

CHINA CARE CHILDREN ATTEND PARALYMPICS



October 11, 2008

In early September, nearly two dozen China Care children ventured to see the Paralympics, which were held in Beijing just weeks after the 2008 Summer Olympics ended. The children, all from China Care's

Group Educational Foster Homes, which provide a home, family and schooling for our older disabled orphans, had a memorable experience. They watched soccer and wheelchair basketball, table tennis and volleyball, swimming and wheelchair tennis.

"I think the athletes are very brave and determined," remarked Max, a 13-year old boy with malformed hands and feet, after the wheelchair basketball game. "When they fell down, they picked themselves up without any help. The wheelchair is like part of their body now."

This unique and amazing experience was made possible for our children thanks to the hard work and compassion of Wendy Lee, a pediatric therapist from San Francisco. Lee, who specializes in working with children with disabilities, loves what she does and wanted to bring that passion and expertise to children internationally. The Paralympics provided the perfect atmosphere, she thought, for disabled children in China, since it offered the world in their backyard.



"I believe that to be able to share and give the children in the orphanages and foster homes the opportunity to see and be involved with the Paralympics would give them such inspiration," she wrote to China Care in early 2008. "It gives them the opportunity to see their world peers, people with disabilities who can inspire them with their achievements and successes," she explained. Lee organized the transportation, the tickets and brought nearly two dozen volunteers with her to make the trip a success.

What started as just an idea eventually turned into a project that Lee described as a summer camp, calling it, "Inspire to Do." After pouring her love and passion into China Care's orphans this year, Lee hopes to continue "Inspire to Do" each year. "Even without a grand event such as the Paralympic Games, there are many opportunities to share with children with disabilities, such as music, arts and other sports that they typically do not have access to," she explained. "I hope to give them opportunities to interact with their greater communities and to give them ideas for what they are able to do in spite of disabilities."