

# MOSAIC

## Marriage reform empowers people to follow their hearts

On a summer day in 2004, a young Chinese man and a young woman from the United States walked up to a stage draped in burgundy velvet curtains, before the red national flag and the red-and-gold national seal of China at an office in Shanghai. They stood to the side as a government representative — a 30-something woman with a floppy ponytail — asked them to remain faithful and respectful to one another, to care for their parents, to



**Jocelyn Eikenburg**  
Second Thoughts

support each other, and to maintain harmony in the family. Then they signed two small red books on the podium, and held those books up beside their smiling faces, as photographers snapped away and the young government representative beamed. By the powers granted her by the People's Republic of China, the couple became legally married.

That was the day my husband Jun and I registered our marriage, a moment we had envisioned ever since January of that same year, when he had proposed to me over the phone. But none of this — the proposal, and the subsequent marriage registration — would have happened in 2004 without a very

significant change that took place in China on Oct 1, 2003. On that date, a reform of China's Marriage Law took effect, abolishing a previous requirement: approval by your employer or work unit to register your marriage. In Shanghai, this change applied to students too, like Jun, who was in a graduate program at the time. The prior regulation had barred us from even considering marriage for a simple reason — universities would not permit it.

Thanks to this reform of the Marriage Law, we could move forward to register our marriage without concern over any impact on Jun's graduate studies. The only approval that mattered in the process was our own. We weren't the only ones that year who took advantage of the change. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, 2004 stood out as a boom year for marriage registrations across the country, with 8.67 million couples tying the knot, a rise of nearly 7 percent over 2003. At the time, it represented the largest year-on-year increase in marriage registrations in China since 1986.

Residing in Shanghai proved fortuitous for us, as not every area embraced student marriages with the 2003 reform. But canceling the need for approval in marriage registrations had generated such a strong ripple effect, which apparently trickled down even to students, despite their university's stance on the matter. "After China simplified procedures for marriage applications in October 2003, schools had less ability to keep track of their students' marital status," China Daily reported in its story "Huzhou student marries after rule change", a headline referencing the country's ultimate decision in 2005 to lift the 50-year ban on student marriages for all universities.

The 2003 marriage reform, and subsequent 2005 reform to permit student marriages, have had an incredible influence in China, empowering individuals to follow their hearts in one of the most important life decisions a person can make. This kind of freedom, a critical aspect of China's reform and opening-up, has helped transform the country into a more humane place to live. It means China can better fulfill its promise to "serve the people", including a young graduate student in Shanghai who longed to marry his US sweetheart in 2004.

A version of this piece was first delivered as a speech on Dec 12 at the Changing China, Transforming World event organized by China Daily website.

Contact the writer at [jocelyn@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:jocelyn@chinadaily.com.cn)

### Candid camera: Winter fantasy

The 20th Harbin Ice and Snow World in Heilongjiang province opened to visitors on Sunday. Covering an area of 600,000 square meters, the park uses 110,000 cubic meters of ice and 120,000 cu m of snow to create a magical experience.

WANG JIANWEI / XINHUA



### Bilingual: Google's Year in Search

## 谷歌年度热搜榜

中国日报双语新闻

2018年全世界最关注什么? 谷歌年度热搜榜告诉你。下面, 快跟双语君一起来看看吧!

Google recently unveiled its Year in Search for 2018. The year has been rife with tragedy and some high-profile people passed away, including cook Anthony Bourdain and designer Kate Spade. But 2018 also brought a British royal wedding and an exciting World Cup. Here are the top-trending Google searches of 2018.

日前, 谷歌公布了2018年年度热搜榜。这是悲伤的一年, 包括名厨安东尼·波尔顿和设计师凯特·丝蓓在内的众多名人相继离世; 但这也是喜悦的一年, 这一年我们见证了英国王室婚礼和激动人心的世界杯。下面请随谷歌热搜榜回顾一下这一年吧!

year, including rappers Mac Miller and Jahseh Onfroy, who took the second and fifth spots, respectively. 瑞典打碟师、音乐制作人艾维奇 (真名为提姆·柏格林) 是“逝去的人”中搜索量最高的。今年还有一些同样英年早逝的音乐人, 例如排名第二的说唱歌手迈克·米勒和排名第五的杰塞·奥弗洛。

People also wanted to know about the lives and legacies of Stan Lee, Anthony Bourdain and Stephen Hawking. 斯坦·李、安东尼·波登和斯蒂芬·霍金的传奇人生也同样备受关注。

### Black Panther

Early this year, *Black Panther* hit theaters. The massive success of the film was largely considered a landmark moment in Hollywood, and stirred up discussions around race, different African cultures, and more.

今年年初, 《黑豹》上映。影片的大获全胜被很多人视为好莱坞的一个里程碑。它引发了关于种族、非洲文化等话题的讨论。

The top four most-searched films were superhero movies: *Black Panther*, *Deadpool 2*, *Venom* and *Avengers: Infinity War*, in that order. 搜索量排行前四的电影都是超级英雄电影, 按排名依次为: 《黑豹》、《死侍2》、《毒液》和《复仇者联盟: 无限战争》。

### Sylvester Stallone

The US actor beat out controversial social-media star Logan Paul, teen heartthrob Noah Centineo, and comedian Pete Davidson to become the most-searched actor on the internet this year. He starred in *Creed II*, which builds on the Rocky franchise. 美国演员西尔维斯特·史泰龙击败了备受争议的网红罗根·保罗、少女杀手诺亚·琴蒂内奥和喜剧演员皮特·戴维森, 成为今年网络搜索率最高的演员。史泰龙今年出演了洛奇系列电影《奎迪: 英雄再起》。

### Nick Jonas

Nick Jonas came in at number 10 in the music category, but the top 25 related search queries were all to do with his wife, Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra, suggesting that online interest was largely fueled by his marriage rather than his music. 尼克·乔纳斯在音乐类搜索中排行第十, 但是搜索最多的25个相关词条都和他的妻子——宝莱坞女星朴雅卡·乔普拉有关。这说明网友主要感兴趣的是他的婚姻, 而非他的音乐。

Their wedding occurred in New Delhi earlier this month. 本月初, 他们在印度新德里举行婚礼。



Online Scan for more bilingual news

### This Day, That Year

## 40 years on

**Editor's note:** This year marks the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy.

On Dec 26, 2008, a Chinese naval fleet set sail on an anti-piracy mission off Somalia. It marked the first deployment of the People's Liberation Army Navy to the waters off the war-torn country.

In the past decade, China's naval forces have expanded their engagement in the region, adding the protection of Chinese nationals and interests overseas to counter-piracy

and escort activities.

According to official statistics, more than 100 ships and 26,000 soldiers and sailors have been dispatched since the start of the anti-piracy mission.

During this period, 6,595 ships have been escorted and more than 60 Chinese and foreign vessels have been assisted or rescued by PLA Navy warships.

In 2002, the PLA Navy conducted its first global goodwill voyage, sailing for 132 days and visiting 10 countries.

Since then, the Navy has conducted several global goodwill trips to promote friendship and exchanges with the rest of the world.

Hospital ship *Peace Ark* has conducted at least seven Harmonious

Missions, providing free medical care and services for tens of thousands of people in more than 10 countries, including Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, Columbia and Venezuela.

Now, the 31st task force of the PLA Navy is conducting anti-piracy operations and escorting commercial ships off the Gulf of Aden, in the western Indian Ocean. The task force consists of a guided-

missile frigate, an amphibious transport dock and a supply ship. It also has three helicopters, and is supported by 700 officers and soldiers, plus dozens of special operations troops.



Naval fleet sets sail to fight pirates

Historic mission underlines nation's resolve to protect citizens' interests

### The newspaper and beyond

#### On our Sina Weibo

##### Technology helps visually impaired shop online

Engineers from e-commerce giant Alibaba have been improving a technology called optical character recognition to help visually impaired people shop online. The software enables users to take a picture of text, and have the app read it back through the device's screen reader. For example, you can take a picture of an item on Taobao and have it read aloud by your smartphone. China has more than 17 million visually-impaired people.



##### How to introduce your partner to your family

Bringing a new romantic partner home with you for the holidays is an exciting relationship milestone. However, it can also be daunting for you, your significant other, and your family. Relationship expert and best-selling author Susan Winter suggested the dos and don'ts of bringing someone special home for the holidays. Visit our Sina Weibo page for the eight ways to make that initial visit as comfortable and enjoyable as possible for everyone involved.

##### Pickle ornaments decorate Christmas trees

Every year, families across the United States and the United Kingdom hang up quirky little pickle-shaped ornaments to decorate their Christmas trees. The practice is thought to be a centuries-old tradition brought over from Germany. The origin of the tradition, however, is a bit murky. Whimsical foodie ornaments shaped like avocado toast, hot sauce, pancakes, and ramen have become popular in recent years. Check more posts online.



Online Scan to read more on our Sina Weibo page

#### On chinadaily.com.cn

##### Culture: Letters prove a huge hit on TV

"It is a breath of fresh air for China's variety shows," is typical of the widespread online comments for a popular TV show, *Letters Alive*. After achieving huge success in the past two seasons, the megahit show will return with more surprises. The show will be aired on Heilongjiang Satellite TV on Saturdays. The semi-theatrical show draws inspiration from the British TV show, *Letters Live*, based on Shaun Usher's best-selling anthologies, *Letters of Note*. Letters penned by celebrities ages ago, or modern regular people, are chosen and then reinterpreted by today's stars, striking a chord with audiences by presenting human stories.

##### People: College guard turns into teacher

Li Mingyong has lived an inspirational life. He dropped out of school at 16, worked as a security guard at college at 22 but had a dream of getting a degree. Born in 1977 in a remote village in Zunyi, Guizhou province, Li went to Guiyang, Guizhou, after graduating from middle school. In 1999, he became a security guard at Guizhou Education University. He used what little spare

time he had to study. In 2001, he enrolled in the university's junior college, majoring in Chinese, and graduated two years later. In 2010, he got master's at Guizhou University, majoring in aesthetics. Then Li went back to Guizhou Education University and worked as a college counselor. He was accepted by Central China Normal University in 2015 and graduated this year. Now he teaches aesthetic principles and ethics and regulation of news communication at Guizhou Education University. "I hope my story can touch the students and help them learn to grow in difficult situations," Li said.



##### Travel: Meet your next favorite holiday hotspot

It is expected that eight Pacific island countries will become popular destinations for Chinese tourists next year. The eight countries have established diplo-

matic ties with China, and a series of tourism events will be held next year to mark these new relationships. The islands are as yet relatively unknown in China. Where are the must-see spots in each? Which one should you pick for your summer holiday? Visit our website to find the tour guide with all the information you need.

##### Books: Martial arts author signs online deal

Malaysia-born novelist, Woon Swee Oan, known as Wen Rui'an to Chinese martial arts fans, revealed that he still possesses a passion and energy for writing, during a recent event in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. "Now, I can write for one hour without pausing for a second to blink," the 66-year-old said. Woon, who has seen dozens of his novels adapted into nearly 30 films and TV series, has signed a deal with the internet giant, NetEase, to license the digital copyright of his work to the company's online reading platform, NetEase Literature.

##### Online

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