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San Ming Times Updates

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Greeting from the Unique City of San Ming, China,

March 20th The 1st Day of Spring

For the last several weeks we have been experiencing the warmer weather of Spring. It is still too cold to wear short sleeve shirts, but you can tell Spring is here. With this new Spring weather we get lots of rain. In fact it rains almost everyday. The spring flowers and the budding trees are simply gorgeous. It is nice to get a break from the regular smells of the city and smell new fresh flowers and leaves. I give thanks to the Creator for his wonderful creation! March 20th was also my birthday. I am getting old. I must confess that I missed an American birthday celebration, but my children tried to give me a "Happy Birthday". I thing I broke a record for the most cards I received in one day. I received a total of 38 cards. WOW! When my four friends were here to visit they gave me the ingredients to make Lasagna. So for my birthday I made a good American lasagna complete with fresh salad (a gift from Dorcas) and REAL American salad dressing. Thanks Guys for the gift!!!

Where do we come from?



Every Saturday evening I have a meeting with my 8 boys. During these weekly meetings I talk to my boys to encourage them in their walk of life. This is also the time for me to set guidelines and deepen my relationship by playing games etc... This last Saturday night meeting, I decided to ask my boys if they have any questions that I can try to help them answer. It took several minutes but finally the boys opened up and started to ask questions. The one question that we spent the most time on was a question asked by Benjamin "Where do we come from". I wanted to help my boys think through this question so I asked them, "Where do you think we come from"? Their answers were vague ranging from monkeys to sea shells to absolute nothingness. While I did not answer their question I hope and believe this has helped my boys to start thinking for themselves.

### The Sound of Music it affects us

I heard and read reports that music affects us all emotionally and physically. We of course I know that up-beat music gets your blood pumping while sad music gets you depressed. Several weeks ago some of my boys asked me during the weekend if they could listen to music while they do their homework. During the weekends I do not mind if my boys listen to music and so surrendered the home's CD player. A couple moments later I hear what sounded like a thunderstorm and a traffic jam turned on high volume. It was humorous to watch my boys as they turned the radio to a local rock and roll station and was now trying to concentrate on their homework with the radio's volume on high. I made a deal with these boys and in doing so we did a short experiment. One week their hard music and the next week they can listen to my music then we will decide which music is more uplifting. This last week they listened to a classical music CD with calm forest noises in the background. All weekend they had better attitudes and their whole outward appearance was so much better than the week previous. Our lesson learned: The sound of music is powerful.



## Future Plans

I am currently in the process of pondering my future plans. My current visa expires in Aug 2009. This brings up some question about my future in China. One of the questions is: Do I go to a university to farther my Chinese language skills so I will be more useful to the Children's Village? In June I am going to visit a university in Xiamen to get more info regarding classes and course schedules etc.... If anyone has any words of wisdom about attending a university to learn another language, please share. My current plan is to fly back to the USA June 26th for a short break and to see my family again.

Thanks for your pryers and support,

Stephen Burkholder

Random Children's Pictures