

Rocky K. C. Chang



Welcome to the Hall family, in particular, the Lizhi Hall family.

Like some of you who are new to the Hall family, my family and I are also new comers. I am the new warden (also known as “dorm parent” in North America) for the Lizhi Hall. My official duties commence on August 1. At the time of this writing, I still know very little about the Hall and have not yet moved to the living quarters. But my family and I are really looking forward to joining the Hall family. The following bit of background information is based on my sharing with a group of Hall students on 26 April 2008, as part of the vigorous warden recruitment process.

My family and me

I was born and educated in HK from kindergarten to Form six; the rest was spent living in the US. My wife (Claudia) was born in Taiwan; she received her primary and secondary education there. We met each other in the US, got married, and then I decided to return to HK to teach and she followed me. My three kids (Rachel, Caleb, and Hannah) were all born in HK. Caleb and Hannah were born while we resided in Whampoa Garden, and Rachel spent the bulk of her childhood in Whampoa. A few special “features” about our family:

- ✧ We do not possess mobile phones.
- ✧ We have no full-time maid.
- ✧ We wear masks—the surgical filter masks—when we are in crowded places.

For leisure, I like to go jogging and play soccer, Claudia likes to play piano and read, Rachel likes to cook and sew, Caleb likes to play chess and Lego, and Hannah likes to bug Caleb and Rachel when she runs out of things to do. Common family activities include listening to Broadway musicals (and singing-along at the top of our voices; our favorites are *Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Cats*), playing card games and Monopoly, grocery shopping, and cycling. Our family's favorite local “rest and leisure” sites are the Dog Park in Wanchai, the Peak, Shek O, Cheung Chau, and the TST East Waterfront Promenade. On Sundays, we attend the Mandarin-speaking service at the North Point Alliance Church.

The Hall family and my family

The “Call-for-Warden” notice received last December came at a perfect timing. I first contemplated applying for the warden post six years ago, but at that time my kids were still rather young in age. Now, at 13, 10 and 6.5 years of age, they can better appreciate the Hall life and perhaps make some small contributions (my own wishful thinking, of course). When I first saw the post description, I was particularly attracted by a warden's responsibility of providing “pastoral care and intellectual guidance to hall members.” I understand how much genuine care and wise guidance can help shape a young man's and woman's outlook on life. Therefore, I treasure this honor and wonderful opportunity to serve you in this way.

Applying for the warden post was not my own decision only, my entire family also gave their full-hearted support. To us, being the Warden, “Mrs. Warden”, and “Junior Wardens” for the Lizhi Hall presents us with a special and unique opportunity to extend and share our family's lifestyle and values. Therefore, the wardenship is not so much a job as it is a sharing of our lives. Although we will be living above you physically, we hope you will see that we actually live among you and that the spirit of togetherness as a family will undergird everything we do in the Lizhi Hall. “We”, by the way, refers to the Lizhi Hall residence and our family from the last sentence on.

You and the Hall family

You may ask, “How can we build a family of 356+5?” My answer is by living together. I could not possibly describe the dynamics and impacts of 361 lives living together adequately, because the process takes place latently and subtly. But I do know that a true community will eventually emerge as each member willingly shares his/her life with others in the Hall. Living together is not just participating in the Hall activities, nor is it just finding a secure place in a circle of friends in the Hall. Living together is about sharing one’s life with others, which includes hobbies, interests, values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, joy, sorrows, successes, failures, and so on.

I firmly believe that everyone has something valuable to contribute in life. When we share openly and honestly and learn to appreciate others’ unique gifts, in time we will see a “BIG Family” germinate. Therefore, everyone in the Lizhi Hall is important: 一个都不能少. Never underestimate the influence you can make on another person’s life. A smile, a small act of kindness, a gentle spoken word could soften a heart and touch a lonely soul; it could even redirect the course of another person’s life. This, in essence, is what a family is all about. “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.” (Romans 12:9-10).