

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad China 



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EDITOR'S NOTE

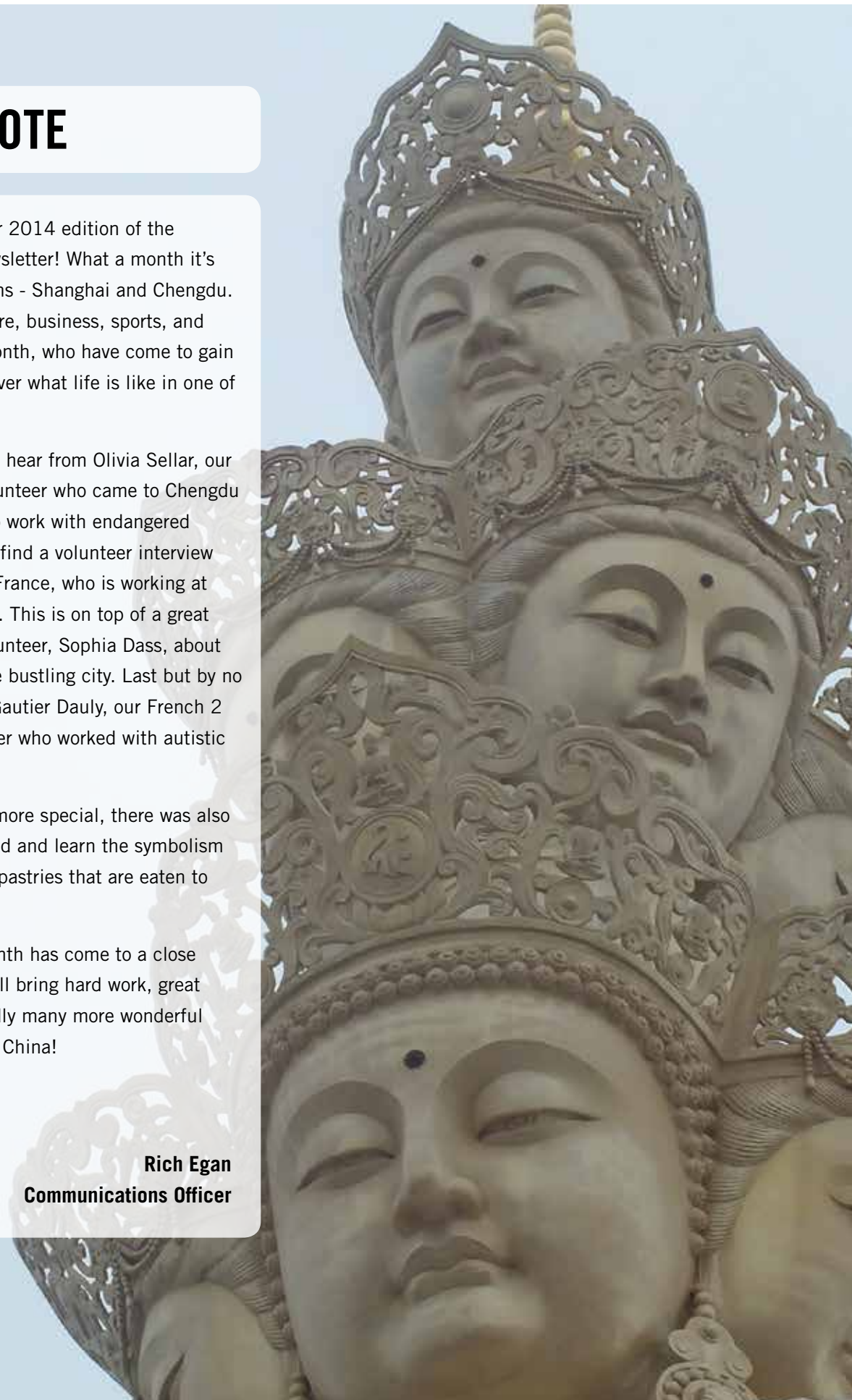
Welcome to the September 2014 edition of the Projects Abroad China newsletter! What a month it's been in our two destinations - Shanghai and Chengdu. We have welcomed law, care, business, sports, and medical volunteers this month, who have come to gain work experience and discover what life is like in one of China's big cities!

In this month's edition, we hear from Olivia Sellar, our Australian animal care volunteer who came to Chengdu with her young daughter to work with endangered panda bears! You will also find a volunteer interview with Celine Saurons from France, who is working at a top law firm in Shanghai. This is on top of a great article by UK business volunteer, Sophia Dass, about her experience in the same bustling city. Last but by no means least, is a blog by Gautier Dauly, our French 2 Week Special care volunteer who worked with autistic children in Chengdu.

To make September even more special, there was also a moon festival! Take a read and learn the symbolism behind the delicious little pastries that are eaten to celebrate this occasion.

Another action packed month has come to a close but I know that October will bring hard work, great friendships and undoubtedly many more wonderful stories for Projects Abroad China!

Rich Egan
Communications Officer



VOLUNTEER STORIES

Gautier Dauly (France) 2 Week Special Care and Community

Je suis parti en Chine avec Projects Abroad dans le cadre de la mission « two weeks special : care and community » pendant deux semaines. Cette mission consiste à venir en aide à des enfants autistes. A propos de mon expérience générale en Chine,

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Australian animal care volunteers, Olivia and Mila Sellar, work at the panda base near Chengdu

This March, I found out that my 10 year old daughter and I had a 3 week holiday to spend together in June/July. My husband and son had already booked their kite surfing camp so I had to come up with

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Sounds of the Underground by Sophia Dass (UK)

The London Underground is positively archaic when compared to Shanghai's modern metro system. However, it is notable that the London Underground was opened in 1863, which was 130 years before Shanghai's first line opened in 1993.

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An interview with Celine Saurons, a French law volunteer in Shanghai

The Projects Abroad China team has had the pleasure of welcoming 20 year old Celine Saurons from France, as one of our law volunteers. Celine is currently in her second year of university, studying for her Bachelor's degree in Political Science at Sciences Po Paris

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FEATURE STORY:

Mid-autumn moon festival

On Monday, 8th September, China celebrated the mid-autumn moon festival. Some parts of big cities went from being urban jungles full of thousands of hurried commuters to descending into an eerie emptiness. This emptiness forced me to envisage a hay bale floating through the air or a zombie apocalypse causing all humans to flee like in the movies! The noises, which one learns to filter out when living in a Chinese city, have been silenced in a way that I have rarely encountered during my time in China. And the reason is the public holiday for this celebration, which means that most people were with their families and had a day of rest. In Shanghai, the majority of the city's 'foreign' population went back to their hometowns, while most of the Shanghaies stayed at home and did what the Shanghaies do best... had a massive feast!

Anyway, let me explain to you what the moon festival is. The mid-autumn moon festival is celebrated on the 8th month and 15th day of the Chinese calendar when there is a full moon. The celebration of this festival is believed to date back to the Zhou Dynasty period (1046-256 BC). There are various reasons for the celebration at this time of the year; one being the fact that it is the middle of autumn. Across most of China, the heat of the summer is still lingering so it doesn't feel like summer has ended. However, the festival represents a time of transition when the clear nights of autumn and cooler days will shortly be upon us. This is definitely welcomed by everyone. The hot sticky summer is soon to be gone and the harsh winter across the majority of China is yet to come. Also during this time of year, the moon is believed to be at its brightest. Food offerings are given and tradition says that this is the time of year that will determine whether there will be a good harvest the following year. This is due to the ancient belief that the moon pattern is related to agricultural production. Prayers are, therefore, offered to the moon. Perhaps the most important tradition of the moon festival is the gathering of families. The bright full moon represents a togetherness and unity, and this is supposed to symbolize family bonds. One of the hallmarks of the moon festival is the consumption of moon cakes! These little round beauties of pastry are exchanged between friends and families. The cakes can even show a sign of prestige and some can cost up to \$200!

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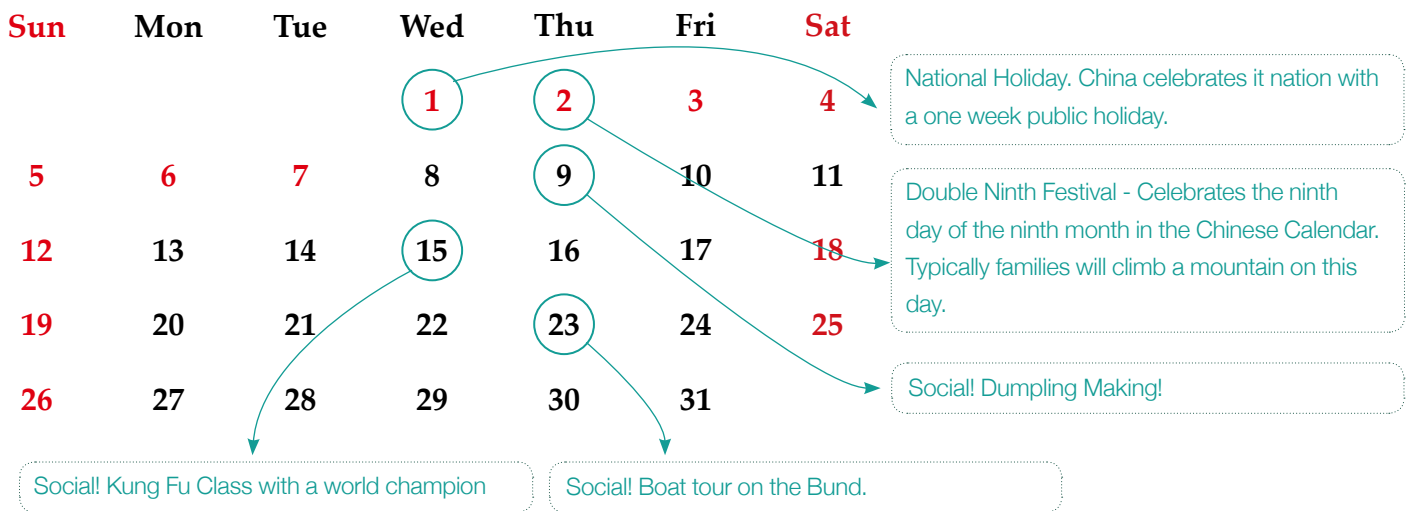


PHOTO PAGE



SOCIAL CALENDAR

HELLO OCTOBER



* Note that events and timings are subject to change. For up-to-date info contact Rich +86 (0)18221063387.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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