

The IEP TIMES

Bringing the World to Eastern Mennonite University

October 4, 2007

Harrisonburg, VA 22802

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

October 10: IEP Movie Day: *Arabian Nights*

October 16: Field Trip to Brethren Woods

October 22-23 Fall Break: No classes

October 29: Guest Speaker Don Snow

October 31: IEP Potluck; Harvest Celebration

News from Home



Ramadan is a holy month in the Islamic lunar calendar. Muslim people fast in this month. Fasting, in Islam, is getting up before dawn, praying, and eating along with drinking until sunrise. When the sky turns orange in the morning, Muslims stop eating and drinking until sunset. During this month Muslims must pay zakat, or charity in the English language. When the sunset occurs, Muslims break their fast and eat. During the nights of Ramadan, Muslims also pray extra to God and become more devoutly religious. At the end of the month, Muslims get together and eat with family and friends. This festival is called Eid. It is part of the Muslim religion and the blessed month of Ramadan.

Aysha, Kurdistan, Iraq
Low Intermediate Level

On the night of September 26th, Iranian President Ahmadinejad will give a big lecture in New York. President Bush doesn't like our president and our president doesn't like President Bush. I don't know why President Ahmadinejad is coming to the United States. Maybe he wants to make a friendship with President Bush or maybe it is for political talks without friendship. I hope it will be for friendly talks and that this first visit will not be the last of friendly talks.

Armin, Iran
Low Intermediate Level

International Day of Peace

Friday, September 21st, 2007, IEP faculty and students attended a lecture by Archbishop Desmond

Tutu when he visited the Gandhi Peace Center at James Madison University. The International Day of Peace and Archbishop Desmond Tutu September 21st was declared the International Day of Peace because around the world many people are abused and their human rights are violated. This is a global situation and abuse is suffered by many people. The absence of peace is the reason for the declaration of a day for peace. Archbishop Desmond Tutu leads a formidable crusade in support of justice and racial reconciliation in South Africa. His tireless work against apartheid was first recognized on September 21st, 1984.

Archbishop Tutu holds an honors degree from over one hundred and thirty universities and has received many prizes and awards in addition to the Nobel Peace Prize. He received the Nobel Peace Prize for his hard work for human dignity, justice and equality in South Africa. He has a strong conscious and fights the fight for peace. On the International Day of Peace, Archbishop Desmond Tutu gave a message of hope for the spirit and respect for human rights.

Neris, El Salvador
Low Intermediate Level

Wedding Bells



The happiest day of my life was when I got married. My wedding was wonderful and merry. The day had three parts: a special ceremony, which was in the morning; a walk in a park; and evening at a restaurant.

The special ceremony included different contests, which consisted of tasks. If my husband couldn't do them, he paid money. For example, my friend said phrases and my husband must continue them in rhyme.

After the contests my husband and I went to a special park, where a photographer and sound operator made a film about us. And at six o'clock we arrived in the restaurant, where we had a special show, which included an orchestra, musicians and professional dancers. My husband and I were happy, because we

had dreamed about this day and wanted a beautiful wedding. And our dream did come true.

Milana, Uzbekistan
Advanced Level

A Wedding day in my country is an important and hard day for relatives of the bride and groom, because relatives of the groom and bride do everything. They will meet people who come to congratulate and take care of everything for the wedding. Everybody who comes to the wedding should wear nice clothes and come on time. The groom wears a black suit and the bride wears a white dress. The groom comes to the bride's house by special car with his relatives and takes the bride to a special large room for the wedding. The bride and the groom are in the first car and someone drives. Other cars go behind the car of the groom and bride.

When the bride and the groom arrive to the large room, relatives sing special songs and then the couple enters the large room. The couple sits on special chairs. Women sit on chairs and female relatives of the groom and the bride begin to dance. After that the groom and the bride begin to dance slowly. Then the couple cuts the cake and eats. People eat sweets. The wedding takes from 2 to 3 hours. After that, everyone goes home.

The father of the groom pays for most everything, but the father of bride pays some things. For example, he pays for the party. This party for women is in the bride's house before the wedding. If the groom is a rich person, the couple will go to any country for a honeymoon. They will stay one month or more.

Mohammed, Palestine
High Intermediate Level

In my native country, the wedding is in the church. The bride wears a white wedding gown and the groom wears a business suit or a tuxedo. The couple's family and their friends wear the traditional costume or the regular outfit.

At the church, the couple exchanges the wedding bands. The bride and the groom read a testimony before the pastor and both families and friends.

After the church, the couple's family organizes a party. They rent a reception room. The bride takes off the wedding gown and wears a fancy dress. The couple receives presents and gifts from both families and friends. After that, the bride and groom open the party by beginning to eat. There are different types of food. The traditional food is cassava bread and cassava leaves, white cheese with sweet potatoes, and modern food like fish and meats.

When everybody finishes eating, the couple opens the dance. The couple begins with a traditional dance. After that, they dance modern dances. After the party, the couple goes to the groom's family's house. If the groom owns or rents his own place, the couple can go there. Most of time, the couple doesn't have a honeymoon. That is how people get married in my country.

Muke, Congo
High Intermediate Level

An Iranian wedding has many processes. Most of the couples in Iran get to know each other for sometimes 1 to 3 years before they get married. When they make sure that they really love each other, the groom's parents go to the bride's house and then the parents get to know each other. Both sides should agree to the wedding. Then they decide about an engagement party.

The engagement party has to be in the bride's house and the bride's father is the one who pays for the party. The couples will exchange rings and they will be engaged until they will completely know each other. During these days the groom has to find a house for their future life and the bride buys all the furniture needed for their new house.

The next step will be the ceremony and it has to be in the bride's house, but the groom will pay for it. The ceremony is usually in the afternoon and it has to be before dark. It is a superstition and Iranians believe that it is bad luck to have a wedding after dark. In the ceremony, the bride always wears a long white wedding gown and a veil and the groom wears a suit and tie. First the groom puts the ring onto the bride's finger and then the bride puts a ring onto the groom's finger. Then they will put honey in each other's mouths with their fingers. Then the groom gives some jewelry such as earrings and necklaces to the bride, and it can be gold, silver or diamonds. It depends on the fashion at the time. Next will be the parents of both sides and the other guests who also give them jewelry.

After that the wedding party starts. It is usually in a hotel or in a big house. The wedding party will be at night and a music band plays Iranian music and the guests dance and then they will serve food for dinner. The foods must be different kinds of Iranian food such as rice, broad bean rice, barberry rice, kebab, chicken and many sweets for dessert.

At the end the bride and groom cut the cake and the final dance is a Tango. Their car is usually decorated with lots of flowers and after the wedding most of the close friends and relatives follow them to their house and they blow horns to show their happiness. At the door they say goodbye to everybody. The next day at last the couple will go on a honeymoon. Some of the Iranian couples go to foreign

countries and some of them go to Iran's beaches for their honeymoon. Sometimes it continues two days or sometimes a week.

Arian, Iran
High Intermediate Level

It is very common to celebrate the weddings in churches, homes or hotels in my native country. First we have the ceremony in the church for many hours. Sometimes the ceremony is in the bride's parent's house. During that time the groom and the bride promise each other love forever. That promise is very important in my country. After the ceremony we have the reception in the groom's parent's house. The reception lasts many hours. During that time the people in the wedding choose different kinds of food to eat.

The most traditional food in the weddings in my native country is beef with potato salad. Sometime the food in the weddings is chicken and potato salad. The decoration is with balloons around the place, on the wall, and on the tables. They put on romantic music to dance. The gifts for the bride and the groom are something for the house. The groom's parents pay almost always for the wedding. The bride wears a white dress and the groom wears a tuxedo. Finally, the bride and the groom have a honeymoon for a week. Most of the couples in my country go to the beach or visit another country.

Hector, Honduras
High Intermediate Level

In my home country, couples get married in their home, or in a hotel, and sometimes in a marriage place which is a beautiful, very big place, and it is very expansive. The man usually gets married at age 25-30 but the women at age 20-25. Usually the man is older than the women. All marriages in my country are arranged by parents. If the couple knew each other before, they will keep it secret.

On the marriage day, the man dresses in Saudi clothes. It is like a long white dress we call "thoup." The woman dresses the same as in America. The marriage party usually starts at 10 o'clock p.m. for the men, and it is finished at one a.m. But for the women, they start at 11 and finish at three or four in the morning. During the night, the women like to dance. But the men don't like dancing because in our culture dancing is only for women.

After the marriage party, the couple travels for the honeymoon. They spend about three or four weeks there. Many of the couples in Saudi Arabia spend their honeymoon in Europe.

Muhanned, Saudi Arabia
High Intermediate Level

The LILAC Project

Each semester, our IEP classes partner with selected undergraduate classes on LILAC ("Lively Intercultural Learning Across the Curriculum") projects that are designed to give all students involved new learning experiences through cross-cultural interaction. This semester, the speaking and listening classes have partnered with a Video Camera and Non-linear Editing class. The video editing students are filming interviews with IEP students, while IEP students gain experience being interviewed. The second project involves IEP writing classes and a college writing class. The students in these classes are interviewing each other on cultural topics such as dating, religious festivals, and education. Students will then write essays based on their interviews.

Yesterday we went to the library, where we had a presentation about a video project that my classmate and I are going to participate in. After the presentation, I met my project partner and talked about a subject for the project. We came up with more than one subject. Saudi culture might be one of the topics. Eventually, we decided that my partner will choose the subject and we will talk about it next week.

Saltan, Saudi Arabia
Advanced Level

Milana and I were in the same group. Our interviewer was John. He is a senior student at EMU. He is interested in video editing and wants to get a job in the field. We talked about personal stuff such as hobbies and some background to get to know each other. We all like sushi. And then we talked about how we'll do the interview. First, he will write questions and email us and then we'll think over the questions. It will be more fun that I expected.

HunJeong, Korea
Advanced Level

Healthy Living



I like to cook and prepare healthy food. Vegetables and fruits have a lot of vitamins and minerals for people. I can make salad with pepper, onion, tomato, lettuce and dressing. Fruits have a lot of fiber to help your body. I like to make smoothies by mixing fruit with ice or ice cream. I try to make my kids drink a lot of water; it is very healthy for their

bodies. Benefits of cooking at home are that it supports a healthy diet and the food tastes better.

Svetlana, Belarus
Low Intermediate Level

Learning Languages

Teaching Spanish was one of my activities this past Spring. I have never had that experience before. The first day I was so afraid, I did not expect such a big group of people. There were a lot. That was exciting and scary at the same time; it took so long for me to calm down. People were nice. They really paid attention to everything I was saying. They asked a lot of questions. That was the worst part for me, because in those moments it seemed like if I had forgotten everything, that I did not know any Spanish. I felt horrible, but I could give them answers. They seemed very interested in learning this language and that made me glad. Although I did not like teaching, I gave it the best I could.

Diana, Columbia
Advanced Level

There are several ways to learn a new language. One way is to spend a lot of time watching television and listening to the radio. Another way is to take classes at a language school or university. The best way to learn a new language is to talk with and listen to native speakers.

Edis, El Salvador
Low Intermediate Level

New Beginnings



I was living with my family before I came here. I used to have a car, a job, a lot of friends and a lot of places to go. I was living in the capital of Nicaragua, Managua. I studied there for five years to become a systems engineer. One day my brother called me and said, "Congratulations, you are a professional person now, and I feel proud of you." I was very happy, because he said that. We were talking a lot about us when he said, "Do you want to continue studying something else besides engineering?" I was very surprised by the question and suddenly I said, "Of course I would like to, but what do you mean?" He told me about coming to the U.S.A and taking English class as he did in IEP. He said, "After you finish, you can take any career that you want to study most in your life." This is how I took this opportunity. I left everything behind, and now I can tell my friends about the differences between the U.S.A and Nicaragua.

I came on January 3, 2007 and it was a big change for me. The first difference between living here and living in my country is the weather. My brother picked me up in the airport around 11 at night. It was very cold at that time and I was wearing summer clothing because in my country we have tropical weather all the time and I didn't realize that here it was winter. I was freezing to death. The first night here, I slept only a few hours because my classes began the next day. I went to the Valley Mall and my brother bought winter clothes for me, and I started to feel warm.

The second difference that I saw when I came here was the lifestyle. In my country, people take their time for everything, the contrary of the U.S.A. Here people always are busy; therefore, they do everything in a hurry. Fortunately, this does not happen with all the people in the U.S.A. Perhaps the places, streets, population and the system of government are so big that you can find a lot of kinds of people with many different kinds of cultures.

I have had good experiences since I came to the U.S.A. The place that I am studying is for international students, and they are from everywhere. I have learned a lot besides English. I have learned how to communicate with other cultures and I know more about other countries. If I was in Nicaragua right now, I probably couldn't have this wonderful experience. My country is very small and everything looks similar. Everybody speaks Spanish, almost everybody is Catholic, etc. This keeps us in one culture without knowledge of others.

Finally, I can say there are a lot of differences between the U.S.A and my country, but I think this happens everywhere. The good thing is to be aware of having all these new experiences as treasures in our lives.

Gretel, Nicaragua
Advanced 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

The writings in this edition of the *IEP Times* were produced by the students who are studying in the IEP during the Fall Semester, 2007. Thank you to the students and the teachers – Anali Kratz-Mathies, David Graybill, Dwight Martin, Christi Kramer, Mary Hairston, Jean Kilby, Jennifer Weaver - for their contributions, and to Sarah Huffman for the layout of this edition. The director of IEP is Michael Medley.