



# Hunan Foster Care Program

## Families Thru International Adoption

**Winter 2008**

**By Natascha Moore and Melissa Haywood**

Chinese New Year is the longest running and most celebrated event in the Chinese calendar. Each year, the New Year falls on a different date than the year before; sometimes a different month! This year, the year of the Rat, the festivities begin during the second week of February.

The legend of Chinese New Year actually takes place thousands of years ago. Ancient folklore suggests that Buddha invited all of the animals to meet him on Chinese New Year. Of all of the animals that were invited, only 12 were present to bid Buddha farewell. As a reward for attending Buddha's farewell, each year was named after an animal in the order that they arrived, thus the lunar calendar was born. The Chinese believe that whatever "animal" you are has a profound link to who you are.

During Chinese New Year celebrations, red is a central theme. The color red is a prevalent theme because red is believed to symbolize fire and drive away bad luck. Wearing black and white is avoided during this time, as it is thought to bring bad luck. Poems are written on red paper, and people will wear a lot of red during the celebrations. Children are given "lucky money" in red envelopes. Early on New Year's Day, children receive lucky red packets called 'Hong Bao' containing sweets or money. Chinese children look forward to receiving these packets. They are usually given by their parents or grandparents, but it is considered rude to open the envelopes in front of the person who has given it.

The first week of the Chinese New Year is very important as families come together to dine on a huge feast just for the occasion. A popular food is 'jiaozi' which are dumplings boiled in water. These dumplings are prepared on New Year's Eve and served right after midnight. Often times, a coin is hidden in one of them. It is thought to bring luck to the person who finds this coin. The dumplings are shaped like gold and silver bars in hopes that they will bring good luck and good fortune. If a family member is not able to attend the festivities, an empty seat is placed in that family member's absence. This elaborate feast is also a way to pay respect to family members that are departed.

We hope that the "Year of the Rat" brings health, wealth and good fortune for all!

### *Countdown to the Olympics*



An unprecedented demand for tickets to the 2008 Beijing Olympics means many who want to go will not be able. All over the world, National Olympic Committees are complaining that not enough tickets were allocated. Beijing organizers said in April that 75 percent of the 7.2 million tickets on sale would be for domestic consumption, with 25 percent for sale outside mainland China. Overall, the Beijing Games will generate about 9 million tickets. However, officials said the domestic allocation was now down to 50 percent, with more tickets going abroad. With the decrease in domestic ticket sales, China's domestic ticketing system crashed when 1.8 million tickets went on sale in the second phase in late October, overwhelmed by 8 million hits in the first hour and 2 million phone calls. Embarrassed organizers scrapped the computer, reverted to a lottery system and demoted the head of ticketing. Tickets are still available. There are many sites online or you can contact your local National Olympic Committee.



## *From Hunan to Home*



By: Stephanie Withrow

About 15 years ago, I listened to a young woman talk about her experience on a mission trip with her youth group. She was one of a handful of American teens from the Midwest that spent a few weeks painting and working in an orphanage in China. This young girl described how her life was changed throughout the course of the trip as orphanage staff gradually let the girls play with the children and hold the babies.

It was the first time I became aware of the many little girls living in orphanages in China. The explanation – they were girls, and China prefers boys over girls. Now, I know that answer is simplistic and simply not true. The circumstances surrounding each little life are varied and complicated. Whatever the reason, my heart was captured, and I knew I wanted to be *Mommy* to one of those little girls. I was 24 years old, then.

Twelve years and many twists and turns later, I paced the floor of a hotel room in Changsha City, Hunan Province waiting for the knock on the door. My husband and I, and the two other families we traveled with, were eating lunch in the hotel just hours after our plane landed in China when hotel staff came to our table with a note. “Go to your rooms. Your babies will be here at 4.” We threw money on the table and ran in six different directions. There was formula to buy, diapers to get, clothes to unpack, camera batteries to charge, gifts to wrap, and pacing to do. It seemed I’d waited my whole life for this moment.



## *From Hunan to Home continued*



Emily Claire was placed in my arms at 4:10 on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003. Then she sobbed non-stop for four hours. It's all been uphill from there.

One month ago, we were thrilled to learn that she had been in the care of a foster family from the time she was about 7 weeks old until the day she came to our hotel room. On the day of her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday party, we were able to show her a priceless picture of herself when she was a tiny baby. A picture we would not have if not for the foster care program of FTIA.

Emily's sister, Grace joined our family in 2005 in Jiangsu Province, and we are anxiously awaiting permission to travel to Nanjing for brother, Cooper. We are grateful beyond words for the love Emily received from caring foster parents and for the commitment of FTIA to China's children waiting for a family.





## *Hunan Story*



*My Mommy and  
Daddy*

Fan Zhi Qiu was adopted by an American family on December 2, 2007. Before the adoption, Zhi Qiu had received a photo album from her adoptive parents. Her foster mother showed the album to her and told her who her adoptive mother and adoptive father were and what her room would be like. Her foster mother also told her that her adoptive parents would come to pick her up soon. She remembered all that her foster mother would tell her. She was eager to see her adoptive parents. She held the album in her arms all the time and didn't want to share it with anyone. She was afraid that other children would love her adoptive parents too and take them away from her. Knowing she was so attached to her adoptive parents, her foster mother was very happy for her. We wish her a healthy and happy life with her forever family.



湛江

*From Zhanjiang*

## Ming Peng—A Good Girl

Zhan Ming Peng was born on December 22, 2005 and placed into her foster family on September 1, 2006. Her foster mother gives her delicate care. Because of her foster mother's education, she has become a very polite and clean girl. One day, she saw her foster mother get a pair of slippers for a guest at the door. From then on, every time there is a guest coming, Peng will go and get a pair of slippers ready at the door. Everyday when her foster father comes home from work, she will prepare the slippers for her foster father, too. She enjoys this job, and if somebody else does that for her, she gets upset. She will ask you to take the slippers back so she can prepare the slippers for her foster father herself.



*From Hunan*



## **Little Wuzi**

Cai Wu is a very adorable boy. Everybody calls him Little Wuzi. He was born on May 3, 2006 and placed into the foster family on December 21, 2006. He has a round chubby face. He is very smart, active and loving. One day, he was watching TV with his foster mother. His mother murmured to herself, “It is so cold. I’d better put socks on”. Without any words, Little Wuzi went to his foster mother’s bedroom and got socks for her. His foster mother was so surprised and touched by his actions. She couldn’t help holding him into her arms and said “Thank you, my good boy.”



## *Continuing Needs*

### **Zhanjiang Foster Care Program**

There were 12 children in the program in October and November, and 11 children in December. In October and November, 1 child was internationally adopted each month. In December, 2 children were internationally adopted. As of December 2007, 29 children have been fostered and 17 children were adopted. There has been a total of \$200 donated this year. The total annual expense for the Zhanjiang program was \$11,018.45.

### **Changsha Foster Care Program**

Forty-one children were fostered in 2007 for the Changsha program. From October to December, 14 children were internationally adopted. A total of 513 children have been cared for in this foster program and 177 foster families have been involved. The total amount donated to the Hunan Foster Care Program in 2007 was \$30,088! The total annual expenses were \$41,333.44.

### **Hengshan Foster Care Program**

As of January 1, 2008, there were 6 children in the program. From October to December, 4 children were adopted. As of the end of 2007, 33 children have been cared for in this program, and a total of 27 children have been adopted.

**Thank you to everyone who donated in 2007. You can see that every penny made a difference.**

\*\*\*\*\*

FTIA can now accept online donations thru Pay Pal for our China Foster Care Programs! You do not have to have a Pay Pal account to use this option. Please go to <http://www.ftia.org/FosterCareDonationButton.asp> and click on the PayPal button. Complete the requested information on your name and credit card, enter the amount of your donation, and click the "Submit" button to complete your payment. This is a secure online site and your information will not be shared with anyone outside FTIA.

