



CAMERON HOUSE

金美倫堂

Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2011

# CURRENT



My Voice  
My Choice  
Westminster Woods 2011



# My Westminster Woods 2011 Experience

Courtney Leung, senior at Lowell High

This was my final year at Westminster Woods as a youth participant after coming every year since the 6th grade. Ever since my first time at West, I looked forward to it more and more each year. But this year was different from all the others. I felt it was more unforgettable, surreal, and definitely way too short. The trip went by so quickly that when I got home, it felt as if I never left the city. The only proof that I was ever at Westminster Woods was in all of the bug bites I got.

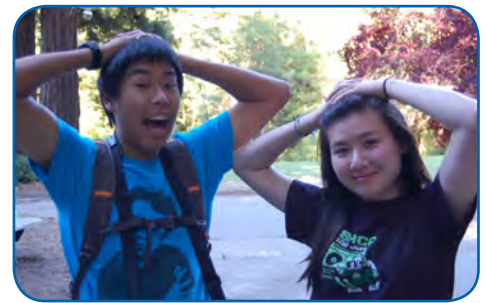
Some of the things I really enjoyed and loved about West included admiring the beautiful scenery, having the opportunity to truly relax, and spending time with everyone (especially those in my commission). I've known only a few people in my commission since pre-school or first grade, but at West I was able to really get to know each person. This year at West, I was able to reconnect with a friend who I haven't seen since eighth grade and got to know an awesome guy who just got involved at Cameron House this past summer. I really enjoyed family group time because it allowed me to get to know people outside of my club group. Before West, I knew the people in my family group mainly on a first name basis, but after a week of spending time together, I now feel more comfortable going up to them and having a conversation.

In the city, I feel that friends, family, school, and extra-curricular activities can pull you in a million different directions, but West allowed me to get away from all of that. At Westminster Woods, and Cameron House in general, I don't feel like I'm judged; I can be myself and know that I do not have to worry what others think. I felt less stressed and more relaxed while I was at West.

I wouldn't say that my trip to West this year was better than in the past years, but it was definitely memorable. Each year has its own special memory that I really like. This year I really enjoyed the classes. There were so many options to pick and choose from. I took classes in stencil making and yoga. I learned how to make a stencil I can do at home as well as an alternative way to build up muscle strength without working out in a gym with weights through yoga. Also, despite not being a flexible person, I was able to grab my toes at the end of yoga class!

At Westminster Woods, I learned that people are what make a place great. If I am in the most beautiful place all by myself, and I have no one to enjoy and share it with then that place loses some of its beauty for me. On the other hand, someone also told me the place contributes to the people as well. In the city there are too many distractions, but West is a getaway from all the distractions and it allowed us to really get to spend time with everyone there in a loving and supportive community while enjoying nature, soaking up some sun, and watching the stars without the interference of fog and city lights.

The theme of the week was "My Voice, My Choice," what I first thought of when I heard what the theme was, was that "yeah, yeah, I get it, watch what I say, think before I speak." But when I read the stories in the BMS (Body, Mind, and Soul) booklet, it made me reflect upon my actions and how they truly affected the people around me. How a simple phrase like, "That's stupid" could easily make a person feel inferior compared to other people. My West experience this year was filled with life lessons, personal reflections, opportunities to get to know the people around me, and lots of fun.





On a beautiful Saturday morning in June, nearly 100 Social Services Ministry's program participants waited excitedly at San Francisco's Pier 41 to board the ferry to cross the Bay to Angel Island. Many of the participants have never been on the ferry, nor to Angel Island. With the community's recent struggle to keep and maintain the immigration station at Angel Island and in commemoration of its 100th anniversary, it is important that recent Chinese immigrants understand and learn about this piece of Asian American history which impacted many Chinese immigrants in the early 1900s.

With strict immigration laws, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the fire of the 1906 earthquake, which destroyed government documents of people's immigration or naturalization status, future immigrants had to stop at Angel Island for an interrogation process to determine whether they were legitimately

able to stay in the United States. The long, harsh interrogation process and the unknown length of time that they had to stay in the crowded barracks at Angel Island were not only physically tiresome, but mentally draining. Many have expressed their anxiety, distress, and feelings by carving poems on the walls that still remain today.

This visit to Angel Island's immigration station was a rewarding and eye-opening experience for the participants. They also learned that Miss Donaldina Cameron served as a character witness and advocate for many of the Chinese immigrants during that time. The many individuals and families who come to our organization for services have stories and experiences which have deep connections with our history and mission. As we continue to carry out our mission and vision today, we hope to serve many more generations to come.

## Service Learning Project Reflections

This summer, the Solid Ground 8th grade department tackled the service learning theme of immigration. After a simulated cooking activity comparing the age-old metaphor of the "melting pot" versus a newer term to describe culture in America, a "tossed salad," we started to graze the tip of not only why immigration is a topic worth exploring, but also how it applies to each and every one of us. Because of the rich history Cameron House has with helping immigrant populations, our service-learning project took place on site in an effort to connect our campers to how Cameron House continues to help those in need today.

I coordinated our community project with an English Second Language class that is offered at Cameron House to adults. I hoped that the kids would be able to help the older students learn English, and that in return they could ask these older students questions about their immigration history and share any insight they have on the whole process.

It felt like the colliding of old and new; to my right, an older generation that had immigrated to the US years ago, and to my left, a new generation of bright-eyed talented youth. But in both, a curiosity to know what the other is thinking and what their experience is like. The lesson of the day centered on vocabulary and dialogue about vacations. The 8th graders role-played vacations they had been on so that the ESL students could analyze and discuss what they heard. In another portion, some of the 8th graders asked the adults questions about what it was like when they first arrived in the US. The language barrier crumbled as we translated for the students that spoke English into Chinese and

by: My-Thanh Mac, Solid Ground Coordinator

vice versa when the ESL students could only express themselves in their first language.

Some of the moments that stood out to me most from that day were when the adults were answering the 8th graders' questions. One of the campers asked the room if they had any regrets immigrating to America. While there seemed to be a wave of lamentation in the responses, one gentleman strongly replied that he didn't come to America for himself, but for later generations to have a better life. I couldn't help but gaze at the youth around me, including myself, and be thankful for all that I have been given for we are that later generation. In return, the ESL students were really curious about whether the 8th graders could speak and write Chinese. When to their dismay most of them did not, they were very excited to teach the kids how to write some basic phrases. One of the phrases we learned to write that day was the characters for "beautiful." Standing in that room listening to the charged conversations between old and young about school, life, and everything in between, the word "beautiful" felt like just the perfect word to describe this experience.



# Three - Generations at Cameron House

Tyler Lym, Solid Ground Summer Volunteer 2011

Hello everyone, my name is Tyler Lym, and I'm from San Jose. This past summer, I was a volunteer summer leader at Cameron House's Solid Ground program for 6th - 8th graders. I am a fourth generation Cameron House participant, starting from my great aunt Alyce Ford Chung (pictured). As told to me by my grandfather and family history buff, Richard Lym, Alyce was given up for adoption as an infant because of her parents' poor health and the bad



economy. Miss Donaldina Cameron and helper, Auntie Wu, went to Tonopah, Nevada, to bring Alyce to "920 Home" as they called it. She was raised by Ms. Cameron and even called her "grandma." Alyce was eventually adopted by the Poon family, but she kept on being involved with the Cameron House Women's Guild up until her death in 2004. For the second generation, my grandparents Richard and Jean Lym were very much involved with Cameron House. My grandma, Jean,

worked as a secretary for over fifteen years at CH, greeting almost every visitor that came to this special place on Sacramento Street. My grandpa, Richard, was on the Cameron House Board, and was part of the team that helped approve the construction of the upper yard. For the third generation, my father, Kevin Lym was also active in Cameron House. He was a camp leader and director, a commission leader, and also helped oversee the annual Cameron House Carnival for two years. Both my Uncle Brian and Uncle Joel participated at CH, too. In addition, my mother, Maxine (Wong - maiden name) started at CH as a 5th grader in daycamp and became a participant in Friday Night Youth Club, and was a camp leader too.

So as for my story, it is a bit different than my family's long history here at Cameron House. Going back a little more than a year ago, I barely knew what Cameron House was. My parents used to bring up Cameron House in conversations, with my dad telling the classic tale about how he as a camp director and his kids were stung by a colony of bees at Golden Gate Park. My family and I dropped by Cameron Carnival a couple of times, and my grandparents and parents seem to know a lot of people there. Besides that, I did not have much of a clue as to what Cameron House was, only knowing that my parents and grandparents had spent a lot of time there. Then, one day, that all changed. At a social event last year, my family and I bumped into Laurene Chan! My dad was her first-ever daycamp director when she first became a volunteer leader, and now she was director of CH youth programs. After the two of them talked for a while, Laurene brought up an interesting suggestion to my dad: Why don't you have Tyler come up to San Francisco, stay

with relatives, and be a day camp leader at Cameron House! That one small idea stuck with my parents and grew as we kept talking about "what if" I could do that. Soon enough, it was decided that I would be spending my summer at CH in the city by the bay alternating between my grandparents' and my uncle and aunt's house. My junior year passed, and then summer of 2011 came!

Leaving San Jose for more than a week at a time was a bit difficult at first as I had to adjust to the different climate in SF and a lot of new faces. Through training week for leaders, I was able to get to know my co-leaders and other leaders of the Solid Ground department better. I was lucky to have some great and super friendly directors and colleagues at CH as they helped me out along each step of the way in becoming a leader with their constant support. The first week of camp came, and oh, boy did I learn fast what I was in store for! Sixth graders, my oh my. When I first met my kids for the summer, they greeted me with such energy and wackiness, it bowled me over. After lunch came around on day one, I was already tired out! It showed me the challenges that I would face this summer - bonding with and taking care of high-energy middle school students. As the summer progressed, I was able to really get to know the kids more through all the fun outdoor games that my department played, such as capture the flag and barrel rolling down grassy hills at Golden Gate Park. I couldn't help but go crazy and have fun myself; it was like reliving all my own childhood memories! Through spending time with my sixth graders, I was able to learn about the little details about them, and listened to what was on their minds at the moment. Along with learning more about my kids, I learned about myself through the process, too. Some of the lessons were compassion, being confident with my decisions, and being responsible as kids were depending on me. The days came and went, with each day bringing new experiences, some times great, some times difficult, and many times full of laughter. When the last day came around, I could not believe camp was over. Time passes by fast when you are having fun, and it truly did pass by in such a quick manner.



(Pictured L-R) Tyler and Jordan, Dick and Jean, Kevin

# Three Generations (Continued)

While summer camp has passed, the spirit of Cameron House lives on within me even when I am sixty-plus miles away back home in San Jose. Daily events that occur in my life remind me of what I've learned this summer, such as listening to my friends with a whole heart, taking the initiative to be friendly with people that I barely know, and even doing a silly dance such as the "Bernie" with my peers. Cameron House has been a positive influence on my life. It's helped me grow and mature in different ways. The lessons that I have learned and the skills that I have gained as a leader are all part of this growth that I have experienced. I hope to use all of this and integrate them into my daily life as a high school senior so I can create a positive influence on my own surrounding community. Also, my summer experience helps me understand why Cameron House holds a special place with my grandparents and parents.

My junior year English teacher taught me: "True happiness is in the doing, not the done." On day one, I was that newbie

leader who was a bit more occupied with eating his delicious lunch and getting chances to rest from looking after those kids with boundless energy. I was going on a day-by-day basis, not a moment-by-moment basis. As a rookie leader, you have to start somewhere, right? It does not always start off on the right note, but as time goes on, you get the hang of the course and begin to carve your own self-image of that special leader you want to be. As weeks went by, I grew to really enjoy the company of my kids through all the interesting experiences we had shared together during this summer. Cooking, jukebox, storytelling -- you can name it. Towards the latter part of camp, I became a leader who was focused in the moment, just concentrating on what had to be done right in the here and now. Yes, I had become the leader who had a blast running around and playing with my Solid Ground kids at Golden Gate Park, and then could watch them happily sleep without a care in the world on the 29 Sunset bus back to Covenant Church.

## Cameron House Young Adults

by: Moony Tong, Cameron House Young Adult

One of the newer and also transformative ministries shaping up in Cameron House is the Cameron House Young Adults (CHYA) ministry. This group was formed because the young adults (loosely defined as age 18-35) themselves wanted to be part of a supportive and nurturing community that offered an opportunity to continue to learn, grow, and build relationships. Many of these young adults grew up through the Cameron House youth programs and wanted to be part of a community where they can still be connected with each other, Cameron House, and the larger community as a whole.

On the weekend of August 26-28, a total of 30 Cameron House Young Adults met at Westminster Woods for a retreat to learn and discuss about the personal, professional, and spiritual development of young adults. The facilitators for the weekend in-

cluded many of the young adults themselves, along with Scott Barlow, the Rev. Greg Chan, and the Rev. Kimberly Elliot. There were many great discussions and discernments including topics on how to present and build confidence while networking with people in a professional environment and building, maintaining, and incorporating Christian values in our daily lives.

As the young adults continue with its programming and as new young adults continue to join this ministry, we ask for the community to equip us with the knowledge and challenges to better ourselves and our surroundings and to use us to help and serve those who we come in contact with.

Below are some pictures from a few CHYA events this past year.



Soul & Elegance (February 2011)



Habitat for Humanity - Daly City  
(March 2011)



[above] River Rafting (July 2011)  
[below] West Retreat (August 2011)

To learn more about CHYA, visit: [Facebook.com/CHYoungAdults](https://www.facebook.com/CHYoungAdults)

# SHINE Senior Commission Mission Trip Ghost Ranch, New Mexico

by: Sing Quan, SHINE Commission Co-Leader



After spending a year planning, fundraising and overcoming obstacles of all sorts, the high school senior commission group SHINE survived the 30-hour Amtrak train and bus ride from Emeryville, CA to Albuquerque, New Mexico to join the Ghost Ranch Service Corp. The whole experience was filled with new and transforming experiences for each and every member. From the bottom of our hearts: THANK YOU TO EACH OF OUR SUP-

PORTERS AND DONORS. You joined in partnership with us in MANY different ways and helped to make this all possible! We'd love to talk with you about our experiences, but just in case we don't see you, please go to [cameronhouse.org](http://cameronhouse.org) to view the presentation we shared with the Friday Night Club youth in early August. Enjoy!

## Faithful Partnership in Action

by: Monica Walters, Executive Director

Throughout the past year the CH/PCC committee composed of representatives from the Cameron House management team and the Session of the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown crafted a Partnership Statement to define and guide our continued work together. This statement was formally adopted by the Cameron House Board of Directors as well as the PCC Session and can also be found posted on the Cameron House website, [www.cameronhouse.org](http://www.cameronhouse.org).

The process of developing the statement stimulated great ideas about ways that we can build stronger communities through our collaborative work. Our commitment to this faithful partnership is clear, and we summarized that pledge with enthusiastic agreement.

We look forward to the continued ways in which we can make this partnership statement full of faith and life!

### CH/PCC PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT

Ephesians 2:19-22

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.*

Partners in the Household of God

The relationship of Cameron House (CH) and the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown (PCC) can be described as partners in the household of God as written in Ephesians 2:19-22. Together, our household of God is built upon the work of generations of believers who have claimed the power of the gospel message as they have served their communities in Chinatown, the SF Bay Area, and the world. As we have served in the past, we continue in the present, open to the changing needs of the communities and being relevant to a new generation.

This shared ministry with its Christian perspective has a common vision, empowering others to fully participate and contribute positively towards a healthy society. CH creates a safe and nurturing environment for children, youth, individuals, and families by providing counseling, peer group support, and crisis intervention enabling active involvement in the community through leadership development, education and advocacy. PCC welcomes all who desire a new life in Christ to join

their spiritual community in worship, prayer, study and fellowship witnessing to the gospel of Jesus Christ and responding to God's call in the world.

In partnership, we create a stronger ministry that responds enthusiastically to the needs of the community and to Jesus' call for us to equip others in the faith. Through advocacy, service, and spiritual formation, we will act faithfully in the spirit of Micah 6:8 "to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God."

To venture forth together in mission we will:

- Strengthen our relationship through fellowship and community building
- Communicate regularly with energy, reflection, transparency and compassion
- Develop strategies and plans to address identified needs and ministries
- Implement them with a spirit of mutual cooperation and shared resources

September 15, 2010

Laurene Chan, Director of Youth Ministries, D.C.H. Elder, PCC  
Di An Chen, Elder, PCC, Mandarin Commission  
The Rev. Kimberly Elliot, Co-Pastor, PCC  
Yulanda Kwong, MSW, Director of Social Services, D.C.H.  
Irene Ng, Elder, PCC, English Commission  
Monica Walters, Executive Director, D.C.H.

# Tributes & Memorials

## IN HONOR OF:

### CH Staff

Allen and Denise Tom

### Survivor's Spouse Support Group

Carol Dolezal-Ng

### Doreen Der-McLeod

Nora Li

### Miao-Sheng Feng

Kong and Agnes Chan

### Helen and Benson Kwan

Low and Jeanette Chan

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Gordon Poon

Yvonne and Weyman Wong

Carolyn Yee

### Kenneth and Josephine Kwong

Janet and Steven Oshiro

### Calvin Lew

Randall & Candace Tom

### Florence Lew

Randall and Candace Tom

### Harry and Doris Loo

Parasol Tahoe

### Carrie Louie

Richard and Jean Lym

### David Miller

Cynthia Joe

### Virginia Mei

Kong and Agnes Chan

### Renee Lym Robertson

Richard and Jean Lym

### Lisa Romano

Natalie Berg

### Jack and Arlene Schaupp

Laurene and Corey Chan

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Alfred and Sharlene Hall

Dayton and Mary Leong

George and Maureen Oleyar

Carolyn Pryor

James and Amoena Quan

Jeannette Wei and James Caldwell

### Nathan and Su Lee Tom

Melvin and Jeannie Lee

### Karen Choy & Tong/Choy Family

Ginger Smyly

## IN MEMORY OF:

### Earl Chew

Gerald and Beatrice Chin

Laura Kim

Martha L. Yick

### Sue Que Gee Chin

Robert and Carolee Lim

### Raymond Chow

Jean Low

### George & Elva Chung

Anonymous

### Emily Eng

Wayne Eng and Marie Chin

### Stanley Fong

Wilfred and Ellen Fong

### Vera Fong

Dora Jang

### Mary Tom Gon

Pat and Harry Mar

### Mildred Ho

Byron and Karen Ho

### Jerome Jow

Sally Y. Wong

### Abraham and Lydia Kao

David and Amy Kao

### Bill and Helen Kee

Palmer and Betty Lam

### Ruth Kwan

Tim Kwan

### Bronson Lee

Alson and JoAnn Lee

### Jim Y. Lee

Gerald and Beatrice Chin

Mary Fong

Laura Kim

### John and Leona Lee

Alfred and Sharlene Hall

### Raymond Lee

Marv Lee

### Arthur Lingsch

Hellmann and Lorraine Yee

### Florence Logan

Pat and Harry Mar

### Lorna Logan

Geri Humphry

Pat and Harry Mar

### Janice Lum

Byron and Karen Ho

### Dorothy Miller

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Douglas Clark

Bruce and Doreen Der-McLeod

Mildred Hall

Gwen Jeong

Dayton and Mary Leong

Jean Low

Monica Walters

Jeannette Wei and Jim Caldwell

Ruth Wu

### Fannie Foo Mock

Nancy S. Chan

Martha Chang

Beverly and Michael Chinn

Cheri Choy

Percy and Jean Chu

Eva Hoffman

Arnold and Faye Lee

Millie and Eugene Lew

Robert and Helen Low

Katie Tom

Jessie Tong

Flora Young

### Jane Newhall

Elizabeth McDonald

### Grace Ong

Mark and Barbara Fong

### Lillian Parvin

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Bruce and Doreen Der-McLeod

Terrence and Lianne Leong

Jeannette Wei and Jim Caldwell

Ruth Wu

### Leslie Richards

Judith and Edmere Richards

### Randall Roy Tom

Pat and Harry Mar

### Rodney Tom

Pat and Harry Mar

### Roy Tom

Pat and Harry Mar

### Stanton Tong

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Paul and Joy Perdue

Sandra Tong

### Adolphus Wong

Laurene and Corey Chan

Harry Chuck and Linda Lee

Byron and Karen Ho

Glenn and Jacqueline Kwan

Norman and Irene Lew

James and Amoena Quan

### Jeung Wong

Mark and Christina Chew

Victor and Mabel Hwang

Gerald and Annette Jeong

### Joseph Q. Yee

Claudia Belmessieri

Please let us know if your name was inadvertently left off this list.

## In Memory of Jane Newhall

Jane Newhall died recently at age 97. Her passing brought back a series of warm memories for me personally. I first met Jane shortly after I was appointed director of Cameron House in 1977.

In the late seventies, with the shifting of our national church structures and support systems, Cameron House was faced with a decision to dramatically downsize its ministry. Jane Newhall came to our rescue with a grant which would sustain the work of the mission while enabling it to retool for the future.

Jane Newhall was more than an ardent supporter of Cameron House and the many causes she supported over the decades. She also gave generously of her time as a member of our Board and Foundation and was a steady participant in our Women's Guild, a core group of faithful Presbyterian women from churches throughout the Bay Area.

At Christmas, Jane would let us stage our annual Christmas parties in her spacious living room. But my favorite memory

by: Rev. Harry Chuck

will always be the potted plants she prepared for our annual carnival which she left one early morning atop my station wagon with a note saying "I'll see you guys later... walking my dogs."

Humble...discreet...faithful...generous...are words people commonly use to describe Jane Newhall. She loved singing in her church choir, participating in bible study, walking her beagles, and quietly empowering her favorite causes. Jane was truly a God-send, an angel who has returned home to be with her heavenly Father.





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# Save the Date!

## Soul & Elegance

### February 18, 2012

#### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

We are now accepting nominations for the  
 "Donaldina Cameron House Award for  
 Excellence in Leadership and Service"

Nomination forms and instructions can be  
 found on-line at our website:  
[www.cameronhouse.org/nominations](http://www.cameronhouse.org/nominations)

Deadline for nominations is Sept. 23, 2011



Your contribution, time, and support to Cameron House makes a difference.  
 Visit [www.cameronhouse.org/GetInvolved](http://www.cameronhouse.org/GetInvolved)

