

The IEP TIMES

Bringing the World to Eastern Mennonite University

February 12, 2007

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

February 26: Talent Show

March 5-9: Spring Break

March 21: Bowling at Valley Lanes

Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

There was finally snowfall in Virginia. It was snowing a lot for the first time this year. In the Fall, Toromare said, "I am afraid of the coming winter," because she did not know snow. In the New Year, she said again. "I am lucky because it is warm this winter."

In the morning, it was snowing. Snow covered everything, and there was no sound in the afternoon. Toromare was surprised when she saw the snowy world. I took some pictures for Toromare in the snow. She will send the pictures to her family. And I made a snowman for her. But the snow was not sticky, so I made a snow mountain. After that, she walked to Esther's house. I worried about what she felt as she walked in the snow.

She came back in the evening. And she said cheerfully. "Kazuko, I like snow! I want to walk to school too tomorrow morning." I was really glad and so happy.

Kazuko, Japan
Lower Intermediate Level

My home country is Thailand. I am used to hot weather and high humidity, because my country lies in a tropical zone. This is my first winter. The weather is extremely cold and the snow this winter is a new experience for me. My first snow day made me miss my classes at IEP, because I assumed school was canceled. It was a new idea for me that school may be called off if the weather gets terrible. I was really curious about snow. How does snow affect people? I searched for information. I knew some details about snow, that it is a great natural art from the sky. Some people take advantages of snow; on the other hand, some meet problems from snow, inevitably.

Snow is art from nature. Snow crystals are great creative objects falling from the sky. They are

beautiful, like real stars and with such intricate, unique designs. Snow crystals are nothing more than ice which condensed from water vapor. Their shapes are symmetrical, hexagonal and branching structures, yet no snow crystals will look exactly alike. In addition, snow paints everything white. It changes the environment from colorful and lively to colorless and calm; however, it looks gorgeous in a different way. There are a number of impressively, beautiful pictures of snow structure and natural views with snow on the Internet.

Like other natural materials, man takes advantage of snow in many aspects. Plenty of winter sports are created for snow, such as skiing or snowboarding, in order that people can exercise and enjoy life during the winter. Although I have never tried them, I think it may be exciting to have a chance to play winter sports. Furthermore, businesses based on those sports gain ample opportunities to build their incomes. For instance, ski sellers are able to sell their products in winter. Moreover, most children look forward to playing in the snow. They build a snowman and throw snowballs. These activities make living in the snow enjoyable.

In addition to taking advantages of snow, people also have troubles from snow. Transportation in snow is a serious problem. For example, a lot of flights are canceled or delayed when there is a snow storm. For instance, it was a very terrible time for people waiting a long time for their flights in airports, some of them losing their chance to be with their families on Christmas day. Car accidents happen easily because snow makes roads slippery. Moreover, some plants die or stop producing their fruits because of cold weather. This brings about a price increase of these plants. Consumers, inevitably, have to bear this problem.

Finally, all above are some aspects of snow. There are a lot of interesting points about snow, such as how the structures form. In my opinion, we should adapt ourselves to snow and take advantage of it efficiently. However, we should learn about snow and prepare ourselves to confront difficulties caused by snow.

Pon, Thailand
Advanced Level

The LILAC Project

The Lively Intercultural Learning Across the Curriculum (LILAC) project for this semester is Food and Population. Last Wednesday was our first time to meet EMU students in the cafeteria for the LILAC project. We made five groups, introduced ourselves and asked some questions to know more about the members of each group. EMU students were shy, but IEP students were talkative because their teachers taught them how to have a discussion. The EMU professor introduced a little bit about the project. I think the LILAC project will be interesting because the students are multicultural and we will share with each other about our Food and Population.

Esther, Benin
High Intermediate Level

At the beginning of the LILAC project, we took a few minutes to break the ice. After that, we were talking and joking easily. It was really interesting to meet Americans and share the same languages and the same goals despite our different cultures. I liked having a conversation with Chris, Elliot, Sara, James, Junko and Rachael, also Yana (my little friend) who is studying at the IEP house with me. I hope to see them again; maybe it will be the beginning of a friendly relationship.

Gretel, Nicaragua
High Intermediate Level

On Friday I was talking with EMU students in the frame of the LILAC project. I liked it very much. First of all, we introduced ourselves to each other. Then we were eating and talking about “overpopulation” in the world. Also, we were talking about Harrisonburg. I really enjoyed this conversation because I met new people and learned something interesting. I hope we will have other meetings in the future.

Badir, Uzbekistan
High Intermediate Level

Memories of Home...

The High Advanced Writing and Grammar class is in the process of writing personal essays, which will lead into a research project and the writing of argument.

I like life in the country. Each moment in the country is a memory in my life. I love the wild plants, the big and tall trees and flowers. There is meaning behind everything in nature. Being in the country

makes me trust myself more. It is as if I could find answers to all my questions. Also, I love the wild animals, finding bird nests, listening to their songs, and chasing rabbits to see where they have hidden their baby bunnies. The country is a perfect place to play hide and seek; this is one of my favorite games. When I lived, as a child, in the country on my grandparents’ farm, La Tinaja, in Mexico, my brothers and I always were up in the trees looking for new adventures.

Bacilisa, Mexico
Advanced Level

I remember growing up in my hometown in my country, El Salvador. I suffered a lot from violence because of the war that was going on at that time. During the civil war from 1980 though 1992 I lost my grandfather and my aunt. It broke my heart when my mother told me how it happened. Sometimes I don’t like to think about it or the way they were treated. My father served during that war and it was hard for me when he was on duty because I didn’t know what was going to happen to him. In fact the war was so intense that I used to pray for him every time he was on duty, because I was scared of the things that were going on during that time.

I remember how things happened and how we had to be aware of everything around us as kids. We were afraid because there were a lot of kidnappings during those years. I remember when I was eight years old I went to the capital city with my mother and I saw two smaller children playing on the street with guns. I got scared, because I didn’t know that they were fake guns until my mother told me that they were not real.

During the years of war I experienced many things. When I hear about war going on in different countries around the world, it breaks my heart again, because I know how it feels. I know that kids are the ones that suffer the most and we as adults can prevent these things. Because I know that any kind of violence can take away happiness and that beautiful smile from the little ones, we need to show them peace and love and to teach them to do good things in life.

Fredys, El Salvador
Advanced Level

Northern Iran is my favorite place. It is located about four hours away from Tehran, the capital of Iran. It is bordered by the Caspian Sea; because of this, it has many jungles and is so green. Every where you go is covered by trees and flowers. The most luxurious and perfect hotels have been built in this area, in front of the beach and the forest. It usually rains and is hot and humid. This is the most famous

tourist place in Iran. Everybody likes to spend vacation at this place, enjoying the weather and amazing views of the beach and the jungle. It also has very delicious food, such as fish. This is my favorite place, the place where I used to go every year with my family. It is where I used to swim, go to restaurants and enjoy the weather. This is the most unforgettable place. I just wish to be there again, to remember my childhood. One day I may travel there with my own family and I tell them about all the good memories that I have of this place.

Ali, Iran
Advanced Level

Leaving my homeland for a new place to live was very hard. Leaving my family and friends behind was the most devastating situation that I have known, the most difficult decision that I have made. Now, I am wondering whether the sacrifice of family and friends is worth a new life. Or, am I wrong? When I decided to come to the United States, following my husband because of his job, I was not sure if I was doing the right thing. Still, in my tradition and values, when a woman gets married she has to follow her husband anywhere he goes. Therefore, I did it without thinking.

When I arrived to this country, I brought with me many dreams. The few things that I have from my country are a couple of pictures and a lot of memories. The pictures I have show the family I have in my mind, a family that looks like it did the way I left it, not the way they look right now. For example, my mother has been sick for almost three years. Now, in the present day, she looks very thin. I almost didn't recognize her in a recent picture my sister sent. In my memory, my friends also look the way I left them but, in real life, they look so different, as different as life is now. Besides, I know they have all had a wonderful time sharing together with each other. Though I couldn't be with them, they are in my dreams everyday.

Sometimes I remember different kinds of situations, especially about my childhood. I dream about my father and my brother and the way they passed away many years ago. In dreams, I talk with them often and it makes me feel so happy. I have all my family and friends around me, though just in my dreams. Therefore, I see that it is my dreams that have made me survive my new life here in the United States.

Toni, Mexico
Advanced Level

For many people, leaving home can be hard because leaving friends, food, culture and customs behind is not easy. In my experience, it was kind of an adventure. Nevertheless, the reason why I came to the United States was because I wanted to have a college degree and a better class of life. This is something that I probably could not have gotten in my hometown because of bad-paying jobs and crime.

So far, my life in the U.S. is going good. I am taking classes in the Intensive English Program (IEP) so that later I will have the chance to go to the university. Also, I have a job. I thought since I am here, I do not need to depend on my family anymore, although sometimes I would rather not work and just study. Alas, life is like this and I just need to ride it.

Even though I miss my friends, food, streets, beaches and my country's nightlife, I am happy here and I know that it is for my best future.

Carlos, Peru
Advanced Level

One day my father said, "Never say that you won if you did not struggle and make a challenge for your life." When I came to the United States to learn English, I realized what he was saying. I came to the U.S. to learn a new language and a new culture. English is very different from my own language. For example, in my own language when you make a sentence, you write verb + subject (*Matory izy* that means "She sleeps"). Learning English, I have had such a hard time making this change in my mind, but I have not given up. I keep going and I improve my English every day. In my experience, learning a language is learning a new culture and a new way of thinking.

During my studies at IEP, I have learned something very interesting for my future life. I have learned in writing to use abstract and concrete words to describe something. Also, I learned about a method of reading and about participating in discussions.

IEP is like a little world, because I met so many students from around the world. So I take this opportunity to enrich my life by learning about different kinds of cultures. For example, I did not travel to Haiti, Kenya, Benin, Bolivia, or Germany but when I listened to oral presentations from my classmates last semester, I got to know a part of their cultures, customs around weddings and funerals, for example. In my mind, IEP looks like an open window where you may see the world outside, see outside your world. It is like living water to give life, because it provides education and gives you a new horizon. I have not learned English only. In Madagascar, I was a teacher; so I learn through IEP's teachers their

methods of teaching. I know through them how to make your students pay attention to you and enjoy their class.

In conclusion, learning a new language makes you struggle and is a big challenge. We have a Malagasy proverb saying: "If you go first and are ready to learn new things, you find the first way to develop yourself."

Toromare, Madagascar
High Intermediate Level

A Trip to the Capital

On Thursday, the first of February 2007, my IEP friends and I went, together with IEP teachers, to Washington, D.C. First we met at IEP at 8.15 a.m.; then we took the EMU bus to Washington, D.C. It took about two hours to arrive. When we arrived to the city it was very big with a lot of traffic. First we went to visit the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. It was a beautiful place. We saw and learned a lot about Indians, things like the costumes and the "storms" of guns and money. We saw a movie about the Indians. It was a great visit. Then we went to the U.S. National Botanic Garden. It was a really beautiful and wonderful place. We saw red flowers, yellow flowers, blue flowers and a lot of other kinds of flowers. After that we went to a big bookstore where we read some books and drank coffee and tea. Finally we returned to IEP. We arrived to IEP at 8.00 p.m. It was the best and the most wonderful trip I have had in my life, because I went there with my IEP friends.

Tameem, Saudi Arabia
High Advanced Level

Today I went to Washington, D.C with IEP students. The weather was cloudy and cold. Many people went. It took about 2 hours from Harrisonburg to Washington.

First, we went to the National Museum of the American Indian. We had learned some about Native Americans in our American culture class. I already knew many things about Native Americans so I understood a little more. We went to the fourth floor and looked at Native Americans' gold, stone, guns. After that we watched a film about their lives. It made me feel sad.

Afterwards we went to the Botanical Garden. It was really an interesting place. There were so many plants and flowers. It made me feel fresh! I like plants and flowers, so I really enjoyed that place. There were so many different gardens and places which had different themes. For instance, there was a

Desert room and Jungle room. I took a lot of pictures and I had a great time.

YoJin, South Korea
High Intermediate Level

Food and Fun

We held Asian Night and it was so exciting. I had a really good time. There were around 100 visitors. I was really amazed by the visitors. I never thought that we would enjoy it like this. There were a lot of kinds of food were made by us. Everything was homemade and tasted delicious. We made a lot of sushi, and these sold out. Some my friends who are students of EMU told me, "That was great last night" I was so happy to join them, and I thought it is good to be interested in other countries' cultures. I would love to take part in this project next year. Hopefully, it will be held again.

Yana, Japan
High Intermediate Level

Last Thursday there was a pizza lunch for international students and teachers at the Commons Center. Each person introduced himself /herself during the event. Of course, most of the undergraduate students spoke English very fluently and had confidence in themselves. In the future there are things that I want to study, but I can't imagine being a student like them. Some day I will be. One thing I really like about EMU is that they accept students from many different countries. At the same time American EMU students are required to go to another country. There is a wide world in this small college.

Nozomi, Japan
High Intermediate Level

- ▲ Improve your English skills!
- ▲ Enhance your education!
- ▲ Press forward in your career!

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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