



Service Learning News

3.17.08

by Judy Brookhart

As we are all heading in different directions for spring break, or enjoying the less chaotic pace of northeast Ohio when everyone is away by staying home, it is good to include a time of reflection. At my church, we call it “Sabbath rest,” but without the word “Sabbath,” the word “REST” still jumps out. It doesn’t mean doing nothing. It means doing something different, unique, special, set apart from the usual.

I have the perfect opportunity for that set apart time, for I will be traveling to China to visit my son and his family who live in Shanghai. Because the flight from Chicago to Shanghai is between 13 and 14 hours, I have a lot of time to read, listen to music, and think. I am taking a number of books about people who have served or are currently serving others, as well as some books with political themes, and isn’t it true that ideally every politician and political theory exist to serve people. Such writings can be inspirational and encouraging!

Speaking of airplanes, Matthew Young and I have just booked 10 reservations to Little Rock in June. We are taking a group of middle school students to Heifer Ranch where we will all commit to the value of serving others through interactive learning, community building and work projects. We need to be good stewards of our resources and our environment, and Heifer will teach us more about hunger, sustainable development, and how livestock can change the lives of people around the world.

Because we want this week to be as meaningful as possible, we will do a lot of team-building in the spring. Annie W., Zoe S., Zach Z., James A., Nate and Izzy H., Audrey B. and Sam H. will be meeting with Matthew and me regularly, as well as serving somewhere in our Countryside Conservancy community together. We will also read and discuss a book to challenge our perspectives and learn how each other thinks.

As I prepare to head out to China, I have been cleaning my office and concluding projects. Thanks to teacher generosity, I am mailing a box filled with supplies to our sister teacher Emelina in Peru. I also have a couple of bags to deliver to the Humane Society. Chris Kane stuck her head in and gave me some sage advice: “Don’t send Emelina the kitty litter!”

Serving together,

Judy Brookhart

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