

## 001126 Carrying Veggies

### Veggies

Kiwi's appeared in the market a few weeks ago along with oranges. I was excited to see both, but I am still waiting on the pineapple to reappear. The produce is something that I will really miss about Yantai. Often, it is the farmers themselves who bring the produce in on tractors to sell in the markets or to others to sell in the markets. So, at these markets which are really just alleys where people lay out their vegetables on cloths, you have maybe a hundred people all selling various produce. Each person may have five feet of space in which to sell various things. I have mentioned the apples, cherries and pears for which Yantai is famous. Some of the markets are organized with every five feet having a designated number and a person in charge to keep things organized. However, even in these, you still have people displaying their produce on the alleys leading up to the market. There are also permanent booths where people will even live. My friend who sells the Bonzai Chicken has one of these, although she does not sleep in the booth. There are also booths for hardware items, steamed buns and butchers where you can see slaps of meat hanging. There are people with metal tanks of water containing fish, shrimp, crabs or any other sort of seafood. The more memorable things that I have seen include sea urchins, the scorpions (which I never got to try) and the live chickens just waiting or someone to pick one out for dinner. The markets get very lively in the early morning, at noon and in the evening when people pick up things for dinner.

### A hand full

Last spring, my friend Jack who is an engineer who I tutor arrived at my place carrying what looked like a black purse. He explained that he had ridden on his friends motorcycle and so had work a jacket without pockets from work. Therefore, he had carried the "purse" to put his papers into. However, during subsequent classes, he still showed up with the purse. I did not really take too much notice of it until I was traveling during the summer. I noticed that all over the country, it was becoming the rage for men to carry these little, black bags. Once I returned to Yantai, I saw that the rage had been adopted full swing here as well. The proper way of holding them is under your arm as you walk. They are convenient in that you can carry all sorts of stuff in them (such as your cell phone and pager which everyone in Yantai seems to have).

Since the main modes of personal transportation here in Yantai and in most of China are either bike, moped or motorcycle, you run into the problem of what to do with your helmet if you wear one. No, bicyclists do not wear helmets (as they should as I have seen too many of them splatted by cars), but a lot of people do while riding their motorized bike. Once the bike is parked and locked, a lot of people continue to wear their helmets rather than to carry them. So, it is common to see people walking on the street or in a store with their helmet on, but the visor flipped up.

### Classes

This week I will be teaching my students about middle school students in the United States. A

seventh grade class at the Galvin Middle School in Canton, MA put together some information about what middle school students learn and what they do during the day. I am using this letter as well as information from pen-pal letters from students in Canton MA and a school in CT for my lessons. The pen-pal letters are in response to my students letters from last spring.

My students are very interested in their counterparts in the States. So far, my students have been amazed by the short school days and the small classes of less than thirty students. I am looking forward to this lesson as well as to distributing all of the letters.

## Broken

On Sunday morning, I awoke to find my right eye red and painful. I have been dealing with what I think is a torn cornea for the past few days and now the doctors here think that it is infected. I am not sure why all of this has to happen now with only two weeks to go. It is very frustrating to me and very upsetting. However, on the other hand, it is happening now and not in March or prior to leaving to travel in China. At least I will soon go home to where I can hopefully be fixed.

But, being on crutches does have its advantages. Friends have taken to calling me a new nickname. In Chinese, the nickname is "huile weigoren" or "broken foreigner". For example, if I am in the market with friends and we get separated, it is easy for them to find me. They only need to ask people "Ni kan le huile wiegoren ma?" (Have you seen a broken foreigner?) and people immediately know who they are referring to.

Take care,

Jeff



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