

we dream, believe and achieve



Mifan Mama
June 2011 report

Children's Day ... what a way to start the month! This to me is such an important date for your calendar. A special time for children all over the world and a time for us to remember those children who need our help and support, whichever country they may live in: they need YOUR HELP.

Well, what a busy month June was and how quickly it passed. This time of the year is always so sad as some Expats leave Shanghai to return permanently to their own countries or to move on to the next country for work. Thank you to all of you who have left for all of the support while you have been here. We hope that you don't forget us and that you always remember these special children.

I am always so happy to see those of you who open your hearts and decide to adopt a Chinese orphan, you change their life for ever. I know it is not an easy decision but these precious children need you.

Lao Wang and 140 of his children along with his family will move to the wonderful new facility that the Government has built them 2 km from the old building. The rest of the children will remain in the old building so they will still need our support in both facilities for different things.

We have Abbots Infant formula as a sponsor they have donated enough milk powder for our babies for one year. This is an immensely wonderful donation. Not only does it feed our babies but it also frees up some of the food money.

**Launch of ‘In a Chinese Orphanage’
at the
Intercontinental Hotel, Pudong**

On March 16th we were lucky enough to be guests of the Intercontinental Hotel in Pudong for the launch of Anna Willett’s book ‘In a Chinese Orphanage’. Anna’s amazing book is a photographic record of the daily lives of the children and carers who call Lao Wang’s Orphanage home.

Lots of copies of the book are available for sale at only **150 RMB**, so if you’re interested, just e-mail us at mifanmama@gmail.com and we’ll put you on the right track to buy your copy! It’s a great reminder of your time in China, and is a great way to show those ‘back home’ what our work is all about.

Selling all of these books will mean a huge boost for the Mifan Mama Education fund and ensure that several of the children from Lao Wang’s will be able to stay on in high school and perhaps go to university.

The launch was a fabulous cocktail evening with canapés and drinks and great service as always from James Koratzopoulos and his team at the Intercontinental, Emmanuel, Jane, Miranda and everyone else who helped. We were also privileged to be joined by Christopher Wright, the Deputy Consul-General of Australia, and Andrew Whitford, Head of Greater China at Westpac Banking Corporation, the book sponsors.

We are very lucky to have the support of this amazing hotel chain and James and his wonderful staff. They have been a supporter and sponsor of Mifan Mama now for 18 months and have helped us raise money for the children by catering for our concerts and now the book launch: this is an amazing support.

This month the Intercontinental Hotel staff decided they would like to give Boxes of Love to Lao Wang’s children at this special time. Lots of love and care was put into them and it was our joy to give them to the children on their behalf.

Marks and Spencer

How do we begin to thank Shirley and the staff and suppliers from Marks and Spencer? This month they donated clothing, new duvets and new pillows: how warm and cosy these children will be this winter.

Monique and her ladies and students from her church made up hygiene packs for the children with soap, shampoo, face cloths, toothbrushes, toothpaste and many other personal items in a lovely case for each child to keep. They had made enough of these packs to go to the other orphanages that we support on a monthly basis. They also collected used clothes, shoes and toys all of which went to the children. The good thing also was that Monique and her husband Jay visited the children with us to deliver the items (see Monique’s report below). Monique has an amazing gift of music and entertained the children at the orphanage, with her wonderful singing and playing the yuk.

Marie Lucie, Grace Ho and other members of **SCF Church Puxi** had donated soft teddy bears earlier in the year and these were given to all of our children at the orphanages we support on a monthly basis. They were so excited to receive them: thank you.

Thank you once again to the **Australian Women's Social Group** for their monthly support in providing basic essentials to the orphanages.

And to everyone else who has contributed in whatever way – thank you! We couldn't continue without you.

EVENTS

Second Mifan Mama Tennis Tournament

I was so proud to be at the finals of the second Mifan Mama Tennis Tournament held in Green Valley Villas, Puxi, organised again by Stephanie and Anne Claire. What a wonderful event – the tournament finals were very exciting.

BISS Bazaar

We were very privileged to be part of the BISS school summer Bazaar at which we were able to meet new friends and let them know about Mifan Mama while they buy our cups and other items the proceeds of which go to buying food for the children.

SCIS Hongqiao Campus

The students of SCIS at Hongqiao have undertaken several fundraisers for Mifan Mama to help the children at Lao Wang's Orphanage in the last academic year, including a very successful bring and buy sale chicken sponsoring at Easter. On attending the upper school's final assembly, to say thank you to the students and update them on what had been achieved with the money they raised, Julie G also accepted a further donation, 4,238 RMB, raised by Clement Voon and Brandon Park who had organised a fashion show in the school.

Julie briefly explained to the students about Mifan Mama, the rice programme, how much food is sent monthly, and how the money they had raised would be spent. They were told about the chickens bought with their Easter fundraiser, and how they will be added to and will hopefully provide much needed variety and protein in their diets.

The students were all very much looking forward to their summer vacation, and although many of them would be moving on, we at Mifan Mama look forward to continuing to work with them in the coming year.

Donation from Pudong Cub Scout Pack 969

During March Mifan Mama were contacted on behalf of the Pudong Cub Scout Pack 969. Their members, and there are lots of them, were having a fundraiser in the run-up to Easter, and would be selling chocolate products in their neighbourhoods – yum!

Around 70 cub scouts sold chocolate eggs, rabbits and chickens to their friends, neighbours and family, and sold an incredible 112,000 RMB's worth! The proceeds of all their hard work were donated to Mifan Mama – an amazing 43,000 RMB.

At the end of May, the two Julie's were delighted to be invited to their annual Blue and Gold Gala Dinner to receive the donation for Mifan Mama. Many of the boys and their family members were present, as many of their parents are involved in the Cub Scouts. Julie Martens accepted the donation and showed the boys and their families some of the DVD from Lao Wang's Orphanage, explaining about Mifan Mama and what we do.

We also learned a great deal about the Cub Scout Organisation, and were privileged to witness the ceremony undertaken by two of the older boys as they left the Cub Scouts and went on their journey to become Boy Scouts and perhaps one day Eagle Scouts.

A delightful evening at the Parkwood Hotel in Pudong, who did a great job, and a big thank you to Marc Rivers, Cubmaster of Pack 969 and John and Monique Condon and their family for making Mifan Mama part of their fundraising programme

MEDICAL REPORT

Well we can tell you that some of the money raised by the American School concert last November has helped Min Sun a 10 month old baby boy from Lao Wang's to have eye surgery. He was born with congenital cataracts and could not see. Because of these amazing students led by their music teacher and Juliet (student) and all the other students and sponsors and supporters he will now have sight.

Min Sun travelled with us on our return from Lao Wang's at the beginning of June. He spent the time before surgery at one of our volunteers' homes. After extensive tests by Dr George and the team at the Shanghai United Family Hospital it was found that his only problem, apart from teething, was his eyes. He was then taken to the XingHua hospital where he had extensive eye tests and heart tests. He was admitted on Sunday 19 June 2011, and had surgery to the first eye the following day, then on the second eye on Thursday 23 June. He has made a full recovery; the surgeon has removed the lens from his eyes he will get a pair of glasses with very thick lens and wear this until he is two years old when he will have further surgery and lens implants then he will not have to wear glasses.

On Saturday 25 June 2011 he was sent home from the hospital and has been at my home for recovery until our trip on 2/3 July when he will return to Lao Wang's Orphanage. He is a lovely boy and is doing very well. You would not believe he has had two surgeries in the last week he is very strong. He was not holding up his head and his back was very weak when he came to us but he is much stronger now. Poor Min Sun has also been teething while he has been with us and in pain from this. Please bring teething jell or powder on your trip back to Shanghai also cream for sore bottoms and Calpol or the equivalent - much needed. Thanks!

Julie M

Orphanage Visit for June 2011

Written from the heart by Jay and Monique

Every visit to Lao Wang Orphanage yields special and exceptional results. While each trip always yields important results in the lives of those we serve, sometimes equally important results can be found in the hearts and minds of those who make the trip – each coming back with renewed resolve to participate, or with new ideas about HOW to help, or positively affected in other ways. The trip in early June 2011 was exceptional in all of these ways, as well as in some other ways.

First some background. Two friends of Mifan Mama have been in Shanghai for about 6 months. They are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). Upon arrival they discovered that a member of their Shanghai congregation, Roger is the brother of a friend back in the US. Wanting to get to know them better, they invited Roger and his wife Paige to attend the Black-Tie Fundraiser recently held at the Shanghai Center. While introducing Roger and Paige to Tony Martens, it was learned that Roger is the Country Manager for Abbott Labs – makers of Similac baby formula. Striking while the iron was hot, Roger was invited on the spot to help Mifan Mama secure a donation of baby formula from Abbott Labs. Roger agreed.

Lesson learned: don't be afraid to ask for help, most people are happy to do what they can.

Fast forward several weeks. After all the requisite administrative paperwork was complete to receive a donation from Abbott Labs, Julie Martens was informed that Mifan Mama would receive 200 packages of baby formula. How exciting! Upon delivery of the formula, however, we discovered there was a problem. **Instead of 200 packages of formula, we discovered there were 200 BOXES, each box containing 6 packages of formula. Through the generosity of Abbott Labs and Roger Bird, Mifan Mama now has enough formula for many months to come!!!!**

As for the actual trip, here's how it all played out. On the afternoon of Saturday, June 4, five “Pudong-ites” travelled by small chartered bus from Pudong to Puxi, where they picked up another 7 intrepid volunteers, then proceeded on the ~6 hour trip to Hefei in Anhui province, arriving at about dinner time. During the trip the group alternately slept, talked, read and sang songs with the accompaniment of two volunteers who had each brought guitars. *(Side note, although long, the trip is comfortable with plenty of stops made along the way to stretch, use the restroom, buy food and drink, etc.)*

As usual, the group arose early Sunday morning to complete the remaining 2 hours of the trip. Upon arrival they were immediately touched as the group of **200+ orphans**, who of course knew the volunteers were coming, gathered at the front gate of the orphanage to cheer and welcome them. Next, the older orphan boys and some of our group unloaded the truckload of supplies that had arrived separately earlier in the morning.

As many of you know, the Mifan Mama organisation collects various "in-kind" donations, as well as financial donations that are used to purchase rice, flour, oil and other food related items. Every monthly distribution to the orphanage is unique. In addition to the standard food and other collected item distribution, this month there were several additional types of donations delivered, including:

- A larger-than-normal distribution of Similac baby formula, arranged for as a donation from Abbott Labs, as noted above;
- "Boxes of Love", donated by families, schools and churches from around Shanghai (*Editorial comment: this would be an EXCELLENT family or neighbourhood or congregational service project – please let us know when you would like to hold an activity to assemble some of these “Boxes of Love”*);
- Hygiene kits put together by the Relief Society organizations from 6 LDS congregations including Ningbo, Hangzhou, Suzhou, Nanjing, Shanghai and Pudong. These kits include such things as soap and shampoo, toothpaste and a toothbrush, hand sanitizer, a comb, wipes and toilet paper, sanitary napkins, etc.
- Boxes of sweets and other goodies for the Aiyi's who work with these kids (they seldom get anything for just themselves) ;
- Boxes and bags of children's coats, clothing, shoes and games also collected by local church congregations
- Brand new shoes and stuffed animals

After the truck was unloaded, each person received their own personal distribution - it was like Christmas for them! They stowed their items in their personal space, then we all gathered in the cafeteria to sing songs and have some activities. Unfortunately we did not think to get Chinese versions of some of the old favorite songs - that would have been nice – but we were still able to sing songs in French, English and (some) Chinese.

When approached with the proper attitude, these trips to the orphanage are happy occasions for all involved, but for some this could be a sad place. There are many physically and mentally disabled people there. Although there are many “normal” kids there, babies or children with Spina Bifida, Cleft Palate, Down Syndrome, blindness and other maladies are common. For those willing to jump in and share their love, the sadness disappears and the joy of supporting a fellow human being emerges and uplifts. We discovered one blind young man has an AMAZING voice, and he sang for us. It is interesting how loss of one faculty often improves the use of another - he seemed to have perfect pitch. Later in the day, we made personal visits to each of the dorm rooms and chatted with each child personally, sometimes singing songs, sometimes just hugging.

Our group had the opportunity to go inspect the new facility under construction. It is wonderful! It is expected to be complete by September, at which time some of the orphans from the Lao Wang orphanage will move in. Even though Lao Wang and his team continue to do a great job with what they have, we are hoping the orphans will receive improved nutrition and care at the new facility. Unfortunately not all of the residents at Lao Wang's current facility are eligible to move, so there will be continued need to help support these lovely people.

As the day wore on, it came time to leave. All of the orphans, but especially the ones from 6-10 were sad to see us leave and clung to us as we boarded the bus. They followed the bus to the gates of the orphanage, waving good bye. After we crossed the bridge to the main road,

about a quarter kilometre away, and turned south again, we saw the children all lined up on the entrance road still waving goodbye across the way. Very touching.

Tired but happy, the little group of 12 (plus the FANTASTIC driver) made the long trip home to Shanghai, some not arriving to their destination until 1 am. Great thanks to those who made the trip. More important, great thanks to those of you who made the trip “in spirit” by helping raise funds to ensure these orphans can be cared for. Without your continued help, none of this would be possible.

Monique & Jay

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO ARE A PART OF HELPING THESE PRECIOUS CHILDREN IN WHATEVER WAY YOU CAN: YOU ARE MUCH APPRECIATED.

THERE IS MORE JOY IN GIVING THAN RECEIVING.

Thank you!

Julie Martens

Mifan Mama President
www.mifanmama.com



Mifan Mama Tennis Tournament



Pudong Cub Scout Pack 969 Presentation



Visit to Lao Wang's Orphanage: June 2011

