

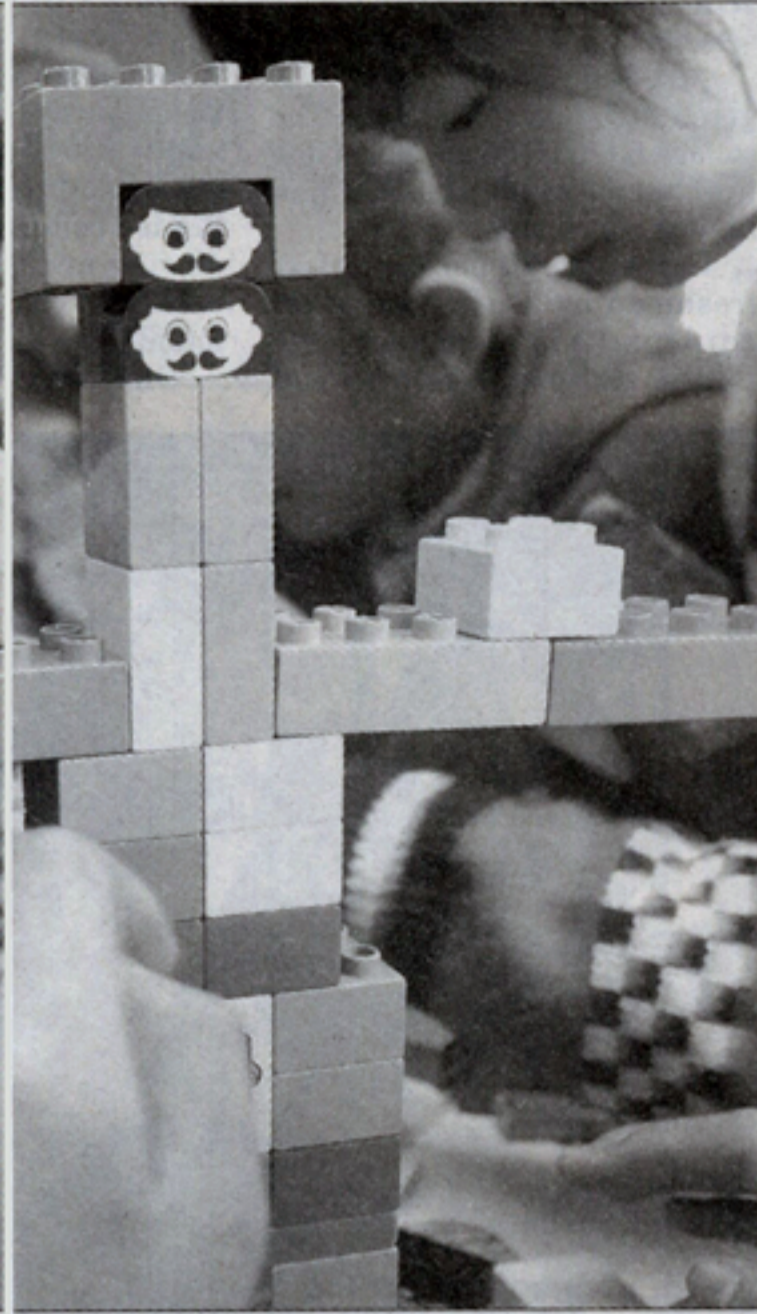
Toy library spreadingsmiles
Children have lots of fun learning at the newly opened playground

By YU NAN
China Daily staff

Li Sitong deeply frowned and clung tightly to several pieces of colourful brick when her mother Wang Hong asked her to go home. "I don't want to go," the 8-year-old said firmly. "We have to finish the 'palace' for the princess which we specially designed for her."



Toy joy: A boy is enthralled as he fixes a brick toy at the Green Children's library, which opened in central Beijing two weeks ago.



CHENG GONG

This situation has been replayed quite often since the Green Children's Toy Library, the first one in China, opened its doors in Beijing two weeks ago. As curator of the library, Zang Wei, 40, usually tells her assistants to delay closing in such circumstances.

"I just don't want to destroy their happiness and the sense of completion and success," said Zang.

In the past two weeks, the brand-new library has welcomed several hundred children aged from 6 to 14 with about 170 types of toys, which include dolls, bricks, blocks, paper-cuttings, jigsaw puzzles, as well as car and plane models.

Ren said, "It also educates parents how to select safe and suitable toys for their children. The final function is geared towards toy producers, in an effort to promote more design innovations," he said.

"It is a totally new concept to most Chinese people," Zang said. "But few children can resist returning after their first visit."

It is a paradise where they can forge friendships, find happiness, learn teamwork and build wisdom.

Not merely 'play'

The driving force that led Zang to open a toy library originated from a poll about children conducted amongst Beijing in 2001.

The poll was designed to gather marketing information and was organized by Zang's company - Beijing Good Ideas Culture Exchange Co Ltd.

"I was shocked to see that 80 per cent of the children merely use the word 'play' when answering the question of what they love to do most," Zang recalled.

"I could feel their small but arched happiness from their answers as they were enjoying such nice facilities and environments compared with my generation," said Zang.

"I believe it's partly because of a lack of opportunities to play."

Ren blamed the decline of entertainment in children's lives on the increasing burdens of study and parents' bias towards playing.

"Some parents still regard it as a waste of time," he said. "But children have a different universe."

"Well-designed toys are the best tools for kids to improve their ability to solve problems, to foster their spirit, and to stimulate their creativity and improve their health," Ren said.

"Toys and Education," published in the early 1990s by the famed educator He Qun (1892-1982), who established a modern children's education system in Chongqing.

"An effective toy library helps children know what kind of toys can most benefit their child."

Good beginning

Mo Hongzhen said she felt appointed when she first stepped into the 130-square-metre toy library year-old daughter Wu Fan.

They spent two hours on the library in the eastern part of Beijing. Mo caught a glimpse of a pie introducing the library.

"Honestly, the place is not what the news described," Mo said. "The toys seem so small and the room seems to be much smaller."

But her apprehension disappeared as her daughter quipped herself in jigsaw puzzle.



YANG XI

All work and all play: According to the China Toy Association, China gained more than US\$8 billion through toy exports over the past 11 months. This is an increase of 27 per cent compared with the same period in 2001. A total of 95 per cent of the toys was processed according to customer design.

TODAY'S RADIO

Table listing radio frequencies and programs: FM 97.4 MHz (all stereo), AM 640 kHz, FM 87.6 MHz (all stereo).

TODAY'S TELEVISION

Table listing television channels and programs: CCTV-1, CCTV-2, CCTV-3, CCTV-4, CCTV-6, CCTV-8, CCTV-9, CCTV-10, CCTV-11, BTU-1, BTU-2, BTU-3, BTU-4.

BRIDGE (By Phillip Alder)

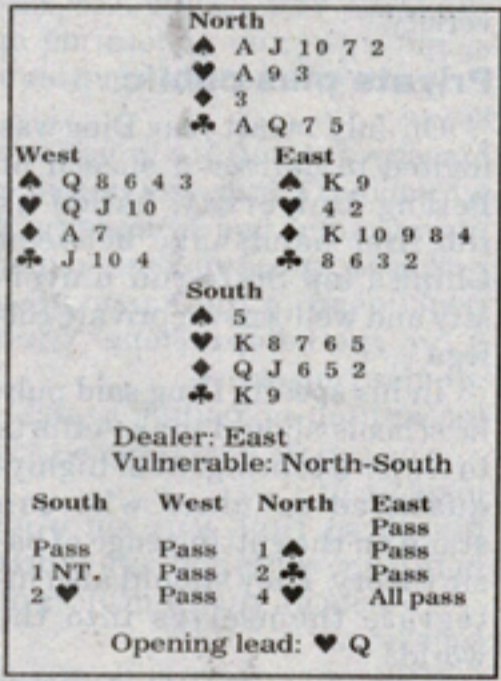
Computer bridge championships, like the one held in Montreal last August, are the equivalent of a human and one or his three clones playing. All four players on a team "think" identically.

The winning program was Jack, written by Dutchman Hans Kuitjff. It won the final by the comfortable margin of one point over WBridge 5, the product of Frenchman Yves Costel.

Jack led poorly and played well on this deal from the final.

At the other table, the Jack West led the diamond ace, an inferior choice when one knows from the auction that dummy has at most a singleton. After this, WBridge 5 had no trouble winning 10 tricks via one spade, four hearts, three clubs and two diamond ruffs in the dummy.

WBridge 5 West found the trump lead. However, Jack timed the play well. After winning with dummy's heart ace, declarer played a diamond to the jack and ace. Back in with the heart king, Jack cashed the club king, played a spade to the ace, ruffed a spade, took dummy's ace-queen of clubs (discarding a diamond from hand), trumped another spade, and ruffed a diamond. That was 10 tricks down, nine in and one out.



CROSSWORD (No 6801)

- ACROSS 1 Ride the rapids 5 JFK arrival 8 Catcher's glove 12 Mock butter 13 "Ben—" 14 Kind of rug 15 Drill 16 Sapporo sash 17 Quartz grains 18 Anaesthetized 20 Back muscle 22 Play for time 24 Chit 27 Dr.'s visit 30 Fries go with 32 Evergreens 33 Help out 34 Bunny features 35 Not subtle 37 Marries 53 Drain 38 Tenet 39 Hero sandwich 41 Loud noise 42 Highways 46 Wharf 49 Citrus drink 51 Two 52 Wheeler 53 Pro once 54 Drain cleaner 55 Object on radar 56 Cry of woe

Crossword grid and solution for No 6801.

Solution to No 6800

Solution grid for crossword No 6800 with words like LBS, MODERN, LOW, TOO, ARENA, EWE, DOUBLE, GROANS, GAL, FRIAR, HABA, DO, ASNER, ART, HERB, ISLE, IS, DISCUSS, ON, LOBE, KELP, APE, SNORT, PB, VIE, ABETS, JAR, SPRYER, MOTIFS, HOD, MEETS, NRA, YES, SENSE, GOO.

WHAT'S ON

- STAGE Kung fu show: "Hidden Dragon, Crouching Tiger," a performance which demonstrates the best of the mysterious Chinese kung fu, is being staged at the Xinrong Theatre in Beijing. The show displays brilliant Chinese martial arts within the structure of a dramatic story. Presented by the Beijing Detian Shunyi Culture Development Company, the performance is aimed at entertaining the increasing number of international travellers in Beijing. Time: 7:30 pm, daily Place: 16 Baizhifang Lu, Xuanwu District Tel: 8354-0774, 8354-0775 National Ballet is to stage "La Traviata" in Beijing. Time: 7:30 pm, February 2 Place: Tianqiao Theatre, 30 Beiwailu, Xuanwu District Tel: 8315-6170 Love on Internet: A comedy which translates as "Cuihua, Soured Pickle Dish Please" will be staged. It tells a funny, modern story which reveals what is in vogue with present-day youth in China. One young man tries to find a woman through the Internet. But two men come to contact him. Finally one woman arrives and all the three try to woo her but in vain. Time: 7:30 pm, January 30 Place: Poly Theatre, Dongsi Shitiao Tel: 6567-5049 CONCERTS Chinese folk songs: A group of senior folk song singers will co-stage a concert, showcasing old Chinese folk songs, including "The Song of Yangtze River," "That Is Me," "The Never Setting Sun in the Grassland," "The Red Star Lights My Way to Battle" and others. Time: 7:30 pm, January 28 Place: National Library Concert Hall, Zhongnancun Nanlu Tel: 8854-5731

- Orchestra of Zongzheng Song and Dance Ensemble affiliated to the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army is to perform a concert to celebrate the new spring. They will play "Swan Lake" suite, "Light Cavalry Soldiers" and "Emperor's Waltz" as well as vocal pieces. Time: 7:30 pm, January 30 Place: National Library Concert Hall Tel: 8854-5731 Film themes: The China National Film Symphony Orchestra will hold a concert, playing familiar tunes from films like "Pearl Harbor," "Sound of Music," "Ghost," and Chinese films including "Shining Five Stars" and "Five Golden Flowers." Time: 7:30 pm, January 29 Place: Poly Theatre, Dongsi Shitiao Tel: 6567-3788 EXHIBITIONS Art exhibitions: A collection of Chinese ink paintings by a variety of artists is on show in the western hall of Wanfung Art Gallery. On show are 40 works by 16 veteran artists including Sun Jianlin, Feng Linzhang, Song Di, Hu Yongkai, Shen Daohong, Wang Mingming and Zhao Bu. Some of these artists use traditional Chinese painting methods successfully at their own distinct styles, while others blend Chinese ink painting techniques to create new works. The eastern showing Kuang of Beijing's (hu and watercolor) middle-aged C Huang Youwei Time: 9 am-4 pm January 31 Place: 136 Nanchi, Dongcheng District Tel: 6523-3320 Literary exhibition: A celebratory exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of Chinese literature master (1902-88) is National Museum. Born in Feng County, Hunan province, Shen Yizhi, a unique painter of western style. He wrote 200-odd novels and introduced to literature in China. He died in 1981. A celebratory exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of Chinese literature master (1902-88) is National Museum. Born in Feng County, Hunan province, Shen Yizhi, a unique painter of western style. He wrote 200-odd novels and introduced to literature in China. He died in 1981.

- including embroidery, shadow puppets, woodcarvings and paper-cuts from Shaanxi, Henan, Shanxi, Shandong, Anhui and Zhejiang provinces which were made during the Ming and Qing dynasties are on show at Qin Gallery. In addition, oil paintings in different styles and on different materials by artists using new techniques to depict the social changes of the past two decades are also displayed. Time: 9:30 am-7 pm until February 15 Place: 1-1E Huaweili, north of Beijing Curio City Tel: 8779-0461 "Soul of India": Bronze ware from ancient India will be shown for the first time at China Millennium Monument on the second stop of a three-month tour of China. Bronze making has a history dating back to the period of the Indus Civilization, about 2500-1500 BC. During the 9th-6th century BC, Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism flourished in succession, providing a permanent theme for Indian bronzes and other art forms in Indian culture. Its golden age was during Indian medieval period (the 7th-13th century). A total of 80 invaluable unearthed bronzes will be displayed. Time: 9 am-5 pm, February 14-March 17 Place: 9A Fuxing Lu Tel: 6857-3281

Table with 3 columns of words: shipper, Runs a fever, Baby carriage, Seattle hrs., Decent grade, Kind of agent, Exception, Triumphant shout, Casper's st., Tournament passes, "Fernando" group, Sour pickle, Loose traction, Sine—non Khan, Colouring and mine, PCB regulator