“The people have purified our souls...”

In his opening remarks at the Amity Foundation’s Board of Directors Meeting held April 25-26th 1999 in Nanjing, Bishop K. H. Ting, Board President, recalled Amity’s early years and origin. He noted that foreign friends used to ask in the 1980s, “What can we do for you...?” Ting said the church in China needed a way to enable foreign friends to help, “...so we organized the Amity Foundation.” Some feared this would violate the Three-Self principles. But it did not. Instead, the fact that much of Amity’s funding comes from abroad has made Amity an international bridge of friendship and understanding. Bishop Ting believes that Amity has helped many from abroad to move from non-understanding to understanding about the church in China.

In his work report, Dr. Wen Zao Han, Amity’s General Secretary, reflected on the growth and evolution of Amity since its founding in 1985. From an initial staff of five, it now has thirty working under five divisions with projects in almost all provinces in China. He stressed that where Amity has been able to achieve a modicum of success, it has been mainly due to the contributions of people at the grassroots and the support and concern shown by leaders at different levels. Most important, it is the people’s efforts which should not be forgotten: they tightened their belts, raised funds, contributed their labor and made all kinds of sacrifices. According to an Amity staff member: “We helped the people and the people have purified our souls.”

Han stressed that after 14 years of existence, Amity has become an organization where both believers and non-believers are jointly engaged in humanitarian ventures. This sends an important message to Chinese society and the world at large: that people of different beliefs can and should join hands to serve society and bring benefit to the people.

Small is beautiful

Amity may be a very small NGO (Non-governmental organization) but it has an important role to play. According to Han, Amity should continuously improve its methods of work and attitudes so that its projects can have a multiplier effect and help create new social development models. As an NGO, Amity has the advantage of flexibility. It has tried to adapt to changing social needs and has paid attention to emerging social issues. For instance, in 1993, the Board decided to shift the focus of Amity’s projects towards Central and Western China (where poverty is most severe) and to move from single projects to integrated projects. In recent years, Amity has started an Aids Education Campaign in Yunnan under its Medical Division; in Jiangsu Province, it has started a re-training program for retrenched women workers. All this is an indication of Amity’s adaptability.

Through its experience Amity has established the following basic principles: —projects must help grassroots people meet their basic needs; —projects should help people develop their own capabilities and not result in dependence; —projects should be “owned” by the beneficiaries themselves. Therefore, in the whole process, from project investigation and analysis to planning, implementation and evaluation, there should be joint participation of everyone concerned: the beneficiaries, the relevant work units, Amity staff and consultants. This will help develop democracy. Projects should also bring about sustainable development. They must be centered on people’s development, preserve the environment and bring about simultaneous development of persons and communities.
Self-improvement is an important element among Amity staff. This has been encapsulated in the “Three Cs”: Compassion, Commitment and Competence. Staff have been encouraged to continue improving themselves through specialized education or training and, in their work, to learn from the people, from experts, from all sources. As a result, they have attained a high level of expertise in various fields.

According to Han, Amity has emphasized the importance of professional ethics among its staff. There have been irregularities and corruption in many places, especially in the last few years. In such a context, Amity staff have been urged to observe a high standard of professional ethics and to constantly remind one another not to behave like "imperial envoys" or "saviors" and alms givers. They are encouraged to learn from those at the grassroots who give much but ask little in return. As a result, many government units and local leaders have praised Amity for being “clean” and exemplary.

The key to Amity’s future is staff quality

In projecting the future, Han said that Amity would continue with its primary aim of serving society and raising the living standards of the people. He pointed out that while China’s achievements have been remarkable over the last few decades the country continues to be confronted with problems of poverty, overpopulation and environmental degradation. Some of these may even threaten China’s further development. In establishing its directions and strategy for the new millennium, Amity should bear these problems in mind.

Amity will continue to focus on poverty alleviation in Central and Western China, and try to ensure that education and health undertakings will contribute to integrated and balanced development in these areas. At the same time, Amity should also pay attention to urban poverty and serve the weak and powerless in the cities.

Much of Amity’s funding now comes from Europe. While Amity should continue to work closely with existing partners it should at the same time expand its links with other organizations in North America, Hong Kong and Asia. In order to broaden these links, Amity needs to do more work in the area of research and publicity.

Han also stressed the need to improve on project evaluation. Whether or not a project should be supported hinges on the quality of its implementation and the benefit it brings to the people. Based on changing needs, Amity projects have moved from single projects to integrated projects which are often sustained for periods of 3 to 5 years. It is therefore important to improve evaluation of projects both during the course of implementation and at the end. It may be necessary for Amity to have someone responsible for coordinating the evaluation of projects. Amity should explore the possibility of jointly involving directors, experts, and foreign consultants in project evaluations. This should improve project implementation by raising the professional skills of project implementers, competence levels and increasing the degree of transparency.

Strengthening the organizational capability of Amity will be a key task. This will hinge on staff quality. Han noted that most Amity staff are deployed in fieldwork and have a lot of say in how funds are used. It is crucial for them to resist corruption and unhealthy tendencies. Amity should develop a sound system of financial accountability and an evaluation system that takes into consideration the social impact, experiences and lessons of a project, including the perspectives and work style of staff. Han ended his report by stressing the importance of staff development and staff quality: “We should unceasingly urge our staff to consciously pursue the “Three Cs” (compassion, commitment and competence) as we march into the 21st century together with the rest of China.”

New Members Join Amity’s Board of Directors

Several new members were added to the Board in the April meeting. These include Mdm. Shen Peirong, who has retired from the Ministry of Labor in Beijing; Prof. Zhu Chuanyi, research fellow of the American Studies Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Mdm. Xu Jingcan, a board member of the Shanghai YWCA and a former member of the Shanghai Municipal CPCPP (Chinese People’s Political Consultative Committee); Prof. Qu Qinyue, former president of Nanjing University; Xu Yinghui, Honorary Chair of the Jiangsu Provincial Merchants Association and former member of the National CPCPP; Zhou Jiacai, Vice-President of the Jiangsu Provincial Overseas Friendship Association and Prof. Ting Yen-ren, a professor in Nanjing University’s School of Foreign Studies and former Associate General Secretary of the Amity Foundation. Ting is now Vice-President of Amity’s Board of Directors.

Quotes from new board directors:

Stephen Ting Yen-ren: “I have grown with Amity because I joined her work almost right after she came into being. Over these years, I have visited many men and women, old and young, whose lives have been touched by our work. While we touch their lives, they also touch ours. It is the longing, the commitment and the sacrifice of these people that are driving, and will continue to drive, our work forward.”

Shen Peirong: “I have heard much about Amity — known for her committed staff, her good project management system, and her unique fund raising mechanism. However, what touched me most is the compassion of Amity’s staff. This is the KEY to Amity’s success.”

Zhu Chuanyi: “Before I became a member of the board of Amity, I had heard many good comments about Amity and her work, especially from academic circles in Beijing. The Board meeting and subsequent visit to Amity’s project area in Yunnan convinced me (that) all the good comments (were true). I hope my own research on NGOs in China will be helpful for Amity’s future work.”

Other members of Amity’s Board of Directors are: K. H. Ting (President), Bao Jiayuan, Chen Shiheng, Chen Zemin, Deng Fucun, Fung Fei, Gao Ying, Wenzuo Han, Li Tai, Li Shoubao, Luo Guangzong, Peng Cui’an, Shen Derong, Phoebe Shih, Wang Juzhen, Xu Rulei.

Staff positions announced

Dr. Wenzuo Han continues as General Secretary but there are now three instead of two Associate General Secretaries: Gu Renfa, Qiu Zhong Hui & Li Enlin. At the same time, Qiu Zhong Hui will continue as director of the Rural Development Division while Li Enlin will continue as director of the Medical Division and coordinator of church-run projects. Zhang Liwei is the Special Assistant to the General Secretary.
ANNOUNCEMENT

We are happy to inform you all that the 2000 Amity Calendar will be ready in October of 1999. The 2000 Amity Calendar is a collection of drawings by children from different orphanages in China, who depict their daily lives and hope for the future. For those who would like to order copies of the calendar, please feel free to contact us at the Amity Foundation, 71 Hankou Road, Nanjing, JS210008, P.R. China. Or you can reach us by fax of (86-25)663 1701 or by email of AFN71@publicl.ppt.js.cn. The price is USD 5 per copy, including the international postage. Thanks.

封底：通向幸福的未来
Back cover: Head for the future

Mother and son

In 1999, the Amity-sponsored children's social welfare institutions (orphanages) held a nation-wide drawing competition, and some prize-winning pictures from this competition have been included in this year's calendar.

Although unfairly treated in their early lives, these little artists have embedded in their works their confidence in themselves and hope in their country and in the future of the world. With clumsy strokes, bold composition and rich coloring, they share with us their dreams. In fact, they are reminding us of a dream we all dream of: that there be more love, care and happiness in the 21st century.

These children come from 28 orphanages Amity started to work with in 1987. With the joint efforts of these orphanages, local governments and friends from both at home and abroad, the work at these orphanages has improved significantly. And the children under their care are not only having their material needs met, but are also enjoying a rich cultural life. As a participant in this endeavor, Amity has witnessed all these changes and is thankful.
Compassion in practice

---Amity’s rural development work

Since 1985, over 1.34 million poor people all over China have benefited directly from Amity’s rural development projects. Amity has succeeded in transforming the compassion and donations of friends and partner organizations at home and abroad into concrete projects that have helped meet the basic needs of these people.

It has completed 461 drinking water projects, 71 irrigation systems, undertaken slope terracing over a total area of 1,900 hectares (4,700 acres), tree planting over 15,000 hectares (38,000 acres) of land, provided agricultural technology training (35,000 person-times) and helped more than 8,000 children return to school.

Amity’s rural development work has expanded dramatically over the 14 years since its inception. When Amity was established in 1985, there were 125 million people who lived below the official poverty line. Today, according to Chinese official statistics, there are still 42 million people living below the poverty line in China.* They are the essential target groups of Amity’s work. Simply meeting their basic needs for food and clothing is of primary importance and a goal of rural development work.

The Move West

Due to limited experience and funds at the early stage, Amity’s rural development projects were concentrated in areas close to Nanjing. In 1993, Amity’s Board of Directors decided to shift project priority to western China. In 1992, funds allocated to projects in western China accounted for only 10% of the total funds for rural development projects. In 1998 they account for 87%. Almost all large-scale integrated rural development projects carried out in recent years have been located in western China in places such as Gansu, Ningxia, Shanxi, Guizhou, Guangxi and Yunnan. In these areas, Amity projects target the poorest places especially remote areas that suffer from poor communications, inadequate transportation and harsh living conditions. This is to ensure that limited funds are used only for the poorest in the poorest areas.

The Two “E’s”

Amity’s funds are utilized essentially as seed money, to serve as a catalyst. In its “three-in-one” contribution policy, the Amity Foundation only covers part of the total expenses of projects, with local governments providing matching funds and local beneficiaries contributing their share in the form of voluntary labor. To avoid creating dependency, Amity never covers all the expenses in one project. Neither does Amity fix the proportion of matching funds for a project. Instead, Amity determines the contribution based on the needs of the local situation, always striving for optimal benefit and output with as little funds as possible.

Amity is accountable to its donors and assumes responsibility for every penny that is spent. The principle of two “E’s”, “effectiveness” and “efficiency”, means that funds should be managed effectively and used efficiently. Amity has tried to strengthen and improve project management over the past few years. Especially in large-scale integrated development projects, setting up a special local project office and a separate account is a requirement for the management of both project activities and funds. Last year, an Amity Project Management Workshop was conducted in Nanjing to discuss this. These measures are essential for efficient management of project funds. In addition to this, Amity continues to ensure that its own staff have direct contact with target beneficiaries and personally inspect project sites. Maintaining the principle of two “E’s” is the key to Amity’s high quality management of projects and funds. Local partners often say that “spending Amity’s donation is much more difficult than applying for it.” After visiting Amity projects, some development experts and scholars have heaped praises on Amity: “It is wonderful how Amity has been able to do so much for poor people with so little funds! How great it would be if other projects could be like this!”

Effectiveness and efficiency find expression not only in the management of projects and funds but also in the technical and rational design of projects. For example, Amity recently invited a water conservancy specialist to undertake a technical evaluation of a large drinking water project. The evaluation not only helped save RMB 420,000 (US$52,500) in project funds but also increased the number of beneficiaries in the three target villages and ensured the sustainability of the project. It is obvious that the principle of 2 “E’s” requires both professional knowledge and a strong sense of responsibility. By practicing it, Amity has won greater trust among its donors so that funding for rural development work has grown exponentially. The total amount raised in the last four years was more than four times that of the first ten years. Rural development projects have expanded to a much larger scale and have started to involve governmental development agencies from foreign countries.

A Strategy for Sustainable Development

Amity’s rural development projects were initially confined to small...
single projects with limited goals. Since poverty in many areas is related to the shortage of water for drinking and irrigation, earlier projects consisted mostly of small-scale pumping stations and drinking water projects. However, realizing that the causes of poverty are multifaceted, rural development work has been geared towards integrated development projects since 1993. More than just the random combination of several different projects, integrated development projects require close coordination and interplay between various sub-projects so that there is an organic relationship between them. How to strengthen this relationship, to develop appropriate guiding principles and development strategies, are important new tasks in our future efforts.

Women’s participation in projects is important

Population explosion, scarce resources and environmental degradation are among the most serious problems facing China and the world today. They are closely related to the issue of poverty. According to experts, 80% of poverty-stricken counties in China are located in ecologically fragile belts. The problems of poverty and ecology are like two bitter gourds on the same vine or the two faces of the same coin; they interact as both cause and effect. Putting an end to poverty requires solving the environmental problem. Unless the twin problems of economic growth and environmental preservation are solved, poverty will remain a vicious cycle.

Bearing this in mind, Amity focuses on both economic and ecological benefits in rural development projects. In January 1998, Amity held a Sustainable Development Workshop in cooperation with CAST (China Association of Science and Technology), the first national workshop of its kind. The workshop concluded that in poverty alleviation and rural development work, we should not simply “drain the pond to get the fish”, that is, seek short-term success or quick profits. Rather, we must concentrate on helping poor people get on the track of sustainable development by both meeting their basic needs and promoting a balance between social development and environmental preservation.

The Participatory Approach

The “three participations” is a consistent practice of Amity in the implementation of projects whereby the participation of beneficiaries, specialists and local leaders is emphasized. Among the grassroots, the participation of women, church and Christians is especially encouraged. Experience has shown that this ensures both the quality and smooth implementation of projects. Through experience, Amity realizes the importance of engaging beneficiaries in the whole process of project implementation, so that they not only contribute their labor, but also have their capacity for self-development enhanced. We believe that human development is the most important of the three (social, economic and ecological) aspects of development. Only when human development is enhanced can such development be sustainable. The human being is not a passive object of development, but an active and dynamic subject.

The theory of participatory development asserts that the success of any rural development strategy depends on whether local people are consciously organized to participate in the development process from the grassroots up. It is based on the belief that local people have the capability of understanding and solving their own problems. The core of participatory development theory is that the focus of development is human development. In recent years, local farmers and local leaders have welcomed and strongly supported Amity’s experimentation with the participatory approach.

The level of people’s participation in a project is a vital part of project monitoring. Accordingly, Amity has conducted several workshops and training courses on participatory development in places such as Ningxia, Gansu and Guizhou. We have also undertaken several appraisals of the participatory approach to underscore the point that people’s needs should be the basis for project planning and design. Instead of being passive recipients, local farmers have become dynamic participants. For instance, in a village of mainly Christian Miao in Wuqing County, (Yunnan) villagers expressed their wish for a drinking water project. With the help of local leaders and experts, Amity implemented a drinking water project that brought piped water from 10 km. away to each household. Last year, they applied for a new irrigation project to make use of the extra water. After one winter, they have realized their wish. What is more valuable is that they have laid out their own management rules and set up a monitoring team for the projects. When we visited the projects and were greeted with songs of welcome, we saw hope for the village.

*(According to World Bank statistics, the number of people in China living below the poverty line was 125 million in 1997.)*

Qiu Zhong Hui
Rural Development Division

Schoolgirls in a Wuqing village with Eva Lai of Amity’s Hong Kong Office. Education is crucial for sustainable development.
Where a hundred flowers bloomed:  
Easter in Yunnan

Dazzling displays of flowers along streets and rotundas provided a visual treat as we drove into Kunming from the airport. The “City of eternal spring” was bustling with excitement and putting its best foot forward as it prepared to receive thousands of visitors from all over the world flocking to the International Horticultural Expo. This was April 15th and we added to the happy chaos with a delegation of 16 from the Amy Foundation. The annual Friends of Amy Easter Tour had just begun. This year, the delegation was extra large with 16 participants from 11 countries: Ireland, Sweden, USA, Canada, Germany, England, Fiji, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia and New Zealand. The Christian Conference of Asia had selected five, including two from Cambodia, two from Indonesia and one from Vietnam. Among the participants, most of whom were women, there were seven ordained ministers, four theology professors and five working in China-related programs.

Yunnan’s uniqueness stems from the great number of minority nationalities that live together in the province. The diversity of cultures makes it very colorful and interesting, not to mention a beautiful landscape of rice terraces, snow-capped mountains, lovely lakes and valleys. Stephen Suleman, Dean of the Jakarta Theological Seminary remarked that: “One of the most interesting things to see in Yunnan is the presence of over 25 of the 52 minority nationalities in China. The Chinese people are composed of so many nationalities, each with their own language, cultural background, customs and traditions. There are the Naxi, Bai, Yi, Sani, Miao, Lisu, Wu, Dai, Hui, and so on. The Naxi people (whom we met in Lijiang) seem to have a very sophisticated culture. The Naxi – at least some of them – once lived in a matriarchal system. Now only a small group, the Mosuo, still keeps the custom alive.”

Economically poor but spiritually rich

We visited five churches altogether and met with leaders of the Yunnan Christian Council in Kunming at the end of the trip. Three of the churches were in the Wuding area which we visited during the first three days of the 10-day tour. This was the hardest part since we spent at least four hours to reach the churches in Baishiya and Zhaji. We traveled an average of 200 kms. per day, most of the time over winding mountain roads which often dissolved into bumpy, potholed dirt roads. However, once we reached the churches, the warm welcome with firecrackers, songs and carpets of pine needles were overwhelming. The Miao choir at Baishiya gave a memorable performance of the Hallelujah chorus.

Lientje Kaunang, a theology professor from Indonesia, observed that: “The people live in remote and barely accessible mountain villages. They are very isolated. Living in very simple houses made of wood and clay, they are very poor, striving to meet their daily needs in the rough and mountainous terrain. They meet in a very simple building, far from their homes, for Sunday Service and other church activities. Economically, they are very poor, but spiritually, they are very rich. Their faces and their lives speak of it. They welcomed and served us generously and hospitably. They worship God in a lively even if very simple manner. I myself cannot forget the songs sung by the youth choir. It was very beautiful and harmonious. Oh, it was amazing. I love them.”

In Dali, famous for its distinctive Three Pagodas, we visited Dali Church in the Old City and the Xiaguan Church. Built 90 years ago, closed during the Cultural Revolution and reopened in recent years, Dali Church is an impressive stone structure. Its distinctive feature is the “Dali Old City Christianity Reading Room” which is attached to the back of the church but whose wide glass front faces the main street of the Old City. It is open to the public during the week and has a wide assortment of books and magazines. The reading room also has stocks of bibles and hymnals for sale. Anyone can enter and read the literature. Christian tracts are available on the table for those interested in picking them up. This is probably the only Church-run reading room of its kind in the whole of China.

Across the street from the church is the lay-training center, comprised of several dilapidated buildings. Before 1949, the place used to be a mission school run by the China Inland Mission. The church and the Yunnan Christian Council hope to construct new buildings so that long-term training courses can be conducted there for the Western Yunnan area. In almost all the churches, which were always filled to the brim with people, many of them young, pastors were conspicuously absent.

Elders who are rather advanced in age provide leadership in the Dali and Xiaguan churches. However, at the moment, Dali church is being served by a young couple trained at Nanjing Seminary. Deng Jian Wei and his wife are originally from Shanxi. Deng will be ordained in August and become the first pastor of Dali Church in many years. There is also a young woman graduate of Nanjing seminary, Luo Yi, who now serves the Xiaguan Church. Obviously, the lack of trained pastors is a major problem since in all churches, membership is
growing very rapidly. However, we also encountered a network of Nanjing seminary graduates (mostly in their 30s) scattered among the churches in Kunming, Wuding and Dali.

Birgitta Larsson of Sweden who teaches at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong noted that: “The two congregations we visited in the Dali area witnessed in different ways to a painful past: a church that had been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, an old pastor who had been imprisoned for more than 20 years. But they also demonstrated great decisiveness in all their efforts to rebuild their congregations, in spite of aging leadership and divisive threats from what they called heretical groups. The whole question of the old leadership and the lack of young ordained ministers occupied our minds during most of this tour. We had been provided with figures that indicated there were thousands of Christians in Yunnan province without trained and ordained clergy. At the same time, there are a great number of people with theological training who apparently were not eligible for ordination.”

In discussions with church leaders, we were informed that the Men Tu Hui or Disciples’ Sect is active in the Dali area. It encourages followers to limit food intake to 100 gms. per day and to neglect farming because they anticipate the Second Coming of Christ in the near future. One of the sect leaders was converted or had his views “corrected” when he attended one of the lay training courses.

The sessions at Dali Church and with the Yunnan Christian Council were very helpful in getting a better perspective on the church situation at the local level and in the province as a whole. We learned that there is a Women’s Fund that has been set up by the Yunnan Provincial Council. All church collections on International Women’s day are given to this fund. There are special lay training courses for women at the grassroots that include literacy classes.

Amity helps smooth the way

It is clear that church involvement in social development work is just beginning but in the churches where there has been cooperation with Amity in rural development projects, we realized that Amity has helped smooth the way in church-state relations. After the completion of projects, local officials usually become more open and accommodating to the local churches. In some areas, churches and meeting points have been registered where previously they had been refused. We learnt how important it was for churches to be registered. It helps provide, for instance, some protection from the whims and abuses of corrupt local officials. At Zhaji church, comprised mostly of Yi minority people, we learned that Amity’s help in rebuilding the church and in the electrification of the village had helped bring harmony to a divided community of around 4,000 people. In areas like Zhaji, projects with Amity have shown people the positive role of the church in society and strengthened solidarity between Christians and non-Christians.

Lientje Kaunang commented that: “In Shilata, I saw Amity Foundation projects: a dam, biogas and slope terracing. In Lijiang, Amity helped rebuild a reservoir, a primary school and new villages after a severe earthquake destroyed the place in 1996. More than 300 died in the disaster and 300,000 people lost their homes. We saw the ruins of the old villages. The survivors have been relocated to new villages, built with Amity’s help. In this way, the people can experience new lives. In the new villages, people can enjoy their homes, and the fellowship of family and community. ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ (Luke 3:11). The people who participate in the Amity Foundation have shared with those who have nothing. The light of the Lord has shone there.”

Our trip of 10 days felt much longer than that because we covered so much distance and met so many people. Revd. Winston Baker, until recently pastor of the Kowloon Union Church in Hong Kong, shared these thoughts: “It was a privilege to participate in the Easter ‘99 tour of Yunnan province and an honor to be counted among Amity’s ‘friends.’ This was especially so since we were able to sense, first hand, the mutual respect and trust that provincial government officials have built up through joint programs with Amity in support of the most needy local people. As one associated with an international congregation, I appreciated the varied composition of the tour participants, and the breadth of cultural and faith experiences that each brought to the China visit. The group knit well together so that the different insights and experiences that each observed added to my own existing knowledge of China and the rapidly changing lives of its people.”

Theresa Carino

Susana Yabaki of Fiji conversing with a villager at Shilata, Wuding
From Amity's Grandmas: 
Tender Loving Care

Amity started working with orphanages in the early 1990s. Initially, it consisted of donations for purchasing basic necessities for children in the Nanjing Orphanage. Later, when it was discovered that the orphanage did not have enough care-givers to provide adequate care especially for infants and disabled children, Amity organized a program for retired medical workers and teachers to become volunteer Grandmas at the orphanage. Four women members of the local church volunteered. Their love and care brought significant changes. Many children benefited and some of those with disabilities made tremendous progress. Amity then decided to expand the Grandmas Project to other orphanages. Today, Amity sponsors a total of 78 Grandmas in 19 orphanages all over China. For each Grandma, Amity provides a monthly allowance of 300 RMB (US$ 38) to cover lunch and transportation costs. Below are some of their stories.

Qian Xinxı suffers from cerebral palsy. At the age of 8, he was unable to speak, to walk steadily, or perform many of the simple functions boys of his age normally can. Qin Guo Hua, a retired teacher noticed his problem as soon as she started working as an Amity Grandma at the Zhenjiang Orphanage. Although she had no special training in working with children with cerebral palsy, Qin was determined to enable the boy to speak and learn other skills. She started teaching him. It was hard work but she never gave up. Her love and patience paid off. The little boy began to utter some words, perhaps not as clearly as other children, but it marked significant progress for him. Delighted and buoyed by her initial success, Qin began to set higher goals for the boy. She began to teach him how to read basic Chinese characters. Each time little Xinxı learned a new word, Grandma Qin would praise and encourage him. Xinxı often forgot what he had learned but Grandma Qin was never discouraged. She would teach him the same thing over and over again—once, twice, a hundred times. Her patient efforts bore fruit and after less than a year, Xinxı could recognize over a hundred Chinese characters and articulate some simple phrases. He began to sing simple songs and learn to do things on his own. In fact, he has made so much progress, he will be able to attend a public special education school this fall.

In my own experience at the Nanjing Orphanage, where I was an Amity Grandma from 1991 to 1995, I remember Wei Shuisheng when he was only one year old. He had a congenital defect in his left hand. Suffering from malnutrition and slow development, he was “soft and floppy” and was always lying in bed. I decided he needed special attention. I not only advised the orphanage to feed him more nutritious food, I brought milk and chicken or fish soup from home to supplement his diet. After half a year of such special care, little Shuisheng became stronger and was able to hold his head up. I started to spend more time with him, talking to him and giving him more attention. Little Shuisheng’s improvement was amazing. He learned to do most things normal children can. Now, whenever I visit the orphanage, he is all smiles and calls me “Nai-nai” (Grandma).

At the Changshu Orphanage, Grandma Wang Wei Jun has this story to tell about little Yu Luo who has congenital hare lip and a cleft palate. In 1998, when she was three, she received orthopedic surgery for the hare lip through Amity’s sponsorship. Initially, though, she was unable to speak. She never smiled and disliked playing with other children. Grandma Wang started giving her more attention and care. She would hold her, talk with her and tell her stories. Gradually, feeling the special love from Grandma Wang, Yu Luo began to smile and to speak. She started to enjoy playing with other children. Thanks to Grandma Wang, Yu Luo has turned out to be a happy and active child.

Like those whose stories have been told here, there are many Amity Grandmas dedicated to spending their retired life for the sake of children in many orphanages in China. They are like angels, bringing love and hope to those children. Their work is difficult but they give encouragement to one another, sharing their joy in the achievements of the children as well as their problems.

Hong Bihua
(translated by Yang Jing)
Nanjing Drug Rehabilitation Center receives new equipment

The Amity Foundation donated medical equipment worth HKD 500,000 to the Nanjing City Drug Rehabilitation Center on May 7th, 1999. Most of the equipment had been sent from abroad. Amity’s General Secretary, Dr. Wenzao Han, spoke at the presentation ceremony. Huang Xing Guo, Vice-Director of the Nanjing Security Bureau, and Jing Le Ping, Director of the Anti-Drug Department, were present to receive the donation on behalf of the Nanjing Drug Rehabilitation Center. A representative from the Nethersole Fund in Hong Kong, donor of the equipment, was also present at the ceremony.

Amity has long been concerned about the drug problem and the need for AIDS prevention. In the last few years, Amity has initiated many projects in cooperation with drug rehabilitation centers, especially those in the border areas of Yunnan Province. This, however, is the first time Amity has cooperated with the Nanjing Drug Rehabilitation Center. In his introduction, Director Qian said that the Center began accepting patients in October 1995 and so far has treated more than 130 people. However, the Center is still poorly equipped. He hoped there would be further cooperation with Amity in the future.

Training for administrators of church-run clinics

A training seminar for administrators of church-run clinics was conducted at the Jinling Mansion in Nanjing, April 18-22, 1999. Attending it were 42 participants from 37 church-run clinics in 16 provinces and cities. Leaders of the Nanjing Institute for Hospital Management and the Nanjing Health Bureau delivered lectures on reforms in the health sector and various aspects related to the management of hospitals, medicines and primary health care centers. Participants were also able to visit the Zhou Zhuang Village Clinic in Jiang Yin Township and the Xi Shan Qiao Township Hospital in Jiang Ning County in Jiangsu Province. During the seminar, participants engaged in lively and in-depth discussions on how church-run clinics can enhance their capacities and positively participate in the development of the nation’s health care system.