

Making a Manitoba-Chinese connection

Local delegation explores Asian commerce, technology opportunities

By Arlene Davidson

A Manitoba delegation spent 13 days in China last month to explore opportunities in commerce, education and tourism.

The seven member delegation led by Pinawa economic development officer Shane Li, included Pinawa Mayor Blair Skinner, Tim Stefanishyn, Superintendent of the Whiteshell School District, and four individuals from Winnipeg representing the tourism and business sectors.

The group departed from Winnipeg on April 14 to meet with officials in the cities of Heze, Wenzhou, and Shanghai and returned to Canada on April 26.

The local representatives explored every opportunity to find relevance and potential benefit for the community of Pinawa.

"The trip was very successful," said Li. "We made a lot of good connections with Chinese senior government officers and private companies. The discussions about trade, education, tourism and technology exchanges were very productive."

Li added two visitation groups from China are currently making arrangements to visit Pinawa in the near future.

Li, Skinner and Stefanishyn reported that throughout the tour, the Manitoba delegation was given exclusive access to high ranking government officials and private sector groups representing populations in excess of 50 million people.

"Every meeting, field trip, information session, presentation and dinner engagement focused on one or all of the following key areas of interest: commerce, economic development, education and tourism," explained Li.

The purpose of the trip

was to introduce Pinawa and the province of Manitoba to the Chinese people and to learn more about their similarities and unique cultural nuances as it applied to future economic, education and tourism habits.

"Each engagement focused on introductions, future partnerships and above all, relationship building. Every attempt was made to identify and explore mutual benefits to partnerships and investment in the three sectors of focus throughout the trip," said Li.

During the visit, the delegation observed that although China is significantly ahead of Canada in terms of finance capital, technology and education investment, they may be behind us in some areas.

"They are keen to close the gap and are investing massive sums of money from both the private and public purse to make that happen," said Li.

"The government of China is investing an enormous amount of money in education and are taking steps to bridge the cultural divide," said Stefanishyn. "They dedicate compulsory English at Grade 3 and sponsor students to study internationally. We really should be learning Mandarin."

The group visited a state owned business incubator and also one that was privately owned.

"Industrial Parks in China are cities within cities, providing office and manufacturing space as well as housing, schools, hospitals and retail outlets for the people that work and live there," explained Skinner.

Skinner and Stefanishyn said the trip was an eye opener for them and they were impressed with the initiatives that the Chinese people have taken with respect to protecting the

environment.

"China is a current leader in reducing their environmental footprint," said Stefanishyn. "They are taking gigantic steps to decrease negative impacts on the environment. The cities were clean; personally more than I expected."

They reported that public transportation was unobstructed and there was no congestion of traffic. The cities in China have established a bike sharing program that is available to the public. People can pick up a bike at one of many stations and leave them at their destination point. After midnight, workers collect all the bikes and return them to the pick up stations.

"We saw lots of purposeful green spacing and everyone turns off their lights at 10 p.m. to conserve



Photo submitted

Tim Stefanishyn (left), Blair Skinner, Chengyong Song, deputy secretary general of WTC Shanghai and Chamber of International Commerce Shanghai, Shane Li and Samuel Hu, international relation division chief, meet for a tour and discussions at the World Trade Centre in Shanghai.

energy," said Stefanishyn.

Skinner, Li and Stefanishyn are looking forward to returning the warm

hospitality they experienced while in China when dates are confirmed for two delegations that will

be travelling to Pinawa this summer to tour the school and the site of the former Whiteshell Laboratories.

LdB Library Corner

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Library is looking for volunteers to work at Mrs. Lucci's on our behalf, Monday through Saturday, from June 12 to 24. If you have a bit of spare time and are so inclined, we have the hours posted at the circulation desk. Thank you volunteers for coming to our aid once again.

SRP REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

The Lac du Bonnet Library Board and Staff are pleased to announce that we will be running a Summer Reading Program again this year, from July 4 to Aug. 17. The program is open to all children ages four to 11 years of age. Visitors to our community are most welcome. Join us Tuesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Library for activities, games, snacks and stories. This is a drop-in program, but in order to be better prepared, pre-registration is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please either stop by the Library or give us a call at 204-345-2653.

NONFICTION

Why Can't I Get Better? – Solving the Mystery of Lyme and Chronic Disease by Dr. Richard I. Horowitz
Toxin ToxOut – Getting Harmful Chemicals Out of Our Bodies and Our World

Irresistible – The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked by Adam Alter.

Catalogue and events details are available at the Library website www.lacdubonnetlibrary.ca

WHAT'S NEW?

Dreamtastic: A New Collection of Poetry and Short Stories Written by Young Canadians is now available at the Library. In the summer of 2016 Polar Expressions Publishing held their ninth annual writing contest for Canadians

of all ages. This book showcases the very best works received from young writers across Canada aged five to 15. Prizes were awarded to the first, second, and third prize winning poets and writers, along with 10 honourable mentions. Congratulations to local student Lily Hodgson (12 years old at the time), on being awarded second prize for her piece *Something to Wait For*.

From Nancy Rue's inspirational Faithgirlz series for junior readers, we have *Lucy Finds Her Way*.

Rufus is an apprentice in his father's goldsmith workshop in Cologne. He is one of many who fall under the spell of Nick, a charismatic preacher whose promise to lead a journey to the Holy Land is mesmerizing enough for hundreds to leave family and safety behind and follow him. But despite Nick's charisma, he is flawed, and the crusade that Rufus embarks upon with so many others turns, terribly, into a journey of failed dreams and broken promises, in *The Broken Road*, a young adult novel by B.R. Collins.

Police detective Daniele Harper turns to the Delphi Center crime lab for help in investigating a high-profile double murder, but regrets it when her attraction to their chief firearms examiner threatens her focus on the case, in *At Close Range*, a Tracers novel by Laura Griffin.

Born of Shadows, the fifth League novel by Sherrilyn Kenyon welcomes the reader to a world where corruption dominates everything and everyone. It's kill or be killed. But there are those who will protect you. You just have to decide if they're better than the ones chasing you. Or worse.

Other titles in a continuing series include: *Nightshift* (No. 3 Midnight, Texas) by Charlene Harris; *Speaking From Among the Bones* (No. 5 Flavia de Luce) by Alan Bradley; and *We All Fall Down* (No. 4 Michael Kelly).

After Hangtree lawman Sam Heller saves his life, teenage gunslinger Young Bill begs Heller to save one more – Cullen Baker, the original quick-draw artist, who is forced to fight a life-and-death battle with a corrupt robber baron for control of the Torrent River, in *Seven Days To Hell* by William W. Johnstone.

Catalogue and Events details are available at the Library website www.lacdubonnetlibrary.ca

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