

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT



You never stop learning about the effect of culture on business in China. I've done business in China for 25 years yet I still get it wrong.

Greetings from Shenzhen. I've spent the last few days with our manager, Ken Li, who was an

early employee at our foreign representative office and is now an independent contractor still representing our company. When Ken was an employee he witnessed some pretty awful behavior among our staff. He worked under a "little prince" who barricaded himself in his office and took kickbacks from the realtor who rented us the office, yet presented us with a polished knowing face.

As an employee, Ken never said a word as he was the "young man" afraid of being fired. Clearly we had made some awful choices in choosing staff. We thought we were thorough. We used a thorough interview process where we discovered the applicant's technical abilities and problem solving skills. But we didn't check to see if the applicant had, what Ken calls "heart".

Now that Ken feels free to speak honestly, I asked Ken what is this "heart" and how do we look for its presence. It turns out that heart is a combination of ambition, ethics, and worldview. In China, a person with heart is ambitious to grow and learn and advance in the profession. A person with heart has a system of ethics that mediates his choices. A person with heart has a worldview in which China occupies a position of respect but treasures his very personal relationships with his family and his friends.

Ken's young prince of a boss was given books to read on important aspects of the business and chose not to read them. His ethics were self-serving. As it turned out, he had no friends and was at odds with nearly all of his family. I personally interviewed him and saw none of this. How could I be so wrong?

I am not Chinese. Even in my own culture I'd have difficulty with these subtle signals. In China it's far more difficult. So, what I've learned, and what I'd like to pass on to you, is to learn as much as you can about Chinese culture and values and then bring a trusted Chinese friend along to read between the lines.

Speaking of culture, for the past 30 years, the Northwest China Council has provided wonderful learning opportunities. This is our 30th year: a very special one. I hope you'll participate in the many programs discussed in this newsletter and that you'll join us for our 30th anniversary special events.

- Michael Bloom, President

CHINA EDUCATORS NETWORK

The Educator Task Force of the NWCC held its first event recently - a networking event for Portland area educators who teach about or are interested in all things China. The networking event, which featured Chinese tea and appetizers, was held at Shanghai Noble House restaurant in John's Landing in Portland. About 30 educators and education consultants attended, including representatives from **Portland Community College**, Concordia University, **Pacific University** and **Linfield College**. Several educators from K-12 also



participated. Attendees, many of whom completed an interest survey, reported that they enjoyed the opportunity to mingle and talk with their colleagues and learn about the China Council's interest in hosting future such events. In coming months, the task force will be working on arranging similar events, such as peer lectures, and developing a listserv to publicize events of educator interest.



CHINA BUSINESS NETWORK

This is exciting and busy time for the China Business Network. We started 2010 with a CBN presentation, *“Shipping Your Products Overseas”*, with representatives from **Columbia River Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association**. Both **Dale Wolfer** of Allports and **Patti Iverson Summer** of Global Trading Resources, Inc. gave excellent presentations on the secrets of successful shipping. An expanded session is currently being planned to get into even more details for later.

Our second *“China Town Hall - An Update on Taxes, Legal, Transportation & Oregon Legislative Issues”* was held on March 10. We had excellent presenters for each area: China tax update - **David Ling** and **Roger Di** of KPMG Beijing and New York; China Legal Update - **James Mei** of Davis Wright Tremaine; The Port and Oregon’s Trade-based Economy - **Bill Wyatt** of Port of Portland; and Oregon Legislative Update by **Representative Jules Bailey**. The session was moderated by **Jin Lan**, Oregon-Fujian Sister State Association with very active participations from the audience.



The **Northwest Film Center** is presenting:
“Man Zou– Beijing to Shanghai”
Director: Jason Reid, Seattle, 2010



Arriving in Beijing three weeks after the Olympics, four American friends from Seattle and their Chinese guide set out on a month-long trip to bicycle 1,000 miles in China’s countryside, filming their adventures along the way.

Without support vehicles, they were able to capture an intimate and unfiltered look at parts of China that are typically bypassed or flown over. In more ways than one, the bicycle trip is a vehicle

Sunday, May 23, 2010, 7:15PM

Whitsell Auditorium
1219 SW Park Avenue
Portland, OR 97205

\$8/adults, \$7/PAM member, \$7
Seniors & students

to explore the environmental, economic, and sociological issues facing China today. The team members intersperse their own experiences with the opinions of residents, expats, and academics.

CHINA TOWN HALL 3

UPCOMING EVENT - May 3, 2010, Monday, Brought to you jointly by the China Business Network & the China Educators Network:

“Chinese Education for Oregon Students” & “Marketing Oregon Education in China”

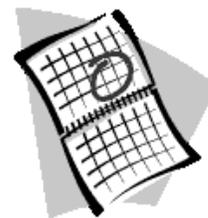
Don't miss this opportunity to hear about the importance of Mandarin Chinese education and current programs in Oregon schools to help prepare our students to work and excel in the international work place. Equally important, we will learn about ongoing programs and economic benefits to Oregon by promoting our education system in China.

This meeting will open with welcoming remarks by Mayor Sam Adams, Chinese Education Counselor Shao Wei and Superintendent Susan Castillo. They will highlight the co-operation of City of Portland, State of Oregon and China. Two panels of distinguished leaders and professionals will provide insights and discussions of the current programs. This meeting will also include a webcast from Beijing, titled *“Tips from EducationUSA”* about marketing our programs in China.

Join friends and colleagues to continue our conversation in this third China Town Hall meeting. Since December, 2009, the Northwest China Council and the Oregon-Fujian Sister State Association have jointly organized this set of forums and meetings to solicit the best ideas – from China business and professional experts, China related organizations in the state, and Oregon companies doing business in China, to help elected officials, business leaders, professionals and general public to gain a better understanding and create a win-win economic situation for Oregon & China

The evening includes a buffet dinner, networking, and opportunity to meet with the speakers and panelists informally. Please mark your calendar for Monday May 3, 2010, check our website, www.nwchina.org, for announcement, and join us for this important conversation.

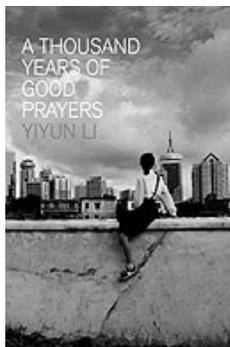
- *Cathy Chinn, Chair*



China Business Network Annual Sponsor

NW CHINA COUNCIL BOOK CLUB REPORT

The March 2010 NWCC book club selection was "**A Thousand Years of Good Prayers: Stories**" by Yiyun Li. This book is a collection of ten short stories written by a Chinese-American writer in English, which is her second language. Yiyun Li came to the United States from Beijing in 1996 at age 24 to study medicine. She took a writing workshop on a lark, and caught the attention of the professor who told her that she had a natural talent, and should continue to write. This led to a career change and a MFA degree. Ms. Li is now an assistant professor of English at Mills College, in Oakland, California. Publication of "**A Thousand Years of Good Prayers**" in 2005 was met with literary success winning Li the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award, the Paris Review's Plimpton Prize, and the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award.



The advantage of a short story is it can be consumed in one sitting. Short stories are also gripping, interesting, and usually have a moral or message.

Some of Li's stories are set in China, typically a small town or village, where people's lives change under shifting of political or economic circumstances. Other stories are set in the United

States, revealing mainland Chinese immigrant experience in America. The stories are anchored in China's past as well as in the present.

The story "**A Thousand Years of Good Prayers**" is about a father who comes to the United States to comfort his daughter newly divorced after seven years of marriage. His ex-son-in-law had returned to Beijing permanently. The story explores the theme of father-daughter relationship, generational gap, cultural differences, social values, and self-deception. The story has twists and surprises, and is thought-provoking.

Li's stories are diverse, well-written, interesting, and gripping. However, some of the stories left our readers feeling weighted or melancholy for compromises some of the characters are forced to make.

The next book selection is "**China's Megatrends: The Eight Pillars of a New Society**", by John and Doris Naisbitt. 2009.



John and Doris Naisbitt, longtime China observers, provide an in-depth study of the fundamental changes in China's social, political, and economic life, and their impact on the West.

For more information, or to join the book club, please contact:
johnw@nwchina.org

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The Northwest China Council is a non-profit, non-partisan organization primarily supported by its members. Our mission is to increase understanding of Chinese culture, contemporary affairs and business in Greater China, i.e. China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese Diaspora.



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