



# International Voices

George Fox University  
English Language Institute  
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## The Bamboo Park



By Zhu Feng

My favorite place is the bamboo park which is not far away from my home. Every month I will go there.

There is a big lake in the middle of the park. I like sitting beside the lake. I always like dropping myself in the lawn beside the lake and listening to music. When I sit in the lawn in the morning, I can hear many different kinds of birds sing. They sing very well. It makes me feel relaxed. I always lose myself in their singing. The smell of the park is from the bamboo. That is the special smell I like best.

The bamboo will keep green all the year round. I like walking in the bamboo. When you are walking in it, the green bamboo will encircle you. Sometimes you can see the birds flying in the bamboo. No one can faze you. You can relax yourself in the bamboo. I like this kind of feeling. I like walking with my MP3 in the bamboo. I forget everything that makes me troubled and lose myself in it without thinking about the study and the homework. This is my favorite place. Every time I go there, I can relax myself.



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# Early Education in China



By Guo Rui

My name is Guo Rui. My family name is Guo, and my given name is Rui. I am from Hunan, China. What

I'd like to talk about today is one aspect of China—the education system.

Initially, China's education is particularly good in the period of childhood and adolescence. I still remember that, when I was in my elementary school and middle school, the teacher always gave us huge amounts of homework after we had taken nine classes in the day time, and I could not go to sleep until 12 o'clock every night to finish all my homework. Moreover, in high school—like everybody—I studied extremely hard to get a good result on the college entrance examination, which is

the most important exam in China. When I was young, I always complained that I had to study all day long. But now I am aware that all these things were to help me to build a solid foundation for my knowledge system.

Admittedly, China has a superior basic education system; however, the majority of kids who grow up in this system have just one ability: reading books and taking exams. We have no time to do any other things. In contrast, I know that American kids always have lots of fun in their childhood, and they can do various sports, dances, music, etc. Therefore, I maintain that China needs to absorb the essence and discard the dross of the two cultures.

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# New Life in America



By Vivian Zhu

I still cannot believe I am in America now. Although I live in a new place, eat different food, and listen to and speak English every day, I still feel it is hard to adapt to the new environment. I try to not keep going the same way that I used in China, but I am afraid I need more time. I would like to share my experience about the differences in life and study between China and America.

Firstly, there are some different habits in daily life. Chinese like to drink warm water but Americans prefer cold. Even now I always put a glass of water into the microwave to heat. Moreover, the way of cooking is different. For example, I will never forget when my friend did some cooking, and the fire alarm began to ring. We felt very ashamed because of disturbing the neighbor.

In addition, the way of study here is really different from that in China. College students in China do not study really hard. They have very little or even no homework, whereas the students in Chinese high schools are very busy every day. Even more, they don't have weekends or any spare time. I still remember I never went to bed before midnight when I was in high school. And there are all kinds of quizzes and exams every day. So when I went to college, I thought I was free and I didn't want to study anymore. And most of the Chinese undergraduates think like this. On the other hand, I know American college students always study hard. They spend a lot of time on reading and reviewing

the knowledge. That is what I need to do now.

In conclusion, you can never know how amazing it is to live in another country unless you try it. I hope I can make more friends here and enjoy the new lifestyle well.

## About GFU



By Xiao Yezhen

George Fox is a beautiful university. There are many trees. In the Fall, you can pick cherries from the trees on campus. Sometimes you can see a teensy squirrel. It is running and finding food in the grass. If people come close, the squirrel keeps doing its own thing. It does not fear men. It is so cute.

The buildings have no more than four stories. So you can see the widest sky. You will feel that the sky is so close. There is a little garden on campus. Colorful flowers begin to open.

There are a lot of Chinese students. We usually go to the library to study, or we play basketball in the gymnasium. There are many activities, like dance parties, cooking, games, and so on. It's fun. The American students are all very friendly here. They are willing to help you adapt to the life here. I like to live here, and I like the people here.



## My Room



By Wang Xin

I have a small but relaxing bedroom. When I enter my room, the first thing I see is a big window. Looking outside,

I see an old poplar near my window; the sun shining through the swaying leaves into my room looks like a bunch of pearls, sparkling on the floor. Next to the window is my table, which is a wooden brown table. I often do my homework there, sitting warm in the sunshine and cooled by the breeze coming through the window.

On the left side of the table is my stereo, which is my favorite; it includes a couple of old black speakers and an old black amplifier. On the right side of the table is my bookshelf; it is full of a colorful collection of my favorite books and CDs. My bed is next to the wall, on the right side of the door.

I turn on the stereo, insert my favorite saxophone CD, walk to the bed, lie down. The soft mattress makes me feel relaxed and comfortable. If I close my eyes, I can feel warmish sunshine on my face. Enjoying sweet soprano saxophone music from the old speakers, gradually I feel peace fill my heart. In my room, I do not need to worry about anything. The music keeps going; I fall into a deep sleep and have a sweet dream.

## Sanya's Beach



By Huang Jueqiong

Sanya is a nice city in China. I like this city very much, especially Sanya's beach.

I could remember, when I was eleven years old, I went to Sanya's beach. When I arrived at the entrance of the beach, I could see a huge blue sea and felt the sea and sky mix together because the sea and sky looked the same color. I also saw the waves in the sea. The waves made some fish skid on a stone. Fish in the exposure of sunlight reflected a glarey silver. The sand looked like white because of sunlight. As I walked on the beach, the sand felt soft. Also I saw some conch shells, broken but still lovely nestled in the sand. Also, as I looked at the glittering sea and took a deep breath of salt air, I felt a new feeling—something peaceful—wash over me. As I stood by the sea, spray flapped onto my feet. The water made me feel cool; it was very comfortable. On one side of the beach, I saw several tall cocoa trees. I think the trees make the beach have another beautiful color. Sometimes several white seagulls flew across the blue sky.

I like this beach very much. I will not forget the sea, sky, conch shells, cocoa trees, white seagulls... I will not forget anything about Sanya's beach.

# A Life Changing Experience



By Oksana Kozushko

When I was fourteen, I was adopted from Russia by an American family.

When I was ten I went to live in an orphanage. After that, I lived in two different orphanages. The third was my favorite. It was like a home because the teachers were very nice and were always there for me. The teachers weren't enough, though. I still was missing something in my life. No one could give me the love I needed. Only parents can do that.

I never thought that I could have parents again. When I found out that someone wanted to adopt me, I was very excited. I was also scared, thinking maybe I wouldn't be good enough for them, that I wouldn't be the child they would want, or that they wouldn't like me for who I was. My teachers were always telling me to not mess this one up because it was my big chance to have a family again. When the time came to meet my parents, I told myself, "Don't mess this up Oksana."

When I met my parents, they were different

people. I had never met anyone like them before. They didn't care about my past or what I had done. They just cared about giving me love and what is important in life. My parents loved me for who I was and they didn't back out of my adoption. They did what they believed God wanted them to do. My parents didn't listen to the adoption agency when they told them that adoption is hopeless, especially for a girl who was fourteen.

Since that adoption moment, my life has changed. I have parents again, new brothers, and a new life. The choice I made to be adopted, four years ago, brought me a long way in life. It helped me make goals for my life, such as getting a good education and working towards getting a job. My hope is to one day become a social worker. When I was adopted, my social worker helped me realize that there is always hope for kids like me. I would love to help kids see that there is always hope for them and that they are able to accomplish their dreams in life.



# My Spiritual Journey



By Angus Yip

I am Angus Yip, an international student from Hong Kong. I am really enjoying study at George

Fox University, a private Christian college. In addition to Fox having a Christian background, I also like the small class sizes at Fox. Having a nice school environment, like the one found here, is important for my studies. Although my family does not have any religious background, I still asked my parents to send me to a Christian school for my studies because I had a positive experience at a Christian school in Hong Kong. It helped me in different ways. In this essay, I would like to share my experience with you and I hope you will enjoy it.

When I was a kindergartener, I started to get to know God. I have really enjoyed my studies in Christian schools for a number of other reasons. The teachers have been really nice and helpful; they have helped me in academic and friendly ways. The students that study at the Christian schools are really friendly, peaceful and helpful. I learned a lot about God's story and what He did for us at school.

I have studied at Christian schools my whole academic life. It has changed me spiritually, changed how I view my life, and improved my academics. In Hong Kong, we had a lot of activities to learn about God; one was these was

chapel meetings. Also, we had a reading time for every student to read the Bible and do devotions to help us understand how Jesus did miracles for us.

When I was choosing a college in America, I decided to choose George Fox University in Oregon. I live in the dorm during the school year. The dorm has done a lot of activities to help the needy. For example, we have served the people who need help and have gone to church. This has been a meaningful experience for me. I am getting to know more about God, but I think I still can learn more from Him. I know there continues to be a lot to learn from Him, so I want to study in a Christian college to continue learning from God.

When I first started learning about God, I felt like it was very boring for me to learn about Him. In Hong Kong, I just learned the famous events in his whole life, but I could not understand the significance of these events. Since I came to America to study, I really learned more about God. The school has offered many opportunities to serve others, and I am able to do something that I learned from Him. I am really happy about this because at first I knew nothing about God and now I understand His deep meanings. I appreciate the changes God has made in me. He helps me have no fear because I know God will always take care of me. He makes my life better.



# The Exciting Class

By Amy Yan Zhang



This is the fifth week that I've been here. I was excited about everything when I came here. The campus is so beautiful. I really enjoy the natural scenery, like the fresh air, lots of green grasses and lovely flowers; every time I look around it catches my eye. I really enjoy the difference here. My dream was to go abroad to study and experience another culture. It's not a daydream anymore. I'm now experiencing America with my own eyes and no longer just experiencing it through television or movie. It's really exciting!

Everything was going well before the semester began. But troubles poured over me when I had my first class. That was a sociology class, and the way of teaching is really different from my country. In my country, the teacher is a lecturer who always keeps speaking in the class. The teachers write important aspects of the course on the board, and we work hard to take notes and just keep listening. Then, the rest of work is to understand the teacher's words. How can I discuss with others? I felt frustrated and kept silent in the class the whole week. Likewise, we got a lot of homework to do, and I had to stay up late every night to finish my homework. I felt so tired and depressed at that time. But I really want to do well to my class. So, after one week, I started getting adjusted to the learning ways here. I try my best to study sociology. Now, I found the feeling of sharing my

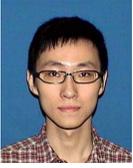
opinion with others through the discussion is super great.

Now, the sociology class is my favorite class among all of the classes I have. It is a lot of fun. For instance, when we learned the chapter called cultures, my professor took a variety of deserts for us to have a taste. I tasted a kind of Italian fish, and it was delicious. I felt excited about that, because I was always curious about new things. Likewise, we played games, like Monopoly, which we played in our childhood. Although those children's games were different from my country, some rules of the games were similar. This rarely happened in my first two years college in China. I always discover new findings during every class. In addition to the sociology class, on every weekend, I spend one hour and a half in my Bible teacher's home to have a Bible study. We listen to some Christian songs and stories, and I really appreciate and enjoy that time. Now, everything is going well again. And I enjoy the life of challenges and exciting classes here.

I would take my courage and do it all over again.



# Building Relationship at GFU



By Kun (Leo) Qian

Hi, everyone.

My name is Kun Qian, but I prefer that others call me Leo. I will describe a little of my background and my experience at GFU, and present to American students the situation of some new Chinese students as well as my own analysis.

So far, I have been at GFU for three months for the MAT program. I always feel happy and satisfied because I have a good housemate, nice teachers and friendly classmates. Everything is going well for me.

But some other new students do not feel that way. For this new semester, I am taking some language classes with the new Chinese students. By talking with them, I noticed that they did not seem happy or satisfied with their relationship with local people. I was told that they found it hard to find American students to talk to for improving their English, or to build up a long-term relationship with English speakers. This confused me because I did not have these issues at all. So I found out more about their situation by comparing our daily schedule.

First of all, besides the language classes, I am still taking my MAT classes several nights a week and on Saturday, which provides me many more opportunities to communicate with different people. But all they have are language classes with all Chinese students.

Second, because I have already finished

one semester, I am more used to the teaching style here so that besides all the classes, I audit two math classes, work in the math lab and take a piano class, so I have many chances to talk in English and make friends. But some of them thought the homework of language classes is already so overwhelming that they do not have enough time to handle it, and also mostly they do homework together. Thus, less and less time would be spent on communication with American students.

Third, I live with an American with whom I can talk English and who will show me any aspects of American daily life that I cannot see in China. For example, she asked me to go to church, a wedding or a family reunion with her; we went water skiing with her family. However, many Chinese students live together, which means they would miss many precious experiences with local people. But I heard from a Chinese student that even though she lives with an American roommate, she does not see her a lot because when she gets up early in the morning, her roommate is sleeping; after she goes back to the room late at night because of classes and assignments, her roommate is also sleeping. The situation of some students is more challenging. For example, one who has similar problems relating to American students also finds it hard to enter into the Chinese students' group because of having a different native language.

The last point I want to make is that a long-term relationship is easier to build when you inter-

## *Building Relationship ...continued*

act with American students for a long time. For example, in the MAT program in the summer, I had class from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day, which forced me to talk to American peers; and now I have to go to the Portland campus for MAT classes several times every week so that I have found some classmates to carpool with. During the rides, we talk a lot because we would get bored without it.

These are some things I have observed from the experience of some new Chinese students. I hope you can understand the situation of foreign students and try your best to help them get rid of the stress resulting from the language barrier. Here is some advice: Don't be afraid when you see some Chinese students grouped together because sometimes they need to be together to figure out questions or problems and, most importantly, don't feel that you are being intrusive if you talk to them because I believe that, since the Chinese students have decided to study here, they would like to talk in English as much as possible. Moreover, don't give up if you cannot understand them or they cannot understand you at first. It is a very good opportunity to know more about another culture and country, and also it is a way to review your own language because they might ask many questions about English that you have never thought of before. That is why my colleagues in the MAT told me that I always challenged their English.

## Serve Day

By Song Mingfei



I think the disabled, GFU students, and society get benefits from Serve Day. This was my first time to attend

GFU's Serve Day. We went to Tigard to help the disabled who cannot take care of themselves. My RA told me how to do these things, such as clean the floor and kitchen, because I didn't know what I should do. And just for a while, I can work with American students, also have fun with them.

Moreover, when I washed the plates, a woman who has something wrong with her leg and lives in this house smiled at me. She said "Thank you." It made me so happy. Finally, a person who works there also expressed their thanks.

So, that's what we can see in my experience about "Who benefits from Serve Day?" I think the different groups of people can be involved with each other. GFU students help the disabled. The disabled make us feel we can do the things that are worthwhile. And society encourages people to help each other. Consequently, we can feel happy when we help other people. And the disabled can get concern from society. Besides, I can feel the culture of America.



## My Uncle's Yard



By Xiao Qiong

Standing in the gate of my uncle's house, at first, I saw a not too big yard.

The gate and rail fence of the yard are made of bamboo. The rail fence is just one meter high. Beautiful wisterias entwine with the bamboo. I even can smell the fragrance of bamboo and wisterias. When I closed my eyes, the fragrance set me free. I felt that my body was becoming light. It seemed I could fly.

At last, I pushed the gate and saw a beautiful grassplot; the grass is very green. And then I was attracted by the swing in the big tree. I turned right and walked to the swing. The big tree looked like a kind granddad. He had strong limbs; he was wearing an emerald green coat. As I looked at the old tree, I felt warmth in my heart.

In front of the tree, there are white chairs and a white desk. The beautiful pattern, which looks like flowers in the desk and chairs, was elegant. I sat in the swing and swung gently. I looked up, and looked at the blue sky; there were some white small birds. A wind blew; I felt that I was so close to nature, and I was peaceful. I like this yard very much; it is a place that can make me peaceful. When I feel unhappy or need to think about something, I will sit in the yard.



## Let Us Talk Together



By Wu Ye

Hello! My name is Wu Ye. If you like, you can call me Chris. I am from China. This is my first time to come to America. The country is different;

the people are different; the culture is different; everything is different. So this is almost a new world for me. As an international student, I really want to make friends with every guy in America.

First, I think I should introduce my hometown, Xiamen. Maybe you will like China. Well, China is a really big country. And my hometown, Xiamen, is a small island which is located in the southeast of China. It is one of the ten cleanest cities in China. There is a beautiful road around the whole island. Every year there is an international bicycle race on this road. And the most famous place is Gulangyu, which is also a small island that belongs to Xiamen city. At the beginning of the 20th century, this small island had many foreign embassies. And this island has another beautiful name—Music Island. Every year we have many tourists who arrive at Xiamen. So if you guys want to come to China and come to my hometown, I will be very pleased to be your leader.

Also, I really want you guys to be my leader in America. To learn a new different culture, I am interested in everything about America. From the day I came to America, I have taken an active part in all the activities of George Fox every day. It is a good opportunity for me to communicate with Americans. I think it is a good way to improve my oral English skill. However, if you are interested in Chinese, maybe we can chat together in Chinese. Of course, I think, like me, every Chinese student will like to do this. So just let us talk together. It will be a good experience for us.

# Live in the Present



By Lucy Chen

I am sitting in front of my laptop thinking about this journal. I am in America far away from my home where I have lived for eighteen years. It's hard to realize that I am now in America; it feels like yesterday that I was in China. I always dreamed about studying in a foreign country, taking care of myself, and making friends with students from all over the world. My dream finally came true. Now, every time when I look up to the sky, I know across the horizon there is China. When I stroll at the seaside, I know across the Pacific Ocean there is China. Studying at George Fox University, I got to know why all my friends who have already studied in a foreign land say it is so hard to be successful in a foreign country. Everything is new to me. I never know what will happen tomorrow, who I will meet, and what I am going to do. I learned to live in the present.

When I was in China, I always worried

about what things will happen tomorrow. I often couldn't sleep well before a test, I couldn't sleep well before a big event, and I worried about what things would happen in the future all the time. After all these worries, I was so nervous all day long. I have always been very sensitive to things that make my life filled with gloom. I couldn't even smile; indeed I always pulled a long face. I was absolutely not a happy girl at that time. I have always wanted to change myself, so that I am not too sensitive.

Live in the present, never worry about what things will happen next, and enjoy life. Everyday I just do what I want to do: study hard in class, say hi to all the people who smile at me; smile to all the people who pass me, smell the roses and be a happy girl. What a wonderful life! Living in the present makes my life unexpected; I will never be nervous about what will happen in the next second. I have more time to enjoy my life, and look for pleasurable things. I love my peaceful life at George Fox University.

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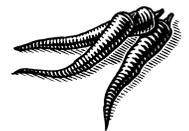
## How to Cook Chinese Pork and Peppers



By Yao Yuan

Cooking Chinese food like pork and hot peppers is easy. Just follow these steps. The first step is to buy some pork, hot peppers, salt and soy sauce. If you like green onions, you can also get some green onions. Second, cut the meat and the vegetables. You need to cut the pork and the peppers into slices and cut the green onions into small pieces. Third, turn on the stove and start

cooking. Put a little oil in a pot, wait for the oil to boil, begin to stir-fry the peppers in the pot for two minutes and then add the pork. Finally, put the salt and soy sauce in the pot when the pork is cooked. Then switch off the stove, add the onions and let them cook awhile in the pot. After the onions are cooked, put the food onto a dish and give it to people to taste. Now you can cook Chinese food for your family and friends.



# Breakfast

Minxiang Sun



I've been enjoying my breakfast for nearly a month since I got here. Eggs and potatoes are unbelievably delicious to me, which starts to make me wonder if it is an American recipe. Especially for the potatoes, it is a consuming process. I think it must take a while to cut the potatoes into several cubes and fry them. However, when mixed with the special sweet brown sauce, these cubes become one of the most delicious foods I have ever tasted.

As for Chinese breakfast, the place I am from is famous for noodles. They are long and round and made of wheat flour. They are definitely good tasting food. However, if I tell you I have had noodles for nearly ten years, you will understand why I don't like them. We will have porridge and dumplings from time to time as well. The porridge is mostly made of white rice and water. We boil both of them together until they become sticky, which is the thing we call porridge. In America, I have seen it called *congee*. Our dumplings are totally different from American ones. First of all, we use the dumpling wrapper, which is made of flour, to wrap the stuffing, which can be either meat or vegetables. They are all moon shaped. Then all of them need to be put in a pot that is filled with water. The last thing is to boil them until they are able to float on the water. Because it takes a long time to make them, we don't usually eat them unless it is a traditional festival. Otherwise, we'll have either noodles or porridge for breakfast, and you will be tired of these quite soon. So you have to adjust your appetite all the time, which is so annoying.

Since I have been to Northern Europe for almost a year (last year I studied Norwegian there), I'd like to share something about their breakfasts. Most of the breakfasts there are made of bread. They offer a lot of bread and some stuff that you can put on your bread to make it taste better, such as blueberry jelly, strawberry jam, cream, and so on. There's no doubt that you won't feel hungry after breakfast because your stomach is all filled with bread. But I still don't think it is a good idea to have breakfast over there. You will get sick of bread even faster than porridge and noodles.

**We hope that the  
students' writings in  
*International Voices*  
will inspire you to  
reach out to  
international students  
at George Fox University  
and seek friendship  
and understanding.**

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