



George's Summer Night Story

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Summer Night to Rural China's Orphans

By George Yu

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On August 14, 21 volunteers from SAP and 10 volunteers from Mifan Mama gave "A Summer Night at Lao Wang's Orphanage". Different from previous visits, the purpose of this trip is to bring joy to orphans, so that they can have the same summer night as other kids.

A team of volunteers was formed from both SAP Labs' CRS Program Hand-in-Hand and Mifan Mama. Many ideas were proposed, and we narrowed down to more interactive plays than on-stage performance. The reason is that 70% of orphans in the Orphanage are either mentally or physically disabled. We need to engage as many kids as possible in our program, so that they can be part of a fun summer night.

At 6:00 am, six volunteers arrived at the office to load our gifts, sound equipment and lighting systems to a bus. By 7:00 am, all volunteers boarded the bus and started our 700 KM journey to the Orphanage. At 4:40 pm, we got to our destination. Not surprisingly, many kids were waiting at the gate to greet us. We received a warm welcome with many handshakes, hugs, and smiles. They have been expecting us for quite some time, even during a heavy thunderstorm.

During the bus ride to the Orphanage, we did a self-introduction by all volunteers. Quite a surprise, we found there are four families there: Yueting Zhou, COO of SAP Labs China, brought his nine year old daughter Nicole along. He wants her to see other kids living outside of Shanghai and play with them on this trip. The second family is Da Zhuang and Wei Yang. Da Zhuang is a professional musician. When he heard about this trip, he brought his wife along to do something good for the kids living in the rural areas.

Cha family is the third one. Jennifer Cha works at SAP in US, and her two sons Jeff and Jason are interns during their summer vacation in China. In fact, Jeff and Jason have been working on organizing this visit from very beginning. Instead of going to World Expo, the whole family visits Anhui together right before their departure to US. The fourth family is Gallagher. Bernadette has been involved with Mifan Mama for some time now. Her daughter Caitriona and friend Lizzie Simon are visiting her. As soon as Bernadette returned to China, she tried very hard to be part of this trip and she made it. Lizzie just returned from her six month volunteer

work at an orphanage in Johannesburg, South Africa. She told us her experience there to help those kids infected with AIDS.

The introduction won't be complete without a full story about Mifan Mama and Lao Wang's Orphanage. Jenny Chen, Katja Hamsch and George Yu took the lead to do this. Equipped with the good understanding of the background of our mission, the bus was approaching the destination through a lightening thunderstorm. We were concerned about the weather, its disruption to our evening program.

Not surprisingly, the immediate challenge to us is we had no power! The thunderstorm knocked out the power grid right before our arrival. The volunteer group made a decision right away: skip our scheduled dinner and give the Summer Night in the courtyard as soon as the orphans finish their dinner in the remaining day light. Two teams went into action: one to setup a distribution table to give out presents, and another one to prepare the Summer Night. The remaining volunteers either helped out or reached out to orphans by visiting their dormitories, talking with them or holding babies in their arms.

Our second challenge is to make a stage in the courtyard to attract kids. Roy Zhang had an idea. He put a used bed frame on the ground, and filled it with colorful balloons brought in by Jenny Chen and her friends. It was not an easy task to keep kids' off from balloons, or we would never be able to blow enough to create a critical mass to make the stage.

One special gift was prepared for Da Zhi who has a seeing impairment. Da Zhi has a dream to be a guitar player. In previous trip, his wish became true. Mifan Mama gave him a guitar. Today, we have three guitar players in our team. Da Zhuang, a professional musician gave Da Zhi a private tutoring session on guitar playing. We are eager to hear Da Zhi playing some music for us on our next trip there.

The event started with presenting the SAP Scholarship to Lao Wang's Orphanage from Yueting Zhou. The scholarship was solely established to support students from Lao Wang's Orphanage. Both Shang- Ling Jui, MD of SAP Labs China and Yueting Zhou made significant donations to the fund. In his short speech, Yueting strongly suggested to students "We dream, we believe and we achieve" as displayed on our Summer Night backdrop. You are not alone. All the volunteers from SAP and other organizations are behind you. In response, the student representative appreciated the scholarship program and expressed their strong desire to study hard and fulfill their lifetime dreams. They want to use their own actions and successes to respond the generous support from Mifan Mama and other organizations like SAP.

The Summer Night was co-hosted by Mr. Jin from Orphanage, Jenny Chen from Mifan Mama and Even Deng from SAP. They did an excellent job in warming up the crowds and keeping programs running smoothly.

The "Rabbit Dance" led by Qing Chen of SAP Labs kicked off our Summer Night. At the beginning, the kids were shy and hesitated to come forward to join. The fun displayed by

several brave ones and our treats changed their mind. With the overwhelming demand, we had to repeat the Rabbit Dance so that more kids can be part of the game. This warmed up the audience and laid a good foundation for the entire evening program.

The second performer is Jin Xia Ren, a care taker from the Orphanage. She danced with a drum tied up at her waist. Instead of her normal posture and routines, Ren danced like a little girl circling around the stage. Her maneuver and spontaneous jokes won a lot of laughs and applauses from the audience. Nobody knew our Aunt Ren is such a funny grandma.

Our second game is called "Squirrels and A Hunter" from Rainbow Peng and Leafy Ye. Two adults form a tree shelter to protect a squirrel from a hunter. As soon as the music stops, the squirrels need to seek a shelter under a tree or being hunted down. With the experience from the first game, there is nothing called shyness anymore. We had to limit the number of participants. But we still give something sweet to those who could not make it or being hunted down so that they feel the love in a happy family.

After singing songs from two guitarists Stephen Yang and Da Zhuang, Li Guo from Mifan Mama started teaching a children's song while playing his own guitar. With the help from Xiao Liang and several others, they used their arm and body movement to be in sync with the rhythm and learn a new song. The music and movement excited them more than the words in the song. What a heck, as long as they enjoyed it. We are all happy for them.

The words from one of the participants, Hock Peng Lim expressed the true feelings of us: "It was enlightening and gratifying to learn that simple activities and songs could touch the hearts of these little souls and bring out the smiles on their faces. As we strive towards advancement and prosperity into the 21 century, let's not forget to give a helping hand to those who have lagged behind us." Hock Peng is from SAP Asia and on a short assignment in China, and was delighted to join as soon as he heard this event.

As the darkness set in, we brought our Summer Night to a closure in a light breeze. In the 70 min long Summer Night, we presented 11 programs to orphans. On the bus to our hotels, volunteers already started discussing our next projects: raise 75,000 RMB (8,600 Euro) to build a well water filtering system for the orphanage, and make 5,000 Boxes of Love before Chinese New Year. Our motto is: "We dream, we believe and we achieve".

If you are interested in making a donation, please [contact us](#) and you will receive a reply giving full details of how this can be done - thank you.



Photo 1: Yueting Zhou, COO of SAP Labs China announced the scholarship program in Lao Wang's orphanage and put on the SAP volunteer badge to the student representative.



Photo 2: Da Zhuang, a professional musician tutored Da Zhi on guitar playing



Photo 3: Strong Participation from Orphans to the Rabbit Dance



Photo 4: The girl was so happy when she found her shelter under a big tree by Katja Hamsch of SAP and Bernadette Gallagher of Mifan Mama



Photo 5: Learn a new song from Li Guo of Mifan Mama



Photo 6: After the event, we had a group photo together