



## Curves Food Drive & Visit 2010

### Curves Food Drive & Delivery to Lao Wang's Orphanage May 9 2010

To all those who do not know, Curves was founded by Gary & Diane Heavin in 1992 in Harlingen, Texas. They share a passion for commitment to women's health and fitness. Their innovative 30-minute fitness concept combines strength training and sustained cardiovascular activity through safe and effective hydraulic resistance. They have 10,000 locations in 70 countries. Curves are now in Shanghai, China.

Last year Mifan Mama was lucky enough to meet up with Kim, Director of Operations & Marketing, Curves Shanghai-Taiwan, at a Bazaar in Puxi. Kim was very interested in Mifan Mama and asked us all about the work we were doing. After explaining to her, she told me that every April Curves locations around the world have a food drive for the needy. During this time no monthly fees are taken, instead members are asked to bring in and donate food for the needy and at the end of the month each franchise delivers this food to their chosen outreach program.

What an amazing thing for Mifan Mama to be part of: just the type of project, helpful to us and what we do, so in April this happened at Curves HongMei Lu and Curves JinFeng Lu. I know a lot of hard work by the staff of Curves went into assisting Mifan Mama feed the Orphans, and we really appreciate all the effort that has gone into this first venture with Curves.

**A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE CURVES TEAM AND MEMBERS WHO MADE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE.**

On Friday 7 May Kim, Jaclyn and their team were ready for us to send a truck to collect the 3,000kg of food that they had collected. Together the Curves and Mifan Mama teams would deliver this food to the Orphans at Lao Wang's in Anhui.

There were some problems, as there always are, trying to get a large truck down a narrow road at the first location, but this is China! And everything is possible. I was not there to witness the collection but by 8.30 the next morning when the truck arrived at our home to load donated items from Mifan Mama Supporters May, Nancy, Hilary and all the people who dropped off donations of nappies with Stephanie in Puxi, Julia, Kate and anyone I have forgotten (thank you) the Curves donation was on board.

By noon the Mifan Mama Team were leaving Shanghai, heading towards Anhui and the Orphanage. The Curves team was amazing: they took a fast train on Sunday to Hefei and a taxi to take all 10 of them on to the Orphanage.

The weather was lovely and warm, no rain (unlike Shanghai) and by 1.00pm Sunday the Mifan Mama volunteers, the Curves team and the truck were all at the Orphanage. Introductions were made to Lao Wang, the staff and all the children and Kim gave a brief talk about Curves.

We didn't say "Moved that Bus" as on the famous TV programme, but we did say, "LET'S UNLOAD THAT TRUCK". Immediately there were people everywhere: Curves Team / Mifan Mama Team/ Staff / children, everyone was either helping unload or taking pictures. The children were so excited by what was happening and so curious to see what had been brought for them. (We had already given them their candy bags while we were waiting for the Curves team to arrive). This was something else they were getting: double treats and why not?

After everything had been unloaded and put away, things did not calm down. The children were so excited - new faces, new people to hold their hands, to give them big hugs. We all spent the next two hours just visiting and learning from one another.

Kim pledged to Lao Wang that this was only the beginning of their support and that next year's delivery would be bigger. Lao Wang and his children are not worried about this: they just hope to see the wonderful ladies again and to share love, kindness and warmth with them, even if it's just once a year and for a few hours. To them these experiences are precious, making them into who they will be tomorrow. It reflects itself in the very way they show kindness, love and care to one another.

It is Mifan Mama's privilege to work with the Curves team and I for one can't wait for them to open an office in Pudong.

Julie

Here is an extract from a letter Kim wrote to the ladies from Curves who visited the Orphanage:

Dear ladies, (Bing, Crystal, Penny, Leanne and all the Curves girls)

First, thank you for making our trip to Anhui. Your dedication to Curves is seen through your commitment to your health. Your commitment to our charitable events showed a special consideration that has become a consistent trait of Curves women globally. The joy comes in finding out about 'these special members'. It was my pleasure to have learned more about you all on this trip. Your kindness was reflected in the faces of all that we met this past weekend. I am humbled with an experience like this.

Upon our return, I sat in my children's room and was able to feel the love that is in our home - the security and comforts my family have. And the deep love I have for my own children felt more profound. It is not always something we find easy to 'feel', since life is busy. There are those moments, of course, where we catch our kids doing something, saying something, experiencing something, where we can feel our love for our family. Without question the day I returned was also one of those special moments.

Every day since we left, the children have crossed my mind. It is amazing the language barrier for me is not something I remember at all. Love is something that truly does not need language - it is one all its own and was so clear that day, as was joy and happiness. I remember that. Which, I would say, many would think that would not be something we would remember. As we know, there were moments of profound sadness, but the children do not know any different - they were happy to see us and I was truly glad to have come.

My deepest thanks to you all for making the trip and bringing the much needed love and assistance to the orphans at Lao Wang's. And Mifan Mama: your commitment to them is beyond words. Thank you for helping us to help them through you. We look forward to many years ahead.

Kim



The Curves team meets the children