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An amazing surgery

Floria Tsui

Floria Tsui, an obstetrician/gynecologist visited Heqing in January, 2006. The following story is summarized by Vienna Chan.

During the short stay in Heqing, one woman came in desperately asking us to help her. She had had a complete tear of her anal sphincter during the delivery of her baby 8 years ago at home since she had not had enough money to deliver in a hospital. This tear had never been repaired and it had caused bowel incontinence. No one knows how she has managed to live with such a terrible problem for the past 8 years. When she heard the specialist team was coming to visit, she borrowed about \$1000 RMB and came to the hospital for help. She told us that she only had \$1000, nothing more. The other 2 gynecologists on the team and I examined her carefully and felt that this might be a very complicated procedure that we wouldn't even take lightly to do in Canada. Although I knew in my mind every single step of how to perform this surgery, I had never actually performed this type of surgery in Canada. We encouraged her to go to Kunming to seek medical help. She refused since she would not be able to pay \$8000, the probable cost in Kunming. We then told her to give us until the next day to think about it.

That night, we talked and debated about whether or not to do it. What if there were complications? What if we botched the procedure and she ended up suffering more? What if people complained afterwards and refused to have any foreign visiting doctors come any more? Many more what ifs came to our minds. Deep in my

heart, I felt that God was calling me to take this step in faith.

The steps of the surgical procedure kept playing inside my head. I knew what to do and wanted to do it, but why didn't the other two gynecologists agree? However, we finally decided to tell the lady the bad news the next day that we were not going to operate on her.

That night, I told the department head our decision so she could tell the patient the next day. To my surprise, the department head said that the lady had already admitted herself to the hospital, waiting for the surgery to be performed. I suddenly realized that God was indeed telling me something. We needed to step out in faith and help this lady. God would not abandon us. Amazingly, the surgery went exceptionally well. Within an hour, everything was repaired and it looked beautiful. It was as if God had guided my hands through the entire operation. Although we planned to take at least 2 or 3 hours, God surprised us by his amazing provision so that one hour was more than enough. We even had time left that morning to do some sightseeing. When we visited her on the ward that afternoon, both her and her sister had tears in their eyes. They were so grateful.



This incident taught me a big lesson. I realized that things are usually not under our control and decisions are not made in the usual way. We need to have faith in our great and amazing God. We need to put our pride aside. We need to come alongside him to see what he is doing and join him, allowing his power to work through us.

China Trivia



Guess what is the Greek architecture in this beautiful residential area in Chongqing, China?

Answer: p. 4

My memory of Heqing

Stephen Cheng

My story with Heqing started when the local officials initiated a request for MSI professionals to teach mental issues to the Bai minority group in this region. MSI assembled a team led by a clinical psychologist from Los Angeles, a psychiatrist from Hong Kong, a social worker from Singapore and myself, a nursing manager from Canada. We had about 3 months to design a 5-day teaching program to 3 different groups of audiences. Over countless emails and conference calls we finally sketched the outlines of the program that included topics such as high school exam stress, mental illness, suicide prevention, role of the family and other forms of effective mental health intervention.

Lijiang greeted us with its gentle and refreshing mountain air. On the way to the town of Heqing there were endless patches of yellow and green plants. Scattered

farmhouses accentuated the simplicity and antiquity of this picturesque environment.

We woke up to a crisp cool morning in this town that is 7000 feet above sea level. The sun seemed to be brighter. Most of the flowers had bloomed in March. Seventeen degree Celsius in the afternoon was just right for our first town tour. In this town of 260,000 people, there is a sense of unhurriedness. The stores opened until 10 pm and there is no line-up anywhere. The main forms of transportation were the 3 wheelers that can take up to 4 passengers. The sky was blue and the air smelt clean. Our host served us with home made German breads and coffee. I had my first sticky rice chocolate ice cream!

On the 3rd day we had bread and water for breakfast and headed to the high school for our first day of teaching. After a



simple ceremony of speeches by government officials, our team leader started her part of the program. I followed with an hour-long presentation of high school exam stress in front of 850 students. My 3 months training in Mandarin proved useful. We did a similar presentation at another high school to a slightly smaller number of students in the afternoon. The officials treated us to delightful dinners when we finished teaching. I never saw so much fresh vegetables. They were nicely presented with thoughtful color combination. Who can resist fresh broad beans, finely sliced green peppers, tender looking mushrooms and of course the deep-fried goat cheese. We were

often offered 35% local wine. I still can't tell a superior wine from an inferior one.

As soon as the dinner was over our team regrouped and shared thoughts and feelings. We had to prepare for the lesson plans and handout for the following day. By the time we were finished it was about 9.30 – 10 pm. Though we were tired we humbled ourselves and sought strength and wisdom from God for the tasks that was ahead of us. Through songs, bible verse and prayer our hearts were renewed and knitted together.

For the next 2 days we taught clinical intervention to 75 medical staff in a new hospital. We spent the last 2 days with 70 teachers in a school. The feedback from the medical staff and teachers were very positive. The official report considered our effort exemplary.

Since coming back I have been asked more than once whether I would ever go back to Heqing? My answer is I don't know. What I know is that in Heqing I had a taste of sharing the lives with nameless servants laboring quietly in the presence of God. I learned a little about prayer and the deep bond of Christian friendship. It was in Heqing that I came to understand the quality of gentleness, hardworking and the eagerness to learn amongst the Bai minorities of China. Although I still don't belong to Heqing, I am no longer completely foreign to Heqing. A young student handed me a note at the end of the first teaching session. It read, "Uncle, I congratulate you on a job well done, I was encouraged not only by what the team taught but also the spirit of love you brought from overseas." When I think of Heqing, I feel peace and joy amidst familiar comfort of a home.



Teaching over 500 students about stress management

Love Never Fails

Lowana Lee

Summer Dew! What a beautiful name - and she was indeed a beautiful girl, refreshing like her namesake. I met her in a city hospital in China. Her story was one of the many that had plucked at my heart strings. She was thirteen years old. She should be young, happy and carefree. Her parents had gone to live and work in a big coastal city to earn more so as to better their living condition, leaving her with her grandparents.



She did not lack anything, except perhaps not feeling being loved. They told me that she had tried to take her life by ingesting pesticide. This was her second attempt. When I saw her, she had balance problem and nerve damage. Therapeutic exercises and splinting can help her physically, but I cannot change her heart. Why was she so sad and depressed that she had to take her own life?...



I saw him in the pediatric ward in a country hospital. They said that he was premature. Though tiny, his limbs and body were well formed. He was beautiful. His parents named him “Strength”, hoping that he would be strong. He had difficulty sucking. His mother was so worried. She was hoping that he would be able to eat and get strong. You could see the concern and then despair in her eyes when he would not take to the nipple. After hunting high and low in the small town, we found a special nipple for him so that he can suck better. His mother became hopeful – but how I wish that she could find and understand that everlasting Hope!...

We met her in the hospital cafeteria. She was only a young teenager, but she was working in the hospital kitchen. She worked long hours. She came from a poor village and was far from her hometown. Her friends thought that she was lucky to get a job in the hospital in town. Normally, a young girl of her age would be going to middle school. She wanted so much to read and write. She had this wistful look in her eyes. Above all, she longed to be loved. How I wish she could find the One who is Love Himself!

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. Love will not cease, it will not be stilled, and it will not pass away – for Love never fails.

Words from Editor - Vienna YY Chan

China is developing at an amazing pace in recent years. The country is looking for various kinds of professional support ranging from medical, English teaching, business, agriculture, community development, etc. Last month, I went to Chongqing to teach English to teachers and students. God's love flows through us to all those we come into contact. Would you like to come and join us? For upcoming short and long term opportunities, please feel free to email Charles Chan, Director of Mobilization, MSI Professional Services Canada at info@msicanada.org or visit our website at www.msicanada.org

China Insight

Fuzhou, China. One of China's newest factories operates here in the basement of an old warehouse. The people working here are 'gold farmers'. Every day, in 12-hour shifts, the 'play' computer games by killing on-screen monsters and winning battles, harvesting artificial gold coins and other virtual goods as rewards that can be transformed into real cash. Affluent online gamers who lack the time and patience to work their way up to the higher levels of gamedom are willing to pay the young Chinese here to play the early rounds for them. One gamer said, "For 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, my colleagues and I are killing monsters. I make about US \$250 a month which is pretty good compared with other jobs I've had. And I can play games all day." This virtual economy is blurring the line between fantasy and reality. There may be well over 100,000 young people working in China as full-time games. (*New York Times*, 15 Dec 05)



The beauty and hard work of rice farming

Answer to China Trivia: The Greek Pantheon