



## Chris & Karen Cunningham

Bridges International at Penn State  
*The International Student Ministry of Cru*

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This past month has been a lot of fun! As we mentioned last month, we took a bunch of students to the **Pennsylvania Grand Canyon (pictured at left)** and it was certainly a big hit with our crew! Next, we stopped in on the Mountain Laurel Festival in nearby Wellsboro. Everyone enjoyed the chance to walk around and try the various “fair foods.” We had a few new folks on our trip, making it was a good opportunity to build some relationships. Thanks for your prayers!

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July we had a fun picnic at nearby Spring Creek Park, which, as the name implies, has a nice creek running through it. In the past, trying to manage the grill takes so much work for such a big group that we passed on burgers and such, went with fried chicken and lots of side dishes. It was good call, and the Lord also graciously provided an open Pavilion for us to use so we had plenty of room for setting out the food and seating for everyone. After the dinner we had our own **4<sup>th</sup> of July Olympics** in which we placed people on one of three teams, and they competed for the honor of Gold Medal Winner 😊.

For one young man, a PhD student from China, it was his first time to attend any of our activities and he *loved* the picnic. I heard a little of the conversation he was having with our student President, which included a friendly invitation to join our ongoing Saturday dinner (the meals are catered and pretty tasty!) and Bible discussion. The new student kindly said he would think about it -- we’ve not seen him since. Perhaps it’s no surprise that for many students, the only activities they attend are our social activities. That’s o.k., with us because we know that God uses our efforts to **plant seeds of kindness and curiosity in students’ hearts** which may yield fruit in the future.

Last Saturday we said farewell to L., a post-doc from China, who’s been involved with us for the past two years. He came to us from the Bridges ministry at West Virginia University (thanks to our good friends Chuck & Ginny Lewis), where he received his PhD. He’s taken a faculty position at Wright State University in Dayton, OH. We’ve already put him in contact with some folks from a couple ministries at Wright State and we’re praying that God will use him as “salt and light” in his department. Every year students, and post-docs, leave our ministry and sometimes head for more education, or they frequently take positions in either academia or industry. It’s our prayer and purpose to send them out with a **vision, and a passion, to make a difference for Christ’s Kingdom**. Your prayers are always appreciated in this regard!

### Cancer update

My cancer journey is mostly unchanged. I’m feeling pretty good - still no cancer-pain these days (and all medical bills are getting paid). We are grateful for your ongoing prayers! The only discomfort I experience is the continued stiffness, weakness, joint achiness, etc. which are side-effects of the treatments I’m receiving. On August 2, I’m scheduled to get another bone scan. That should give us a better idea of what’s going on inside me. As I process what’s happening to me with this cancer, I’m reminded often that life is full of pain and loss and grief, but we have a kind and loving Savior who provides just what we need, when we need it. As I recently read, “the path to holiness, often runs straight through suffering.” And as my friend Ray wrote, “We say, no pain no gain, We want the gain, but we don’t want the pain. But they go together. And growth comes from the difficult times...” I’m trusting that God will use this affliction for His glory and that I will become, by His grace, more and more like Jesus in the process. And as I think about the fragility of life, I’m encouraged when I think of the resurrection. I sometimes tell students that our current bodies are version 1.0, but at the resurrection we’ll receive the ultimate upgrade to version 2.0 - the glorified body like our Lord Jesus (Philippians 3:20). What an amazing God we love and serve! Hope continually rises in my heart!

**Please pray** that our group can meet, and befriend, many new students in early and mid-August. Pray too for our various welcome activities to be well attended (picnic, hikes, visit to Penn’s Cave, etc.).

We thank you for your partnership in the Gospel. Your prayers and financial support are carrying us along!





*Most of our group at the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon*



*Playing Corn Hole at our 4th of July Picnic **above** and a race using chopsticks to transfer beans **at right***



*4<sup>th</sup> of July relay race passing water backwards over your head **above** and the start of the water balloon toss **at right***

