



# FCC Connections

Newsletter for Families with Children from China -- St. Louis, Missouri

## Year of the Dragon

### Chinese New Year 2012



The year of the Dragon is almost upon us and FCC will celebrate' the arrival with another great Chinese New Year party. This year's party is sure to be a lot of fun for everyone. There will be a few new things to the event and some favorite things from past events so be sure to mark your calendar's now.

Save the date of January 15, 2012 and plan to celebrate with all of the FCC families at the Maryland Heights Center. You will receive a brochure with more information as well as a registration form some time in December. Please be sure to submit it right away!

This year we are glad to host the Shaolin Lohan Pai dance troupe as our entertainment. They will amaze us with their show and delight us with a lion and dragon dance, only fitting to greet the new year. Along with the entertainment, families will have the chance to enjoy a delicious buffet lunch, unique crafts for the kids and our annual silent auction. You don't want to miss the auction as we already have a number of wonderful and new donations, things we haven't offered in the past.

New this year will be our "big kids" room. The older kids have been asking for a separate space and more difficult crafts so this year we're going to give it to them. This space will be open to kids 9 and older. We hope the kids will not only stop by to do a craft or two but take some time also to just sit and visit with each other. It's a great spot to get to know a new friend or reconnect with an old friend.

In the weeks prior to the event we will be emailing requests for volunteers to help with several different aspects of the party. If you're interested in helping, please let us know.

Chinese New Year is a wonderful event to celebrate and share. We hope to see you there.

#### Inside . . .

Book Reviews Hep B Study Little Girl Found reprint Membership Renewal Much more!

## From the FCC Board . . .

Another year is coming to a close and we hope you all had a great one. For FCC it was a wonderful year shared with many wonderful families.

In January we had a huge turnout for our annual Chinese New Year party. From the food and crafts to the entertainment and auction, it was just a fun day all around. Be sure to mark your calendars for the next big CNY event - January 15, 2012.

After much planning and preparation, Chinese Culture Day returned to our lineup of activities in June. The day was full of interesting and fun cultural activities for the kids as well as a few things for mom and dad, including some great vendors. We're hoping to do another great Culture Day in 2012 so please watch your email for more information. This event is a great way to get more involved in FCC.

Summer wouldn't be summer if FCC didn't have a fun night at the Magic House, all to ourselves! We had a great turnout on a hot summer night and the kids all seemed to have a blast. Look for another Magic House night in the summer of 2012!

Fall brought with it a slight change in our usual event options with the combination of the Autumn Moon Festival and the FCC/OCA picnic. Held at Eckerts, many FCC families came out to pick apples and pumpkins, play with friends and enjoy a great fall evening hayride.

Our final item for the year is membership renewal. Because of you, our members, all these events are possible. Please find the registration form at the end of this newsletter and mail it in. Your continued membership and support is so important to the success and continuation of FCC.

Thank you to all the people who volunteered their help this year and to those who came out and supported FCC at each event. As always, if you have an idea to share or would like to get more involved, we'd love to have you. All you have to do is email us at [fccstl@earthlink.net](mailto:fccstl@earthlink.net) We're looking forward to more fun in 2012.

Happy holidays!

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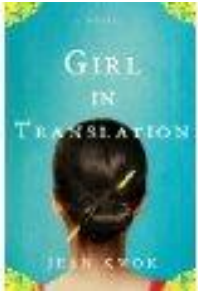
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## Book Reviews

## Girl in Translation

Jean Kwok, author



This is the story of an 11 year old girl and her mother who move to the United States from China in search of a better life. They arrive in this country to be greeted by the mother's sister and her family in New York City. Excited to begin their new life, the mother and daughter are shocked to see the apartment the sister has for them. Located in an impoverished part of town, the apartment is decrepit and dirty with broken windows and heat that does not work. Nonetheless the mother and daughter are grateful for a place to live and try to make the best of it. Soon the daughter begins school and the mother goes to work but neither are happy in this life. They continue to remind each other that they should be grateful and that they now have a better life than they would have had in China.

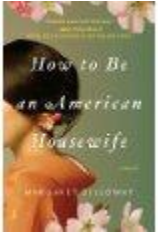
The 11 year old speaks some English and begins school but it isn't long before the other kids begin to tease her for her ethnicity, clothing and English. She makes one friend and discovers she is also much smarter than the other kids. When she finishes elementary school she is given a scholarship to a prestigious upper level school where she continues to excel in her classes despite the teasing of her classmates for her cultural and economic differences.

The mother goes to work in a clothing factory in Chinatown run by the aunt's family. From the start of the book it is clear that this isn't just a factory but a sweatshop where the employees are treated badly and paid very meager wages. The mother feels she owes a debt to her sister for her generosity in paying for their trip to the United States and their apartment so she has no choice but to continue working in the factory. Every day after school her daughter also comes to work in the factory.

As life continues, the daughter grows older and meets other people her age both in Chinatown and at school. Despite living in poverty and spending everyday working in the sweatshop, she finds some happiness in life and considerable success in school.

As the years go by, despite formidable odds, the mother and daughter actually do forge out a new life. Eventually the debt is paid and the mother leaves the factory work behind for a new job and new apartment. The daughter finishes high school and receives a full scholarship to study at Yale. From there the story takes an interesting twist but resolves with a happy ending.

I loved this book and would definitely recommend it. It is well written, descriptive and at times very sad and very happy. Ultimately the story concludes on a happy note. The book is fiction but closely follows the details of the author's real life. This is her first novel and I would say she wrote a very good book.



## How to Be An American Housewife

Margaret Dilloway, author

Shoko was a young war bride in Japan who moved to the United States with her new American husband. One of the first gifts given to her was a book to teach her how to be the perfect American housewife. Living in southern California throughout her marriage, Shoko tried hard to fit in and yet constantly felt like an outsider. Her move to America caused a lifelong break between her and her brother, a guilt that Shoko would carry with her always. For years she saved away as much money as she could so that she and her husband could one day take a trip back to Japan and mend things with her brother. However, by the time she had saved enough, her own health was in such decline she was unable to make the journey.

Shoko and her husband had two children; both of them raised in America and grew up in an American culture. As adults they held little interest in Shoko's ancestors or life in Japan. Shoko's granddaughter showed little more interest. As her health worsened, Shoko knew in her heart she must make amends with her brother before she died and insisted her daughter make the trip to Japan in her place. Sue, Shoko's daughter, took her own daughter and made the journey reluctantly to please her mother, never thinking that it would be the life altering experience it was. While in Japan, Sue and her daughter were introduced to some of Shoko's relatives and were able to tour places pivotal to Shoko's life in Japan. Their trip also included making amends with Shoko's brother.

While this book does not involve any aspect of Chinese culture, I found it interesting in that Shoko's Asian roots made her feel like an outcast in America much as I would think anyone from China might have felt in that era. Shoko's faith and hope in her long lost brother and the feelings she continued to carry with her regarding the family she left behind in Japan seem to me to be similar as to what a Chinese woman might have felt in the same situation. While trying to become the perfect American housewife, Shoko's felt that she never fully reached the success as those born in America. This idea possibly makes the point that wherever a person comes from, it can be difficult to assimilate fully into the American culture and still hold true to the roots from which they came.

This book was very interesting, at times even comical, but the message it shares about the bonds of family, is very clear. Shoko is a strong woman, trying hard to make a good life in the present but with her heart always partially in the past as well. The story shares her struggle to find success in life as the perfect housewife, American or otherwise.

*(The following is a very poignant, touching story of child abandonment in China. Reprinted from the Financial Times.)*

## Little Girl Found

*By Patti Waldmeir*

One might easily see such a thing in a Shanghai alleyway and think nothing of it: a bundle of fabric tied up with a rope. Except that this particular bundle was screaming.

I could not tell at first if the squalling child was male or female, but I knew exactly what it was doing there: a desperate mother had swaddled her newborn infant in several layers of clothing and left it alone in the winter darkness - so that it could have a chance to live.

For me, it was an all-too-familiar story: my own two daughters were abandoned at birth, left alone in a Chinese street to the mercy of strangers. But that was more than a decade ago - a decade in which China has become a powerful force in markets from natural resources to sports cars, from luxury goods to aircraft carriers. In a China of diamond iPads and gold-plated limousines were babies still ending up in anonymous alleyways?

This child's mother had chosen the spot carefully: only steps from one of the best hotels in Shanghai, beside a Dunkin' Donuts franchise patronized mostly by foreigners. I had been meeting my friend John there for a quick doughnut fix, and it was he who heard the baby's cries as he chained his bicycle to the alleyway gate.

"There's a baby outside!" John exclaimed as he slid into the seat beside me, still blustery from the cold. "What do you mean, there's a baby outside?" I asked in alarm, bolting out of the door to see what he was talking about.

What I found was a scene whose every detail spoke of maternal care, and anguish: the multicolored quilt was bright, thick and tied just so - the corner lay over the child's face, to protect it from the pre-Christmas chill. Beneath the angry bundle lay two plastic carrier bags bulging with brand new baby clothes, tins of infant formula, packs of nappies and scrubbed-clean bottles, the only love note a mother could dare to leave for a child she would never know. China's version of the stork myth is to tell children they were found in a trash can; in the case of the baby in the alleyway, that story was too close to the truth for comfort.

"There, there, little guy," I crooned as I awkwardly picked up the quilt bundle, which immediately stopped crying. The doughnut shop staff had already called the police to report the abandonment, so I knew I would not have long with Baby Doe (or Baby Donuts, the nickname suggested irresistibly by the location). I knew that the police would call for an ambulance, too, that would whisk the child away. So for half an hour I cradled the infant (which I only later discovered was a six-week-old girl) and bawled.

I cried for the baby, for the mother, but most of all I cried for my own children: abandoned at the far more dangerous ages of one and six days old - and in weather possibly far colder. I cried for women I do not know, who were forced to discard the children who became my daughters. I cried for the fact that they may never know their child is safe, and cherished.

I had mourned for those women before: on my children's birthdays I always remember the women who gave them life. But I have never wept as I did holding Donuts. The weight of her body, the soupcon of coldness around the nether regions that suggested a possibly wet nappy and the way she protested when I sat in one position for too long, were altogether too real for comfort. I knew all about abandonment in theory; now I knew about abandonment in nappies.

I suspected right away that Donuts had a medical problem: something about the way her mouth puckered when she breathed, and the fact that she was sweating, gave me a hint; but more than anything, it was the fact that abandonments of healthy infants are increasingly uncommon. Most children in Chinese orphanages now are disabled. To adopt healthy children, foreign parents must wait for up to five years.

Healthy babies do still find themselves on the street sometimes: China's one-child policy continues to produce surplus children, especially in areas where rural people believe boys are needed to carry on the family name and support parents in retirement. The result is that girls are abandoned or aborted. Indeed, only days before my friend stumbled upon Donuts, dead twin girls had been discovered near my own local subway station in a prosperous Shanghai suburb. And in May, a Chinese micro blog site carried a particularly striking photo of a newborn girl, dressed in pink and found in a box containing the equivalent of \$200.

I knew that I could not simply walk off with Donuts (though I was sorely tempted). I was all too aware that for any eventual adoption she would need the all-important "certificate of abandonment" - and for that she needed to have a police report of the circumstances in which she was found. If I just took off with her, neither I nor anyone else could ever adopt her: I wanted her paperwork to be impeccable.

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But paperwork is one thing, and finding a squirming, squalling baby in one of the richest streets in Shanghai is quite another: it unnerved me. I wish I could say I had the presence of mind to look out for the mother (such mothers often lurk nearby to make sure that their baby is safely discovered); I should have taken pictures of the carrier bags, with their eloquent testimony to a mother's devotion; most of all, I should never have let her out of my arms.

Maybe I should have insisted on riding with her in the ambulance to hospital, or on going with my friend to the police station where she was processed for admission to an orphanage. I should not have let him do all of that alone.

But because I have adopted children in China, I knew that the system had to be allowed to work and that, realistically, I had to step aside. It was my friend who had found Donuts, so only he was expected at the police station that night to give his account. It was there that he learned from a police officer that the hospital had made a preliminary diagnosis of a heart defect in Donuts. So instead, I went home and hugged my own kids and fretted over how to help this newest orphan. I started e-mailing and texting friends around the world, and within hours many of them responded with offers of money to repair Donuts' heart. Several of them volunteered to adopt her. Under Chinese law I am too old, and too single, to do so myself; but I vowed that if I could not be her mother I would be her guardian angel.

And so began a frantic race to find and help Donuts. I had no name and no identity number; all I had was a copy of the police report handed to John, as the official "finder", and a mobile phone snapshot of the infant that he'd taken. I contacted a number of foreign charities to see if they could assist. Several of them (notably the Baobei Foundation and Heart to Heart Shanghai) asked Chinese members of staff to try to locate her by offering potential medical help - fearing that if the offer came directly from foreigners it would be immediately rebuffed. They were rebuffed anyway.

About 10 days later, just before New Year, we got word that Donuts, still with no name, was at a hospital in central Shanghai. But when I took my children, then aged nine and 11, to try to visit her - bearing chocolates to soften up the nurses - I was told (doubtless dishonestly) that the hospital had no pediatrics unit. We even looked for her in pediatric emergency - a gruesome experience not for the faint-stomached. When my Chinese colleague inquired after her, by phone, she also turned up nothing. I began to despair that I would ever know if Donuts lived or died - and all because China has suddenly learned to resent the hand that donates to it.

China is still smarting from the national humiliation of having had to export as many as 100,000 babies in the past 20 years. Foreign charities are still allowed to help some of the sickest babies from the poorest provinces; but Shanghai prides itself on being able to pay its own way. Foreign volunteers used to be allowed into the Shanghai orphanage weekly just to cuddle the kids; now they are not. Shanghai wants to make one thing perfectly clear: if its abandoned children need a heart operation, they no longer have to go begging.

I immediately recognized the attitude: a new Chinese self-confidence - some call it arrogance - that has emerged. From babies to banking, China is flexing its muscles. But one of the upsides of that new confidence is that the government has begun to care about what the rest of the world thinks of it. Knowing that, and having failed through other channels, I turned eventually to the information section of the Shanghai department of foreign affairs, and explained my intention to write an article about Donuts - in which I might find it necessary to mention that the system meant I was not allowed to help her.

Their staff quickly located the baby and reported on her condition - she had atrial septal defect (a common heart condition), a large angioma on her right eye and one webbed foot. When she was about four months old, they arranged for me to visit her at the Shanghai City Children's Welfare Institute, where she was taken after her hospital stay.

It was there that I discovered that being a ward of the state in China these days is not nearly as appalling as it used to be. For as China has grown wealthier, so have its orphanages. There are homes in some smaller, poorer or more remote cities that remain grim, but at Donuts' orphanage, visions of *Oliver Twist* are a distant memory.

Its grounds are beautifully landscaped, the compound is painted in cheerful primary colors and staffing is ample. Today, Donuts is nine months old and is cared for in a large, bright room reserved for babies whose health needs monitoring. Four trained nurses are on duty at all times, for about 20 infants with special health needs.

The orphanage where my elder daughter, Grace, spent the first eight months of her life was rebuilt recently; with under the floor heating, flat screen televisions, a Little Tots climbing frame and a bouncy castle. And the US charity Half the Sky Foundation - which has trained staff in scores of Chinese orphanages to nurture children rather than just keep them alive - recently announced that Beijing will start to shoulder the financial burden of building special nurture centers in additional Chinese orphanages.

Soon after Donuts arrived at her temporary home, orphanage staff gave her a name and a birthdate. Her name was chosen according to a formula that applies to all new arrivals: 2010 arrivals all receive the same surname, Jiang; the orphanage wishes to keep the rest of her name private. Her official birthday is October 28 2010, arrived at from an educated guesstimate. Like both my children, for the rest of her life Donuts will celebrate a birthday without ever knowing how accurate it is. Where other children have a birth certificate, a genealogy and a family tree, they have a "certificate of abandonment".

The first couple of times I visited her, Baby Jiang seemed to be doing well: she was responsive, alert, relaxed, and she cooed a lot. Charm, in an orphanage baby, works wonders: babies who smile, coo and engage their caregivers get far more attention, and for her, that might make all the difference.

Aware that babies are not all created equal in the eyes of many orphanage nannies, the first time I visited, I came bearing expensive presents: Lindt Lindor truffles and a posh European tea sampler, gifts chosen to convey a sense that this was a baby of substance. I need not have bothered: Donuts already had her own PR strategy.

The head matron told me right away that she "sleeps well and eats well" - what more could one ask for, in an orphan? But the look in the eyes of the bucktoothed, sweet-faced nurse who held Donuts - making the same silly faces a mother would make - told me that she is also a favorite. The nurse may not be Mum - but she will do nicely for the moment.

The tale of an abandoned Chinese infant is not always so warm and fuzzy. For centuries, rural Chinese women were forced - by circumstance, and often by their mothers-in-law - to strangle or drown or simply throw away girl babies at the moment of their birth. Xinran, the Chinese radio show host turned author, recounts in her new book, *Message from an Unknown Chinese Mother*, an incident from Shandong province in 1989, when she was present at the birth of a granddaughter to the village headman.

"Suddenly, I thought I heard a slight movement in the slops pail behind me," she writes. "To my absolute horror, I saw a tiny foot poking out of the pail... Then the tiny foot twitched! It wasn't possible. The midwife must have dropped that tiny baby alive into the slop pail!" Xinran accosts the grandmother, who explains calmly that "a girl baby isn't a child".

It is that kind of story - which, however, gruesome, is far from apocryphal - that makes it, paradoxically, relatively easy to explain to our Chinese daughters why their parents abandoned them. When traditional preference for sons meets the one-child policy, the inevitable outcome is abandonment (or sex-selective abortion).

Families that need a son may keep the first daughter and try again (most rural families are allowed to have a second child if their first child is a girl). But if they are unlucky enough to bear another girl, abandonment may be their only option. Single mothers may abandon a baby of any sex. And mothers of children with costly medical problems like Baby Jiang's may be unable (or think they are unable) to get help for their children any other way.

But as my daughters grow up I become more aware that vague generalizations about the one-child policy are not the same as concrete facts about where they were born, and when, and to whom - and the real reasons why their parents could not keep them. I was living in the US when I adopted, and that is where my daughters spent the first few years of their lives. Soon after we moved to China three years ago, we returned to the hometown orphanage of my oldest girl for the first time. She was eight then, and not long after our visit she challenged my version of her abandonment myth: "She could have paid the fine," she said to me one night. "Who could have paid what fine?" I replied, dissembling: I knew she meant that her mother could have chosen to pay the stiff penalty (sometimes as much as a year's income) imposed on those who break family-planning rules.

She wanted me to stop making her abandonment story into a fairy tale about the good parent and the evil one-child policy: maybe her mother was a businesswoman who was just too busy to have a baby. Maybe she could have paid the fine.

I have started to hear more and more stories of foreign adoptive families that have, against the odds, located birth parents. Dr Chang Changfu, a Chinese academic, has recently made two of these stories into a heart-wrenching documentary [film](#), *Daughters' Return*, about two Chinese adoptees, one Dutch and one American. They discover birth parents who went to great lengths to keep them, but in the end were defeated by the one-child policy and the traditional quest for a male heir. Both girls, now teenagers, are left torn between the family that bore them and the family that raised them.

Indeed, "root-seeking tours" - which sometimes include birth family searches - have become something of a cottage industry in China as more and more foreign families bring their children to learn about the land of their birth. Some unscrupulous orphanage directors exploit those visits for their own personal gain, soliciting or even requiring cash "donations" for those wanting to visit their child's orphanage - cash that sometimes never makes it to those children who remain there.

Beijing actively encourages orphanage reunions, even offering an all-expenses-paid culture camp this summer in Shanghai for adoptees willing to come to China. Several orphanages have held lavish reunions where overseas adoptees are feted and showered with presents. Some government officials and orphanage directors say privately that one goal of the tours is to counter the psychology of abandonment: they do not want Chinese adoptees abroad to think their homeland discarded them lightly.

So increasing numbers of families are taking the risk of looking for birth parents. Some are afraid of what they might find: what if the parents want the child back? What if, horror of horrors, they discover that their child was one of the small minority who were sold to an orphanage? Recently, adoption circles in the US were abuzz with reports that one adoptive family received a request from the US state department to provide a DNA sample to Chinese police, presumably to prove that their child was not abducted.

That story, coupled with recent increased Chinese media reports linking child trafficking with international adoption, has made some parents think twice about doing any "root seeking". On August 10, A Bright Moon, a website that offered to help adoptive families locate birth parents, said it was closing down because its office in Beijing was "constantly questioned by the police relative to families desiring to search for their child's birth families".

Those who do look often find that things are not as random as they thought: sometimes the child's finder (whose identity is usually disclosed in the police report) may well know the father or the aunt or the grandmother - or may even be the grandmother. Some families designate a relative to "discover" the child - to make sure that it gets safely to the orphanage. Often they know much more than they at first disclose.

Officially, the Chinese authorities discourage birth-parent searches. But once local media get wind of a human interest story of those proportions they are often willing to help publicize the search. In many cases that leads to a reunion - with the parents or siblings of the searching child (and sometimes with the parents of a different child, abandoned around the same time).

After I had read several of these birth-search stories in the local press - and especially after meeting Donuts - I decided to dip my toe in, by trying to find the person who discovered my daughter Grace, the former Yang Shumin. To my secret relief, I failed. After nearly 12 years, her police report could not be located. I visited the police station, where the officers on duty showed not the slightest interest in my quest, and I visited the place where she was abandoned, where I found no one who remembered anything.

The next step would be publicity - but Grace Shumin does not want that. She says she only wants to know whether her birth father is tall - because she likes being the tallest girl in her class, and hopes she comes from tall stock. But she is not willing to take the risk of finding out any more than that. As a pre-teen now, the last thing she wants is more mothers and siblings to deal with: she is finding the ones she has quite annoying enough.

As China grows in confidence, in wealth, in world stature, the first generation of international adoptees will grow to maturity - and ask more questions. They will come to China, to study, to work, to seek an ethnic identity they lost at the moment of adoption. Some may find the ugly truth that they were abducted; others will find (as in one recent case from Jiangsu province) that they were a child who had simply been lost, but ended up in an orphanage believing themselves to be an abandoned child. They will hear heartbreaking stories of why they were abandoned; they will meet mothers who feel no guilt - and others who have never recovered. And some of them will find nothing: lost police reports; obstructive authorities; false documents.

Perhaps my own children will want to know more about their birth parents, when they are 20 or 30 or 60 years old - or maybe they will never have the slightest inclination. Maybe they will never know what the weather was like when they were abandoned, whether it was snowing or balmy, dusky or crepuscular, whether their quilt was tied just so - or whether they had a quilt at all. Maybe they will never care.

Soon, with any luck, Donuts will embark on a new life as the cherished daughter of a loving family, in China or maybe overseas. Just before this article went to press, I heard that Baby Jiang had had her heart defect corrected in a Shanghai hospital. Orphanage staff say they will monitor her progress and make her available for adoption as soon as she is strong enough.

But wherever she ends up, and whenever she gets adopted, I will make sure that Donuts knows just how well she was swaddled; and that her mother chose a mild night, after a run of freezing evenings; and that she picked a busy time at the doughnut shop; and that she put her baby against a wall, behind a gate, sheltered but easily discovered - by people who went there craving a doughnut fix and came away touched by an event they will always remember.

And most of all, I will tell her the one thing that I can never tell my own children with certainty: that her mother loved her. Because if it was not love lurking among all those nappies and bottles and formula tins, I have never seen love before. I hope one day she will think on those things, and forgive the mother who left her there

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## FCC Website Update

We are pleased to announce that Mary Robinson has taken over as our official webmaster. She is working hard to keep the FCC website up to date and has changes planned in the months ahead. If you get a chance, check in now and then at [www.fccstl.org](http://www.fccstl.org) and see what's going on! She's always open to feedback so if you have any suggestions, thoughts, contributions, etc., please email her at [stlfamilyrobinson@yahoo.com](mailto:stlfamilyrobinson@yahoo.com)



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## Membership Renewal - The Time is Now

As the year draws to a close, it's time to start thinking about FCC membership renewal. At the back of this newsletter is a membership registration form. Please fill it out and send it back as soon as possible.

We want to make sure all our database information on each family is correct when we send out our Chinese New Year invitation in a few weeks.



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## Chinese New Year Silent Auction Donations Needed

Chinese New Year is just around the corner. In preparing for the party, we are NOW collecting items for our silent auction. We hope to have quite a few great baskets for everyone to bid on and we need your help. Do you have something you'd like to donate? We are looking for items relating to China, Chinese culture, and adoption primarily but are open to other things as well. It's important that every item be new or very much like new and be of interest to our member families. We're also open to accepting gift cards to area businesses if you'd like to donate that or perhaps you work somewhere that would make a great gift card donation. If you have anything, including baskets to hold the items, please contact me ([gtenhol@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gtenhol@sbcglobal.net)) and I'll let you know where to drop your items off. We really appreciate your help!!

## **The Hepatitis B Research Network - Observational Study of Children with Hep B Virus Infection in North America**

One of our FCC family members sent this in and we felt it might be relevant to others in our organization. Their daughter was diagnosed with Hepatitis B when they brought her back to the US, in spite of being given a "clean" medical record in China. Most of the time, they have learned, the first Hep B vaccine is not given until the child has been in care for five months. Their daughter is now enrolled in this study. The medical team conducting this study have contacted all the area adoption agencies. They would like to enroll more children since this study is long term (at least 5-6 years) and the participants will be informed of new treatments as they are developed. Below is the information regarding the study:

***Who can enroll?*** Approximately 500 children from 6 months to 18 years of age will be enrolled in this study with as many as 50 at St. Louis University.

***What is the database?*** A database is a collection of information related to a specific disease. Once a large amount of information is collected, it may help identify the best way to diagnose or treat a disease. Your name and your child's name and medical record number are never used on the information collected.

***Who is conducting the research study?*** The HBRN Pediatric Cohort study is being conducted by researchers at approximately 7 locations in the U.S. and Canada. SLU is one of the sites. The NIH is funding the study.

***What will be collected at the start of the study?*** A physical exam and medical history will be taken of your child. As the diagnosis of Hep B involves routine lab work, at the same time testing is done additional blood will be collected for your child. The samples would be labeled and stored by a coded number. The collection of additional blood is optional.

***What will happen at follow up visits?*** We will make every attempt to coordinate the research visits with your routine clinical visits. These visits might include a physical exam, medical history and lab tests. Most research visits will also include a brief Quality of Life survey to be completed.

***How does the study last?*** The study lasts for up to 6 years but your participation is based on the child's age at the time of enrollment. There are 3 visits the first year and one per year thereafter.

***What if I want to drop out of the study?*** You are free to drop out of the study at any time.

***Who can I call if I have questions?*** Rosemary Nagy at (314) 268-2700 or Dr. Teckman at (314) 577-5647

