

## Features

# Moss Goes 10,000 Miles to Find Perfect Mate

By Christine Buckheit

Leonard Moss didn't marry the girl next door.

In fact, he says, "I had to travel 10,000 miles to find the perfect mate."

It was in China where Moss, a member of Geneseo's English faculty, met his wife, Shaoping Wu. Moss went to China on a Fulbright Fellowship in 1985 to teach literature at the Beijing Foreign Studies University for one year.

But, says Moss, "I liked it so much there that I ended up staying for two years."

Moss, who had never been to Asia before, says he enjoyed being a part of the Chinese culture.

"At first I had to get the hang of the physical conditions, especially the crowded cities," says Moss.

The average person in China doesn't own a car so Moss bought a bicycle and learned to weave his way through the crowded streets.

Moss found the Chinese people most endearing. "The Chinese people were wonderfully warm-hearted, kind, and generous," he says.

Shaoping was one of the main reasons why Moss enjoyed his stay in China so much. The two met through a mutual friend—a woman from Britain. At the time, Shaoping was a teacher at a police academy.

Moss and Shaoping became very close and eventually the two decided to marry.



PHOTO BY RENEE RIVERS

Leonard Moss brought some of China back home: wife Shaoping Wu.

"Unfortunately, there are three things in China that you cannot do without permission: work, move to a new home and get married," says Shaoping. "Although conditions have improved in the past 15 years, there is

still very little room for personal freedom."

Moss and Shaoping needed the consent of everyone from employers to government officials in order to marry. Both agree that it was not easy.

"Even the party secretary tried to make me reconsider," Shaoping says.

Says Moss, "All the red tape we went through doesn't exist all because of the communists—it exists because of a social organization that has existed for years in China," explains Moss.

Finally, after six months, they were given permission to get married and Moss returned to the United States in August 1987 with his new wife.

Despite all the couple went through to get married, Moss says, "I am not interested in the politics. I still think that the Chinese are very hospitable people. Shaoping and I had so many friends that there were more than 200 people at our wedding reception."

Adds Moss, "My trip changed my life completely and I'm glad I brought some of China back home with me."

Moss and his wife live in Rochester. Shaoping tutors American students in Chinese at Nazareth College. In April, she will present a lecture series on "Introducing Modern China" at the Rochester Museum and Science Center's Garnett School of Science and Man.

## Constitution Conference

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The participants will include returning scholars William Harbaugh, Commonwealth Professor of History at the