

BOULDER-LHASA SISTER CITY PROJECT

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Updates for Fighting Cysticercosis in Kham (Sichuan) 29 January 2018

Shuiluo Primary School Students

Dr. Li Tiaoying, Sichuan Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Chengdu, has informed me that the nine students, whose MRIs showed brain cysts, have received treatment. The families were able to arrange for the drug therapy administered in a hospital under the care of a trained physician. We will have to wait for follow-up MRI brain scans to learn whether each drug therapy produced a cure with disappearance of the brain cysts. However, one of the students developed epileptic seizures before the treatment for her brain cysts. She was examined by a neurologist and given a prescription for an anti-epileptic drug. I have not received any further information regarding her condition.

No treatment was indicated for the other 35 students, whose MRIs showed no brain cysts. Dr. Li has explained to me that the positive blood tests for these students was probably caused by either exposure to the parasite eggs or cysts located elsewhere in the body. Exposure means that the person accidentally swallowed the parasite eggs through fecal-oral contamination, but the human immune system killed the eggs before they become cysts. Besides the brain, cysts could be located in other organs (relatively rare), in skeletal muscles (usually asymptomatic), or under the skin (sometimes painful).

Tsering Youdon & Lhosang Drolkar

Dr. Li has informed me that Lhosang's older sister, Tsering Youdon, was admitted to Rehabilitation Medicine Department, Sichuan Provincial People's Hospital, Chengdu, around January 17 for care of a very serious bed sore, a neurological evaluation, and training to improve her daily life. Lhosang and the



Lhosang around January 19



Tsering & Lhosang on January 19

father brought her from their home in Liangshan Prefecture, Muli County, Donglang Township. On January 19, Tsering contacted me via WeChat. With use of the WeChat translation service, we are exchanging texts and photos. Tsering has indicated that she will receive treatment from the hospital's Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Center. Her treatment is being administered by Dr. Zeng Xian Rong, who is Chief of Rehabilitation Medicine Department, Director of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Center, and also Lhungtse's neurologist. Dr. Zeng is consulting with Dr. Gary Wang, Director of Academic Buffalonnias in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, P.C. (ABPM&R), Buffalo, NY, regarding Tsering's treatment and what specialized equipment will be needed to maximize her functioning and quality of life. Dr. Wang has also raised some donations that he is applying toward Tsering's hospital expenses.

Lhosang will be given a checkup by her neurosurgeon, Dr. Liao, which is not due until around February 22. However, the family came to Chengdu early because Chinese New Year (Spring Festival) and Tibetan New Year (Losar) will be celebrated for a couple weeks around February 16, and some hospital staff will be on holiday during that time. I think that another reason for their early arrival is the seriousness of Tsering's very large bed sore.

Lhungtse

BLSCP continues to support Lhungtse by supplying her with the two medicines prescribed to control her epileptic seizures. If her condition remains stable this year, we will plan to take her to Dr. Zeng, her neurologist, with Tenpa, our Conscious Journeys guide & interpreter, during October 2018 for her annual checkup.

Lhungtse indicated to us that she would like to receive instructions for playing the piano. So we are working to identify one or more teachers for her. My nephew, Aaron-Andre Miller, Bend, OR, is a professional keyboard instructor and interested in teaching Lhungtse. I hope that Aaron will be able to travel with me to Chengdu in October and provide some short-term lessons for Lhungtse. I believe that such lessons would improve her self-confidence, make her happier, and inspire her for a better future.



Lhungtse at home with her electronic keyboard on December 15



Aaron-Andre Miller teaching keyboard in Bend, Oregon

New BLSCP Project for 2018

Taeniasis and neurocysticercosis are highly prevalent in 24 counties in western and southern Sichuan Province and also in many other provinces of China. These diseases are nearly completely neglected in China except for the work being conducted by Dr. Li's group. In Sichuan Province these diseases occur mostly in sparsely populated rural areas. The village doctors and veterinarians in these rural areas need

training on diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of these diseases. Then they will be capable of educating the farmers and significantly reducing the suffering from these diseases. Dr. Li proposes to conduct a pilot training project during spring 2018 for 16 rural doctors and veterinarians from Shuiluo Township, Muli County, Liangshan Prefecture. The success of previous work conducted by Dr. Li's group and BLSCP for Muli County has already prompted the county officials to budget 2018 funds for a more comprehensive screening of county residents for these diseases.

Dr. Li has invited BLSCP to collaborate with her group for the 2018 pilot training project. We believe that this project will set an example for other counties and other provinces, so that they will sustain our efforts by initiating their own such training programs. Because Dr. Li does not have her own budget for this project, she has invited BLSCP to raise the required funding and participate in the project activities. BLSCP will invite two foreign experts to travel with me to Xichang, Sichuan, to enhance a three-day training curriculum.

Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Relationship

On January 16, I received a phone call from Mr. Jigmi Drapa, Lhasa Foreign Affairs Office. He has been my friend and primary contact at Lhasa Municipal Government for ten years. In addition to discussing several personal topics, he asked me whether I may be coming to Lhasa this year. I told him that I expect to travel to Chengdu at least once during 2018. He encouraged me to extend my trip to Lhasa. He would then arrange for me to meet with several Lhasa and TAR officials to refresh the Boulder-Lhasa sister city relationship. My most recent visit to Lhasa was in October 2014, as a tourist. The most recent exchanges between Boulder and Lhasa were the Lhasa mayoral delegation visit to Boulder in November 2014 and the brief visit to Boulder in April 2016 by Mr. Qi Zhala, then-Party Secretary of Lhasa Municipality. I will give strong consideration for this visit and continue to discuss it with Jigmi.

Bill Warnock, President
29 January 2018