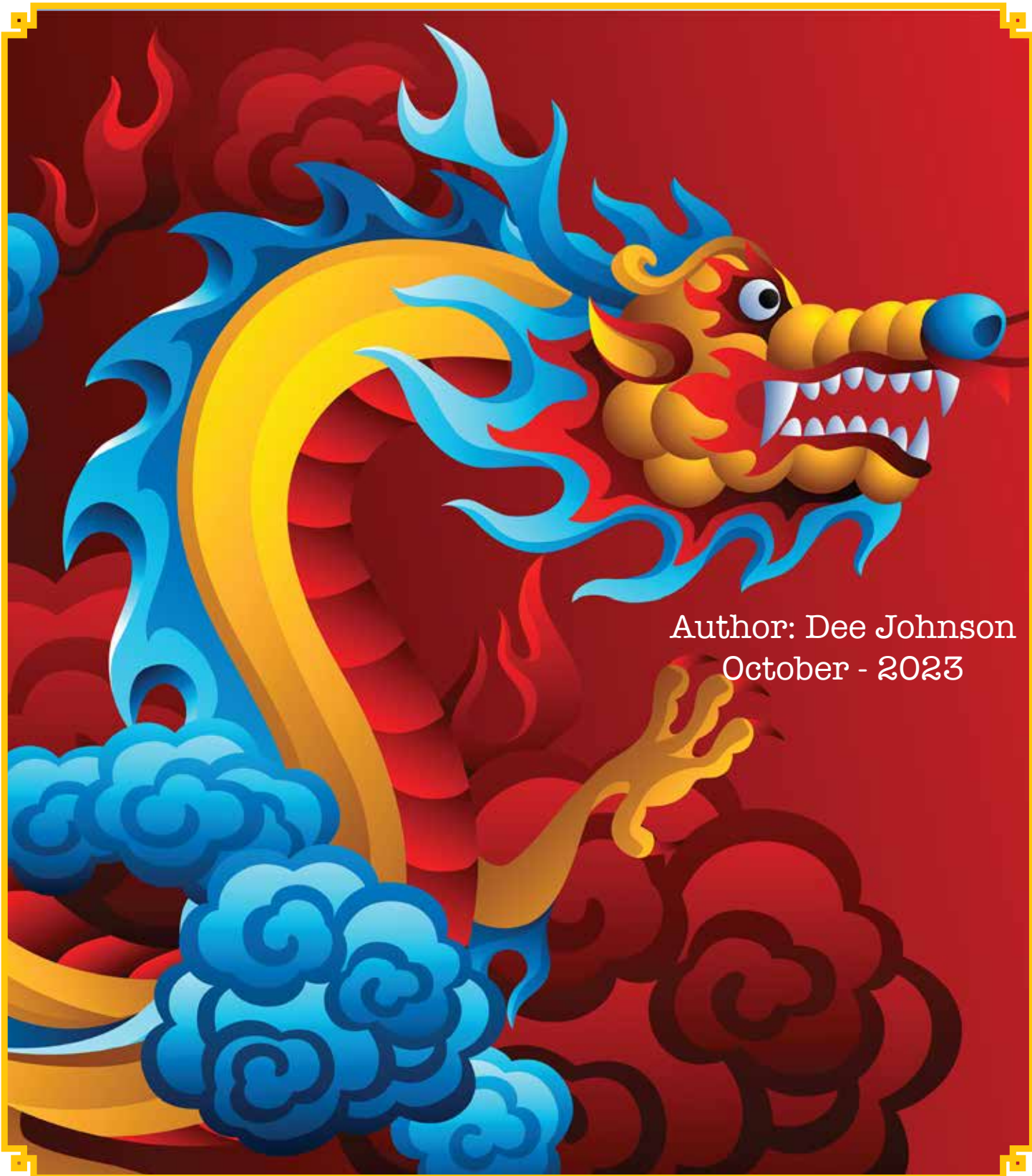


# My Trip To China

## DMACC - 1992



Author: Dee Johnson  
October - 2023

# CHINA TRIP 1992 - ITINERARY

## **SATURDAY MAY 9:**

Dolores (Dee) Johnson: Program Chair - Commercial Art

Curt Stahr: - Full Time Photography

John Ward: Program Chair - Printing

Departure - Des Moines International Airport

**9:30 A.M.** - Depart via United Flight 686 to Chicago, United Flight 881 to Tokyo, Air China Flight 952 to Beijing

**SUNDAY MAY 10:** (22 hours later) **10:10 P.M. - ARRIVE BEIJING, CHINA**

## **MONDAY MAY 11:**

**Beijing** - Nice Weather

**A.M. - TEMPLE OF HEAVEN - TIAN AN PARK**

**P.M. - FORBIDDEN CITY, Tian An Men Square**

**EVE** - Beijing Duck Restaurant

## **TUESDAY MAY 12:**

**Beijing** - Misting/ raining

**A.M. - GREAT WALL - P.M. - Ming Tombs**

**EVE** - Writing post cards & letters home

## **WEDNESDAY MAY 13:**

**Beijing** - Beautiful Weather!

**A.M. - THE SUMMER PALACE**

## **THURSDAY MAY 14:**

**Beijing** - RAIN - RAIN - RAIN!

**A.M** - Friendship Store -

City Shops and Stores

**EVE** - Packing for the next leg of journey

## **FRIDAY MAY 15:**

Enroute via our van & driver to City of **BAO DING** (Rain but clearing later).

**A.M.: ZHUOZHOU CITY - Carpet Factory - HEBEI CARPET IMPORT & EXPORT CORP**

Oriental Enterprises Group Co. Ltd. **P.M.** - Drive to Boa Ding

**EVE** - Welcome dinner in hotel - meeting with city officials and friends of Bob Yuan (Photographer from Bao Ding Daily News)

## **SUNDAY MAY 17:**

**A.M. - P.M.** Boa Ding - Hot and Windy - Medicine Festival in An Guo, (City of Chinese herb medicine - We were on T.V.

**EVE** - Walk in the City

**MONDAY MAY 18:**

**BAO DING** - Warm & Dusty

**A.M.** Park of the Elders, Childrens Athletic Training School, Hebei Art School

**P.M** Bao Ding Daily Newspaper - Drive to Shijiazhuang

**EVE:** Tai Grand Hotel,

Welcome dinner with City Foreign Affairs Official

**TUESDAY MAY 19:**

**SHIJIAZHUANG** - Warm & Clear

**A.M.** The No. 1 State Printing & Dyeing Mill, Hebei Advertising Agency

**P.M.**-Hebei Educational Teachers College

**EVE:** Chinese Opera - A woman played the male lead.

**WEDNESDAY MAY 20:**

**SHIJIAZHUANG** - Hot & Clear

**A.M.** Buddhist Temple - Chinese Universal Studio Movie Set, **P.M.** Art Museum **EVE-**  
Farewell Mongolian Hot Pot Dinner - Dance Party - Meeting with Naros Student - 11:00

**P.M.** Leave our driver Jau - Via train to Xian

**THURSDAY MAY 21:**

**XIAN** - (12 1/2 hour train trip)

**P.M.** - Tour of The Big Goose Pagoda, History Museum

**EVE** - 100 Dumpling Dinner (actually 17 courses)

**FRIDAY MAY 22:**

**XIAN** - Hot & Smoggy

**A.M** - Terra Cotta Soldiers, Emperors Huaching Hot Springs Bathhouses & Gardens

**P.M.** Walking on top of the city wall (very hot), Shopping Street, Open Market,  
Mongolian Soup.

**EVE** - Tourist Musical Play & Extravaganza, Night - Open Market Food Street

**12:00 A.M.** - Train to Beijing

**SATURDAY MAY 23:**

On the train - Arrive Bejiing 4:30 p.m. - Hot Dry!

**EVE:** Last Night in China - Friendship Store - Farewell Dinner with Chinese Friends

**SUNDAY MAY 24:**

**BEIJING** - (Oh What A BEAUTIFUL MORNING!)

**7:55 A.M.** Depart via Air China Flight 951 to Tokyo - United Flight 882 Tokyo to Chicago -  
United Flight 789 to Des Moines

**SUNDAY MAY 24:**

7:55 P.M. - DES MOINES, IOWA (24 HOURS LATER)

**HOME SWEET HOME!**

# CHINA TRIP 1992 **MY JOURNAL**

**SATURDAY MAY 9:** Dolores (Dee) Johnson: Program Chair - Commercial Art, Curt Stahr: - Full Time Photography, John Ward: Program Chair - Printing

Departure - Des Moines International Airport

**9:30 A.M.** Depart via United Flight 686 to Chicago, United Flight 881 to Tokyo, Air China Flight 952 to Beijing

**SUNDAY MAY 10:** (22 hours later) 10:10 P.M. - Arrive Beijing, China



## **MAY 9, 1992 - DATE OF DEPARTURE**

The day finally arrives after nearly 15 months of planning. **FRIDAY WAS RATHER FRANTIC** getting all of the last-minute details taken care of - renewal of driver's license, new glasses, prescriptions filled, teeth cleaned, haircut, and half packed. So hard to know what to take but it's all in 2 bags plus 2 carry-ons and 1 gift bag. We finally depart for the airport at 7:30 A.M. bidding farewell to my skunk-smelling dogs and my comfortable dwelling.

**7:50 A.M.** - Check-in. We are informed that we can only check 2 bags and 1 carry-on. I stuff the gift bag in with my shoes in Dana's huge red and gray gym bag and the hostess tells us that the carry-ons are O.K. Relief - it was to be an extra \$97 for each bag to Beijing.

**9:15 A.M.** - Farewell to my family - very tough because of trying to keep the tears away - my older son was even there to say good-bye, nice of him to come out. Mother's Day is tomorrow.

**9:30 A.M.** - Departure - UNITED FLIGHT 686 to Chicago. It's a beautiful spring day - it is easy to see all of the different varying colors of greens and the patchwork of farm fields from the air even from my seat in the middle between John and Curt. John is by the window. We have 3 seats just behind the wing. We are all nervous but grateful to be having the opportunity for the trip. An opportunity of a lifetime that will - change our lives forever - we've been told in our pre-trip meetings with Bob Mickel who lived in China for 2 years and taught in a college we will visit.

**10:30 A.M.** - Arrive Chicago - Pretty uneventful but I am very glad for the luggage carrier to transport my carry-ons. We have an hour and one-half to take-off so we find a small restaurant area to wait. Beer is \$3.00 a glass. One beer is plenty. The airport has really changed since my last trip here. It is very clean and well organized for travelers. There seem to be duty-free products for sale in an area next to the main terminal. Cigarettes, perfume, and other such items are being purchased by travelers. We aren't interested in carrying one more item with us.

**12:45 P.M. , CENTRAL DAYLIGHT TIME** - Depart Chicago for Tokyo on UNITED FLIGHT 881 - A huge 2 decker plane with about 300 seats. Not Every seat is filled but we are crammed into a small area about half-way back in the tourist section - row 45 seats A, B, & C - with an aisle on the side. I am on the aisle - John is in the middle and Curt is by the window for this 14-hour flight. The seats are narrow, and we are tightly cramped from front to back with very little room to stretch out in any direction. The angle of the seats goes back only a small way, but we are furnished with a small pillow, blanket, and gray soft socks to wear for the trip. The man in front of us has made this trip before - he says that you should sleep early in the trip so that you won't have trouble when you arrive the next night. He is a seasoned traveler, about 35 years old and sitting in the middle right directly in front of John. He spends the trip drinking first vodka martinis, then orange juice, water, coffee, and more alcohol. He talks big deals to any willing ear, and we find him to be quite annoying but entertaining. His seat in row 44 has leg room because it is in an exit area. He says he always asks for this seat on the plane. Can't say I blame him.

We are all tired but can't sleep on the first half of the trip. I didn't sleep much Friday night because of all the nervous jitters of the trip. Things are already starting to change - many foreigners on the plane and don't speak English. A Japanese man sleeps with his entire head out in the aisle and people are practically having to step into the seat of the passenger across from him to get through. Announcements are in English and Japanese. We can communicate but it will become more and more difficult as we get closer to our destination. Service on the plane is excellent - a warm washcloth before dinner - free drinks - good food (2 meals served - American supper and breakfast - plus snacks in-between.

**IT'S JUST SO DARN UNCOMFORTABLE!** There are many channels of taped music so Dana's inclusion of the tape player is not necessary at this point. I listen to Jazz and find it to be quite good. 14 hours is a long, long flight - The view from the window while over land is wonderful. Canada is very different to see from the air with many evergreens and sparsely populated where we flew over in the North/Western U.S.A. territory. **ALASKA** mountains are fantastic - all covered with snow - the terrain is very rugged with very little signs of population. Curt does not have time to get any photos but vows to take shots on the way home - this turns out to be a mistake. Once we leave the land area there is very little to see out the window - just water-water everywhere. Most of the shades are drawn and now people are thinking it's nighttime and IT IS according to our body clocks. The Adam's Family movie is awful, and the only audible channel is in a foreign language! J.F.K. comes on after and the sound is finally in ENGLISH on the right channel, but we are all asleep and miss most of the movie. We get about 2 hours of sleep - sitting up - it's hard not to keep looking at the watch with no numbers to try and figure out the exact time when we cross the International Dateline, but we are soon over halfway into the flight, and I decide not to worry about it once in China. Breakfast is served sometime near 10 hours into the flight, and we enjoy our last American food. John

and Curt have the Quiche and I have a fruit plate. I am trying also to take Ann's advice on not eating too much to avoid jet lag, but this also doesn't turn out to be appropriate for me. and Curt have the Quiche and I have a fruit plate. I am trying also to take Ann's advice on not eating too much to avoid jet lag but this also doesn't turn out to be appropriate for me.

#### **4: 15 P.M. Finally in Narita, Tokyo.**

Touchdown is welcomed. We are confused and lost - guards are preventing anyone from going into the airport terminal without first going through a baggage x-ray custom check and we carry our bags from one direction in a circle until we finally get accurate advice. It is 4:47 when we finally check in for take-off with a Japanese agent at the counter of Air China. She speaks English but is quite frustrated at our late arrival and keeps asking us if we came in on a Northwest flight. She can't seem to find our luggage and tells us that it may not be transferred to Air China so to be prepared to that it may not arrive with us in Beijing. By this time, we could care less and just want to get on the plane for Beijing. A transport bus loaded with



foreigners - I guess that's us now - takes us to the plane and we are seated in the middle of the plane full of passengers headed for Beijing. The plane is due to take-off at 5:00. Most attendants speak English after a fact, but we are in the minority.

**5:20 P.M. - AIR CHINA FLIGHT 952** takes off headed for our final leg of this 22 hour journey. After take-off I discover that there are 2 empty seats over by the window and I quickly move to be more comfortable. This trip has been very hard on my body. The view is of a purple sunset over what looks to be a mountainous region. **WE ARE IN CHINA!**

I am anxious to land in Beijing. The service on the plane is adequate but not overdone and now English is the second language. A documentary type show is playing on the screened TV and all of the language is foreign to us. The taped music channels are classical and other foreign music. I fall asleep quickly and get about 1 hour of sort of rest until they come down the aisle with the serving cart. The dinner meal is my first exposure to foreign food - REAL FOREIGN! Dinner is some kind of chicken pieces, shrimp salad, rice, processed cheese, coffee, tea, fruit and Coke - which is served in a friendly manner. A warm washcloth is also served before dinner. This is a very nice touch - one which should be adopted in America. After dinner we are given reports to be filled out to declare our take-in items over \$50 U.S. There are very few

things to declare - only the tape player, camera, recorder, and wedding rings on my part. Later on, we discover that none of this is necessary to declare and never does anyone look through my carry-ons.

**9:00 P.M. China time - WE ARE LANDING! IT IS DARK AND THE STAIRS ARE UNLIT!**

I manage to stumble down the stairs and drop everything in the process. The airport, which is about 100 yards from the plane, turns out to be DA LING- a very sparse military controlled facility. A very nice-looking young American couple are in front of us in line and they say this is something unexpected for them although our flight plan does say 1 stop. They turn out to be from the American Embassy in Beijing. They have been there for 9 months and are just now returning to their jobs from a 2-month holiday in San Francisco. They seem to be very unhappy with the landing and express their distress. We fumble for our passports and declaration papers to show to a guard in the terminal. Curt is the only one in our group that is stopped by the guards to search his bags. He has a camera tri-pod that looks suspiciously like a gun in a bag that is opened at every possible stop-search. After a 30-minute wait in a holding area we prepare to get back on the plane. The luggage rack on wheels is impossible to get up the stairs but I manage to carry the whole thing on the plane. John has misplaced his boarding pass and spends a few anxious moments searching for it but finally finds it and gets back on the plane. Heaven forbids that he would have to remain in Da Ling for the remainder of the trip. Getting resettled in our seats I discover an American girl from Pennsylvania who is sitting in front of Curt and John, so I move over to talk to her. We are almost there! Her name is TISH, and the purpose of her visit is to play in Beijing. She seems to be very liberal in her ideas. Seems her cousin was working on the pipeline in China and met and married a Chinese girl and opened an American restaurant called - **FRANK'S PLACE** by the **JIAN GUO HOTEL** on the eastern gate to the city. We are invited to come over for a visit, but we never make it - too busy once in Beijing. She gives me advice as this is her second trip to the city some of which I find amusing and later factual. Such as the fact that babies are bare bottomed for training purposes - a sight that we all photographed on many occasions during our trip.



**10:10P.M. -BEIJING TIME-11:10 A.M. IOWA TIME-LANDING-RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!**

We are thrilled to see our luggage coming off the moving ramp like those found in any airport anywhere. The sight of the airport is not one worth mentioning because we are so happy to be on the ground. It seems that there are not very many people here and we collect our luggage and look for our interpreter. Zhang -John- Chao -Chow- has a DMACC sign and John greets him first. We are relieved to be met by someone who speaks our language so well. There was a very good possibility that Chao would have not been able to meet the plane because he was in a meeting in another part of China and didn't know if he could make it back in time. He has been traveling to meet us most of this day. We are very glad to see him! He is accompanied by Yuan Bao -Bo- Sheng -Shung- our soon to be Chinese guest photographer - and Zhao -Jau, we are advised to call him- Rei Sheng - our driver who would be with us for the first 10 days of our visit.

The airport is some distance from the **HEBEI GUEST HOUSE** hotel, but I am so thrilled to have successfully completed this journey I just can't begin to describe my feelings at this point. Chao -we soon learn to use his first name, as their names are reversed here- is excited to have us here at last and he is willing to answer all my silly questions on the way to the hotel and in the next 15 days. I feel that my conversation is quite animated but it's very difficult to hide the excitement in being in such a far-away place. It's difficult not to be looking for similarity in the surroundings but we have been advised to - leave our Western Logic at home-. One of the first things you notice on the trip to the center of the city is the tree lined streets. Trees are poplar, willow, and something they call the Scholar tree. It is about 11 :00 P.M. Beijing time and streets are lighted but rather quiet on the trip to the city. We are riding in a van which has 4 seats but will easily seat 8 people. My station in the van is always directly behind the driver next to the window. John and Curt sit in the back bench type seat and Chao sits next to me on another bench type seat. Seats are covered with a light-colored cotton fabric which we will see throughout our trip covering chairs, sofas, and other pieces of furniture. The hotel seems to be in an alley off the narrow city street. The lobby is not spacious but adequate with a circular cushioned seat around a pillar in the middle of the area. Our rooms are on the 9th floor with views of the city. At 1:00 a.m. we retire.



**HEBEI GUEST HOUSE HOTEL**



## **MONDAY MAY 11:**

**BEIJING** - Nice Weather

**A.M** - Temple of heaven - tian tan park

**P.M** - Forbidden City, Tian An Men Square

**EVE** - Beijing Duck Restaurant

**5:00 A.M.** - Wide awake and ready for the day. The windows of the room are open to the air. No bugs - it is very dry. City life begins around 6:00 A.M. I am particularly interested in seeing birds since we have been told not to expect many. The first birds are pigeons in flights up and over the tops of buildings around the hotel. I can see pagodas in the distance and wonder if this is the style of architecture here in China. Later on I find out that these are temples.

**8:30 A.M.** - Wide awake and ready for the day. The windows of the room are open to the air. No bugs - it is very dry. City life begins around 6:00 A.M. I am particularly interested in seeing birds since we have been told not to expect many. The first birds are pigeons in flights up and over the tops of buildings around the hotel. I can see pagodas in the distance and wonder if this is the style of architecture here in China. Later I find out these are temples.



**TEMPLE OF HEAVEN INTERIOR**

**9:00 A.M.** - Leave for the Temple Of Heaven. It is in a park on a hill. Very Impressive with gold decorations everywhere - ornate interior - colors only the Emperor was allowed to use - RED, GREEN, BLUE, AND REAL GOLD (straight from the bottle). Today is cloudy and about 55-60°. Everything here is on the metric and centigrade system. It is so dry. We aren't cold here. Color is everywhere. The children are beautifully dressed - most in bright colors with ribbons in their hair. I am asked to take my photo with a gentleman and all are teasing me but, later, John has a similar request from a girl so we get even. I hand out M& Ms to children and we take lots of photos. Girls in wedding dresses of purple, lime green, and orange are celebrating their special occasion by touring these national monuments. Families are prevalent here. The elderly men gather in a covered walkway to sing ancient songs accompanied by musical string instruments and other hand made rhythm devices. I have taped the music. Others are playing a game similar to our chess with animals as the players. They move swiftly through the game as though they had played it every day of their life. In the park, we discover an old woman picking through the sparse grass for herbs to cook and there are dandelions. John says the

roots probably came through from home. No Kidding! The evergreen trees are very old and symbolize long life.



John Ward  
Dee Johnson  
Bob Yuan,  
Curt Stahr

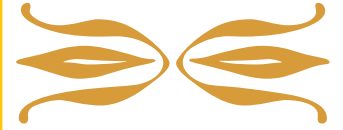
### TEMPLE OF HEAVEN

**12:00 P.M.** - Back to the hotel for lunch and then off to The Forbidden City and Tian An Men Square. We walk for miles, and I have left my walking shoes in the room - STUPID MOVE. 9900 rooms are in the Forbidden City complex where The Last Emperor was filmed and where the last emperor lived with his huge family and support group. Many museums - old relics - signs are in English (much to my astonishment) with many misspelled words. I find it interesting to find so much English here.



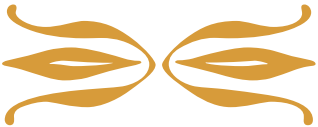
### FORBIDDEN CITY

**5:30 P.M.** - Dinner at a local Beijing Duckling Restaurant. They are very proud of this tradition. The restaurant is really a building with many floors and dining rooms. Each dining room has 8-10 large tables for 8 people, and they are filled every night with reservations. We are very tired from the long day, and I must fight to stay awake during the meal. The duck is served along with the usual variety of dishes and courses on a lazy susan. We drink beer and coke with the meal. After dinner we return to the hotel, and I am in bed by 8:00 P.M.

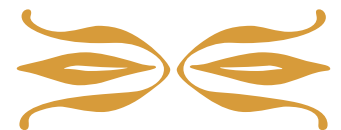


**CARVING  
THE DUCK**

**TEMPLE  
OF  
HEAVEN**



**DUCK  
DINNER  
IN  
BEIJING**





## **TUESDAY MAY 12:**

**BEIJING** - Misting/ raining

**A.M GREAT WALL - P.M** Ming Tombs **EVE** - Writing post cards & letters home

The experience of a lifetime! (on many bucket lists) Raining - lots of steps - climbing - people everywhere - seems everyone or every family has a camera - very commercial - selling tee shirts and memorabilia on the wall at many places - very steep in spots - exhilarating - exhausting - wet - cold - spirited - colorful - noisy - car overheated - on top of a mountain called Swallow Mountain - trees on top - wall stops in places or is blocked off from entrance due to unsafe conditions - Zhang Chao is my lifeline - Curt & John are separated from us when I see Mohammed Ali on the wall. He looks at me but sees nothing comprehensible.

**12:00 P.M.** - Lunch at the Ming Tomb - wonderful place - lots of expensive gifts - furs, jade, porcelain, et. My hologram pin is a big hit with the clerks and most people who see it. Vendors yell at up "Hello American" and name their product. More walking in the afternoon and it is muddy. I photograph footprints in the emperor's walkway - interesting design - concrete underground vault - most of it is not original but replica. Signs in English - Magpie birds in trees near the tombs - uneven walk surface around the tomb - peaceful walk on the avenue of the gods and animal statues - a huge turtle structure in the building with actual handwritings of the emperor on a tablet signifying Long Life again.

**EVE:** Dress up for dinner - writing post-cards - in bed by 10:00 P.M.





## ON THE GREAT WALL

The above photo was taken with a Kodak instamatic panoramic camera that I bought before the trip. Unbeknownst to me, my son Dana had already taken 3 or the 4 photos it came with so this was a one-time lucky shot of the Great Wall. It was raining and only one person in the photo! Pretty Amazing!



Also on the Wall was

**MOHAMMED ALI** with his entourage.

I took this photo as well with my film camera. He looked happy but there was a blank facial expression that revealed his failing condition at the time.

It was a surprising encounter!

**WEDNESDAY MAY 13:**

**BEIJING** - Beautiful Weather!

**A.M - THE SUMMER PALACE** - Pavilion for Perceiving the Spring - Hall for listening to Orioles - Lunch in the Emperors Dining Room - Longevity Hill - Suzhor Shopping Street - Park

**P.M.- EVE** -

After the boat ride we tour a marble boat that the Empress has built for her children to play on. We have lunch in the Emperor's dining room near the Hall for Listening to Orioles. We meet Zhang Chao's friend and I gift my first watercolor print and one of Curt's photos (at this point we are doubtful that we will be able to give them all away and be left carrying them all over Hebei Province).

We are certain to take much more home than we have brought with us.

**SO MUCH FOR LISTENING TO THE ADVICE OF OTHERS!**

**DRAGON BOAT TO PALACE**



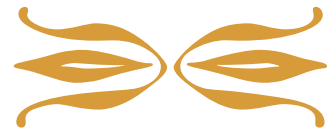
**BRONZE OX**



**MARBLE BOAT**



**HALL FOR PECEIVING SPRING**



We are honored guests in a private dining room - gold silk embroidered material covers the chairs and bright fuchsia azaleas are on the table. We are told that the Empress ate here in this very room. The service is impeccable.



**EMPRESSES  
DINING ROOM  
WHERE WE  
HAVE LUNCH  
AT THE  
SUMMER  
PALACE**

Three girls wait on us and serve dish after dish of food. The variety is incredible. There are cold dishes from spiced meats and vegetables to special steamed little buns in shapes that will give you wealth, happiness, health, and of course long life (to name a few). Each bun is shaped differently, and some are filled with a flavored fruit jam which we are told is made from apple, soybean, and pear. There is a very sweet tiny cake also made from soybean. The second course selections are hot fish, chicken, beef, and pork with a bowl of rice and a wide variety of hot vegetables and mushrooms in sauces. The trick to perfecting your chopstick performance is to pick up a button mushroom with your chopsticks and get it to your mouth before it skittles across the table or onto the floor. You must pace yourself at every meal to keep from overeating. At this meal we are also served small dark brown fried whole baby birds with heads and beaks intact! I didn't eat the head, but the meat was quite tasty. A soup of some blandness usually follows everything and sometime fruit soup or plain fruit. We have had NO TEA served at any meal yet. Tea is always available in the room. Later, we read an article written by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. who took the same trip as ours and ate in the same dining room. He describes his experience.

“Our party is given a splendid banquet at the Summer Palace. It is an enchanting spot - a large lake, artificial man-made hill, palaces dotted with pagodas, bridges of different shapes, weeping willows, lotus leaves growing by the water, a long-covered walk by the water's edge (the painted Covered Promenade-Chang Lang). We dine in a place called “Listening to The Orioles Sing”. Many courses - the dessert is silver ear, a tree fungus said to be excellent for high blood pressure and much eaten by the old.”

After lunch we take a short break and I meet a large group of women from Finland - only 8 hours from Beijing. They speak English quite well. The climb up to the top of the man-made hill is horrible. I have chosen to wear a black silk blouse this day with a linen blazer and there are times during the climb when I must stop to catch my breath

and mop the moisture from my dripping face. The steps are made of rock but not a planned-out distance apart or between and some of the angles are sharp and quite high. By the time I reach the top, my blouse is completely soaked, and the sweat is pouring from my forehead so profusely that I can't even keep my glasses on to see. The view is spectacular - rooftops and the little boats on the lake seem to be like toy boats from this distance. There is a breeze! John, Curt, and Bao Sheng are nowhere to be seen so we go ahead and climb down the other side of the hill. They eventually answer our calls and come down to join us. From there we go to a shopping street that lines a river. There is an admission price for this too. All tickets are purchased by Bao Sheng who seems to have a bankroll of Chinese money. Even in the U.S. currency the tolls are not cheap. This trip would be costly if we were paying for it ourselves.



### **SUZHOU MARKET STREET AT SUMMER PALACE**

The shops are all specialty shops where tourists can purchase anything from Jade to kites. I'm impressed with a man hand lettering a Chinese character in outline form without using a pattern. My only purchase is some postcards.

The walk back to the van is lengthy but flat and through a park. We pass an elderly couple sitting on a bench sharing an afternoon nap and they are content to enjoy a peaceful moment in the park. The park crew is watering the newly planted trees which are held up by bamboo poles. It is quiet there but more construction going on in the remainder of the park. The special treat here is to buy a round of bottled cold (Yes I said COLD) water for everyone. The price is about 14 yuan for 6 bottles or about 75¢.

### **THE TASTE IS REFRESHING AND A WELCOME TREAT FOR US ALL!**

The afternoon is complete by a trip to the Beijing Zoo. The zoo is disappointing, barren, dirty, and sparse. Many of the exhibits were empty and had no water available for animals. The water exhibits were so scummy that there were no animals in sight. The pandas (a main featured attraction) were painfully bored and sleeping with their eyes open through dirty glass (which we have come to expect on most of this trip). The most interesting exhibit was of pygmy monkeys the size of mice. The best kept exhibit



was the giraffes and they seemed to be in a better kept part of the zoo. On the walk back to the van, I took a photo of a baby with the bottom cut out of his pants. A common sight to us by now. I AM VERY TIRED and ready to return to the hotel. Dinner is to be outside this evening.



**EVE:** Dinner outside the Grand Hotel. The food seems better than usual - homemade spicy noodles, dumpling soup, rice, pork, chicken, and more. Little stands line a row near the front of the hotel. Variety galore - seems expensive to me but we are their guests as usual. Umbrella tables and white lawn chairs like the ones from home provide a relaxing atmosphere for our meal. The driver seems to be more at home with us even though he speaks no English. There is a book in the van. After the first course we walk to yet another street where more food is being cooked and eaten on the spot. Curt is extremely full but John and I try an egg dish like a miniature omelet cake - HOT & GREASY. Topped off by fresh pineapple on a stick (delicious). The venue is noisy and smelly but very interesting and a good experience.

The night walk to the Tian An Men building is nice. It is a perfect night and what a sight to behold! There must be a million lights outlining the building. Chairman MAO smiles at us from his lofty painting. Back to the hotel and in bed by 10:30 P.M.



## **THURSDAY MAY 14:**

**BEIJING** - RAIN - RAIN - RAIN!

**A.M** - Friendship Store - City Shops and Stores

**EVE** - Packing for the next leg of the journey,

**BEIJING** - raining much harder than Tuesday. Today is to be our day! We are shopping and resting. Our last day here until the Friday before we leave to go home. We are ready for our next experience.

The shops and stores are packed and rather unsophisticated. Can't believe the number of shopper here. If their economy is so poor, how can they afford these prices? Hundreds of people pack the aisles. Zhang Chao stays right with us all the way. I buy a ladybug pillow and stapler, a silk jacket for Lee, and a silk shirt for Dana. This afternoon we will rest and tonight we will shop again.



### **FRIENDSHIP STORE IN BEIJING**

**EVE:** Shopping tonight was fun. Found some superb values at the Friendship Store which was more like an American store with Chinese products. Some prices were quite high. \$118 Yuan for a small basket of stuffed pigs (almost bought it) but decided instead to buy some silk pajamas for \$80 Y and an embroidered robe for \$80Y which I still wear here at home. I was able to use my Mastercard but ran out of time because the store was closing. We were able to return here on our final day to shop some more. In this store Chao does not need to accompany us because all of the clerks speak some English even though they are not anxious to wait on us. It was raining very hard while we were shopping. We had a great laugh at the thought of Curt being left behind at the airport while 9 million Chinese citizens crowd past him.

**WE FIND VERY LITTLE COURTESY HERE IN BEIJING!**



## DAY 5 - FRIDAY MAY 15:

Enroute via our van & driver to City of **BAO DING** (Rain but clearing later).

**A.M.:** **ZHUOZHOU CITY - Carpet Factory - HEBEI CARPET IMPORT & EXPORT CORP** Oriental Enterprises Group Co. Ltd. P.M. - Drive to Boa Ding

**EVE** - Welcome dinner in hotel - meeting with city officials and friends of Bob Yuan (Photographer from Bao Ding Daily News)

On the way to **Bao Ding** city we are in a traffic jam where a 90 minute drive turns into 2 1/2 hours. It is raining again and even harder than before. The city limits for Beijing reach at least 90 minutes from the hotel. We might think we are in the country because of all of the farms. Not a single inch of land is wasted here. Grain and other crops are planted as near and far as we can see. Traffic still consists of bicycles, trucks, cars and vans but today we are seeing combines, tractors and trains.

We have a tour and lunch at a carpet factory. We meet the manager who is a young man. We find out later that his father is a high ranking Communist Official. He gives us a tour of the showroom and one small plant area where the rugs are hand made at the rate of one per year by 6 girls pulling silk thread through a backing material which is an off white color. The rugs are all silk and breathtaking. They even have touches of gold thread and are a minimum of 1" thick. Other products are sold by this corporation including pottery made from porcelain, enamelware, furniture and other arts and craft items including **JADE** of course. Jade seems to be the main offering here but I haven't seen anything I want to buy or can afford. They will ship rugs to us in America if we want to buy.



**SILK HANDMADE CARPET**

**LUNCH** is quite pompous and we are introduced to a man who will be opening a branch of his business in Los Angeles. He is older and speaks English well. He is interested in our business connections if any. I swear we have been promoted as "wealthy Americans". The way we are treated and featured at every venue has been so unexpected. The manager is bored with us and obviously only going through the motions. He does not ask me one question during the graciously served meal. We are introduced to a wonderful white wine called "Great Wall". During the plant tour we change vans and I crack my head severely getting out. This has been a common occurrence for me throughout the trip. I have bumped my head and tripped about 5 times each day. Chao very calmly just says "Watch Your Head, Watch Your Step". He is very patient with me and the others are just used to it. Our exchange of gifts at every place we visit are prints of a watercolor drawing I did of Des Moines and from Curt a black and white print. We receive black enamel vases as we depart for Bao Ding.

**3:00 P.M.** Arrive at Hebei Guest House in Bao Ding. It is a very nice hotel with large rooms that are twice as large as the hotel in Beijing. There is a large ceramic tiled bath and entryway to the room. The bed has silk bedspreads and comfortable guest chairs. It is a relief.



**MY ROOM IN  
THE HEBEI HOTEL  
NEAR BAO DING  
CITY**



**6:00 P.M.** Dinner is the most entertaining meal we have had to date. The chair of the city and a photography director for the Bao Ding Daily newspaper are our hosts for the evening. We learn to “Gum By” which is a bottoms up toast of a strong white liquor. The food is traditional Chinese fare. Cow stomach, whole shrimp, crab, whole fish with bones, an endless variety of vegetables and meat. The strawberries are now in season and many are grown in this province. The photographer is offering one toast after another to Curt and getting sillier by the minute. He is very animated. We invite them to see some of Curt’s photography after dinner. The lighting is so poor, even with all the lights and TV on in the room you can still barely see. They have invited us to visit the newspaper on Monday before we leave the city. It seems to be quite an undertaking to change the schedule but Chao gets it done and Boa Sheng makes the necessary arrangements. We do laundry here at the hotel again and I even manage to put up a string clothesline in the large bathroom. We are out of Woolite and will have to buy more or use shampoo to finish out the trip. I’m sure they could care less what we wear or how we look! To them we are

## **AMERICANS** (Opportunity).

**SATURDAY MAY 16: BOA DING -**

**A.M.** Rain,

**P.M.** Sunny and Bright **Western Royal Tombs of the Qing Dynasty**

Drinking the last of my bottled water from home. Their boiled version will have to do. The thermos in my room is not keeping the water hot as in Beijing so I will warm my water by setting the cups on the travel iron. John’s adapter seems to have burned up yesterday so he will have to use mine. The electric appliances don’t work the same here than at home. Have only used the curling iron once - am getting by with my hair clean and drying naturally. The fashion here seems to be wash and wear. Should have left most of my clothes at home. If I were to do this trip again I would definitely take only 1 bag and 1 carry-on. The camera is a must and 2-3 changes of

clothes. The rest could stay at home.

We had a trip to view the Western Royal Tombs of the Qing Dynasty in Xian where we get the real taste of life for ruralism China. Haven't seen one tourist since leaving Beijing. We are really in the minority - what their term is for people of China is lesser numbers. The trip up and back was an education in and of itself. The masses of people working on roads, in fields, along the train track, building brick buildings in towns and villages, cooking and eating food, (seems they eat all the time everywhere we go), carrying heavy loads, watering, and sometimes they are just resting - (saw a man sleeping in rags just along side a railroad track) This is life for the peasants in China. They must collect rain water and boil it for drinking and cooking. Even saw people washing clothes on a rock in the stream. Children are beautiful and happy and mostly colorfully dressed. Chinese people, for the most part, have beautiful skin. The young girls we have waiting on us are gorgeous with smooth complexions and shiny black hair. In the city, I have seen some girls with perms, but I'm sure this is somewhat of a rarity. The tombs were much like those of the emperor in Beijing but less in repair and gave me a feeling of less tourism. Took lots of pictures.

Lunch in the resting place for the emperor and empress introduced me to my first Chicken Feet (tastey) We are eating so much greasy food - I am sure I have gained a ton of weight. I must diet when I get home (more than a fat chance). Every day we have a meal or even two that are served with real china and silverware at white linen covered tables that have a rotating center lazy susan where the food dishes are available throughout the meal. The restroom facilities are all varied. I asked where the one was here and was told to walk back by the garden. Well, I took the walk past fountains, flowers, plants, and it was about a block from the dining area. It was an open pit in the ground where you had to squat to relieve yourself. NO WAY was I doing that. Two chinese girls were squatting completely down over their pits. My legs and knees do not bend this way even though I had used an outhouse at my Dads farm growing up - this was just not going to happen! Lost the urge to go and held it until we got back to the hotel. So that experience was Fancy to Ridiculous with a new understanding of life in China. Will tell you later about the overall restroom experiences.

After that extravagant lunch, we toured the tomb of Chong, emperor who died in 1908 - they have an actual picture of him and the tomb and coffin being built and delivered. What a feeling to stand here next to history. Afterwards, the tombs of the concubines were saddening but very peaceful. I must see the movie The Last Emperor as soon as I get home. HOME HOME is a wonderful place. I LOVE IT HERE, but I will never be back again! John Ward (Program Chair of Printing) is in love with this place, and he may get to return. He is still very young (in his 30s) and has many years ahead of him. Curt will go on as before - visiting other places and deciding for himself and telling stories that fascinate his students that are totally made up. The trip back was exhilarating. We were in the mountains, and the views were peaceful and wonderful. The Strawberry Market was wonderful! All in all, a perfect day!



**SUNDAY MAY 17: BOA DING** - Hot and Windy

**A.M. - P.M.** Medicine Festival in An Guo, (City of Chinese herb medicine - We're on T.V.

**EVE** - Walk in the City

We are celebrities in a small city. I thought we were going to a festival, but we were honored guests! I sat in the front row with all the officials and was introduced as a member of the important guests from America. We were televised throughout the opening ceremony, and as we walked through the crowd looking at the herbal medicines (including dried grasshoppers, scorpions, and flowers and other things I did not recognize. WOW! What an experience - a person could get used to this! There were dancers in full-dragon costumes dancing in front of us and beating drums and music. The day was perfect, and I even brought home a silk flower bouquet that I have in my bedroom window to this day. It catches the breeze, and the little flowers dance reminding me of this festival.



**MEDICINE KING**

After a tour of the medicine market, we were hosted at a lunch in the Mayors Hotel in the downtown area in a special room with a huge table with fruit and tea where we were again welcomed to the city. We were advised what to eat and what not to eat by our interpreter as some of it had powerful medicinal effects. We were served sea urchin and many herbs and other spices and drank a very potent liquor they called Qizhoudaqu which was 55% alcohol. We were welcomed to the city once again by very friendly people. We felt honored and were impressed by it all. On the ride back, we took pictures in a peasant cemetery - We were hot and dusty, but it was a wonderful day.



**MONDAY MAY 18: BAO DING** - Warm & Dusty

**A.M.** Park of the Elders, Childrens Athletic Training School, Hebei Art School

**P.M** Bao Ding Daily Newspaper - Drive to Shijiazhuang

**EVE:** Tai Grand Hotel, **EVE:** Welcome dinner with City Foreign Affairs Official



**BOA DING NEWSPAPER**



**CURT GETS A HAT**



Sunday (yesterday) is the only day of rest for most workers in China (although we saw people working). I got up at 4:30 a.m. (my right leg is really bothering me every day - taking 2 Advil). We are leaving Boa Ding today. We took an early trip to a park where we saw the elders exercising. It was wonderful seeing how flexible they are. We had two tours in our career fields - The Art School (where we felt very much at home) and The Boa Ding Daily News (where I lost my sun glasses). At both places, we were very welcome and would be able to work out an exchange easily with no problem. We also visited a kindergarten school where children performed for us in unison at 4-6 years old. The school system operates much like ours except for much dust and dirt everywhere. Each day, we were feeling quite filthy by the end of the day and even took cold showers just to get it off. Today was hot but now, (Tuesday A.M.) it is cool and very nice here at the Hebei Guest House in Shijiazhuang (Our Sister City). This hotel is across the street from Zhang Chaos office. (They are playing a morning bugle) The first shower all trip for me - electric plug in for 110 in bathroom - light you can see by - 2 telephones in the room - many of the things we expect to find at home - wonderful! The man we meet at dinner is Zhang Chaos subordinate - he has many connections in Iowa and lived there for 9 months in Dubuque. He is very casual, and we are treated like royalty in a private dining room in the Grand Hotel. We ate french fried scorpion, dog meat soup and shark fin, and other things we can not mention for dinner. The hotel is fabulous, and we are told it will serve 10,000 guests a year - many who will be from America.

We finished the evening by drinking potato beer in the bar of the hotel and watching people and laughing - our latest night yet - 11:00 p.m.

7 TIMES  
FALL  
DOWN.  
8 TIMES  
STAND UP.



## HEIBEI ART SCHOOL

This experience was in my area, so I was thrilled to get to attend classes in the Art School, even though the students were mostly copying from art already done by someone else. They gave us pottery vases as gifts which were broken before boarding the plane for home. The poster contest winner was the one with the 8 at the top. My choice also.



## TYPICAL DINING

In the evening, we were hosted by the City Officials where many different plates of food are served on a rotating circular lazy-susan.





## **TUESDAY MAY 19:**

**SHIJIAZHANG** - Warm & Clear

**A.M.** The No. 1 State Printing & Dyeing Mill, Hebei Advertising Agency

**P.M.**-Hebei Educational Teachers College

**EVE:** Chinese Opera - A woman played the male lead.

Today we will tour the fabric printing plant and college. We will call home - looking forward to it! I do miss everyone so much. (Written later) Called home at 7:30 a.m. - the call will cost \$80 or \$75 Y which is the exchange rate at the bank today) Great to talk to everyone! Sounds like things are okay at home - so much to talk about when I get home. American breakfast of fruit, juice, and toast (their bread is wonderful) & coffee with sugar. Ate with a fork for the first time in ages. We will miss the meals with our new friends - we have become quite close being together all of this time. Boa (Bob) Sheng has even started telling American jokes and is feeling more at home with us all the time. The printing plant was impressive! The structure here is very family oriented. Even though a couple may have now only have one child to continue being paid a monthly family allowance, they are very close. We see many families together, especially young couples with nice clothes riding their bicycles in the evening or mothers and babies or young children playing on a trampoline in the park or riding scooters (little battery operated cars) around in a plaza. During the day, there are elders caring for babies, but most of the time children aged 4-18 are in school from six days a week.

## **THE WEEKLY SCHEDULE IN THE CITY IS VERY STRUCTURED:**

Up at no later than 6:30 (a loud radio broadcast announces each day)

**MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY: 7:00 A.M.** Exercise for everyone - parks, plazas, office buildings - everywhere (same music every day)

**7:15** Go to work - Most ride bicycles or very full buses. **7:30** Breakfast

**8:00** Workday begins. Many people live close to their work or even in the same area where there may be apartment buildings which do not have elevators so they walk many levels of stairs. **12:00** Break - Home for lunch or with friends **12:30-6:30** Work

**6:30** Dinner **7:00 P.M.** Walk, Watch TV **9:30-12:00 A.M.** Bedtime

**SUNDAY** Same time arise, Wash Clothes, Go to park - visit friends & family.

**9:30-11:00 P.M.** Usually go to bed.

The schedule will vary greatly during winter or on holidays. As the American teachers have expressed - families come first here, and time is not as strict. Travel to and from work cannot be predictable (unless you work in a factory - on a shift)

(Back to our day) Lunch at the hotel was very friendly - just the six of us - basic Chinese food - we feel very relaxed now - off to the college in the afternoon.

The college is much like the Art School and other places - dust everywhere. We are ushered into a greeting room where we are amazed to meet two American teachers from Wartburg College in Forest City, Iowa. The President of the college (who remembers Ann Schodde (responsible for arranging our visit and the exchange) is kind and warm. He speaks limited or no English but has 2 young interpreters who are excellent. One who has lived in Des Moines studying at Grandview for a year speaks English very well. The two Americans are going home in two weeks after a year here. and they are anxious to leave. They show us computers with Windows programs on them. and no

one knows how to use the operating system as the instructions are in English. They let us go to their apartment in another building which was really sparse in furnishings, but they are Missionaries and expected to have only basics. They have never seen the reception room we were in. They have a lot to tell us - mostly all BAD - they are so ready to return to America. There are many opportunities for us here and everywhere we go. They are very interested in exchange programs.

A newly equipped Advertising Agency in Shijiazhuang has a complete set-up with no designers. It would be an excellent opportunity for an exchange. It is the most well-equipped studio we have seen and is clean and new.

After the evening meal, we go to the Chinese Opera! Colorful, loud, and crowded. We sit on hard folding chairs in a hall that has a staged area up front for the performers. The closeness makes me very tired, and I am exhausted after this day. We left this event early, and they wanted to go to a karaoke place (they love these). Again, it was loud and crowded. I was wanting to go to my room to just get some rest. Tomorrow we will drive to the Western Tombs of the Chong Dynasty. We also visited a school for children, so this day was packed with activities)

### **WEDNESDAY MAY 20: SHIJIAZHUANG** - Hot & Clear

**A.M.** Buddhist Temple - Chinese Universal Studio Movie Set,

**P.M.** Art Museum

**EVE-** Farewell Mongolian Hot Pot Dinner - Dance Party - Meeting with Naros Student - 11:00 P.M. Leave our driver Jau - Via train to Xian.

Up early - we have sort of a choose-it-yourself breakfast buffet. There is Chinese & American food - quite informal. We have a choice of tea or coffee almost everywhere. The morning visit is to a Buddhist Temple where a very large Buddha towers over us and another with 10,000 different faces. We are also shown a mini-Universal Studios where a major new movie is being made and where the displays are pretty clean. The city (Chao tells us) has set an example for all of the province on how tourism can improve the economy. They are in the process of making another film here, so they will have more to attract visitors. The sites of the Buddhist temples and the movie sets are packed with food and trinket stands. Everywhere we go, there are people selling things. A very tourist-oriented city. Back to the Hotel. Our rooms must be vacated. We hurry to take showers and pack for the long voyage to Xian (Sheeann). The afternoon is spent at a local Art Museum - very old relics from certain dynasties - we are impressed with a Jade shroud for King of Zhongshan, Liu Xiu (d. 57 BCE), in the National Museum of China, Beijing, China. There is also a room filled with long hangings of calligraphy. After the museum (which is cool inside) we go shopping for two hours. I bought only 2 tapes, (very beautiful music I am listening to now on the train ride), some Sumi brushes, bookmarks, and paper flowers similar to the ones at the medicine festival in Anguo. Curt and



John buy tapes, silk scarves, and John gets his wife a purple, silk blouse. Shopping is very difficult without an interpreter - next to impossible. The people are so packed in the stores, and there is only one place to pay on most floors. People wave money and change slips at the money collectors desperate to pay for and collect their purchases. Many department stores have 4-5 floors - the only way up is to walk the stairs - true in almost every building we've been in. (The Americans at the college were living on the 4th floor (top) of their building and most, all classrooms are 4 levels too). Side Note: No one is fat here - have seen only a few pudgy people. It is hard to believe, but they work, eat, exercise, and no one is fat. Most of the people with extra weight are some higher up officials or elderly people, **I FEEL SO FAT!**

At about 4:30, a very strong wind whips through the area, and we are bombarded by dust. We quickly duck into another store. The wind lasts only a short time. There is little in these stores we want to buy - we are killing time until dinner reservations. We walk through an enclosed open market - they are selling meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits, breads, and all sorts of non-edible products. The stench is terrific, and we nearly gag from it all. Furniture in a side area is painted and decorated with a colored enamel finish typical of most we have seen. We are told that a complete bedroom outfit will cost from \$500 to \$2000 Yen. Not bad by American standards.

**TIME FOR DINNER.** This is a nice atmosphere - all of us in one booth. The decor is mainly black and white decorated with greenery and flowers. In the center of the table, a pot is buried and the waitress fills it with water and assorted vegetables while Chao orders the meat we will cook ourselves. The meats come on small plates, thinly sliced, and they vary from beef, chicken, pork, fish, to lamb. The trick is to eat as soon as you can after the meat is dropped into the pot so it will not overcook and be tough. It is great fun to try to stab the thin pieces with a little meat fork while the water is boiling and rolling. Most of the time, a spoon must be used to extract the the meat for ease of serving. It was a nice evening, and all-in-all, a nice way to end our stay in Shiziaruang.

After the meal, we went to a place near the new Tai/China hotel where we met Naros two sisters. Sister or brother in China may only mean good friend or relative, so you have to ask. We enjoyed hearing Chao sing Karaoke and Naros sister number one in a duet. Everyone dances to Michael Jackson - I'm Bad (actually in English) and other varied music videos. Girls dance together and the music is everything from Polka - Waltz - Disco. No partner for Disco - just everyone out on the floor. They love Karaoke, and we find many places where it is the main feature.

**SIDE NOTE:** America is becoming the favored country so all Russian signage is being replaced by English, and the spellings and grammatical errors are pretty funny. You could have a full-time job just helping with the conversion.



## **THURSDAY MAY 21:**

**XIAN** - (12 1/2 hour train trip)

**P.M.** - Tour of The Big Goose Pagoda, History Museum

**EVE** - 100 Dumpling Dinner (actually 17 courses)

The train trip is 12 1/2 hours with multiple stops.

Note: At the beginning of the trip, they cover all the seats and benches with white cotton material to absorb the coal dust coming from the open windows. The train runs on coal. The restrooms are all public and multi-sex. A person soon loses the need to use them, especially by the end of the trip.



About the best part is that you can stretch out & walk around. Curt & John sleep on the morning stretch. I spend the time talking to a famous Chinese Calligrapher and illustrating poems he writes for us all. We were also visiting about the meanings behind their names and colors and the typical day which I have recorded on an earlier page. It passes the time and made the long trip much more bearable. The scenery outside was pretty much the same except in the mountains where we saw earth dwellings and ancient villages/ walls of dirt and holes dug back into a hill where people were living. Everywhere there is grain planted in terraces, on small patches of land, sides of the roads - any & everywhere they can stick it. Other vegetables appear too like onions, tomatoes, cabbage, and daily staples, but mostly all grain everywhere. Some is turning quite gold now and ready to harvest next week or first part of June. Chao knows exactly when the grain harvests occur in different parts of the provinces. He is quite knowledgeable on history and answers most all of our questions either on-the-spot or closely afterwards as he has a Chinese/English dictionary and can look up the references.

**12:24 A.M. ARRIVAL IN XIAN** (She ann) We are met by Mr. Yuang (2 we call him) - very Americanized and can speak English better than Chao. His driver (a Mel Torme look alike) is very dark skinned and almost looks like a different nationality. The hotel is quite American, and we even have plug-ins in the bathroom for the 110V (a definite first), a bullet shower and hot water all the time - even out of the tap in the sink. The view out my window is of an apartment building and another building where people have a few residences. After dark, when we get back from the evening activities, I spend nearly an hour looking through binoculars and getting an education on Chinese life in the city.

**XIAN** is the most commercial and the most developed city so far. We are on a whirlwind tour of the city. A late lunch in the hotel and off for tour - the city is laid out in a square with a wall on all sides and a bell tower in the middle.

**OUR FIRST STOP** is a Buddhist Temple the Big Goose pagoda. Lots of Americans and other white faces. We are not thrilled with the many tourists. Curt is approached by a young Chinese man wanting to go to America and a beggar woman with a very young child wanting to exchange her money for F.E.C. Chao just told her where to go, and eventually she left us alone. The temple was pretty much like most except they were burning incense, and a couple of Buddhist worshippers were praying.

**SECOND STOP** - a brand new museum - BEAUTIFUL - probably one of the nicest museums I've ever seen anywhere. Many very old artifacts - Yuan (2) was our guide. and he took us slowly through all the dynasty periods at an excruciating slow pace. The prices in the museum gift shop were outrageously high. Outside, they had grass of some type (first we've seen in China) unkept tufts of it in the middle part of the museum but grass none-the-less. White faces everywhere in the city.

After the museum, we had a dumpling dinner. They are famous for this in Xian. We were 1/2 hour late for our dinner, but it worked out. This restaurant makes 170 different kinds of dumplings - each shaped differently and filled with different fillings - some vegetable, plain, and spicy meats of all types - even sweet sour and hot dumplings. They are served in round bamboo steam baskets, and 1 for each person at the table. No sauces are provided until the last dish has been served. The meal is quite filling, as all have been, and we are quite full by the time we finished all those dumplings.

Finally, back to the hotel for a shower - to wash off all the dirt and grime one more time! Refreshed, we walk for a way to the Bell Tower hotel - a very American hotel - expensive and everything in English. The evening wraps up about 9:45 - we are exhausted. My view (as I said earlier) is of life in a couple of buildings nearby. The roof of a lower building is covered with trash - bottle - cans - bricks (a common practice) - boxes, etc., piled high. Through binoculars, I can see (Alfred Hitchcock's Rear Window like) windows of family life. A young man watching T.V., a grandmother, daughter & child cleaning up after supper and eating leftovers, an elderly couple sewing a bed cover & then going to bed with the lights on, and a young man washing himself outside his back door, Coal dust belches from a chimney nearby, the windows of my room are filthy as are all the windows on the train or anywhere we have been except the museum today. (Give it 3 months). It is hard to believe how they deal with personal hygiene in all this dust. Also, many people smoke and are in apparent good health. After watching for about 45 minutes, I sleep very well. I have had no problem getting a good night's sleep since I brought my pillow. It makes a **BIG** difference!



## **FRIDAY MAY 22:**

**XIAN** - Hot & Smoggy

**A.M.** - Terra Cotta Soldiers, Emperors Huaching Hot Springs Bathhouses & Gardens

**P.M.** Walking on top of the city wall (very hot), Shopping Street, Open Market, Mongolian Soup.

**EVE** - Tourist Musical Play & Extravaganza, Night - Open Market Food Street

### **12:00 A.M. - TRAIN TO BEIJING**

Another whirlwind day - up at 6:00 a.m. - breakfast at 7:30 - off to our first stop by 8:15. The main attraction here are the Terra Cotta soldiers - discovered in 1974 accidentally by a farmer digging a well - they are life sized in a dirt pit 300 strong, and the number being discovered is on the increase. The story goes that the emperor picked a site for his tomb at the age of 13, and workers spent 37 years constructing the area. After construction, all workers were sealed in the tomb permanently so that no one would ever reveal any details about the area. The discovery has brought visitors from all over the world including 600,000 each year. Many are tourists from Japan (500,000), and there are new hotels going up which are jointly owned by Japan/China or other countries and China to help this area. The pit is impressive. but not awesome - too many tourists! Curt manages to take pictures even though he has been told NO PHOTO throughout the pit viewing. It is very easy, and we all take a few shots without flash. I have no idea what they will be like without looking in the view finder. All-in-all, it is rather disappointing and way too touristy for my taste - 3 or 4 deep around the front rail by the pit. It is nearly impossible to get the full effect from where we could see. Out of there in about 30 minutes after a 12-hour train trip plus another hour travel to view this sight. (Reminds me of a time my family traveled nearly 3 days to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon only to spend about 90 minutes there because of a rain-storm) My only purchase is some playing cards for 5Y. A different gift (to say the least) but many were available - including jade which is now out of sight in price and quality. (I remember it being considered junk when I was in high school) Can't believe this gemstone is now a national treasure. I have quite a few pieces at home - guess they are worth a lot now. After a tour of the how-they-did-it-all museum, and the gift shop where photos of all the prominent people who have visited the site (Presidents and High Officials from all over the world), we move on to an unearthed tomb for a brief stop. A woman approaches me with a bright multi-colored quilt called a 100-cloth design - she shies away from a photo, and I never did find out how much she wanted for it. I wanted to buy one but never had the opportunity after that as we drove quickly past all the stands selling along the road near the attraction. (learned a little lesson that day)

Next was the Hot Springs bath houses and gardens where we were greeted by Pomegranate trees with bright orange blooms. The bathrooms where the emperor and empress reclined in the hot spring water. The lower levels were barren, dark, and dingy concrete - not an exciting place at all to visit. I am sure the colorful clothing of the people at the time would have made it far more impressive. The outside of the dwelling is ornately decorated. There is a small pond and a stone boat, not unlike the marble boat at the Summer Palace. Many people are here, and it's quite hot inside.

We leave to find a quiet place for lunch. We find a place nearby, and it is just perfect. Quiet and only one other group in the place. Most often we eat on the second floor of a multi-story building. This is no different. There is a large and very expensive gift shop on the first floor. Hanging plastic grapes greet us in the entryway. The food is spicy and Mongolian recipes and other dishes we are getting more accustomed to and of course warm Pee Joe (beer). After lunch we look around a little, and I find a watercolor drawing of grapes that I want to buy. Mr. Yuang (2) talks them down to 80Y which is supposed to be a good buy. It is a well-done piece entitled Summer Harvest in the Emperors Temple - painted by a Yang Guottin from the Nan Xi(she) province. I am pleased. I find out later that Mr. Yuang has made more than one DEAL at lunch. Chao tells me that the meal cost only \$20 American (very reasonable). That would be only 108Y for 6 people - quite a bargain. My purchase was probably the first sale of the day - a young man seemed excited to sell it. and he was not the artist - only assistant manager of the restaurant. Still do not know why. The print was mounted on the wall with thumbtacks so definitely not a treasured piece of art, but I love it. (Hanging in my home here 31 years later)

We go back to shower and pack one more time for the train. A last shower - it is really getting hot outside now, and the hot shower is like a hot bullet (no way to adjust). Packing and moving are getting to me. I am about 15 minutes late for our 4:00 p.m. departure. We are going to walk on the top of the city wall. It is a hot barren dusty place with a few tour groups and the usual vendors. Here we see the old and new architecture and the top floor of some dwellings a little below the wall where there are two German Shepherds sleeping and pots of flowers and plants amongst the dingy surroundings. Down on the lower level, we walk across a suspended bridge and see our first running water. It is gray/green pouring out of a pipe into a shallow stream. Trash floats on the non-active side of the bridge. A young couple is posing for pictures with a statue of a guard - they are having fun. We are hot and dirty again.

The next event is a touristy performance at a very nice theater - laser lights & beautiful costumes adorn the actors and actresses. I use my last small tape to record the music (NOT ALL OF IT) This place is just for foreigners! Chao & Boa Sheng do not think they will get to stay with us as all Chinese are expected to sit upstairs in another place. This is quite strange to us, and we insist they stay with us. It is so different to see so many white faces here (about 500 I would guess) - they are videotaping and photographing Curt. Many speak a strong accented language - they are mostly 50 or 60 years old. Some people next to us are rudely talking in French during the performance - it is very irritating because the performance is beautiful. There are lots of wonderful costumes, dancing, gymnastics, and special singing and playing of instruments. The performance lasts about 1 1/2 hours, and we are captivated throughout. It is the story of the Han Dynasty and shows how the emperor chooses an Empress. Of course, they look nothing like the original royalty. IMPRESSIVE - Curt takes lots of pictures with his fabulous camera. After the performance, Mr. Yuang 2 meets us outside in the van (he has seen this many times - a repeat performance every night for 2 years (except for Winter), and he takes a lot of guests. Then we view the Open Market Food Street area. Vendors are cooking on the top of open grills - some boiling pots too.

Noodles of all kinds. We return to the van for our ride to where we will have supper. We get out to walk, and Chao goes searching for my teacups with lids. They are found in a small dirty open shop where a grandmother and grandson work alone. The pattern is black background with white edges and Chinese roses all over the cups and lids. I must look carefully over them all to pick out ones that are not chipped. 20 Y for 4 cups. In the back of the store, they are wrapped carefully in the daily paper and tied together with red plastic string. I walk through an open food and clothing market that has live snapping turtles, frogs, and every kind of fish imaginable. It is decent compared to others we have been in - but no sale. Supper is on the 2nd floor of a Mongolian restaurant that dates to 1908. The decor is quite old, but a new air conditioning unit pumps cold air into the room. We are relieved to be in the cool air even though we drink warm beer again. The meal is the usual plates of cold dishes but there is a twist. Tonight, we are served large bowls into which we tear up hard bread into pea sized pieces, and the waitress whips them away to some unknown place where the soup awaits. I am having fun with my stress card from Better Homes & Gardens - We find that Chao is occasionally stressed. My reading has been blue (calm) the entire trip. Our driver for Xian is also in the red (tense) category. They explain it all to each other and even the waitresses get into the act. After the cold round, we are served meat dishes, and everyone seems full when they bring the bowls back full of our steaming souped-up bread! More spices - hot and pure seasoned GARLIC cloves (very strong) are added by individual taste. (Rice is the same way - add what you want and enjoy). One bite into the garlic clove, and I know instantly what we have been smelling on people as we were shopping. An odor would hit us occasionally and you would wonder what it was - **NOW WE KNOW!** It is not an unpleasant odor, but it's very strong and different -

**NO MORE GARLIC FOR ME - THANK YOU!**

Things are so backward here! Only one Ad Agency in the entire province and that one in Beijing, so they must go to Hong Kong for printed materials - a very long way.

**GOODBYE XIAN!**

**SATURDAY MAY 23:** On the train - Arrive Beijing 4:30 p.m. - Hot Dry!

**EVE:** Last Night in China - Friendship Store - Farewell Dinner with Chinese Friends  
We are on the train all day long - we write, listen to music, sleep, and rest. Breakfast is white bread and jam (AGAIN) - coffee and hot milk. The place is a little cleaner because we are the first ones on the train. The restroom is horrible by mid-trip because the stool has no water flow in it - a mess to say the least. Lunch is in our room - rice, beef & veg - shrimp, veg, chicken with veg, and warm beer (Pee Geo). After lunch, Chao & Bao Sheng give us our Chinese name. Curts is Long River History - Johns is Intelligence, and mine is DaLin (Beautiful, Colorful Singing Bird). We tease John about Smart Ass, and he get Boa Sheng to give him a Chinese term for Shopping Maniac for me. We are finally back in Beijing - the train station is terrible - the worst crowd yet! We hire a van to take us to the Friendship Store for shopping one last time. I buy a 14K gold ring that was so soft it did not last long once I brought it home. Also, some silk PJs for my son, Dana, and a beautiful butterfly sequin blouse for my daughter, Deanna, which she NEVER wore. Time flies.



**6:15 P.M.** Check in our old hotel - rooms on the same floor (9) - a lucky number for them here in China; although we are told marriages all take place on even numbered days for luck. I am in room 901 - the air conditioner is even on - cool air, but no time for a bath. Supper is served in only a short time. This meal is probably with less pomp and circumstance than most. We eat on the first floor in the Chinese food restaurant - just the 5 of us now. The food is pretty much standard fair and more warm beer. They agree to have a beer with us later after Chao goes to see his brother.

Back to the room for a hot shower and shampoo in the postage-stamp sized tub. My last night in China! Cannot wait to get home! **HOME - WHAT A WONDERFUL PLACE!**

**9:00 P.M.** We get together in Curt & Johns room for beer and peanuts. They have tipped the young store owner 16Y (he closes down for the night) Curt is giving all his extra money to Chao & Boa Sheng - he hates the idea of having to change it back. I will change mine because I just cashed a travelers check (STUPID MOVE). I thought I was going shopping later but NOT. Just goes to show - things do not work out the way you think they will. This evening Boa Sheng is quiet. Chao says he is sad to have us go. We are too but we are READY! At 11:00 we say goodnight.

**4:00 A.M.** - Awake and can not sleep any more. Up and packing for the last time to leave.

**6:30 A.M.** - Goodbye to Hebei Hotel and on the way to the airport. Beautiful trees, shrubs, roses and sculpture line the street to the airport. Missed all of this on the way in. Sort of a surprise to me as has been most everything about this trip.

### **SUNDAY MAY 24: BEIJING - (OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING!)**

**7:55 A.M.** Depart via Air China Flight 951 to Tokyo - United Flight 882 Tokyo to Chicago - United Flight 789 to Des Moines

**7:15 A.M.** - AAt The Airport - it, too, is under construction - a whole new front is being added. Boa Sheng goes ahead to get a couple of luggage carts. They are something new since I first traveled - a sort of grocery cart for luggage. Chao loads our suitcases on the carts and proceeds into the airport lobby. On the way he manages to drop my things twice (it breaks every vase I have received as gifts in China, but my husband Lee is able to repair one lamp. Chao seems very nervous as am I. The line for money exchange is hectic, and people are impatient. Cannot believe all the rigmarole to get money here. You must fill out forms, show your passport and Visa, show receipts, and wait and wait and wait! First one clerk verifies your passport and information then another counts your money - not once but twice. The exchange money is counted back, and all copies of carbon papered forms are stamped. I get back \$137 (no coins). They seem to keep a bit of the exchange money every time - pretending they cannot exchange to smaller currency. Only at the hotel in Beijing did the girl give me some of their plastic penny-like coins. They seem to be worthless (like my print). and I left them in the hotel room for the room servants. Money finally exchanged - we bid farewell to Boa Sheng who apparently does not have the authority (Chao has a special red card) to pass this point. By the way, it costs 60Y apiece to get back into the airport at Beijing. We were told 15Y so it's gone up since then. Curt had given all his \$ to Chao & Boa Sheng so Chao pays for our tickets. Boa Sheng is sorry to see us go. He has become quite close to us and especially John during these past 2 weeks. He takes my hand and says GOOD FRIEND. He will need a lot of practice to be able to survive in America. Chao will help

Once inside customs, we check in our luggage and bid Chao goodbye (John says he was teary eyed) - he seems very quiet to me. I ask him if he is going for breakfast now? He just said that he is not hungry - the time is just too short!

**7:55 A.M.** - Finally on-board Air China. We have 3 seats not together. I am by the window, Curt next to me, and John is across the aisle on the other side. There are empty seats in front of us so I move to a seat by myself with an excellent view. In the air, we look relieved, but we have a long flight ahead. In only one hour, we are landing at Da Ling for another passport and customs check. Da Ling is surprisingly an ocean city. There are red, yellow, and blue apartment buildings in the city, and some other colored buildings. A variety of boats dot the water on landing. The airport is still just as sparse as we remembered it on the way in. While waiting to reload, three planes land and disembark their passengers. Two leave - we are still waiting - a bore. Will we EVER get out of China? The wind blows a door open - shattering the glass. Uniformed people come to clean up the mess. Finally, we are on our way to Tokyo. Lunch is served - mostly rice and fish, not too good. They give us a nice, small, nylon gadget bag to carry things in.

**2:55 P.M.** - Land in Japan - The landscape below is a vast contrast to China. Instead of Grain fields, there are rice fields; from the air, they look like mirrors of glass - reflecting the sky and clouds above. Many (I count 10 or 12) golf courses dot the area also. I wonder at the difference between the two countries and at the resentment I feel between them. We check through customs again and have plenty of time to make our flight. **UNITED (BLESS THEM OH BLESS THEM)** offers us Concierge-class seats on the way back to Chicago, and we jump at the chance to enjoy luxury. We are dirty and tired, but we are grateful to be on an American plane. The first time in 15 days we hear English or Japanese second over the loudspeaker. Champagne is served and anything else we want! Ice water, reclining wide seats, white linen lap cloths, chilled silverware, mixed nuts, (that's us), hors oeuvres, chilled salmon, baby asparagus spears, caviar on toast, tenderloin steak, baked potato with sour cream - diet coke - **WE ARE IN HEAVEN!** The gift is a small bag filled with many nice products we can use. EEGADS - so this is how the better half-lives! A woman in front of us leans over the seat to tell us about Japan. Sounds like she is anxious to be going home, too. Most of the trip is spent dozing off and on and eating the wonderful American food. What a JOY to be in such comfort!

**3:00 P.M.** - Landing in Chicago! It is COLD here - 55 degrees - what a relief! English voices everywhere. They are playing **GOD BLESS AMERICA** on the sound system. Through customs again, and we can put our passports away! I probably will not be using it ever again.... or at least not soon. Call home and nearly break down - in just 5 hours, I will be home!

**6:30 P.M.** - On the plane heading home at last - the last leg of our incredible journey.

**7:55 P.M. - DES MOINES, IOWA (24 HOURS LATER)** - Touchdown from Chicago! My family does not expect me until 8:55 p.m. so I am waiting again! .... but **NO PROBLEM - I AM HOME, AND IT IS SWEET!**

**SUNDAY MAY 24:**

# HOME SWEET HOME!



# EXTRAS

FOLLOWING are some observations, photos, and other notes from the trip.

In retrospect: Since this epic journey in 1992 (when technology was just getting a toehold in America) I have kept in touch with our Chinese exchange friend Bob Yuan who we called Boa Cheng throughout the trip. He came here for a visit in 2017 with four other Chinese friends and his wife. He bought a house in Warren, Ohio, where he was (until Covid) spending some time during the year. He plans for American families who have adopted Chinese children to visit China and to meet their biological families. We had a great visit even though he was the only one speaking English. He remains a good friend of our family.

# OUR EXOTIC CHINESE MENU

Deep Fried Tree Leaves  
Deep Fried Flowers  
Egg Roll - Red Beans  
Deep Fried Turkey Feet  
Chicken Feet  
Cow Stomach  
Beijing Duck (Head & Beak)  
Mung Beef w Vegetables  
Silver Ear Fungus  
Cold Rolled Chicken w Bones  
Chicken & Snow Peas  
Chicken & Peppers  
Chicken & Hot Sauce  
Many Tofu  
Pork w Tomato Sauce & Vegetables  
Tomatoes w Sugar  
Chicken & Ginseng  
Pears stuffed w Medicine Herbs  
Rice w Sugar & Herbs  
Steamed Whole Baby Squid  
Chicken w Hazelnuts  
Chicken w Lily Pond Seeds & Flowers  
Soup w Chicken Meat Balls  
Soybean Sprouts w Red Beans  
Shark Fin  
Leopard Soup  
Almond w Cucumber  
Steamed Bread  
Flowers w Flower Pods  
Sea Prawns  
Mussel  
Shrimp  
Squid  
Many Many Fishes  
Lake Smelt (head & all)  
Shrimp w Vegetables  
Whole Jumbo Shrimp  
Whole French Fried Baby Bird  
Dumplings stuffed w everything  
Watermelon & Strawberries  
Hot Caramel Sweet Potatoes  
Warm Coke  
Jasmine Tea  
Five Star Chinese Beer (Pee Joe)  
Sorghum Liquor (Oizhou)  
Warm Cats Milk

## **ALL MEALS WERE EATEN WITH CHOPSTICKS**

(Even though we were offered silverware on occasion)

## **TYPICAL BREAKFAST**

Hot Milk or Hot Coffee in a glass

Lumpy Coarsely Grated Sugar

Sliced White Bread (Cake like texture & taste)

Sticky White Steamed Rolls (Sometimes stuffed with Sweet Soybean Paste)

Strawberry Preserves

Assorted Salty Soysauce Vegetables

Tofu Concoctions of all types

Some type of small thin meat slices (probably Pork)

2 Fried Eggs swimming in grease

Rice Soup (clear watery soup - tasteless - last course)

## **TYPICAL LUNCH AND SUPPER**

Beer or Wine - sometimes Coke, rarely water, rarely cold.

Lots of toasting at these meals - "Gum Buy!"

Many plates of vegetables in sauces, meats, breads, and noodles of all sorts.

All types of meat were served including chicken, pork, beef and fish. Sometimes plates of peanuts.

Usually a main dish of meat - a large fish or pork leg (the fat was delicious and a favorite)

Bowl of Rice with fresh fruit followed by soup.

Tea in our hotel room and when meeting new people.

Bottled water was sold nearly everywhere.

No diet soda.

Food was cooking everywhere.

Special dining rooms for tourists and guests

We saw loads of cabbages everywhere.

Strawberries were just like ours and in season.

Ice Cream was sold on the streets.

## **NO ONE WAS FAT!**

## HEBEI HOTEL - BEIJING

Our residence for the first and last days in Beijing. It was supposedly American friendly, but my suspicions were that it was a Medium level accomodation that was convenient to many of the main attractions.

Note: Toilet paper was like crepe paper. Showers were cold, hot water in thermos for tea was amazing. Meals eaten here were basic. Staff was friendly.



## TIATAN PARK

Lots of walking to see the Temple of Heaven!



## TIAN AN MEN SQUARE

Impressive!

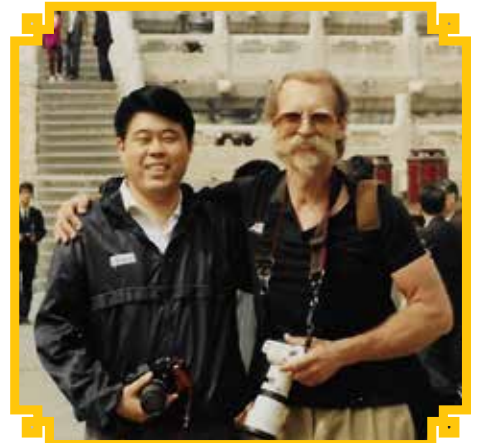
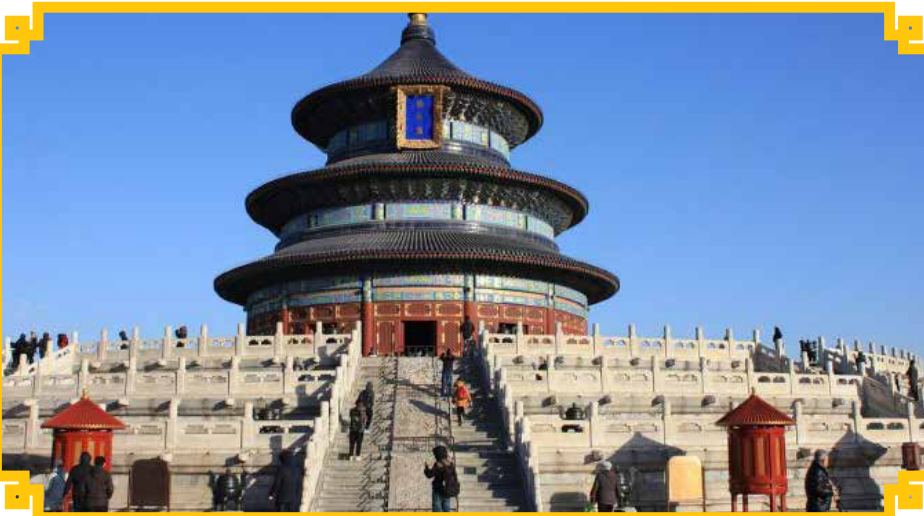


## **TIAN AN MEN**

**SQUARE** An aerial view of the massive area occupied by the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and, of course, Tian An Men Square.



## **TEMPLE OF HEAVEN**



## **FORBIDDEN CITY MUSEUM CLOCKS**



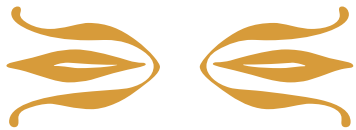
## **INCENSE BURNER**



## **EMPERORS WALKWAY - BEIJING**

At the Summer Palace we walked this colorful walkway where the Emperors were transported to dining.

## **1000 YEAR OLD TREE**



## **TURTLE**

Symbolizes Long  
Life



## **LION**

Symbolizes Good  
Luck, Power, &  
Protection



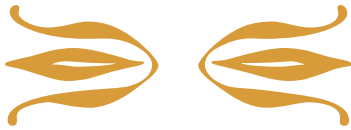


## BIRDS ON A BIKE

In Beijing we saw nearly everything being transported by bicycle. These cages of birds was just one example.

## SMART HAT

This lady had a clever solution to getting some protection from the sun.



## 明十三陵总神道简介

明十三陵，是明朝十三个皇帝的陵墓所在地。由大红门进入陵城，有南北走向的总神道，南端建长陵神功圣德碑亭，碑亭四隅衬石雕华表，亭北设石望柱、石象生，北端建有灵星门，布局严谨庄重。

长陵神功圣德碑，正面刻仁宗朱高炽为成祖撰写的“神功圣德”碑文，碑阴及两侧刻清朝乾隆、嘉庆二帝的御制诗文。

石象生，又名“石仪卫”，宣德十年（1435年）始置，计三十六尊，由南至北依次为狮、骆驼、象、麒麟、马，各二立二卧，其后又有四武臣、四文臣、四朝臣，象生造型生动，雕工精细，具有很高的文物和艺术价值。

## A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO SHENDAO OF THE MING TOMBS

THE MING TOMBS IS THE SITE OF THE MAUSOLEUMS OF THE THIRTEEN EMPERORS IN THE MING DYNASTY. THE ROAD SHENDAO MEANING THE WAY OF THE SPIRIT LEADS ON SOUTH-NORTH AXIS TO THE TOMBS THROUGH THE BIG RED GATE. AT THE SOUTHERN END STANDS THE TABLET HOUSE FOR CHANG-LING THE FIRST TOMB BUILT IN BEIJING FOR THE THIRD MING EMPEROR. A MARBLE COLUMN KNOWN AS HUABIAO ERECTS AT EACH CORNER OF THE TABLET HOUSE. PROCEEDING TO THE NORTH TWO COLUPTING CALLED WANGZHU IN CHINESE AND STONE ANIMALS AND STATUES APPEAR. AT THE NORTHERN END IS THE DRAGON-ROSEMARY GATE. THE WHOLE STRUCTURE WAS LAID OUT EQUALLY AND SOLEMNLY.

THE FRONT SIDE OF THE TABLET BEARS AN INSCRIPTION IN PRAISE OF EMPEROR YONGLE'S MERITS AND ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE SECOND MING EMPEROR. ON THE REVERSE AND TWO SIDE FACES IS AN INSCRIPTION OF THE IMPERIAL STYLE VERSES BY QING EMPERORS QIANLONG AND JIANGING.

THE STONE ANIMALS AND STATUES ALSO KNOWN AS "STONE GUARDIANS" THIRTY-SIX IN ALL, WERE FIRST FOUND IN THE YEAR OF 1435. FROM SOUTH TO NORTH THE ANIMALS ARE ORDERLY: LIONS, SEICHA (A MYTHICAL BEAST OF THE FELINE FAMILY SAID TO BE DISTINGUISH RIGHT AND WRONG), CAMELS, ELEPHANTS, GILIN (A SORT OF IMAGINARY ANIMAL WITH A SCALY BODY, A COW'S TAIL, DEER'S HOOFES AND HORNS ON ITS HEAD) AND HORSES. TWO DRIVING AND THE OTHER TWO STANDING BEHIND THEM. THE STATUES INCLUDE FOUR MILITARY OFFICERS AND FOUR MINISTERS OF MERIT. ALL THESE FIGURINES ARE OF GREAT VALUE OF CULTURE AND ARTS OWING TO THEIR VIVID DESIGN AND DELICATE CARVING.

## AT THE MING TOMB

Signs being converted to English





## THE MARBLE BOAT

Also known as the Boat of Purity and Ease, is a lakeside pavilion on the grounds of the Summer Palace in Beijing, China. It was first erected in 1755 during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor.



## DRAGON BOAT

This was our transportation to the Summer Palace which was a very difficult climb for us.



Just me waiting for our ride to the Summer Palace.



## OUR CHINESE HOSTS

John Chao (Interpreter), Jau (our driver), Boa (Bob) Cheng



## THE SUMMER PALACE

A long ride across the newly renovated lake that had clear clean water. (rare in China at this time). It was an exhausting climb to the top of the hill, and we even went down the other side to a shopping district where we met our driver. The Summer Palace is the center of interests of all tourists coming to visit Beijing, and its many cultural and historical relics.



## DUCKLING DINNER

Our First Night in Beijing



## PALACE HALL

of Benevolence & Longevity



Looking like a part of Heaven after visiting the turmoil of Beijing city center, the Summer Palace is the place to have a rest to discover the amazing architecture (green porcelain tile roofs) of the park invented hundreds of years ago during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)





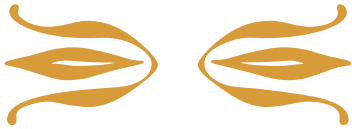
## CARNIVAL AT THE GREAT WALL

Upon arrival at The Great Wall, we were greeted by performers and many vendors selling things that you might expect at an attraction in America.



## JOHN CHAO AT THE WALL

A friendly wave from our Interpreter as we explored the many steps on the Wall.



## COMING DOWN THE WALL

Curt and Boa (Bob) Cheng coming down from the furthest they could climb to on the Wall.



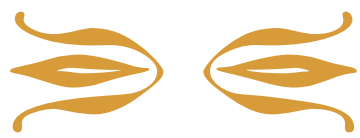
**PHOTO OP** Have your photo taken on a Camel or Horse at the Wall.





# ELDER PARK

Most of the elders join in to exercise every day. This was a Park dedicated to them, and we saw an 80-year-old man lift his leg up over his shoulder.



# ATHLETIC TRAINING SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AGES 4-6



# ELDER PARK STATUE



# TWINS AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL

## GIANT PANDA

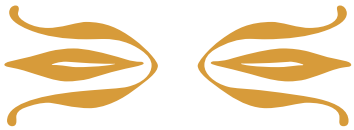
This Panda was ready for a nap and did not even move at all while we were watching from an open area with a high wall. There was a glassed-in area where people might be able to see the Pandas up close, but the glass was very dirty and we could not see much at all .

## GIRAFFES

The cleanest exhibit of all.

## BEIJING ZOO

We were asked if there was anything we wanted to see while in Beijing and I responded to go to see the Zoo.



It was disappointing, but, HEY, I asked to go!



## TIGER

I took this photo of the resident Tiger. A beer bottle had been tossed into the concrete pad. It was another area that could have used a good cleaning.





## THE TERRA COTTA SOLDIERS

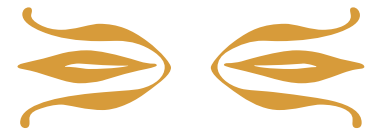
A long train ride from Beijing and then the largest crowds of spectators we experienced. They told us NO PHOTOS, but we did take some anyway, and they were selling many memorabilia in the expensive gift shop.

It is another bucket list attraction in China. Difficult to get there and disappointing because of the crowds.



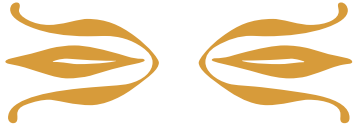
## SHAANXI HISTORY MUSEUM

This Museum was brand new and well worth the visit.



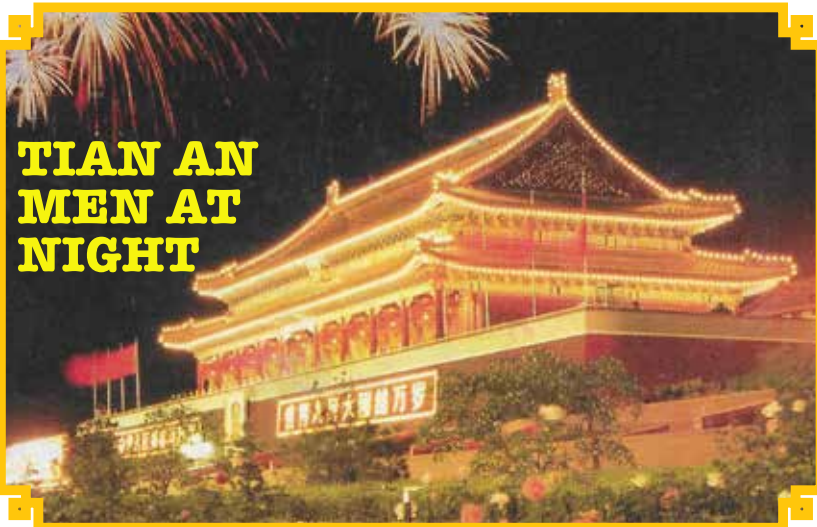


**GRAVESITE**



**MOST DINING TABLES**

**MY GRAPE PRINT**



**TIAN AN  
MEN AT  
NIGHT**

**POST CARD SENT HOME**



Hi Honey  
Wish you  
were  
Here!  
♡ D.

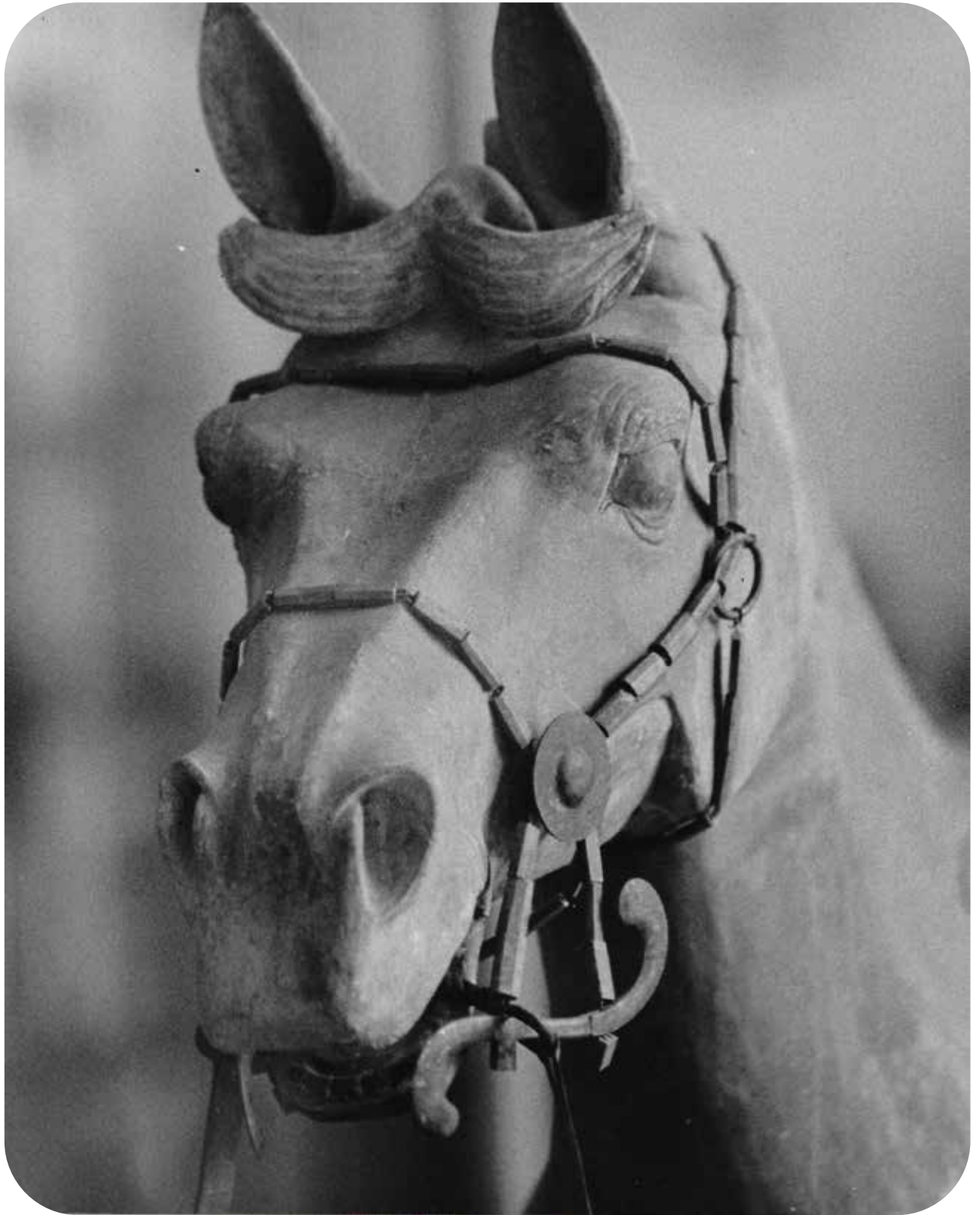
中国人民邮政明信片  
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LEE R. JOHNSON  
878 NE 52ND AVE  
DES MOINES, IA  
50313  
U.S.A.

天安门  
Tian An Men

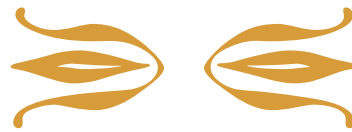
北京市邮政局  
BEIJING POST OFFICE





**CURT STAHR PRINT OF THE TERRA COTTA HORSE**





**CHONG TOMB** One of the tombs of the Qing Dynasty we visited on our way to Boa Ding City.

**THE BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF CHONG TOMB**

The tomb was built in 1707 and completed in 1715. The tomb was for the ninth emperor Xai Tian. (the year of a title of the emperor's reign) Emperor Guang Xu and his empress Long Yu were buried in the tomb, about is also the last imperial tomb in Qing Dynasty. The tomb was built after his death. During the period of the Revolution of 1911 began and the Qing Dynasty was overthrown, but the tomb project was completed by his imperial family. You will find that both the scale and the range of Chong Tomb was smaller than others. The Grand Tablet Hall, Stone Animals and Stone Figures were cancelled because of political and economical reasons. It was the late tomb of the Qing Dynasty, the builder absorbed the skill from abroad, thus the drainage system was more efficient. The outlets were arranged in the city. There is a mound in front of the Soul Tower and three-Entrance Gate. Flashing on the mound is 5 metres wide. The wood structures in Chong Tomb used copper and iron, therefore they are stronger and more solid. It is known as "Copper Beams and Iron Columns". The stone carvings have a unique quality in that they cannot be found anywhere else. There are more silver pine and spruce trees in the tomb area.

The underground palace was excavated in June 1980 and opened to public in August of the same year. The underground palace is an arch stone structure of 645 metres depth. It consists of the tunnel, an arched passage and the coffin platform etc. The end of the underground palace is the coffin platform, in which stand the coffins of the emperor and empress. Nearby are four boxes of sacrificial objects. Beneath emperor Guang Xu's coffin there are two ditches and 14 holes through out of the underground palace. 8 Bodhisattvas were carved on the 8 marble gates.

Emperor Guang Xu and Empress dowager Ci Xi were blood sisters. The emperor came to the throne when he was 10 years old. Ci Xi monopolized all powers to herself. After emperor Guang Xu assumed power he accepted the advice of Kang You Wei. The struggle between the emperor Guang Xu and empress dowager Ci Xi who was his aunt became more acute. She staged a palace coup and gained control. Emperor Guang Xu was put under house arrest in the Summer Palace, Beijing. Dying at age of 38 in October 1908.

## **2 WEEKS AFTER TRIP:**

My system is much better. I am still dieting but easing back into the normal American foods. Had a nice evening last week and Chinese food at Jade Garden in Ankeny. Also met Jack Mastofski (17-year associate instructor) for lunch to give him the Sumi brushes. The lunch turned out to be quite interesting as one of the cooks had just returned from Beijing. She speaks English and Chinese (her nationality) and has agreed to help me write a letter to the Ad Agency in Shijiazhuang to find out about the exchange for one of my students. There are other Chinese people working there too. This will be welcome for Bao (Bob) Cheng as they do speak his language. They even served dumplings like we had in Xian. Perhaps the 2 young chefs could find a place here for the next years exchange. I wish I had bought more gifts. There were many people I forgot to buy for, and I am nearly out of things to give away. Perhaps next time. (Ha Ha) Naro is getting married and will be gone all of August! Ann sees to thing that she and Chao were closer than friends and he will be very surprised to find her married when he arrives. I delivered the package on Monday, and we had a nice talk. Chao had called and was rather upset that he was not going to get to bring his wife and daughter. Ann had sent her Fax to him. Naro just explained that Ann's job was being eliminated and that she could not be responsible for his family. What Ann did not say was that he probably would not have been able to bring them along in any situation because of the circumstances under which they are being sponsored. They are to be working here while living in the international house. Naro encouraged Chao to work it out after he gets here in September. We have not heard anything more about their arrival. I sent a letter and some photos. People are still very interested in our trip (or MY trip). Seems I talk about it all the time. Some of the more distasteful parts of the trip, like all the dirt, are fading but, the more pleasant memories are increasing in value and becoming more positive all the time. Placed a call to Bob Mickel but he is out of town until June 16th. He may call when he gets back. The pictures are still not all developed but I have some wonderful shots. Curt's slides are even better than mine. My Great Wall panoramic photo is awesome. (in fact, I still use it to show that I was on this trip)

Even though it has been 2 weeks since I got home, I am still in China reliving the trip all the time. This week was the Anniversary of the Tienaman Square incident. There were two special programs of great interest on PBS. I taped one show. It was a 2-hour program on China after Tienamen. It was filled with images we saw on our trip but, the information was much different than that presented to us. Seems we were somewhat sheltered from the truth. This is not a surprise to me. After all, Chao does work for the government, what could he say. The Botanical Center group is now in China! I did not get a hold of any of them before they left but, I guess that 4 of their groups of 26 had been there before. I am sure they will come back with stories much like ours.

I have another student interested in going to China. He is married with children and would take his family with him. I guess we will have wait to hear from Chao before doing anything. (It never happened)I started typing my journal on the computer. It will probably take 10 hours or more. It is surprising how much comes back to me. It is very clear in my mind. In fact, I have added details to make the journal descriptive. It would be nice to give advice to people traveling to China, but it looks like we will soon be forgotten in the many.

**CARVING ON STONES CAN INCLUDE EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD.**

**KNIFE CAN RECORD HISTORY.**

**A POEM FOR CALLIGRAPHY BY XIE DEPING - (OUR SLEEPING COMPANION) ENGINEERING TEACHER AND ARTIST ON THE TRAIN TO XIAN WITH US.**

**MAY 21, 1992**



**(MILLET) (COMMUNICATE) (IMPORTANT)**

**EFFECT LIKE  
OPENING OF  
A NET IN  
CASTING WITH  
WEIGHTS**





## FESTIVAL DANCERS

At the Medicine Festival we were featured as celebrity guests. The entire village turned out in our honor plus videographers and we were sitting at the main table to enjoy the entertainment.

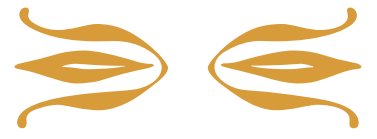
**SILK RUG**

**BEIJING AIRPORT**



## MORE GIANT PANDAS

We didn't actually see these in this environment but they are a national treasure.



## HIND SIGHT

Even though this was 31 years ago, the memories are still as fresh as if it were yesterday. I have enjoyed reliving the experience and hope this will give others the courage to share their stories of trips taken while being a part of DMACC.



Dee (me) 2023      Bob 2023  
HeBei photography magazine



**THE  
END**