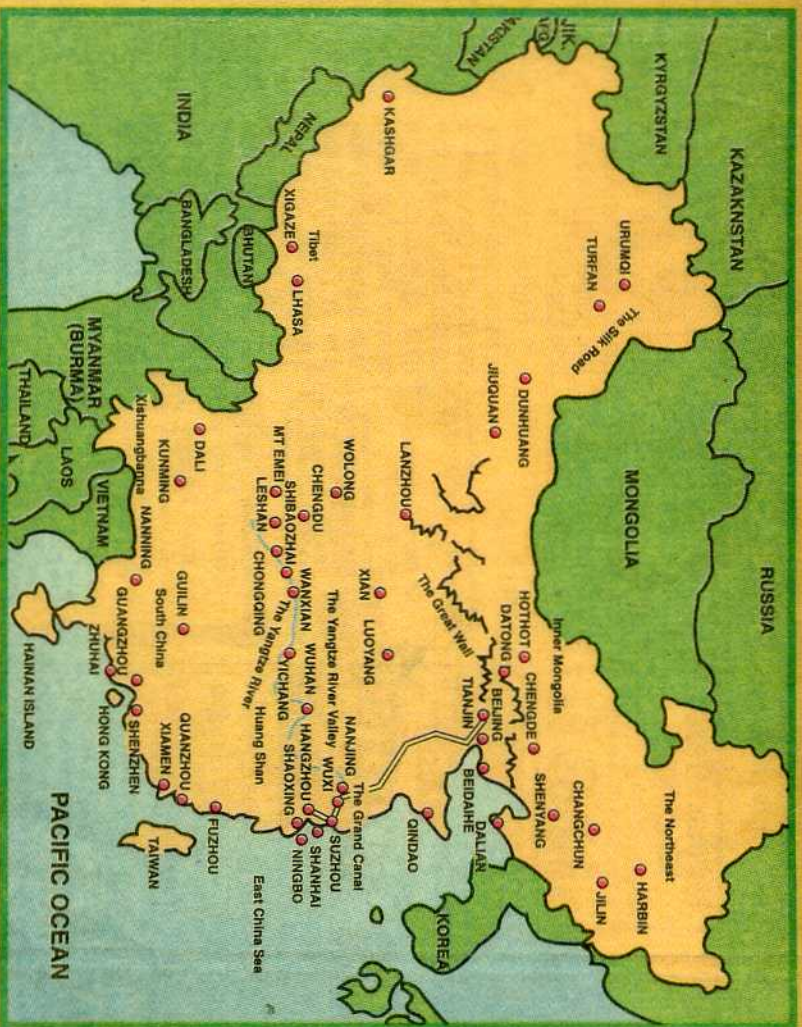




Ping and Chris Lee and their son Charles.

— Staff Photo by Paul Hellstern



The Oklahoman Graphics

# China's Homeland, Oklahomans' Home

By Chris Jones  
Staff Writer

**EDMOND** — Hard work, good luck and silky goats played a part in bringing a Chinese couple to the United States, where both are employed at Langston University.

Now, through their China Special Tours, they are planning a trip for Oklahomans. They want to take people in their adopted state to their homeland in China where the culture, language and food are no mystery to them.

Ping Wu came to Oklahoma in 1988, her husband Changhui Li and young

## Edmond Couple Organizing Tour

son Chao Li arrived two years later. The Edmond couple are living the American dream, with good jobs, a home and cars, and an 11-year-old son who, according to his parents, is totally Americanized. So are their names. The family name is now Lee, the parents are Ping and Chris and their son is Charles.

Both have green cards and in 1996 will decide whether to apply for Amer-

ican citizenship. They are not allowed to hold dual citizenship in China.

In China, Ping Lee worked as a project officer in the animal husbandry department, Division of Economic Cooperation, in Xinjiang. Her job brought her in contact with representatives of many foreign countries who visited the area to forge joint ventures and international marketing agreements.

Through her work in Xinjiang she met Dr. Ocleris Simpson, dean of Agriculture Research and Extension Pro-

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grams at Langston University. He arranged for her participation in an agricultural research exchange program in Oklahoma.

"My hometown is one of the top goat production areas in China," Ping Lee said. "This is why I came here."

At Langston, the in-

ternational E. (Kika) de la Garze Institute for Goat Research seeks to establish and maintain long-term national and international research capabilities, she said. Its mission is to generate technical information concerning production and utilization of milk, meat and fiber from goats and share the information

worldwide. The institute has regular contacts with China.

Ping Lee's decision to accept the opportunity offered her was not an easy one, because she had to leave her family in China.

"I'm a very lucky person," she said.

"For us, it's like a dream to be here. It's not that easy to do; there have to be sponsors and there are many who want to come, but not many people get this chance."

The family experienced two years of loneliness and separation before they were together again.

"It was very hard for me to make the decision to come," Chris Lee said. "I gave up a high position in my home country to begin all over as a student. We both sacrificed. In China, I was in the travel business for 14

years, first as an interpreter and guide, and before I left, as general manager of the China Xinjiang Overseas Tourist Corporation."

The couple experienced six months of culture shock when they arrived in America, especially about driving.

"I had to learn how to drive, and when my husband came here I taught him, that is the first thing to learn here," Ping Lee said. "We were English majors in China and the language was no problem for us. In China, the only drivers are professionals and the photos of me driving

really surprised my family."

When Chinese friends come to the United States to visit, the first thing the Lees show them is the grocery store and the freeway, Chris Lee said.

Since coming here, Chris Lee has earned a master's degree in business, and he works as a financial aid counselor at Langston. His wife earned a master's degree in international affairs, and is a research associate and interpreter at the university.

Chris Lee has planned a tour to China Sept. 16-29, which will begin with a flight from Oklahoma City to Los Angeles and Shanghai, China's largest city. Travelers will see a brocade farm and tea factory in Hangzhou, the Great Wall and Ming Tombs in Beijing, Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses in Xian, take a cruise on the Li River and shop in Hong Kong.

"I am still interested in travel," Chris Lee said. "I am good at

travel and I picked out the most interesting places for this first tour and in this case I think we can make a contribution to both countries, because the majority of Americans don't know my country well."

In China, he said, he organized and escorted hundreds of tours and traveled to major tourist cities there many times, and also to Canada, the United States, France, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

The trip will help promote mutual understanding and exchanges in culture, education and trade, Chris Lee said, and a way for people in both countries to make new friends.

The trip includes round-trip airfare from Oklahoma City, air/land fare within China and Hong Kong, hotel accommodations at four-star hotels, three meals daily, guides, evening shows and insurance. The cost is \$3,190 per person. For information, call Chris Lee at 341-8776.