

The IEP TIMES

Bringing the World to Eastern Mennonite University

December 16, 2004

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Dec. 20: Christmas Celebration and Recognition of Student Accomplishments 10:00
Discipleship Center

Jan. 5: Placement Test - New Students 9:00 a.m.

Jan. 10: Orientation 9:00 a.m.

Jan. 11 First day of classes 8:30 a.m.

Director's Presentation

The other day our director Michael Medley told us about his trip to Pakistan. He lived there for eleven years. Two of his children were born in Pakistan. It was a very interesting speech. I always like to learn about different cultures, different countries and different people. Especially, I like to learn more about the Muslim world. Pakistan is as big as two Californias. The people are 98% Muslim people and about 2% Christian. The Muslim religion is very strong and strict, so I think it is not easy to work in this country. Also, it seems dangerous because of terrorists. Michael told us that some terrorists threw a bomb at nurses. This particular hospital is Christian and doctors and nurses are Christians. They killed five nurses. Many local people were not happy about what the terrorists did. Most Pakistani people are very friendly. They served Pakistani tea for Michael, and he made this kind of tea for us. It was delicious!

Anna Marchuk, Ukraine
Intermediate Level

Conversation Partners

My conversation partner is Ana. She is from Colombia. Her native language is Spanish. She has visited Venezuela and Ecuador. She speaks English too. She is single. She is studying to improve her grammar. She is studying at EMU. She likes to watch TV. Her favorite dish is Bachata. Ana volunteered to be a conversation partner because she likes to do volunteer work. She spends her time cleaning the house and doing her homework.

Tatiana Sych, Belarus
Basic Level

My name is Pond. I have a conversation partner. His name is Caleb. He comes from Iowa. His family is in Iowa. He is an American citizen and he speaks English. He came to Harrisonburg by car. He is a student. He studies at EMU. His major is mathematics. The primary reason he selected mathematics is because he wants to be a professor. He is single. We meet every Monday at the snack shop. We converse about the English language. He helps me and teaches me about English. I am happy to meet him.

Chawalit Iamkitphaisan,
Thailand Basic Level

Enjoying Food Together

I went to a Thanksgiving Banquet for international students. It was organized by EMU and JMU international students. There were lots of people of different ages and they were from countries, such as Thailand, Korea, China, Canada, El Salvador, Uruguay, Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Bulgaria. We had a prayer together, shared a good dinner, an American traditional Thanksgiving meal with turkey, potatoes, beans, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Also, we enjoyed apple cider and coffee. A group of elementary school children presented a program about the origin and history of the Thanksgiving tradition in the US. I went with my family and each of us enjoyed that event. We met an American girl who speaks Russian very well and she has good pronunciation.

Nataliya Kirichun, Belarus
Intermediate Level

Many people were at the Thanksgiving Banquet. It was located at the Cornerstone Church. It was a nice experience for me because I met many people from different countries. Also, the meal was so good. During dinner we were talking about different things and sharing different opinions too. One thing that was important to me was the history about Thanksgiving, knowing why we celebrate this day in the USA. I hope I will have another opportunity in the future to share moments like that and meet people like me, from other countries.

Gerardo Hernandez, Uruguay
Intermediate Level

Today we had a Potluck party. All the international students brought some food made in their native style. We met in the cafeteria and set a big table with all kinds of dishes on it. Then we prayed and enjoyed the food. After we ate, we played. We switched our name tags and told each other about the person whose tag we had and we did that a few times. At the end we made a circle and told everyone three things that we knew about the person whose tag we had on at that time. I heard about Monica Hochstedler and that she is a piano teacher. I met with her at the end of that party and spoke to her. I had been looking for a piano teacher for long time. I wanted to know if there was a music school in Harrisonburg. I was surprised when I met Monica. She told me that EMU has a program for children's music education and she gave me the phone number and email address. In our life we sometimes have good meetings.

Tatyana Bondaruk, Belarus
Intermediate Level

Last Tuesday we had a potluck where we had to bring food from our country and also we were with our conversation partners and we had fun. We ate different kinds of food and then we had to talk with somebody that we did not know and then we had to talk with another person and tell that person about the other person and what she does or she likes to do. After all that, we had to tell everybody about the last person we met and we had a lot of fun because we shared a lot of things. I think we need more things like that.

Ernesto Ortega, Mexico
Intermediate Level

The "Chaja" is a very famous cake in Uruguay and is used on any occasion, such as birthdays, baptisms, anniversaries and even weddings, in which you have the wedding cake, a special big and beautiful cake in the middle of the table and Chajas on both sides of this cake. Chaja can be a sensational dessert when we have guests. We also can go to the store and buy one. We have the big version or just a small one. It is not very hard to make one. These are the ingredients: five eggs, one cup of sugar, one cup of flour and one teaspoon of vanilla extract. The filling and frosting need whipping cream, peaches in syrup, caramel and meringue. Then preheat the oven to 350 degrees and slowly put the batter in the cake pan. In a large bowl beat the egg whites until soft peaks begin to form. Add the egg yolks, one at a time. Add the sugar and the vanilla extract, beating well, and then add the flour slowly. Bake the cake for twenty minutes. Let

it cool for a couple of minutes. To prepare the filling and frosting you need whipping cream. Then cut the peaches in small pieces and cut the meringue too. Cut the cake in three layers. Put some peach syrup in each layer and fill with caramel or cream with peaches and top with meringue. Put the cream and meringue for the frosting. This is the traditional Uruguayan cake.

Nathalia Rodriguez, Uruguay
Intermediate Level

Field Trip

Last October 13, IEP organized a field trip to the Frontier Culture Museum. This museum narrates the life of four different historical cultures. Before I arrived in America I learned world history. I thought the early immigrants in the United States came from England. England had the Puritan Movement. A lot of Puritans were pressured by the government, and they left England to America in a ship, the Mayflower. Now, I just know that I am wrong. The early immigrants were not just from England but also Germany. When we visited four different places and cultures I learned more about Europe than I did from my historical book.

We also visited the P. Buckley Moss Museum. I learned that the artist knew about the Amish and Mennonite people. Her paintings expressed Amish and the lifestyle of these traditional "plain people." Her style is very similar to a kind of Chinese brushwork with is called fine brushwork (Gong Bi paint). It is a traditional Chinese realistic painting that is characterized by fine brushwork and close attention to detail. Two kinds of styles are very exquisite. We can feel peaceful and tranquil from her paintings in our modern society.

Jinzheng Wu, China
Intermediate Level

Immigration

It has been almost four years since I decided to come to the United States. I think that it has not only changed my life but my family too. My husband had made this decision five years ago, with a dream in his head for a better life. But our sadness and loneliness was excessive because of our separated lives. So when he found a good job in the US, he decided to go back to Mexico for us. He told me about all the benefits that we could have if we chose to live with him in Harrisonburg, such as a good education for my son, the opportunity to learn a new language for me. But the most important thing was that we would be together again. One of the reasons that I agreed to come to the US was that my son

could have a good education. The level of education is higher in Mexico and even free in some states. However, the opportunity to study in a foreign country is a dream that not a lot of people have in my country. Another reason for me to live here in the US is that, just like my son, I could also learn a new language. I could have the same opportunity to learn English in order to be able to communicate with other people, not only with American citizens but even with people from other countries like I do now.

Toni Herrera, Mexico
Advanced Level

I admire all the immigrants from all over the world because with a lot of effort they try to immigrate to different countries with dreams and goals. Immigrants come with a dream. For some their dreams come true, for others, not. Some immigrants lose their lives on the way. I also admire immigrants because they don't care what they have to go through to make their dreams come true. Some of those dreams are to help their families so they can have better opportunities. Immigrants come from countries where the economy and job opportunities are low. We always look for the industrial countries, so we can obtain our goals. Many immigrants get their goals. Some become famous singers and business people. They get their goals with a lot of effort. When they immigrate they go through discrimination, racism. In some cases they suffer discrimination from their own people. Discrimination hurts but we have to go through this to make our dreams come true. Some immigrants succeed and we take that as an example. All that I have to say is God bless them on their way.

Luis Fajardo, Ecuador
Basic Level

Immigrants come to the US for different reasons and more opportunities, such as political problems, better jobs, education and economic problems. At first, immigrants have a difficult time. Some don't have documents and don't speak English. First of all, the immigrant needs documents, should study English, must work six or seven days a week, learn the laws and new rules. Finally, they should try to learn English quickly and speak it every day. Some immigrants don't work in their field. They have to work in something else. Usually immigrants have to study English and work at the same time. Many immigrants help their families in their countries. Some immigrants are now important people in the US. They work in the government and big

companies. The immigrants' vote is very important to elect the president. Most of the immigrants in the US are Hispanics. The second language in the US is Spanish. Immigration is very important for the American economy.

Alvaro Gutierrez, Columbia
Basic Level

I came to the US on August 7, 2004. I am from Bolivia. The US is a very interesting culture but the culture is different from mine. My first language is Spanish. When I came I did not know English. I only knew greetings. I felt frustrated because I could not communicate with other people. I am now studying English at IEP. My English class is important. Learning English is hard. I think if I learn English and live here, my relationship with people will be better. I am here with the MCC program as a Spanish Assistant teacher for one year. I enjoy having conversations every day with the students who are learning Spanish. Sometimes I miss my family, friends and food but I am happy for the opportunity to meet new people, friends and learn another language, culture and lifestyle. I believe it is important to understand and communicate with other people. The most important is to know that God is the same in all places today, tomorrow and always. I give thanks to God for His help here and also people who are near me because they help me not to feel alone.

Olga Duran, Bolivia
Basic Level

Cultural Values

One of the important values in Japan that I don't accept is the priority of harmony in groups. Basically in Japan, harmony in groups should always be more important than a person. I know that the harmony is necessary and important for groups; however, it is too strong in Japan. Japanese harmony in groups means that we should not stand out ourselves in the hierarchical group structure and must obey the leaders or the superiors. If we disturb that harmony, it is the biggest shame.

Sometimes we should obey and serve the leaders, the superiors or the group with our life. Traditionally, this kind of strict obedience with one's life was a kind of aesthetics, so during World War II most Japanese fought fanatically for the Emperor and the superiors with their life. I think we have a mental thinking that we can lose our lives for the group. It is not rare that someone who makes a mistake kills him or herself for the group's prestige. In a structure like this, an individual often is ignored

or sacrifices himself/herself for the profit of the group. Also the harmony means that we should not say personal opinions, and we must not express opposition or criticism, and should not change the group precedents. If people say or do something new, they often can be bullied by the group. We can see the bullies like this everywhere in Japanese society. I think that too much concern for priority of harmony in groups distresses many people and also tightly restricts Japanese society. I think an individual should be respected more than the harmony of groups in Japan.

Yumiko Nakashima, Japan
Advanced Level

Charity is one of the important values in the Islamic societies which is very agreeable to me. Parents teach their children to donate some of their toys, money and clothes which should be in good condition. On Islamic occasions all members of the family try to find out who needs any kind of help among relatives, neighbors, friends and orphans. Every one has to provide at least one person with money or anything that he/she needs. Charity is the most successful way to help people avoid going through any wrong means to meet their needs. So our Holy Book “Quran” encourages rich people to support poor people. The profound meaning of charity is not only a kind of help, but also establishes a very strong relationship between families and all people. Muslim people try to keep this value to gain its benefits at the individual level and the society’s level as well.

Hala M. Youssef, Egypt
Advanced Level

Past Experiences

It was 1986 and I lived in a village named Hanaran. The reason we lived there was because my father ran away from Iraq military. He ran away because at this time Saddam Hussein was president in Iraq. He forced my father to be a soldier to fight Iran. But my father decided not to go because Saddam Hussein was a criminal. He wasn’t a peaceful man. He always tried to keep other countries’ land. So my father decided to go to the mountain to that village. We were there for a couple of years until 1988. In 1988 Saddam’s forces won a victory in Kurdish Peshmurga. Saddam’s soldiers came to the mountain to capture runaway soldiers and Peshmarga. I will never forget the day that I, my mother, my sisters, and my brother left my father and my uncle in the mountains because they couldn’t come with us for fear of Saddam’s soldiers. So we left the mountains

to go back to the city of Sulammani. The village was far away from the city. We couldn’t drive a car so we had to walk. We moved that day. But we got caught by Saddam’s soldiers. They kept us one night in prison. But thank God we were lucky; they let us go. Anyway we made it back to Sulammani. After one month Saddam decided to catch these people who still lived in the village, so he captured more than 82,000 Kurdish people including men, women and children. He took them to an unknown place. Nobody knows what happened to them. Now still their family who left them behind are waiting for them to come back. This was the most horrible experience I have ever had.

Chemam Muhamed, Iraq
Intermediate Level

Folk dancing in my childhood took me out of my feelings. In fourth grade at the elementary school, the teacher chose the best children to do the folk dances. I was one of them. I was so excited about it, that I couldn’t believe it; the teacher chose me to be part of our traditional dancing group. When I danced wearing the traditional dress – a long white skirt complete with roses and lots of gold – in front of the public, I felt I was a different person.

Elia Cortes, Mexico
Intermediate Level

The Final Word

Thank you students and teachers for another enriching semester! You have been a wonderful group! This edition of the *IEP Times* is great proof of your growing abilities to write with passion and commitment about issues that are important to you. Your hard work and your motivation inspire me in my job. I look forward to seeing many of you when the next session begins in January. At that time, we will welcome several new students. Meanwhile, have a blessed Christmas holiday!

Mike Medley, Director

Please contact IEP at (540) 432-4059, email iep@emu.edu or see our website at www.emu.edu/iep for more information

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