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NURTURING THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

BlueStar's summer camp goes global

More than 100 children join the program, some are from the UK, Australia and US

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What kind of summer camp would make a British man come all along from his native country to China on his 20th wedding anniversary?

The answer is a summer camp in China organized by a company for the children of its employees.

EDUCATION

Darren Burrows, quality technician at BlueStar Fibers Co based in the United Kingdom, told China Daily that it was a pity that he could not celebrate his wedding anniversary with his wife back home. But he added that he also felt glad to be able to participate in the camp as a volunteer to teach local kids.

The BlueStar summer camp is organized since 1992 by China National BlueStar (Group) Co, a subsidiary of China National Chemical Corporation, one of the top chemical products manufacturers in the country.

This year's summer camp, the 23rd edition, was held under the theme of equality, friendship, harmony and improvement, said the summer camp's representative Li Huili, who is also a company employee.

"Twenty-three years is a long-time commitment for the company and its China



Remi Aillot, a child from France attending the BlueStar summer camp, asks questions during a class in Beijing. About 120 children, aged between 8 and 15, joined the camp this year. Fifty-four of them were from 10 countries, including the UK, Australia and the US. More than 40 teachers specialized in foreign languages and psychology worked together in the camp.

National BlueStar's President Ren Jianxin," said Burrows, who visited China for the first time. "I enjoyed every minute of it and I would love to come back on my 25th wedding anniversary with my wife."

He said he was busy as a volunteer, but that it was also very rewarding.

A few minutes before the interview, Burrows shared information and funny stories with the kids about the Olympic Games, which were held in his London hometown this year.

The children, the offspring of China National BlueStar's Chinese and overseas employees, listened to him attentively and answered his questions with enthusiasm.

Li, who worked every summer in the camp since 2007, said that 120 children between 8 and 15 joined the camp in Beijing this year, and 54 of them were from 10 countries, including the UK, Australia and the United States.

Up to 40 teachers, including

professionals specialized in foreign languages and psychology, worked together in the camp.

Many overseas employees enjoy participating in the camp and they usually come back after their first experience, Li said.

Alain Bisson, a French engineer at China National BlueStar's French venture, said that this was his second time in the camp.

"The camp gave me the

chance to visit a lot of interesting places with great architecture in Beijing. I was impressed with the kindness of Chinese people in 2009, so I came back," he said. "The camp has tightened the relationship between Chinese kids and their overseas peers."

Many former campers from the 90s are now college students or grown-ups because the camp has been held for more than 20 years.

Some of them wanted to give back because they enjoyed their experience



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ALAIN BISSON
ENGINEER, CHINA NATIONAL BLUESTAR'S FRENCH VENTURE

when they were young.

Chai Jing, 20, a sophomore student in Beijing, is one of them. She said she joined the camp every year when she was in primary school and that it was an activity that she looked forward to every summer.

She volunteered to work as a translator in the camp this year.

Founded 23 years ago for children of China National BlueStar's employees, the camp was organized originally to help the company staff with childcare during the summer holiday. But later the annual 20-day event became an important traditional and educational activity, providing a chance for youngsters to learn martial arts, sports and even the company's philosophy.

The first camp in July 1989 was a seven-day tour of Gansu province. As the company became bigger and more international, the camp also became more professional, with a growing number of children participating.

In 1999, the company invited experts from the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education to draw up a curriculum for the camp. It also employed university students as teaching assistants and brought in doctors to give healthcare support.

Meanwhile, the company has gone global. As a large-scale State-owned enterprise, China National BlueStar has 45 factories and 17 scientific research institutes all over the world.

China National BlueStar also bought a number of overseas businesses, including its 2006 takeovers of two French companies — Adisseo and Rhodia — and its acquisition of Qenos in Australia. In 2007, it also acquired a UK subsidiary.

Amid this background, the camp became international in 2009 with the participation of the children of foreign employees.

"We aim to give children the opportunities to explore a new world and help them to understand their parents better by letting them know the company that they work for," said Li. "The camp's development has been a reflection of the company's development."

The company spent 70 million yuan (\$11 million) in the past years to organize the camp. All the campers enjoy the activities for free.

But as the camp gets better known all over the country, an increasing number of people are inquiring if they can pay for their kids to join it. However, Li said that it likely won't happen in the near future because the camp is a benefit for staff and not a for-profit activity.

Citizens join hands to help flood victims, at least 60m yuan donated

When the heaviest rainstorm in 61 years hit Beijing on July 21, the hope of humanitarian help was not dampened. Relief efforts came from all circles of the society in varied forms.

By July 26, more than 60 million yuan (\$9.4 million) had been donated to the disaster-hit areas in the capital city and more help is on the way.

The Fangshan district in southwestern Beijing — one of the most severely hit areas — received donations of 32.8 million yuan just one day after the disaster. The district's government sent out 2.4 million yuan worth of relief supplies to local residents.

Dozens of volunteers from the Taiwan Tzu Chi Foundation came to Fangshan district on July 30, bringing along bottled water, instant noodles, blankets and other daily necessities worth 3.6 million yuan.

According to a statement from the Beijing municipal government on July 25, the disaster affected about 800,000 people in the Fangshan district with economic losses of 6.1 billion yuan, accounting for 53 percent of total losses.

After the disaster, the municipal government, in cooperation with many businesses and individuals, participated in the relief efforts.

Officials from the municipal government donated 221,000 yuan, China Development Bank Beijing Branch donated 1 million yuan, and the Beijing Red Cross Foundation spent 1.3 million yuan in the relief



A girl donates her savings to people hit by the recent floods in Beijing at a charity event. Help came from all sectors of the society after the heaviest rainstorm in 61 years lashed Beijing on July 21.

efforts.

More than 70 companies, including Dalian Wanda Group Corp, Nongfu Spring, Beijing Television, Beijing Performance & Arts Group, and 35 cultural personalities, participated in the charity activities organized by the Beijing Cultural Assets Office.

In addition, people helped the victims of the disaster in other ways.

Many netizens used micro blogs to report on rescue activities and to show their solidarity.

After the disaster, micro-bloggers sent about 9 million messages and comments to forward SOS information and

help with the rescue operations.

Some netizens organized their own rescue teams via the Internet. They volunteered to give a ride to stranded pedestrians and cooperated with the police to rescue people stuck in flooded areas.

Government organizations also updated information and sent warnings on their micro blog accounts on Weibo to facilitate the monitoring and assessing of the situation and to help citizens better protect themselves.

But more help is still needed.

The rainstorm claimed 77 lives and affected 1.6 million

people. The estimated economic losses were 11.6 billion yuan up to July 25.

According to the China Insurance Regulatory Commission in Beijing received 42,000 applications for compensation totaling 790 million yuan.

The Beijing municipal government said that local governments would build makeshift shelters for flood-afflicted residents as soon as possible. They also pledged to renovate residential areas hit by the disaster in about three months.

Ye Yiwen contributed to this story.

charity briefs

Potential marrow donors at 1.49m

Potential donors enlisted in the China Marrow Donor Program, or CMDP, total 1.492 million, making the marrow bank the world's fourth largest in terms of donors, Xinhuanet reported on Aug 1, citing an official from the Red Cross Society of China.

The CMDP has facilitated about 3,000 stem cells donations for patients at home and abroad and it has uploaded the information of 50,000 donors to the World Marrow Donor Association, said Zhao Baige, executive vice-president of the RCSC.

The CMDP, China's leading bone marrow bank, was established in 1992 by the RCSC.

The organization also helped promote human organ donations by cooperating with the Health Ministry in work concerning publicity, registration and human organ distribution, said Zhao.

Crackdown on organs trafficking

Police said on Aug 4 that 137 suspects had been arrested in a crackdown on human organ trafficking, amid intense pressure on finding sufficient donors through official channels, Xinhuanet reported.

The operation, which was jointly conducted by 18 provincial police authorities in late July, also rescued 127 organ suppliers, according to a statement from the Ministry of Public Security.

Meanwhile, experts also called on authorities to improve hospital supervision to prevent human organ trafficking and set up a sound donation system.

Statistics from the Ministry of Health show that about 1.5 million Chinese need organ transplants, but only around 10,000 transplants are performed annually due to a lack of donors.

Local govt aids mudslide victims

The local government's post-disaster recovery measures have helped residents in a mudslide-stricken county quickly recover

from the disaster, Xinhuanet reported.

The government in northwestern China's Zhouqu county, Gansu province, has implemented a series of measures, such as free skill training and financial support, in a bid to help the farmers overcome the difficulties.

Local authorities in Zhouqu said that more than 25,000 local farmers in the county have received vocational training and the county has sent about 10,000 workers to the industrial hubs on the country's eastern and southern coasts.

At the end of 2011, the provincial government of Gansu adopted a set of measures such as providing skill training to the farmers and developing new industries and ecological management, in an effort to help local people ward off poverty.

Nomura sponsors music festival

The Pacific Music Festival, a series of international music and education events supported by investment bank Nomura, staged orchestra concerts on Aug 2 in Shenyang, the capital city of Northeast China's Liaoning province and on Aug 4 in Beijing.

Nomura Group and the Nomura Foundation have been the main corporate partner since the event's inception 22 years ago," said Nami Matsuko, Nomura's global head of Corporate Citizenship.

"Nomura and the PMF share the common goal of developing the finest young musician talent to enhance music worldwide and provide the artists with the unparalleled opportunity of education to become a global player."

Entrepreneurship book for schools

A newly published book — *A Centennial Archive for Chinese Entrepreneurs (1912-2012)* — was donated to local schools in Beijing to inspire their entrepreneurship with the vivid stories of Chinese entrepreneurs in the past century.

"It's the entrepreneurs who made remarkable contributions

to China's development by using their wisdom to assemble all kinds of resources," Mao Yushi, a renowned Chinese economist said during the release of the book on Aug 3.

"Without their efforts, work would not create any value," said the 84-year-old economist.

The book includes stories of more than 200 Chinese entrepreneurs over different stages in the last century, recording both their glories and hardships.

Air Force donates \$1.9m to students

The Chinese Air Force has donated 12 million yuan (\$1.9 million) to the Spring Bud Project, in a bid to support impoverished students in the Tibet and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions, the China Philanthropy Times reported on Aug 7.

It was the Air Force's 10th donation to the Spring Bud Project, an education-support scheme under the China Children and Teenagers' Fund. A total of 54.85 million yuan (\$8.6 million) has been donated to the fund, to help more than 16,000 students in impoverished families, said the report.

In addition, high-ranking officials from the Air Force also pledged to provide more donations to the fund.

'Boomerang effect' in poor

Poverty still hampers the economic development in West China although the number of impoverished people continues to decline, reported Xinhua News Agency, citing a report issued by the Social Sciences Academy Press.

"Poverty has had a 'boomerang effect' in some regions, with some areas that were previously out of poverty becoming impoverished again," said the report.

The report cited a steady decline in the impoverished population, the improvement of family income structures and increased housing as the results of poverty alleviation efforts in West China.