

Dear Friends and Relatives,

Our teaching and testing is over. Last night we had a Variety Show that lasted a few hours, showing various talents of our students, team, and invited guests. I have selected some of the more interesting photos and performances.

Last Spring there was a severe earthquake at Yushu, a remote Tibetan town in the extreme south of this Qinghai Province. Death toll was much smaller than in other famous earthquakes because of the sparse population. Most buildings were flattened and hundreds of lives were lost. Some 18 refugees from Yushu are right here on campus full time, while others come and go (like a bunch of upper elementary age children brought here today for lunch by the Chinese Red Cross). It is likely that they lost homes and family members, as well as school buildings. The resident Yushu team provided some of the best entertainment of the Show in color and talent.



In full Tibetan costume, a team of girls performed several of their dances. Note the very long sleeves used as streamers and the upraised



points on the toes of their boots. One young man was an excellent singer, with a quality that one might expect for national prominence. Here he is pictured with the girls seated in the background. Another young Tibetan man, a bit shy, also did a song. Two of our student-teachers performed what I suspect was a love song. The man (a Muslim) did the singing while the woman danced around beautifully attired in her Tibetan dress.



Early in the program a woman from one of our classes played many musical pieces of different styles on a traditional stringed instrument. The beautiful music was of concert quality. A man played an American tune and a Chinese tune on a small flute. If you ever take the train to Tibet and hear instructions in English, he is the speaker. His voice was recorded four years ago, but he has never been on that train. Right now he is underemployed, teaching English in primary school



yet having a license as a translator. There were other performances by individual student-teachers and by classes of them.

One of our own team, a recent college graduate from the Idaho - Washington area, Grant Miller, learned Tai Ji, a slow aerobic exercise, during many early mornings in a neighboring park with many other Chinese practitioners. His Chinese trainer helped him buy the traditional uniform. Then the two of them, she in red, performed the routine for all of us during the middle of the Variety Show.



The closing ceremonies are Friday morning (tomorrow as I write this, but the day that I send it). We expect many tears as the Chinese teachers depart. They have greatly appreciated the friendships and our teachings. Such displays of emotion are normal for them.

The temperatures have been unusually hot here in Xining the past few days, reaching into the low 90s (F) or nearly 35 C. Fortunately the air is drier here than in the east. I understand that in Denver right now it is similar.

Ed Holroyd  
29 July 2010