

# Humanitarian/Teaching Visit to Guilin

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Nestled amongst karst mountains in southern China is the city of Guilin. It is one of the most beautiful places on the planet. The Li River winds through miles of vertical emerald mountains. Night fisherman, standing on bamboo rafts, fish using cormorant birds by the light of hanging lanterns.

two days later, just in time to eat and go to bed.

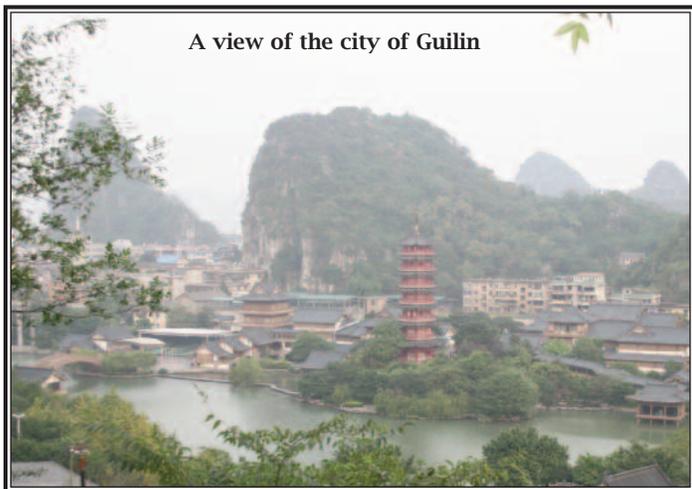
Monday through Friday, we saw patients in a very nice clinic. In the evening, we lectured to the dental staff and students. Ultradent provided a PowerPoint presentation to help teach their technique of root canal preparation and obturation. They were generous enough to supply nearly all of our restorative and endodontic supplies. I also found this an excellent opportunity to share my MAGD MasterTrack PowerPoint cases with them.

Dr. Hsu, a participating dentist from Boston, shares this experience: "A mother brought her nine-year-old cerebral palsy son to see me for the second time. He was grateful (*I had filled his painful teeth on the right side last year*). He waited eighteen months to see us, the 'American dentists,' again! I realized that we could make a difference."

Lorrie Belcher, a nurse-anesthetist with our group, shares this uplifting story: "One experience I had was when I went out into the country with the optometrist and fit glasses for the elderly, these sweet Chinese farmers and wives came in bent and worn; hands and faces etched with years of labor. We fit them with something so simple as reader's glasses and gave them the newspaper to read. Their weary faces brightened up with huge smiles as they read for the first time in years. It was such an uplifting experience."

I personally saw a young single mother who couldn't afford root canals to save two of her molars. Much of her income went to medical expenses for her adopted son suffering with a chronic blood disease. Her expressed gratitude for saving those two molars made my entire visit worthwhile.

One afternoon, part of our group visited a very progressive school for children with Down's syndrome. About 100 children sat patiently and respectfully waiting for us to arrive. We brought them gifts from America and they returned gifts to us made by their own hands. Our hygienist



The Affiliate Hospital of Guilin Medical University's Department of Stomatology hosted our team of dentists and support auxiliaries to treat the local underserved population and to offer evening instruction on new dental techniques and dental materials.

Our team numbered twenty-two; seven dentists (*four of whom spoke Chinese*), one optometrist, two nurses, two hygienists, a videographer and nine other support staff. Our team represented six different states in the USA: California, Alaska, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New York, and Utah. AGD members included Karl Koerner, DDS; Scott Stucki, DDS; Josh Davidson, DDS; Newell Walther, DDS; Kenneth Wong, DDS, MAGD; Yin Hsu, DMD, MPH, FAGD; and myself, Bruce Bosler, DDS, FAGD.

Over the years, Dr. Karl Koerner, an AGD member and practicing dentist from Utah, has organized multiple such humanitarian trips to China. He is a popular speaker on Oral Surgery and finds potential humanitarian participants wherever he travels. He lectured to our CAGD MasterTrack group this past April. During his presentation, he included a few pictures of China and spoke some Chinese. *That hooked me and I was ready to go!* It was something I've always wanted to do.

In October, we all met for the first time at the Los Angeles Airport. After three flights, four security checks, customs, nineteen hours of total flight time, and losing a full day lost over the international date line, we arrived

26 at the Jing Tong Hotel,



demonstrated proper brushing and flossing technique. I led them in a popular Chinese folk song, "Mwo Li Hua" which I had learned many years before as a missionary in Taiwan. Visiting those children was the emotional highlight of my trip.

(continued on the following two pages)