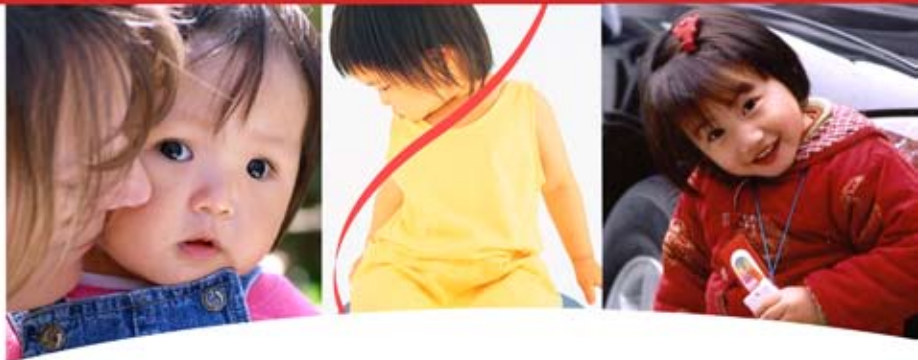


The Red Thread

CONNECTION



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2006

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- *Books for Your Family to Enjoy Together!*

The **Red Thread Connection** wants to know if you have any ideas for our new newsletter! If you would like to contact us or be featured in our newsletter, write us at:

CCAI FLORIDA OFFICE
253 Pinewood Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32303
ccaifl@chinesechildren.org

(850) 878-8788 phone
(850) 878-8988 fax



CHINESE CHILDREN ADOPTION INTERNATIONAL
美國國際中華兒童服務中心

Waiting... Still Waiting!!!

You finished the paper chase, now what? You wait. And wait. Fourteen months of waiting is almost impossible. All the nervous anticipation that comes with making a decision as important as international adoption, and all the frustration that results from getting all the forms and paperwork completed seems too much to bear. You work so hard to be organized, get fingerprinted, and put together your dossier. What should happen after all that effort is a child, for heaven's sake! You know he or she WILL come... just not right away. While relieved to have the initial part over, it is disappointing to be "teased" with now having to wait for your child. Well-meaning people tell you to "hang in there" or "just think what you can look forward to." But nothing seems to help you feel better about the wait. You just want your child home and it is incredibly unfair that you have to wait!

CCAI has several activities to assist families during their wait. *The Circle* and *In Touch* publications have helpful articles and the staff in the Dossier Department tries to communicate with in process families as much as possible. The Florida Office staff has attempted to make sure all families have access to the Florida newsletter

and website and mentor families. Our reunion is planned for November 3 – 4. Many of you are coming and we are very excited about it! We are "there" with you, since most of us have been through the process at least once!

Here is one suggestion on how to spend your time while waiting. We are currently looking for a few families to be special messengers! You would get together with other families in your area to advise the Florida CCAI Office staff on the best way to "get the word about adoption." You would assist us in developing a 6-month plan for information seminars in your community – identifying places to hold them, setting specific dates, and getting it publicized.

As a result, you would be directly involved in helping to spread the message about adoption. What a great way to spend time while you are waiting! It may not get your child home any faster, but it sure would get loving families for more children!

If you think would like to get involved in this new activity, contact us at: icare@chinesechildren.org or sign up at our special **Getting the Word Out** table at the Reunion in a few short weeks. ■

Famous Faces



◀ **Camille,**
Daughter of Jeff Blaker and
Cristine Duignan, Group 1063,
Born 1/25/06 in HuaiHua,
Hunan Province

Molly Lynn Hui, ▶
daughter of Paul and Sherry
McCluskey, Group 1064,
Born 9/29/05 in FuLing,
Chongqing Province



◀ **Mya Lynne,**
Daughter of Doug and
Michelle Kneer, Group 1064,
Born 12/27/05 in FuLing,
Chongqing Province

Callan Archer, ▶
daughter of Ken Crossland
and Chris Croft-Crossland
Group 1063, Born 1/11/06 in
LinXiang, Hunan Province



◀ **Julia Wren Lingjing,**
daughter of Tom Casmer
and Mary GrandPré
Group 1044, Born 1/22/04
in LuoYang, Henan Province

Next Information Seminars

October 28, 2006 Faith Family Church
Sunday
(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM) (Palm Beach Co) 6450 Melaleuca Lane
Green Acres, Florida 33463
Nancy Fontaine (850) 878-8788
ccaifl@chinesechildren.org

October 28, 2006 Casa Welch
Sunday
(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM) 130 Damifiwill Street
Boca Grande, Florida 33921
Trish Kurowski (850) 668-2383
trish.kurowski@comcast.net

November 15, 2006 Alafaya Trail Library
Wednesday
(5:00 PM - 6:45 PM) 12000 E. Colonial Drive
Orlando, Florida 32826
Brenda Dayton (407) 310-9257
bdayton@cfl.rr.com

November 18, 2006 St. Giles Presbyterian Church
Saturday
(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM) 116 Fox Ridge Road
Orange Park, Florida 32065
Thomas Cavano (850) 878-8788
ccaifl2@chinesechildren.org

November 18, 2006 Casa Welch
Saturday
(2:00 PM - 4:00 PM) 130 Damifiwill Street
Boca Grande, Florida 33921
Jo Ann Welch (727) 638-0740
joiwelch@aol.com

November 18, 2006 Cocoa Beach Public Library
Saturday
(2:00 PM - 4:30 PM) 3825 McGregor Blvd.
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
Julie Podges (321) 253-9491
jbpodges@aol.com

December 9, 2006 Alafaya Trail Library
Saturday
(10:15 PM - 12 Noon) 12000 E. Colonial Drive
Orlando, Florida 32826
Brenda Dayton (407) 310-9257
bdayton@cfl.rr.com

This is a partial listing – for a complete and up-to-date list of meetings in your area please go to <http://www.chinesechildren.org/InfoMeeting/InfoMeet.aspx?State=Florida>

CCAI Florida Family Reunion's For the Children Silent Auction Needs YOU!

The Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Safari Hotel in Orlando will be anything BUT silent on November 4th when we kick off the CCAI Florida Family Reunion Breakfast Banquet with the "For The Children, Silent Auction" to benefit the ZunYi Orphanage in Guizhou, China. The goal is to raise \$10,000 to build a sorely needed playground at the facility, and with an expected attendance of almost 500 people, we're betting the myriad of exciting auction items will entice enough high bidders to reach that goal!

Trips, Treasures and Trinkets for All

From warm sunny beaches to cool mountain breezes, vacation packages are always popular auction items and you'll find several delightful **vacation destinations** from which to choose at our auction.

- 2-day, 1 night stay at the Doubletree Guest Suites hotel in *Naples, Florida* and 2 complimentary adult tickets for the Caribbean Gardens Zoo and Naples Museum of Art.
- A condo on *St. Augustine Beach* for a week!
- A free weekend at the Safari Sheraton (to be used after the reunion, not during!)
- A weekend in historic *Apalachicola, Florida* at a cottage that sleeps 7. It is about 15 minutes from the beautiful St. George Island Beach.

- A three-day weekend in the western *North Carolina* mountains outside of Asheville in a farmhouse that sleeps 4. It includes a one-day ski lift ticket/equipment rental for 2 adults at Wolf Laurel Ski Resort that is 30 minutes away.
- A weekend at the Old Greer House in *Banner Elk, North Carolina*. It is a lovely house that actually accommodates up to 35 people, with dorm style sleeping. Great for a CCAI Travel Group Reunion! The package includes tickets for a white water rafting trip down the Anaconda Rapids on the Watauga River.
- Spend the Day with Seminoles (the real ones!) at the Billie Swamp Safari located on Florida's Big Cypress Seminole Tribe Reservation in the *Everglades*. This is for five people and includes an airboat ride, a swamp buggy tour, and a snake and alligator show!




DOUBLETREE
HOTELS-SUITES-RESORTS-CASINO

We've also covered the bases for the **sports fans** in the crowd. Here's the lineup so far:

- A *St. Louis Cardinals* ball cap signed by the entire team and coaches, (signatures include Tony LaRussa, Scott Rolen, Albert Pujols, Jim Edmonds, Chris Carpenter and even Hall of Famer Red Schoendienst!)
- A *football* signed by *Joe Thiesman*
- A *game bat* used, signed and donated by *St. Louis Cardinals* infielder #27 *Scott Rolen*.
- A *Boston Red Sox* ball cap signed by 1967 Cy Young Award winner *Jim Lonborg*.
- A *football* and *miniature FSU Seminole Helmet* signed by *Bobby Bowden* (with display case), includes an authenticated photograph of Coach Bowden signing the helmet.
- A basket of *FSU Women's Basketball* items and memorabilia
- A wonderful package of items for the family *golfer!*

Lovers of art and literature will have plenty of choices, as well.

- *Mary GrandPre'*, illustrator of the wildly popular *Harry Potter* books, has donated four original working sketches from the *Harry Potter* series: an 18x16" original pencil sketch of "Harry playing Quiddich," another 18x16" sketch of "Harry and Ron in the Flying Car" and two 10x 8 1/2" working chapter sketches for *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.
- Beautiful, signed prints from two books by *Grace Lin*: *Fortune Cookie Fortunes* and *Red is a Dragon*. The autographed books are also included!
- The latest book from *Ed Young* (Caldecott winner and author of many Chinese children's illustrated books), the lovely illustrated, *Beyond the Great Mountains: A Visual Poem About China* and it is signed, too!



- A signed copy of *Love Without Boundaries* (the first one that is going to be out of print by November to make way for the second one!)
- A wonderfully fully illustrated *Chinese cookbook*
- A beautiful coffee table book of *photographs of China!*
- A *Chinese peasant folk print*.

We'll also have a multitude of **"Themed Baskets"** featuring everything from A to Z... or, rather, B to P, with themes ranging from **Baby Dolls** to **Pandas!**

- An Asian *"Just Like Me" Doll* by *American Doll* with her red mandarin style dress!
- A cute, Asian *"Bitty Baby" Doll* with her powder blue mandarin style dress by *American Doll!*
- A complete *"Pandamonium" Panda Birthday party* for 8 girls including handmade invitations and thank you notes, party cartons with special favors, Panda DVD, and even a Pin the Chinese Outfit on the Panda game!
- A stuffed *Panda backpack* with an array of books and DVDs about the loveable pandas!
- A basket of *health products* from *Honey Tree* natural health food store.

- A special pack of wonderful books for the early reader!
- A *PBS package* with a *Barney and Friends* backpack and great books and videos of many favorite characters!
- A *Fun in the Sun* beach basket!
- Learn *Chinese* basket with *language tapes and flashcards!*
- Many *Adoption Scrapbook* baskets including several already-embellished and ready for your adoption journey photos - all you have to do is add the pictures and journaling!
- A basket of scrapbook supplies with an Asian theme (paper, stickers, embellishments, etc.)

It all sounds fantastic doesn't it? But we still need more! So... if you've got an item you want to donate or a theme you would like to create, we'll find a bidder and everyone (especially the children) will be a winner.

For more information on how to donate or volunteer, call the CCAI Florida Headquarters at (850) 878-8788 or send an e-mail to icare@chinesechildren.org.

From Fine Arts to Finger Paints:

A Chinese Child Casts a Spell on Harry Potter Illustrator

Mary GrandPre' is known to millions of Harry Potter fans as the illustrator who brought the magic of Harry and Hogwarts to visual life. But on August 28, 2006 it was GrandPre' who experienced the magic when she received the long-awaited news that she and her husband, Tom Casmer, had been matched with, and would soon travel to adopt, a beautiful baby girl from China through CCAI. "We are just beside ourselves with excitement" says GrandPre'. "I still go into the studio each day, but it's really hard to focus on anything else right now!"

Truth is, GrandPre' is focused not only on the adoption of her daughter, but also on the plight of the thousands of Chinese orphans who have been left behind and may never experience the love and nurturing environment of a "forever family." For this reason she eagerly offered to donate four of her *original* working sketches from the Harry Potter series, to a silent auction to benefit an orphanage in the Guizhou province of China. The auction will be held during the second annual CCAI Florida Families Reunion on November 4th in Orlando. Proceeds from the auction will go towards the construction of a playground at the

ZunYi Orphanage, which is one of the poorest orphanages in China.

Recently, CCAI Florida Media Coordinator, Trish Higgins Kurowski, interviewed GrandPre' about the challenges of illustrating the astronomically successful series, her exciting donation to the CCAI silent auction and her eagerness to begin work on a new chapter in her own life entitled "Motherhood." The following is an excerpt from that interview.

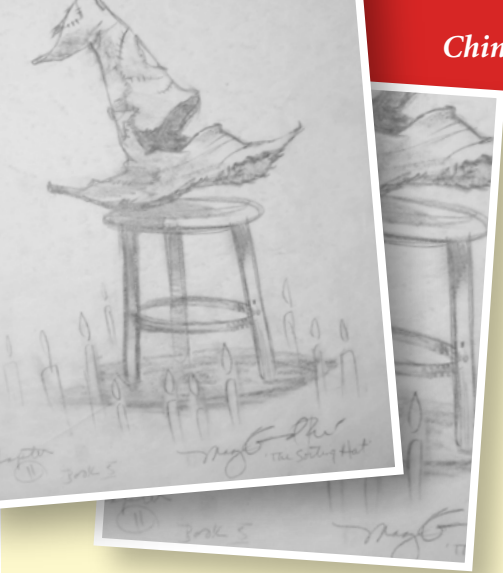
THK: Tell me about the sketches and why you donated them to the auction.

MGP: Being a parent who is waiting for her own Chinese child, I wanted to do something for the children over there, so when I heard about the CCAI auction I thought perhaps the Harry Potter sketches would help raise some funds. The pieces that I've donated are working sketches. Those are the really tight sketches that I show the art director before he gives me approval to go to that final charcoal. They are not the finished art. They are done to get to the finished pieces. The ones I have donated are an 18x16" original pencil sketch of "Harry Playing Quiddich", and another 18x16" sketch of "Harry and Ron in the Flying Car." There are also two working chapter sketches for *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. I believe they are for chapters three and eleven.



▲ Mary GrandPre'.

◀ Cover of *TIME* magazine.



THK: What role do the illustrations play in the book? In other words, how do you decide what you are going to illustrate, and what are you trying to do with that illustration?

MGP: First, I get the manuscript from the publisher and read and re-read it very carefully highlighting areas that might be good things to show for the chapter sketches and the cover. For the chapter sketches, I try to pick something that will intrigue the reader to turn to the next page without giving away anything that I can't be giving away at that point. It's just a little teaser. With the covers, it's kind of the same thing, only it's for the whole book. I just try to find an interesting scene that will portray the mood of that whole story, while highlighting Harry, of course, so people will pick up the book. Obviously, with Harry Potter I don't have to work too hard to get anybody interested because they already are.

THK: Do you ever put in a little private joke or hide something in your illustrations?

MGP: Actually, I do with other illustrations. I don't so much with Harry Potter because I don't own it like I do other works. I really just try to honor what J.K. Rowling is writing about because the readers are such

fans, they're so focused, and I have to be so true to what she is saying. It's a very serious project.

THK: When you get a manuscript how do you go about formulating a design?

MGP: I'll get a phone call from the publisher saying the manuscript will be arriving. It's a very secretive thing. I sign a confidentiality agreement stating that I won't talk to anybody about the fact that I've got it, that I'm reading it, or what it's about. Nobody in the household, not even my husband, can know about it.

THK: Wow.

MGP: It's very, very secret. I even have a secret place to keep it safe, but when it's here it's a little stressful. The deadlines are pretty tight so when it arrives I start right in reading and taking notes because J.K. gives us a lot of information. She is a very visual writer and there is a lot to pay attention to. Then, when I'm done reading, I come up with some sketches for the cover, I discuss them with the art director, and we decide what we think is the best direction to take. Next, I'll work on a couple of ideas in some sketches, which is just pencil on tracing paper, and then I'll send them into the publisher in New York, who then shows them to JK Rowling to get her input. She's always very agreeable and she's been very supportive about the artwork for the books.

THK: Do you have any interaction with J.K. Rowling during the creative process? Do you ever call her up and say: "I'm thinking of doing such and such and wondered what your thoughts were...?"

MGP: No. And it's not uncommon for the illustrator and the author to not be in contact. Even with picture books, the publisher tries to keep the

author and the illustrator separate so they don't interfere with each other's vision. It's kind of weird, but it makes sense because the author invents all this in her head and the illustrator translates it visually, so we each have to listen to our own voice. The publisher acts as the middleman and makes sure it's connected.

THK: Have you ever spoken to Rowling personally or met her?

MGP: Yes, I met her about 7 years ago in Chicago when she was touring this country. We sat down with the publisher and had dinner and a nice evening. She's a very personable woman and very approachable like any one of us.

THK: How much time does it take for you to come up with the cover from start to finish?

MGP: From reading the book to finishing the cover takes me about a month. I drop everything and work solely on that. It takes me about three weeks to do the chapter headings for a thirty-chapter book. I do about two a day. It's really a tight deadline. Everybody is waiting for this to get done so they can rush it to the printer.

THK: How about the image of Harry. Did you come up with that image?

MGP: Well, people ask me that a lot and all I can say is that J.K. Rowling describes him in the first book, and all I do as an illustrator is take those words and bring them to life with pictures. So, she really conceptualized him with her words and then I just drew what she said. But, when it came time to do the first big picture of Harry, which was for (the cover of) Time Magazine, book three had already come out and I hadn't really done a large portrait of him yet. I could look

at the small figures I'd drawn and try to make a portrait from them, but I really needed some sort of reference. I was under a really tight deadline, so instead of trying to hunt down a boy of 10 or 12 or how ever old he was, I went into the bathroom where I had a huge mirror and just started to sketch my own face as a reference.

THK: Really!

MGP: Yes, so I just kind of used that as a starting point and then adjusted it to fit what Harry really looks like. People who know me say Harry kind of looks like me, but when I look at it I see a boy. And of course every year as books come out and Harry ages, I have to age him by giving him a little bit more jaw, or a little heavier brow or maybe changing his expression depending on the book and how old he is at that point. It's fun, but it also comes with a lot of responsibility because there are so many attentive fans and most of them are kids, and kids don't miss a thing.

THK: Have you ever made a mistake on a detail and been caught?

MGP: Yeah, I have. I did a cover for Nickelodeon once and I mistakenly gave Harry blue eyes. Harry has green eyes but it wasn't caught until after the cover had come out and kids had bought copies of the illustration. I didn't even realize the mistake until I was at a school in Minnesota talking to a group of second, third, and fourth graders and one of the kids said, "I noticed on the Nickelodeon cover that Harry has blue eyes. He's supposed to have green eyes. Why did you do that?" And, there I was, kind of on the spot, so I said, "Well you know, Harry's got so many powers he can change his eye color whenever he wants to." Since then I've been REALLY careful about what I do and how I show Harry and all the other characters!

THK: Do you have a favorite illustration of Harry Potter?

MGP: I would say the last cover is probably my favorite. It is *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. With each cover comes a deeper understanding of the whole series and it just keeps growing on me a little bit more. And that's the way it should be. You improve with each piece and I feel that it's my best piece.

THK: Your first children's book was a Chinese tale, *Chin Yu Min and the Ginger Cat*. Do you consider that prophetic?

MGP: I do. And it's also close to my heart as a children's book, NOT because I happen to be adopting a girl from China, but because the story is so heartwarming. I just really connected with it.

THK: You differentiate between being an illustrator and an artist. What is the difference?

MGP: You know I've changed my mind about that. I used to be kind of snobbish about it. I used to think that fine art was kind of higher up on the ladder than illustration, but I don't believe that any more.

THK: What changed your mind?

MGP: I think... just time. I think I just realized that we all go through the same creative process, and it's all about drawing and expressing with whatever medium you use, and so... what the hell...it's art.

THK: How would you describe yourself?

MGP: Illustrator, I guess. I try to approach each project without predetermining what it's going to look like according to my style. I try

to treat each project with a fresh eye without letting my style dictate ahead of time what it's going to look like. I think style should be second to the way it's treated.

I approach Harry Potter in a more traditional, kind of classic way than a lot of my other work because I believe that's what the story calls for. It's a classic story, not trendy, and more about basic human values, which, in my mind deserves a more straightforward approach.

THK: Now that you're about to become the mother of a Chinese child, do you find yourself drawn more toward Chinese art?

MGP: I do. And I love it. The brush work and the grace of it, the beautiful color that I would never be able to do, but I really appreciate...

THK: How do you think your child is going to change the way you create expressively?

MGP: I think more than anything she is changing the way I look at life, the way I prioritize. I already think of being a mom as more important than being an artist though in time it will probably balance out. But right now everything else has taken a back seat. I'm looking forward to moving on to the next chapter in MY life, and while I'm grateful for the Harry Potter experience, I'm also looking forward to starting my own new chapter and kind of putting the Harry Potter thing down for a little while.

THK: Will you be doing sketches for *your* new chapter?

MKP: I guess in some ways I will be sketching a new chapter with her... but I'll probably be doing it with finger paints and making a big mess! ■

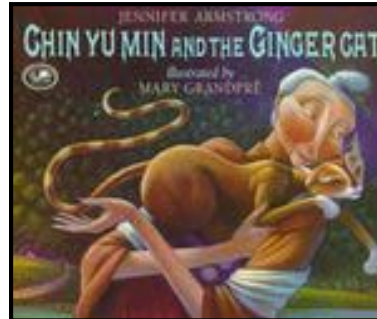


National Adoption Awareness Month

Florida International Adoption Day

November is National Adoption Awareness Month and November 18th marks Florida International Adoption Day. While November's designation as the National Adoption Awareness Month has been celebrated for a few years, Florida's International Adoption Day is only in its third year. In 2003, when the Florida Office of CCAI was established, one of our first state-wide activities was sponsoring this important day. Governor Jeb Bush declared November 18 as the special day for families who have adopted internationally. Remember to take some time and celebrate the day with your family. Tell your child's day care program or classroom teacher about your adoption journey. Bring in a special treat for your child's class group or pack a neat treat in his or her lunch box! Above all, remember the Red Thread Connection that binds us all together. ■

Books for your Family to Enjoy Together!

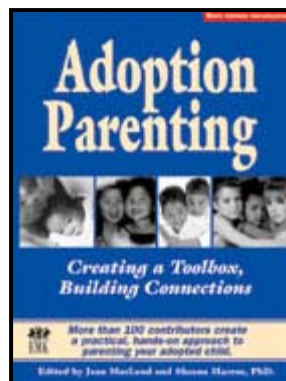


▲ *Chin Yu Min and the Ginger Cat*

By Jennifer Armstrong

Illustrated by Mary GrandPre'

Chin Yu Min and the Ginger cat by Jennifer Armstrong is a story about how an elderly Chinese woman discovers the value of friendship through her relationship with a ginger cat. This sweet tale has been made into a play as commissioned by the Arts in Education Institute of Western New York for its 2005-2006 season.



▲ *Adoption Parenting: Creating a Toolbox, Building Connections*

Edited by Jean MacLeod and Shena Macrae, PhD.

Over 100 contributors are included in this wonderful resource from EMK Press. "Parenting adopted children requires parenting with an extra layer and this book helps you to understand where that extra layer falls. This over 500-page book is a wealth of information for the newly arrived home family and the experienced family as well." It includes topics such as sleeping through the night, discipline, PTSD, sensory integration issues, speech and language delays, and attachment problems. ■