



The
“Love is Blind”
Newsletter
December 2009

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www.bethelchina.org



Dear friends, sponsors and supporters,

December 2009

With 2009 coming to an end, Bethel can look back and be blessed to have received nine new children. Pan Pan, Guo Guo, Hai Feng, Ya Fen, Li Ping, Cha Lu, Xiao Mei, and Miao Miao are all wonderful children and now have the opportunity for a better life. Another recent blessing comes in the form of a successful medical surgery. Preschool student Lu Yuewei is currently recovering after receiving successful Tethered Spinal Cord Syndrome surgery.

Over the course of the year the children have had the opportunity to go on multiple field trips. Some of the 36 trips that were taken this year include the Beijing Museum of National History, the Capital Museum China, and also the historic Great Wall. Some of our older students experienced travel by subway.

During this Christmas season, the Bethel Choir has sung in multiple venues such as schools, cafes, and hotels. Bethel's 2nd annual Christmas Performance, which was held at the beautiful Westin Choayang, was a huge success and put everyone in the holiday spirit.

While Bethel continues to find new avenues towards advancing our children, we continue to internally refine both of our pioneer projects.

Since our last newsletter, Bethel has established a purchasing department. The purpose of this division is to ensure that every financial purchase

is made with smart, cost-effective solutions. Another addition, benefiting the whole organization, is the establishment of our HR department. Both of these new departments have already proved to be beneficial, and will continue to be essential tools for the future.

In accordance to the goals of our national initiative, Bethel provided training seminars this past September to preexisting orphanages throughout China. The orphanage staff that received the trainings represented a combined number of 3,600 orphans.

A recent milestone has come from the launch of Bethel's new 2.0 website. Thanks to creator Haoxian Wang, the new user friendly website offers Twitter-like blogging, an intelligent slide show application, and an interactive children's page.

Even the Bethel farm received some additions. Thanks to contributions made by Mike Da Silva, our farmers and local university volunteers helped dig and plant 600 walnut trees. With their roots planted, we hope that much like our organization, these trees will be used for the benefit of many.

Things you may have missed:



This fall our preschool class visited the local post office. During their trip they learned the process of packaging materials, and how mail is sent and received!



Accompanied by recording artist Leslie Blackshear, the Bethel Choir belts out some carols during Bethel's 2nd annual Christmas performance. The performance, which was held at the Westin Chaoyang, featured the Bethel Choir, the Instant Noodles jazz band, and a presentation by Guillaume describing Bethel's past, present and future. Over 250 guests attended the event!



Li Ying is the first graduate of the Bethel school to move into the Bethel assisted living dormitory. In the dormitory she is learning how to prepare and cook various meals. Although her favorites are instant noodles and dumplings, she is learning how to make full meals (such as rice, vegetables and chicken). Everything that she has cooked, she has purchased, with her own money from the local supermarket. Along with Li Ying's new living arrangements, she is now a new Bethel intern working in our office. When you call the office, she will be the one on the other line!



Through their devotion, patience, and love our teachers have done an excellent job in preparing our students for whatever dreams they may one day wish to accomplish. They are the best!



Ai Yuan, who is guilty of having a sweet tooth, is learning how to make bing tang hu lu. They can be described as candied haws (mini apples) on a stick. Bing tang hu lu is a popular favorite here at Bethel.



Beijing has received several snowstorms over the last few months. During one, Xiao Li Li is learning how to perfect the art of the snowball. It looks like she needs to get working on that snowball.



Our CSR opportunities are now developed. Along with corporate sponsoring programs, we now offer two alternative programs. Organizations have taken part in our Career Outing Program, which consists of taking our older students to a professional environment in order to broaden their horizons and help them gain new perspectives. Bethel's main goal is for our students to become "employable." The Employee Enrichment Program gives organization employees the chance to impact Bethel's physical aspects, by taking part in activities such as harvesting corn or planting grass, etc.



A word from the founders

What an exciting year! To see our first graduate in college in the US, our second graduate in our independence program, to see the launch of our National project, our successful Christmas concert, the adoptions and reports of happy children. We are already excited for 2010; something tells us that it will be an amazing year!

So many have contributed to make Bethel what it is meant to be. I wish we would have time to appreciate all of you, who sometimes work long hours with no recognition. Even so, I am confident that no good, even done in secret, goes unnoticed. That might even be the purest form of charity. Know that Delphine and I are so grateful that you are by our side to make sure that everyone is given a shot at the pursuit of happiness.

We extend our warm wishes of peace and happiness for this Christmas season to you and your families,

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Bethel in a nutshell

Bethel is a not-for-profit organization that provides foster care, education and professional training for Chinese orphans who are blind or visually impaired. The Project's training center, named The Love is Blind Project, is located on a 17-acre property, near a small village outside Beijing. The organization was founded in 2002 by a French couple, Guillaume and Delphine Gauvain.

In addition to providing quality care and education for blind orphans, the Project envisions the development of a community that is self-sustaining and respectful of the environment. We are currently producing our own eggs, fruits and vegetables and raising goats, sheep, rabbits, pigs and chickens.

This is a model we hope to reproduce in other parts of China and the greater Asian community.

The Project in its current location offers services for up to 70 children at a time, and includes these aspects:

1. Foster Care: seven separate houses where we strive to create a family atmosphere, providing 24-hour care for our children
2. Education: our school offers classes in English and Chinese Braille, Conversational English, Chinese, Mathematics, Science, Orientation and Mobility, Daily Living Skills, Physical Education, Social Studies, etc...
3. Professional training: in farming, gardening, language translation and piano tuning

Bethel is also an active player on a national level to train orphanages staff and caretakers, which allows us to be part of a global initiative that impact the lives of thousands blind orphans.



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