Harvard China Care is pleased to announce its 5th Annual Benefit Dinner and Silent Auction. This November 16th, take a trip from downtown Boston to the jazz bars of Shanghai! This year’s benefit showcases smooth jazz dance and song with a surprising Asian twist. Lined up for the night are dance performances from Harvard’s Mainly Jazz Dance Company and Boston’s premier Asian dance troupe, Dance Revelasian, as well as vocal performances by critically acclaimed jazz vocalist Le Zhang, accompanied by Brian Friedland on piano.

The benefit dinner will open with captivating dance performances by Dance Revelasian and Harvard’s Mainly Jazz Company. Dance Revelasian is Boston’s premier Chinese dance troupe, boasting a group of experienced dancers drawn together by a shared passion for dancing. Mainly Jazz Dance Company (MJDC) is a Harvard College dance company composed of both male and female auditioned members and apprentices. The company performs in a variety of styles, including traditional jazz, lyrical, hip-hop, funk and modern.

Described as a “rising young star” by Tan Dun (Academy Award-winning composer of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon), Le

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China Care Conference

by Helen Yang

On October 2nd, China Care Foundation hosted its annual Clubs Conference in New York City, bringing together almost 70 members from 20 clubs across the US and Canada for a day of bonding and ideas exchange. Helen Yang ’12 was able to attend the conference as a Harvard China Care representative. Through mingling, workshops, and a Subway lunch, students had the opportunity to meet representatives from other clubs and discuss a range of topics, including

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I've been back in America for just over a week now, and I think it's finally time to sit down and pen out my final thoughts about my internship experience.

Though perhaps some of my memories—both sweet and sad—of Bethel will fade with time, I am certain that Bethel's impact on me will remain for the rest of my life.

I'll begin with the bitter so I can end with the sweet. Though the Gauvains are making a tangible difference in the lives of blind orphans in China, it is painful to see how many questions are still unanswered. What is the best way to educate children who are blind or have other disabilities? What are the prospects for these children as they grow into adults? Though most of these children have horrible pasts, ranging from sexual abuse to severe neglect to abandonment in infancy, and though we were complete strangers to them (and Darius did not even speak their language), they clambered for attention and completely trusted us from the moment we arrived at Bethel. We soon found that these children were as generous with their hugs as they were with their smiles, and the ability to easily make a child happy was truly heartwarming. The children demanded very little from us. All they asked for was friendship—someone to lead them through the market, someone to show their MP3 players to, and above all, someone who would take to heart even the smallest things that make a child’s world spin.

In my short 3-week stay at Bethel I fell in love 12 times, once for every child I taught. All of these children managed to touch my heart and it will be impossible to abandon the impression they left on me. Even now, every so often, I find myself calculating Beijing local time, and wondering what those children are up to...

by Robyn Thom

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Reflections on Bethel...

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I'll begin with the bitter so I can end with the sweet. Though the Gauvains are making a tangible difference in the lives of blind orphans in China, it is painful to see how many questions are still unanswered. What is the best way to educate children who are blind or have other disabilities? What are the prospects for these children as they grow into adults? I have no good answers to these questions, and I left Bethel with the realization that there is still clearly much more left for us to do...

And now for the sweet: the children. There really is something magical about the Bethel children. From the moment we met them, they greeted us with open arms, literally. I have never met a group of children so warm and so willing to accept strangers into their lives. Though most of these children have horrible pasts, ranging from sexual abuse to severe neglect to abandonment in infancy, and though we were complete strangers to them (and Darius did not even speak their language), they clambered for attention and completely trusted us from the moment we arrived at Bethel. We soon found that these children were as generous with their hugs as they were with their smiles, and the ability to easily make a child happy was truly heartwarming. The children demanded very little from us. All they asked for was friendship—someone to lead them through the market, someone to show their MP3 players to, and above all, someone who would take to heart even the smallest things that make a child's world spin.

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We had a great deal of flexibility and this allowed us to get more and more involved in the lives of the kids. One of the boys, Jiabao, was smart enough to figure out where we lived (after a few failed attempts) and after that, he followed us around even though our workday had ended... I was touched by the sense of understanding amongst the kids. For those who were shorter, who couldn't walk, another classmate would be there to hold their pen, push their wheelchair, and lend a hand. I am so grateful for this experience because despite the slobber, the pulling, and the hitting, I had an extremely fulfilling purpose—to make these children smile.

-- Wendy Chen

Quotes from Jiaozuo....

“...For arts and crafts, we had told the children to decorate their papers with whatever they liked best. The atmosphere, cheery at first, turned bittersweet when I realized that almost every single drawing included a home. Jiabao’s picture was the most heart-wrenching—it was a picture of himself with his mom and dad outside of their house. His was the only drawing that included a family, and though he never mentions it, I’m sure he still wonders when he’ll get his back.”

-- Isabella Weschler

“...We had a great deal of flexibility and this allowed us to get more and more involved in the lives of the kids. One of the boys, Jiabao, was smart enough to figure out where we lived (after a few failed attempts) and after that, he followed us around even though our workday had ended... I was touched by the sense of understanding amongst the kids. For those who were shorter, who couldn’t walk, another classmate would be there to hold their pen, push their wheelchair, and lend a hand. I am so grateful for this experience because despite the slobber, the pulling, and the hitting, I had an extremely fulfilling purpose—to make these children smile.”

-- Wendy Chen
Jiaozuo Memories

It was the evening of my fifth day at Jiaozuo when I heard a young voice sobbing, “Aiyi! Aiyi!” I followed the sound to the stairwell and saw a little boy several flights above me, walking unsteadily and clinging to the railings. I knew most of the physically disabled children lived on the third floor. Why was he here, lost, crying and scared, on the ninth flight of stairs?

Eventually I learned his story. The boy had been dropped off that afternoon by his surrogate father, who had found him abandoned on the streets and had raised him like his own child, against the wishes of his family. However, pressure from his fiancé and relatives escalated over time until he had no choice but to leave the child at the local children’s home. As the story goes, the two—surrogate father and twice abandoned child—both shed tears as they parted.

While abandonment is a common history for these children, many have hope of being found again through adoption. There is fussy Lanfang, a preemie whose health has thrived against all odds. There is also small, restless Chunyan, an adorable yet fickle drama queen who often cried and threw tantrums. Yet I will always remember the spontaneous kiss she gave me when I leaned in over her crib.

Lin’an was the hardest to say good-bye to. He is an adorable two-year-old, with an innocent face and a ready smile. Suffering from cerebral palsy, Lin’an cannot walk—though he often imitates the motions while holding onto the bars of his crib—and he is also frequently sick; trips to the hospital are a common occurrence. And yet, despite all of these hardships, his smiling face radiates happiness and life.

I still remember when I first buckled Lin’an into the playroom’s indoor swing set. His legs stiffened as they often did, his small feet pointing inwards, and he was clinging to the sides with an iron grasp. Yet when I swung the set, he looked upwards and smiled like an angel.

by Dianne Xiao
**Playgroup Starts New Semester**

by Karen Xiao

We are so excited to begin yet another year of fun, friends and food with Harvard China Care’s Dumplings playgroup! We celebrated the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival with many old friends and new faces at our first Dumplings playgroup. This event is always a favorite among kids, parents, and volunteers alike. We learned about the story of Chang’e and the origin of the Moon Festival through a fun play acted out by the volunteers. There was even a special appearance by some of our little playgroup participants as the ten suns in the sky and the bunny rabbit! We also made origami rabbits and ate delicious mooncakes.

The theme of our second event was Chinese tea, and we sampled different types of teas such as Green, Jasmine, Raspberry, Oolong and our favorite, Bubble Tea! We also learned about the history of tea and some tea customs such as tapping your fingers on the table as a sign of thanks when someone pours you tea. The kids then decorated their own teacup and made a Chinese emperor hat.

For our third Dumplings of the semester, we had a lot of fun learning about Chinese games and acrobatics. We watched some videos of Chinese acrobats who could do everything from balancing parasols on their feet to balancing on their heads! It was so cool that we all got up and tried difficult balancing tricks with parasols and handkerchiefs ourselves. However, when that proved too difficult, we did some stuff that was slightly easier like Chinese jump rope and spinning handkerchiefs. Still, we got tired pretty quickly, so we sat down to make our own Chinese paper dolls and mini parasols.

It’s been such a great start to Dumplings. We are excited to share even more fun times with everybody at Dumplings!

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**Mentoring Celebrates Moon Festival**

by Yuying Luo

The kick-off event for the 2010-2011 XiongDi/JieMei Mentoring Program took place on October 3, 2010. We were very excited to return again after a relaxing summer. This year, the program welcomed twenty-two mentor-mentee pairs, which include many returning pairs.

The theme for the event was the Mid-Autumn Festival. Although Mid-Autumn Festival was actually celebrated a week earlier on September 22nd, we held a belated celebration again with everybody. We learned all about the history, traditions and legends of the holiday. Everyone also actively participated in a mini-Chinese lesson in which we learned a few characters related to the Mid-Autumn Festival. Mentors helped ensure that their mentees were able to pronounce the words and write the characters as well. The mini-lesson was a success and we hope to include a brief Chinese lesson in every single event from now on.

Also new this year is the introduction of red folders which everyone had the chance to decorate at the first event. We hope that they will use it to keep all the informative handouts we have designed for the events. After learning all about the holiday, mentees enjoyed a variety of activities including origami, word searches, and other arts and crafts activities. And of course, a celebration of Mid-Autumn Festival would not be complete without mooncakes! Everyone enjoyed snacking on delicious red bean and lotus mooncakes from Chinatown.

We hope those who attended the first event thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We look forward to another exciting year of the mentoring program! If you have any suggestions or feedback for our events, please do not hesitate to email us!
The China Care Project

Combined with funds raised from last year’s benefit and other fundraisers, Harvard China Care has been able to fully fund a Special Care Nursery Unit at the China Care Home in Beijing. Situated in the heart of Beijing next to some of the best hospitals in China, the unit is ideally located to care for fragile orphaned infants both pre- and post-surgery.

Since this past May, the unit has cared for over twenty-five infants. They have ranged in age from a few months to a year, and have come from orphanages from all over China, from northeast China to central and coastal provinces.

All of the children in the unit are medically fragile. Some were born with developmental defects like anal atresia, in which the rectum is malformed, or spina bifida, in which the incomplete closure of the neural tube causes part of the spinal cord to protrude through the bone.

Already there have been several success stories: Zhuangzhuang was born with a heart defect and anal atresia and has undergone surgeries to care for both defects. Bona was born with a heart defect and has recently undergone a successful heart surgery. Boxiong was born premature and has been steadily gaining weight. All are currently recovering in our special care unit.

In total, we have been able to provide care for 26 orphaned infants in China. We hope to continue to be a part of their stories in the coming year. This would not have been possible without your generous support!

Contact Us
Harvard China Care
Student Organization Center
at Hilles
Box # 109
59 Shepard Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
E-mail
care@hcs.harvard.edu
Website
http://hcs.harvard.edu/~care

HCC 5th Benefit Dinner

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Zhang is a critically acclaimed jazz vocalist. A scholarship student and graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, she currently studies at the Aaron Copland School of Music, where she recently won the Sir Roland Hanna Memorial Award for jazz performance. Le Zhang is currently an active performer in both the New York and Shanghai jazz scenes, and we are excited to have her here in Boston. Her arrangements of Chinese traditional music in a modern jazz context are capturing the attention of the American and Chinese public alike.

All proceeds from the dinner will be donated to cover the operational costs of a special care unit in the Beijing China Care Home, which provides individual and professional care to medically fragile orphans both pre- and post-surgery. Funded in collaboration with the Jenzabar Foundation, our unit opened this past April and has already cared for over 25 infants, many of whom are now on their way to recovery. With your generous support, we hope to continue this worthwhile endeavor.

Last year’s Fall Benefit, which raised over $30,000, featured acclaimed singer-songwriter Dawn Xiana Moon and keynote speaker Xing Hu, the China Domain Manager at the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations at Harvard University. We would like to extend an invitation to all our friends, families, and supporters to join us again this year. Together, we can make a difference.

China Care Conference

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fundraising ideas, how to raise campus awareness and how to increase collaboration between clubs.

“Because this was my second year attending the China Care Conference, I met some familiar faces and some new ones,” says Yang. “It was really nice to meet these students because we are all dedicated to the same cause.” Especially since this year is China Care Foundation’s ten year anniversary, Yang says she “definitely left with a renewed sense of awe for the work we all do.”

You’re Invited...

HCC’s 5th Annual Benefit Dinner

when:
November 16th
7 to 10 PM

where:
Lenox Hotel
61 Exeter Street

website: www.hcs.harvard.edu/~care/benefit2010/

Contact Us
Harvard China Care
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Box # 109
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E-mail
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