



- ☺ Our Website is now live!
- ☺ One of the most important experiences of my forty-one years of life
- ☺ Xubo has one more home!

Shanghai has been a great, very interesting and definitely unforgettable experience for me. Thanks a lot!

Eva Bijl, Holland, Jan, 2009

Shanghai Xu Bo Art and Culture Exchange

Volunteer Time

February 2009

Our website is now live!!!!



I am delighted to announce that the Xu Bo web site is now live! Please check out our new presence in cyberspace at www.xubo.org. The site provides a comprehensive description of Xu Bo's programs within China as well as overseas. With the web site, people will be able to learn more about our programs any time of day, from anywhere in the world!

The Xu Bo web site will not support direct application for China programs. Instead, we will direct the reader to one of our wonderful overseas partners, who will continue to handle the program application process. The web site will make it possible for people to learn a lot more details about our China operation, our mission and our people. Included in the web site are many stories written by former volunteers, photo galleries for volunteers and teaching locations, and a video gallery where one can view videos taken by former volunteers.

I'd like to thank former volunteer (and new staff member) John Millspaugh for all the hard work that went into creating the site. I also would like to thank David, the webmaster of the Travel-to-Teach organization, for helping John get started building our site.

Jessie Duanmu, director of Shanghai Xu Bo

Volunteer Time

One of the most important experiences of my forty-one years of life!



My first working experience in China was coming to an end. I had been working in a primary school for four weeks, teaching English, but since the semester examinations were approaching, there would be no lessons during the last ten days of my stay in Shanghai. So I asked for a new placement, never thinking or hoping that my second working experience would be as fascinating as the first one. A student of medicine had just arrived and I was asked, if I agreed to accompany her in her placement, which would be “Cerecare Center”, a Wellness Center for children with Cerebral Palsy (CP - the term refers to a disorder of movement, caused by damage to the motor control centers of the developing brain). At that time, I did not even know what Cerebral Palsy is and I agreed to work with the new volunteer. Something which, during my first day there, I was afraid

that I would regret!

I was confronted with an “unknown, special world”, a reality with which I was not familiar and which - I thought - would not be able to bear! Having to do with children who can not live a “normal” life seemed to be beyond my limits. I remember I could not help thinking: “this is too much for me” - trying to help little children do all these common, simple things that we take for granted. We helped them walk, stand, sit, eat, go to bed, dress, play. Things for which healthy children do not have to struggle! I was almost in a state of shock, trying to hide the tears that were coming to my eyes, feeling lost, confused and helpless, until I had to remind myself that I was there to help! So I somehow started to “function” in this new world, trying my best to do what I was asked for – which, to be sincere, was not really much, because the staff were too kind to let us get too tired! But once you get there and you get to know the children and have feelings for them, you find yourself wanting to do more and more! You can not stop thinking of ways to make them have fun, singing and playing with them or teaching them English words. Every afternoon, we had a break from 12:00 to 14:00, when the children would have their nap and although in the first days we would use this time to rest (something, which was not



Volunteer *Time*



really necessary, we were not tired), as the days went by we would use this time to prepare a game for the children. During one of those breaks we made some “puppets” out of color paper and chopsticks! I remember myself, hidden behind a small, portable blackboard, moving these “puppets” for the teaching game we had thought of. I could not see the children's faces, but I could hear them laugh – and at that magical moment, this small room had become the whole world! No words can express what you feel, when you know that you can offer those children some nice moments. A small “piece of you” that you give them, as

tiny as it may be, gives back an enormous reward, a unique feeling of doing something so precious, so worthwhile!!

We took back much more love than what we gave. On the one hand from the staff, who would not stop thanking us, although I always felt that it was me who should be grateful for what I have lived there! And on the other hand from these indescribably adorable children. We may have taught them some English words, but they have taught us that people with a physical disability have an incredible ability in feeling. They may not be able to walk, run and dance, like you and I can. In some cases, they may not even be able to speak. But they are able to communicate with you in such a way that you would never imagine of. Because nature has deprived them of a healthy body, they try to make up for their lives by using every little piece of their heart.

What I have lived there is simply indescribable and unforgettable. These people, young and old, in Cerecare Center have offered me the most precious experience of my two-months' journey in China and, believe me, one of the most important experiences of my forty-one years of life!!!

Written by Lena Progka, Greek volunteer, from Travel Works, January 2009

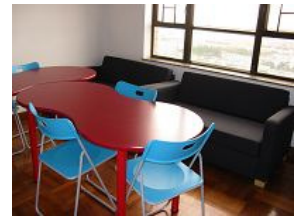
Volunteer Time

Xubo has one more home!



After the Four years' journey, XuBo has grown up into an energetic teenager from a toddler baby. In year 2009, XuBo is now proudly celebrating its 5 years old birthday!!

Under the vigorous growing, XuBo has moved into a new office located in the middle of the financial area, Xujiahui district. The new



site can be described as gaining its own peacefulness among those business affairs.

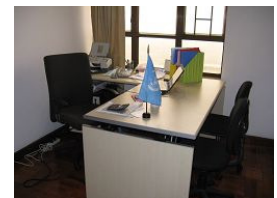
Traffic there is quite convenient, just jump on the metro, Line 4, and get off at DongAn Station, you will arrive at our new office situated in Everwin Garden. Standing in the spacious new office balcony, you can overlook the outdoor sightseeing. The beauty of Xujiahui



district will catch your eyes. The ambitious Shanghai Stadium, the busy commercial streets and the overwhelming mansions and high-rises all cater for the new structure of XuBo office.



Whenever you feel tired, feel free to take advantage of the gym here! After a whole day's work, relaxation is a must. It will help you recover quickly and be in full battery the next day. You can never imagine. We have table tennis, swimming pool, Tennis and gym! The leisure hours in XuBo are becoming much more colorful!



The flat in Xin Mei Square is only for our foreign volunteers .It's a shelter for them to enjoy home fun and warmth of a family. More and more volunteers get together in the flat and make life-long friends. The meaning of our flat is not only a home for them, but also a family.

Written by Nini Shao, Project Coordinator of Shanghai Xu Bo