

“BULLY-PROOFING YOUTH” Part 2 of 2

BY ECHO LU

In the “Bully-Proofing Youth” seminar hosted by Asian Community Alliance (ACA) on Jan. 23, 2016 at the Miami University VOA Campus, expert Jim Bisenius who has 20 years of experience as a child and adolescent therapist specializing in teaching extremely targeted students how to handle bullying situation, gave the parents and students a two and half hour training on how to find out and deal with bullying.

Bisenius started on “what to do and what not to do as a parent”. He said that the no.1 rule is “If you have a child who is second grade or younger, you can sometimes talk to the parents of the kid who is bullying them,” and “it does work because really young kid listen to their parents.” But “if you have a child third grade and up, never ever, with no exceptions call out to the parents of the kid picking on your child.” “It is dead wrong.” He added. Through his experience working with more than 300 kids, he found out it is only going to make things worse. He suggested that parents help and coach their kids how to stop the bullying but never step in.

Using graphics, he demonstrated how differently kids behave and socially associate with other kids at school in terms of their self-esteem; and how bullies run their groups, how they pick their victims and how they isolate, control and manipulate victims. Bisenius went on to explain kids with high self-esteem usually do not picked on others nor do they become victimized.

Bisenius put kids into several categories to explain his points, and he focused on “leaders”, “followers” and the bullies as he shared examples and cases with the audience. Bisenius stated that kids should know which category they fall into, not because they need or should be in certain group, but the “social barrier” around them is very important when dealing with bullying.

Bisenius taught the audience that bullies are fed by their peers’ “fear” and “anger”. The use of appropriate body language could stop bullying behavior. Bisenius said this technique could even be used by adults in workplace, “but be careful with the person who write your paychecks”, he joked. Bullies “do not like themselves, no exceptions.” Bisenius said, “they are trying to pull their victims to their status.” And he reminded all the kids in the audience that bullies use the reaction of their victims to get and exert their power.

Heads up, eyes locked, lips together but not squeezed, take your tongue press behind your front teeth for shaking jaw, take a quiet breath or even fake a yawn, and lose and relax tighten shoulder, and do not turn your back to the bullies. He said kids usually could master these essential body languages in two weeks. Bisenius also emphasized on the power of silence. “Silence mixed with the right body language could make you look cool, silence mixed with the wrong body language would get you picked on more than talking back to bullies. Bisenius role played with ACA volunteer Zeyd Khan, who is a fourth

year medical student at University of Cincinnati as the bully, and he demonstrated different verbally and physically reactions to depict the power of confident body language and the power of silence with confident body language to regain control.

For kids who were being hit by the bullies, Bisenius suggested the parents consult a local martial art instructor who portrait a warm, caring persona, and describe how the bully assault the child in details and ask the instructor to work with the child how to take back control in a defensive way.

On the subject of social bullying, he explained how bullies run their group, controls who is in or out, ruin friendships and isolated their victims by creating and spreading rumors, or threatening them. “These little kids are master chess players, they are thinking ten, fifteen moves ahead.” Bisenius said.

“I, for five years, was the therapist that the police would many times call, to talk with teenagers, who were thinking to hurt themselves, that was part of my job, I know as much as that topic as I do about bullying. All the kids that I worked with felt disconnected from their families when they were having those thoughts of hurting themselves. That isn’t their family’s fault, as that’s usually not the case at all.” Bisenius said. “For whatever reasons, it could be a chemical thing going on in their head, or it can be a reaction to a medication, or reaction to food that we aren’t even aware of.” Bisenius continued.

Bisenius found in his years of experience that when children are having thoughts of hurting themselves, they all feel disconnected with their family, and at this isolated point, their friends are the most important people to them, a phone call from a friend can help the isolated child tremendously. He also found that bullies are most afraid of peer bonding. He encourages kids who have been picked on to bond and support each other without letting it be known to the bully in order to avoid their friendship being ripped apart. He also said sleep-over can help children bond faster on a one-on-one basis, and he asked parents to help their kids to bond with friends but do not pick their friends for them.

Lastly, Bisenius lectured on ways how parents could show children their love; “nurturing” and “set limits”, he said these two are equally important. “You can push them as much as you want, as long as they know mom and dad love me dearly and they really want me to succeed, then, that’s not damaging. But when children start equating love with whether they succeed or not, that’s where it harms them.” Bisenius said.

Bisenius advised that parents spend at least five minutes a day, focus on nothing else but on their kid, just one at a time if they have more than one kid, listen to what they have done that day, or cook a meal with love, to bond with their kids and let them know they are loved. Hug is the second important thing, Bisenius added. He also encouraged the kids in the audience to talk honestly with their parents regarding the pressure they felt.



Jim Bisenius (right) works with ACA volunteer Zeyd Khan (left) to show the audience how bullies are fed on the fear of their peers at the “Bully-Proofing Youth” Seminar On Jan 23, 2016.

Photo by Echo Lu

We The People: Fishers High School Team is going to Washington DC

BY XIAOBIN TAN, SENIOR AT FISHERS HIGH SCHOOL

We the People is a class/club that competes in debates that are hosted at the state and national level. The debate is formatted as congressional hearing style where a unit presents a paper with specific topic to judges, then the students will be asked a series of follow ups.

There are six units each specializing their own topic. For unit one, they focus on the philosophy behind our founders in creating our country. Unit two focuses on the history of America/constitution between Federalism vs. Anti-federalism. Unit three is related to the civil war and the amendments that followed, along with Due Process of the Law. Unit four targets issues like congress, presidential power, SCOTUS, and what the constitution says about them. Unit five is related to logistics of court cases, SCOTUS, and the Bill of Rights. Finally, unit six, the unit which I got placed in is about Immigration, Citizenship, Voting, and current issues.

This class has changed me a lot as a person and definitely helped me to become an educated citizen. Mrs. Paternoster has helped me understand why citizenry is important while I’m in the pursuit of gaining my naturalization. She is not only an exceptional coach, but also a role model and friend. I became Mudsock District Champions with my team, Regional Runners-up, Regional Unit VI award, and finally Indiana State Champions on December 14th. On April 22nd, we will be representing the Indiana at the National competition in Washington DC. To do so, each student has to fundraise up to \$1,200 because the total cost of the trip is 40,000. This is a big number to raise in a short amount of time. We would appreciate the community supporting and helping us get to DC so we can bring

back a National title for our state!

The link for the fundraising page is <https://www.gofundme.com/gx6fd2a5w>



Xianbin with his trophy



We the people team

Chinese New Year

王安石：爆竹聲中一歲除，春風送暖入屠蘇，千門萬戶曠曠日，總把新桃換舊符。



BY DR. PATRICK LAU

“New Year’s Day. A fresh start. A new chapter in life waiting to be written. New questions to be asked, embraced, and loved. Answers to be discovered and then lived in this transformative year of delight and self-discovery. Today carve out a quiet interlude for yourself in which to dream, pen in hand. Only dreams give birth to change.” ~Sarah Ban Breathnach

The Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival 春節 is the most significant holiday in China as well as in Chinese communities all over the world. The festival commences on the first day of the first month in the Chinese lunar calendar, and concludes with the Lantern Festival or Yuanxiao Festival 元宵節, celebrated on the 15th day. This is the year of the monkey.

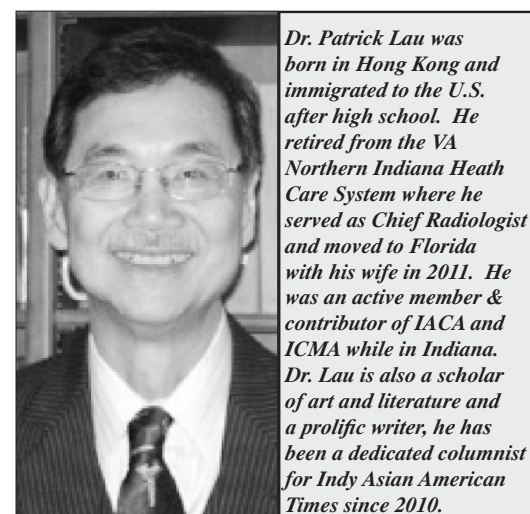
Traditionally a few days prior to New Year’s Day, people thoroughly clean their houses and sweep the floors, in the belief of sweeping away the lingering ill fortune from the old year. On the 24th day of the twelfth lunar month, people offer sacrifice to the Kitchen God, ‘Zaowang 灶王’ who is believed to be the guardian of the family hearth, protecting the family from fire and other dangers.

People customarily hang or paste red scrolls called chunlian 春聯, vertically to the right and left sides of the front door. They display literary verses articulating lucky, happy, inspiring and blessing messages regarding the upcoming New Year, for instance, 迎春迎富貴, 接財接福接平安.

Another popular custom is pasting a red poster with the Chinese character auspiciousness or good luck, ‘福’ on the doors, windows and walls, which are not infrequently adorned with red paper-cuts and couplets with the themes of happiness, wealth, longevity and good fortune. Most families also embellish their houses with blooming plants and flowers like peony, and multicolored, vibrant pictures 年畫. Red lanterns are a traditional sight during the Spring Festival. Red and gold are the favorite colors for the Chinese New Year; red symbolizes happiness, and gold, wealth.

It has been a long observed tradition for a family to gather for a celebratory reunion dinner 年夜飯 on New Year’s Eve. The celebration emphasizes the ritual of a religious ceremony to honor the household gods as well as the family ancestors and departed relatives. Equally significant, it serves to symbolize the unity of living family members.

Many Chinese believe in auspicious foods which are customarily served on the table. Dumplings symbolize wealth because they are shaped like ancient silver



Dr. Patrick Lau was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to the U.S. after high school. He retired from the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System where he served as Chief Radiologist and moved to Florida with his wife in 2011. He was an active member & contributor of IACA and ICMA while in Indiana. Dr. Lau is also a scholar of art and literature and a prolific writer, he has been a dedicated columnist for Indy Asian American Times since 2010.

and gold ingots. Whole fish 魚, signifies abundance, surplus 年年有魚/餘 and good fortune. Whole chicken implies prosperity and completeness as well as unity in the family. Prawns denote liveliness and happiness; while long noodles for longevity. Oranges, kumquats and tangerines are symbols of wealth and good luck. Nian gao 年糕, New Year’s cake symbolizes higher achievement or promotion in position at work in each coming year 年年高升.

Another traditional food is Yuan Xiao 元宵, in the South, it is called tangyuan; they are round dumpling balls with sweet fillings. Tangyuan 湯圓 is pronounced similarly to “tuan yuan” 團圓, which means reunion, and additionally, tangyuan is sweet and round. Thus, eating tangyuan together symbolizes unity, completeness, harmony, and happiness for the family.

After the reunion feast, the whole family usually stays up for the night, playing mahjong, cards or other games; while others are watching television programs, such as the China Network Television New Year’s Gala. Other public celebrations include parades, concerts, and acrobatic shows in many communities. Another tradition is the dragon and lion dance, which is supposed to welcome the good fortune, success, and prosperity of the New Year. In the past, setting off firecrackers was an integral part of Chinese New Year celebrations; people believed that the exploding noise would dispel all evil spirits and misfortunes. Due to air-pollution and safety issues, firecrackers and fireworks are banned in dozens of cities in China, while others have imposed restrictions.

Visiting family, relatives and friends during the New Year Season is called Bai nian 拜年. Red packets 紅包 containing ‘lucky’ money is given to the younger generations, particularly children and teenagers from the older generation. This ritual symbolizes luck, wealth and blessings for all involved.

The spirit of Chinese New Year is a genuine wish of happiness, peace, safety, health, longevity and prosperity for the family members and friends. The New Year symbolizes a new beginning; an opportunity for people to start fresh and accept new changes as well as hoping for better lives in the coming year. Nonetheless, Hal Borland once said, “Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us.”

Happy Year!

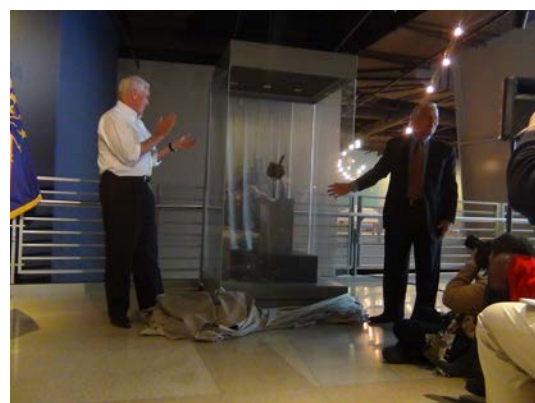
State Museum Unveiled Newly Discovered Abraham Lincoln Artifact From Indiana

BY IAAT REPORTER APELLES JOHNSON

I couldn’t help but feel out of place at the press conference. Already, I had seen several accusatory glances upon my entry. As an African-American, I am accustomed to the frequent gazes in any gathering of people assumed to be out of my tax bracket. However, the additional raised eyebrows I gained from representing an Asian-American organization, I am not yet accustomed to. I felt irregular, like a bump in a smooth table or a knot in the side of a tree. Nevertheless, I bore through the scrutiny and took comfort in the fact that the prolonged stares were only present in the eyes of those outside my own generation. I also found solace in being one of the first in my state to see the artifact we had come to recognize: The Mallet of Abraham Lincoln.

Known during his candidacy as “The Rail-Splitting President”, the state of Indiana was overjoyed to have found the mallet, fashioned by Abraham Lincoln’s own hands, and used to split those famous rails. To all Hoosiers, this mallet is a momentous symbol of the important role Indiana made in the 16th president’s life. When Lincoln was just a child, his father, Thomas Lincoln, decided to move to the state of Indiana for Abraham’s upbringing. This move was partly because of the business opportunities Indiana brought, but largely due to the fact that Indiana was the first state to outlaw slavery, a practice Thomas Lincoln was vehemently against. It was in Spencer County that Abraham Lincoln was raised, though very few artifacts from this time remained. It was here his father taught him the trade of carpentry, and most of the items they had during this time was used until it they were used up.

Governor Mike Pence, a history major at heart, was very proud that this artifact of Indiana history had been found and was able to be on display in the Indiana State Museum. During his speech, the Governor laughed, “I’ve always said, Lincoln made Illinois, but Indiana made Lincoln.”



Unveiling of artifact by Governor Mike Pence and Museum CEO Tom King

Photo by APELLES JOHNSON



Newly discovered Abraham Lincoln artifact from Indiana.

Photo by APELLES JOHNSON