



China Foster Care Programs

Families Thru International Adoption

Winter 2007

Brrr!

As wintery cold weather sweeps across the mid and upper east United States, Changsha, Hunan and Zhanjiang, Guangdong are having moderate temperatures in the 50's and 60's. No doubt that even though the temperatures are mild, the children are bundled up in several layers of clothing! Those of you who have traveled to China to pick up your children during the colder months probably encountered a tiny child wrapped in about 5-10 different garments!

Happy Year of the Pig!

Chinese New Year, also known as Lunar New Year, is a celebration of the New Year in Asian communities around the world. The date of the New Year is determined by the lunar calendar, so festivities begin with the new cycle of the moon that falls between January 21 and February 19. Each year is named for one of 12 symbolic animals in sequence. The animals, in their sequential order, are the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar.

The New Year celebration is the most important and the longest of all festivals in these communities, traditionally lasting for two weeks. During this period, towns and villages are decorated with colored lanterns, floral displays, and brightly colored banners with New Year greetings. Preparations traditionally begin in the home the week before the New Year,

By Nikki Bilderback



All Bundled Up!

when families thoroughly clean their houses to symbolically sweep away all traces of misfortune. They also pay off debts, add a new coat of red paint to doors and windowpanes, and decorate their homes with flowers. To avoid bad luck, parents warn their children to be on their best behavior and to avoid the use of vulgar expressions. On the evening before the New Year, families gather for a feast of special dishes. Each dish has symbolic meaning, often signifying good luck and prosperity. At midnight, families light fireworks to attract the attention of gods and to frighten away evil spirits. The fireworks last until dawn, although celebrants may light additional fireworks for the next two weeks.

On the first day of the New Year, people put on new clothes to symbolize the discarding of the old year and its misfortunes. Then they take gifts to friends and relatives. The gifts usually include special rice flour cakes and fruits such as kumquats and oranges. Many adults, particularly



Happy Year of the Pig! (cont.)

married ones, also follow an ancient custom of giving small red packets of money to children, unmarried adults, and employees or servants.

Among the most spectacular festivities of Lunar New Year are the dragon and lion dances. As many as 50 or more people support long dragons and lions made from vibrant paper and cloth while dancing in processions down city streets. The dancers perform to the beating of gongs and drums, while others perform acrobatic displays. Some of the performers may occasionally reach up to take red money packets or fruits and vegetables hung from storefronts. The celebrations end with the lantern festival, an event in which merchants hang lighted paper lanterns outside their shops. Children often parade through the streets during the lantern festival, carrying lanterns of various shapes and patterns.



Predictions for 2007

The Year of the Pig/Boar 2007 looks to be one filled with impatience, mobility, and change. You are likely to travel in 2007, Pig. Whether this means changing addresses, pleasure travel, or business travel, is uncertain. However, this restless feeling will continue throughout this New Year.

-The Happy Year of the Pig article was contributed by Diane Bousman, a China coordinator at FTIA.

Famous people born under the sign of the pig:

Alfred Hitchcock, British film maker

Andrew Jackson, 7th US President

David Letterman, talk show host

Elton John, singer

Ernest Hemingway, writer

Lucille Ball, actress & comedian

Woody Allen, writer & director

Get more information about Chinese New Year at:

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/chinesenewyear1.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_New_Year

Crafts for Chinese New Year:

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/chinesenewyear/>

Recipes for Chinese New Year:

<http://allrecipes.com/HowTo/Chinese-New-Year-2007/detail.aspx>



湖南 *From Hunan*

Three Sisters and a Motorcycle

Yi Dan, Zhi Qiu, and Xiao Ang are three spicy girls in the Hunan Foster Care program. All three girls were born in mid-2005 and have lived close together in the community since they entered the foster care program. They play together often. Their routines, down to the food they eat, is almost exactly the same. They are almost like triplets because they are so close.



Xiao Ang's foster father owns a motorcycle. When the girls see him with his motorcycle, they instantly become excited and want to sit on the motorcycle for fun.

When placed on the motorcycle, they girls laugh with delight. Their happiness and smiles bring joy to their foster families and also to the neighbors.



Xiao Ang sits proudly on her foster father's motorcycle

The girls enjoy sitting on Xiao Ang's foster father's motorcycle so much, that when he needs the motorcycle to go to work, the girls refuse to get off. Their foster mother's need to quickly find other toys to entrance the girls off the motorcycle so Xiao Ang's foster father is not late for work!



Zhi Qiu enjoys a sit on the motorcycle.



Yi Dan smiles as she pats the motorcycle



湛江 *From Zhanjiang*

The Little Musician

Wei Ji is a little girl who loves music. Her foster parents found out about her love of music one day when Wei Ji began to cry and she was inconsolable. Her foster family tried many things to get Wei Ji to stop crying. They tried giving her toys and feeding her, but she just would not stop crying.



Wei Ji's foster parents were at their wit's end when the beautiful sound of a nearby neighbor singing reached their ears. Wei Ji stopped crying as soon as she heard the singing. With tears still on her cheeks, Wei Ji turned her head towards the beautiful voice. A smile broke out on her face and she began kicking her feet and waving her arms with delight. Her foster parents thought she looked adorable.

Because of Wei Ji's joyful response any time she hears music, she received the nickname "Little Musician."



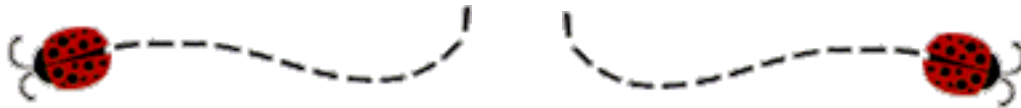
*Wei Ji with tears in her eyes
waits for some pretty music*



*Wei Ji turns towards
the soft sounds of
singing.*



In each issue of the China Foster Care Programs newsletter we would like to share stories and pictures of children who have been adopted and were in our programs. If you have adopted a child who was fostered in either of our programs, please feel free to send us stories about your adoption experience or about how your child is doing now that they are home. We will try to feature 2-3 stories and pictures in each newsletter. The *From Hunan to Home* section is really a sharing place for families! In future issues we hope to also have stories about children from Zhanjiang.



Contact Information

FTIA has been keeping track of the contact information for all families who adopted a child through our Foster Care Program. If you have moved since you requested the photos of your child, or if you've added an email address or changed your email, please let me know and I will update your file. Once in awhile I will get in contact with families to ask for stories or photos, or just to let you know the new newsletter is up. I would like to keep in contact with as many of you as possible. Please send me an email to let me know of changes, or if you just want to check that the information we have is current, you can email me too. My email address is nbilderback@ftia.org. Thank you!



Continuing Needs

Hunan - Five years and going strong!

Five years ago we felt like proud little parents ourselves of our newly-hatched Foster Care Program. We were so excited as we worked through the final details with Changsha First Social Welfare Institute and pulled together our first foster families. We were tickled to have our first 25 children move from an orphanage setting to one-on-one family care. It is AMAZING to believe in just five years we have been able to grow from 25 children to serving hundreds of children in their first days and months of life. We are so grateful for those of you who have supported us throughout these years. Now, as we begin our sixth year, the program has 100 foster families in place ready to care for children at any given time. This has been a very successful program and we look forward to many more years of helping children receive the care they need.

In 2006 our first quarter donations totaled \$4,236. For the second quarter we had donations of \$5,375, third quarter donations totaled \$2,835, and our fourth quarter donations totaled \$3,033. For 2006 we received total donations of \$15,479.

For 2006 the Hunan Foster Care program incurred total expenses of \$37,661. Of this total, the administrative costs of \$7,486 were covered **100% by FTIA**. The rest of the expenses are for direct care of the children in the program. This leaves a deficit of over \$14,000 needed to care for these babies. We realize seems like a huge amount. But every dollar counts. We have such faith in you, our FTIA families. If you pull together your most generous donation and call your friend or neighbor to do the same, we just know that we can reach our goal.

Zhanjiang - New Beginnings and New Opportunities!

Our Zhanjiang Foster Care Program is our newest program. Zhanjiang City is located in southwest Guangdong Province on the coast of the South China Sea. As we watched the quality of life improve for so many children through our Hunan Program, we just knew we had to do more. To be able to work with another orphanage and serve even more children is such a treasure. We are very excited to be working in Guangdong province in addition to Hunan.

Like Hunan, Zhanjiang is starting out as a fledgling program with a handful of foster families ready to care for children. And like Hunan, we are revved up and ready to grow! As much as FTIA can do, it is only with your assistance that we can be great. As the program grows we will share more information through our newsletters and website.

To date we have received donations of \$1,050 for this program. As the program gets up and running we hope to expand and witness the same success that we have had with the Hunan Foster Care Program.

Please remember that monies donated to the China Foster Care Programs are completely separate from other adoption related expenses. Also note that 100% of all monies donated to foster care go directly to the care of the children as FTIA covers all administrative costs for the programs.



Donate Online!

FTIA can now accept online donations thru Pay Pal for our China Foster Care Programs! Please go to <http://www.ftia.org/FosterCareDonationButton.asp> and click on the PayPal button. Under *Program Area* please select *General Donation* and in the comments section enter the name of the program you would like to donate to, either Hunan Foster Care or Zhanjiang Foster Care. This is a secure online site and your information will not be shared with anyone outside FTIA. **Please note if you are paying your donation using an American Express credit card, a fee of 2.85% is charged and will be deducted from your donation. This is only applicable to American Express credit cards.*

Fun Funding

A Quilt of Wishes - Teresa Werner, an adoptive parent, has written a beautiful tale about adoption. Her book is called *A Quilt of Wishes*. A portion of the proceeds from her book sales will benefit the FTIA Hunan Foster Program. You can learn more about the book and order it from the website www.aquiltofwishes.com. I want to thank Teresa for such a wonderful story and helping out the foster program!



Archer's Archives turns your adoption photos into beautiful DVD movies with music. 20% of profits from the DVD projects will be donated to the FTIA China Foster Care Programs. Please visit the *Archer's Archives* website www.archersarchives.com for more information.

Mama's Wish/Daughter's Wish - Is a story by Brynne Blackington, as told to her mother Debbie. This is a beautiful story of a mother and daughter coming together despite being an ocean apart. If ordered by March 31st, \$5.00 of your purchase of *Mama's Wish/Daughter's Wish* will go to the FTIA Hunan Foster Care Program. You can download the order form for this book on FTIA's website at: <http://www.ftia.org/Hunan%20Foster%20Care/Index.html>. Thank you Debbie and Brynne!



China Foster Care Programs

Families Thru International Adoption

Contact Information



If you would like more information on the FTIA China Foster Care Programs, or would like to check to see if your child was fostered through one of the programs, please contact Nikki Bilderback by calling 888-797-9900 or emailing nbilderback@ftia.org.



Families Thru International Adoption is located at:
400 Bente Court
Evansville, IN 47715
www.ftia.org

If you would like to contribute to help give a child a better start in life you may do so by completing the form below and mailing in a check or money order to the address above. It does not take much to help out. A donation of \$50 will provide food, clothing, and other necessities for a child for one month. A donation of \$350 can provide food for a child for an entire year! We appreciate your support!

Donation

FTIA China Foster Care Programs

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone # _____

Email _____

Amount of Donation \$ _____

One Time Gift

Monthly Gift

(Please check one)

Please let us know which program you would like to give to:

Hunan Foster Care

Zhanjiang Foster Care