

Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Project Trip Report, 6-30 September 2010

Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Project (BLSCP) members Carol Delker (registered nurse), Megan Newton (professional photographer), and I traveled to Shanghai, Chengdu, Lhasa, and Beijing on 6-30 September 2010 to lead a training exchange on Diagnosis and Treatment of Echinococcosis and to continue the development of future sister city exchanges on several other topics. Echinococcosis is a deadly parasite disease which is causing extensive suffering by rural Tibetans in Lhasa Prefecture and elsewhere on the Tibetan Plateau. As many as 300,000 Tibetans on the Tibetan Plateau (15,000 in rural Lhasa Prefecture) are infected with this disease.

Sep 8-10 - China International Friendship Cities Conference, Shanghai

Following an invitation by Mr. Shen Xin, Director of U.S. Division, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) in Beijing, we attended the 2010 China International Friendship Cities Conference in Shanghai. The conference was attended by more than 700 delegates from 47 countries, including former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Delegates from Lhasa included Mr. Cao Bianjiang, Executive Deputy Mayor; Ms. Kangla Metok, Director, Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office; and Mr. Jigme Drapa, Senior Staff Member, Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office.



Jigme Drapa, Carol Delker, Bill Warnock, Cao Bianjiang, Kangla Metok (left to right) at conference in Shanghai.

[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

After we arrived at the conference, I was asked by CPAFFC to give a short speech at the Forum on China-US Friendship Cities. So I described the Boulder-Lhasa relationship and our work on the parasite disease. We were then surprised and honored to receive an

"Award to Boulder, Friendship City for Communication and Cooperation with China." I received a nice plaque on stage, as did representatives from many other cities.

During one of the lunches, Mr. Cao indicated that Lhasa Mayor Dorji Tsedrup is now interested in accepting the standing invitation from Boulder to lead a reciprocal Lhasa delegation to Boulder. While there was some interest in the delegation coming to Boulder as soon as this fall, I explained that we need several months to plan the event and hope that the Lhasa Mayoral Delegation will be able to visit Boulder for one week during 9-25 May 2011. With respect to reciprocity, I re-confirmed that the Lhasa delegation should be six or fewer persons and should plan to stay in Boulder for eight or fewer nights. Lhasa should plan to pay for air fare and other travel expenses to/from Denver International Airport, while BLSCP will cover all expenses incurred in Colorado.

Meetings with Eight Bureaus of Lhasa Municipality

Sep 13 am - Lhasa Municipal Health Bureau

At Lhasa City Hospital (LCH) we met with Dr. Wang Ren Hao (LCH President), Mr. Dawa (LCH Deputy Director), Mr. Dorje (Lhasa Municipal Health Bureau), and several others to discuss updates for the training exchange.

Sep 13 pm - Lhasa Municipal Tourism Bureau

We met with Mr. Wang Ping, Deputy Director, and Mr. Cham Chung, Marketing Director. Although BLSCP does not directly participate in tourism exchanges and activities, it does help to facilitate tourism exchanges and activities with interested Boulder-area companies and individuals.

The bureau would like to attract more foreign tourists to Lhasa for rock climbing, trekking, cycling, running, and other sports. For the past five years, the bureau has co-sponsored trekking during July-August in the Lake Namtso area and a half-marathon during September with up to 4000 runners. We visited a challenging rock climbing site on the north side of Lhasa.

Sep 14 am - Lhasa Municipal Education Bureau

We met with Mr. Chun Da (Deputy Director) and several other officials. The bureau has had very few previous teacher exchanges with the U.S.A. and the U.K. and no previous student exchanges. However, the bureau now sees great potential for annual exchanges with Boulder on school management, teaching methods, and curriculum research and development. The bureau suggested that each side send school administrators, principals, teachers, and students to its sister city for a variety of discussions, consultations, and activities. Visiting educators could observe classrooms and meet with local educators to discuss their lessons, curriculum, and teaching methods. Students could participate in classrooms, after-school student activities, and perhaps weekend student activities.

Lhasa would like to send its first education delegation to Boulder for about one week in February 2011. Delegates would include one bureau official, one principal, two teachers, and two sixth-grade students. We agreed to look for economical housing for the delegation, continue working together on the details of the trip, and then send a written invitation.

We then visited Lhasa Chengguan Primary School #2, which has 1642 students, who are all ethnic Tibetan. We observed a sixth-grade Tibetan Language class of about 45 students and were particularly impressed with the various teaching methods. We then entered a sixth-grade English Language class, where we interacted with several small groups of students who were discussing their favorite season of the year. Upon returning to the courtyard, we were treated to a traditional Khampa dance by 22 fourth-grade girls in full costumes. We learned that the teachers and students who will visit Boulder will most likely come from Chengguan Primary School #2.



Carol Delker talking with English Language students.



A sixth-grade Tibetan Language class.



Tibetan Language students working together in a small group.

[photos courtesy: Carol Delker]

June 2011 is the target date for the first Boulder education delegation to visit Lhasa.

Sep 14 pm - Lhasa Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau

We met with Mr. Tang, Director General, and other officials. We discussed potential topics for future exchanges, including climate change, advanced urban garbage disposal, and reduction of emissions in the transportation sector.

In order to continue developing topics for future exchanges, I presented the bureau with a list of questions from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 Office in Denver concerning water, waste, air quality/transportation, and climate change. (On July 14, I gave a presentation on BLSCP at this EPA office to nine environmental experts, who are very interested in participating in BLSCP environmental exchanges with Lhasa.) The bureau agreed to send us their answers to the questions, and Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office agreed to provide the translations. We look forward to working further with the EPA to develop and implement exchanges with Lhasa.

We then visited Lhalu Wetland National Nature Reserve, which is a 12.2-sq km wetland on the north side of Lhasa.

Sep 15 am - Lhasa Municipal Agriculture & Animal Husbandry Bureau

We met with Mr. Hu, Deputy Director, and several other officials. We discussed potential topics for exchanges, including improving methods for generating methane (fire-damp) for home cooking gas and "barley deep," which refers to developing a large number of products from barley. The methane generation could be increased using new technologies for improving efficiencies and for keeping underground waste materials at suitable temperatures during the winter. The barley deep project could be improved with advanced technologies and more financial investment.

In order to continue developing topics for future exchanges, I presented a list of questions on food crops from Prof. Mark A. Brick, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, Colorado State University, Fort Collins. (On August 9, I met with Prof. Brick at his CSU office and learned that he is very interested in participating in BLSCP agricultural exchanges with Lhasa.) The bureau agreed to send us their answers to the questions, and Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office agreed to provide the translations. We look forward to working further with the CSU to develop and implement exchanges with Lhasa.

Sep 15 pm - Lhasa Municipal Science and Technology Bureau

We met with Mr. Jigme Dorje, General Secretary; Mr. Qi, Director, Yingli Solar's Tibet office; and other officials. We learned about the bureau's current projects, including solar electricity for rural families, power stations for schools and office buildings, solar water pumping for agriculture, and solar space heating for hotels.

Whereas most solar electricity installations in the U.S. are now grid-tie systems, this technique is rarely used in Tibet. The bureau expressed an interest in BLSCP sending a solar electricity technician delegation to Lhasa for an exchange on grid-tie systems. The General Secretary indicated that he would check with his superiors regarding prospective dates for this exchange and then inform BLSCP through Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office.

We then visited Lhalu Wetland National Nature Reserve to view a large number of hybrid street lamps, each having a solar photovoltaic panel and a small wind turbine.

Sep 16 am - Lhasa Municipal Commerce Bureau

We met with Mr. Xie, Director General; Mr. Norbu Tsering, Deputy Manager, Tibet Green Barley Beer; and others at the new Tibet Green Barley Beer factory on the west side of Lhasa. Although BLSCP does not directly participate in commerce exchanges and activities, BLSCP does help to facilitate such exchanges and activities with interested Boulder-area companies and individuals.

We received a tour of the beer factory, which has recently been built using modern German-made machinery.

Sep 16 pm - Lhasa Municipal Culture & Art Bureau

We met with Ms. Cao Lan, Deputy Director General; Ms. Drolkar, Personnel Director; Mr. Tsering Dorje, Arts Director; and Mr. Kalsang Tsedor, Marketing Director. We discussed two potential exchange topics:

Lhasa sending its Municipal Song & Dance Troupe to Boulder, and Boulder sending cultural and art exchanges to Lhasa.

Ms. Cao said that the bureau has more than 100 performers. In 2008 about 30 artists performed in Singapore, and in 2009 about 10 artists performed in Russia. Normally the bureau prefers that at least 30 artists participate in any performance. However, we suggested that a smaller number would be better in Boulder, to minimize costs and to allow the opportunity for some joint performances with local Boulder artists. In any case, Ms. Cao said that October would be the best month for such an exchange.

I described the interest of my nephew and niece in conducting a music exchange in Lhasa. (They are professional musicians accomplished in composition, performance, and teaching of music.) Ms. Cao said that a delegation of only two artists would be too small. However, my nephew and niece could be part of a larger professional group of singers and dancers. The group should represent Boulder well, and choosing a genre that is "different" would be especially good. The choice of month of the year for the exchange would be made by the Lhasa Municipal Government.



Tibet Chengguan Niang Re Performance Group
[photos courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

We were then treated to a special performance by the Tibet Chengguan Niang Re Performance Group, which is said to be the best in Tibet. They performed several songs and dances, including some traditional Tibetan Opera.

Training on Diagnosis and Treatment of Echinococcosis

Expert Trainers

Dr. Qiu Jiamin, Sichuan Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Dr. Li Tiaoying, Sichuan Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Mr. Chen Xingwang, Sichuan Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Chengdu, Sichuan, China

Prof. Akira Ito, Asahikawa Medical University, Asahikawa, Japan

Dr. Ren Zhen (Rinchen), Aba Military Hospital, Maerkang, Aba Prefecture, Sichuan, China

Sep 20 pm - Opening Ceremony

This event was held in a presentation room at Lhasa City Hospital, where our trainers gave all of their lectures. The trainers brought their lecture data on disks and presented this information with a laptop computer and LCD projector that were provided for them in the presentation room.



Dr. Ren discussing CT scans with Lhasa City Hospital staff.
[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 20 pm - Surgery Lecture - Ren

Surgery is the sole method for the cure of AE (alveolar echinococcosis) and some CE (cystic echinococcosis). Dr. Ren introduced different operation methods for CE and AE cases.

Sep 21 am - Surgery - Ren

Observation of operation by Dr. Ren on young Tibetan man from rural Lhasa Prefecture with CE lesions in his liver.



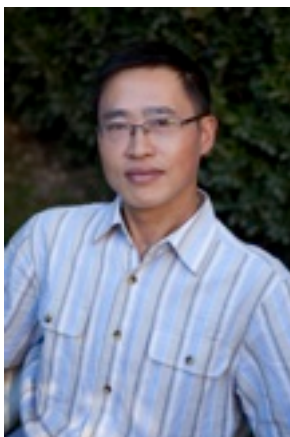
Dr. Qiu giving his Introduction Lecture.
[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 21 pm - Introduction Lecture - Qiu

Dr. Qiu gave a general introduction about the biology, life cycle, and epidemiology of *Echinococcus spp.*, as well as clinical manifestations of human echinococcosis.

Sep 22 am - Lecture on Histopathological diagnosis and X-ray diagnosis of lung CE - Qiu

Understanding the histopathological features of human CE or AE is very important for postoperative diagnosis of this disease. Dr. Qiu introduced the morphological characteristics of cystic and alveolar echinococcosis under a microscope. Additionally, chest X-ray features of lung CE were introduced.



Mr. Chen, technician
[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 22 pm - Histopathology Practice - Qiu, Chen

Observation of pathological sections of human CE and AE, and reading chest radiograph of lung CE. In addition, worms of *Echinococcus granulosus* and *Echinococcus multilocularis* were also provided.

Sep 23 am - Ultrasound Lecture - Li

Introduction of the characteristics of ultrasound images of CE and AE lesions as well as criteria for classification of ultrasound images of cystic echinococcosis proposed by WHO IWE and clinical implications of each cyst type. In addition, criteria for classification of ultrasound images of alveolar echinococcosis proposed by Li *et al.* were introduced.



Prof. Ito demonstrating rapid diagnosis kit.
[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 23 pm - Serodiagnosis Lecture - Ito

Prof. Ito introduced the diagnostic value of recombinant antigen B and Em18 in CE and AE cases. He also demonstrated recently developed rapid diagnosis kits for CE and AE, which were donated by a Japanese company for the training project in Lhasa.



Dr. Li giving her Chemotherapy Lecture.
[photo courtesy: Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 24 am - Chemotherapy Lecture - Li

The principle of treatment with albendazole in CE and AE patients was introduced, and information about how to assess the efficacy of drug treatment in CE and AE by ultrasound was provided. In addition, conventional side-effects of albendazole and important items to notice during albendazole treatment were presented.

Sep 24 pm - Closing Ceremony

Sep 25 - Screening for Disease in Rural Village - Li, Chen, Ito

Demonstration of screening for echinococcosis using abdominal B-ultrasound was performed in Wumatang village, Damshung County. Originally, 20-30 Tibetans from this village volunteered for the screening. Apparently other villagers learned about the screening after we arrived in the village. We tested a total of 53 adults, including men and women of all ages. The ultrasound detected two cases of CE liver cysts, one inactive and one active. The active cyst was a 4-inch liver lesion in a young woman who was apparently unaware of her infection. Prof. Ito tested her blood sample in a rapid diagnosis kit, which confirmed the infection. The Director-General of the Damshung County Health Bureau and others explained to her how people are infected with CE through accidental ingestion of microscopic parasite eggs. She was then given a regimen of albendazole tablets for treatment of the infection.



Screening for parasite disease with ultrasound.



Giving a blood sample for further testing for parasite disease.



Prof. Ito testing blood sample with rapid diagnosis kit.

[photos courtesy:
Megan Newton Photography]

Sep 26 am - Surgery - Dr. Ren

Observation of operation by Dr. Ren on a young Tibetan woman from rural Lhasa Prefecture with CE lesions in her liver.

The training exchange was deemed a success by all participants. Our expert trainers are recognized to be among the very best in the world. Each training session was attended by about 35-50 medical personnel from Lhasa City Hospital, Lhasa Municipal Health Bureau, Lhasa Center for Disease Control, and the seven county hospitals in rural Lhasa Prefecture. Our trainers told us that they were very happy to work with BLSCP in Lhasa Prefecture and would like to join us for another such project in 2011.

We learned that it was impractical for Lhasa Municipality to record the video and audio of the training course. Apparently it would be difficult or impossible for Lhasa City Hospital to send its own personnel to train public health officials in other prefectures. However, we know that we greatly increased the expertise of Lhasa Municipal Health Bureau, Lhasa City Hospital, and Lhasa Center for Disease Control on all of the echinococcosis training topics. Several of the trainees requested and were given copies of the training lecture presentations on disk.

Additional Meetings

Sep 20 - Banquet hosted by Lhasa Municipal Health Bureau

Ms. Tashi Dekyi, Director, hosted this event at a Tibetan restaurant.

Sep 21 - Banquet hosted by Lhasa Municipality

Mr. Ma, Deputy Mayor, hosted this event in place of Mayor Dorji Tsedrup, who was not able to attend due to other responsibilities.

Sep 24 - Tibet University

During our Boulder mayoral delegation visit to Lhasa in October 2008, we met with Ms. Wei Hong, Director, International Exchange & Cooperation Department, Tibet University. In November 2008, BLSCP hosted her in Boulder for four days. We discussed a potential project for BLSCP to send American university students to Tibet University to study Tibetan language and Tibetan art. After she returned to Lhasa, she met with Ms. Tashi Paldon, then Director, Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office, who concurred that this would be a good project.

We met with Wei Hong for dinner and asked if the student exchange could be a viable project. She indicated that we could identify student candidates and then propose the exchange details to her in a letter. She would then negotiate the arrangements with the proper authorities in Tibet.

Sep 26 - Banquet hosted by Lhasa City Hospital

Dr. Wang Ren Hao, President, hosted this farewell event at the Yarlung Zangpo (Brahmaputra) Hotel.

Sep 27 - U.S. Consulate, Chengdu

I met with Mr. Vlad Lipschutz, Consular Section Chief, and Ms. Rosalyn Adams, Vice Consul, to brief them on the Boulder-Lhasa sister city relationship and to ask how BLSCP can best coordinate the visa applications for the two Lhasa delegations expected to visit Boulder during 2011. These are the education delegation, which would visit for one week during February 2011, and the mayoral delegation, which would visit for one week during 9-25 May 2011.

Mr. Lipschutz and Ms. Adams asked that BLSCP keep them updated regarding the development of these exchanges. Among the detailed visa application requirements listed on the U.S. Consulate Web site, they emphasized the letter of invitation from BLSCP, information on family backgrounds and funding, and scheduling group interviews at the U.S. Consulate. They indicated that for the education delegation, the interview process will proceed more smoothly if the group is accompanied by an official from the Tibet Autonomous Region Foreign Affairs Office.

Sep 29 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, Beijing

I met with Mr. Huang Ping, Director-General, Department of Consular Affairs, and an associate for 45 minutes at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters in the Chaoyang District of Beijing. The meeting was arranged by Mr. Shen Xin, Director of U.S. Division, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), Beijing. Mr. Shen and Ms. Ba Cuicui, another associate, also attended the meeting.

Until April 2010, Mr. Huang was Consul General, Chinese Consulate in Chicago. Mr. Huang has shown a strong interest in the Boulder-Lhasa sister city relationship. He visited Boulder in April 2009 and January 2010 to meet the Boulder Mayor and to discuss the Boulder-Lhasa relationship with leaders of City of Boulder and Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Project.

Among Mr. Huang's many current responsibilities are managing China's consular relations with foreign countries, administering foreign consular institutions in China, and guiding the consular operation of China's overseas diplomatic missions and foreign affairs offices of local governments.

I briefed Mr. Huang on BLSCP's recent accomplishments in Lhasa and outlined our planning for further exchanges in 2011. I updated him on the growing support, including donations, that BLSCP is receiving from the Boulder-area Tibetan community. I explained that, as with any BLSCP supporters, we would like to involve local Tibetans in our exchanges, in Boulder and in Lhasa. For travel to Tibet, any Boulder citizen must obtain a Tibet Travel Permit and a Chinese Visa. We discussed China's policy for granting visas to Tibetan-Americans. I explained that BLSCP is also interested in assisting Boulder-area Tibetans who would like to travel to Tibet to visit their relatives.



Shen Xin, Bill Warnock, Huang Ping, MFA associate (left to right) at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing.
[photo courtesy: Catherine Ba, CPAFFC]

Mr. Huang invited me to meet with him again during my next trip to Beijing.

Fundraising and Expenses

In my e-mail sent on August 18, I reported that our Parasite Training Project fundraising campaign had netted \$11,071 and needed an additional \$1,571, based upon estimated project costs at that time. During August 21-31, we received additional donations totaling \$775. **These brought our total donations for this project to \$11,846, from 72 different donors.** This total is \$146 more than our original project budget of \$11,700, which we estimated in December 2009. **Thanks again to every donor!**

The project donations were used exclusively to pay for expenses for the five expert trainers, including air tickets, lodging, meals, and honoraria. These expenses totaled \$10,728, which is \$1,118 less than the donation total. We currently plan to apply these surplus funds toward the cost of a future echinococcosis project either in Lhasa Prefecture or elsewhere on the Tibetan Plateau.

None of the project donations were used for the travel expenses incurred by Carol, Megan, and me.

Please forward this e-mail to your friends, co-workers, and others interested in supporting our work. Please reply with your comments, questions, and information on how you can help.

Best regards,
Bill

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