

Kuanshan Branch

January 4, 2006

The Transformation of the Warehouse in Xia Ma Tribe

By Boe-xun Yang

Translated by Alice Chang

With a little bit of imagination and careful planning, one can transform an abandoned and useless warehouse. Early 2004, the medical tour team of Kuanshan Branch arrived at Xia Ma Tribe located in Wulu Village, Taitung. Police officer Yung-fu Chiu of Xia Ma has established the Xia Ma Aborigines Cultural Awareness Association. He explained to Tzu Chi Kuanshan Hospital Superintendent Poon Wing-him that he hopes

to set up a library equipped with computers to expand the visions of the kids so they are no longer confined by the mountains.

Superintendent Poon immediately consented and requested the information department to process the case. The information department provided four computers along with the county hall's computers to support the initial establishment of the library. As such, the warehouse full of miscellaneous items transformed into a bright building in October of 2004. The villagers no longer considered the building off limits.

However, six computers alone could not complete Officer Chiu's goal. On the same day that the association was established, the hospital invited newspaper columnists and reporters to attend the opening ceremony. Through the media, mountains of donated books were sent from various



Dr. Wing-him Poon(left), Superintendent of Kuanshan Tzu Chi Hospital, and staff in the hospital and local volunteers always figure out things for the needy in the community.



Students celebrate the commencement of the library in harmonic voices.

sources, which took the villagers significant amount of time to separate and categorize the books.

A new problem arose with the receipt of donated books; there were no bookshelves. The Superintendent immediately requested everyone to help the situation. After nearly two months, a comic book store in Taitung City was closing its business and had to dispose six bookshelves. Arrangements were immediately made to transport the bookshelves to Tzu Chi Kuanshan Hospital. Employees of the hospital bought paint and sandpaper to assist the carpenters in reconstructing the used bookshelves into four shelves. During weekend mornings, the Superintendent led hospital employees to

sand down and repaint the bookshelves. The recycled bookshelves looked brand-new.

After all the diligent efforts and love gathered from the public, the library of Xia Ma Aborigines Cultural Awareness Association finally opened its doors for business. The opening ceremony was attended by Guay-huay Pan, Secretary of the County Hall, Wen Jin Tsai, Principal of Wu Lu Elementary School, Jing-zhi Hu, Representative of the County Association and Doctor Zhou-rong Chiu (representing the Superintendent, who had appointments that day).

Students of Wu Lu Elementary School showed their gratitude through their exhilarating harmony. Reporters from various



Upon entering the library, students instantly picked up books to read.

newspapers also attended the opening ceremony. Reporter Lee Huei Jing of the United Daily News fought to keep back the tears in her eyes when she saw the set up in the library. She was deeply moved by the outcome of the journalists' reports in the newspaper. A simple gesture by the reporters helped build the library that was filled with love. All of the reporters were very touched.

The children of Wu Lu Elementary School were very excited about the establishment of the library. Upon entering the library, they immediately picked up books and began reading. Sixth grader Tseng Wan Ru and fifth grader Chen Yu Ru expressed gratefully, "Thanks to Tzu Chi Foundation for helping

the establishment of the library. Now we can all come to the library to read and use computers after school. Not only will we gain new knowledge, we can also share what we've learned with our parents."

Master Cheng Yen aspired that hospitals should not only cure physical pain, but also provide complete care of the body, heart and soul. This is also the goal of Superintendent Pan Yung Qiang. Tzu Chi Guan San Hospital vows to not only provide good medical service, but also learn the happy spirits of the Tzu Chi volunteers to be compassionate and empathize with those suffering and to service those residing in remote locations.