

Winter 2015 ERM (USA) & NAFEC (UK) Report.

Recruiting Support



(Dr. Philomena Commons & Steve Price)

This has been a busy autumn/winter season for the ministry of ERM (USA) and NAFEC UK. We assisted in sending **Dr. Philomena Commons** to Pyongyang, North Korea to support the work of KFPD (care of the Disabled), and **Prof. Ewan Thompson** to Yanji, China.



(Prof. Ewan Thompson, now at YUST in China)

Philomena is a professor of Physiotherapy at Leeds University, and has worked in the field of care of the Disabled for many years both in UK and other countries.

Ewan will teach in the English/History department of Yanbian University of Science & Technology (YUST). He has already “made a hit”, a dynamic Welshman with a ukulele!

International Science Conference in Pyongyang

Dr. Steve Price travelled to North Korea in mid October to participate in the **3rd**.

International Science Conference at PUST. Accompanying him were **Jorjeo Pinheiro** and **Valmir Soares**, two former first class Brazilian soccer players who are building bridges of relationship through sport. They presented a lecture at the conference concerning their international sports ambassadorship, and also coached the university soccer players.....which delighted many including the Presidents of the university.



(Above photos *right* Pres. Kim with Jorjeo and Valmir; *left* Pres. Kim and NK Pres. Park with Jorjeo)

Steve gave the opening “Welcome” to the many conference participants, and also presented a Wales rugby shirt to Prof. Wesley Brewer, the conference organiser. (Wes had greatly encouraged Steve, who had experienced difficulties obtaining a travel visa and had to rebook his flight three times!)

Following the Opening Ceremony, Steve met Kim Gould, the Under-secretary at the UK Embassy in Pyongyang. Kim is from Ynysddu, Wales, and they discovered their grandfathers had worked in the same coal mine in the nearby village of Cwmfelinfach.

The lecture Steve gave at the Science Conference was entitled “**Accept no difference**”, which related to the care of the physically-challenged in the many countries of the world where he had undertaken medical missions. He spoke of his association with KFPD, and the excellent work being established throughout North Korea by this organisation, which is directed by Mun Chol Kim.

A poignant moment came at the end of his presentation when spontaneously the students sang along with the blind singers, whom Steve had filmed during his June visit to North Korea.

Another highlight was renewing friendship with a PUST science student whom Steve had met at a previous visit to the university. Steve had encouraged him to study Medicine, and he had subsequently undertaken research into kidney disease.

The student dedicated the lecture to Dr. Steve Price! (who as a young medical student, had researched kidney function, and its role in hypertensive disorders). A lively discussion ensued.

DPRK Soccer Academy

The conference presented a good opportunity to link with old friends, faculty and to introduce President Kim to Jorjeo and Valmir.

DPRK University President Park, and the Dept. of Foreign Affairs at PUST, arranged for the two soccer stars to visit the DPRK Academy of Soccer, near the famous Pyongyang May Day Stadium. Numerous officials of the Academy, and FIFA representative, came to meet them, and encouraged their return to coach soccer in 2016.

We still hope to bring a team of 11 players to North Korea next year, and a goal is to raise funds to construct an excellent soccer pitch at PUST.

Korea federation for Protection of the Disabled (KFPD)

Unfortunately Steve was unable to meet Mun Chol Kim of KFPD during this visit, but he learned that the visit of Dr. Philomena Commons had been a positive step in relationship building; the hope is that there will be opportunities for her to set up teaching clinics for the care of the physically challenged both in Pyongyang, and elsewhere throughout DPRK.

NAFEC UK had tried over a period of many months to arrange for two Paralympian swimmers from North Korea to come to Wales for a Training Camp. This project had been “in the works” since May, and had been greatly supported by Jon Morgan, Director of Disability Sports Wales, Rob James of Swim Wales (National Pool, Swansea) and Chaplain Steve Jones. The goal had been to bring **Sim Sung Hyok**, aged 19,(who has lost both legs), and **Jong Kuk Song**, aged 18 (who has lost a leg),as well as their coach, doctor and physiotherapist to train alongside our coaching team in preparation for the Brazil Paralympics in September 2016.

Within a short time we were able to raise the funds for their accommodation, wheel chair accessible vehicle, air flights and visas.

We believed that this project would send a message off support to the Disabled in North Korea, and elsewhere. It might have positively linked the small nation of Wales with North Korea.

It was with much sadness that NAFEC learned in early December that the Swim Team members were not allowed to come to Wales.

Medical School Construction



(Photo shows the Teaching Block at PUST)

NAFEC UK’s ongoing projects include the continued support of PUST, and the Department of Medical Science (DMS). We are raising money for the new building, faculty recruitment and equipments both for the Medical School and Teaching Hospital.

In September we arranged for **Dr.David Roh**, (who is responsible for the development of post graduate education and hospital services), to come to London to meet the leaders of PRIME, as well as to share his vision for DMS with the Christian Medical Fellowship.(CMF)



PRIME has been engaged in medical teaching and curriculum development throughout many countries of the world. It is possible that they may play this role at PUST.

A number of doctors we met at CMF expressed an interest to undertake short teaching assignments at PUST.

CMF member **Dr. Alex Bunn**, who had visited North Korea with the NAFEK UK team in June, has set up a “blog” for those with an interest to learn more of the opportunities for service at PUST and KFPD.

Following his return from North Korea at the end of October Steve’s wife Stella, had arranged an appointment for him to visit his doctor to sort out a problem of right leg pain and loss of sensation. MRI studies revealed severe Spinal Stenosis.

Thankfully he was operated on in mid November by neurosurgeon Dr Terrance Doorly at Salem Hospital, Massachusetts. (Steve had referred many patients to Dr. Doorly during the time he had practiced in the Boston area and had great confidence in his skill).

Much has happened over the recent months, and NAFEK UK is fortunate to have the support of persons like you. We wish you a Blessed and Prosperous New Year in 2016.

Watch this space for more news!