

Day 1 May 18, 2007

It was too rainy for the cotton candy man to spin his trade. He usually would be in



front of one of the main entrances of Green Lake Park making cotton candy using nothing more than modified bicycle and sugar. Instead, older couples sat on benches under the large full foliated trees lining the Green Lake watching the raindrops fall while young couples walked hand in hand.

There is a peacefulness to Green Lake, it is a place away from the maddening rush of the streets filled with cars and sidewalks crowded with people. I sat on one of the benches learning how to text message, which is one of the

preferred means of communication in Kunming. Although it only costs 0.18 RMB (about 3 cents) per minute to talk, sending a text message is even less expensive.

Jane had text messaged the per person price for a buffet dinner. Earlier in the morning I walked with Jane Ramsey over to the Wicker Basket, a restaurant which is a training site for the deaf and disabled. We



arranged for a team buffet on Monday night. I thought that the taste of Western Style



Dr Guo Min

cooking might be good after two days in Kunming and a first day at the Hospital. After Jane AKA “Kunming mom” reminded me to take my phone, card for their home address, etc I hopped into a taxi to go the First Affiliated Hospital.

Returning to the First Affiliated Hospital seemed comfortable and familiar. After not finding either Dr He or Dr Kun, I returned to the ENT department where I was warmly greeted with a cup of green tea. Dr Guo Min helped me phone Dr He who had completed all of the arrangements for the team. We also met with one of the other

residents in the NICU who confirmed all of the arrangements. Dr Guo Min took me to the hospital cafeteria where we feasted on tofu with tomatoes, spicy ground meat, chicken with vegetables, fried spinach and other fried vegetables and rice. The selection was immense. I inquired whether the team could eat there for one lunch. The price was certainly right, 6 RMB per person even included access to a Coke vending fountain! Dr Guo Min then led me outside of the hospital to find two restaurants near by where the team could have lunch. As we walked along the streets we talked about her planned trip to the United States to work with Dr Roberson to learn about cochlear implants.



Soccer play on the side of the field where there was still grass

After saying goodbye to Dr Guo Min I walked around Green Lake Park to gather information for the team trip. The Disabled Games for China were being hosted in Kunming. Jane suggested that I

meet them there to watch the soccer competition. It stopped raining during our time there, but the field was now brown in the center, with a near-liquid brown mud that had the consistency of molasses. Each time a player would kick the ball into the center of the field, it would quickly come to a dead stop. The ball became a slimy brown orb. Nevertheless, the Kunming squad demonstrated great ability as they won 6 to 0, to the delight of the crowd. The field was split in two with two games occurring at the same time. It had all of the appeal of channel surfing. By looking back and forth one could keep track of both of the game (while missing key parts of both games too). We were good fans, staying to the end of the game.

Afterwards we walked to Foreigner street where we met new friends Jing Lu, a translator



Jane Ramsey at the Soccer Game



Jing Lu, Dr Katherine Welch and Mike Frick

for the team, Dr Katherine Welch, a Pediatrician who is a Chinese language student in Kunming, and Mike Frick, a public health student who is studying in Kunming for three months.

After a great discussion, during which we eagerly consumed pizza, salads, hamburgers and tasty chocolate desserts, we all headed back home. There were questions regarding the meaning of some obscure medical terms, talk about medicine in Yunnan and laughter about coping with cross cultural challenges. We will be seeing more of all of them during our time here in Yunnan.

Tomorrow the team arrives in Kunming!