

# The Firefly



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# NATIONALISM

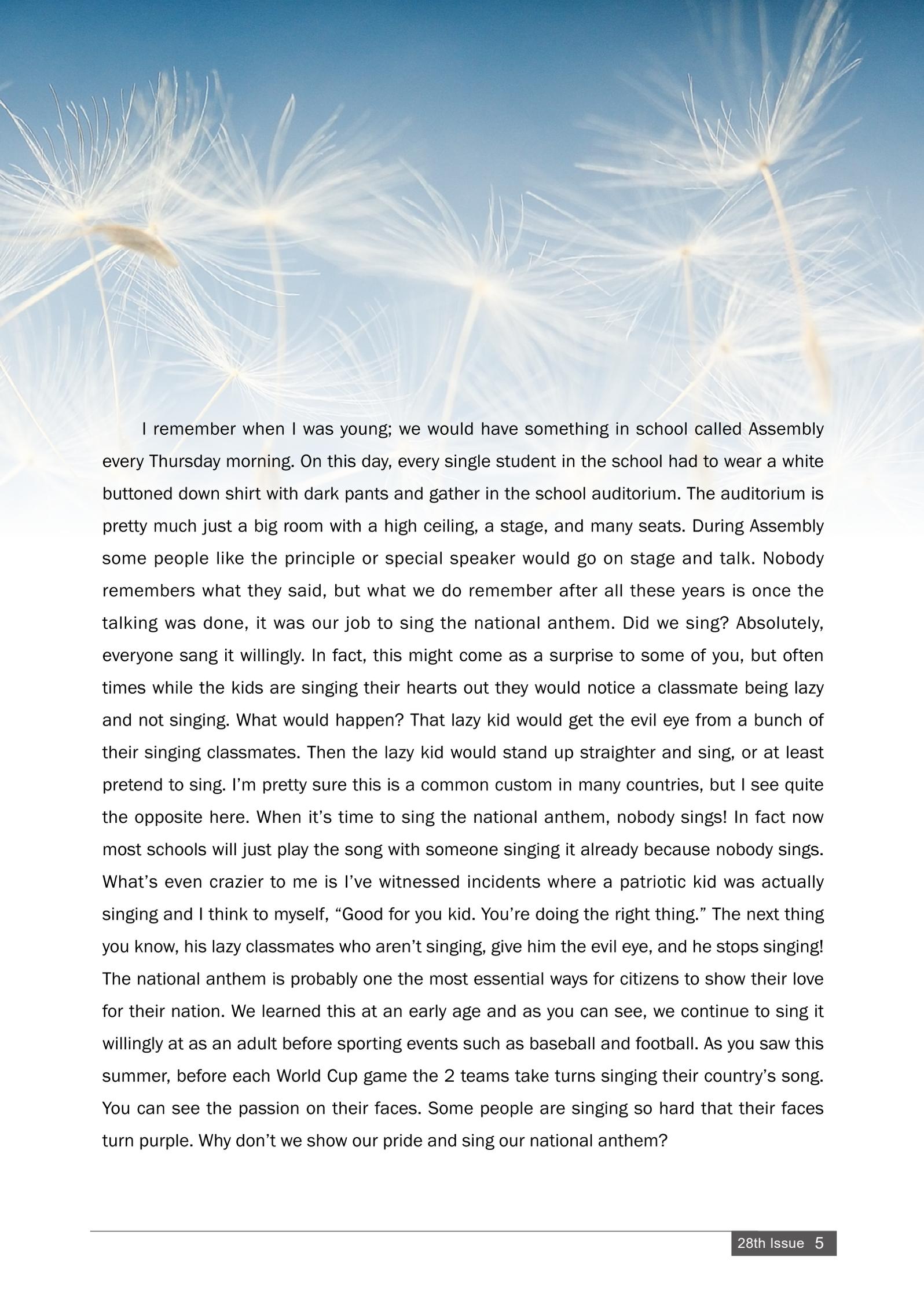
By Paul



In the past nationalism was an ideology used to develop and modernize nations. This ideal encouraged citizens to work hard in pursuing the creation of a better future for their country. Oddly enough in our era, this notion has been twisted in the western world. More people are beginning to have an adverse perception of nationalism, associating it to far right movements and beliefs. Multiculturalism resulting in racism and the Internet resulting in the spread of propaganda may be culprits of this ugly phenomenon unfolding in the west. Today, if you are referred to as a nationalist in countries like America or Germany; you are probably a racist, extremist, or sometimes a religious fanatic. It's a strange world out there. Meanwhile, it doesn't seem to be the case in East Asia. Nationalism in countries like South Korea and Japan have proven to accelerate their growth time and time again. The Japanese people rebuilt their nation at an extraordinary speed after the Second World War. South Korea exploded onto the global economic scene in the early 2000's and it looks like they're here to stay for the time being. Personal feelings aside, we have to acknowledge how much these nations have achieved. Of course there are many factors involved, but nationalism played a pertinent role in their success.

A background image showing several dandelion seed heads with their seeds blowing away against a clear blue sky. The seeds are bright yellow and white, creating a soft, ethereal glow.

I've lived in Taiwan for over a decade and since my ancestors are Taiwanese I've grown up with more than a slight interest in the affairs of the island. Now that I've been here for so long, I've witnessed some things that seem to go unnoticed. We are a product of our environment so it's understandable to disregard what we perceive to be normal. For example, if you were born somewhere in Texas, you'd think it's very normal to own and carry guns. If you were born in India, you might expect your parents to arrange your marriage. Or if you were born in some parts of China eating dogs for breakfast is healthy. It's perfectly fine to believe those things because they were happening ever since you could remember. Changing deeply rooted beliefs, habits, and traditions requires an extreme amount of effort mentally after receiving information that would force you to reform. Throughout my years here the lack of nationalism wasn't really apparent, but lately I've been left scratching my head wondering, "Do you guys really love Taiwan?"



I remember when I was young; we would have something in school called Assembly every Thursday morning. On this day, every single student in the school had to wear a white buttoned down shirt with dark pants and gather in the school auditorium. The auditorium is pretty much just a big room with a high ceiling, a stage, and many seats. During Assembly some people like the principle or special speaker would go on stage and talk. Nobody remembers what they said, but what we do remember after all these years is once the talking was done, it was our job to sing the national anthem. Did we sing? Absolutely, everyone sang it willingly. In fact, this might come as a surprise to some of you, but often times while the kids are singing their hearts out they would notice a classmate being lazy and not singing. What would happen? That lazy kid would get the evil eye from a bunch of their singing classmates. Then the lazy kid would stand up straighter and sing, or at least pretend to sing. I'm pretty sure this is a common custom in many countries, but I see quite the opposite here. When it's time to sing the national anthem, nobody sings! In fact now most schools will just play the song with someone singing it already because nobody sings. What's even crazier to me is I've witnessed incidents where a patriotic kid was actually singing and I think to myself, "Good for you kid. You're doing the right thing." The next thing you know, his lazy classmates who aren't singing, give him the evil eye, and he stops singing! The national anthem is probably one the most essential ways for citizens to show their love for their nation. We learned this at an early age and as you can see, we continue to sing it willingly at as an adult before sporting events such as baseball and football. As you saw this summer, before each World Cup game the 2 teams take turns singing their country's song. You can see the passion on their faces. Some people are singing so hard that their faces turn purple. Why don't we show our pride and sing our national anthem?

Unfortunately, far too many man-made disasters or accidents have happened in Taiwan in recent memory. Events such as the powder explosion in 2015, the majestic plane crashing into the Keelung River also in 2015, the most recent Puyuma train crash in Yilan, and the countless tour bus crashes still fresh in my mind. I've been using my job to conduct research on my students each time these events occur. Lucky for me, I've had plenty of opportunities to carry out my research in recent years. My "research" is not complicated at all. I just ask a simple question, "Do you feel sad?" and the overwhelming answer was "no". When I first asked this question years ago I was surprised by the response. I thought this would have been an automatic yes answer. Just like when you ask people if they like ice cream or puppies. The answer is usually yes and if you said otherwise, people would think you're weird. It turns out being sad about Taiwanese people dying is weird. I looked closely at this because I suspected that some people felt embarrassed by being sad. I analyzed hundreds of faces carefully for their reactions. What I found looking back at me were just blank stares. In fact, a few times students raised their hands to say they felt sad, but after looking around at the lack of other hands raised, they put their hands back down! It dawned on me that this was normal in Taiwan and I shouldn't be. Of course in third world countries people die all the time and most people don't have the time or energy to care because they're just trying to survive,

but we should care more. We should be an advanced society capable of compassion for our people, especially the dead. Why don't we feel sad for our dead countrymen? It's not our students' fault, especially the younger ones. They are a product of this environment. Schools and parents should do more to properly teach our youth in having these emotions. In the US, schools carry out a moment of silence to mourn the dead. Other countries arrange memorials to remember tragic events and remind their citizens of the horrors that happened. It's a reminder for the people to feel sad and show sympathy for one another. I'm not saying you need to start hugging everyone you see on the street or cry whenever a baby dies, but we can start by actually feeling slightly saddened by our people dying horribly. Maybe if more Taiwanese felt compassion for each other, we might actually have fewer accidents?

Obama once said, "Our country is only as strong as the character of our people." Singing the national anthem and grieving for our lost ones are just common customs in most modern nations. They display passion people have for their country and they serve as the backbone of society pushing their citizens to strive for a better future. We can use some more of this in Taiwan. Display more nationalism. Grieve our losses. And please, sing the national anthem.

# Medical Camp



This summer, I participated in a medical camp held by Taipei Medical University, which was a great opportunity for me to experience what it is like to be a doctor. I joined the camp with the thought that I could learn some medical knowledge, which may be helpful to me in the future.

During the camp, there were many interesting activities, such as playing games which are related to medical knowledge and listening to some lectures from famous professors. In addition, there was a lesson in which participants took turns simulating the conversations that take place between Doctors and Patients, which made me realize the importance of empathy. All the activities allowed us to learn new things and have fun at the same time.

The most unforgettable event was solving a puzzle from a human skeleton. I remember the moment when I stepped into the room, I felt sick because of the bad smell of Formalin, and my heart pumped faster and faster. However, when I saw the human bones, I stopped being nervous and felt appreciative instead, respectful of the Silent Teacher who dedicated his or her body to be used in medical training and research.

Although it only lasted for three days, I gained a lot of valuable experience. After the medical camp, as physically exhausted as I was, there was a sense of contentment in me. And thanks to the team leaders who greeted us in a friendly way, we could express ourselves at will. With the precious experiences in this camp, I now have a brand-new perspective of the medical field.

By 1008 林秉賢

# The Medical Camp



On the morning of August 1st, grade 10 students gathered in an auditorium of Taipei Medical University (TMU), and waited for the commencement of a three-day medical and humanities camp. It was the first time that our school cooperated with TMU to hold a camp for us, which made us excited and a little tense. As the clock struck 9, lights were turned off, a welcome video started to play, and, the camp began. In the following three days, the camp taught me many things, all of which were interesting, educational, and helped me grow a lot.

Among all the activities, the most impressive part to me was “The Reality Competition.” Each team was led to a different level, and the host there would tell the students what to do. The levels were set not only in classrooms but also in laboratories, group discussion rooms and even the student dormitory; besides, levels ranged from answering medical questions, to reconstructing disordered human bones into a skeleton, and to finding photos hidden in a recreation room. Since nobody could be good at so many challenges, teamwork was of great importance. Through this activity, I gained knowledge as well as sharpened the skill to communicate and work well with others.

Apart from the Reality Competition, two professors of TMU respectively gave us lectures about long-term care and cadavers, too. In the former one, professor Lin talked about the aging population structure and the problems that elders may face. This made us think about how to improve their lives, whereas in the latter one, professor Feng told us some stories about cadavers and their relatives, and then explored the right attitude towards life and death. There were also several lectures held by college students from NTU and TMU. They talked about doctor-patient communication and logic. Though the themes they presented were somewhat serious, so vivid were their lectures that I was fascinated. All the students were absorbed in the lectures.

A bit naughty and noisy as we were, the camp was a huge success on the whole. Some of my acquisitions are as follow: Not until these lectures did I learn that medicine is not a group of skills to cure patients by any means but an extensive field related to science, communication, logic and philosophy. Above all, to whoever wants to become a guardian of human's health, enthusiasm about lives is absolutely necessary. Otherwise, the skills will mean nothing to you. They will simply be a means of making money, which is not the really essence of medicine.

The three-day medical and humanities camp helped me understand if I'm indeed interested in medicine. I'm looking forward to having more camps and activities like this to help me know myself better while creating wonderful memories.



By 1007 邱士紘



# An Unforgettable Trip

With our minds full of expectations, we got on the tour bus and imagined how interesting the day would be. After an “exhausting” drive, we got off the tour bus with yawns. While most of my classmates played with their smart phones during the drive, I slept for 2 hours. When I woke up, I was fully refreshed.

After we arrived at the IDEA institution, the instructors asked us to play some games about “unity” and “respect.” One of the games was very impressive. Around 10 people took the hands of their classmates beside them, and formed a huge circle. There were 2 hula hoops and 2 belts on 4 people’s arms. All we had to do was to pass them around the entire circle. Although it was a tough game, we speedily strategized with our classmates and came up with an instant solution. We learned the value of teamwork.

Next, we went rock climbing. I lacked confidence in it because I have always failed to climb to the top. My knees always gave way after I climbed halfway. The instructor began by asking us to do a special thing. She asked four of us to make a group so we could hold the rope securely and protect the climber. She even asked us to yell out the slogan, “Check completed, please start climbing,” right after the climber was ready to go. The exercise gave us courage and confidence to climb up, especially me. I was really encouraged by the enthusiasm of my classmates to assist each other in this task. I decided to toss the bad memories away and do my best with it. Nonetheless, while I was half way up, my knees gave began to feel like jelly. My legs couldn’t help shaking, and my mind just kept telling me that I would never finish it. With my past experience coming back to mind, I gave up in regret.

After the meal and a 30-minute break, we finally faced the hardest and scariest challenge on this trip, “Pamper Pole ( 空中擊球 )” and “Multivine Traverse ( 藤蔓路 ).” I picked the former to take part in because it seemed like a lot of fun. The players would climb up a nine-meter column; stand on a small board, and jump forward to touch the ball. While many of my classmates described it as a simple task, I was freaked out when I looked at the super tall column. Before me, almost every challenger climbed onto the small board and jumped. One of my classmates was too scared and finally gave up halfway, just like what I had done earlier in the morning. His act reminded me of how cowardly I was, and it also gave me the guts to overcome it. Soon, it was my turn. I carefully climbed up and didn’t look back. When I was a step away from the little board, my legs shook again! I closed my eyes and pushed myself upward. Suddenly, I was on the board. Even though I missed the target, I was still proud of myself. After all, I faced my fear and overcame it.

I learned an invaluable lesson from this activity. It deepened my bonds with my classmates and I reflected on my fears. I used to think activities of this kind were entertaining, but as it turns out, they are not just games. In essence, they are useful tools that make people work together. I’m glad I went.

# Cooperation is Power



One Monday during summer vacation, the teacher told us that we would go on a trip to Hsinchu the next day. I remembered we went to the same place three years ago when we were in grade seven. Different from three years ago, this time not only did we go with new classmates, but the activities we were going to engage in had become more difficult and dangerous. We had heard about the new challenges before we were there. It sounded so frightening and unattainable that I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to face the challenge. After a ride of one and a half hours and a short walk, we arrived at the destination.

The counselors there took us to play some group games first. Even though most of us had known each other for a year or even more, the relationship between some still appeared quite fragile. Thus, the games, as they should be, were used to make us understand one another more,



and to be more familiar with everyone. Next, we went on an obstacle that was made up of a couple of vertical ropes and a cable wire. The challenger would climb up a wooden pole to step on the wire, but the only thing he could grab were the ropes which were far apart. Meanwhile, the protector stood on the ground adjusting the elasticity of the rope on the protection equipment.



Because the order was random, you didn't know who was going to be your protector. Even though you were not acquainted with them, they were always the ones who ensured your safety. At this moment, no matter who you are and where you're from, everyone is equally essential.

After every activity, there was a discussion session. In every activity, each of my classmates played an important role; not a single one could be omitted. Many of the activities needed cooperation to reach the goal; that is, the power of one person is not enough. Throughout this team spirit-building activity, I found that everyone in my class was actually so kind-hearted that no one criticized me for all the mistakes I made. We had to stand in others' shoes in order to avoid unnecessary disputes. In the process, I learnt that the only way to success is to talk calmly and always forgive when someone makes a mistake. I believe our class will become more intimate and that this experience will be indelibly imprinted on my mind.



By 1007 李玟



## Yanping Study Tour 2018

This summer I went on Yanping's study abroad tour. Even though it was my second time in the US, I was without my parents; I was on my own. Naturally, I freaked out. I wondered how to deal with the challenges of language and culture. My mind became clouded with questions of doubt.

Will I be able to make friends? Or even worse, will I become a victim of bullying? The trip was an unknown question, but it was also a chance to prove myself in English. So I went thousands of miles, far from my home country, to practice my English, and answer some life questions.

"Why are you here?" An American teacher asked me. I was still jetlagged and the question threw me off. "Good question. Why am I here? Why am I not in Taiwan and enjoying my summer vacation?" I pondered. I had traveled half way around the world to be asked a question that everyone asks. I just hope my heart is brave enough to answer such a question.

I went to the US not because of personal curiosity, but rather, for what people say about the place. Some say that the US has a better educational environment. While other people say that America is a place full of easy money. Therefore, the US is the best place to go for a better life and wealth. I discovered that America isn't always better than Taiwan. America's subway is a mess, compared to Taipei's MRT system. Furthermore, the comforts of Taipei cannot compare to New York's messy streets.



Despite the differences above, the diverse cultures found in the US is something I cannot find anywhere else. Which other country in the world can boast of such richness? I have found none, so far.

We travel to make memories. During the trip, what impressed me the most was Central Park. The unbelievable size of it will amaze every traveler that sees it. New York City is a concrete jungle, but Central Park is a green space that allows everyone to enjoy nature. It's hard to imagine that in a bustling city lies such a beautiful park. The park is bathed in golden sunshine. It is an oasis from the insanity of the world. The lush lawns, cool forests, flower gardens, the glassy bodies of water and meandering wooded paths provide a dose of serenity. To lie on the grass was the reason I came on this trip. It's ambiguous to think that way, but I seem to enjoy life's little moments.

Perhaps everyone has seen the pictures of the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty, or Taipei 101, etc. Nevertheless, it just doesn't feel the same way when you actually travel to it. When you feel the winds from the ocean at Ellis Island, you imagine that you are one of the millions of people that emigrated to the US with dreams and ambitions. It is why in America, you can dream about life and its possibilities. You can feel what the immigrants felt when they stood at the feet of the huge statue a century ago, looking at the inspiring quotes on the Statue of Liberty. "Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door."



Suddenly, I know the answer to the simple but enigmatic question. Why am I here? Traveling is like reading, and the world is an enormous book that we keep reading during our lifetime. A book is meaningful because of the reader, and the world is ravishing because of the traveler. So I found my reason for the trip, and the answer to my question. It's ambiguous I know, but you will understand as you begin your travel journey.

# Yanping Study Tour 2018

On June 30th, my friends and I joined the study tour held by our school. We knew that it was going to be an unforgettable and wonderful trip.

After we arrived in the US, we first went to Boston for four days of sightseeing. We went to many prestigious colleges such as Harvard, MIT and Yale. In addition to their prominence, these schools had one thing in common: they all had a tremendous campus where you could see distinct architecture. Steeping myself in the academic atmosphere, I longed to be one of their students someday. Besides the school visit, we also went to a few famous sites in Boston, such as Quincy Market, Salem and America's oldest candy shop. Quincy Market left the deepest impression. It was like a fish market but unlike any market we have in Taiwan, which is usually smelly and overcrowded, it has air-conditioning and, beyond my imagination, the environment of the market is so clean and agreeable. After the trip in Boston, New York was our next destination.



In New York, we had classes at Fordham University. Fordham was a glamorous school. The campus was filled with a large number of trees. It was hard to find any litter on the ground. What amazed me the most was that squirrels could be seen jumping around everywhere on the campus. Inside the classroom, I had classmates from all over the world, like Argentina, Italy, France, and so on. During the class, I experienced courses of a variety of subjects and I found something different from what we do in class in Taiwan. Foreign students appear to be more talkative than us. They really like to share their ideas with the whole class. In contrast, students in Taiwan tend to be shy and reluctant to express our thoughts whenever the teacher asks a question. It is quite a cultural difference. At first, I wasn't used to it. Nevertheless, when I became more familiar with my classmates, I overcame my shyness and started to be braver, thus more willing to voice my ideas.

I have met a lot of friends and I really enjoyed the life there. I think my biggest development after this trip is that I became very independent because I had to do everything by myself without my parents' help. In the end, I want to thank my parents for supporting me on this impressive trip, and the teachers and our guide Sandy for helping me during the whole trip. I will certainly remember this fantastic trip deep in my heart.



# A Workshop That Teaches Empathy



Last Thursday, our class went on a field trip. The purpose of the trip was to teach us to stand in someone else's shoes, and respect the visually-impaired. In order to help us understand the feeling of the visually-impaired, we went into an extremely dark room. At first, I thought it was horrifying, because I could not see anything in the total absence of light. However, as I got more familiar with the environment, I felt less scared.

In the room, we could only use our senses of hearing, smell and taste, to complete the given missions, such as smelling and identifying what was in a bottle, putting bottles in a box, and drawing comics. An hour later, we were all amazed that we could complete the series of challenges without seeing anything.

We've learned a lot from the trip concerning how we can help the visually-impaired when encountering them on the street. A useful rule of thumb is "ask, tap, guide and report". First, ask them whether they need a hand. Then, tap them on their hands, and they will lay their hands on your elbow in return. What comes next is "guide" – that is, when guiding these friends with visual disabilities, one needs to take half a step forward in order to make sure they are right behind and on the right side. Last but not least, report to them what is ahead – such as stairs, holes or obstacles – so that they can arrive at their destinations safe and sound.

The field trip, for me, was a great experience. It taught me the importance of mutual respect. Besides, I appreciate the bravery of visually-impaired people, who overcome "darkness" despite their disadvantages. As a concluding remark, I will always strive to lend my helping hand to those in need and lead them out of darkness.



By 709 黃柏諺

# The 72nd School Anniversary



The school anniversary was the most thrilling and jubilant event in Yanping. We spent two days meeting in sports competitions, and finished it off with a school fair. It was the highlight of the year.

On the first day this year, the opening ceremony began with an inspirational speech by the principal. Afterwards, musical performances carried our spirits in school unity, and celebration. I enjoyed every performance, even the 7th graders and their gymnastics. However, what caught my eyes were the young men wearing skirts and dancing amusingly, trying to follow the music.

After the dance shows ended, it was time for the yearly Tug of War contest. It was our time to show everyone how strong we were. Our classmates looked forward to this competition because we wanted to show our prowess through brute strength. Our goal was to reach the top; we didn't have a taste for losing. We even had a cheer ready for the occasion. "Sandra! Sandra! Sandra!" Shouting our English teacher's name gave us hope and brought us together in unity. This cute but powerful slogan guided our excitement.

Because of our togetherness, we won the first round. It was a moment of triumph. Some cried, some smiled, and some were ready for more. Later, like a meteorite which looks beautiful as it enters the atmosphere and fades away, our victory faded into empty darkness. At least we won the first round. Practice didn't make us perfect as we had thought. The competition was an unforgettable experience. Our class came together in a way that made us strong. We connected.



The second day, which was Saturday, Yanping held the school fair. I came to school very early, in fact, it was the earliest hour I had ever made it to school. We set up our stall, and prepared to sell our goods. Every class was assigned to come up with a product to sell at the fair. The fair itself resembled a night market. We moved tables, set utensils, and prepared sausages. That's right, sausages. Our class decided to sell mouthwatering Taiwanese sausages.

Then the unwelcomed rain came. One would say that it rained cats and dogs. I thought the rain would damper our enthusiasm that day, and the fair would just feel like a drag. Thankfully, the rain decided to come back another day, and the sun made its radiant entrance. That gave us the motivation to sell our delicious sausages.

Our sellers shouted for customers to try our product. We enticed family members, and friends to come enjoy our food. When you are selling something, everyone is a potential buyer. With this positive vigor guiding us, we successfully sold every sausage we had. It was a great day, the rain stopped, the sun came out to brighten our prospects, and we were sold out of sausages!

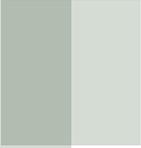
The 72nd school anniversary ended with a warm and exciting closure. After the school fair, I learned to appreciate how important it was to work together with my classmates and teacher. It was a wonderful way to say, "Happy Birthday Yanping!"

By 906 蔡宜健

# Yanping, Happy Birthday!

After Sports Day, the day when we were totally sad because of the defeat of tug-of-war, we were not only tired but also excited for the school fair. Everyone in my class was wondering whether it would be rainy or not. However, it was cloudy.

When I arrived at Yanping it was so early that I thought I might be the first one to open the classroom door, but to my surprise there were already about ten classmates carrying the barbecue grill and boxes of soda down the stairs. Our class' stand was right next to the construction site, and we sold grilled sausages, cold soda and even offered great entertainment with a stein-pushing game. In the past few weeks, we had discussed our preparations a million times and even tested our game on the classroom floor, which made it constantly slippery.



We finished decorating our stand within a really short time, and then we started to cook the sausages when other classes were still decorating their stands. An enticing smell soon spread around the fair and attracted quite a few customers. I worked as a cook, but actually I was just responsible for putting the sticks into the sausages, which had already been grilled by my classmates because I'm an awkward cook without a doubt. I also went around the fair peddling sausages. From my experience, parents were usually easier to persuade to buy our goods. To be honest, I think I am better at being a salesman than a cook because I sold many sausages.

No one knows who came up with the idea to turn the stein-pushing game into an "ice"-pushing game. Surprisingly, the new game caught many people's attention and soon there were crowds gathering in front of our stand. I was inspired; creativity truly leads to success. Sometimes, a crisis can be an opportunity. I also played ring toss, pinball, and dart games at the fair. I even won a Rascal crisper.



All of my classmates had a nice day as it just drizzled and no umbrellas were needed. I learned a lot through the process of being a vendor. Finally, I want to say happy birthday to Yanping.



# The School Anniversary

A short gap between the endless tests in Yanping always seems to be particularly precious. Though there were only two days, it was enough to comfort our tired souls.

This year is Yanping's 72nd anniversary; everyone was looking forward to the coming celebration. To celebrate Yanping's birthday, the school held two activities, the sport's day on the first day, and the school fair on the second day. According to the weather forecast, it was going to rain on the first day. Fortunately, the weather didn't interrupt any competition on that day. The ninth grade's competition was tug of war. After several fierce games, we finally reached the deciding heat: the game between the champion and second place! We were all excited about it.

Catchphrases were shouted loudly. At the beginning, we still believed that success must be ours, but we were wrong, terribly wrong! In the second round the circumstances reversed. Everyone was shocked by that unbelievable scene: we were defeated in just a few seconds. The game ended; everyone was in a bad mood. I thought the reason we lost was that we were too proud. Well goes the saying, "Pride goes before a fall"! In any situation, it is a lethal mistake to underestimate your opponent.



The second day was the school fair. In reaction to the defeat of the previous day, we were determined to make a lot of money. Owing to the campus construction, the number of the booths decreased from 50 to 30, that also meant customers' choices would be reduced too. For two reasons, we chose sausages as our major products: first, it's a much-loved product; second, it's very easy to cook. We ordered about 700 sausages from the factory, and practically sold every one of them. This was a great encouragement to our class. From my point of view, the school fair was really a fantastic activity. We felt so good making money on our own. The sense of accomplishment at that time can't be described with words.

Personally, I thought that despite the fact that we didn't win first prize in the tug of war competition, we all learned a good lesson from it. Besides the school fair was totally beyond our expectation! After working on the school fair with my classmates, I'm confident that a bright future with all kinds of difficulties is awaiting us. I believe we can overcome the difficulties together successfully.



By 906 陳茂紘



Every November 9 or 10 is the sports day at our school. At this time of year, all the students get very excited. Undoubtedly the most exciting part is always the competitions between classes. This day we will be able to show everyone what we have been practicing for, and all our efforts will hopefully pay off.

This year, our class took part in the tug-of-war and the relay race. Unfortunately, we lost the tug-of-war in the first round, so we couldn't go any further. However, we were still optimistic and decided to try even harder in the relay race. Winning first prize became the goal we set for ourselves.

Here's how we practiced: at first we separated the class into two halves and then had a simple match up. We familiarized ourselves with running while holding weights, and then we started to practice how to pass the weights to each other more smoothly. We figured out that putting those who have similar height together could make passing easier, and then we discussed the order of each participant. I got my position, which was last.

On the sports day it was cloudy, a bit like my mood before the race. I was somehow nervous, but I said to myself “Just calm down, and everything’s going to be fine.” I took some deep breaths while the race started. Everyone ran as fast as possible and had only one thought in our minds: win! When the second-to-last runner of our class approached me, I heard my other classmates shouting “Faster! Faster! We were only behind class 9!” At that very moment I held the weight tightly, and I dashed like mad. I couldn’t even think. All I did was go all out running! It took me just a few seconds to run from the curve to the finish line, and guess what? We won first prize, and the honor belongs to everyone in our class.

By 907 李承燁



## *Teamwork Matters*

Yanping's anniversary is a scheduled event every year, which is always held in November. I had two awesome days this year. Sometimes I played poker and sang pop music in our classroom, and at other times I went out to join the events. There were quite a few competitions on the sports day, including many performances such as creative performances by Grade eleven, health exercise dances by Grade seven, and so on. In my opinion, that was the most impressive event. When I moved up to Grade nine, I thought that everyone was too busy with homework and wouldn't care about the anniversary this year, but I was wrong. We still got involved in many events and grasped every opportunity to practice hard for every competition we had signed up for. Luck was not on our side, so we lost the Tug





of War in the first round and were a little bit upset. We thought that we could win. On account of the failure, everyone practiced harder than before instead of being knocked down by defeat. After practicing from time to time, due to the cooperation of everyone and the fact that we didn't give up our competitive spirit, we won first prize in the loaded relay race. I was so excited and didn't know what to say and how to thank every classmate for their effort when I knew we got first prize. It was the first time I got first prize in a team competition after joining this new class. Maybe it will end up being an insignificant honor in our lives, but we gained a tacit understanding and formed deeper friendships. This is something that cannot be purchased with any amount of money. I was proud of everyone and touched deeply. This wonderful experience taught me that nothing is impossible and practice always makes perfect. Even though we had quite a few troubles in the course of practicing, like some of our classmates getting injured, and uncooperative weather, in the end, we still reached our goal, and we can cherish it together. We are the most united class!

By 907 郭奕寬

# Multipotentialite

Have you ever been asked the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” This question may have been asked of you over and over again from the time you were little until you are a high school student picking major you are going to pursue in college. While this question inspires children to dream about what they could be, it doesn’t inspire them to dream about all they could be. In fact, it does just the opposite.

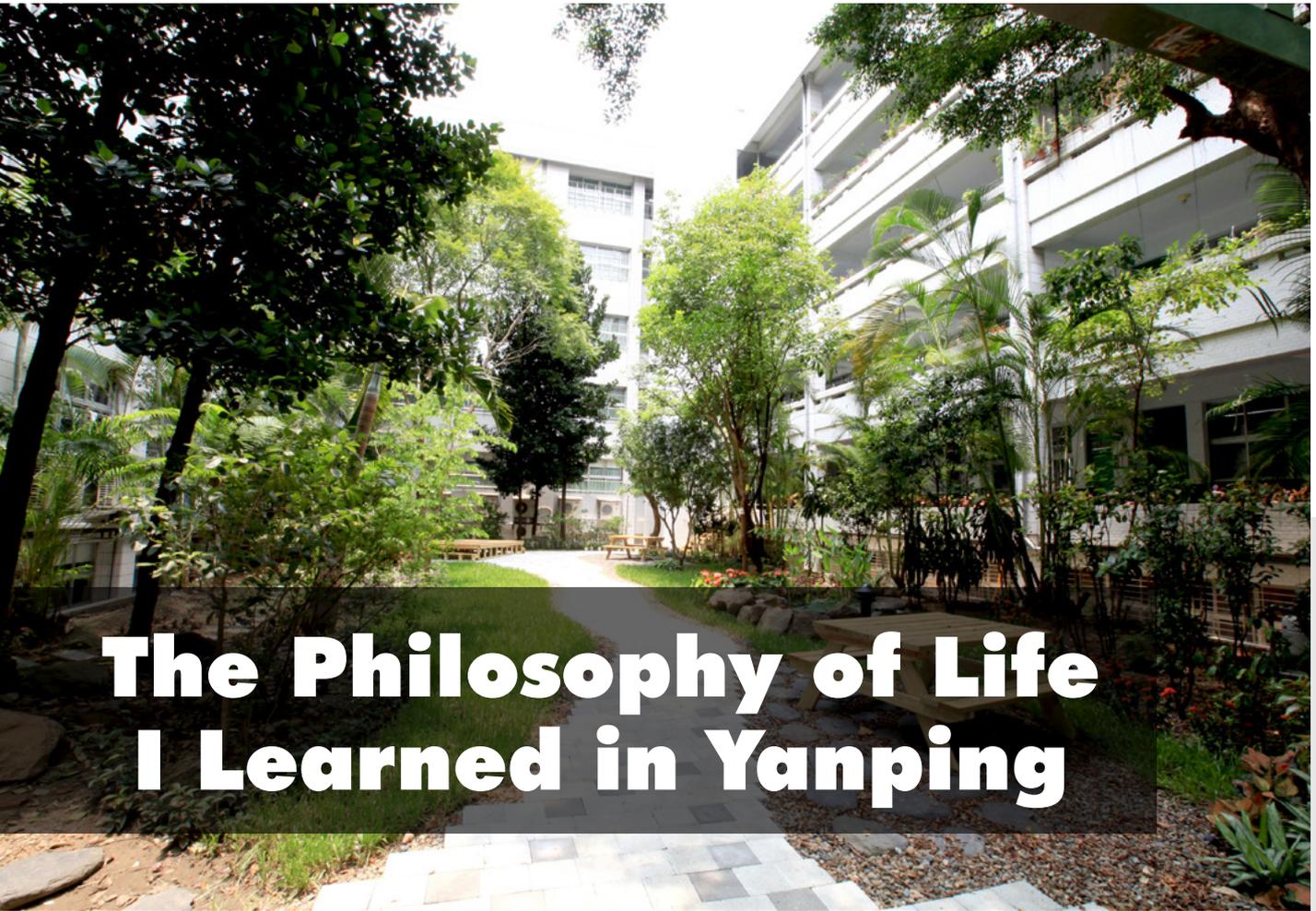
Take Wen-Yung Hou ( 侯文詠 ) for example. He is not only a physician, but also a popular writer in Taiwan. Lots of his essays and stories inspire me a lot. But most of us rarely heard of a person who’s able to work in different careers. All we have to do is to choose. The notion of the narrowly focused life is highly romanticized in our culture. It has something to do with destiny or the one true calling. The idea is that we each have one great thing we’re meant to do during our time on earth, and we have to figure out what it is and devote our life to it.

What if there are lots of subjects that you’re curious about and many things you want to do? You may think that you do not belong to this framework and feel lonely or like you don’t have a purpose because nobody is like you. Actually there’s nothing wrong with you, what you are is a multipotentialite. A multipotentialite is someone with various interests and creative pursuits. Here are three multipotentialite super powers, one: idea synthesis. That is, combining two or more fields and creating something new at the intersection. They can come up with innovative ideas by their



eclectic mix of skills and experiences. For instance, they may regard cooking a dish the same as painting. When they have great color matching ability and cooking skills, an artistic meal can be made possible. The second is rapid learning. When multipotentialites become interested in something, they do their best to observe everything they can get their hands on. Though they're used to being beginners, this means that they're less afraid of trying new things or stepping out of their comfort zones. They can bring everything they've learned to every new area they pursue and create an abundant life. And the third superpower is: adaptability, the ability to be familiar with whatever they need to in a given situation.

To sum up, I believe the spirit of the 108 course guidelines is to encourage students to be enthusiastic. Embracing our inner wiring leads to a happier, more authentic life.



# The Philosophy of Life I Learned in Yanping

When I just came to Yanping High School as a freshman, I didn't think there was anything awesome about this school. I used to think this school was just like a prison. But now, I love Yanping High School very much, and I've learned a lot here. Let me tell you what I have learned in the past two years.

As I write this, the second monthly exam of the fall semester just ended. According to the examination results, I am ranked number one in our school. But actually, when I was in the seventh grade, my academic performance was not as good as it is now. In fact, my grades were below average in the first monthly exam. Needless to say, I was surprised. I didn't know that I could rank that low in class. At the time, my best friend's grades were really good. I really wanted to be like him. Since then, I've studied for three hours a day. After a few months, my name finally appeared on the top 100 list on the examination result bulletin board. At that time, I learned one thing: If you work hard, you'll have good results.

I started to study harder, and I helped my friends improve themselves too. Guess what? Even though I spent a lot of time helping them, my grades continued to improve. To my delight, they also got good grades. It was not until then that I realized both teachers and students make progress by learning from each other. What's more, I learned the importance of friendship.



Another thing I learned is that often times, we create our own opportunity. I am a volunteer in the school library and the Foreign Language Center. Every time when teachers need help, I am always the first to lend a hand, so I am getting along well with the administrative teachers in school. Because of this, I can often get first-hand information and participate in many activities, even going out to represent Yanping in competitions and activities with other schools. What I learned here is that chance is reserved for those who are ready.

At last, I want to tell everyone loudly that I have learned a lot in Yanping, whether it be traditional book learning, or broader lessons about life itself. I think after I graduate, I'll always be proud to tell others that I am a "Yanpinger"!



# My Cambodia Experience

This summer, I went to Cambodia as an international volunteer. It was a trip of a lifetime. Our group had to work in conditions that would be considered deplorable in Taiwan. We built toilets with our bare hands. Besides that, we also built a house out of bamboo and nails.

In addition to construction work, we taught classes, like, culture, music, science, and so on, to local kids. It was the first time I discovered the beauty of teaching. The kids I taught were eager to learn. To be more precise, the sparkle in their eyes gave me strength not to fail them. It was inspiring to see their innocence searching for knowledge, wanting to discover something new about life. When they performed on stage, I was all smiles. The honor and respect we had helped me recognize the real meaning of learning and teaching.

The weather in Cambodia is unusually hot, and it did not spare us. We worked under the sun until we were soaked in sweat. The heat was unbearable. However, when we saw our achievements and the children's smiles, it overtook us with joy. "It's more blessed to give than to receive." It was a beautiful and unique experience for me.

This trip taught me a very profound lesson. In Taiwan we have an abundant number of resources, yet most of us don't feel contented. In comparison, the kids in Cambodian villages don't have much, but they cherish what small things they have while fighting for their life. Therefore, I realized that we should face our challenges with courage and faith and never waste any resources!



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