

English Newsletter Spring /Summer 2008

Dear CASA supporters and partners,

We appreciate your continued support and prayers for CASA and Mercy Foundation. There is so much that we would like to share with you. We hope that you will continue to keep in touch with us through your letters, prayers and financial support. With the recent opening of the Technical Institute in Tokmok and the 30% inflation rate in Kyrgyzstan; our monthly budget has grown by 40%. In addition, Mission of Mercy in Colorado Springs, a long time supporter of Mercy Foundation, has recently dropped their sponsorship due to their own budgetary concerns in our current economic climate. Their support accounted for 15-20% of our monthly support. More than ever, we need your faithful prayers and regular financial support. You can help us by sponsoring a needy student for \$40 per month, a disabled student or orphan for \$80 per month. You can also give \$100 per month to enable a needy student to attend the Technical Institute.

Student Accomplishments:

We are very happy to announce that 2 students from our Mercy Foundation Christian schools have received government recognition for their academic accomplishments. Olesya Korsun who attended the Ivanovka School of Faith and is currently an eleventh grade student at the Tokmok School of Blessing, has won a 1 year scholarship to come to the USA to study as a senior in High School. The Kyrgyzstan government grants 3 scholarships to qualified students from Tokmok (student population of 3,300) and Olesya is the only female student to receive this honor. Olesya will be studying at the Alfred-Almond Central School in NY.

We are also very happy to announce that 9th grader Nadya Tikunova won a city-wide, region-wide and national competition for English. She is now the Kyrgyzstan champion in the English language for this year. Her English teacher Galiya, will also be honored as a result of Nadya's accomplishments. Nadya has been a blessing to Mercy Foundation in many ways. She helps Mercy Foundation by supplying computer technical support and teaching Sunday school classes. Nadya's mother works as the comptroller for Mercy Foundation.

Both Olesya and Nadya are Christians and represented our schools in 2005 as part of the "Ambassadors of Love" performing group that visited the U.S. We thank the Lord for what He is doing for our schools in Kyrgyzstan, and how He has brought recognition to our student body through Olesya and Nadya. We hope that their accomplishments will inspire the teachers to continue to do a wonderful job teaching our students and other students to reach for their potential. Mercy Foundation is planning to send another student team to visit the USA again in March 2009, including students and orphans of different ethnic backgrounds, such as Russian, Kyrgyz, Dungan Chinese, Korean., and German. In addition, a second team will go to Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Hongkong in the summer of 2009.

Special Visitors to Rockford, IL

We were honored to have two distinguished guests from Kyrgyzstan visit us in Rockford recently: the Kyrgyzstan Minister of Religion, His Excellency Kanybek Osmonaliev and Dr. Asylbek Aidaraliev, the President of the International University of Kyrgyzstan and Advisor to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. Minister Kanybek met Elder Yang when he was the Minister of Education back in 2007. He was very impressed by the wonderful things the Foundation has done for his country. Minister Kanybek got an invitation from the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City,

Utah, to visit them. During their visit here, they attended church for the first time, shared at Ron & Millie Tietsort's Sunday school class at RFA church, and toured Christian Life Schools. They were also hosted by Chuck Howard at Anderson Gardens and toured the quarry at Rockford Blacktop, Rockford College and various other scenic sites. CASA also hosted an appreciation brunch at the Stockholm Inn for their Rockford supporters and our two special guests from Kyrgyzstan. At the luncheon, Rockford Mayor Larry Morrissey presented our guests with a special welcome and gifts from the sister city of Rockford (Rockford is sister city to Tokmok). After their return back to Kyrgyzstan, His Excellency Kanybek Osmanoliev and Dr. Asylbek Aidaraliev were thankful and shared that their Rockford trip was a memorable and wonderful learning experience they will not forget. The CASA Board is very appreciative to all who helped to make their visit a great success!

Recent Mission trip

Chuck & Ardi Howard went back to Kyrgyzstan with another team to work on the orphanage in Kemin in the beginning of September. Last year, the Howards and a team of 20 plus family and friends donated their time and labor of love to help renovate the Kemin School for the disabled. Homemade blankets, donated medications and books were hand carried by the team for the students in the schools. The Howards have been back to Kyrgyzstan year after year to help out. Other dedicated summer missions teams have been regularly sent out by the CCCNJ church of New Jersey, which is Elder & Mrs. Yang's home church. CCCNJ is also currently supporting an entire school. We are grateful for the love, dedication and support of CCCNJ, the Howards, many other churches and individuals.

Other Recent Developments:

More tomatoes and cucumbers were produced this year at the Budionovka Farm. Mercy Foundation will be building a dairy farm to include cows and chickens. The by-products of this farm will be used to make Biogas, to generate energy for cooking and heating. It will also be used as a training ground for local farmers in raising chickens and cows, uncommon animals to Kyrgyzstan farming. Common local farm animals are sheep, goats and horses.

Jarabashy School - We are thankful that finally, after 1 1/2 years of waiting, the Dept. of Religion and Justice has approved the charter for this Kyrgyz village elementary school to include Bible classes in their curriculum. The school also obtained the license from the Dept. of Education to open classes in September, 2008. The school had summer training classes for new students. With God's blessing, this village school can be an example to other villages and more Christian elementary schools can open in other villages, introducing the Gospel to more local people.

Mercy Professional Institute - The Institute started classes on Sept. 5th, 2008. The school will comprise of 34 graduates from the Mercy Foundation schools and then admit students from other schools. 80-100 students are expected to enroll for the 1st semester. The Institute will offer classes in two Departments: Business & Computer Dept. and Language Dept. (Russian, Kyrgyz, Chinese, English and German). The Institute hopes to add other departments in 2009 to train future teachers and coordinators for foundation schools. However, there is an urgent need to find professors who can teach Chinese, English and other subjects. The Foundation would also like to establish a scholarship fund to help the needy students enrolled in the Institute. CASA suggests \$100 per month for those who would like sponsor an Institute student.

Financial Needs

We are humbled by your choice to support CASA and we take our fiscal responsibility very seriously, as we have to answer to God, our supporters, the government and the auditors. Thank you for your partnership in providing effective ministry and Christian education to the children of Kyrgyzstan. Currently, we are facing a real challenge in Kyrgyzstan. Due to the country's runaway inflation problems plus the devaluation of the U.S. dollar, our financial ability to continue operating quality schools is a great concern and a constant prayer need. For the past two years, the

cost of living rose 30% each year. We are committed to excellence for these children in all areas of their development. Therefore, we are seeking sacrificial help from our supporters. Please continue to pray about this as your support is critical to continue God's ministry work.

Urgent Prayer Requests:

- 1) Continued funding to run our schools. Due to inflation and low salary, some of our teachers have the intention to look for other jobs or go back to teach in public schools. We urgently need to raise their salary by at least 40% for the coming school year. We need about \$65,000 per month to cover the cost of food, materials, utilities and salaries to run the schools. We have been blessed by good teachers and we do not want to lose them.
- 2) Since 2000, Mission of Mercy has been one of the main sponsors of Mercy Foundation, providing approximately \$100,000 each year through their child sponsorship program. We are sad to report that Mission of Mercy will no longer be able to support MCCF due to budget cuts. We are very grateful to them in partnering with us in the past, to help reach out the children in Central Asia. We are urgently praying for another major sponsor to take the place of Mission of Mercy.
- 3) Need for more Student/Class Sponsors - We would like to stress the need for more student sponsorship to provide for the per student cost of education, feeding and spiritual ministry. The schools receive 0% to 18% funding from parents and the rest comes from contributions from our sponsors and supporters. Sponsoring a needy student is only \$40 per month, an orphan or disabled student is \$80 per month and an Institute student is \$100 per month. Please prayerfully consider sponsoring a student. Your support not only blesses the student but the family as well. Many family members have come to faith in Christ as a result of their child's Christian education in one of the Mercy Foundation schools.
- 4) Prayers for our missionaries: Christa Tsai - healing from surgery and chemotherapy; Mrs. Yuen Yang - healing from foot surgery due to torn tendons; John Tsai & Elder Yang - strength & comfort while they serve in Kyrgyzstan without their helpmates, who are back in the States recuperating from their illnesses and surgery.
- 5) Prayers for all those who suffered from hurricane Ike, including our own board member, Dr. Bianca Yip.
- 6) Prayers for the planning and preparation of the next Ambassadors of Love tour group from our Kyrgyzstan schools, to take place in March, 2009, that God will be glorified.

We are also enclosing a personal report from Elder Chia Shan Yang. Again, we appreciate all of you who continue to lift us up in your prayers and financially support CASA and MCCF ministries in Central Asia!

CENTRAL ASIA SHARING AID (CASA)

- Mission Report #76, July 1 - August 10, 2008 Elder C. S. Yang -

Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.(attention to disciple). Luke 14:33
You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:14. Christians can be the salt and the light in the world, behave in a good manner before men, preach the gospel, lead people before our LORD, and glorify GOD.

What is New at the Foundation

Psalm 37:5 Commit your way to the LORD: trust in him and he will do this.PTL!

1) Jarabashi Islamic village elementary school - Despite resistance from Muslims and the difficulties that we have encountered over the past two years, MCCF has trusted our GOD. We insisted the school must be permitted to teach Bible. The Department of Education eventually issued the certificate for the school on July 2. The school will open on Sept. 1st. This lamp of the light of Christ in this Islamic village will shine in the hearts of the children and the Islamic people. We believe this school will influence other Muslim villages with the power of GOD and more schools of this type will open!

2) Professional Institute of Yraiym - By God' s grace, we obtained the permit from the Department of Education on July 10 after more then 2 years of hard work. The institute will officially open on August 25. We need to urgently use radio &TV stations and newspapers to advertise the opening of God' s 1st Christian institute. We are recruiting qualified high school graduates to attend and continue to need qualified professors both local or from abroad. Please pray for this and give us any financial and human resource support you can. Although the tuition fee is only \$900.00 (half the cost of private schools in the capital) per student, those from poor families still can' t afford the cost. Please help scholarship our student' s tuition fees so that they can continue their college education in a Christian environment. They will influence their Islamic society after they graduate. You are welcome to attend the opening ceremony is scheduled on Sept. 5th. The institute website is www.piy.kg. and with updates to come.

Summer Visits to Churches in New Jersey and New York

1) Chinese Christian Church of NJ (主恩堂) - My home church strongly supports CASA in the U.S. and MCCF in Kyrgyzstan. The Church not only sent short term preaching teams to Kyrgyzstan, but set up a special account to support CASA projects, providing more 100,000 USD annually. CCCNJ is the CASA' s main resource with support from both old and new members. CCCNJ is growing in missions focus PTL with a large focus on developing its youth with two youth pastors. May GOD use CCCNJ as a missionary sending base for young believers to serve God.

2) Short Team mission team from CCCNJ (主恩堂) - There were 8 team members led by deacon Charles Hung (洪家昭) during their 16-day stay and they visited all our schools and projects. They taught children (in schools and neighborhoods) Bible stories and played games with them. The team members were moved to tears by what they saw and are willing to return. While at the High Mountain Retreat Camp they worked with orphans for a week. When the team left, the orphans were all in tears and did not want them to leave. I deeply pray GOD will send more youth from CCCNJ & other churches to preach in Kyrgyzstan. They can teach English and Bible to bless the children and have a greater influence upon them.

Note to Parents and Church Leaders -Young Christians are the driving force for carrying on missions work. It is the church' s and parents' responsibility to encourage them onto God' s mission field. The precursors (Hudson Taylor and Morrison) began working in China while in their 20' s. They spent the rest of their lives there. Their dedication by God' s grace resulted in many Christians in China today. Adult believers, including pastors and church workers, often have other responsibilities (elderly parents, children) so that they have greater difficulty in serving full-time in missions, though in Luke 18:29-30, Jesus said: "no one who left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life" . Jesus also said that we cannot serve both God and Mammon. If you stand on both boats, you will fall into the sea. How are we personally modeling this truth to our children?

3) Church of Living Grace of NY. 宣恩堂(前粵語堂)- I had dinner together with Chris & Winnie Law, Siu Hung and Maggie Lau, Pin & Teresa Tai, discussing many things. I thanked them for their many years of support and hope they can join with CCCNJ together to help MCCF. We welcome them to visit Kyrgyzstan.

4) Living Stone Church of NJ (主恩堂最早的分堂) - I am thankful for Elder CC Wu (吳啓政) for coming out and meeting me for more than two hours. We talked about what God has been doing in our lives. I was told Living Stone is working in Urumqi, China. I invited him and church members to visit Kyrgyzstan when they go to Urumqi as it is close by. I hope Living Stone Church can join together with CCCNJ to help our mission in impacting this Islamic region.

5) Rutgers Community Christian Church of NJ - I lived in NJ for 25 years and have a special link with RCCC. I had dinner with Pastor Chan (詹宏), Elder Huang (黃小石), Elder Yu (于慕潔) and Elder Luan (樂大端). We discussed future cooperation with the mission in Central Asia. I hope RCCC can provide human resources and financial support for our growing MCCF organization. May GOD lead RCCC together with other Chinese churches in NY and NJ to continue MCCF' s mission in the Islamic area and back to Jerusalem. I suggested Elder Yu to lead this mission. He is respected among many Chinese churches worldwide, has visited the Central Asia 5 times and understands the mission work there.

6) Overseas Chinese Mission (OCM) in NY - OCM has been supporting CASA mission work since the time of Pastor Shi (史祈生) and Elder K. C. Leung (梁嘉潮). It has sent 5 short-term mission teams to Central Asia. I had a good discussion with Pastor S. C. Ting (丁聖材). I also have met with Elder Chen (陳志仁), Pastor Sally Sung (宋彩虹) and Pastor R. H. Chou (周如歡). The Overseas Chinese Mission is the largest Chinese church in NY and NJ. Pastor Ting and I discussed about how to develop our work in the Muslim area.

Prayer Requests

1) Sister Christa Tsai' s (何長樂) Health - When she returned to the US, she was diagnosed with breast cancer in the early stages. On July 31st she underwent surgery. It was then discovered that it had spread to some lymph nodes nearby and that she would need another surgery to remove those. The doctor will determine if chemo treatment is needed and for how long. Her heart is fully trusting in God and she is at peace. As my sister in Christ, please pray for God' s mercy and grace upon her that the cancer will not spread further and that she can make a full recovery. She plays an important role in our mission work in Kyrgyzstan. Pray for GOD' s strength and wisdom for her husband, brother John Tsai (蔡柏林) as he cares for Christa but is still actively caring for MCCF.

2) MCCF is in need of qualified workers, especially professors and teachers. (God can use your talents!)

3) Financial support from Mission of Mercy is ending in May 2009 due to their fiscal re-organization. Please pray for other individuals or organizations to support the 500 Kyrgyz children previously supported monthly by MOM.

- 4) MCCF needs donations and support in order to move forward. Inflation has raised prices for everything and so staff salaries are also needing to be increased to match inflation. Please support us while praying for us.
- 5) May you and many others come to see the miracles of God's kingdom in this Islamic country of Kyrgyzstan. Jesus preached among the Samaritans and cured the sick. There are too many people who do not know Jesus in Kyrgyzstan and all of Central Asia. We Christians should likewise go there to share the love of God.
- 6) Mercy Professional Institute needs God's provision of students, staff, books and supplies as school begins August 25th.
- 7) Brothers and sisters, I know you care for me. Because I am almost 80 years old and my physical ability is not as good as before, in order to continue God's mission, please pray for God to send people (maybe you) or an organization to take over my roles. Because of God's blessings, the significant progress of the Foundation is unbelievable. It is our Christian responsibility to preach the gospel among the Muslim countries. Pray for God to provide a special fund to support the mission in order for someone to easily assume my role.
- 8) Pray for my wife Yuen Chen as she remains in the US to undergo a complicated foot surgery on Sept. 2nd. Please pray for the surgeon to be able to do the operation under 1 hour and that she will easily recover from the anesthesia. She cannot be on that foot for 3 weeks and then will have physical therapy. Full recovery will take up to 6 months.

Please visit our website at <http://www.casamission.org>

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY LED BY GOD

- John & Christa Tsai, Missionaries to Kyrgyzstan (9/2008) -

Time passes by so fast, we are into our fourth year in Kyrgyzstan now. It was like only yesterday that we packed our suitcases of clothing and boxes of books, computer equipments and bid farewell to our beloved families and friends. It was a time of mixed feelings, fear of the unknown, and also excitement of a new adventure answering to God's calling. He has called us to bring the gospel to the Muslims, especially to the forsaken children of Central Asia.

But, we did wonder, "What kind of place is Kyrgyzstan?" "We knew so little about this place! We learned that prior to its independence, it is one of the five Stans in Central Asia which were under Russian ruling until 1992. 93% of the nation's land is the Tien Shen (Heavenly Mountain) ranges, with only two plains where land can be cultivated. Most of the folks mainly speak Russian and Kyrgyz (the official languages) and 75% of the populations are of Muslim belief. For hundreds of year, the people lived as nomads, raising sheep and cattle, moving from pastures to pastures, living in yurts(tents). Even today, 65% of the populations depend on agriculture for living and the country remains as one of the poorest countries in the world. We believe this nation is lagging at least 30 years behind. We also wondered about how we were going to serve! We have spent most of our lives (from college until 4 years ago) in California – Land of plenty, known for its technologies - computer, electronics and biotech. We were used to the modern conveniences of Californian living, and took all such blessings for granted. We even assumed that the rest of the world lives the same way as we have. Come to think about it, if we knew we were so ill-prepared , we would not have the courage to go. Even today, both of us can only speak Chinese and English! However, when we made the decision to dedicate our lives to serve Him, God took us on this journey and we started tasting the abundant life that Jesus promised us! It is beyond what we can ever imagine.

In May 2005, we set out with many blessings from HOC5, our sending church to join Elder C. S. Yang and his wife, founder of Mercy Foundation in Tokmok, Kyrgyzstan and their vision to bring the children to know Jesus. Ever since, God has been teaching us many lessons. We knew there were times that we acted like "Doubting Thomas" , struggling with uncertainty about His will for us, and desperately seeking for confirmation. But, we did not know we also had an attitude problem – we thought since we were from California, USA, we were more superior – God rebuked and corrected us for our pride issue. We are His handy work.

God showed us how wrong we were, that He did not need us to do anything. He was gracious enough to allow us to participate in His work, and He did remind us that we too are the work in His hand. But, before we can be useful He needs to break us, empty us (of our old flesh, ego & pride), cleanse us of our sins, then mold us and refine us according to His will. People are small but God is Great.

In those years, we found out whenever we try to operate on our own power and ability, our efforts become "Mission Impossible" . Yes, on the mission field in this young Muslim country, many things are often out of control and unpredictable. Just imagine daily life without a stable supply of electricity, heating and water in the midst of construction of new projects and running of existing ones! Inflation, lack of job opportunities, alcohol & drug abuses, absence of moral standards and family concepts throw the whole nation and her people into total despair. The average citizens of Kyrgyzstan live far below USA's poverty level. One wonders if "Making Progress" in this country is even possible. Everywhere you look, one can witness the ugliness and wickedness of mankind and we really come to understand that a world without true God is a dark place without hope.

God has been our personal teacher and He took time to customize lesson plans just for us, providing practical training by putting us through challenges, obstacles and hardship. These are some of the events that we experienced:

- (1) In June 2005, two weeks after we arrived, we encountered “Resignation of teacher by the dozens just before the start of a new school year” and had to handle the situation in the absence of Elder Yang.
- (2) Demonstrations and protests at our Tokmok Orphanage in early 2006 by Muslim people and supported by human rights leaders from the U.S.
- (3) City government’s failure to keep their part of the written contracts for Tokmok Orphanage to provide free utility while MF is responsible for all the capital and maintenance expenses.
- (4) In 2006-7, experiencing police brutality with Chinese farmers including our experimental farm workers.
- (5) Village workers going on strike in 2007 demanding higher pay while working on the village school that we built to provide better and free education for their children.
- (6) In 2008, conflicts arise among Professional Institute Staff and workers (Christians vs Muslims) causing key personnel threatening to quit, just 2 days after institute’s opening. This list can go on and on, and it just demonstrates how difficult situations can be and how ridiculous people are behaving. However, we learned that even when circumstances seem impossible, God makes the way! He is the sovereign God who is and always will be in total control.

It has been our dream to start a Village School as a model school for all villages in Kyrgyzstan, and last September (9/2007) we thought we finally finished the building and we can start the school. Somehow, the authorities just refused to issue us the license without telling us why. We also made it Year 2008’s goal to start the Professional Institute. The purpose is to bring our high school graduates to the next level – equipping them with excellent skills not only to earn a good living for their own future, but beyond to become the leaders for this young country, and to contribute to society. These students are to be men and women of character, built on honesty and integrity, the pillars of the community; and one day, they are to transform their nation. This country has lived long enough in poverty and corruption, resulting in hopelessness for her people.

However, since we had so much difficulty obtaining the license for the Village school, our faith wavered and we did not believe we can start the professional institute this year. This year in June, Elder Yang and Mrs. Yang returned to Rockford, USA to have their regular check-ups, and found out both of them had either knee or foot problems and were in need of surgeries. One month later, John and Christa also were forced to come back to the U.S., also due to health issues. However, just a few days after John and Christa’s departure, our local staff at Mercy Foundation informed us that the licenses for both the Professional Institute as well as for the village school were granted. Our hearts just leapt with joy and yes, He is the amazing one and we can only praise our God for He is the Almighty God, unstoppable by anyone or anything!

Our Lord has indeed blessed Mercy foundation abundantly in these few years. Since we joined this organization in 2005, our projects, staff and budget have almost doubled in size. We have nothing to boast of ourselves, for now we know how limiting we are. But, He is the awesome God, it is because of Him, we now have 4 existing Christian Schools from first grade to 11th grade (high school graduate), 1 Village School (starting 9/2008) from first grade to 6th grade, 2 orphanages, 1 boarding school for the disabled and 1 Professional Institute (college level, started 8/2008). In addition to that, we are also overseeing one large size gymnasium, a children’s playground, which is open to the public all year long and a mountain camp available during warmer weather. These are facilities we use to bring the gospel to the children and their families. We are also partnering with other local missionary organizations to

expand God's kingdom. Thank you God, that you allow us to outreach to the people of 85 different races including Dungan people (Chinese Muslims), so they may know You.

God is constantly teaching, and coaching us to be His servants, stretching our faith in Him to the next level. Just this June 2008, Christa accidentally discovered a lump in her breast and was diagnosed with breast cancer on the mission field. Since then, both John and Christa returned to USA for Christa's many diagnostic testing. Two weeks after Christa's first surgery, John had to rush back to Kyrgyzstan for the many tasks awaiting him, including the openings of the Professional Institute and the first Village School.

Christa stayed back in the U.S. for another surgery to remove the lymph nodes in her left arm area for the detection of cancer cells in her Sentinel Node. Nine nodes were taken out during her surgery and all were cancer free. However, her physician warned of some possible nerve damage, pain, swelling and limitations in the left arm, which is something she may have to cope with for the rest of her life. In the last week of September, Christa also need to go through Chemo treatment for over a period of 16 weeks to prevent cancer cells from spreading to other parts of the body, through the lymphatic system or blood circulation. Praise God that He has given both John and Christa His peace and His joy through this ordeal. He brings us to experience first-hand that His grace is sufficient for us. Yes, we know some people question why as servant and maid of God we experience such, but we consider this as a blessing in disguise and we firmly believe what the Bible says in Romans 8:28, 35, 37:

- 28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*
- 35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?*
- 37 *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

Finally, we just want to praise God for what is happening to us, for it is through tough times that we are drawn even closer to Him. We thank Him for taking such grace, time, and patience with us, so that we may become more like Christ who is our model for humility, trust and obedience. We also want to thank you for your many supports in all areas, your prayers, your financial assistance and your personal involvement in our ministries. We pray that you will continue to be our co-laborers in Him!

May God bless everyone as He leads us in this wonderful spiritual journey!

John & Christa Tsai