



國際民族舞蹈團

2009

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE



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# BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY'S



# INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE 2008 - 2009



# THE TEAM



## TRACI AKER

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**Favorite tour memory...** Congee...I love congee. And my favorite memory with people...would have to be in Beijing. Good times in the hotel...Jenny's...eating dumplings...climbing the Great Wall...and having my husband surprise me and the whole bus going crazy as we all realized what an awesome and amazing surprise that was.



## EDWIN G. AUSTIN JR.

Laguna Beach, California  
edaustin@byu.edu



**Favorite tour memory:** I have several favorite memories.

- 1) Our guides, Sarah and Yana, will be forever imprinted in my mind
- 2) My reunion with my Chinese brother in Guangzhou
- 3) Our exchanges with the Beijing Dance Academy, the Minority University, and the Guangzhou Dance Academy
- 3) That crazy television program in Shenyang
- 5) Looking across the Hong Kong Bay at the "Batman" building and the surrounding cityscape
- 6) Jeremy's story about getting lost in Shanghai
- 7) Eating Lamien and Bowdza





## VICKIE S. AUSTIN

Orem, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** I have been contemplating what my favorite memory of China was and have come to the conclusion that I don't have one but several items that stick out in my mind.

I so enjoyed watching the students explore each new place we visited and hearing of their finds—the parks, the street shops, the treasures and just the sense of fun and wonder so many exhibited. I was especially tickled watching the Chinese boys/men walk up to/or behind our tall guys and gesture at them or stand next to them for a surreptitious picture or hold their hands out to show how big their feet were. That was delightful.

I enjoyed seeing the changes that have occurred in China in the past 10 years—the growth, the openness, the food. I loved getting to know Yana and Sarah—their care and concern for all of us—and as they became one of us. I loved seeing the Chinese audiences enthralled by the program presented to them and seeing them be more open in their expressions of appreciation—especially when recognizing “Mo Li Hua” or “You and Me”.

I just enjoyed being there with all of you and count myself blessed to be able to be a part of the Folk Dance Ensemble and its mission. Thanks to all—as **everyone** contributed to the success of the trip. Getting to know each of you contributes to my best memories of a tour. Best wishes to all of you in the coming years!



## STEVE BOYER

South Jordan, Utah  
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**Favorite Tour Memory:** My favorite memory is playing hacky sac (jianzi) with some locals one morning. They were all amazing of course, but still invited me to play and it was awesome!



## SALLY BOYLE

Mesa, Arizona  
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**Favorite tour memory:** I loved performing “Mo Li Hua” in China. One of my favorite memories is the first time we performed it at the amusement park. I hadn’t really thought much about what it might mean to the people of China for us to perform a Chinese dance to one of their folk songs. They clapped when we first came out, but when the music turned into Mo Li Hua the feeling of love between the dancers and the audience was overpowering. I’ve never felt anything like that while dancing before. The spirit was so strong and I think those of us performing got a wonderful taste of what we could do for China and what we could learn in return. It was so beautiful.



## JON BRAME

Blue Richland, Washington?  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Talking to kids in English in Dalian.





# SARAH CAMPBELL

Phoenix, Arizona  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Looking back at our international and instate tour for one memory is difficult. Together the trips combine five and a half weeks of my life, 38 days. But, I have come to realize that the most important memories I have come from the people I met on tour. I could write about my fantastic families on mid-semester or the strong members in China. But, I am going to write about my fellow members of the band. Creating a new musical group is difficult; everyone has different tastes, musical backgrounds, expectations, work ethics and opinions. We worked extremely hard to become compatible musically, and our friendships naturally blossomed. On mid-semester we really wanted to mix things up at our last show. Robby and I had been singing falsetto harmonies to Rocky Top while setting up the stage for days, and we decided we should insert a portion of it that night. We worked it before the show and finally decided to rock it. And we did. All of us were really nervous even though we had performed countless times together- it brought the high we all get when playing something new. The crowd loved it and Ed even called it "classy". That experience really represents our group for me. We had fun, worked our tails off, tried ridiculous things, trusted one another, and made something both spectacular and unforgettable out of seven individual, independent musicians.



# EMILY CARPENTER

Draper, Utah  
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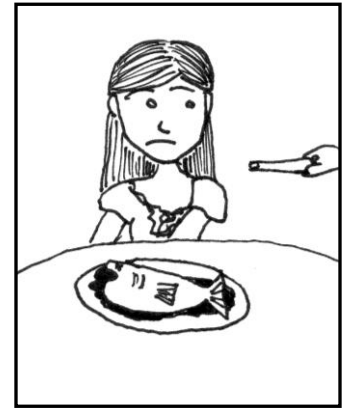
**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory from tour was singing the turtle song (courtesy of Jon Wood) every day. ☺ My second favorite memory was bartering at the Hong Qiao Market in Beijing with Jen. We were so good. My third favorite memory was when Steve Dethloff did the French Canadian sound check because Mikey was nowhere to be found. My fourth favorite memory was Matt Thomas' "Chuckles & Grins" joke book- the elephant jokes and Weird Harold and Fat Herbert! And just anything Matt says is worth remembering.

I loved China Tour 2009!



## ASHLEE CARROLL

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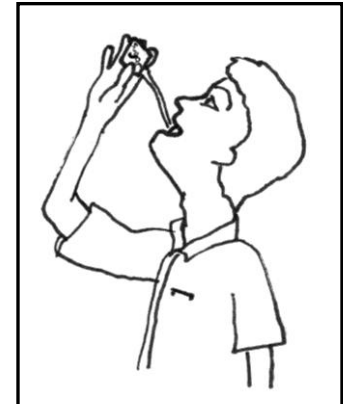


**Favorite tour memory:** When a group of us got to perform for the disabled elementary school in Hong Kong was a really special experience for me. The kids were so sweet and after we performed for them, they sang us their school song. One of the boys had the microphone and he was seriously wailing out the last note for like 10 seconds at the end of their song. It was SOOOOOOOOOO cute and so sweet. They were just precious little angels and it was a really neat experience to get to meet them and be with them for the little time that we were. I LOVED it!



## BRETT CARTER

Memphis, Tennessee  
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**Favorite tour memory:** The special memories that I remember most were the visits to the markets and the bargaining involved. I really remember how we had to fight for what I wanted to buy and often didn't want to buy. I have gotten really good, but I'm far from mastering the art of bargaining. Fun, fun!



## COURTNEY CARTER

Merrimack, New Hampshire  
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**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory from tour was probably in Shenyang when we were out in the square with the people of the city that night. We weren't sure at first if it was a celebration for something, or a party of some sort, but we found out later that it was something they did every night. We watched as they encircled certain people dancing, and then, when I was too short to see anymore, I moved away from the group. A younger man and another man tapped me on the shoulder and asked me who we were and what we were doing there, in very broken English. When we told him we were dancers he proceeded to teach Vickie and I a simple line dance. Jen joined in, but all the other people of the city just stood and watched for the entire song. When the song ended he tried to ask us to teach him a dance. At first he said "perform," and we weren't quite sure what to do, but Jen saved us with a simple line dance she had apparently taught one of her classes. He picked up on it pretty well by the end- but again, the rest of the people just watched. But we had a blast. We taught the Electric Slide for the last song, and some of those watching learned it where they were, but still wouldn't join us. It was a fun night. It was just great to be with the people in their own setting interacting with them even though we couldn't communicate with words very well.



## AMANDA DANCE CHRISTENSEN

Fall City, Washington  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Going to China for me was an experience. I saw things I had never seen before, tasted foods that I had never tasted, observed the people and got to know their culture better. I learned so much about people and the will to survive and the determination to do what had to be done. I had a number of great experiences in China but I would have to say that one of my favorite things was watching the Chinese dance. I loved watching them express their bodies with the spirit. Although they couldn't identify what that was I think they felt it. I could see the spirit in their glowing, illuminating faces. I felt so much light inside, it made me so happy to see their joy in their movement. I love finding similarities with people and dancing with the spirit was one I found with the Chinese people. Another experience I really enjoyed was doing baptisms in the Hong Kong Temple. I loved walking up to the temple and feeling the spirit wash over me because it was hard at times to feel the spirit in this country. It was just right there in the middle of the city and looked divine. China was great and full of so many great experiences. The greatest thing of all is that WE all got to do it together. Lifelong friends we will be and the feelings I felt being with you all and watching you dance will always be in my heart. All of you have made me a better person. Love you all and I love China.



# MICHAEL BURNS CHRISTENSEN

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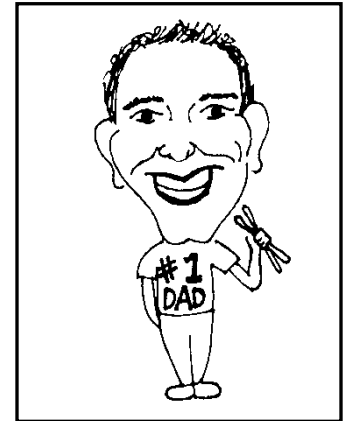


**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite tour memory was finding the Hong Kong Temple with Amanda and Cindy. It was funny because we got lost, and once we found it, it turned out to be an awesome experience. Doing baptisms in Hong Kong was very unique and special...definitely my favorite experience of tour.



# JESSE CHRISTOPHER

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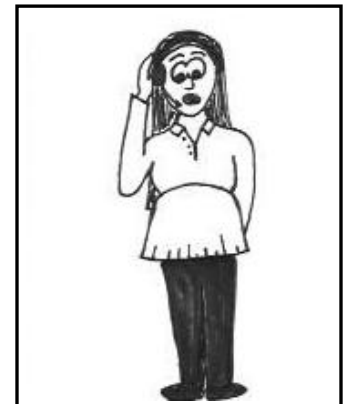


**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory was rushing through Shanghai as a group in order to make it to the acrobat show in time to buy tickets and the show. It was awesome!



# STEPHANIE CHRISTOPHER

Chugiak, Alaska  
stephanie\_ak\_05@hotmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory of tour would probably be in Shanghai when Ashlee Carroll and I experienced "The Bathroom" on the 94th floor of the really tall Shanghai World Financial Center! There were so many buttons and cool options! The seat warmer was really nice. Anyway, we giggled so much and had fun until the janitor lady came and we felt we should be more contained, sober, and mature...Needless to say we left satisfied, with a smile, and feeling squeaky clean! I recommend "The Bathroom" to all.



## STEPHEN DETHLOFF

Bryan, Texas  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Stephen was an employee of the dance department. His boss was Mark Ohran. He worked backstage during the shows and handed people their microphones, although towards the end of the tour, in the middle, and a little bit at the beginning, he would just let dancers pick up the microphones themselves. Stephen had brown hair, and hazel eyes. Depending on the shirt he wore, sometimes his eyes would look brown. Stephen actually always thought he had brown eyes until he got his first drivers license, and the lady at the DMV put hazel down on his license. He'd never paid that close attention to his eye color, but began to afterward.



## JENNIFER GARRARD

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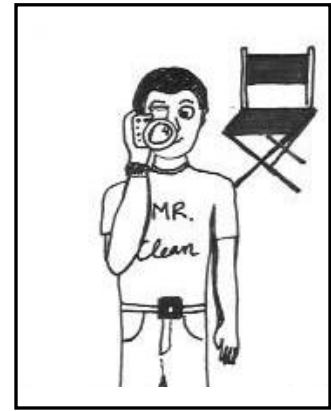


**Favorite tour memory:** I.....personally believe... that.... my favorite memory of tour is....taking a walk around town in Shenyang. Part of what made Shenyang so great was that I had ZERO expectations for it – according to Steve O's China book, "the remarkable thing about Shenyang is that it is unremarkable." i.e. it was not a tourist spot. It had all the makings of a big city but had no tourist attractions except for the original Forbidden City. So, a group of us went on a walk around town and it started with a walk through a meat market (EW!! But, very educational). Then we went to a convenience store and everyone bought a different flavor of cookie and then we shared them. (YUM!! I got milk flavor. Prince milk flavored cookies that had little cut outs in the cookies like swords, shields, other knightly/princely things.) Then Nikki bought dragon eye fruit and we all tried them, which was a fun, new experience. Then a stop at the mall looking for Wolverine in English, which was not a success, but we found many an English grammar mistake and a Snoopy store! ☺ The outing ended in a park full of kite flyers. Many of us joined in on the kite fantasticness. It was very fun to be in the park and soak up everything around us, from the kite flyers to the jump ropers to the people staring at us to people walking around with their dogs to people doing Tai Chi. Later that night, we came back to the same park and danced which was also very fun. Overall, Shenyang was a GREAT unremarkable place.



## JEREMY GOHIER

Logan, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Running in the rain with Rachel along the Avenue of Stars in Hong Kong.



## MICHAEL HINCKLEY

Omaha, Nebraska  
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**Favorite tour memory:** KTV was awesome.



## JIAMIN HUANG

Guiyang, China  
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**Favorite tour memory:** There are so many good memories for me to mention; in our intense travel schedule, I never saw or heard anyone complain or show negative feelings. The one thing that I'll always remember is your boisterous laugh; you laughed on "a little and pool turtle!" You know what I mean.

I love to watch Chinese audiences' reactions to our performance. Each time we sang "You and Me", the theme song from the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, I could feel happiness, understanding, appreciation, and friendship between the Chinese people and us. I always think that dance and music are the best way to link people together. Without speaking the same language, we are still able to have effective communication from the heart. That was one of the most enjoyable moments I had from our tour in China.

Thank you everything you did to make this a wonderful trip! I hope that we will be able to come back to China soon. My Chinese friends love you and Chinese audiences love you too.





# TESHA DAWN JONES

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**Favorite tour memory:** The most memorable moment I have from tour was at our last performance in Hong Kong. It was after Steve O's devotional which had started a handful of people crying. I was standing in the hall upstairs when I noticed an almost familiar song being played. "Where is that music coming from?" I questioned looking into the band's dressing room. "The band must be playing a pre-show," Erin had commented. "This is the harmonic song!"

Both Erin and I turned to run downstairs... I love this song- "Leather Britches" is what it's called. We stood in the wing of stage left listening to the last half of the song. It was in this moment as the faces of people I'd met and all the memories of tour replayed in my mind. I was overcome with emotion while listening to a great song and counting the blessings this experience had brought me. I was reminded of the truthfulness of the gospel and what a blessing it is to know the truth and to be involved in a folk dance way.



# RACHEL ILENE MECHAM

South Jordan, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** It's gotta be a toss up between winning a hamster in Shenyang, China and pranking Jon Wood with it OR one crazy chaotic night of karaoke for three hours straight in our hotel in Wenzhou, China.

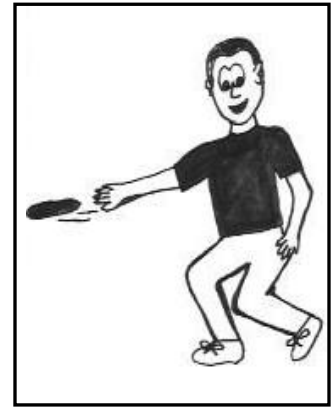
But on a more serious note, every single one of my "standstill moments" of tour, where everything seemed perfectly aligned in harmony and oneness with the world as I looked around and realized I was enveloped in the love and culture of China. A bike ride in Beijing, doing Tai Chi in the park, interacting with Chinese people and especially their angelic children, morning jogs with the "PAC-pacers", and our first performance of "Mo Li Hua" at the amusement park in Beijing. These are just a small handful of my "standstill moments." I miss China. :-)





## JUSTIN MORGAN

Draper, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory from tour was in Dalian. After our show I went out to the audience to talk to the people. One of the first people I talked to introduced himself as “Elder” and told me that he just returned from his mission a few days before. He actually just returned from the Melbourne Australia Mission which was right next to my mission, the Melbourne West Mission. He told me that his sister served in that mission (my mission!) and she was there in the audience too! I met her and we had a great time talking about how the mission was doing. It was an amazing joy to hear that the mission had been growing and there were many people joining the church in the areas I had served. It was also great to hear that the programs that were started when I served were still going on and having success. I would say that at that moment my joy was full.



## SARAH MORGAN

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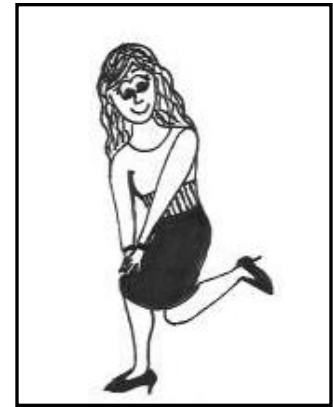


**Favorite tour memory:** The memory that I will always cherish is that of doing a session in the Hong Kong Temple. I’m pretty sure that was one of those once-in-a-lifetime experiences. We learned that the Hong Kong Temple serves about 3.4 billion people... that’s half the world’s population! It was really neat to learn about the construction and daily operation of the temple, especially in terms of the condition of the Church in China and Hong Kong. I was so happy to be able to make it to a session there. Other little fun memories include watching the audience get excited and singing along with us as we sang “You and Me,” cutting all my hair off in Hong Kong, the buffet where “Tastes of Edible Black Fungus” were available for lunch and dinner in Wuhan, bartering, playing Nerts ALL the time, and doing the TV show in Changsha, especially kissing on a show viewed by billions! --OH and also: telling everyone that I was pregnant! Aaaah!!



## SHAN'TEL NELSON

American Fork, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Going out in the crowd after every performance and getting to shake hands and take pictures with the people of China. It was so neat to see their enthusiasm and their love for us. I didn't think that people in China would like bluegrass and folk dance, but they really loved it and appreciated us bringing it to them. I also thought it was fun playing with the band super squished on the corner of the stage at the Dragon-Center! Also, this one may not be appropriate, but walking in on Tesha while she was using the squatty-potty! :)



## MARK OHRAN

Provo, Utah  
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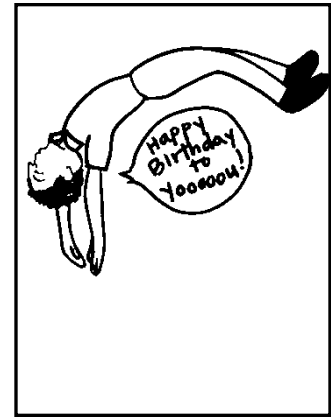


**Favorite tour memory:** There are just too many to tell. Airplane engine failure, changing airlines, lost bags, doing show after show after show, Magnum bars, seeing the great wall, a gerbil in need of a home, fish that stare at you while you eat them, Sara and Yana, teasing Bethany about her expanding waistline, watching my kids run out to meet me when we got home. And many more.



## STEPHEN JOHN ORD

Provo, Utah  
ord.magic@hotmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite memory was hard to choose because I had so many from morning runs to Karaoke nights. But the memory that always makes me smile is our time in Shenyang. When I looked that city up in my tour guide book, it said that there was nothing remarkable about this city and it should be passed over. This city turned out to be one of the best times on tour for everyone. I will never forget the day we flew our kites while others wrote in their journals on the park benches. Greg and I flew our little Super Buddy kite higher than any other PAC flyer! I loved looking to my right to see Steve D. up in a tree getting his mask kite out of its branches and then turning to my left and laughing even harder seeing Matt Thomas trying to untangle himself from his string and in the distance his eagle kite was caught in another tree. It was so touching. Matt looked like a little boy-frustrated and sad at his unlucky turn of events. The park was amazingly fun during the day watching the little ones but it was even more fun at night with the hacky sack, roller skating, games, and of course the dancing! Another blessing that night was getting myself drawn with a huge crowd watching. The picture made me look very Asian. I got good use of my drawing of Asian Steve. Asian Steve was used in many other cities for fun, frights, and frivolity. Good times. That was the best 10 Yuan I spent.



## NIKKI PERKINS

Beijing, Hong Kong, Provo,  
Holladay... take your pick!  
nikkifer@hotmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** I loved any time we interacted with the local people at the parks, but the park in Shenyang really stands out to me as a favorite! When we first stopped at the park in the afternoon I loved seeing all of the people flying kites and just enjoying time together. I remember two families in particular: one of the families had a little girl who was running in circles around her parents to keep her kite (with a very short string) in the air. She was laughing and loving life. The other family was a dad with his son, who came over and talked to me for a few minutes about his son and how much he loved his family. Several of us bought kites and flew them with the help of the Chinese men who laughed at our inability to keep our kites in the air. Then we started playing with a jianzi (the Chinese hacky-sack with feathers) and were joined by two locals. I just loved seeing how happy they were and eager to welcome us to their neighborhood.



# BETHANY RAWCLIFFE

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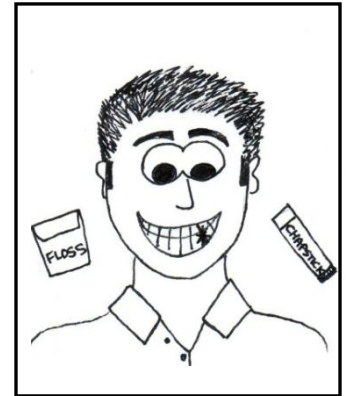


**Favorite tour memory:** The triumphant moment as I made it to the top of the Great Wall of China, 5 1/2 months pregnant! I honestly thought I would only make it to the first lookout point, which wasn't very far up at all. I felt very proud of myself and also was in awe of my surroundings and the history of the place. It was a good moment!



# THOMAS RAWCLIFFE

Orem, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** I really enjoyed seeing the smallest river in the world. That was pretty neat.



## GREG RAWLINGS

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
mischiefmanaged97@gmail.com



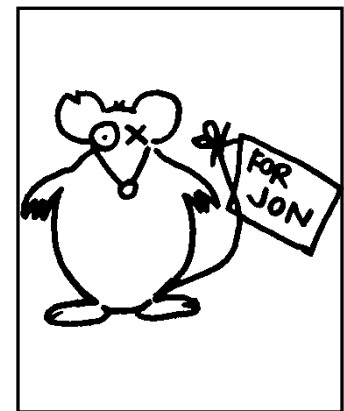
**Favorite tour memory:** My first memory occurred the last day of tour. We all had a little free time before we had sacrament meeting in the hotel. Jen and I decided that we really wanted to see the temple, so we planned on going, taking a picture, and heading back. You'd think that Mikey, Amanda, and Cindy, who were lost for 2 hours looking for the temple, would know where it was. Apparently that was a bad assumption. Their directions were .... wrong... so wrong. And seeing as this story involves Jen and I, you can imagine how lost we got and how loud we were. So we got to the right station and then walked the wrong way for a very long time. I'll spare you the details, but we wandered around EVERYWHERE looking for the temple. Fortunately, a random lady on the street thought she knew where it was, so we kept looking... nothing. Then... it started pouring rain, and we basically were already going to be late. Just as we were heading back, I yelled, "There it is!!!" We could see Moroni poking above the surrounding buildings. Well, we figured we were already late and we were so close, we just had to go. So, we ran through the rain and we made it before the lights went off!! We were so happy, and SO WET! By the time we got back to the hotel, we couldn't find anyone, so we went to one of the leaders' rooms to see where everyone was. We knocked, the room was quiet, the door opened, and you all know what happened... definitely not a sneaky entrance. OOPS! It was totally worth it though. I'll always remember running around Hong Kong in the rain looking for the temple.

My second memory I'll never forget is watching "Mo Li Hua" from offstage and loving how the audiences reacted. I also loved singing "You and Me." It was amazing to feel the culture gap bridged as we saw their appreciation as they sang along. It was incredible to share our love of culture with them amidst a message of peace and joy.



## KATIE SHEPHERD

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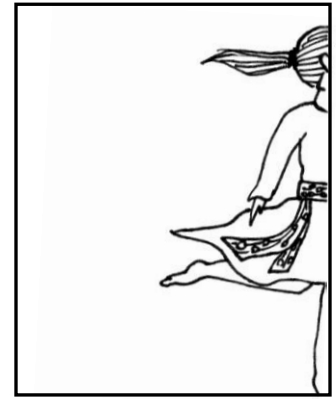
**Favorite tour memory:** When we left a hamster on Jon Wood's doorstep! ☺ RIP Mugangshu!





## AMY CARPENTER SLADE

Draper, Utah  
Amybeth309@gmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** I have so many favorite memories of tour- as far as shows go, I loved all the silly things that happened- like watching Justin's face when he discovered his shirt was ripped open in Fandango, running off stage early in Israeli, and the best-when the Indian music cut in the middle of Balle Balle to the 5 girls' dance- that was so great with the awkward end and all of us sulking off stage. Another highlight was watching Mark and Jon dance in the light booth while we were dancing Western Wildfire....classic. Besides performances though- it was just a fun thing to get to know everyone better... like the free time we had to sightsee- whether it was running around the Hong Kong park in the pouring rain, or going to the Chinese acrobat show and running through the metro. The show itself was a highlight. But the best part was just understanding more about the Chinese people and their culture- tour was great! I loved this team so much!



## COLIN FRANCIS SLADE

Fort Collins, Colorado  
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**Favorite tour memory:** Remember how the engine blew up on the plane and we had to go back to San Francisco? Remember those beds at the Marriott? Even if the beds had been soft in China, they couldn't have been as awesome as those in the Marriott. Heaven...



## ERIN SORENSEN

Bountiful, Utah  
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### **Favorite tour memory: TEA WITH THE LOCALS**

After church in Shanghai, Robby and I decided to check out a museum (for free I might add). Along the way we ran into a couple of local girls. They spoke decent English and wondered if we were from New York (we were wearing nice church clothes and sunglasses, mostly black in our wardrobe, and they thought that's what New-Yorkers looked like) we explained to them we weren't. They ended up inviting us to this tea festival that'd been going on for 2 weeks. We explained very clearly (we thought) that we didn't have a lot of money, and that we didn't drink tea, but that we wanted to watch.

So they led us to a building, up some stairs into a dark, creepy hallway, which connected to a room (it was only then that we began to wonder if we'd were being stupid following them or not!) and eventually to a little room. The four of us sat down, Robby, me, Julie and Jen Jen (at least her name was something close to that). The little tea lady was forbidden from speaking English during these little ceremonies, so our new friends tried to translate as best they could. Basically it was going to cost us 30 Yuan each for the room fee, and then you try the teas and if you like one you can have more for a fee. Then each tea you choose costs 49 Yuan (roughly 7 dollars)

First, she poured some tea over a little stone frog, covered in symbolic jewels. We were instructed to rub its back for good luck. This frog was the tea god, and we were to pay our respects before drinking any tea. The first tea was some kind of an herb they collected in the mountains. Each leaf was hand tied into these intricate little knots. When I remarked at how long that must take, Jen Jen quipped back "it's ok, there are a lot of people in China!" Ya, cheap labor, she's right... ha ha. We were told how to hold the little cup (can I strongly emphasize the word little, these little teacups were half a shot glass big, TINY!! This info will be important later on) Then we were told to swirl it over our stomach and then smell it, then sip three times, we again reminded then we didn't want to pay and they just said, you can do this with us, try it. Robby and I looked at each other and thought "oh well, it's probably just herbal, why not?" So we tried it. Not too bad.

The next tea was made of Jasmine flowers, and it came in a cup that was upside down inside a little tea cup. The tea lady did some kind of a tai chi move to flip the cups over, and then we were instructed to remove the top cup, letting the tea spill out into the bottom cup. The empty top cup was for smelling, and then we were instructed to rub the hot little smelling cup over the sides of our eyes to reduce wrinkles. Also we put the opening up to our eye and looked inside the little porcelain thing to help our eyesight. Then we drank.

The third type was a beautiful pink, and tasted flowery and fruity, like hot juice. It was very good, and they kept giving us more. We thought this was the one we had chosen, so this would be the one we paid 7 U.S. dollars for. Just then Jen Jen asked us if we'd like to try more or stop. "Stop?" "Have we started?" I asked. Jen Jen replied, "Oh of course, anything you drink you pay for." Oh no... and that familiar pit in your stomach set in. How much do we owe already? Well, the tea lady added up our bill... 354 Yuan for Robby and



I. 354!!! That's about 50 US dollars for three TINY cups of tea. Jeez. What's worse is that we only had 200 Yuan and no way to access our card via atm. "Can we wash your dishes" This didn't go over too well, and eventually our new "friends" just bailed us out the 15 US dollars we didn't have. Oh man, what a story. We did however get two little charms out of it. Our 354 Yuan charms as we like to call them now. Totally worth it, though, for the experience.



## ROBBY SORENSEN

Orem, Utah  
iplayguitar@gmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** See Erin's favorite memory above... it's the same one!



## MICHAEL STEELE

South Jordan, Utah  
manofsteele@byu.net



**Favorite tour memory:** The last show in Hong Kong was the highlight of tour for me. Just looking back on the year it was fun to see how far we had come. It was sad to think that it was the last show for a lot of great friends, but I felt so grateful to have known them. Everyone has made such a difference in my life, and it made it that much more fun to dance with them one last time. We had worked so hard to be unified as a team all year, and during that show I felt like we had reached our goal and it felt so great!



# CINDY SWENSON

South Jordan, Utah  
cswens88@hotmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** Partying in the Sunbird Square in Shenyang. We flew kites in the daytime, and then we danced with the people there by night. It was so much fun! ☺



# MATTHEW THATCHER

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thatcher\_matt@hotmail.com

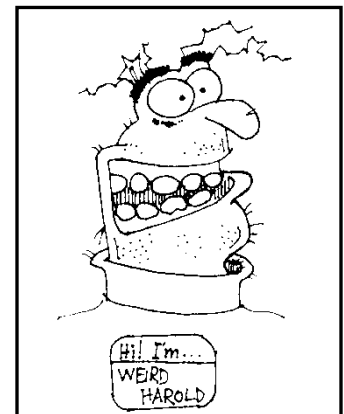


**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite tour memory was probably bartering at the markets. I felt like I was a pretty good bargainer and got a lot of fun things for myself and others! The Great Wall was one of the greatest feelings...to be on such an amazing landmark and see the beautiful scenery. There were so many unforgettable moments that I'll just keep it at what it is. ☺



# MATTHEW THOMAS

Idaho Falls, Idaho  
matt7thom@gmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** My favorite tour memory was Shenyang, when Rachel won a hamster playing animal ring-toss in the park. She named it Mu Gheng-Shu, and he was nasty looking, with a ripped ear and one eye bigger than the other. We all promptly gifted said hamster to Jon Wood, who loved the hamster like his own. That same evening, it was great seeing Katie dance with her new friend in the park.



# KELSIE WAGSTAFF PETERSON

Holladay, Utah  
kelsiejwagstaff@gmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** I loved when we sang “Go Ye Now in Peace” and “God Be With You ‘Till We Meet Again” surrounding Sarah and Yana. It was so powerful to see them feel the spirit. I loved the Chinese people! Also, I loved riding on the Hurricane at the amusement park as a group! We were a screaming watermelon! Also, I loved giving Jon Wood his first and last pet from China- a sweet hamster!



# BRIAN FOLGER WATSON

Fairfield, Montana  
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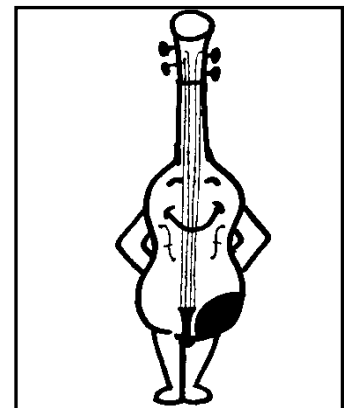


**Favorite tour memory:** Swimming in Repulse Bay in Hong Kong.... need I say more?



# MARY JULIA WILSON

Beaverton, Oregon  
maryjuliawilson@gmail.com



**Favorite tour memory:** One of my favorite tour memories was buying a kite in Shenyang. I haggled for my orange squid kite midst 30-40 Chinese on-lookers. The sales lady was having a field day pulling me out tons of kites to show me. It was quite a spectacle, but I got away with the coolest kite at a pretty good price (I think!) with a cool ball-bearing string winder. Even Mark Ohran thought it was cool.



# JONATHAN WOOD

Provo, Utah  
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**Favorite tour memory:** I have a lot of favorite memories. However, one of my favorites was going to the Shanghai Acrobats show.



# SARAH

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jy\_vin@msn.com



# YANA

Beijing, China  
yanayan640@sina.com



# THE SHOW

NUMBERS PERFORMED THROUGH THE YEAR...

## DANCES:

Appalachian Patchwork  
Attachés tes Bottines  
Balle Balle  
Eretz Hakodesh Movement 2  
Ferfi Mulatcság  
The Gathering  
Hopak  
Inside out and Kicking  
Journey  
Keltatak  
Last Night  
Mo Li Hua  
Piekna jest Polska  
Poltavskyi Duet  
Rapper Sword  
Refabriqu  au Qu bec  
Texas Fandango  
Tides of Anatolia  
Turlutte  
Western Wildfire

## BAND NUMBERS:

B Minor  
Far Away Land  
Flamenco Fling  
The Fox  
Orange Blossom Special  
Gypsy Aires  
Hallelujah, I'm Ready  
Long Time Gone  
Mason's Apron  
Reasons Why  
Rocky Top  
You and Me

# THE WRITTEN HISTORY

**February 21, 2009**

**Logan, Utah**

**Sarah Campbell, Shan'tel Nelson, Tesha Jones, and MJ Wilson**

It was our first show on the road. With the prospect of mid-semester and China ahead, our performance in Logan would be the first of many which we would participate in. Our show was a good preparation for mid-semester tour.

It was a beautiful Saturday morning when we loaded the bus at 9:30 a.m. We had to reach our venue early to set up the stage. The bus ride was full of excitement and anticipation for our first show away from home. Once we arrived at the theater, we were pleased to find it very accommodating to our many needs. We were able to have large dressing rooms including plenty of "star" dressing rooms in which fast changes were possible. The theater was beautifully designed with many ornate figures and gold paint that shocked those who touched them.

Once the stage was set up and the sound check was done we relaxed and had study time. Our sponsor was the Cache Valley Alumni Association of BYU. One member's family served dinner at the theater and Brett entertained everyone at his table with paper clip tricks (although it was rude of Brett to "accidentally" pull the chair out from under Tesha as she was sitting down for her meal). We ate lasagna, salad, and cookies for dinner and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely with the excitement building for their first show.

Soon it was show time at 7:30 and everyone double checked to assure that their props were set and ready for their fast costume changes. The band performed four numbers during the pre-show. The audience's response to each dance was loud and gave us more energy as we went through the show. Overall, it was a huge success.

When it was time to leave, everyone was tired, making the bus ride home pretty quiet. We arrived back in Provo at 1:30 a.m. and everyone was happy to make it back to their own beds safely.

# MID-SEMESTER TOUR

## MONTANA AND WYOMING





# ITINERARY

## FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 7, 2009

**Thursday, Feb 26** **Provo to Helena, MT** **527 mi/9hr**

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10:00 pm Depart for Helena

**Friday, Feb 27** **Helena, MT**

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7:30 am Meet host families at Helena, MT Chapel

7:30 pm **Performance – Helena Middle School (1065 seats)**

**Presenter** Helena Montana Stake

**Contact** Chris Gadzia

**Saturday, Feb 28** **Great Falls, MT** **91mi/1hr 40min**

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8:30 am **Morningside with Helena Stake YW and YM (Dancing, games, music)**

7:30 pm **Performance – Great Falls Civic Center (1785 seats)**

**Presenter** Great Falls Community Concert Association

**Contact** Sherry Turner

**Sunday, Mar 1** **Great Falls, MT**

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TBD Attend church meetings with host families

6:30 pm **Fireside - Great Falls Stake Center**

**Monday, Mar 2** **Glendive, MT** **405mi/7hr**

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5:00 pm Arrive at Glendive Stake Center -Students home with host families for FHE

**Tuesday, Mar 3** **Glendive, MT**

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1:30 pm **2 Performances for elementary schools - Dawson County High School**

7:30 pm **Performance – Dawson County High School (995 seats)**

**Presenter** Glendive Montana Stake

**Contact** Vaughn Jenkins

**Wednesday, Mar 4** **Billings, MT** **222mi/3hr 25min**

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12:00 pm Visit the Billings Montana temple grounds  
7:30 pm **Performance – Alberta Bair Theater (1416 seats)**

**Presenter** Alberta Bair Theater  
**Contact** William Wood (Woody)

**Thursday, Mar 5** **Casper, WY** **288mi/4h 30min**

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7:30 pm **Performance – Kelly Walsh High School (Cap. 550)**

**Presenter** Casper Wyoming Stake  
**Contact** Clark Jensen

**Friday, Mar 6** **Evanston, WY** **324mi/6h**

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2:09 pm **Assembly - Elementary School Show at Evanston Middle School**  
7:00 pm **Performance – Davis Middle School (700 seats)**

**Presenter** Young Musicians, Inc.  
**Contact** Carolee Bowen

**Saturday, Mar 7** **Afton, WY** **145mi/2hr 30min**

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10:30 am Workshop with students in Afton at the High School  
*Teaching dances to high school and middle school students*  
5:00 pm **Performance – Star Valley High School Auditorium (985 seats)**  
8:30 pm Depart for Provo (4.5 hrs)

**Presenter** Star Valley Arts Council  
**Contact** Leslie Shinaver

**Sunday, Mar 8** **Afton, WY to Provo** **222mi/4hr 30min**

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1:00 am Arrive in Provo

**Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**Provo, Utah - Helena, Montana**  
**Day 1 (and a ninth) Traci Aker and Steve Boyer**

It was 9:34 pm. A silver car was surreptitiously pulling into the RB parking lot. As the dark and lovely lady emerged from the vehicle, she realized quickly that she was too late. The bus to take the 2008-2009 International Folk Dance Ensemble on their mid-semester tour had already arrived... and it was almost full! Here is the beginning to that long and wonderful story!

We loaded the bus quite efficiently. Almost everyone was on time (9:30 was the arrival time). Only two of us waited until the last minute to turn in our excused absence forms (Myself (Traci) and Mike Hinckley)-we all know that Ed would never have left without us ☺. At last we were all on the bus, awaiting the arrival of MJ (who was taking part in an on-campus concert). At around 10 pm, she arrived to a roar of applause from the group- we were off! On the way to Helena, Montana- the first stop on our trip.

What do you imagine we did once we got on the bus? There were a few announcements and lots of conversation. Basically we were all left to our own devices until we would eventually fall asleep. The ride through the night was good for most, I believe. I, personally, learned from the examples of my team leaders last year and brought a foam mattress pad to sleep on the floor with (as did a few others). This made the night trip exceedingly more comfortable and doable. The drive went off without a hitch. We made one stop along the way for the “necessary break” and we arrived in Helena at around 7:15 am-ahead of schedule.

Once there, we all beautified ourselves the best we could and waited (some on the bus and some in the church) for the much anticipated arrival of our first host families. We were hosted by the Helena Montana Stake. Once they arrived, the dancers, technicians, and musicians were taken away one by one until there were only myself, Tesha, Jeanette, Matty, and Colin. They were the ones without a host family... just kidding their’s was really late.

Next we all went home with our host families for some much-needed rest and relaxation. All of us grabbed some sort of lunch on the way to Helena Middle School, our first venue. It was beautiful. There was one small problem: the stage. Dun, dun, dun. We quickly unloaded the truck and began our first tour stage set up. Things went slow, but pretty well. Dressing rooms were found, costumes were steamed, and little naps were taken.

At four o’clock the group loaded the bus and headed over to the Stake Center for dinner, which was provided by the Relief Society. It was marvelously tasty and satisfying. We had wonderful barbeque-beef sandwiches, with salad and cookies, and the famous funeral potatoes. Those were so good! And the cultural hall was beautifully decorated with shades of purple and violet, and elegant centerpieces. They pulled out all the stops. Did we mention the food was amazing? After we finished dinner, we sang Irish Blessing for the Relief Society and hosts, loaded the bus and went back to the venue.

That’s when the blocking began. It was then that we discovered much to our chagrin, that the stage was quite small. Hopak was especially cantankerous and the men were forced off the stage during the piece on several occasions—which ended up working out much better than we thought.

This being our first tour show, some of us were a bit nervous. But the show went great. There were a few collisions, formation changes, and technical problems (like the giotto and monitor issues during Irish and mic problems for our beloved Mr. Brian Watson at the end of “Go Ye Now in Peace”). Oh, and Steve Boyer *happened* to wander out on stage during intermission and wave at the audience. But overall, the show was a raging success. The audience threw roses at our feet and blew us kisses...Not really. But

wouldn't that have been cool? Yeah, we thought so. But they did love it. The Spirit was felt and hopefully people's lives were touched.

We have one last thing to tell you about – striking the set! It took FOR-EV-ER (approx. 1 hr 45 min). Our poor host families must have been wondering what they'd gotten themselves into. But they were great despite the group's lethargic striking skills. What, you may ask, was the problem? Lack of experience, perhaps? Perhaps we'll never know... just one of life's little mysteries.

Well, we made it through strike, went home with our wonderful host families, and thus ended our first day of MIDSEMESTER TOUR 2009!!! (To be continued...)

**Saturday, February 28, 2009**  
**Helena - Great Falls, Montana**  
**Sally Boyle and Jon Brame**

This morning we had the wonderful opportunity to involve the Helena Stake Young Women and Men in a Morningside. We started by having Erin share a devotional with the youth to give them a taste of what our team does every day to build our unity and strengthen our spirits. Erin talked about how the traditional female dancers in India would share a message through their dancing and how we try to do the same as we represent people and cultures from around the world. She had the boy closest to going on a mission read D&C 84:45-46 out-loud for us. It talks about Christ being truth and therefore light, thus we should look for Christ and light in all things. Through missionary work and serving others, we can share our light with others. We then sang *Teach Me to Walk in the Light* as an opening hymn and Brett gave the opening prayer. Next, we performed our Indian suite and Mehkerek and then grabbed partners to learn Cukas Drikos, a folk dance from Latvia. In bigger groups, we played the name game and so learned everyone's name by putting a sign with them. We also played "Do you Love Your Neighbor?" which was way fun! We then gathered back together as a team and sang *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*, after which Steve-O, Amy, a young man named Jason and a girl named Erin bore their testimonies. We finished by having everyone sing *Army of Helaman*, which reminded us of fighting for righteousness and more missionary work! It was wonderful to see such a great turnout of good kids who love the gospel and have such strong testimonies. While we were cleaning up, people started playing Jesse's drum box and he taught one boy from Germany (a foreign exchange student) how to get a great beat.



We then took a beautiful drive to Great Falls and went through a gorgeous rock canyon sprinkled with trees. Mike Hinckley gave our devotional on talking to those we love about the gospel and had us talk to our seatmates about what we wish we could share with our non-member friends from home. Steve-O gave our word-of-the-day, but he was holding the microphone so he was not very surreptitious about it.

When we got to Great Falls, we loaded everything into the theater at the Civic Center. We were so excited to see that it had such a big stage! Ron set his station up in the tunnel downstairs and many of us were scared to see the Most Wanted picture hanging up by him. We walked across the street and had a fabulous dinner of pizza, fruit, and cookies presented by the Great Falls Community Concert Association. During our notes we were challenged by Ed and Jeanette to strike the set in less than 50 minutes, so that added another element of excitement to our show (at least for the girls of the stage right dressing room who also decided to race the other girls' dressing room at cleaning up, which was quite easy seeing as the stage left girls did not really care about beating us).

The show went very well and our costume changes are just getting faster and faster! Afterwards some of us talked to a very small woman who asked many great questions about our team, including if

anyone had children and what our most embarrassing moments on stage were. Great questions to ask performers! At the end of cool-down, we all shouted "Ice-Cream!" and the race was on! We finished with everyone sitting on stage after 48 minutes! Yay! Ice-Cream for all! We then went home with our host families to prepare for the Sabbath.

Mikey and Amanda also had a neat experience in Helena in the morning. They got to stay on a huge ranch!! There was a barn, dogs and animals to suit the picture and of course the beautiful skyline. That night Sister Briggs, the host mom, asked Mikey and Amanda "Hey do you want to milk the cow in the morning?" Mikey jumped on that and they got up to milk the cow at 6:40am in -3 degrees. It was a little difficult to do at first, and he got squirted a couple of times, but it was a unique, fun, and memorable experience.

**Sunday, March 1, 2009**  
**Great Falls, Montana**  
**Amy Carpenter and Colin Slade**

Once upon a time, there was a touring group called PAC. They were continuing a tour in Montana, and were spending a wonderful fast Sunday going to church. Some went to wards in the Great Falls East Stake, others went to the Great Falls West Stake, but all were enlightened and uplifted by the testimonies shared. Little did the team know that their testimonies would be further strengthened and reach unanticipated heights.

It all began at 6:30pm at the Great Falls West Stake Center, the location for the fireside that evening. The team met at 5:30 to warm-up their singing voices and share stories of their superb host families. It was certainly an entertaining gathering, but maybe more practice was needed to make the dancers sound like a choir. But lucky for these dancers, the spirit came and made up for any want in their lack of preparation and nerves. The fireside was a success in all sense of the word, and went as follows:

Opening Remarks and Introduction by Ed Austin

*Awake*- sung by the ensemble

Brett Carter's Testimony

*Come Thou Fount*- sung by Rachel Mecham, Erin Sorensen, Sally Boyle, and Shan'tel Nelson

Accompanied by the band

*Savior May I Learn to Love Thee*- sung by the ensemble

Emily Carpenter's Testimony

*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*- played by MJ Wilson, Shan'tel Nelson, and Ashley Carroll

Jon Brame's Testimony

Steve Boyer's Testimony

*Guide Us O Thou Great Jehovah*- sung by Michael Christensen, Colin Slade, Jon Brame, Steve Boyer, Brian Watson, Justin Morgan, Michael Steele, and Greg Rawlings

Sarah Campbell's Testimony

*The King of Love My Shepherd Is*- sung by the ensemble

Following the fireside, the team was offered the opportunity to visit a young 19 year old boy, Jens Carpenter. Jens had put in his mission papers, but was unable to leave because he was diagnosed with cancer. Despite the prayers and blessings given on his behalf, Jens has been given only a month or so to live. To brighten his day, most of the team went to the Carpenter home, but in the end, Jens left more of an impression on PAC than they had planned for. Here are some of their experiences:

Mary Julia Wilson, Fiddler - Visiting Jens was a neat experience. My favorite thing was playing Bluegrass and Celtic music for him and his family. I hope he felt like we thought he was a normal guy who likes fun

music too. We played some Celtic music and I wanted to play B-Minor, but the rest of the band didn't want to. So I told Jens to request B-Minor. He did, and so we *had* to play, haha. Later on, Mike Hinckley talked to his dad and his dad said that their family loves Celtic music and they love everything Irish. That was neat to be able to play the kind of music for them that they love, even without knowing it to begin with. It was neat to meet people that you automatically loved. They were an inspiration to me with their good attitudes and their huge smiles and laughter. They are an awesome family with a lot of faith.

Erin Sorensen, Dancer – Some of the dancers went downstairs after visiting Jens to see the new born puppies. As we washed our hands in the small basement bathroom, we noticed a beautifully decorated poster inscribed with the Irish blessing, the same lyrics that we sang ten minutes earlier. Talking to a host Mom later, I found out that the family was Irish, and that Jens' mother was singing along with us in the back of the room. Jens himself commented that he "loved that song" as we finished, and we were surprised to know that he recognized the song. God really is in the details of our lives, and we felt blessed to carry out that detail that blessed Jens, as well as us.

Brian Watson, Dancer –When we were driving to Helena my dad called me and told me that my home ward bishop had a nephew who was fighting cancer and that he was losing. My bishop was wondering if the dancers would be able to go and visit Jens. I said that we could. I felt that this would be such a great opportunity because tour isn't all about the dancing, it's about the people that we can affect. As we got to his house I was one of the first ones in and had a great time watching the expression of Jens as everyone started walking into his house. He was so excited to have such a full house—his brothers were commenting that they have never had that many people in their house before and were wondering how many more they could fit in. The whole time I was so impressed by the attitude of all the dancers and how well they interacted with Jens and treated him like one of the gang. After everyone left I was talking with the dad and he said that though the dancers might forget this moment he would never forget this night and that it was so special for him and his family. As I was thinking about what he said I realized that it is so important to remember the opportunities that God gives us to reach out and touch other people. It's not every day that a group of dancers and host families can go cram into a little kitchen and living room, present a fireside, and play some music hoping to change some young man's life and come out changed themselves.

Jesse Christopher, Percussionist – After the group gave Jens the testimony meeting, the band decided to play some songs for him. Stephanie and I had been invited to a jam session that night, so I had packed my bodhran in the car. I got the drum from the car, and as I was bringing it in Jens brother told me about how Jens was a drummer in high school, but that he hadn't been able to play for years. I decided that we needed to let him play drums again. So, after showing him the bodhran, and then playing for him, I let him play it for another song that the band was playing. The experience was so neat. He has such a touching spirit. I just feel that everything had been planned that night so that experiences like this one could work out. I was so touched by his spirit and attitude that I wanted to leave him something more. I thought that he should have a memento of our group, so I sent him a bodhran tipper through my host family to remember us by.

**Monday, March 2, 2009**

**Great Falls – Glendive, Montana**

**Emily Carpenter and Jeremy Gohier**

7:30 am- It is much too early to wake up...

8:45 am- We are on the bus and we are going to the Lewis and Clark Museum! Surely we will learn many new and exciting things that even Steve-O, Matt Thomas and Thomas couldn't tell us (history majors... they're supposed to know everything – and if they don't Steve-O will probably make it up anyway. ;)

9:01 am- The Lewis and Clark Museum is closed. Who closes on a Monday? But we are now going to the world's shortest river! The Roe River got its name from a term for fish eggs, because it has often been used



as a spawning pool. It is a very unique site because it is recorded as the shortest river (only 201 feet) but it empties into the country's longest river – the Missouri. Interestingly, because of its small size, it wasn't always considered a river. But there was a local fourth grade class who had been learning about rivers and how they are defined by having a source, a separate channel, and a destination. One of them mentioned the Roe to their teacher and she couldn't find anything wrong with their suggestion. So as a class they submitted it to the national bureau of rivers, or whoever decides these things, and it received its official classification. We also got a chance to see a couple of the falls that give Great Falls its name. When

Lewis and Clark arrived in the area they heard a great roaring and followed the sound to the falls. They named the first one they found Rainbow Falls, because the air was so full of mist from all the falls that there was a continual rainbow. Now most of the falls are dammed so you can't always see the rainbow anymore, but the dams have earned Great Falls one of its nicknames: the Electric City.

10:16- We are now back in our fabulously blue bus seats. The river really was a river- it had a source and a channel and an end, depositing into the Missouri River. Who else can say that they have been to the world's shortest river? Steve-O is giving us the word of the day. No, the bird is not the word. Cantankerous is. Cantankerous means "difficult to deal with." Ed for one, found many opportunities to use this word – though I am not entirely sure that they were all correct uses.

10:29 am- Quiet Time. Shh...

10:47 am- Sally gave me some of the candy for the sweet and sour. Don't tell! Jeanette and Amanda passed out the per diem money. They gave us two-dollar bills! One of the only two-dollar bills I've ever had! Tour gives you such new and exciting experiences!

11:40 am- They've pulled the bus up to an Albertson's Grocery Store for lunch. Yum! I need canker sore medicine...

12:45 pm- Everyone *should* be on the bus. But not everyone is. Good thing Ed is in a good mood – though he did make Steve-O give everyone a confession/apology for taking the cookies from the cookie jar, oh I mean being late. Good thing Jeanette is out getting us all ice cream, or else all these late people would be stuck in this nameless town (Louisville) in Montana... I convinced Ed to try a sour Warhead. He didn't like it very much.

1:04 pm- On the road again- but we have the ice cream for our fast strike on Saturday night.

6:00 pm- We just arrived at the Glendive church building, where our host families have been waiting for us for about an hour (Turns out we took a not-so-shortcut). Earlier on the bus ride, we watched Stardust, after which people slept, studied, or played various card games. Now we are unloading the bus and going to meet our families... Our host, Vaughn of the Glendive Montana Stake, explained how he called Jon Wood to ask how a small town gets a group like us to come and miraculously they fit perfectly into our trip. We can tell that they are excited for us to be here, especially since we are the first performing group like this to come to Glendive. The cultural hall is already set up for our dinner tomorrow night and judging by the folded napkins waiting anxiously on the plates, it should be something to remember.

6:30 pm- After the auction for which families will get which BYU student, we gathered our luggage and we are off to our homes for the night!



**Tuesday, March 3, 2009**  
**Glendive, Montana**  
**Courtney and Brett Carter**

Show day in Glendive, Montana. After spending the night with our host families in Glendive, we all met at the Stake Center at 8:00am to catch the bus to Dawson County High School, just five minutes from the chapel. We had the morning to load in and prepare for our assembly for the elementary schools and middle school. Although the town is small, we found that the auditorium of the high school was quite large. We also learned that at the time it was built it was the largest theater in Montana.

We had just a couple of technical difficulties to work through. The stage depth was short, but the width was fine. Another difficulty we had to fix were the hanging giottos. We had no hanging bars to bring down and connect them to, so Brett, Thomas, and Mike connected them to the tops of the boom stands. Vaughn Jenkins, our presenter went and bought some wood and had it cut to the size of the booms. The giottos were tied to the wood and then to the boom stands. The scrollers also had to be connected to two poles on the front of the stage because they couldn't be connected to the bars of hanging lights. In Ed's words: Mark produced a miracle on the stage.

After doing notes and blocking, we were all sent out to find lunch in the small town. The two choices seemed to be Dairy Queen and Subway. We had to be back quickly to prepare for the Elementary school show at 2:00. The house filled up quickly as the students were bused in from the two elementary schools and the middle school in town. The show started a few minutes late, as the theater filled to full capacity. The kids loved the show and we all enjoyed seeing them afterwards and talking with them a bit as they got back on their buses. Later, one of the host families that had been at the elementary school show told us what some of the teachers had said as they left the performance that afternoon: "This is the greatest thing that has ever come to Glendive." It was a wonderful opportunity for us to bring to these kids something they hadn't ever had the chance to see before.

Ron did a short cool down with us, after which we were sent to clean up and put things away in preparations for the show that night. With the show ending at around 3:00, we didn't have much time before dinner. After cleaning up, we all gathered back on the stage to finish blocking the rest of the dances for the night. Mark requested that the Turkish group rehearse for lighting, which we did. However, right when the music usually gets faster, it turned into Thriller! It took about 3 seconds for us to start dancing along. Good one, Mark! Then we gathered into the girls' dressing room for the scripture study that we hadn't been able to have in the morning. It was led by Ashlee Carroll, with a focus on gratitude.

The bus came back to the venue at about 4:15 to take us back to the chapel where we were served dinner by some of the members of the stake. When we walked into the gym where dinner was being served, the tables were set with real place settings, and silverware and the napkins folded as if we were at a banquet. And this was not just a normal dinner on tour. The "waiters" for the meal came and picked up each of our plates, and returned with a salad for each of us. When we had finished that, they removed those plates and brought us our dinner, and so forth until dessert. Dinner consisted of chicken with tomatoes, and a delicious cream sauce. It was served with steamed carrots, and potatoes. But they weren't just any potatoes. They had sliced the potatoes very thin and cooked them in the shape of roses, being held together by toothpicks. There was homemade bread made by one of the high priests in the stake, and dessert was a delicious lemon cheesecake, with a walnut crust and topped with huckleberries. Vaughn Jenkins introduced the meal, letting us know that they wanted to treat us to the best they possibly could, in hopes



that we would want to come back again to Glendive. After the meal, we gathered to sing *Irish Blessing* and felt very blessed to be with these people at this time. It was something that they had never had come to their town before, and they loved that we were able to be there with them.

The show was a wonderful one. In later conversations we all seemed to note how many of us said an extra prayer as we began the show; we had seen the excitement in our host families and in the community as they told us that everyone in the town knew about it, and tickets were being sold everywhere. The house was full as Brother Jenkins introduced us with much enthusiasm, and throughout the entire show the audience was wonderful. It always helps to have a responsive audience, and they were responsive to everything. Some of the younger children that had been at the earlier show had come again with their parents, and some of the children made their way up to the front and sat on the floor just below the stage all through the show.

Another special event had to do with a young boy in the community who has been fighting cancer. We were asked a few weeks ago if it would be all right for them to have donation boxes set out at the show in order to raise some money to help the family of this young boy as they continue to do testing and treatment. We decided to help out by donating to them 20 percent of our profits from t-shirt and DVD sales to this cause. In the end we donated over \$300 for this young boy, and about \$1800 total was raised for him that night.

After meeting with the people in the audience, we proceeded to cool down, and to strike the set, and then to return home with our host families again. Many of us heard from our host families how much this had impacted the community and the town, and we learned that more than half of the theater was filled with nonmembers. Jeanette noted that she watched the faces of the people as they entered the theater, most of them with questioning looks on their faces, as they weren't sure exactly what they were coming to see. But by the end, they were all pleasantly surprised and, from one host family, it was much more than they had imagined.

**Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**Glendive - Billings, Montana**  
**Mikey and Amanda Christensen**

This morning we left the wonderful town of Glendive. Two individuals, Mikey and Amanda, are now the only two who have gone to three states on this tour instead of just two. Their host family lived right across the border in a little town called Beach, North Dakota.

I think we could all agree that Glendive was a unique and special place. We had never been so well received and cared for. The small town feeling was different but there was a special strength among the members. We were sad to leave such wonderful people.

Before we left, however, we made sure to sing "Happy Birthday" to our one and only Jon Brame! He is now a quarter of a century old! We all went outside and Steve-O and others joined in on the famous happy birthday dance! Later that morning on the bus, many people shared what they love about Jon Brame. If time would have permitted, an experience of this sort could have gone on all day, but this morning, it only went for about a half hour or so. We all love Jon and he is a very special person and asset to this team.

Shan'tel gave a wonderful devotional on prayer and a lot of great scriptures on prayer were shared with the whole group. The word of the day was "sycophant" which means flatterer or parasite. It was a 3 ½ hour bus ride from Glendive to Billings. The first thing that we did when we got to Billings was go to the Billings, Montana Temple! We took a group picture and enjoyed the spirit of the temple. Right afterwards we came to our venue and host, the Alberta Bair Theater in downtown Billings, and began to set up the stage. So

far on this tour, this venue has been the nicest and biggest one we've had!! In our spare time, some people did homework, others slept, some went running, and others went shopping at a small store called the "Vintage." Apparently everything was pretty cheap and some girls decided to buy everything from clip-on earrings to a dress (Sally)!

We all continued to get ready for the show... some faster than others, but we got ready and went to warm-up. After warm-up we continued to our starting positions to find out the band had not gone on to do their pre-tour show yet. Our show was delayed because some of our advertisements said we started at 7pm and others said 7:30pm: the usual time. We ended up starting the show 15 minutes early and had a great show! There were some funny things that happened like when Erin forgot her Hopak boots down in the dressing room and had to wait to come on until Robby found them. I (Amanda) saw her standing in the wing just smiling back stage....waiting for Robby, I guess. Rachel did a beautiful big bow center stage to pick up her ribbons she dropped during Hopak. It was a good show and the audience liked it a lot even though we couldn't hear them very well. This was a smaller audience here in Billings but we performed for them with our hearts. After the show, we hurried to clean up and get home to our host families. What a glorious day here in Billings!! Onward and upward we go. We only have 3 shows left, so let's make it the best!

**Thursday, March 5, 2009**  
**Billings - Casper, Wyoming**  
**Jen Garrard and Steve Ord**

Some of us had omelets for breakfast, yum yum! We met early in the morning for a bus ride from Billings, MT to Casper, WY. It was sad to leave MT, land of the big sky. And brown grass. We did have a family that was especially sad to see us go, the host family for Cindy and Rachel. The wife and children became our roadies. That was fun! Everybody was totally conked out on the way over; Rachel got some great sleeping pictures of everybody since the whole bus was passed out. We stopped at a convenience store, like unto K Mart, to get some treats or much needed supplies. We also saw a man who had a sign on his bicycle that said, "I will not stop riding my bike until the war in Iraq is over." He also had a giant American Flag on the back.

We arrived at the Kelly Walsh High School to the pleasant surprise of a handy tech crew—they helped us unload all of our tech stuff. The Casper Wyoming Stake presented us for this show. Dinner was excellent—we went to a church and had funeral potatoes, barbeque beef sandwiches, chocolate cake, ice cream, and plentiful fruit...although we were only allowed to have 1 strawberry (orders of Ed). For some reason we had more left over strawberries than we knew what to do with. We also threw one of the cooks up in the air for her birthday. The head hostess, even. She was flabbergasted. Also, Ashlee met her cousin who was serving a mission! Lots of great stuff.

Back at the school, sometimes performers were allowed to paint a brick in the hall just to the side of the stage. Robby and Sarah Campbell selected the brick and put a beautiful white background with a delightful blue border. Sarah Morgan took on the job of painting some folk dance figures in the middle and everybody got to sign it for our print to be left for the eternities. It turned out quite well, if I do say so myself.



The show went pretty well—Jeremy and Colin both had their cameras out, recording the show. No one fell into the huge pit separating us from the audience, luckily. The guys got to change in the set shop and the girls split up into a couple of smaller rooms. Rachel busted out the flat iron and came up with some pretty cool curls. Erin also got to sing in the pre-show because Shan'tel lost her voice—she fell victim to the plague of sickness that was going around the team.

When we were sent home with host families, Jeremy stayed with Ed and Brian. He made breakfast for them in the morning.

**Friday, March 6, 2009**

**Casper - Evanston, Wyoming**

**Thomas and Bethany Rawcliffe**

Today we met really early at the Casper chapel and left for Evanston, Wyoming. The anxiety was running high since we all knew that we had a big day ahead of us. We had about a six hour drive to Evanston and we ate sack lunches on the bus, provided by our previous presenter. We had to hurry so we didn't stop often. We got to Davis Middle School at about 1:00, which was a little sooner than we had expected. Young Musicians, Inc. was our lovely host for both shows here. About three-fourths of the dancers and two musicians had to then leave to go to an elementary school show at Evanston Middle School that started at 2:00. We were asked to prepare a show of about fifty minutes. When our show only lasted forty five minutes the principle let us know that we were done before we should have been by announcing it in front of the school.

Back at the Middle School those left behind were busy setting up the show shorthanded. This in itself was stressful with not a lot of tech equipment and not a lot of time to get ready! The rest of the dancers and musicians and the technicians stayed back at the venue to attempt to get the entire show set up in record time. Those that set up had some extra challenges at the venue. The stage was smaller than usual (especially in depth) and there were hardly any lights at the school. Mark had to work his magic and rig up some special lighting, which was creative and miraculous all in one. Special cords were brought from Provo by the Vickie to assist Mark. All the dancers, musicians and technicians that were there had to fill in and learn the jobs of the whole rest of the team that was performing at the time. It took a lot longer than usual but everyone was willing to work hard. By the time the dancers from the show returned, most of the jobs were done and dinner was ready. We ate a meal provided by the presenter in the school commons area. The show went well and we packed up headed for the next day of fun.

**Saturday, March 7, 2009**

**Evanston - Afton, Wyoming**

**Erin and Robbie Sorensen**

*Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,*

The old folk song starts out, a poem written about a river in Scotland. Hearing the melodic run of the creek in Wyoming, William Budge gave the city of today's tour destination its name, Afton.

*My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,*

*Flow gently sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.*

We actually had time to *dream* this morning, and showed up happily at the bus at a late 8:45! Our 4 hours of bus time were broken up by a word of the day (squalid), a video clip, and the traditional Wyoming rush hour.... Cattle! Katie screamed, and Thomas went off about mad cow disease, while the rest of us watched out the window as true city slickers, gawking at a few running cows.

*There daily I wander as noon rises high*

Noon came and went, and we skipped over dinner with an early performance at 5pm. Our show went off without a hitch, though we started getting ready later than usual due to an avid game of scum, where I believe it was reported that a certain Edwin Austin pleaded for another round until the dancers were forced to scramble away to paint their faces at lightning speed.

We were proud of our last performance and truly felt like we'd come a long way in the past ten days as a team.

*There oft as mild Ev'ning weeps over the lea*

The *evening* came early, and by 8 o'clock we'd finished packing and were then treated to a dinner in the Cafeteria by Julie and Jody who stayed late to feed us. The Star Valley Arts Council really took care of us, and we were so grateful for the love that we felt from our presenters, the Star Valley Arts Council. We were also grateful for the love from the boys.... The flowers were beautiful! Sarah Campbell's devotional has become a theme for our tour. As we related stories of love, and scriptures on the same theme, we realized that our love for each other has grown, we are a team now, and are so grateful for the relationships that have been strengthened here in Montana and Wyoming.

*How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,*

A late bus ride, a whole lot of first kiss stories later we were back to our *snowy* home of Provo. Tired, but full of love and gratitude for another wonderful tour, we said our goodbyes, set our clocks forward, and went home to much needed sleep.

**Saturday, March 27, 2009**

**Monticello, Utah**

**Jen Garrard and Stephen Dethloff**

We departed ere 9:30, with a meeting time of nine o'clock. The drive down was long and beautiful. There were a lot of red rocks, and it was surprising that there were red rocks so close to Provo, just on the other side of the windmills of Spanish Fork Canyon. We never knew we were so close to red rocks. Steve Boyer gave a nice devotional about sharing our light with the audience.

We arrived around two o'clock, give or take a few minutes, or an hour or so. We loaded into Monticello High School. The night before Monticello High School had been the location of Monticello High School's Prom. Their gymnasium was decorated like a castle with a moat made of blue Christmas lights, and a cardboard bridge over which couples took pictures. The trash cans were overflowing with empty punch cups. The gym ceiling had also been transformed into that of a castle using cascading, billowy fabric. (There is a disagreement here, some of us think it was plastic.) According to the high school student assigned to help with tech-ing the show, the prom had cost 7,000 dollars to decorate. A lot of money. In addition to the entertainment provided by exploring the Prom Castle/Gymnasium dancers liked to look at images of Sterling Scholars that covered recipients from the 1950s to the present. The lockers in the school hallways were also unlocked, and dancers liked to carouse through them. They were orange lockers.

The banisters on the gym stage didn't travel in and out, and there was no cherry picker at the school, so to set up the house lights we had to use ladders. But, there was only one, and so the process was slow. And long. Mike Steele did the majority of the work, hanging the giottos and scrollers all by himself. Backstage of Mike was a dressing room full of girls watching America's Funniest Home videos on the computer. They were not helping. A few boys were sprinkled into the group. Mark Ohran got frustrated that no one but Mike was working very hard. What an ornery man.

Before setting up was finished we had dinner. Dinner was served... a delicious, delectable, array of mashed potatoes, beef, and green beans. There was also a salad with cheese flavored croutons. There was ranch dressing, or Catalina, or Raspberry Vinaigrette. There was also strawberry shortcake. Some of the dancers had forgotten what it felt like to dance on a full tummy. They soon remembered. Oh, and we had rolls, too. Warm rolls.

After Traci led the group in a warm-up in the cafeteria the show was ready. The boys' dressing room was in the theater room. They shared the space with a mannequin dressed in a neon green muumuu, a pink boa, and a grey wig. And a piano. And costumes. A lot of them that Ed said we were not allowed to wear, or we'd get in trouble. Ed also mentioned this would be the last regional show, and he loved the time he had gotten to know us on the trip. The show started late because of a women's conference that was ending around the same time the show was starting. They wanted all the women to be able to come watch the folkers dance, so they held off for about 15 minutes.

The show started off with a bang on the slippery, slidey stage. It was quite slick. Dusty even. Like, really slick. Ed wanted to mop it during intermission, but we couldn't find a mop. We did dry mop the entire stage during intermission, but that didn't help much. One of the dancers asked if the technicians couldn't pour Coca-Cola on the stage, to make it stickier. This was thought of when, in Glendive, Ed had suggested coking the stage. Mark Ohran thinks that is a horrible thing to do. It hurts the stage. Would you pour coke on your floor at home? No, you wouldn't.

There were no major mishaps. Hopefully the audience was pleased. We don't know. T-shirt sales were a little slow. However, we did get a twenty dollar tip. And, the high school technician assistant bought one, and wore it during strike. A highlight of strike was the new hairstyle adopted by many of the men—a part down the middle. For some reason this accompanied a lifting of the pants waist line, like Alfalfa from *Little Rascals*, or Robert Carradine's character Louis in the 1984 comedy *Revenge of the Nerds*.



The weather was a little chilly, which was surprising seeing how we were in Southern Utah. There was even snow on the ground out in the alley where we loaded the truck. White snow and red rock—didn't seem to go together. On the bus ride we watched *Twilight*, even though some were vehemently opposed to it. You can't please everybody. Some people like vampire love stories, like Rachel who had already seen the film 6 times. 4 in the theater, two on DVD. Jen also saw the movie 4 times in the theater. Boys don't like the film as much.

We got back to Provo at 3:30. Which isn't bad considering the long drive back. Stephen kept thinking the bus driver was going to fall asleep and we'd all die in a crash before we made it back. The bus driver during mid-semester was totally falling asleep all the time. He kept hitting the rumble strips, and admits to being very tired. What a great ending to our last regional show, [sigh].

# EXTENDED SUMMER TOUR- CHINA AND HONG KONG





# ITINERARY

## APRIL 27 - MAY 24, 2009

### **Monday, April 27**

### **Travel Day**

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5:00 pm Meet at RB and load the Le Bus  
5:30 pm Depart for Salt Lake Airport  
9:05 pm Fly to San Francisco  
10:01 pm Arrive in San Francisco

### **Tuesday, April 28**

### **Travel Day**

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1:20 am Depart for Hong Kong – we all know how that went  
12:30 pm Take 2 - Depart for Hong Kong

### **Wednesday, April 29**

### **Beijing**

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2:30 pm Arrive in Hong Kong  
3:30 pm Depart for Beijing  
8:30 pm Arrive in Beijing

### **Thursday, April 30**

### **Beijing**

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1:00 pm Depart for Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City  
**4:00 pm China National Radio Interview**  
9:00 pm Group Fireside

### **Friday, May 1**

### **Beijing**

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**2:00 pm Performance-Meet in Beijing Arts Festival Opening Ceremonies**  
**Shijingshan Amusement Park Theater (1094 seats)**  
4:00 Hong Qiao Market

### **Saturday, May 2**

### **Beijing**

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**2:00 pm Performance-Meet in Beijing Arts Festival Opening Ceremonies**  
**Shijingshan Amusement Park Theater (1094 seats)**

### **Sunday, May 3**

### **Beijing**

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8:00 am Church at hotel  
11:00 pm Depart for the Great Wall

**Monday, May 4** **Beijing**

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9:30 am Exchange with Beijing Dance Academy

3:30 pm Exchange with Beijing Minority University

**Tuesday, May 5** **Beijing**

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6:00 pm VIP Reception

7:30 pm Performance-Poly Theater (1428 seats)

**Wednesday, May 6** **Beijing**

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7:30 pm Performance-Poly Theater (1428 seats)

**Thursday, May 7** **Shenyang**

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9:20 am Train to Shenyang

1:30 pm Arrive in Shenyang

**Friday, May 8** **Shenyang**

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7:00 pm Performance-Liaoning Grand Theater (1300 seats)

**Saturday, May 9** **Dalian** **270miles/4hr 30min**

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7:50 am Travel to Dalian on bus

7:00 pm Performance-Dalian Cultural Club (947 seats)

**Sunday, May 10** **Wuhan**

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7:40 am Fly to Wuhan

9:55 am Arrive in Wuhan

8:00 pm Church in hotel restaurant

**Monday, May 11** **Wuhan**

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7:30 pm Performance-Mid-South Theater (808 Seats)

**Tuesday, May 12** **Wenzhou**

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1:30 pm Fly to Wenzhou

3:00 pm Arrive in Wenzhou

**Wednesday, May 13** **Wenzhou**

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7:30 pm Performance-Southeast Theater (756 seats)

**Thursday, May 14** **Ningbo**

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7:50 am Travel to Ningbo on bus  
7:30 pm **Performance-Ningbo Grand Theater (1508 seats)**

**Friday, May 15** **Jiaxing**

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7:50 am Travel to Jiaxing on bus  
7:30 pm **Performance-Jiaxing Grand Theater (1406 seats)**

**Saturday, May 16** **Shanghai**

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8:00 am Travel to Shanghai on bus  
7:15 pm **Performance-The Grand Theater (1600 seats)**

**Sunday, May 17** **Shanghai**

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8:00 am Church with local expat branch  
9:00 pm Shanghai Circus

Changsha Group

11:30am Fly to Changsha  
3:30 pm Arrive in Changsha  
5:00 pm TV interviews

**Monday, May 18** **Guangzhou**

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10:25 am Fly to Guangzhou  
12:25 pm Arrive in Guangzhou

Changsha Group

6:30 pm TV Taping with audience

**Tuesday, May 19** **Guangzhou**

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Changsha Group

8:00 am Fly to Guangzhou and meet main group

Main Group

10:00 am Exchange with Xin Hai Conservatory of Music  
8:00 pm **Performance-Guangzhou Baiyun Convention Center (2627 seats)**

**Wednesday, May 20** **Shenzhen** 90 miles/1hr 30min

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9:20 am Travel to Shenzhen on bus  
10:30 am Arrive in Shenzhen  
8:00 pm **Performance-The Grand Theater (1199 Seats)**

**Thursday, May 21** **Hong Kong**

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7:45 am Travel to Hong Kong on bus  
9:30 am Arrive in Hong Kong  
**7:30 pm Performance-Jockey Club Auditorium, Poly U (1025 seats)**  
*Intermission: Local dance group - "Kung Fu Fighting"*  
**9:00 pm Post performance question and answer session with audience (30-45min)**

**Presenter** Child Builder Organization, Hong Kong  
**Contact** Mazy Chown- Chief Community Relations Officer

**Friday, May 22** **Hong Kong**

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**10:00 am Interactive Assembly - school partnered with Child Builder**  
12:00 pm Lunch at school with the students  
**2:30 pm Performance-Dragon Center**  
**3:30 pm Performance-Dragon Center**

**Saturday, May 23** **Hong Kong**

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**5:00 pm Performance-Dragon Center**  
**6:00 pm Performance-Dragon Center**  
**8:30 pm Small group to radio station interview on "Good Evening Kabayan"**

**Sunday, May 24** **Provo**

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2:10 pm Fly to San Francisco

CROSS INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE-----

11:35 am Arrive in San Francisco - Clear customs  
4:40 pm Fly to Salt Lake City  
7:30 pm Arrive in Salt Lake  
8:00 pm Travel to Provo by bus  
8:45 pm Arrive in Provo at RB

**Saturday, April 25, 2009**  
**Provo, Utah, USA**  
**Greg Rawlings and Rachel Mecham**

Saturday proved a long day for the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble.

Ed wanted us at the Richard's Building at 2:00 pm sharp, with our personal bags all packed and ready to go so that the weight of each could be determined. We met first for a rather lengthy final orientation meeting, discussing final matters of business and precautions to be aware of during our stay in China. Such precautions include avoiding the water, traveling in groups of three or more, bringing extra Imodium (anti-diarrhea medicine) as well as flip flops for bathrooms that may be less than sanitary, no joke telling (like that will happen), calling our banks and informing them of where our cards will be making transactions, and for all the multiple ladies on our teams with bling bling on their fingers: leave them at home! With all the trivial matters that needed to be discussed and all of the questions that were asked, orientation did not get over with until 3:30 pm.

So, on we went to pack our costume boxes and weigh them, along with our personal bags. I, Greg had the privilege of being the chosen recorder of all weights... what a treat. Most of the team members passed the test of only 22 pounds allowed for the personal duffle, while others weren't so lucky. It was fun watching people's disappointment with 27 lbs.... Cindy Swenson! After much repacking, we all made it. Numerous packaged foods are making the essential's list as a result of the anxiety felt over what kind of "delicacies" will be offered to us during our stay in China. Stephanie and Bethany, our two pregnant techies, are especially in favor of packing extra snacks that are more familiar to them. With some creativity and the sacrifice of other personal belongings, it seems that those bringing American food will be just fine. We were even able to fit the chaps and boots in the boxes, so I guess we'll have to deprive all the Chinese people of thinking we were all from Texas.... no boots on the plane boys! I'm a fan that this is the case.

Unfortunately, a fire alarm decided to go off soon after most of us had weighed our bags, which only put us further behind on schedule. We seem to have bad luck with fire alarms lately, the same thing happened during our rehearsal at the Covey Arts Center just a few months ago. However, we were only out of the building in the drizzle for about fifteen minutes. And then, back in the RB to practice the song "You and Me," the theme song of the Beijing 2008 Olympics, which we will be singing during our show. Of particular difficulty is the Chinese portion of that song, but we are all determined to practice on the long plane rides that await us... those poor people on that 15 hour flight. Ick. Ed choreographed some movement during that song, so that hopefully our audiences in China will enjoy that part of our program even more. Matty and Sally get to show off their interpretive dance skills. Awww! Ed announced he is going to let Nikki wear a costume and come out to sing with us during the show! Woo hoo! A few other dances were worked on as well, followed by a forty-five minute dinner break from 6:45 to 7:30. Family and friends were then allowed to come watch our first run-through of our show for China. Anyone else worried this is happening two days before we leave? No biggie. Most team members were very low of energy at this point, and it was a great advantage to have an audience present to increase our energy and our spirits. We especially enjoyed our new Chinese narrations that, in fact, sound like Jon Brame speaking Chinese.

The run-through went fairly well, with only a few glitches here and there. Entrances, narrations, exits, etc. were all specified by Edwin G. I particularly enjoyed Diane's bindi and Lyndsey giving me a note backstage, and upon seeing Matty and Sally doing their new lift exclaiming, "Ooo, is this new?!!!!" and running to go watch. Bless her. The stage was delightfully slippery and all went fairly well. We hope the people of China enjoy our performance and that we can maintain BYU's prestigious reputation. As soon as our run-through was over, Nikki cooled us down in the lobby and Ed gave us more notes. It took about another hour to pack our costumes for the final time and put everything away from the evening. Most dancers did not get home until around 11:30, and a good night's rest was well appreciated.

The work and sacrifice that is put into preparing for this tour to China is more than worth it. We anxiously await the journey before us, the adventures that will be experienced, and the memories that will remain with us after going on this international tour to China. We can't wait to meet the people and perform from the inside out! Hopefully the people of China will see the light of Christ in us as we dance, sing, and play. We have entered BYU to learn, and this next month we shall go forth to serve.

**Monday, April 27, 2009**  
**Provo, UT – San Francisco, CA, USA**  
**Justin and Sarah Morgan**

We began the day early in the RB for our final run-through before heading for China. The run-through was much needed and turned out to be a success. We were ready.

We had a break to make our final preparations and say our goodbyes, and then we met at the airport. It took awhile to check in and get through security, but once we got in, we played cards and rode on planes for the next two days.

Our first flight's destination was San Francisco which was short and sweet. This was followed by a short lay-over as we waited to board our long flight to Hong Kong. And then...

**Tuesday, April 28, 2009**  
**San Francisco, CA, USA – The Pacific Ocean**  
**Cindy Swenson and Mike Steele**

We departed on our fun double-decker Cathay Pacific airplane flight headed towards Hong Kong. I instantly formed a renewed love for the Chinese people as the flight attendants were so nice and sweet... and beautiful I might add. So, we settled down with our individual TV screens and crazy reclining seats, prepared for a long hard trip. Most of the team fell asleep within the first 30 minutes, and Sally nearly died of claustrophobia... thank heavens Jon saved her. Right when we all started to get settled..... dun dun dunnn..... there was a bang and a jolt and a scream (probably from Rachel... ha ha) and one of the engines on the right wing decided that it wanted to be a rocket instead. Billowing flames caught Jon Brame's eye as his window was right behind the troubled wing. Shan'tel just behind him woke up, saw what was happening, and just fell back asleep. Robby, seated next to Erin who was seated next to Jon, with his pilot's eyes saw that "oh...that's not good." After that diagnosis, we decided that fear and panic were clearly the only options of emotions at that time...well, at least for the few of us who were still awake... which wasn't that many. After ten to fifteen minutes of sparks flying from the engine and flight attendants running the aisles, the captain got on the intercom and informed us that we were indeed going to be heading back to San Francisco... but there was one problem: the plane was full of a ton of gas to fuel our way all the way to China. With that amount of weight, the plane would never land in one piece. So, they proceeded to dump all of the gas out of the plane while in flight. This took nearly an hour. So all of us watched the little plane on each of our screens go round and round in circles close to San Francisco. Once we finally made it back to the airport, we were led to Marriott shuttles that took us to a place to sleep for a little while. Everyone agreed that the beds were incredible. Talk about epitome of feather bed. We arrived there at 5:00 am, so a few stayed up for free breakfast at 6:00. The others found themselves wishing they could sleep in those beds forever. Unfortunately, it didn't last... 9:30 am, we were up and at 'em again. We had been



transferred to a United Airlines flight leaving late morning/early afternoon. When we got back to the airport, we found a wonderful mess of luggage waiting for us. After moving luggage back and forth, frantic check-ins, lost instruments, etc., we finally made it on our United flight to Hong Kong. The rest of the day, as expected, consisted of sleep, movies, games, and books... essentially anything that would keep us busy.

**Wednesday, April 29, 2009**

**The Pacific Ocean – Briefly Hong Kong - Beijing, China**  
**Matt Thatcher and Katie Shepherd**

Today was a travel day. We were supposed to arrive in Hong Kong a lot earlier today, but because of the day before incident (engine going out on the plane) we arrived later. This was nice, though, because we were going to have a six hour layover in Hong Kong, but then got off the plane and pretty much headed for our next flight to Beijing. When we arrived in Beijing we had to go through customs and sadly they didn't stamp our passports because they did one stamp for the whole group. Picking up our luggage we found that Greg and Ashlee's bag was missing. They will probably have to wear the same clothes and hopefully their bags will come soon. Then we just loaded our prop boxes and bags then headed to our hotel, which is really nice. The name of the hotel is the Yanxiang Hotel. We had traveled A LOT by now and were off to bed! Tonight we also met Sarah, Yana, and Katherine, our wonderful tour guides!



**Thursday, April 30, 2009**

**Beijing, China**  
**Matt Thomas and Kelsie Wagstaff**

Q: What hops like a kangaroo, looks like a dog, and is red?

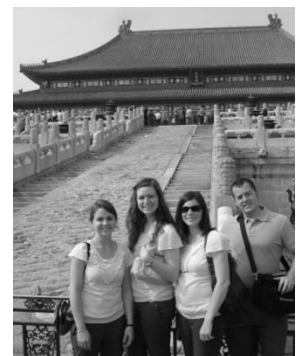
A: A red kangaroo dog!

After waking up at 5 a.m., just like Jon told us we would, we tried to force ourselves to go back to sleep, but laid awake staring at the ceiling for hours.

We arose... the "PAC pacers" went running at a terrible hour, and met the rest of the team at breakfast. It was a delicious buffet that consisted of fried noodles, deep fried dough sticks (the sugar packets were quickly utilized to Americanize them), melon, and delicious juice- and Christmas music! We had hours of free time so some people went to nearby shops and watched the old people tangoing in the park. Also found in the park were a man doing Ukrainian style hopping and another man walking backwards for his exercise.

Next stop: Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City. What a sight! It was fascinating to see the home of the Ming and Qing emperors. Oh boy. Most of us were alarmed with the size of the whole city. We stopped to take a group picture and about 30 Chinese people took a picture of the loud, matching Americans.

A funny thing we noticed while we were there were the "split-bottom" pants on the kids for potty training. We made sure to watch where we walked after we discovered their methods. Walking back to the bus was an adventure, as the vendors unleashed themselves and accompanied us on our march to the bus. Several jewels were procured: statues of dragons, Buddhas, chopsticks, and purses. We eventually got to the bus, and headed to dinner.





Dinner was at the Chinese Dumpling, our favorite Beijing restaurant. A few dishes were different than at lunch and everyone found some delicious things to feast upon. Just don't take the last dumpling from Jon Wood! At this point we all tried to have good Chinese table manners, but surely the lazy-Susan wars were coming.

We then had a fireside from Ed, with a great talk on the Church and China-except the jet lag really set in and everyone fell asleep. Off to bed to freshen up for Day 2 in Beijing.

**Friday, May 1, 2009**

**Beijing, China**

**Brian Watson and MJ Wilson**

May 1<sup>st</sup> was a Friday. We felt like it should have been Wednesday, but it really was Friday. We were preparing for our first show. Hosted by the Beijing Performing Arts Agency, we were going to open the "9<sup>th</sup> Meet in Beijing Arts Festival." It was in an amphitheater at the wicked-bad-sweet Shikingshan Amusement Park. We drove up to the site only to be greeted by a huge, green, hideous monster with teeth on his derriere. Now, this amusement park seemed like a mixture of Disneyland, 6 Flags, and Lagoon. They served ice with strawberry syrup as a refreshment at the concession stand.

We set up for the show in the castle-like amphitheater. The chairs were colorful. They liked lights and fog. The fog machine was awesome. Sarah Campbell especially loved it, since it blew brownish fog right on her every 25 seconds. There was a guy that sat behind the machine and pressed the button whenever he thought it wasn't foggy enough. One thing to notice about this venue is that the first thing that everyone said to each other was, "Have you taken anatomy?" That was because it smelled like they used formaldehyde as a room cleaner.

We ate Big Macs for lunch. Several people realized that they hadn't ever eaten a Big Mac before, (i.e. Sarah Campbell and MJ) because they astutely noticed that there is an extra bun in the middle of the burger.

The show went well, however the floor was VERY slippery, the fiddle wireless packs weren't working, and stage monitors didn't work at all. But, the audience was very responsive, especially because they had special clapping devices. They loved "Mo Li Hua" and "You and Me." After the show, they presented us with a huge bouquet of flowers (and by huge we mean as tall as Brian) and took our picture a million times. They are a very warm, loving people and seemed to have thoroughly enjoyed the show.



Afterwards, we went to the Hong Qiao Pearl Market where many people were exposed to haggling for the very first time. Some were better than others. There were lots of pearls, electronics, and pretty much anything. Then we went to the hotel and ate food at the Chinese Dumpling. Thus ends Friday.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009**

**Beijing, China**

**Jesse and Stephanie Christopher**

This morning was a nice and easy morning. We didn't have to meet until 10:30 so everyone slept as long as they could. We all meandered down to breakfast. We all had fun watching a bride and groom as we

met to go out to the bus. They looked happy and there were a lot of family and well-wishers as well as tons of colorful confetti.

We went back to the amusement park we performed at yesterday and used some extra time to work out the sound difficulties. For lunch we were treated with what is considered Chinese fast-food. It was good... it had chicken, thinly sliced beef, vegetables, and lots of rice. The show started at 2:00 again. There was a good crowd, but not quite as many as the day before and no free noise makers. The crowd loved "Mo Li Hua" and "You and Me" most of all. It was a good show, and things ran smoothly.

Afterwards we were given time to play and explore the theme park. Almost everyone rode the roller coasters and other rides. We all had a great time. Each ride had a ticket booth at the front of the ride, where you could buy a ticket to ride. We found that the park had a little bit from every type of theme park in America. We saw elements of Disney, Universal, and Six Flags. Many had so much fun that they didn't care whether or not they were left behind at the park. Our tour leaders proved too nice for that, however and we had everyone on the bus driving back to the hotel only 30 min. later than planned.



We quickly dropped our stuff off in our rooms, and then walked over to our regular restaurant. The food was really good, as it's all been so far. Right after dinner we all went to the small grocery store up the street and Jon bought us ice cream! The rest of the evening was free and a group of us went to a DVD/CD store by the restaurant. It almost became a frenzy in the store to get the movies for so cheap. Another group of us went to a tailor to get suits and traditional Chinese dresses and shirts made for us. We got to pick the style and fabric. It was fun to watch everyone get measured. We hope they can get 10 orders done by Wednesday next week! Others from the group went for a walk or just went back to the hotel.

## **Sunday, May 3, 2009**

### **Beijing, China**

#### **Mike Hinckley and Ashlee Carroll**

Sacrament meeting was held in the hotel hallway. Jonathan Wood presided over the meeting. For sacrament cups, we used the collection of glasses from individual rooms. Brian Watson and Jeremy Gohier blessed the sacrament, which was passed by Brett Carter and Jon Brame. Matt Thatcher and Mike Hinckley spoke about gratitude and families. Some students commented on how appreciative they were to partake of the sacrament. Our hearts were filled with gratitude as we reflected on our current situation and on the circumstances. We are so blessed in America to worship how, when, and where we want, and it was humbling to be in a situation where we didn't have that opportunity.

For lunch we went to a Friendship restaurant. The food was served in the familiar lazy-Susan and chopsticks style. After eating we had some time to shop for souvenirs. The students were impressed by the quality and variety of the things for sale. Some of us bought things like jewelry and pottery.

Next we took a bus ride to a section of the Great Wall outside of Beijing. We were also fortunate to have our tickets paid for by our sponsors. We were told that the section we visited was the steepest part of the wall, and it took us over an hour to hike to the top. As we climbed, we made a few friends along the trail and even met a few monks from Cambodia. The hike up the wall was extremely strenuous and Nikki, our dance trainer, encouraged us to stretch afterward.



Ashlee-“What’s that thing at the end of the trail, Katie?”

Katie- “Oh, it’s a giotto.”

Ashlee- “Oh, giotto. Right....”

---10 minutes later---

Katie- “Oh look, there’s the giotto!”

Traci- “You mean the pagoda.”

\*Keep in mind: Giotto=stage lights; Pagoda= a tiered tower, usually a place of worship... Don’t worry, we have it on video.

Overall, we all enjoyed visiting one of China’s most famous tourist attractions, and no one was injured! ☺

After a long day, we had some free time. Many group members played games on the couches in the 7<sup>th</sup> floor lobby. We all had fun talking about our day and all of the exciting things that happened throughout the day. Our leader, Jonathan Wood, even came out a few times and told us to keep it down. We were just having too much fun. Luckily, there were no complaints from other hotel members and the evening ended peacefully.

The end. ☺

**Monday, May 4, 2009**

**Beijing, China**

**Shan’tel Nelson and Steve Boyer**

We left in the morning to the Beijing Dance Academy. It’s the equivalent to Juilliard pretty much. We went into a little auditorium and performed. First, we were introduced in both Chinese and English. It took a long time because a lot was said.

When it came our time to perform, we performed “Ferfi”, “Poltavskyi Duet”, “The Gathering”, and “Last Night”. Then came their chance to perform. The main difference between us and them is they are professionals. They were incredible! Some of our favorites include the first dance, which was a fan dance performed by a large group of girls, the coral dance, and the girl who performed the fish dance. They were so graceful and together.



Jiamin told us that they have very strict weight and body size standards. She also told us that only one in one hundred that audition actually make it into the academy. They truly dance like professionals. After the show, some of them ran up to some of us and gave us gifts. We gave them a photograph of us with writing by Jiamin’s husband. They gave us all girl’s XL t-shirts! And we of course took pictures with them too. Then we walked to another building for lunch. It was our first Chinese buffet! The menu included “roasted” duck, and fried “glutinous” rice balls. Brett was brave and ate a boiled chicken head- YUM!

Then we went to the 2<sup>nd</sup> dance school called the Central Minority University. This time we performed on a real stage (and it had the hottest lights ever!). We performed the same numbers plus the band played “Rocky Top”. Then the Chinese students performed a horse riding dance, a warrior dance, another fish dance, etc. They were amazing of course. At the very end they invited all of us to come back on the stage and dance with them. It was fun! After that, part of the band started jamming outside and a group of students gathered around. The best part was when Ed came and started clogging.

After that our leaders went off to dinner and the rest of us went to the Chinese Dumpling for dinner. Then some of us went to the park and played games. Others went to the internet café, played card games, or went to bed. It was a great day. The end.

**Tuesday, May 5, 2009**

**Beijing, China**

**Jon Brame and Traci Aker**

Happy Cinco de Mayo! Today was our first day at the Poly Theater, so we spent most of the day at the theater. We were hosted again by the Beijing Performing Arts Agency. After meeting the bus at 9:30, we spent the morning setting up the technical component of the show and practicing dances. Additionally, some dancers began work on the pieces to perform for Chinese TV.

We broke for lunch and took the bus back to a duck restaurant. Perhaps in honor of the Cinco de Mayo holiday, the method of serving the duck was wrapped in tortilla-like things with cucumber and onion... duck taco anyone? Although the hot tea wasn't enough liquid to quench our thirst, the selection and quality was awesome!

The first half of the afternoon was pretty slow, but once the rehearsal got going, things picked up fast. The run-through was kind of rough, and the show order changed several times. For reasons Chinese, the show needed to end by 9:00, so we ended up cutting French Canadian and Journey. That meant that Wildfire had to change from Appalachian into Wildfire during hambone...crazy!

After a "snack" of McDonalds chicken sandwiches, we were ready for our show. The devotional was from Mosiah about how both the people of Alma and the people of Limhi escaped the Lamanites, but the people of Alma saw the hand of God. Since the show would have many Chinese officials we were all a little nervous, but we had prepared and trusted in God, so we knew we could see His hand.

The show went fabulously well, with none of the major blunders of the run-through, and it was well received. Nikki's parents said that the first person on his feet for a standing ovation was Wenya Cheng, the



executive director for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies. He liked it so much that he came back the next night with his family. Other dignitaries included Xu Li, the president of the Beijing Dance Academy, as well as Wei Wang, Chair of the Chinese Classical Dance Department, Ping Zhang, Chair of the Social Dance Department, and Tiechun Zhao, Chair of the Chinese Folk Dance Department... all of the Beijing Dance Academy. Zhitao Pan, BDA professor and critic on CCTV whom we met in Utah in culture class was also there. The Dean of the Dance College of the Central Minority University was present as well. It was amazing to also have Zuoguang Jia, President of the Beijing

Dance Association, who is considered the "Father" of modern Chinese folk dance. He said that we brought spring and freshness, and that dancing makes us look young and vibrant. Basically his comments amounted to the fact that he felt the Spirit when we danced. He is in his 80's and seemed quite youthful himself as he danced a bit for us. Accompanying him was Shuangbai Feng, Vice President of the Chinese Dance Association and a famous dance critic. It seemed that not only were we successful in our goal of conveying the Spirit, but we saw the hand of God as he described what he felt. What a night!

Dinner was after the show at a famous hot pot restaurant. Some were relieved and others disappointed that there were no live animals to dip in the boiling water, but the food was great nonetheless.

**Wednesday, May 6, 2009**  
**Beijing, China**  
**Jeremy Gohier and Sally Boyle**

Happy Birthday Cindy! Today was lovely Cindy's birthday. She was sung to four times, had three cakes, received two gifts, and was thrown in the air once.

After our traditional breakfast at the hotel, we returned to the Hong Qiao Market. Among the many wonderful purchases were jade statues, more pearls, clothes, and wall hangings. Rather than riding the bus back with us, the Morgan's had the opportunity to experience the first Beijing taxi ride. Many people visited the Temple of Heaven which was nearby. It was very reminiscent of the Forbidden City, but heavily laden with symbolism. Everything was constructed with squares representing Earth joined with circles representing Heaven. This temple was where the emperor would pray for beautiful harvests and perform rituals.

Though some had expressed interest in eating lunch somewhere other than the Chinese Dumpling, lunch was particularly scrumptious that day, made even more so by the Magnum bars provided afterward by Ed-once more in honor of Cindy's birthday. The afternoon was free time and was well utilized for laundry, naps, more shopping, and visiting the seamstress for final alterations.



We returned to the theater for our last show in Beijing. The audience seemed particularly receptive tonight. The Olympic director had returned with friends and family. Seven religious officials were also in attendance, so we were all glad to hear their enthusiastic responses.

After the show, we had to say our good-byes to Kathryn and Fon-xing. They were given fleece jackets, exclusive team t-shirts, pictures of the team, and specially designed gift pens.



Then we returned to the Chinese Dumpling for our final dinner in Beijing. After a last minute trip to the seamstress, our new friend, to pick up the custom clothes, we returned to the hotel for last minute packing in preparation for our trip to Shenyang. It was a delightful blend of relaxation, recreation, and experience.

**Sara Lee Gibb, Dean of the College of Health and Human Performance, accompanied us for the first part of our tour. Following our two shows at the Poly Theater, Dean Gibb wrote this wonderful letter...**

*"The International Folk Dance Ensemble performed in Beijing, China on May 5-6th in the beautiful Poly Theatre, seating 1,500 for 2 nights. Both performances were nearly sold out and very well received.*

*My role was to host a pre-concert reception for our dance friends in Beijing. We have had many partnership activities with the Beijing Dance Academy, (this is the very top dance conservatory in China) and numerous other universities, academies and schools, and individual artists. The Chinese Performing Arts Agency (CPAA) was the sponsor for our group and made arrangements for most things. We were not sure until the last if in fact we were going to be able to host a reception. They seemed to want this under their control. Nevertheless, they came*

*through the day before the reception and performance with very nice invitations and decided to pay for the food etc. after they had considered our prestigious guest list. We quickly distributed the invitations with the help of our friends. We had already made a verbal invitation and had attendance confirmation, much earlier.*

*We had Elder Anthony D. Perkins and Elder Chu-Jen Chia and their wives from the church who came to welcome guests. This was very much appreciated. There were other dignitaries of the Chinese government agencies who had worked with us previously in various capacities who came. In addition, my particular guest list included primarily prominent leaders in the dance field with whom we have had a relationship; heads of university and conservatory programs, top performers, choreographers, a prominent dance critic, and some press representatives.*

*One of the invitees was the Executive Director of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies. He didn't arrive until the reception was basically over so he just met us in the lobby and got his ticket and went in and watched the show. The press people who were there were all about taking pictures of him and he was asked for many autographs in the lobby, obviously a Chinese celebrity. Afterward, he politely thanked me, said how much he enjoyed the performance, and spent quite some time talking to the dancers. He indicated to our cultural advisor that he would like to come back tomorrow night. We were surprised and offered to get him a ticket. He asked if he could have three. The following evening he arrived and waited to see if he needed to buy tickets. I was there with the tickets and he graciously accepted them for his wife and 9-year-old daughter.*



*Again, after the performance he wanted to share how much he was moved by our dancers. He said, "In China there are so many wonderful dancers, but I rarely go to see them perform anymore, and never take my family. The dance is so dark, without hope, and highly dramatic and full of deep and troublesome meaning. These dancers bring such light and joy and hope and I wanted my family to experience this. It was wonderful." He said he would love to visit our university, perhaps in November. My impression is that he and his family are fine, sincere people.*

*There were many positive outcomes from the reception, mainly getting so many of these folks to our performance and letting them feel of the spirit that we try so hard to present.*

*The dancers continued on for 3 more weeks, performing in major cities throughout China, ending in Hong Kong. There were many who made similar comments wherever the dancers performed. Some traveled long distances to attend. Many good friends were made as a result of the tour.*

*The students experienced an unbelievable educational experience of learning to perform by performing; a cultural experience, hardly to be equaled; and a social experience of learning to live closely and harmoniously with others day and night for an extended period of time; a spiritual experience to witness how the spirit accompanied them with health and great capacity and strength when they gave their best efforts and were able to touch the people they performed for and associated with. I have nothing but praise for the directors, students, managers, and all who were a part of this experience. They represented themselves, the university and the church with grace and distinction.”*

**Thursday, May 7, 2009**  
**Beijing - Shenyang, China**  
**Colin and Amy Slade**

It was our last breakfast at the wonderful Yanxiang Hotel. We met early in the morning having packed our bags and turned in our keys for checkout. Breakfast was at 7am though we had hoped it would be at 6:30am. We ate quickly, loaded the bus, and were on our way to the train station at 7:30am.

It was a relatively short ride (~30 minutes) to the train station, but when we got there the bus wasn't allowed to park at the station itself. We had to find a parking spot about two blocks down. At least it seemed like a long way because we all had to carry our big personal bags and PAC bags. This wouldn't have been a problem had the bags still weighed 22 pounds or less, but Beijing was the place to shop. We all had loaded up the day before on pearls, art scrolls, clothes, etc. It's for sure going to be very interesting to see how we're going to get all our stuff home.

Once in the train station we were finally able to set our bags down and rest our aching shoulders. As we waited for the train some of us found a spot to play with a feathered hacky-sack, called a jianzi. Others found a spot on the benches to catch up on some sleep, to write in their journals, or stare blankly into space. The train showed up at the station about 8:50am and we finally boarded and left around 9:20am.

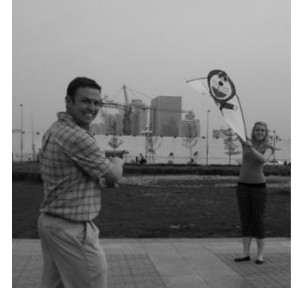
The ride from Beijing to Shenyang was enjoyable and relatively uneventful. Traveling at a speed around 215-250 km/h, it took us about 4 hours. We were on Coach Car 9 which had better seats than any Coach airplane seat. They were quite comfortable with plenty of leg room and they leaned back quite a bit. The time again was used to play games, journal, read, or talk with friends, getting (or starting) the latest gossip.

We arrived in Shenyang at 1:30pm. We heaved all our luggage again to the bus and went straight to the hotel, the Liaoning Grand Theatre Hotel. Before we even got to go to our rooms, we had lunch at the hotel restaurant. We felt at home as the food was similar to that of the unforgettable *Chinese Dumpling* in Beijing. The one difference being that this restaurant served fish. It was actually really good sea bass. Thomas just doesn't know what he's missing.



We then checked into our rooms. The people who were given rooms on the eighth floor quickly discovered that there wasn't an eighth floor. The confusion was eventually cleared by the hotel staff. Turns out that 5's and 8's look similar to Jon Wood.

The rest of the day was spent seeing the sights and experiencing a little bit of Shenyang, one of the 10 largest cities in China. Shenyang was at one point the capital of China, so there is a smaller "Forbidden City" open for the public. Shenyang is also an industrial city with large markets and malls. There are parks as well, for flying a kite or good old fashioned relaxing. In the evening, after the work day, thousands of people gather into these parks, particularly the one just a few blocks south of the "Forbidden City" to dance, play games or sports, and unwind—a social necessity for the hardworking Chinese people. Our group had opportunity to experience all of these.



**Friday, May 8, 2009**  
**Shenyang, China**  
**Steve Ord and Emily Carpenter**

- In the morning the runners ran- ext. Nikki and Rachel, Courtney and Brett, and Steve-O and Steve B.
- Breakfast at the hotel was yummy.
- Poor little Mikey contracted the eye viral conjunctivitis.
- The morning was full of fun and frivolity. Those who were chosen to dance on TV had a nice morning practice while the majority of others went to the park across the street to fly kites, write in journals, or just relax and watch others play and fly kites.
- At noon we had lunch in the hotel with the heavy turn tables and we started eating full fish here. It was good.
- We set up for the show and the theater was attached to our hotel which was nice. We set up quickly and had some time to relax.
- A lot of the guys just stayed in the dressing room and had a romping game of Scum. Others slept, used internet, or watched Breakfast at Tiffany's.
- We're being hosted by the Dalian Yilong Performing Arts Company.
- 5 o'clock we had blocking and that was followed by a yummy snack in the hotel.
- We had devo back stage in the dark and Steve-O talked about breaking a leg and dedicating our show to God. We are lucky to be here in China. Emily C. said prayer.
- The show was.....Wow.... um....Israeli was interesting when half the girls ran off early.
- We struck the set after talking to the fun audience.
- For dinner we had the most delicious Hot Pot/BBQ buffet- WOW- we had sweet and sour chicken, squid "squirrel," french fries with strawberry ketchup, cakes, ice cream, and unlimited fountain drinks- AMAZING!
- We returned to our hotel where we went to sleep, played cards 'til late, or walked to the park again. I think it's safe to say we loved Shenyang!

**Saturday, May 9, 2009**  
**Shenyang - Dalian, China**  
**Brett and Courtney Carter**

Our morning began as we checked out of the hotel by 7:00 am, and we were on the bus at 7:30. It was pouring rain as we loaded the bus and pulled away, and the rain continued all day as we drove to Dalian, set up for the show and left. We were told that it doesn't rain much in Dalian, so this was something different. When we arrived at the May Day International Hotel, we went to lunch in the hotel and two groups gave their reports on the cities.

After finding our rooms and getting settled we took the bus to the Dalian Culture Club to load-in. The Dalian Yilong Performing Arts Company is again our host here in Dalian. Load-in brought just a few difficulties as we had to create a table out of our tech boxes for the front of the house equipment and then almost couldn't get sound from the band on stage. Just a few glitches to work through, but it all came together. We also found that our dressing room was one large room for both the men and women. But, we made it work with men on one side and the women on the other.

Since set up didn't take as long, we all find things to do between load-in and show time. Today a huge card game of Scum continued throughout the hours of break time. Others watched "Pirates of the Caribbean" on Mike Steele's computer, and some practiced using Jon Wood's new Chinese yo-yo. Our snacks for the show consisted of bananas and rolls, and then we prepared for our 7:00 show. Matt Thomas, Greg, and Brian ran back to the hotel to get stuff to pack in their boxes for our flight tomorrow. They had an adventure as they ran through the downpour, getting drenched and almost getting hit by cars several times.

During devotional before the show, Sis. Sara Lee Gibb was able to speak to us, as she would be departing on Sunday. She let us know something she had been told by the director of the Olympic Opening Ceremony who had attended both of our shows in Beijing. He told her that after the first night he realized that our show had brought him hope and joy and light, and felt that the dances in China can seem sad and dark. Because of the hope and light he had felt he wanted his wife and daughter to see the show and returned with them the second night.

The show began well with five girl Indian, but in the middle of Balle Balle, the music suddenly switched to the five girl music! We continued dancing until the men fall on stage, then stood and walked off. Without really knowing what to do, much deliberation occurred on stage until all decided it was best to just go. It was a good spot to stop, so it may not have looked as funny to the audience as we felt on stage. The rest of the show went well even in Rapper Sword when Steve Boyer made a great recovery after letting go of one handle and the sword flopping in the air. But the group didn't miss a beat as Steve grabbed the sword just in time to get into the next position. Jon Wood decided to add to our performance as he stood offstage in chaps, a cowboy hat, a beard from Journey, and spun a Chinese umbrella during soft shoe Irish.

Members of the church were in the audience that night, one of which had just returned from a mission in Australia. From him we learned that their branch has about 40-50 members. It was great to see the church in China in action.

We concluded the night with dinner in the hotel and then to our rooms because we had an early morning to get on a plane the next day.

**Sunday May 10, 2009**  
**Dalian - Wuhan, China**  
**Mikey and Amanda Christensen**

Today was a wonderful Sabbath day. We woke up at 4:30 am and traveled by bus to the airport to catch a flight to Wuhan. We arrived in Wuhan that afternoon and discovered that it was a bit more hot and humid than the previous cities we'd been to. Wuhan is one of the 3 hot furnaces in all of China. We rode the bus over to our hotel and ate a wonderful lunch. Lunch was different because it was buffet style and they had a lot of little treats and cakes and even banana bread! Everyone enjoyed that meal very much!

After that, we all headed over to the Hubei Provincial Museum. When we arrived we took a group picture. As we were doing so, a group of cute children with red hats was there and wanted to take a picture with us. Some of them even



showed off a little cha-cha dance to us. We interacted for a bit with the children, and then went in the museum for the tour. The main feature of this museum was artifacts found in the tomb of Marquis Yei of Zeng. There were a lot of neat things that our tour guide showed us and explained to us about, but the neatest of them all was the musical instruments. We not only saw the instruments that had been dug out of the ground, but we also went over to another building and saw a performance with those ancient musical instruments. I think that we all agree it was amazing! After looking around a bit longer at more ancient artifacts, weapons, and instruments, we left and went back to the hotel.

Back at the hotel, we all assembled for dinner at the same place we had eaten lunch. After dinner we had our own special sacrament meeting and lesson. It's really special and unique that we are able to hold our own sacrament meeting on the tables and chairs of the hotel restaurant with the Chinese waiters and waitresses cleaning up in the background. After a brief sacrament meeting we had a wonderful lesson by Brian Watson about friendship. Everyone shared comments and the Spirit was felt very strongly as we talked about the importance of friendship and becoming Christ-like. The rest of the evening most of us spent relaxing and getting ready for the next day in Wuhan!

Wuhan was a very beautiful city and many team members discovered parks and rivers where many people in this area would gather together to play music, dance, and enjoy each other's company. We all learned more about Chinese culture and how they differ from American culture. While many people in America will spend their time by themselves, or with close friends indoors, Chinese people seem to spend more time outside and expressing themselves more in music and dance. They seem to focus more on the here and now and enjoying life. It was a wonderful day and a wonderful experience to go to Wuhan.

**Monday, May 11, 2009**

**Wuhan, China**

**Thomas and Bethany Rawcliffe**

Today we had free time until 11:45 am. Last night plans were made to do several different things including going to a modern art museum, riding paddle boats and going to a temple, but all of those plans fell through. Many of us stayed around the hotel and relaxed. Some went to the park by the river to fly kites and walk around. They saw groups of Chinese people having picnics or playing cards, and a group of people singing Karaoke with a microphone and small stringed instrument. A group of 10 went to a market, which was really just a big mall along a walking street. However, they were able to see many fancy stores (over 10 huge Nike and Adidas stores) and a couple of streets lined with dingy shops and food stands selling anything from fresh duck to chicken's feet. A few other dancers went to Wal-mart.

At 11:45 we all met on the third floor in an open space to allow the Wuhan group to give their culture presentation. We received some really good information about the city and we were all sad that we didn't have time to see more. We had lunch in the hotel, which was much the same as dinner last night. A few were adventurous and tried the chicken's feet, eel and whole shrimp, eyeball and all! We left for the venue at 1:00 pm, which was the Mid-South Theater. We were surprised that the theater was so dirty, with trash and cigarette butts all over the floor. The workers there were really nice and helped us to clean out a space for the technical equipment in the center of the theater. We set up and ran sound checks and felt pretty good about everything.

Most of us had a lot of extra time to play cards (Super Scum being the main attraction), read, or journal write back stage. The only problem with the theater was that it was blazing hot! We tried everything to get some fresh air in the dressing rooms where people were hanging out. The staff eventually got the air conditioning on in time for the show, which made things nice. We received a snack about 5:00 pm of bananas, a butter cake with funny raisins and a dried pork roll. There was a rehearsal for "Journey" at 5:30 to make sure the dancers remembered it in case it was put in the show later. Good thing they did so because

less than an hour before the show Ed decided it would be fun to do it tonight! Dancers frantically rehearsed the necessary changes to make it work.

The show began at 7:30 pm. It was presented by the Wuhan Performing Arts Agency. The show went really well! The lighting in this theater was much better than the last and the show looked really good. Nothing went wrong technically except the band began to play some songs before the lights were up which made Mark Ohran a little frantic. The marley on the floor of the stage was not taped down either and it got huge bumps in it by the show's end. Stephen had to run out on stage two different times to try to straighten it out. The marley made the footwork sound really quiet to begin with. With the marley moving around, the floor mics got pointed the wrong direction, which made it worse! A couple of dancers fell in "Last Night" by tripping on the marley also. Otherwise, the show looked beautiful and the audience, although quiet during most of the show, clapped loudly at the end. They chattered to one another most of the show and clapped and sang along during "You and Me."

After the show we packed up and carried our tech boxes down the stairs for the workers due to a broken elevator. Although we thought it was nice, our guide Sarah was concerned since the workers were paid to carry them down. We figured we could do it much faster! We went back to the hotel for dinner. Afterwards the leaders and some students went to the park by the river for a nice walk. Another group decided to go in the river... We enjoyed our time in Wuhan!

**Tuesday, May 12, 2009**  
**Wuhan - Wenzhou, China**  
**Mike Hinckley and Tesha Jones**

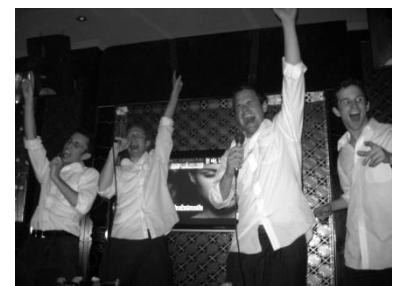
We had free time in the morning. A lot of students made plans to go to the river to watch Tai Chi and to walk around the part of the town that our hotel was in. Most people ended up sleeping in and getting packed for our flight. We left the hotel around 10 am to head to the airport.

Our presenters did not take care of lunch and so we bought lunches in the airport terminal. A few people walked around the airport several times looking for something familiar. To their utter surprise, some found a pizza restaurant and others a store that sold sandwiches, both of which are hard to come by in China. Some things were easy to find such as Magnum bars, and a group of individuals were entering the plane with ice-cream in hand.

Our flight to Wenzhou was about one hour and forty minutes, which seemed like a very short flight when compared to the fourteen hour flight from San Francisco to Hong Kong. Once we got to the airport we found that one of our personal bags was missing. It belonged to Amanda Christensen. Luckily we were able to use Sarah, our translator, to communicate with the airport staff to discover that the bag was at the airport in Wuhan, and would be coming on the next plane. We had it sent to our hotel about four hours later.

Once we were settled into our rooms we headed down to the third floor for dinner, happy to have something to eat. We were surprised to find the table laden with an assortment of seafood, including shrimp-heads with eyes still attached. Everyone enjoyed the meal; even Thomas tried a few different dishes.

After our delightful dinner everyone dispersed into different groups to explore the nightlife in Wenzhou. Activities for the night included exploring the city, finding an internet café, a rousing game of Mormon Bridge, "Lost", and a rented room for KTV (Karaoke). There were 20 people crammed into the dimly lit room, with a flat screen providing music videos and lyrics to the songs being sung. The shin dig began at 8:00 and lasted



past midnight. At one point “I Love Rock and Roll” was blasted loud and clear, and each member in the room stood and sang to the song at the top of their lungs.

By 1:00 everyone had made it back into their rooms. Those involved in KTV showered and clean (we hope), climbed into bed to sleep until the morning.

**Wednesday, May 13, 2009**  
**Wenzhou, China**  
**Erin and Robby Sorensen**

Bike type Rickshaws were lined up waiting in front of our hotel, but considering the rain, our group decided on another means of transportation. This morning we had the privilege of taking the safe and secure taxis of Wenzhou. The cool rain and our five person compiled body heat made for foggy windows. It was hard for us to even see out! We concluded that the driver had x-ray vision, as he drove just as fast and furious as usual. We arrived at the shopping street, and the team enjoyed looking through a whole town of outdoor shops. This probably compared better to a mall back in the states, rather than some of the artisan markets we had visited previously. Some bought souvenirs, but most of us preferred items of the edible variety. The Morgan’s found pizza, complete with cheese! Also, ice cream is a commonly bought treat for us here because of the low price. After shopping, we met back at the hotel for lunch, and were off to the show.

Our venue was in the middle of a lot of construction, with not a lot to see around it, so we all spent the afternoon setting up, reading, jamming out with the band, eating KFC sandwiches, drinking Coke and watching movies. The show presented by the Wenzhou Southeast Theater, went smoothly, and we were met with smiles and peace signs when we walked out into the crowd after the performance. We were surprised to see a big sign saying, “BYU. Nice to see you again,” made by some college students that rode two hours in taxis to attend the show. They had seen a BYU choir performance previously, and really enjoyed it. Needless to say, our performance met their expectations.



**Thursday, May 14, 2009**  
**Wenzhou – Ningbo, China**  
**Mike Steele and Rachel Mecham**

This morning we were rudely awoken from our beds because of a necessary wake-up call at 6:30 in the morning. We had all gone to bed late the night before because of a late dinner after the show. So we were all relishing the fact that we could get a little sleep on the 4-hour bus ride. To our dismay, the bus driver was a little too eager to honk his horn at anyone going slower than he so we were awakened every five minutes by a loud honking horn. Other than that small inconvenience, the trip to Ningbo was very smooth, filled with many long tunnels as we traveled through the mountains. The people who had done their reports on Ningbo had done a great job, and we were excited to get to the “cleanest city in China.”

We arrived in Ningbo around noon, at the most beautiful hotel so far on the trip. Everyone’s first reaction when we walked in the rooms was, “WOW!” The beds were soft, there was a flat screen TV, a huge bathroom with a walk-in shower, and a showerhead from heaven – it was high above the head and larger than the typical showerhead, providing a massage of a shower. There were also scales in the bathrooms, which revealed enlightenment concerning the effects of the Chinese food. Apparently, Jon Brame has gained 15 pounds, but we can’t tell. It seems that most everyone else has maintained their weight during this tour in China.

We had to run to lunch quickly, because our guides needed us at the theater by 1:30. Lunch was just as fancy as the rooms. Each table was in a little room with tasteful interior decorating and its very own bathroom. (The presence of a toilet over a squatty potty is particularly appreciated by the women.) The food was great. There was a funny moment when our guide, Sarah, took one of the small shrimps and ate the thing whole – shell and all! It surprised everyone at that table, and she explained that these were the small shrimp that the Chinese don't take the time to shell before eating. Mike Hinckley tried it, and so did Jon Brame, but only after much deliberation and coaxing on the part of everyone around the table. Unfortunately it was a bit too poky for Jon's taste, and his throat for that matter. His experience proved to be a painful one as the shell and legs of the shrimp poked him.

At 1:30 we arrived at the most magnificent venue: The Ningbo Grand Theater. It seated a little more than 1,500 people over three floors. The theater was our presenter for the show. We got there early, so many of us had time to walk around and explore the premises: many went on a walk along the Yangtze



River. There were lots of pretty parks along the riverside, and it also boasted an awesome view of the huge theater which provided ample opportunity for pictures. The dressing rooms were enormous; there must have been about ten of them! Each person had their own individual mirror and closet to hang their costumes. The biggest room could probably hold around 100 people. It made it nice for steaming and relaxing before the show; everyone was exhausted and wanted to rest. However, rest was not on the schedule. Quickly after the stage was set up, Ed called a rehearsal. He wanted *The Gathering* to be more cheerful, and also wanted to rehearse *Attaches des Bottines*, *Rapper Sword*, and *Keltatak*. It was a difficult task at hand for Ed, but he thought it necessary to keep our minds and bodies awake and active.

One of the best things about the extra time before the show was just being able to leave the theater. Yesterday, in Wenzhou, we felt like we were all cooped up backstage for five hours. We were all definitely in need of some fresh air.

Before the show, we met with some local fashion design students. We all got in our first costumes for them to see. Even though we couldn't communicate well, it was fun to interact with them. They stayed to watch the show. Later, Ed and Jon Wood told us that this was a very important show because this theater was so new and the formality of the venue brought an audience that was expecting an elite performance. We needed to make this one of our best shows on tour. No pressure.

It did turn out to be one of our best shows. Everything really seemed to click, and we fought through the exhaustion that was beginning to set in from a heavy performance schedule this week. After the show, we promptly returned to the hotel for a buffet dinner. It was very good, and very appreciated, but fatigue had taken over. It was bedtime for everyone. We ate quickly, listened to Jon Wood give announcements, and then returned to our rooms for some *much needed SLEEP*.

**Friday, May 15, 2009**  
**Ningbo - Jiaxing, China**  
**Justin and Sarah Morgan**

We met at 7:30 am to load the bus and drive to Jiaxing. On this ride we crossed the second largest bridge in the world – even though the bus driver was positive it was the longest. While we were driving on the bus we were able to have a gospel discussion which Justin led. He started with the scripture Ether 12:6 and talked about weakness, and about how if we work hard at them, they will become strengths. There was

a lot of great input in this discussion including the point that as we continually work on our weaknesses we need to maintain our strengths.

We continued our bus ride to Jiaxing. We learned from the culture reports that Jiaxing was where communism was first conceptualized by three men on a ferry on the South Lake. Some of us could see this lake from the hotel, or from the outdoor elevator. We arrived at the hotel and ate lunch. A dish that was a common favorite were the deep-fried jelly sandwiches. Yum!

After lunch we had a little bit of free time before we had to head to the venue at 1:30 pm. We were hosted by the Jiaxing Grand Theater. Once there we loaded in and...you know the drill. After preparations for the show were completed many "Nerts" tournaments began and lasted till snack time. For snacks we enjoyed two large muffins, bananas, and corn juice boxes.

Not long after snacks we began our show. It started with a devotional by Sarah Morgan. She talked about how our joy in Christ can be full. She pointed out that since the gospel is not fully in China, the light of the gospel is also not there. She said that we were a light for these people to see as we performed for them.

The show was a resounding success, of course. After the show we went back to the hotel and ate dinner. It was buffet style again and there were green chopsticks! And again, there were the fried jam sandwiches and French fries and also fried chicken.

We all retired to our rooms which were decorated with green sparkly counters and some even had computers! What a treat! We had a short sleep before we were up again to travel to Shanghai.

**Saturday, May 16, 2009**  
**Jiaxing - Shanghai, China**  
**Matty Thatcher and Cindy Swenson**

Happy Saturday in China! We had a fairly early morning, starting with a yummy breakfast buffet in the hotel. Check out was at eight, and being the forgetful people we are, we had to hold the bus for people to retrieve their belongings. Steve-O left his drawing of his face in the closet. Shame.

We rolled out at 8:30, headed to the large city of Shanghai! Poor Matty found out that he had his money stolen/lost out of his journal and wallet. 700 Y. But we were quickly distracted as we pulled into Shanghai. The city, including its incredible architecture, was beautiful! We quickly found that this city is a busy one, as there is such a huge population.

First stop: Yu Yuan Gardens. The shopping, picturesque scenery, cool buildings with red lanterns (one of which Steve-O broke), the whole park was so fun. Steve-O came back with a crab, Brett got a knife, and a few others got robes and fans, shirts, etc. A few of the girls found some students from Montana and Utah State! We told them to come to our show... who knows if they did.



After the gardens, we stopped at our hotel to load in our stuff and catch lunch. We stayed at Motel 128. After lunch we were off to the venue. We had the unique chance to perform at the Shanghai Grand Theatre. We were told that mainly professional performers do shows there and Broadway and many other huge performance companies had performed there previously. We were lucky to be there. Thanks to the Shanghai Municipal Performance Company for hosting us here!



We all hurried and set up for the show (minus the Changsha group) fast so we could go out on the town to try and see the famous “Bund”. This place is a river separating old China from Modern China. You can see both sides, and we all wanted to see it. We tried, but without success. We found Cold Stone and other fun food places though.

Before the show: Devotional and cheeseburgers. Both were great. Everyone was tired today, so devotional was based on pressing forward. It helped us to remember that we are in China. We are so lucky!

During the show everything went well, but the sound from the huge hall made it hard to hear what the beat was. The audience loved us though, and our presenters were Mr. Chu and Samniy. Due to theatre rules, we could not visit with the audience after the show, but Nikki and Cindy were able to visit with their friends in the lobby. Cindy had planned to see an old friend from BYU now living in Shanghai, and as they were visiting a girl named Sunny asked for Nikki. Nikki had taught the gospel to her in Hong Kong while on her mission. Nikki was so excited to see her.

After cleaning up the show and eating a large meal for dinner, we all went to bed for a good night’s rest, ready for a wonderful Sabbath.

**Sunday, May 17, 2009**  
**Shanghai/Changsha, China**  
**Matt Thomas, Katie Shepherd, and Brian Watson**

After a night’s stay at “Super Motel 168”, the day of separation arrived, where 14 dancers, including Ed and Jiamin, would go to film a TV special in Changsha, and the rest of the group would stay in Shanghai.

For those staying in Shanghai, morning came early, as they piled into taxis at 7:30 to go to church. We met with an ex-patriot branch at 8:00, and it was a great sacrament meeting. The branch had about 100 members, from all over the world. The meeting was held within a compound. At the conclusion of the meeting, and after visiting with a few of the members, we returned to the hotel in taxis.

Transportation in Shanghai was a fun experience, taxis were a common means. Earlier in the day Emily, Amy, Ashley and MJ never showed up at church. We all missed them and hoped to find them again. We found them later at the hotel, and they told their tale of the rogue taxi driver, delivering them to a random location, nowhere near the church. They were prepared with their emergency card, and made it safely back to the hotel.

A meeting was held, and our first per diem in China was distributed. It was a fun change of pace. Along with the per diem, free time officially began, and groups began to form, plans were made, and excursions commenced.

Transportation by foot was very common for the rest of the afternoon. Jeremy, marooned at the hotel because of poor communication, set out on foot to find food. He found a decent meal, as well as many great sights. He soon found himself alone and lost from the hotel after awhile. He eventually found his way back, in the back seat of a police car- truly a unique experience.

Still, others learned to travel in the Shanghai subway. Shan’tel and Tesha wandered around with a large group looking for something to do during the afternoon. When others decided to cross the barrier from Old Shanghai to New Shanghai they decided to go back to the hotel with nothing but a few instructions and memory of where they had been. They were proud and excited to have made it back to the hotel safely to enjoy the rest of their Sunday afternoon.

Different groups spent their time in different ways. McDonald's and Pizza Hut were choices of many. Some went to the aquarium, others the art museum and some went to see the tallest observatory in the world. Looking down from 100 floors is an experience! Many used time to walk the Nanjing Street and take in the sights.



The group met at 6:00 pm, and hurried to the metro to the circus building to see the ERA acrobat show. It had contortionists, motorcycle daredevils, trapeze artists, gymnasts, trampoline and catapult performers, and many other kinds of stunt people. It was an amazing show, many jaws hit the floor. A great day of sightseeing then ended, and we retired to our rooms to prepare for the trip the next day.

### **Meanwhile in Changsha...**

This morning, half of our group, 14 dancers and 2 leaders, had sacrament meeting in Ed and Vickie's room before leaving for Changsha to take part in a T.V. show taping. We had no clue what to expect but left excitedly awaiting our adventure.

We found that it is much quicker to check a group of 16 into the airport vs. 40. However, we did run into a problem when we realized that Mike Steele was booked for two tickets and Cindy had none! So, after several phone calls Jiamin was eventually able to contact the TV station so they could change all of the information to allow Cindy to have a ticket. However, at 15 minutes to the ticket counter closing they had no ticket. At 10 minutes the TV station said the Ticket was on its way. As the minutes ticked down Ed had his credit card ready to purchase the ticket himself. Alas, with a minute to go the change went through and Cindy had a seat.

Once we arrived at our hotel, we were to freshen up and look presentable for some of the workers from the T.V. show. They were on their way to come interview us and get to know about us individually and our personalities. We made our way up to the conference center in our hotel and remained there for the next 5-7 hours, depending on when we were interviewed.

The two directors, Wu Bin and Quang Dan Wei were very friendly and thanks to our amazing translator, Jiamin, the talking went smoothly back and forth. They asked about our majors, hobbies, families, etc. Here are a few highlights from the interviews:

- The directors wanted to know if Traci could demonstrate crumping on stage. Ed referred to it as crimping.
- Jon was introduced. A person (to keep his identity secret we will call him Ed A. no, that is too obvious, how about E. Austin) said, "We call him Curly." In reference to Jon's major of Physics the directors just wanted to know what in the world do you do with it. Jon says, "I can measure the height of a tower with an elevator, scale, and stopwatch. Or give me a hair-dryer and ping-pong ball and I can explain the physics of how a plane flies." "You know...the wind...whoosh."
- Courtney and Brett were declared Ed's personal trainers who took him running every day, three times a week.
- Thomas walked out in Matt's Hopak costume and the directors looked at him and said "Shuaige," which Cindy happily knew the meaning of. It means handsome man. The directors were also sad to find out that Thomas and so many of the guys on the team were married.
- Colin revealed that he was a black belt. Need I say more?
- To Jen they wondered if she could use mathematical probability to choose the best possible boyfriend from a random sample of guys. She replied, "I like to look at other factors."
- They asked about Sarah and Justin's first kiss story and wondered if they would kiss on stage. Sarah said no, she doesn't like kissing in public.
- They were especially interested in Jon Brame and Jen Garrard and those with more "difficult" majors... "How on earth do they have time to dance too?"

It was quite the memorable experience. In the middle of this lengthy process the best prize of all came and that was PIZZA HUT! The knight in shining armor who brought it in was named Peter Zhong, and he later became our very good friend. He spoke excellent English and was a great help to our group. His fellow guide was Jessy Zhon. We'd like to thank the Hunan Satellite Television "Up Every Day" show for hosting this lovely event.

After the interviews finally ended we were off to our rooms. Girls went and played cards and boys went and watched a movie. What a long day!

**Monday, May 18, 2009**  
**Shanghai - Guangzhou/Changsha, China**  
**Kelsie Wagstaff and Brian Watson**

Monday morning came early, (especially for those who got little sleep after a spectacular acrobatic show), but we had to get to the airport in time to check our rather large group in and get on our flight in time to Guangzhou. As soon as we stepped off of the plane, we felt the extra humidity hit us. We were in the middle of a rainforest! Our hotel was set in the middle of a mountainous, green, and beautiful landscape. Surprisingly we had been promoted to a 5-star hotel which was connected to our theatre which was part of an enormous 5-building convention center. As soon as we sat down for lunch and had hot rolls with butter, we knew we would love it at that hotel. The whole hotel was so nice! Soft beds, big showers, and a swimming pool were just a few of the benefits. We felt very spoiled to say the least.

After a delicious lunch, we headed out in taxis to the walking street where there were remnants of the road and city from the Song, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties that were excavated while building the new road. It was interesting to see the old road and parts of the city that were from so long ago.



After wandering around the different shops for a little while, a group of people went to the beautiful park and enjoyed the natural beauty of the southern part of China. Later, most people met back up in the swimming pool where we soon found a way to make a big spectacle of ourselves. Rachel conveniently had bought a big ball back in Shenyang and we used it to play ultimate water polo. Robby's long arms were an unfair advantage for the other team but Sarah Campbell was also on his team and her small size didn't keep anyone away from ganging up on her and tackling her when she got the ball. Stephanie was a secret weapon too because no one wanted to beat up on the pregnant girl.... she scored a lot!

After we had finished the match, we all retired to our separate rooms and enjoyed our soft beds and cool rooms. What more could we ask for? Our presenters treated us so well and we felt so lucky! We could instantly tell we were going to like beautiful Guangzhou.

### **Across the country in Changsha...**

As we left the interview the previous night we weren't entirely sure what the schedule would be. Joyfully we were told that because we looked so tired during the interview that they wouldn't need us at the studio until 1:00 p.m. There was much rejoicing and sleeping in.

As we pulled up to the venue there were audience members already waiting at the door. This was a good effect to get our excitement up. Surprisingly the studio wasn't full of a lot of glamour. However, it was still pretty cool.

Our continual motto for the day was to be flexible because we were always getting new schedules of when we needed to be somewhere different. Pretty much we were just hoping that we wouldn't lose an essential piece of information in translation. We were very grateful for the efforts from Peter, the directors, and Jiamin to keep us informed. (I feel it necessary to mention the great steamer we had, the several different ways we blocked our entrances on stage, and how incredibly slick the stage was!)



Our last preparation for the show was hair and makeup. It was mostly for the girls. To our enjoyment they each had a different makeup artist with her own special design capabilities. Cindy's was the most liberal on eyebrow makeup making her look like Captain Hook. Jiamin came out of there looking like a million bucks. Justin's hair was described by his wife as "looking like a cow sucked on it." And Colin and Ed were twins. And with that it was time to begin the show "Tian Tian Xiang Shang" broadcast by Hunan TV...this was the go go part...

Ahem...

It began with us saying no to carrying beer on stage for our mock party with the hosts, to having haphazard starts to Poltavskiy Duet, Chinese Flowers, and Mehk, to our hosts Wang Han, Ou Di, Qian Feng, Tian Yuan, and Yu Hao Ming coming on stage slapping their legs "Mehk-style," to Ed teaching them how to chug, to Colin actually doing Kung Fu on stage, to Sarah having to kiss Justin in front of a live studio audience, to doing a good old fashioned square dance at the end. The whole time Jiamin acted as translator, thank you so much to her. And it was awesome. All of us had so much fun interacting with the show hosts and showing China what BYU folkdance is about. (For further television show enlightenment you need to watch it. However, it is highly edited and you will notice that some of the dances aren't in the order that they were choreographed.)

After the show our guides treated us to dinner at an amazing Brazilian restaurant. It was divine. Following dinner we walked around town to an old street called "Bar Street." Here we felt a little bit more of what older China was like. Slowly we made our way to the other end of the street where our bus was waiting to receive instructions for tomorrow. And to Mike, Ed said that if Cindy had two plane tickets in her name that he was to say "I'm Cindy Lou."

And thus I will end with this one phrase in regards to some of the memories that just can't be described or put into words. "What goes down in Changsha, stays in Changsha."

**Tuesday, May 19, 2009**  
**Guangzhou, China**  
**Jesse and Stephanie Christopher**

The group that went to Changsha flew to Guangzhou this morning. We were reunited this morning to hold an outreach at the Xin Hai Conservatory of Music, which also has a dance program. We met around 9 am, to travel to the conservatory. As we all came down to the bus, Ed wrote our names down in order into what he called the 'Tree of Life.' It was basically who came down in what time increments. The people who showed up 10 minutes before we were supposed to be there were in the first bracket, and then 5 min. and so on. We all thought that we met a little bit too early, but we were happy we did once we found out that we had the wrong address and had to drive for longer than we expected.

When we arrived at the outreach, we were greeted by students dressed in white with red sashes. I asked Yana what the sashes were for, and she told me that red is China's national color, and has a lot of

meaning for them, and that when someone wears a sash like that it means that they are welcoming you and that they are there to serve you.

As we walked in past the auditorium where we would be performing, we found that all of the students were waiting for us already. Mike Hinckley and Steve Dethloff walked through the audience trying to find a restroom and received applause just for showing their faces. As the dancers were frantically getting ready, Mark Ohran suggested that the band do a pre-show. When Yana went to organize it, they announced it right away, and the band rushed out on stage. They played 2 songs with one wireless microphone (Jon Wood held it up to each instrument during solos). The dancers and the band then went and sat down to watch the dancers from the conservatory perform for us. Then we performed for them. We did Mehk, The Gathering, and Last Night. Ed also demonstrated the instruments that weren't as common in China. The students watching us were a great crowd and cheered very loud for us. Afterward we mingled a bit, and took a picture out in the humidity with the performers from the other group.



We travelled back to the hotel and had a gourmet Chinese meal in our 5 star hotel. The hotel was so nice, and everybody loved how soft the beds were. The rooms came with every amenity that you could want. It was great.

After lunch we set up for the show in the theater that was also located at our hotel (in the fourth block ... we stayed in the fifth block). The hotel was so big that there were 5 different buildings connected by a walkway. The group who had gone to Changsha were allowed to get stuff done quickly and then go and relax in the hotel. Most of them swam in the pool and took naps.

The show, hosted by Guangdong Culture Communications, went well as usual. After the show we once again had dinner at the wonderful restaurant, and then had a quick meeting before we went up to bed. In the meeting we talked about being trunky and how to avoid the pitfalls associated with that attitude. We also talked about making the rest of tour just as good as the first part. Then we all gladly went to bed.

**Wednesday, May 20, 2009**  
**Guangzhou - Shenzhen, China**  
**Sarah Campbell and Greg Rawlings**

Our day began with a scrumptious breakfast in Guangzhou. Unfortunately they ran out of hash browns, but still had six flavors of Dryers ice cream left. Ed made what he called the "family tree", which was a list of when we arrived to the bus. He read it aloud. Once on the bus some students gave their research reports for Jiamin.



We got to hotel around 11 am and were promptly lined up to have our temperatures checked to make sure we didn't have swine flu. Having passed inspection we were able to soak in the Vision Fashion Hotel, a vision indeed! Each room had different modern décor. Some rooms were psychedelic with rainbows, disturbing images, and lots of mirrors, patterns, and feathered lamps. The favorites were the glass house (a room covered in mirrors), the space ship room, the Barbie room, and the kiwi room. Everybody was running around taking tours and photos-when we realized there were signs saying we couldn't. We ate lunch in the chic restaurant at noon. They had the Chinese staples of noodles and watermelon...and...CAKE!!! Yum.

Our venue was connected to the hotel, making things extremely convenient. We loaded in to the theater at one o'clock, and all had to wear back stage passes. The dancers got nervous because the wood floor was torn up and the possibility of getting splinters was great. We had free time after – some kids rode on paddle boats and others got Slurpies at 7-11. Devotional was smashing, we sang "Love One Another" and it meant a lot to Yana and Sara. They were touched and crying, which left the spirit and the true purpose of our shows in all of our minds. We all determined to keep the audience in mind while we performed. The show went well – except one of the dancers kicked over Mike's mic stand during Appalachian so the music got off and things went poorly after that (during the song). We struck the set quickly and went back to the hotel restaurant for dinner – basically the same as lunch.

Then...all mayhem broke loose. The band took fashion photos in the rooms while most girls followed suit, and pretty soon many of them had huge teased hair, pounds of make-up and an assortment of costume pieces on. The pictures were totally vogue and the rooms provided plenty of backdrops and props. Let's just say people got pretty creative. We were up pretty late but have many rolls of film to preserve the damage. It was a great day.



**Thursday, May 21, 2009**  
**Shenzhen, China - Hong Kong**  
**Ashlee Carroll and Steve Ord**



We left the Vision Fashion Hotel this morning. We had to say goodbye to our wonderful tour guides Yana and Sara. We sang "Go Ye now in Peace" and "Irish Blessing" to them and then we all gave them hugs as we departed. They were in tears as we left and so were we. It was a great experience. We love Sarah and Yana!!!

We took two busses to Hong Kong. We had a successful crossing of the border from Shenzhen to Hong Kong and the sky scrapers rose all around us. We arrived at the YMCA and it was a very nice hotel. We dropped off our bags and were given per diem money for lunch. Many went to McDonalds, others to the supermarket or the 7-11.

We went to our venue at the Polytechnic University and our guide was Mazy Chow of the Child Builder Organization. We took our stuff from the bus and had a long walk to the stage. The band had sound check and a lot of dancers took the chance to sleep because of a fun and late night of fashion and frivolity. They fed us box dinners-three choices.

At the devotional that night emotions were high as Sarah Morgan announced she was pregnant, Ed said his thanks to the team and last speech. Steve O. gave the devotional about the blessings of Folk Dance and being a part of this team. Very few had dry eyes as they prepared for the last show. China has been wonderful.

The show went fantastically and the energy was high. At intermission the little kids did an ABC and Kung Fu number that was so cute and they included some of our dancers like Amy, Emily, Steve O., Greg, and Kelsie. It was a lot of fun. The audience was made up of Chinese youth who were not as wealthy as other shows we have given. Ed gave a great lecture after about what we do and the unique dances and costumes.



At the hotel people went to the store to get snacks. Ashlee's roommate from Hong Kong visited. After the show we all enjoyed a batch of homemade chocolate chip cookies, courtesy of Nikki's mom. Everyone demanded seconds on them but there was not enough to go around.

**Friday, May 22, 2009**  
**Hong Kong**  
**Stephen Dethloff and Tesha Jones**

We woke up on Friday in the luxurious hotel of the YMCA in Hong Kong. We met on the fourth floor to wrap up student presentations on Hong Kong. Each of us sat on patio furniture, straining our ears to hear who was talking because it was loud outside. By the time the presentations were over half of the group was asleep, having given up on trying to listen.

By mid-morning a group of 16 left to perform at a school of disabled students. Everyone else got free time. Free time in Hong Kong was the best. Some people went in search of Jackie Chan's handprints imprinted in concrete on the Avenue of the Stars, while others visited the Buddha Temple, and the LDS Temple in Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, the select 16 toured the school of the disabled, SAHK B M Kotewall Memorial School. They performed for the younger age group. They were hosted by the Child Builder Organization. Everyone was sad they were not able to interact with the students. They were not allowed to do so because parents were afraid of them carrying the Swine Flu.



We all met together at 3:00 pm in the lobby at the YMCA to take a bus to the Dragon Centre. Our bus drove around the mall three times before navigating through the underground parking lot's narrow driveways. Our stage, which ended up being very small, was in front of a giant Gundam Wing poster. The boys changed below this poster underneath two elevators they had closed down just for their changing room. The girls changed in a non-circulating hut on the right of the stage.



Everyone scrambled around - confused at which numbers were going to be performed due to our small stage. Protest rent the air as Ed explained that he still wanted to try to do Bollywood. There was an argument between the leaders vs. the Dragon Centre people about wearing stickers with the Mall's logo. Jon Wood (our fearless leader) refused their protests but caved a little for Rapper Sword - whose stickers had fallen off by the end of the dance. The shows were great with small band numbers built in between.

Life in Hong Kong at night was as fun as the Dragon Centre was full of people. Most of our group went to the night market to see what trinkets they could find. Many were overcome with joy when they found patches to put on their PAC bags. At the end of the day we were all safe back at the YMCA - thinking of, and preparing ourselves for our last day on tour...

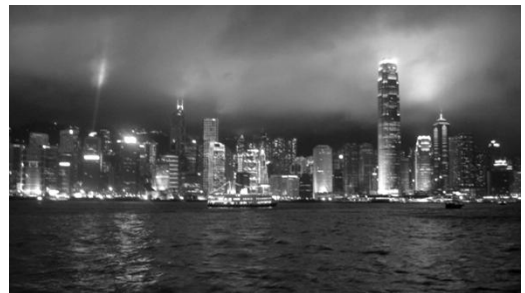
**Saturday, May 23, 2009**  
**Hong Kong**  
**Jen Garrard and Steve Boyer**

This was our last day in Hong Kong. Everyone was trying to cram everything they possibly could into the precious free time we were allotted. This is the story of that day.

It all began in the morning. Some of us went to the temple. Some of us went to the beach at Repulse Bay. Some of us went to the market. Some of us went to the outdoor aviary. All of us got stuck in the rain. After we all got as much into our morning as we could, we met in the lobby of the YMCA for our last show of tour. It was another show at the Dragon Centre in the mall, as the stickers will attest. Cheers for the ever-changing show line-ups! I'm pretty sure we had like 15 by the end of the day. Even though the stage was cramped we managed to pull out a pretty decent show. Some people weren't in any of the dances so they went shopping, of course. The rest of us were lucky enough to stay. It was interesting to see everyone's reaction to the last show. For the most part it was pretty chill. No tears were shed (as far as we can tell). We think it may be because the shows sort of wound down at the end rather than end abruptly with a full show. So that was good.

After that we took the buses back to the hotel and some people packed tech boxes and prop boxes. After a short meeting, the rest of us took off for the evening to feed ourselves, both foodistically and touristically. We finished off tour with an American food bang, including TGI Friday's, Pizza Hut, Subway, and McDonald's.

Our original plan was to go to the Peak as a group and have our breath taken away by the spectacular view. Unfortunately, with the rain and the clouds and the height of the peak, our breath stayed with us because we called it off; we wouldn't have been able to see anything. Plan B included seeing Night at the Museum 2 as a group, which was also abandoned, because three of our credit cards were rejected. So instead we were left to our own devices which was fine by us! There was still much to do and see in Hong Kong.



Chosen activities for the night included ferry rides to Hong Kong Island and back, visiting the temple (though some found it more easily than others), the light/laser show, and a cool visit to a church building on Hong Kong Island. It has four chapels and ten floors and is cool. We met back in the hotel to have sacrament meeting in Mark's room (which was also the tech room). It was cozy and great.

Ed and Jon shared some thoughts, followed by Mark, Jiamin, and Vickie. Then Jiamin translated a letter from Yana and Sarah for us. It was hilarious and really sweet. At ten forty came a soft knock on the door. It was Jen and Greg and they were late. Oops. But at least they saw the temple all lit up in its majesty. All in all it was a great ending to our amazing tour.

After that we pretty much just packed up our things/threw away half of our belongings to meet the weight requirements because we had bought so many treasures on our journey.

Fun times. Fun times, indeed.



**Sunday, May 24, 2009**

**Hong Kong – The Pacific Ocean – San Francisco, California - Salt Lake City, Utah, USA**

**Ed Austin**

Today we woke up after having three amazing days in Hong Kong which included 5 performances, a special assembly for SAHK B M Kotewall Memorial School which serves children with disabilities, a radio program, and tons of free time for sightseeing and shopping. As Vickie and I left my hotel room, we took one last look at the breathtaking view of Hong Kong Harbor. It was a typical travel day. The group met at 9:40am where we said one last goodbye to Jiamin. Many in the group met her daughter, Zoa, for the first time. We then loaded our equipment and luggage onto two buses, found our seats, had our passport check, and “washed the windows” as we said goodbye to Mazy. Our buses departed from the YMCA at 10:30am.

Today would be the longest Sunday that many people might ever experience. Because of the time changes, we actually ate lunch three times: in the Hong Kong airport, over the Pacific Ocean, and at the San Francisco airport. Our flight went without incident, and it was actually shorter in time than the flight over. On their personal screens, many of us watched movies which included: *Yes Man*, *Valkyrie*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *America's Next Top Model*, *Four Christmas's*, *Die Another Day*, *Harry Potter*, *Secret Garden*, *Chicken Run*, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *Red Cliff I*, *Red Cliff II*, *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate factory*, and *The Little Mermaid*. There was no shortage of movies to choose from!



We arrived safely in San Francisco at 11:45am (2:45am Hong Kong). After several hours we boarded one last plane and arrived in Salt Lake City at 7:40pm (9:40am Hong Kong). It indeed had been a very long Sunday.

This tour has afforded us some amazing opportunities. The people we met have been wonderful, and our exchanges with the Beijing Dance Academy, the Minority University, and the Xinghai Conservatory of Music—unforgettable. We learned to enjoy new foods and a uniquely different cultural lifestyle. We have seen incredible, modern cities that have only recently grown out of the ancient landscape, and walked upon historical paths leading to the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, and the locations where Communism in China had its earliest beginnings. We performed live for thousands of audience members and were viewed nationally on *Tian Tian Xiang Shang* [天天向上], *Up Happy Every Day* for an estimated audience of over a billion people. And we have felt the blessings of a loving Father who has watched over each one of us and allowed us to be part of a great work in this beautiful corner of His vineyard.

I can express my feelings best about our experiences in China through two short memories. The first occurred when we had our first exchange with the Beijing Dance Academy. As I watched the first selection performed by beautiful young women with their exotic pink fans, I remember being overcome with tears as I recognized each one—a daughter of our Father in Heaven. And secondly, as I watched each member of our group lovingly embrace a tearful Sarah and Yana at the end of our time with them, I knew that we had succeeded in sharing the love that Christ has for all of His children. In essence, I believe this is what we were primarily sent to do in China.

I want to thank each of you who gave so much of yourselves to prepare for this great adventure in China, and then worked so hard in making it all happen. To Jon, Mark, Jiamin, Vickie, and Nikki—a huge thank you for all you did for the team. You all did it so well.  
Blessings—

# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WE PERFORMED FOR:

Shikingshan Amusement Park Theater	800
Shikingshan Amusement Park Theater	1000
Beijing Dance Academy	100
Beijing Minority University	900
Poly Theater (Beijing)	1100
Poly Theater (Beijing)	1100
Liaoning Grand Theater (Shenyang)	1100
Dalian Cultural Club	700
Mid South Theater (Wuhan)	600
Southeast Theater (Wenzhou)	600
Ningbo Grand Theater	1000
Jiaxing Grand Theater	1100
The Grand Theater (Shanghai)	1200
Xin Hai Conservatory of Music	400
Baiyun Convention Center (Guangzhou)	1800
The Grand Theater (Shenzhen)	1100
Jockey Club Auditorium (Hong Kong)	950
Hong Kong Elementary School	50
Dragon Center	500
Dragon Center	200
Dragon Center	200
Dragon Center	200
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>16,700</b>
<hr/>	
Changsha TV	50,000,000
Radio Interview	100,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>50,116,700</b>

# A LETTER FROM OUR TOUR GUIDES:

*"I really want to hold a microphone and open heartedly share my feelings out, but I am also worried that my weak eyes will leak tears, and also the way I cry is very ugly. Therefore, I asked cute Teacher Huang to help read this letter.*

*When I first received this group assignment and saw that the schedule was more than twenty days I thought it was too long, and I was hesitant to take over and was not sure if I wanted to accept. When we came to pick you up from the plane, every BYU team member wore the same clothes and your faces looked the same too, so I thought it was going to be impossible for me to tell you apart. However, city by city and show after show everyone began to make a place in our hearts. After we were together for a while I could close my eyes and see everyone's faces.*

*Cindy dragging a long voice with a pouty lip and then she would reach her hand out and cutely say "5." Crazy drummer Jesse on the stage looking like a goose as he drummed. Thomas's signature smile and his handsome tap dancing. Jen's various beautiful hair bands. Colin's "[talking/personality] smooth like butter." Jeremy's cute facial expressions when he talks about when he was lost. Mark's big belly and kid-like, down to earth smile. Justin's personality: shy and full of goodness. Mike C's magnetic voice. Dragon Steve's crazy laugh. Steve B is full of heart and has an understanding smile. Steve 3's sunny face. Robby's moving voice and beautiful sounding piano playing. Michael H's red cheeks. Sarah Campbell's cute tininess. Amanda's cute, little freckled face. Traci's mischievous cuteness. Nikki's willingness to help everyone. Ashlee's beautiful big, grey eyes... Forty-four people that I could write many pages about and would still never finish.*

*I fell in love with you guys deeply. And also Da Ge (big guy aka John), Professor Huang (Jiamin), Ed and Vickie like guardian angels always keeping you guys safe. Nikki and Ed both said Yana was like a mother for the group. Yes, definitely! Yana shares with each of you the love she has for her son; that is a type of deep and heavy love. Because of you all, we are filled with thousands of happiness. You all definitely understand gratitude; you kept expressing it for everything we did. We actually did very little; we only did what we were supposed to do. The hotels, whether they were good or bad, and the choice of theaters were not up to us, so we only do some connection communication work. From the very beginning, you always say thank you to us.*

*We love you all. When we unconsciously realized that it was time to leave and be apart, our hearts shrank into a lump. We didn't want to go to Shenzhen because we knew it was our last night. From that day on, no one would be there to tell you guys to "move faster", "don't lose things", "look again"... We were overcome with emptiness.*

*I hope that in some country in this world and some place in some situation to meet you guys again. Love you, miss you, Yana, Sarah hug you! If anyone misses us, use email."*

*-Sarah and Yana*

# "YOU AND ME"

## 2008 BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES THEME SONG

我和你，心连心，同住地球村。

Wo he ni, xin lian xin, tong zhu di qiu cun.

You and me from one world, we are family.

为梦想，千里行，相会在北京。

Wei meng xiang qian li xing xiang hui zai Beijing.

Travel dreams a thousand miles meeting in Beijing.

来吧朋友，伸出你的手，

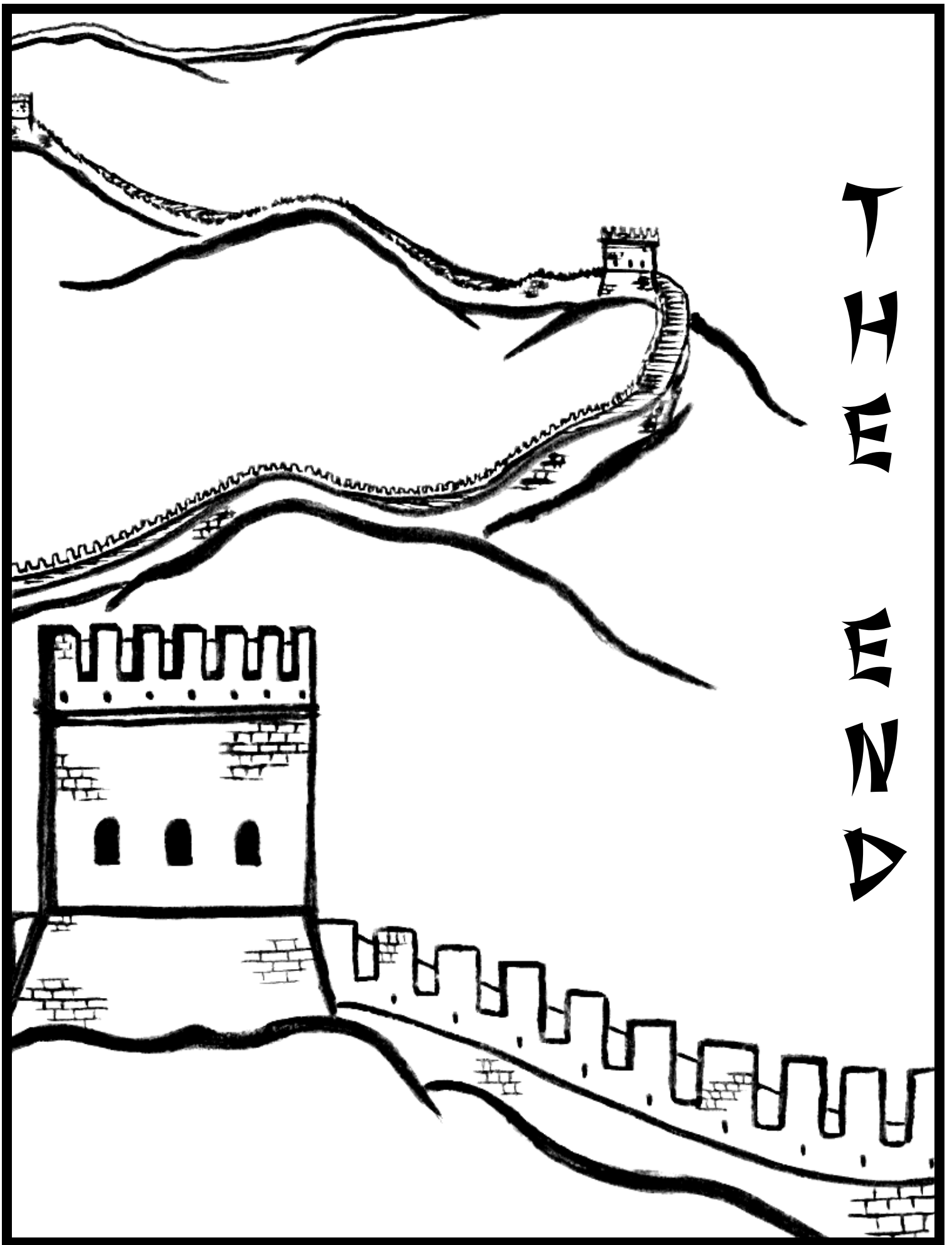
Lai ba peng you, shen chu ni de shou,

Come together, put your hand in mine,

我和你，心连心，永远一家人。

Wo he ni xin lian xin yong yuan yu jian ren.

You and me from the world, we are family.



THE GREAT WALL