



A personal journey to find one's self

Emily Steckler of Yankton recently traveled more than 6,000 miles to learn more about herself.

Steckler traveled to South Korea June 14-28 with a group of other South Korean adoptees. The Chicago Arirang Lions Club, a service organization that helps the Chicago Korean community, sponsored the trip that included outings to Seoul, Busan and Gyeongju.

"This was the fifth year for the trip and I met someone through Facebook on a page for Nebraska Korean Adoptees who encouraged people to apply," Steckler said. "I applied and got accepted."

The trip is open to high school juniors and seniors, as well as college-age students, who are adopted Koreans, Steckler said. The cost was very low, \$1,200 because most of the expenses were paid through fundraising efforts of the Lions Clubs in Chicago and South Korea.

When Steckler found out she was accepted she said she felt very thankful.

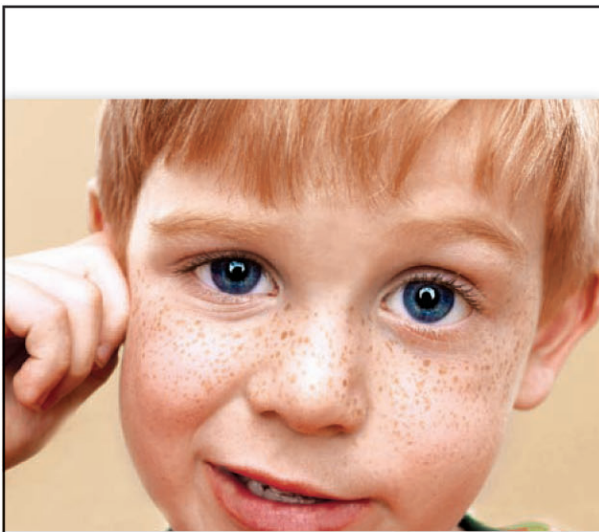
"(The Arirang Lions Club) was trying to contact me to tell me I was accepted and I was busy working and doing schoolwork during finals," Steckler said. "They got a hold of my mom and told her and when she called to let me know, I just started crying instantly."



During their trip, the group had an overnight stay at the Gilsangsa temple. Pictured in the center is the monk who hosted them.

At first Steckler said she thought the trip sounded too good to be true.

"You were supposed to send the fee along with your application but at first I thought it might be a scam because it was so cheap," she said. "I contacted them and told them I would send it if I was accepted. When they accepted me and started sending info and needed my passport information and things I sent out the money."



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