flat for a party—people knew each other or met at the first time talks merrily about their interests, their job and the casual life. As time going on, people move, people get married, people have babies…As time going on, people are quite able to call on more friends for parties but however, chances are far slimmer. People seems get indulged into their own busy life and have no time to care the world around them, including taking care of themselves. So things happened that when people needs friend, they are afraid to disturb others or feel guilty for ever failed offering time to their friends. So more and more, people go shopping on their own, people have luncheon alone, people choose to play single activities, such as go gym separately instead of playing balls….When people get bored, they eat the loneliness themselves…But just want to ask, is life going where it should go?

This is quite familiar with the famous politician and sociologies, Professor Robert D. Putnam addressed in his famous work ‘Bowling alone’ that the numbers of all kinds of clubs, associations decreased dramatically within 1960 to 1990 (Putnam, 1993). But unusually, the numbers of bowling clubs decreasing as well while the ratio of playing bowling increasing extraordinarily. Do people feel less like to favor others and prefer living alone? That question aroused a hot discussion all over United States for years. Now here come my humble thoughts towards the current life that we and our friends live in China. I am not able to conduct a national wide survey like the famous sociologists but just a few observations in our daily life.

I have a couple of friends around that live very different life, especially the way of entertaining life. For example, in our academic life here in the University of Hong Kong as research students, apparently, everybody is busy with their research and most of them manage their own schedule which means someone prefer wake up in the morning till midnight while some others keep working through all over the night and sleep until early afternoon. So does the schedule of sports and entertainment activities accordingly. There are no much distinctions of the activities themselves but the way you entertain yourself and others. Problems turns out frequently like how many people you want to play with and to what extent you are inclined to adapt others’ schedule. So, things happened that by and by, someone choose to sport themselves, they go hiking alone, they go swimming themselves, they window shopping themselves. Meanwhile, some others are committed in groups of people to badminton, tennis, volley ball, hiking, and even cook together. Well, you may say, their activity demands collective actions, yes, but difference is that when these people are interested in activities, they try to do it in group instead of just convenient their own time. Thus, teams built up and collective life proceeded with the sequences of sharing goodness, such as disseminate information of hot news, goods on sale, coming performance or lectures, special training program as well as the people in need of help among themselves and outsiders sometimes. What's more frequently sequenced is that they offering care to each other and share both joy and sadness. No doubt the more people you join together, the more support you offer as well as being supported. Just imagine the situation at risk, no matter how well prepared the party is, they can hardly expected how dramatically the risk will be. The only certainty is more people get reunited, stronger the society turns out. On the other hand, as one of the famous philanthropists remarked that ‘The saddest thing over the world is not any incurable disease, neither any disaster or frightens, but the feeling of being unwanted and unloved.’

So comes the emcee’s question of ‘How many people from different professions or background that you can call together to have a cup of coffee?’ It sounds to be pure relationships but not purposely proposals which in another sense to be more difficult for some of us. Well, don’t try to answer it right away, but leave the question for the rest of our lives. Begin with your family and the festivals and do it step by step. Say, no matter how busy you are, try to reach your families at the spring festival or Christmas Eve, and then grow it wider and wider.

That is what CIIF is trying to conduct, the public relationship for public good that you can offer and also may count on the reciprocities which is called the promise of social capital.

Chen Honglin (Ph.D student)
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Would you care for tea?

I have modified my opinion piece “Should regulations require more specific labelling of products’ contents?” which was put in South China Morning Post in 18 August 2006.

Do you usually pay attention to what you drink?

Coming from a country of green tea, Japan, I was surprised to find various kinds of sweetened tea drinks in Hong Kong. In Japan, we do not add sugar or flavouring to traditional tea or bottled tea drinks.

Green tea that contains catechin and polyphenol is considered healthy, therefore, green tea drinks in Japan (completely bitter, of course) are popular especially among women and middle-aged men who are health conscious.

Green tea drinks market is amazingly competitive in Japan. Spokesperson in Itoen (伊藤園), one of the most famous tea beverage companies, says that the market will be developed over one trillion yen. While the soft drinks market has been stagnating, green tea drinks sell very well. Recently Chinese green tea drinks have been popular as well as Japanese green tea.

The great difference between tea drinks in Japan and those in Hong Kong is that the latter contains sugar.

Given the green tea drinks in Hong Kong contain sugar, they can be classified as a purely tea drink, but a soft drink like sweetened fruit juice or soda.

South China Morning Post wrote that teas are no better than soft drinks (16 August 2006). Indeed, consumers can be easily misled by some labelling, such as "low sugar". According to the Post, “the amount of sugar in the drinks varied from nothing to 9.2 per cent per 100ml for the brand Unif Iced Tea - meaning the overall sugar content is similar to a 355ml can of original Coke, 100ml of which was 10.6 per cent sugar”.

Consumers have to be aware that the tea drinks are not always healthy. Soft drinks contain a lot of sugar, colouring and flavouring. Both schools and the government can help educate children and parents that taking soft drinks frequently is not good for their health.

I remember a poster in primary schools in Japan about how much sugar fizzy drinks contain. I understood why my mother did not want me to drink sugar-added drinks. Since then, I basically do not drink any sweetened drinks.

The question is not whether there is an appropriate labelling, as the Post asked the readers, even though it is one of the ways to let consumers know what low-sugar tea drinks really mean. It is a matter of health awareness, with too much sugar in the bottled drinks. Awareness has to come both from the production side and consumer side.

In the meantime, I will stick to the healthy, yet truly luscious, traditional tea.

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