

A journey to find Jacob



Courtesy photo

Alexis Aronis poses with her new brother, Jacob, in this photograph. Alexis was able to travel with her family to China and bring Jacob back home.

By Alexis Aronis
Honorable Mention, Feature Writing
Division 3-4 Grade

One day while I was at school, my mom was checking for babies to adopt and she found a baby boy in China.

We decided to add to our family, but it took two years before we got to travel to China to pick him up. We decided to name him Jacob.

I had to make a very big decision, was I going to go to China or not? China is very far away in Asia. I felt a little bit scared, but it was worth it. The airplane ride was very long but since I was in a front row window seat, I had a TV to watch. When we landed it felt like we had only been in the airplane for a second.

When we got to China, I noticed that the Chinese airports were very different. We had to ride in buses after we got off the plane and nobody could sit down. I was getting tired of standing.

In the airport, Chinese people were staring at us like crazy. I got very shy. I was not used to being stared at. So I decided to just deal with it.

We saw some other people who we were to meet because they were adopting babies,

too. We went to the hotel, which was super fancy. I could not believe my eyes! When we got to our hotel room, it was a little bit weird: the beds were as hard as a rock. It was hard to sleep and it didn't help that my dad was snoring like crazy! The next day we got to meet our guide. Her name was Rosa and she was super nice!

She took us to the Emperor's Palace, Tiananmen Square, the summer Palace and the Great Wall of China. I was so excited! It was such an adventure. The Emperor's Palace is very big and I think it is because the Emperor had lots of beautiful buildings and boats.

Tiananmen Square is so huge and it had a picture of China's President on the wall. The Great Wall is amazing. It looks like a long snake winding through the mountains. It was very steep and I had a hard time walking up the steps. I don't know how they built this wall. It must have been very hard to do.

After the Great Wall, we went to a Chi-

Family takes trip of a lifetime to China

nese acrobat show. It was very cool; I can't believe that they can do the things they did. One guy jumped on a springboard and landed on a chair that was very high up in the air! There were 20 girls all riding on one bike. They were all amazing!

The food in China was very different. They had things like snake and scorpion soup, stir-fried pigeon, bullfrog, and steamed fungus. We ate at a McDonald's and it really tasted funny. We had a hard time adjusting to the food, so we ate a lot of rice.

We flew to my brother Jacob's city, Chengdu, and met him the same day. We had to wait in the hotel room and the nannies from the orphanage brought him to us. He was crying like crazy and he must have been very scared. I think he was scared because we were strangers and he knew they were leaving him with us. After awhile, he stopped crying and the next day, he was smiling and laughing. I love him so much!

One day while we were still in Chengdu, our guide took us to the International Panda Research Institute. We had to walk a

long way through bamboo trees. Pandas love to eat bamboo. We saw huge pandas swinging on swings, eating bamboo, and playing with each other. They were so cute!

I got to sit on a bench with a panda and put my arm around him while he was eating an apple. He ate all of his apple and then put his paw on my leg and started scratching. I think he wanted another apple. I was so happy that I got to get that close to a real panda!

The rest of the trip we spent getting to know Jacob, shopping, and my parents had to do lots of paperwork for the adoption. After two weeks, I was feeling a little sad and missing my dogs at home.

We flew home on a big plane and Jacob and I slept for most of the trip. When we landed in San Francisco, I was so happy and glad to be home. Going to China was the adventure of a lifetime, and I have lots of memories that will last forever.

The best part of the trip was bringing home my new brother, Jacob!

The author was a third-grader at Foxboro Elementary School in Vacaville when this was submitted into competition in February 2008.

Design-an-Ad winner



This advertisement featuring Ray's Cycle of Vacaville earned Marco N. Begonia an honorable mention in the design-an-ad category of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition in the 3-4 grade division. Marco was a fourth-grader in Lori Carranza's classroom at Dan O. Root II Elementary school when this was submitted in February 2008.

Puzzles, Games, Comics winner



This comic strip by Kimberly Diaz earned an honorable mention in the games and puzzles category for the Armijo High School student, who was a senior in Lynn Herring's classroom when this was submitted in February 2008 to The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition.