

MY EXPO | YANG XIAOCHUN

## Impossible is nothing

Expo volunteer Yang Xiaochun, who has no right hand, enjoys trumpeting the can-do attitude

**W**hen I learned that the Life and Sunshine Pavilion was recruiting volunteers, I immediately registered in hope of being selected. Fortunately, I passed all the rounds and became a volunteer.

In order to fulfill my responsibility wholeheartedly, I quit my job at the R&D department of a foreign enterprise. I don't regret this decision at all, because I can find another job after the Expo 2010 Shanghai ends. Also I feel that volunteering at the Expo is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Working as a full-time volunteer at the Life and Sunshine Pavilion requires a lot of effort. I get up at around 6 am to catch an early bus, because my home is far away from the Expo Garden. In the pavilion, I guide visitors around the exhibits and explain the contents to them. When people have questions about directions, or where to dine or where to shop, I'm more than happy to help.

Serving others makes me happy because I can make them better informed and solve their problems. Sometimes people say thanks and go to shake my hand. Then they notice, or remember, that I don't have a right hand to shake. They're usually pretty embarrassed and apologize, but I feel good because it means they treat me like a normal person.

In fact, people with disabilities such as myself can ignore what we have lost, and focus more on what we have. We don't need to feel sorry for ourselves or worry about what we can't do. Instead, we can develop our abilities and focus on what we can do. I can see. I can hear. I can walk. So I can help those who have lost their sight, or their hearing. I can push wheelchairs.

Being inside the Expo Garden exposes me to society's efforts to make life easier and better for people with disabilities. I especially like the facilities displayed inside the Life and Sunshine Pavilion. They show how it's possible to make a better life for everyone.

People like myself need and deserve a higher education, physical exercise and access to cultural events. Although many of the facilities in our pavilion cannot be popularized right now due to the cost, they give us hope of a better future.

Outside the Expo Garden, I see more and more facilities devoted to special-needs groups, and this makes our lives much easier. The installation of such facilities demonstrates not only the developing technologies, but also a rising awareness of the need to care and love for people with disabilities. Despite the fact that public facilities are sometimes abused, or occupied by people who do not need them, in general



GAO ERQIANG / CHINA DAILY

**Yang Xiaochun says the Expo shows how it is possible to make life better for people with disabilities.**

the standard of life for people with physical limitations has been elevated.

In recent years I've noticed that the government has been paying more attention to these issues. For example, last year it was very difficult for many college graduates to find a job, due to the state of the economy, so the municipal government helped us a lot with the job-hunting process. I personally received a lot of help from various government departments.

I don't have a concrete plan as to what I will do after the Expo ends, but the experience of volunteering at the Life and Sunshine Pavilion has definitely been valuable. I think I will go on helping groups with special needs in the future, using all my abilities and potential.

*Yang Xiaochun is a guide at the Life and Sunshine Pavilion. He holds a bachelor's degree from Shanghai University of Engineering Science.*

### newsbites

#### Monkey King exhibit

Zdenek Sklenár's *Monkey King* exhibition launched at the Czech Pavilion on Oct 5. The pictures of this Czech painter, who was inspired by Wu Cheng'en's novel *Journey to the West* back in the 1950s, will be accompanied by an interactive animated story and a Czech-Chinese version of *Journey to the West*.

Liu Xiao Ling Tong, the most famous Chinese performer to be associated with the role of the Monkey King, attended the grand opening.

#### Azulejo tiles

An Azulejo ceramic-tile exhibition will be held at Shanghai Times Square until Oct 15, featuring cultural activities by the Portugal Pavilion. Azulejo, or painted and tin-glazed ceramic tiles, constitutes a major aspect of Portuguese architecture, and can often be seen on walls, floors and ceilings in the country.

This exhibition combines old and new forms, and displays the works that Portuguese art gallery Ratton spent 23 years collecting. The exhibition will be free to the public.

#### Image Expo 2010

Image Expo 2010, a live collaborative project, took place at the Ireland Pavilion in September. The exhibition documented the experiences of 20 visual communication design students at the ongoing Expo.

It was supported by students and lecturers from two prominent seats of higher education: The Dublin Institute of Technology's School of Art and Design, and Fudan University's School of Visual Art.

#### Belgium-EU Pavilion hymn

The music video clip of the Belgium-EU Pavilion's *Women de ge* was released recently in China. The Smurfs, who serve as the mascots of the pavilion, were integrated into the clip as 2D animations. The hymn was composed by Belgian pianist and composer Jean-Francois Maljean, who performed it with Chinese singer Shang Wenjie. The clip, filmed by Taiwan director Chen Ying, will be broadcast on Chinese television this month.

#### Natural History Museum

Shanghai Natural History Museum, which opened in 1956, now has over 270,000 specimens, including minerals, ancient and modern animals. This public collection, which aims to expand further, incorporates demonstrations, educative displays, private collections, research, recreation, science and the arts.



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