



Columbia Friends of China

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P.O Box 30131, Columbia, MO 65205
<http://columbiafriendsofchina.missouri.org>

An Amazing First Year

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A group of Columbia citizens who are interested in promoting Chinese culture and language in Mid-Missouri got together in November 2005 and founded Columbia Friends of China (CFC). The first membership meeting in November established the CFC mission statement, goals and bylaws and elected officers and board members. The selection of Laoshan as our Chinese sister city was made when Laoshan district director Mr. Wang Weida came to Columbia in 2005 for a 6 month program organized by University Asian Affairs Center for Chinese government officials. He met Mayor Hindman at a party and the friendship blossomed from there. Director Wang sent a 3-person delegation to Columbia on Jan 12, 2006. On May 17, Columbia Mayor Hindman led a 9 member delegation to Laoshan to sign the sister city agreement. The Columbia delegates were warmly welcomed by Director Wang and Laoshan officials. The delegation toured the city, visited Haier — the biggest home appliances manufacturer in

China, visited Haier — the biggest home appliances manufacturer in China, walked through the ancient Tao temple and tasted the sweet cherries picked directly from the trees. They also discussed a wide range of culture, education, technology and economic exchange ideas with Laoshan officials.

China's increasing importance in world policy and economics are well recognized by American citizens. In recent years, it has also exerted significant impact on the economic development in Missouri. Asia accounts for 19% of Missouri's \$10.5 billion exports in 2005 and China



ranked number five in all nations that did business with Missouri. Missouri is a sister state of Hebei Province, a neighboring state of Shandong, and both St. Louis and Kansas City have already established sister cities (Nanjing and Xian respectively) in China. Columbia is the 3rd city in Missouri to launch the tie between China and Missouri. Mayor Hindman hopes that citizens of Columbia will enjoy and benefit from the interactions between the city's newest sister city and from Chinese cultural events organized by Columbia Friends of China. Mary Jo Herde, coor-

dinator for special programs at the Asian Affairs Center predicts that this relationship will foster greater cooperation and exchange opportunities between Shandong and Columbia. Hsiao-Mei Wiedmeyer, President of CFC, hopes that the sister city exchange programs will promote and increase local residents' interest in Chinese culture and traditions.

CFC sponsored several special events in 2006 including presentations made by Dr. Richard Heimburger ("Transitions in Chinese Medical Missions 1913-2006"), Mayor Hindman ("A Visit to Laoshan") and Mr. George Frissell ("Confucius Forum"). CFC also held several pot luck dinners that brought members together with students, families and visitors from China. On September 29, the first Chinese Dumpling Festival was held, and over 400 people showed up to taste Chinese dumplings and foods donated by area restaurants and stores. This event raised \$4000 for CFC to support future exchange and culture events. We have more events and activities planned for 2007. Come and join the fun.



Get to know Laoshan 崂山



Laoshan is one of the seven districts of the Metropolitan Port City, Qingdao. Columbia's sister city is on the east coast of China on the peninsula part of Shandong province about 500 miles southeast of Beijing. The 200,000 people of Laoshan live in an area of about 150 square miles between Lao-Mountain (Lao-Shan) and the Yellow Sea.

Laoshan is an ancient town with Tao temples dating back 2000 years, and it is also a fast-growing city that attracts

international businesses to its high-tech industrial district. Laoshan has a beautiful coastline, and its clean mountain water has made Qingdao beer world famous. Laoshan also is the northernmost Chinese city that grows and processes its own brand of tea. It is a resort town with many festivals celebrated throughout the year. The area will host many of the sailing competitions for the 2008 Olympics.

Check out our sister city at <http://friendsofchina.missouri.org/gateway-laoshan.shtml>.



2007 Plans

With Laoshan

- Laoshan physicians plan to visit Columbia (April)
- CFC plans to sponsor a group of Columbia-area musicians to the Laoshan Beer Festival (August)
- Sister schools between the two cities
- A summer English camp for Asian students
- Ancient Tao music orchestra plans to visit Columbia

In Columbia

- Membership Appreciation day and Chinese New Year Celebration (February)
- Adult Education classes of Chinese and Mahjong (classes start February 2007).
- A China tour focusing on foods from different regions (October)
- Seminars on Buddhism, Taoism, Taichi and other cultural topics
- Possibility of area schools offering Chinese language (in progress)

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 4:00 PM at the International Community Church, 1215 University Avenue. All members and individuals interested in learning more are welcome!

February 8 - Member Appreciation Day!

All CFC members are invited to a Special Chinese New Year celebration at the Thornbrook Terrace Clubhouse off Scott Blvd on Feb. 8 (Thursday) at 6 pm. Traditional Chinese dishes and wine will be served. This event is free for paid members. All friends who intend to join CFC are also invited. Membership card and souvenir will be distributed. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to interact with other CFC members.

Sign up for the two new Adult Education classes: Secrets of Mahjong & Beginning Chinese at www.ed2go.com/columbiacc or call 573-214-3803.

Check out our new Website
<http://friendsofchina.missouri.org>

Chinese New Year is Feb. 17 and this is the Year of Pig

