



KEVIN LAUNIUS/Daily Courier

Exchange students from China crowd around an alpaca at Pannonia Alpacas, a farm on Board Shanty Road, on Tuesday afternoon.

# Chinese students enjoy local sights

By Stacy D. Stumbo  
of the Daily Courier

Thirty-two students from China are improving their English and embracing American culture during a two-week stay in Grants Pass.

Northwest International Student Exchange (NISE) of Portland coordinated the

trip. The organization has conducted international educational home-stay programs for high school students since 1983.

The visiting students hail from a boarding school in Zhengzhou, China, south of the Yellow River at the eastern edge of the Xionger Mountains.

After a more than 13-hour flight, the group arrived in Grants Pass on Saturday. Since then, they have been learning English from 9 a.m. to noon at Allen Dale Elementary School and spending afternoons touring local points of interest,

## 32 visitors in town for two weeks as part of educational and cultural exchange program

including Wal-Mart and Wildlife Images in Merlin.

Teachers Gary Lathen of Hidden Valley High School and Xavier Valdes of Glendale High School are instructing the group.

"They're nice, nice kids," Lathen said. "Very respectful."

Jin Minqiao, 14, said the Wildlife Images tour was her "first time to see wild animals." She said the experience was a little scary but she found the animals cute, "especially the bears and the wolves."

Tuesday, the students took a field trip to Pannonia Alpacas at 1283 Board Shanty Road. The farm, owned by Zoltan and Susan Szabo, provided a unique opportu-

nity for the students to observe a rural lifestyle. The city they come from has a population of 8 million.

Lathen said the group will see the Oregon Coast and the Redwood forest by the end of the week.

NISE host families provide room and board and an American family experience for guest students.

"I love them very much," Jin said of her hosts. "They are very friendly. They do a lot for us."

Jin said American food is delicious and the recent heat and the smoke haven't bothered her because the climate was similar to her hometown.

She said American houses are larger than what she's used to and the "yards are very big."

"I think Oregon is a very beautiful city."

She has hopes of returning to the United States in a few years to attend college.

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