

VOICES

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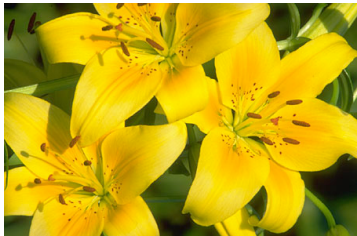
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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

BY JOY TESH

On the morning of February 1, 2006, I woke up as the new director of the Language and Culture Center. Of course, I had known for some time that I had this job, but on the first day of February, I truly felt the awesome responsibility and yes, the excitement of this new beginning. Mine has been an interesting journey.

I began working in the LCC as a teacher in 1979. After a few years, while continuing to teach, I became the coordinator of individualized instruction in the program that has now evolved into the CALL Lab. I became the Associate Director in 1987 and loved that job for eighteen good years. I cannot imagine a better place to work. I love this job. I accept it with great humility, and I will work very hard to do it right.



I am the third director of the Language and Culture Center. Dr. Joyce Merrill Valdes, our first director, served from 1975 to 1983. She was the director who had the vision and who did the hard work to get this program started. She was also

the director who hired me as a teacher and gave me the opportunity to begin this journey. Dr. Joseph O. Davidson followed Dr. Valdes and served as director from 1983 through 2005.

(continued on page 2)



Ramatoulaye Sene

Ms. Sene and many other LCC students attended the Spring 2006 Culture Festival in traditional garb. Inside this issue, you can see more pictures and read about the celebration and the wonderful lunch they prepared and shared.

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LCC Director Joy Tesh, former Director, Joseph Davidson, and teacher Judy Kleeman enjoy the Spring 2006 Culture Festival.

Dr. Davidson was my mentor and my friend, and I am sure that the only reason I had the courage to apply for this job is that I had learned from him exactly what is involved in directing an Intensive English Program.

Dr. Davidson and I worked together during January of this year, and he retired on January 31, 2006. (Even new students this semester will remember Dr. Davidson because he was the director when you began this semester of study. He was a won-

derful director and a wonderful human being. I cannot begin to tell you how much we all miss him.)

I was very fortunate to work in this program under the leadership of Dr. Valdes and then Dr. Davidson. To try to follow in their footsteps is an awesome and inspiring task. I carefully observed and learned from both of these great directors, and they are in my heart and in my thoughts every day as I try to continue the good and important work they started.

When Dr. Valdes retired, we named the first LCC scholarship in her honor, and we will continue to offer that scholarship to continuing LCC students. We are now happy to announce that we will name an-

other full scholarship for Dr. Davidson. Students will be able to apply for the Davidson scholarship in the summer of 2006, and the recipient will return to the LCC on full scholarship for the fall term of 2006. The Joseph O. Davidson scholarship will cover the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one semester of study in the Intensive English Program.

The Language and Culture Center is thriving. This spring we have 223 students from thirty-two countries studying in the Intensive English Program. As I experienced the LCC Culture Festival with all of you on that Friday in

March, I realized that we were all caught up in a very special moment. We were enjoying food, music, and dance from around the world on a beautiful spring afternoon, and I don't know if you, dear students, realize how beautiful you were, many of you in national dress and all of you smiling and sharing language and culture. Thank you for coming here to study with us. Thank you for helping us create the beautiful mosaic we all witnessed at the culture festival. You are amazing students. The Language and Culture Center welcomes you. I welcome you, and I am very happy to be your new director.

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SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

Lisa Fee, Bakary Touré, and Luis Angel Quiroz Garcia Receive LCC Scholarships

The Language and Culture Center awards scholarships each term to the returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. The Joyce Merrill Valdes scholarship honors the founder and first director of the Language and Culture Center, and it covers the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. In addition to the Valdes scholarship, the LCC offers merit scholarships of \$1500

each for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. At the fall graduation ceremony on Thursday, December 9, 2005, LCC scholarships were awarded to Lisa Fee, who had successfully completed level five, to Bakary Touré, who had successfully completed level two, and to Luis Angel Quiroz Garcia, who had successfully completed level three in the Intensive English Program.



Lisa Fee

Lisa Fee was the recipient of the Valdes scholarship. Lisa is from China and her native language is Chinese. She is now studying in level six, and she has been a student at the LCC for three terms. After she completes her study of English, she plans to enter the Master's program in business at the University of Houston – Victoria where she has already begun to take a class. She has never won a scholarship and says that it has been a good experience and has increased her self-confidence as she prepares to meet the challenge of graduate study. Lisa says, "The LCC will leave me with good memories forever."

Bakary Touré was the recipient of a merit scholarship. Bakary is from Mali and his native language is Bambara. He is in level three and has been at the LCC for two terms. His intended major is petroleum engineering and he plans to begin a master's degree at the University of Houston after studying English at the LCC. When he received the merit scholarship, he was very happy and proud. Bakary says that it has been important for his future and has been of great help to him adding, "Thank you to the LCC."

Luis Angel Quiroz Garcia was the other recipient of a merit scholarship. Luis is from Mexico, and his native language is Spanish. He is currently studying in level four and wants to pursue a degree in journalism at the University of Houston after

completing his studies at the LCC. Luis says that he will always remember the "incredible moment" when his name was called, saying, "My heart just stopped." He tells us that he dedicated this award, like everything in his life, to God, his family, and his friends. Luis thanks his teachers as well.



Bakary Toure'

We congratulate Lisa Fee, Bakary Touré, and Luis Angel Quiroz Garcia on their outstanding records in the Intensive English Program at the Language and Culture Center, and we wish them great success as they continue to study in the United States. These students tell us that they were totally surprised to receive the scholarships and now encourage their classmates to apply. We all look forward to learning who will be the next LCC scholarship recipients at the spring graduation ceremony, to be held on Thursday, April 27, 2006.



Luis Angel Quiroz Garcia

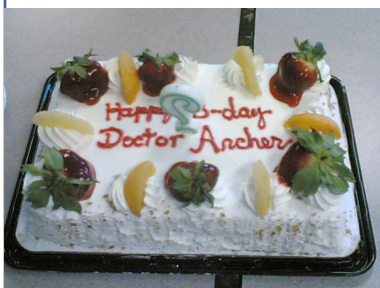
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FUN AT THE LCC!

Level 3 Students Celebrate Dr. Carol Archer's Birthday

by Class 3A

March 9 was a special day for LCC students and teachers in class 3A and 3B. That day was Dr. Carol's birthday, and the students and other teachers prepared a surprise party for her with music, food and fun. They signed and wrote cute sentences in a beautiful card. Some of the teachers brought a sweet cake and sodas. On the day of the party, the other teachers, Ms. Esperanza, Ms. Gursharan and Ms. Susan, and the students in 3A came into the classroom where Dr. Carol was working with the students in 3B. They were singing and carrying the cake as they came through the door. It was a great moment and came as a complete surprise to Dr. Carol. She cut the cake and shared with everyone. Then they started to dance to country music. The students sang



“Happy Birthday” in six languages – Spanish, French, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, Arabic and English. The celebration lasted over an hour, and Dr. Carol said,

“It is the biggest and most agreeable surprise I've ever had.”



Teachers Carol Archer and Susan Wilson try some dance steps with 3A students



Carol Archer shows her appreciation as she opens her card.

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Culture Festival Fun

by Class 3B

Friday, March 24 was a wonderful day for LCC students, teachers and guests. There was a culture festival with food, dancing, traditional clothes and pictures. For the event, some people wore their traditional clothes, and took pictures with one another. Other students and teachers brought typical food from their countries. We had a chance to try many kinds of food and enjoy them. Also dancing was very interesting; people were dancing with traditional music, especially the dance from Texas. Older Texan dancers taught us how to dance traditional Texas dances. The culture festival was an exciting experience, where we could share and show our culture by food, dance and clothes.



Xinran Wang and Irelida Torres pose with a member of the Texas dance group that demonstrated traditional dances for the students.



Y Nguyen and Linh Nguyen

LCC students spent many hours preparing a great variety of delicious dishes!

Level 4 Students Enjoyed the Festival!

Hee Kyu Bae, 4A

Last week on Friday, we had a big festival at the LCC. It was the "LCC Culture Festival," to which all foreign students bring their traditional food and where they introduce their culture and life. Of course, every Korean thought about what food was best to show our culture, so we decided to make two kinds of Korean foods. First, we divided all the Koreans in our class into two groups to cook. Our group members were mostly classmates, and after discussion, we chose "kimbab." It is a special food. When children go on a picnic, they bring this food. It looks like "sushi," a Japanese food, but it is different in its making and materials. (continued on page 6)

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Level 4 Students had a great time cooking and eating!

(continued from page 5)

Moreover, another Korean group decided to cook “steamed chicken.” This food is very popular in Korea now. The day before the festival day, we went to the Korean market to buy the foods. While our group was cooking, I just helped to cook and advised, because I can’t cook well. At culture festival time, I was very much surprised at the taste because before I was afraid to taste our cooking. Other foreign friends liked our foods also. This festival was very good for us. I was happy to eat foreign traditional food.

Katherine Suarez, 4B

When I came to the LCC culture festival, I was surprised at seeing the large quantity of food and number of people who were participating. I was very happy to enjoy with my classmates dishes from their countries. This experience let me learn a little bit about other countries which are located far away from mine. During the festival we could see a Texan dance group who tried to teach us how to dance a typical dance from Texas. One dancer proposed dancing with me. I really appreciated his invitation. Learning about other countries was an amazing experience that I will never forget.



Abdoul Traore and Aoua Kone display colorful garb.



Mohammed Al Shammari in traditional Arab dress , with Ting Huang

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Kahlifah Albinali, 4A

The event that I like most in each semester is the Culture Festival day because on that day you can meet your friends in the LCC or in the university and share your own traditions with them. I cooked especially for my classmates and my teachers, and I invited them to taste my cooking. Then I tasted the food that was cooked by my classmates. After finishing eating, I took pictures with my friends and with LCC students who were wearing their traditional clothes.

liked it. Eating so many sorts of food was perfect. I'm eager to attend the next time.

Irelda Torres, 4A

When I heard about the culture festival, I got excited because for me it was going to be something new. On the other hand, I got worried because cooking is not easy for me. I had to decide about cooking something easy, so I chose "chilaquiles." I didn't exactly remember how to cook the chilaquiles, but I asked my sister and she offered to help me. We finished cooking at almost twelve, and then my sister brought me to school, and I was very surprised when I saw some students wearing typical suits from their countries. The food was excellent too. The



Karina Lima and Luciane Costa

really enjoyed this part of the festival. I really learned a lot about other cultures.

Phuong Thanh Ly, 4A

I was very happy to join in the LCC Culture Festival. I have never joined in any

festival like this before. At first I decided to bring a Vietnamese family food, but it was too difficult for me to make by myself. I would need someone to help me make it. Finally, I decided to make egg rolls because they are delicious and I can make them by myself. At the festival, everyone put their foods on the table and let everyone else eat their foods. Everyone

also danced at the festival. The festival was more and more exciting in the end. I really want to join in it again.



Mohammed Al-Khuraim and Ali Hadi Alsagoor

Ting Huang (Thelma), 4A

Last Friday was the culture festival. Every student bought some food on that day. Because students came from many countries, foods were different. I tasted a lot of kinds of food, but not all. Some food was so strange. I remember eating Vietnamese candy. The outside was sweet, but the inside was spicy. My classmates advised me to have Korean food. It was very delicious. I am good at cooking, so I helped my friend cook Chinese food—sweet dumplings. I made my classmates try it. They

most fun thing about the festival was when the Arabic students got ready to dance. This was great. I could learn how they dance and listen to their typical music. I



Left to Right: Son Trinh, Chia-Yi Liu, Ying-Ping Lin, and Dahirou N'Diaye

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A member of the Texas dance group with Hassan Alyami (middle) and Fahad I.D. Al Salem



Arab traditional dance

The Texas Square Dancers demonstrate American square dancing



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LCC students and teachers enjoy watching traditional dancing from Texas and from around the world.



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INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

LCC Students Present Recipes from Around the World

Kebsa

Hussain Al-Sagoor, 5B

Saudi people can't live without kebsa. Kebsa is the national dish for Saudi Arabia. Everyone there eats it, even the royal family. I think that kebsa is the favorite dish for our king. We like kebsa so much because it is filling, delicious, and traditional for us. Kebsa simply contains rice and meat or chicken, but we prefer meat in Saudi Arabia, especially lamb. It also has a special blend of herbs and spices. Good kebsa depends on the person who makes it. It depends on his or her mood. He or she can add extra things to the dish, such as a special kind of pepper or a different vegetable. Choosing good vegetables and good meat for the dish is very important.

"To"

Delwende Pierre Nikiema, 5A

One of the most popular dishes in my country, Burkina Faso, is called "To." It is made with white corn powder and water. From the middle ages, it has been cooked everywhere in my



L to R: Bakary Toure', Mouhamadou N'Daw, and Abdoul Traore

country. We used to

eat it with many kinds of sausages, depending on the culture. It's cooked like compact pasta, with lemon juice to make it taste good. Most people like it because it's very easy to cook and it's cheap.

To cook "to" we need corn powder, hot water and lemon juice. We first put the lemon juice in hot water and heat it, then we add the corn powder and mix it with a wood mixer to make it compact. After cooking it for twenty minutes, you can serve it. "To" is sometimes seasoned with different spices. It can be eaten by itself or with any kind of sausages like spicy and salted ones, with cooked leaves, or with vegetables. "To" is very delicious when hot, particularly for dinner because it's light and easy to eat.

Among all of my country's dishes "to" is commonly considered the national dish because it is so well liked and known by all the Burkinabe. It is eaten with any kind of food. "To" is to the Burkinabe what bread is to French.



Whole Salmon by Ahmed AlSalman, 1B

Ingredients:

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 3 tomatoes | 1 chili |
| 2 onions | cauliflower |
| parsley | whole salmon |
| garlic | oil |

Directions: Slice the onions. Cut up the tomatoes. Put the whole salmon in the casserole dish. Then put the sliced onions on the salmon and put tomatoes, onions, parsley, garlic and chili and cauliflower with the fish. After that, put the casserole dish in the stove for 1 hour.

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Kudu Sandwiches

Ahmed Al Ghnem, 1B

Ingredients:

3 small tomatoes
1 medium onion
breasts of chicken
oil
salt, pepper
cheese
bread
mayonnaise
soy sauce
sweet peppers

Directions: Chop the onions and chicken. Add the oil to the pot and add the onion. Saute the onions. Then add the chicken to the pot. Add salt and pepper and cook for 5-7 minutes. Chop the tomatoes and sweet peppers and add to the pot. Mix all in the pot. Add soy sauce. Cook 10 minutes and mix. Put in the sandwich with cheese and mayonnaise or ketchup or anything you like.

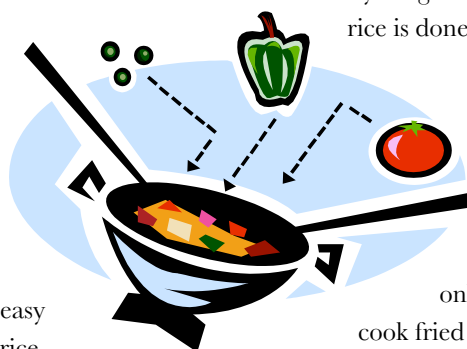
Fried Rice

Chao Chen, 5B

Fried rice, which is generally made from cold leftover rice fried with other leftover ingredients, originated as a home dish from China around 4000 BC. Later it became a healthier dish, made from fresh ingredients and often served as the fast food dish in a Chinese family.

Fried rice is prepared in a few simple and easy steps. First, the rice should be steamed well before it is fried. Second, the ingredients must be fried before they are fried together with the rice. The ingredients can include vegetables such as carrots, bean

sprouts, celery, or peas, as well as meat such as chicken, pork, shrimp, or spam, or possibly alternatives like tofu. Third, be sure to have enough vegetable oil and put the cooked rice and seasoning into it. Fried rice is often seasoned with black pepper and soy sauce, which gives fried rice its brown color and salty taste. Additionally, green onions and ground garlic add variety and extra flavor. The last step is to mix everything well, and the fried rice is done.



Fried rice is the so-called Chinese fast food because it generally takes only five minutes to cook fried rice, yet it does not lack essential nutrition. As a result, fried rice would be one of the best solutions for solving hunger problems.

Zainab's Pasta

Zainab Al Hazza, 1A

Ingredients:

2 boneless chicken filets	parsley
250 g pasta	1 small carrot
1 large onion	5 TBS butter
7 mushrooms	cheddar cheese
1 large sweet pepper	2 TBS mayonnaise
1 chili pepper	water
1/2 c. corn	salt, pepper, thyme
1 clove garlic	4 tsp. lemon juice

Directions:

Add the chicken filets and stir fry in a frying pan. Add the salt into the pan. Put the pepper and lemon on the chicken. Chop the onion, chili peppers and garlic. Sauté the onions, mushrooms, garlic with the butter in the pan. Put the water in the pot and boil the water. Add the pasta into the water and simmer for 20 minutes. Peel and chop the carrots. Add the carrots, sweet pepper and corn on top of the onion and mushrooms in the pan and cook until soft. Add the sweet peppers in the pan and stir-fry. Grate the cheese. Mix the pasta, sweet pepper, cheese, corn, parsley, mayonnaise, and add salt and thyme. Put the chicken and pasta into a dish.

More recipes on the next page

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Feijoada

Joao Silveira (Jokas), 5A

Feijoada is a typical dish made with beans, meat and vegetables. Feijoada is a very common dish in Angola, Brazil, and Portugal. It has become a part of the culture. Being far away from home and writing about one of my favorite dishes make feel homesick. The pure taste that it has is typical, and you can feel the smell when you are far from the kitchen. I still remember the Saturdays that I used to go to my grandmother's house to taste her wonderful and delicious feijoada. Besides its delicious taste, feijoada is also very rich in calcium and iron. In other words, feijoada is very healthy. Feijoada is translated in English as "bean stew." It is quite delicious, but it takes time to prepare.

Coming from a family in which learning how to cook is an obligation, I do strongly believe that I can teach you how to prepare a wonderful and tasty feijoada. The first thing that should be noted is that there is a specific kind of bean, called the pinto bean, that we have to use. However, if you don't have pinto beans, you can use red beans or white beans. The beans usually take a lot of time to cook, perhaps thirty minutes or an hour. The beans must be very soft before we add any other ingredients. The type and quality of the meat is

very important for a good feijoada. We can use three to four types of meat such as chicken, pork, beef, and sausage. The meat must be cut in small pieces and then marinated in salt and garlic for about ten minutes. Next, put the meat in another pot and cook the meat for about thirty minutes or until you feel it is okay to eat (note that the



Yiyu Wang (left) and Joao Silveira (right) with American friend

meat must be as soft as possible). We can not forget the vegetables because that is what makes the feijoada healthier. The types of vegetables used are cabbage and tomatoes. Wash the cabbage and the tomatoes very well and then chop them into small pieces. Now that we have all the ingredients prepared, we are ready for the feijoada.

The second stage is to start mixing all the ingredients we have cooked: the beans,

the meat and the vegetables. There is no specific rule as to how to mix them. We can start by putting the beans in a new pot and letting them cook for about ten minutes. Then add all the meat to the beans, and after ten minutes add the vegetables. After another ten minutes, add a little bit of vegetable oil and salt mixed with mashed garlic, and I can assure you that after twenty minutes you will start to smell the wonderful aroma. Let the mixture cook for another thirty minutes. There is one more thing that we still have to do, which is to prepare the steamed rice. Steaming the rice is the easiest thing that we have to do, which is why it should be the last step. Prepare another pot with vegetable oil and onions and add water. When the water starts to boil add the rice. It will probably take twenty minutes for the rice to be cooked. Now that we have everything ready, it is time to eat and I do believe that it will make your mouth water.

Feijoada is a very healthy dish, so do not worry about fat or carbohydrates. And when you cook it, just make sure you have everything well cooked, especially the meat and the beans, and that the vegetables are well washed. Moreover, if one day you have the opportunity to go to one of those countries I have mentioned above, make sure that you taste the feijoada before you leave the country.

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Devil Spicy Sauce

Abdoul Traore (Papi), 5B

This sauce is so spicy that it is called “Devil Spicy Sauce,” especially because of the main ingredient, which looks like a banana but has a spicy taste. The name “Devil Spicy Sauce” comes from a long time ago. It is said that the people made a pact with the devil, and to punish them, God cursed them and caused more deaths. God would forgive them only if they atoned by eating the same fruit that caused their pain.

“Devil Spicy Sauce” was created by the oldest Malians in order to make the fruit easier to eat. In the beginning, this sauce was made only for the soldiers and the oldest Malians, but sometimes people who are ill can consume it because of its ability to cure many sorts of illnesses. A female uses it in order to find a real soldier to be her husband because only a man with a strong mind and incredible strength can eat it.

“Devil Spicy Sauce” is extremely hard to make and requires some particular skills. First, you have to be over 35 years old because it is claimed that the older you are, the wiser you should be, and wisdom is an important factor. Second, there are some secret ingredients which are known by few people. Finally, the most important ingredient, which is very rare and only appears every two years at midnight, is the “devil spice.”

Before you cook it, there is a meeting with the elders to decide who is going to lead the operation and who is going to assist him. The cooking day must be a really sunny day. Then the operation can start at exactly 2:00 a.m.

The leader puts the pot on the fire. After five minutes, water from rocks or mountains is added and a special mixture is prepared. The mixture includes tomatoes, salt, devil spice, oil, and some leaves cut from secret trees. All things must be stirred while the leader/wizard says some magical formulas for five hours. After that, the cooking is completed.

It has been eaten from generation to generation, from people to people, because of its ability to cure many kinds of illnesses. It is also used for its power to reveal the truth about the paternity of any child from the Malian village called Kolokani, for anyone doubting whether or not a child is from their family. However, the “Devil Spicy Sauce” has no effect on somebody who is not born in Kolokani.

Poem

*Since you've been gone, the
night seems so long, the
moon loses its brightness,
the sun hasn't risen,
nothing is left in here just
the memories of you and I.*



*Can you tell me why I miss the beauty of your
eyes and the kindness beneath your smile? Please
tell me how I can stop the tears I cry and get the
darkness out of my life, please come back and
turn my loneliness to paradise, be my angel that
flies in my sky, let me breathe the air you breathe
so I can be alive again, like I use to be... by
your side.*

Ahmad Alkhamees, 6A

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*The roses of her cheeks thawed and its essence spread.
The sun is under the dark nights.*

*The twilight's image is like her lips and at the back of it is lightning.
The thunder is the sound of my heart beating.
My heart rises to its death by her love and I won't break our pledge.*

*I thought she was waking because her eyes seemed drowsy,
The eyelashes fluttered near her dark eyes.*

*Mute eyes, which hide and disclose, are magnetizing my mind from
north until south.
What's this flirtation? What's happening?
When she blinks, she answers my questions.*

Poem and drawing by Abdullah Bandar Alajmi, 2B

Alone in the Moment

*You are alone in the world, with nobody there
To hear you, to give you a hand
Give you advice or just simply be there
Without doing anything, just being there for anything*

*However you will never know how people would be,
Those who one day appear to give you everything in the
world
But in an instant disappear, and turn their back on you
To make you feel bad like you were worthless to them.
In those moments you do not know what to do,
And you realize that you are alone.*

*It may be the most unexpected person can give you something
That you would never forget, it might be that person
Who can change your day, and make you feel
That everything you have done in your life is worthwhile
But who also is going to leave, and you will realize that you are alone again.*

*In those moments you will know that everything
You have done in your life does not have any sense
At all, until you give a hand to someone
That might need like you did and you might
Realize that you were never alone, because someone gave you a hand
And you might not have realized it that day
But at the end you will always remember it.*

David Buitrago, 6B

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My Little Cousin

Abdullah Bandar Alajmi, 2B

My little cousin from Riyadh in Saudi Arabia is four years old. One day his mother bought a kite for him. He lost this kite because the weather was windy. His mother bought another one for him. When he was at home, he lost this second one too. He was sad when he went to sleep.

While my mother and my cousin's mother were talking together, he woke up during the night. He came to the mothers and said "Abdullah (meaning me) will come back by airplane. So he will find my kite in the sky and he will bring it with him to me." Since he is expecting me to bring his kite to him, I will have to buy one for him when I return home.

Yosra Almashamea, 2C

Home I want to live in
 Everybody likes the happiness
 A far cry from here
 Very close to my heart, but far away from my eyes
 Everybody likes the leisure
 Name of paradise

Sang Hyun Lee, 2C

Stupid in my idea of love
 And
 Nerd of choosing gift to sense
 Gosh! It's me
 However,
 Yesterday and today and tomorrow
 Unlimited love, I'll give to love
 Name of love, this is my life

What's Hidden in a Word?!

Gabriela Torrez, 2C

Good luck
 Amazing
 Beautiful
 You can't live without me

Ahmed A.K. Almulhim, 2C

Adventurer	Killer soccer team
Happy	Soccer
Muslim	Anzagi is my favorite player.
Eastern region	
Doctor	

Sidiki Coulibaly, 2C

Sunny and nice
 Out of control for you
 Loving you is the history of my life
 After a rain the sun is coming
 Near to you
 Gold and money for you
 Ever near you

Every day my love for you grows
 Nothing is in my life if I lose you
 Remembered the poem by heart
 Inseparable my love for you
 Quickly come to me and catch my love
 Usually I think of you
 Eternally I memorize special moments

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SPECIAL EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Bairam

By Ahmed Nazir, 4A

If you want to enjoy a strange, simple, and interesting festival, just visit Egypt for the Bairam festival. It's the best festival, in my opinion, in Egypt. In the morning of the first day, you will see the people going to pray in a big hall. Can you imagine how many people you can see in only one hall? You'll see at least 20,000 because in Cairo the population is very high.

After prayer, every family goes near their home and finds a good and healthy animal, such as a cow or sheep, and divides it into three parts-- the first for the poor people, the second for friends and neighbors, and the third (usually the smallest part) for the family. Then everyone chooses his job. For example, I take the part for the poor people to them and my brother takes the

neighbor's part to them. My father tells the butcher how to cut the parts, and my mother cooks the meat.

After finishing this job, I go with my friends on a trip in the desert beside the pyramids to enjoy our time and grill the



Mahdi Al-Dhawi and Mana Al-Hawkash

meat. Sometimes we ride horses while the meat is grilling. We stay there till midnight, playing and have fun.



On the second, third, and fourth days of the holiday, I travel with my family to Alexandria to enjoy the beautiful views and the sea and to meet our friends there.

S.I.A.O.

Rebeca (Becky) Compaore, 4B

SIAO (Salon Internationale de l'Art de Ouagadougou), which means Arts and Crafts Fair of Ouagadougou in English, is my favorite event. It takes place every two years, and this year it takes place from October 27 through November 6. The SIAO is a gathering of craftsmen from countries around the world in Burkina Faso (West Africa). It is a large international show of West African craftsmen products and woven textiles. During this event, workers and students are glad to leave their jobs and their work early to go see the expositions from other cultures. People go with friends or with their family, and some come from other countries just to enjoy the expositions, such as wood or bronze sculptures, leather working, basket making, painting, musical instruments, jewelry, iron work, batik, and many other things.

What is special about this event is that in every festival a continent or island is represented by one or two countries that are invited especially to show their culture and dexterity in art. Cultural activities, such as dancing and traditional music and exhibitions of masks, are also enjoyed by the public. I like it because our parents give us some money to buy a souvenir, which could be the necklace or the bronze statue that I always wanted, and because I can learn more about other tribes and cultures of other countries.

VOICES

Children's Day

Soo Jung Kwon, 4A

Children's Day (Orini Nal) is a South Korean national holiday celebrated on May 5. It was founded by the Korean children's writer Pang Chong-hwan in 1923 as a way to instill in the children a sense of independence and national pride. Children's Day highlights the dignity of children and their need for love, care, and respect. It is also a day to honor adults that have contributed to improving the lives of children. Everyone who has passed through childhood has good memories about that day. Many cities have parades, and a lot of museums, zoos, amusement parks, and movie theaters offer steep discounts or free admission to children. But, most importantly, gifts are given to children by their parents and relatives. When I was young, I received presents from my parents and went to the amusement park with my family. Not only did we have a good time with our family, but we also had time to think about the origin of Children's Day.

Victory Day

Anatoly Andreyko, 4B

There are three very popular holidays in my country: New Year's, Space Day, and Victory Day. Victory Day is the day when Hitler's Germany capitulated in the Second World War to Russian, American, and European armies. This happened on March 9, 1945. Now, on this day, we have a vacation. Usually we celebrate with a victory parade. People watch parades and



TV programs and present special gifts to participants of this war. Today those people are our (great-) grandfathers and (great-) grandmothers; therefore, they are a very small population. Also on this day, people visit a memorial for those who never came back home after the war. Children like this holiday very much. Usually they receive gifts from parents and grandparents. Also, our grandparents tell us many interesting stories about their life and the Second World War.

Forest Day

Soon Kyo Lee, 4B

My favorite holiday is Forest Day. It is similar to Arbor Day in the U.S. The date is April 5th. Korea was an agricultural country until the early 20th century, so trees are very important resources, and this time of year (April) is a very good time to plant trees in Korea.

In addition, a lot of trees are burned out by forest fires every year, so the importance of trees increases each year. On this day, most people plant trees somewhere themselves.

They remember the importance of trees again and decide to take care of them well. I feel the warmth of nature on this day. I get hope for myself, and I think of friendship with nature by planting. Therefore, I like this holiday very much.

Chinese New Year

Shasha Zhang, 4B

My favorite holiday is traditional Chinese New Year, which we also call spring festival. It is the most important festival in China. It consists of a period of celebrations, starting on New Year's Day, celebrated on the first day of the first month of the Chinese calendar. This holiday is a family affair, a time of reunion and thanksgiving. We have a big dinner with family on New Year's Eve, which includes a lot of traditional delicious food. In fact, different foods have varied meanings. For example, fish means a wish for surpluses and bountiful harvests every year. Dumplings symbolize abundance and wealth for the household. Oranges are symbols for plentiful happiness and prosperity. In addition, children can receive red packets from elders, which contain some kind of good fortune. This is one of the reasons why I love this holiday. The other reason is that everybody can get more than seven days for vacation. We often visit family or friends during these days. Moreover, we can use the vacation days to go shopping or travel. I really enjoy myself in my favorite holiday time.



VOICES

Welcome to Venezuela!

Angel Romero, 5B

I've noticed a blank expression on people's faces when I tell them I am from Venezuela. Therefore, I've decided to write a few lines about my country, which Christopher Columbus described in 1449 as a paradise on earth when he arrived on its coasts. When the first explorers arrived in South America, they found houses over the water, in the Sinamaica Lagoon, reminding them of Venice. Therefore, they named that region *Little Venice*, which became Venezuela in 1500.

Venezuela is located in the northern part of South America and is bordered on the north by the Caribbean Sea, which gives it a great opportunity to develop its tourism economy. Venezuela is also blessed by nature, having the most beautiful and unique sights you will ever see. There are beaches, plains, and mountains. Pay attention because I am going to describe some of the most beautiful sights. Keep them in mind so you can visit them when you decide to go to Venezuela.

Let's start in Caracas, which is the capital of Venezuela. Caracas has a population of around 4 million people and is located in a valley surrounded by the Avila, which is a mountain that reaches 7,800 feet, providing wonderful weather all year round. Furthermore, Caracas is a cultural center, hosting every year a great number of groups from all over the world for the International Theater Festival. It is also known that the museum of modern art of Caracas is one of the most important in South America.

Now let's move from the city crowd to the peaceful place of Los Roques, which is an archipelago located on the Caribbean, 100 miles from Caracas's port. The special things about Los Roques are the white sandy beaches and crystalline waters with incredible colors.



Los Roques Archipelago

It is time to move far away from the center of Venezuela to the huge forest in the south. There you will find El Santo Angel, the largest water falls in the world, which are 3,000 feet high. You will also be able to camp at the Canaima National Park, and La Gran Sabana.



Salto Angel Water Fall

The next stop is the Andean ranges, which offers extraordinary views and picturesque spots, making it an authentic place to relax. The Andes include the country's highest peaks, The highest point in the Venezuelan Andes is El Pico Bolivar, which rises to 16,427 feet in the Cordillera de Merida.



Bolivar Peak

Don't leave Venezuela without visiting Coro, the city that was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1993 for its rich fusion of local traditions with Spanish and Dutch architectural techniques. It was founded in 1527 during an attempt by the Spanish colonists. Driving from Coro Punto Fijo, you can admire the spectacular Coro Sand dunes, sand mountains sculpted by the wind that cover an area of 91,280,00 hectares. The Coro sand dunes were declared a National Park in 1972.



Sand dunes

VOICES

The Rules for Conversation in My Native Language

Nguyen Dang Khoa, 5B

In my country, Vietnam, we don't have any general rules for conversations. Basically, we use different pronouns to talk to each other, and it depends on the age, title, relationship, or esteem. People have various styles of dialogues.

Younger people have to show their respect to older people by using the words: "Ong," "Ba," "Ba," "Me," "Bac," "Co," "Anh," "Chi," and "Em," meaning Grandfather, Grandmother, Uncle, Aunt, elder brother or elder sister, and brother or sister, respectively. Unlike English pronouns, the Vietnamese pronouns used in calling each other are so complicated that it is too difficult for foreigners to remember all of them. To elders, such as a grandfather, grandmother, uncle, or aunt, we have to use another word, "Thua," and the pronoun to talk to them. For example, "Thua ong" means "Dear Grandfather" in English. Otherwise, we are scolded or blamed as "not educated" or "indecent." In addition, we are supposed to listen to the seniors. Argument with seniors is evaluated as a "disrespectful attitude." Children usually obey their parents or seniors without quarrels or debates.

In social relations, for example, in institutes, schools, organizations, or business, we have a variety of pronouns to use. Based on titles given in organizations, people have to say the word "thua" and/or the title and name. If not, they are considered disrespectful. Arguments can occur or discipline measures can be taken when people are not respected. Misunderstanding in communication is sometimes a big problem in social relations. People can remember

such attitudes for a long time. Some people even keep them in their mind forever. In small or large Asian companies, employees or junior staff members are not supposed to quarrel with or debate with seniors or bosses. Otherwise, they can be dismissed or persecuted, especially in family- or state-owned companies. By contract, people working for western companies or multinationals can discuss, negotiate, and debate with their seniors or bosses freely. Everything is discussed to find out the best solutions. However, some western bosses are also conservative and stubborn. They don't change their mind when their decisions are made.

Generally speaking, in Vietnam or Asian countries, classes have existed for a long time. Time goes by, and the society has also changed. People are less conservative. Nevertheless, thoughts of feudalism are still in existence in society. Most of the conservatives are the elderly or middle-aged. Youth or open-minded people normally like western styles of conversation. It is completely reasonable because discussion (or debate) is used to crack problem-solving questions, which is sometimes hard for people to do alone.

Learning English in the USA

Liza Abdullaev, 5A

English is the most popular language in the world. Now almost every intelligent person can speak it. Some people are afraid that they will never learn English because they don't have language skills. However, even if you don't have a natural ability for learning languages, you can learn it if you follow a system which consist of several easy steps.

The most important thing you have to do is to overcome your shyness. You should try speaking as much as possible. Making new friends always helps to improve your ability to speak. Talking with strangers on the street or in the stores could also be very beneficial; asking them questions and listening to how people respond help a lot to learn new words and expressions.

The next important step in learning English is the reading. One could start with reading books, magazines and newspapers. It is not recommended to use a dictionary for every new word one might not understand. It is much more helpful and useful to try to understand and guess the meaning of the words from the context. After guessing the meaning of the words, you should write them down in a notebook. It helps to reinforce the understanding in the memory. Only then one should look up those words in the dictionary of American English to verify the correct meaning.

Besides reading and talking, listening to spoken English is not less important. Listening to music on the radio and watching TV help to intensify the perception of the language. Steps that were applied for reading could also be used in listening. In addition, you should listen and try to repeat those words with the same pronunciation.

Learning a new language is not an easy task, especially being in a new country. However, it shouldn't become a barrier for communication. English could be a very easy language to learn if one would follow the guidelines that were described in this essay and enjoy the studying of the new language.

VOICES

DANCE THERAPY

Carlos A. Duran, 5A

In Venezuela, it is common to find people that like to practice dance therapy.

Dance therapy is a combination of dancing and relaxing. It is a kind of exercise that consists of three parts where people can enjoy dancing. There are not many rules in this therapy; the most important rule is to enjoy it. In this kind of exercise, it's not important if you are a very good dancer or not, but is really important to have enough desire to do it. These therapies consist of following an instructor when he is dancing. He dances to different kinds of music with different rhythms. When you follow the instructor, it is like an aerobics class but more relaxing. Also this therapy has some benefits for your health.

The first part is the beginning that consists of preparing the body to start the therapy. It is a form of stretching that helps people to be ready to dance. Second is the dancing part where people follow a teacher when he is dancing rhythms like salsa, merengue, pop, tango and others. And the last part is when we relax our bodies after finishing the second part. This is the cool-down time.

The best way to enjoy dance therapy, I think, is trying to do the exercise considering our capacities. We don't have to work our body more than is necessary or above our capacities. If we work our body more



L to R: Silvana Lara, Lulu Sun, and Katherine Suarez

than is necessary, the person is not going to be relaxed. Usually in dance therapy, we can find people who are different ages. For example, people who are very young, like teenagers or younger, and people who are around sixty or older can all participate. In other words, this means that dance therapy is for everybody.

Also, dance therapy has many benefits. For example, it is very good if you want to be in shape and you can learn how to dance at the same time. Another benefit is

that you can make friends. When you know how to dance well, it is very easy to make friends at parties or social meetings. Also, if you are in shape, especially in countries like Venezuela, where looking good is important, it is easier to find new friends. All of

these are very important, but I think the most important benefit is the benefit to your mind because you can relax your mind for a moment and forget all your problems. I think this is the best benefit that any therapy can bring us.

When I was a child, I used to dance for a company. But when I started the university, I couldn't because I didn't have enough time. For that reason I started to practice dance therapy; I continued for a long time until I became an instructor. Actually, I think I am in shape and I feel that my health is very good. For those reasons I would like to recommend dance therapy to everyone.



VOICES

NOTES FROM THE STUDENT ADVISOR

by Dave Burns

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Our first trip of the semester was during registration week, when we went to the Rothko Chapel and the Menil Collection and then to the Galleria. We saw many interesting things at the museum. Afterwards, we had lunch, shopped at the Galleria, and saw the Waterwall.



The next event was the class photo followed by the LCC Sports Tournament. Everyone had a good time. Winners were as follows: Bowling: 1st–Hussain Al Yami, 2nd – Abdullah Hus-sain, and 3d – Dawas Al Salem, Billiards: 1st –Tai-Lun Hsiun, and 2nd – Allen (Yiyu) Wang Table Tennis: 1st – Emad Al Saleh, 2nd –Ferass Al-Hakeem.

On March 10th, many students, teachers, and guests enjoyed a real Texas experience by going to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, where they saw prize-winning animals, visited the carnival, and saw the rodeo. The rodeo was followed by the popular Texas singer Pat Green.

The LCC Culture Festival was another popular event. We got to share each other's cultures as we tasted dishes from around the world prepared by our own students and staff! We were entertained by the Texas Square Dancers, who showed us how to square dance with many of our students joining in. Afterwards, LCC students performed some of their dances, too. Many students wore clothing from their countries. We enjoyed seeing all the Saudi Arabian clothes as well as clothing from Africa, Vietnam, and other countries.

We will end the semester with a trip to Sam Houston State Park near Huntsville. This is a day when we can relax with classmates and teachers, have a picnic, and enjoy being out by the lake. The day after



Anatoly Andreyko, Semi Ro, and Rebecca Compaore enjoy bowling in the LCC Sports Tournament.

the trip, we end the semester with the graduation ceremony and a reception. We wish good luck to those students who will be leaving us. For those who will be returning, start planning for the summer and for welcoming the new students who will be joining us.

SOCCER TEAM

Thanks to the LCC Eagles. They made it to the second round of the tournament. Our thanks go to all the players for representing us.



VOICES

IMMIGRATION

If you are in F-1 student status, you need to make sure you maintain your status. SEVIS, which stands for Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, is an electronic tracking system that keeps student records. We have to update it at the beginning and end of each term. It is very

If you will be transferring to another school, it is important that you see Dave Burns or Sam Long so that you can follow the proper procedure and have your transfer recorded in the SEVIS and can get a new I-20 from your new school.

If you are planning to take a summer vacation, see Dave or Sam first. You must

semester to study, you cannot have a summer vacation UNLESS you are planning to leave the U.S. during the summer OR you have finished your English at the end of the spring semester and will be entering a college or university for fall semester. If you do not qualify for a vacation and you plan to stay in the U.S., attending only the summer II session is not enough to keep your full-time student status. You will have to attend the whole summer to maintain your F-1 status. If you have any doubts or questions, be sure to see Dave or Sam. It is very important that you maintain your F-1 status. Because of the changes in immigration law, it is now very difficult to get your student status back if you lose it.

If you are traveling outside of the U.S., you must have your current I-20 signed on the back. Your visa must also be good.

Students who made the Special Registration when they entered the U.S. must check out at the airport with Homeland Security when they leave the U.S. See Dave if you need to do this and get the instructions on how to check out.

If you move to a new apartment or house, you must fill out a change-of-address form (get one in the LCC office) so that we can update your SEVIS record. This is required by immigration law.



LCC students from Taiwan seem to be having a good time on Class Photo Day near the fountain.

important that we know what you will be doing so that we can keep your records current and you will keep your F-1 student status.

fill out a vacation request form (get one in the LCC office).

The rules for intensive English students are a bit complicated in regards to summer vacations. If spring was your first

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Ahmed Nazir appears to be saying, "Draw!"

LET'S RODEO!

LCC students got into the Texan spirit at the Houston Livestock Show and rodeo!



Above: Phuong Thanh Ly, Aoua Kone, and Irelida Torres get ready to watch the Rodeo and featured entertainer.



LCC students check out "Agventure Plaza," a popular feature of the Houston Livestock Show.

VOICES



Culture Is Fascinating

Karina Lima, 6A

Studying with people throughout the world, I have had a wonderful experience. Culture is something fascinating. People wear different styles of clothes, talk and look at you in a different way, and behave in different ways. Their religion, beliefs and trust are directly linked to such distinctions.

The differences are so interesting. Each person from a different country has something that makes him or her special. Clothes are an interesting example. A Muslim woman wears a scarf that hides her hair from adult males. In the beginning I thought it was something so strange that I couldn't understand its purpose. Eventually, I realized that this was an important part of her religion that she should follow. Her beauty is for her husband and family. The beauty for these "strangers" is based on the style, color and quality of their

scarf.

In addition, sometimes some friends look at you in a way that you don't like very much. However, it's not on purpose. They only recognize something as unusual for their culture. As an example, people from South America like wearing tight clothes and having closer contact with people. On the other hand, people from many other countries don't act in this way. Humans have a tendency to judge the other even if it is about her or his way of greeting each other.

Another interesting difference is how people behave when they want to help someone. Some people, like Latinos and Muslims, help their friends in a direct way, with words. If you are in trouble, they will give you support. They show their friends that they have friends to count on. Other people, like Chinese, Japanese, Koreans and Taiwanese, behave with companionship. They are available to their friends all the time, but in a silent way.

As it has been shown, people are so different and at the same time so similar. Once you accept their differences as qualities of a different culture, you learn how to appreciate and admire them. Culture is everywhere in everybody. Culture makes us a special person with several qualities.

Thank you!

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Voices

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