



Evergreen Education Foundation Newsletter

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

Another year has past quickly. Once again, it is time for me to share with you what we have accomplished during the last year.

This past year was an extraordinarily busy one. As promised in last year's newsletter, we did complete the four libraries. Two of these were in Guizhou (thanks to the generous support of Chang Ching Ho), one in Yunnan and one in northern Jiangsu.

This summer, we were able to do a site visit at the Yunnan's Youwan high school. It was a memorable experience for the visiting team, consisting of Eileen Tang, Pamela Bevier, Qin Jie and Faith Chao. We were especially pleased with the frank discussion and interchanges between our visiting team and the students. They told us about their dreams and goals and were curious about our lives and why we are working for this type of foundation. Many students expressed a desire to do similar work when they completed their education. Representatives of these four schools came to our bi-annual international conference in Kunming along with the representative from the schools we have been working with in the past.



Picture taken with Students at Youwan High School in Yunnan during our site visit this summer

This is also a year during which we expanded five of our school libraries into library centers with satellite branch libraries. These five centers are: Li Jia Shan high school in Qinghai, Tianshu Number 1 school, TongWei Number 1 school, and HuiNing Number 4 schools in Gansu and Danfeng High school in Shaanxi. Although, these satellite branch libraries are mostly middle schools, we have some which are not schools that warrant special mention. TianZhu and TongWei both have satellite branch libraries located at their county public libraries. These extraordinary collaborations have been extremely beneficial to both the schools and to the public libraries. School librarians normally would not have formal training in librarianship, but the librarians at the public libraries would. Thus, the school libraries can benefit from the expertise available at the public libraries in dealing with library management issues. On the other hand the

especially important as they start using computers to perform library management tasks. Also, as the public libraries are opened for longer periods of time, students benefit having more study rooms. It can truly be said that this collaboration has revitalized the public libraries involved.



Grand mothers waiting taking a rest after visiting the Public library in TongWei

As nearly all of our school libraries are in agricultural rural areas of China, the satellite branch library at the agricultural zone in TongWei is especially appropriate. This is a cooperative that grows all kind of specialty vegetables and has hot houses for growing mushrooms servicing the high end markets of expansive hotels. Our librarian at the site would take samples of the mushrooms and cookbooks from the library, go to the farms in the mountainous areas. As they chat with the farmers, they use the recipes taken from the cookbooks to prepare mushroom dishes. During the meal, they would discuss the advantage of the farmers joining the cooperative and using the library to learn about growing mushrooms. Below is one farmer who took advantage of this invitation and his income last year (30,000 yuan) was considerably higher than previous years' combined.



Farmer Zhang Yang Wa came to work at the agricultural zone in TongWei after "barefoot" librarians went to show him mushrooms grown at the Zone.

The highlight of the year was, of course, our conference: ITIE 2006: Ethics and Knowledge that took place in Kunming this June.

Three hundred delegates came and many of whom gave teaching demonstrations as well as presented papers. Below are articles given by several people who attended the conference.

The foundation is especially grateful for the generous support of the Joseph Tse foundation, Frank Kung, Emma Chang Hsun, Super Star and the Bill and Melinda Gates Access to Learning Award Fund that made the conference possible. The foundation is also lucky to have as its tireless and hardworking volunteers: Eileen Tang, Yu Jingyi, Susan Wong, Geoffrey Liu, John Lee, Bai Fan, Donna Yeung, Jerry Xi, Daniel Peng, and Rachel Xu., to mention just a few.

Faith Chao, President

A Flower to be Treasured

by

Cecile Chu-chin Sun, University of Pittsburgh

In the province called Yunnan, meaning South of the Clouds, against the backdrop of mountains and an emerald lake, the Evergreen Education Foundation began its three-day deliberations on the timeless role of ethics and knowledge in an age dominated by fast-moving technology and value-free information. Few in the world today would suggest that real learning can be replaced by unrelated bits of information, much less opt for a future that embraces technology at the expense of human decency. So why did we bother to come all the way to Yunnan since we more or less already knew what the outcome of the conference would be? But, no matter how predictable the nature of a conference may seem to be, when the participants have an opportunity to freely speak their minds in candid exchanges with fellow educators, something magical can occur. My reflections will focus on one such magical moment.

At one of the group discussions following the plenary session on the subject of Ethics and Technology, a mild-looking middle school teacher, in a halting voice, asked the first question: When we present certain kinds of information downloaded from the Internet to our students, should we acknowledge our source? A simple enough question and an answer in the affirmative were soon given by a fellow participant. But the teacher did not stop at this point. Feeling somewhat more at ease now, he continued with a second query: Would inflating the grades of our students so that they could get into better schools be ethical, given the fact that most schools follow this practice? There was a barrage of responses ranging from shock, disgust, and utter denial. But, when things calmed down a bit, there was a quiet admission on the part of some Chinese and American teachers that, in fact, the practice existed in quite a few middle schools in both countries. Encouraged by the atmosphere of free and honest exchange, the original questioner made a confession about an unethical practice that had been weighing on his conscience for a long time. For years, in order to help his fellow colleagues and to earn a little extra money for himself, he had ghost-written papers for their promotion chances. The room fell quiet for a moment, but the silence was soon interrupted with comments—some sympathetic, some critical. But, the dominant spirit of the moment was sincerity, naked sincerity.

Such sincerity is moving. The middle school teacher sensed the

to us all. Even though the things he exposed and invoked others to expose were nothing to be proud of, the sincere candor that we all experienced that day from him and others as well, like the pure lotus blossom rising from the muddy waters, standing tall and proud, is a flower to be treasured. On that day, the middle school teacher from a remote area in China somehow sensed that the ITTE conference provided precisely such a rare environment for sincerity. Let us not forget, then, that this treasured flower of sincerity is the first step towards both true learning and ethical decency.



One of our delegates at the conference, Harriette Land standing in front of the library Gate

ITIE 2006 Conference

by

John Lee, Evergreen Education Foundation

Five months after the conclusion of a 3 day Information Technology, Information Ethics conference in KunMing, I was called upon to write a short take. As I do so, I still marvel at how much was achieved to the benefit of a few hundred attendees on a shoestring budget with volunteers paying their own way to make this conference a success.

The attendees are educators and scholars from many provinces in China and from several states in America. I have no doubt about the lasting benefits. I can certainly recall my varied roles and would like to share with you these memorable experiences.

Despite being a volunteer supporting team member, I, like other attendees, reaped the benefits of the 3-day program. The program consisted of Keynote Speakers, Panel Discussions, and Parallel Tracks of different themes. Besides gaining the knowledge and wisdom from the program and the participants, there were collateral benefits, not the least of which were interactions with other participants either in the Track sessions or over meals.

Of the Keynote Speeches, Prof. Tu's view of a Dialogical Civilization remained fresh in my mind. Another speech given

Primary and Secondary School education gave one hope that the government's economic goal of passing by UK and catching up to America was achievable in 50 years.



Yunnan Government official welcoming Professor Tu WeiMing and delegates

Of the Panel Discussions, Prof. Liu did a great job in moderating the panel of learned educators on Cultural Perspective on the Ethics of Scholarly Presentation. Prof. Sun reminded all that, a Chinese scholar in Ching Dynasty, Huang Koa Wei advocated how scholarly work of history ought to be conducted. Namely, the official version would need to be vetted against non-official ones as well as other sources. This scholarly approach appeared to have gone by the wayside in this age of Internet, where plagiarism aplenty and ghostwriting readily available and gainfully employed. The second theme of the conference, Ethics, was imminently evident.

As mentioned earlier, the Parallel Tracks offered a variety of themes. That included field trips. I wished to attend many, but managed to be in a few. I learned a lot outside of my professional life. The themes covered education and information and library management, methods, approaches, challenges, technologies, cases and demos. The field trip I took was one to Yunnan University, known as the little ChingHua, and ranked #6 in China. Besides a beautiful campus, it also housed a museum with a wide collection of minority ethnic relics.

I should mention my part of a support team. Mine was in checking out presentation setup at different venues. As luck would have it, there was little for me to do. Our partner in this conference was the Main Public Library, and the head of the Library had a competent team of staff. On the evening before the conference started, I was able to contact the person in charge who assured me that all was well. Indeed it was. And, for whatever little that was not there and the presenter needed, most, if not all were readily met, one way or another.

I would not do justice to forget to mention the talent of the librarian staff. They gave a musical and artistic dance performance one evening. I can vividly recall the elegant movements, the colors of the costumes, the folk stories and the riveting music from a WuLu flute that we requested encore.

Lastly, as a program evaluation team, I was happy to report that the vast majority of the attendees confirmed what I felt about the conference. The feedback from the survey was a resounding comment of value. Evergreen ought to continue doing future

That leads me to invite readers to join us in planning, implementing and attending a conference in 2008 in China. I can promise you that it will be another wonderful brainchild of Faith, our beloved President. There is a lot of work and the conference will have greater impact and benefits to a wider attendees. We look forward to you becoming a part of our team and using your talents to this upcoming program.

Impressions of the International Conference on Information Technology in Education (ITIE), Summer 2006

***By
Don Felipe, Golden Gate University***

The richest kind of learning experience takes one beyond new knowledge and transforms the perspectives and thinking of the learner in unexpected, fruitful ways. The learner begins to perceive in ways that were not possible before, and feels compelled to ask questions that would never had occurred to him otherwise. For me the ITIE Conference in Kunming this summer was an experience like that, and much more. Each presentation, each encounter, each event, was rich with glimpses of news ways of thought, experiences, and ways of life that were in a way incomplete; there always seemed to be something more to say, something more to ask, something more to think about.

The conference was also a family experience for me. I came to the conference with my wife and our six year old daughter, who still talks about China five months after the conference. If I would describe my learning experience as a kind of transformation, what could one say about my daughter's? She now seems to carry pieces of China within her as well as memories of dear friends, whom she will not forget.

And there are innumerable things that cannot be forgotten.

I remember the gracious hospitality of our hosts from welcoming smiles, to rewarding activities, to considerate planning. I remember cultural activities and new knowledge to explore, the colorful, exquisite dance of young students, the drums and the unforgettable beauty of the peacock dance, the manuscript collection at the Kunming library and the rich history of this region of China.

I remember teachers in China, their enthusiasm and diligence, their knowledge and concern for the issues discussed at the conference.

I remember projects of American and Chinese high school students, as well as their faces, their expressions of optimism, their common desires to make the world a better place.

I remember presentations by Chinese and American colleagues, the ideas, the earnest communication, the questions, and the prospect of further interaction.

I remember testimony and honest, open discussion of ethical questions that are crucial to our future.

And I will never forget the honor of sitting on panel of distinguished scholars that included professors Tu Wei Ming, Cecile Sun, Jack Deeney, Eileen Tang and Blanche Woolls, a panel that squarely confronted ethical problems of plagiarism and academic integrity and the implications of these problems for students, teachers and society at large.

Finally, I remember the tireless efforts of Faith Chao and other members of the Evergreen Foundation, caring for us, guiding us, leading us, and making possible a learning experience that has enriched the lives of all those touched by the conference.



Yu Jingyi and Qin Jie giving a skit at the closing banquet

The conference itself offered an extraordinary opportunity to listen to superb presentations. To hear, meet, and then be on a panel with a foremost Chinese authority from Harvard (Prof. Tu WeiMing) was humbling. Other speakers had messages of meaning, and it is fortunate that the speeches were published. To have students from San Jose in attendance and presenting papers made me very proud. Finally, one speaker quoted Rudyard Kipling's poem about east being east and west being west which is often stopped at "never the 'twain shall meet" when Kipling's next two lines, implied that meetings such as the one we were engaged in can overcome any obstacle.



Geoffrey doing a fantastic job translating for Blanche

***Fairy Tale City, Fairy Tale Conference
Kunming, China, Summer 2006***

***By
Blanche Woolls, San Jose State University***

The invitation to attend and make a presentation for a conference in Kunming was irresistible for several reasons. The first was that Dr. Geoffrey Liu was going to be there to translate. If you ever need an English/Chinese simultaneous translator, Dr. Liu is the best in the world.

Another reason was to see, first hand, the good things that the Foundation is continuing to do in China. Attending the award celebration of the Gates Award in Buenos Aires, Argentina was special, and to see how this project continues to flourish was inspiring.

A third was a more personal reason. While I had been in Kunming earlier, the weather had been cold and raining, and I missed the Stone Forest. Also, my husband had never been to Kunming, so he was delighted to come along with me. We visited the Stone Forest, and Don went to the Dragon Gate (allowing me to read a book while he went up the mountain because I had seen that.) We especially enjoyed the ethnic folk museum with the costumes of the many groups in that area.

All expectations were met and surpassed. The hotel, across the street from the beautiful library building, made it simple to get to the conference site. The library there is a model for any city in the world. Every staff member was welcoming and helpful with any request. Their cultural evening, a wonderful performance by library staff members, equaled an evening anywhere.

Your Views and Suggestions are Important to Us.

Please let us know your opinions and any suggestions for improvements. To find out more, please visit us at our web site:

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