



International Voices

George Fox University
English Language Institute
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Let's Get Acquainted



By Yi Yi

This article describes some hobbies of mine and presents information necessary for all the students in GFU to know more about me.

First, I will introduce myself. My name is Yi Yi and I am 22 years old and was born in Hunan province. My parents are both advanced teachers who not only brought me up and taught me knowledge but also conduct themselves in an exemplary way to show me how to be a useful man. Now I am living off campus and cooking for myself; I have great interest in cooking and eating. Sports are my favorite hobby. I like playing soccer, and watching soccer games is a part of my life. Next year, the World Cup will be held in South Africa, so maybe I will burn the midnight oil for almost half a month. Another thing I spend most of my spare time on is reading books about literature, art, philosophy and history. My favorite American author is Jack Kerouac; I have read his book *On the Road* twice. I was attracted toward the real, free, crazy life

each time I read. However, our college is a Christian university, whose belief prohibits self-indulgence.

Since I arrived at Newberg, I have found the people here are very friendly and leisurely. The sharpest difference between American college life and Chinese college life is individualism. The students at GFU are free; they can enjoy and value themselves in everything they do. I often wear beachwear to class, because I feel very comfortable and there is not any objection by my teachers. Last month, I took part in the Serve Day work and visited the Real Life Exhibit of Medical Teams International, where I learned many good things about helping people, serving community, and feeling unbearable pity, which are more important than one's academic record in my view.

I love friends and I want to make friends with you American students. If you have interest in Chinese culture, such as Confucianism, Chinese handwriting and Chinese poetry, you can talk with me, and I will invite you to my house to eat Chinese food. By the way, I am good at cooking.

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Junshan Island

By Li An



Junshan Island, located at the center of Dongting Lake, is one of my favorite places. Since I grew up in Yueyang City and it is near Dongting Lake, it is convenient for me to visit Junshan Island.

Junshan Island's strong attraction for me is not only because of its beautiful scenery but also because of the comfortable feelings left in my deep heart. Junshan Island looks from afar like a tortoise lying on its stomach on the lake's surface. When I set my feet on the island, an unexpected wisp of wind bringing a faint scent came quietly to my nose. So I walked alone in the direction where the faint scent was coming from. After several minutes' walking, a large bamboo grove came into my sight. Then I approached them and found that they were the mottled bamboos which were well-known in the ancient legend in China. The legend said the stains were the tears left by the second wife of Emperor

Shun. Owing to the stains' mystery, I extended my right hand and touched its smooth, hard surface as if I could have wiped them off the bamboo.

There was a temple after I strolled through the large bamboo grove. Before I entered into the temple, I had heard that some birds were singing over my head. Coming to a standstill, I caught a glimpse of some birds of different kinds singing and dancing on the roof. What an interesting picture it was! It was one that would keep in my memory forever!

But aside from its beautiful scenery, above all, the big attraction is the comfortable feeling I've gotten from the people living in the island. All of them are friendly and hospitable to the traveler coming from outside. We sat and had tea together, then watched the traditional opera until the sun set.

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Traditional Chinese Food



By Shiwei Liu

Steamed buns are often on the top of a Chinese breakfast menu. It is a traditional Chinese food. I

love steamed buns very much. They are soft, tasty, and more importantly, healthy. Let me show you how to prepare them.

First, you have to go to the market to buy some necessary materials. Usually you need to get flour, yeast, sugar, oil, and mushrooms.

Now, let us make them. You should make the filling first: cut the mushrooms into small pieces, and mix them with oil and salt. Also, you can put some pork into it. Then you need to find a large bowl and dissolve



the yeast in warm water. And then blend in the sugar, oil and salt. Wait for some minutes and mix in the flour. This is used for the coating of the buns, and is used to wrap the filling up.

Finally, you have to put the fresh steamed buns into the boiling water and wait for fifteen minutes, and they are ready to serve!

They are very delicious. Not only do I like to eat this food, but I also love the culture of the steamed buns. On Chinese New

Year's Eve, people always prepare some steamed buns to celebrate Spring Festival. All family members get together and eat steamed buns; it is a wonderful time for the Chinese people. I love this food very much, and I want you to love it after you taste it.

Improving the World



By Zhang Youwen

How can we improve this world both physically and mentally? There are many

problems in this world, like racism, pollution, or violence.

Different nations face different difficulties. In China, we cannot ignore overpopulation. Some developed countries' main problem is racism. Violence exists in every

country. In some parts of the world, pollution is a serious concern.

However, China cares about environmental protection more and more. For example, we are forbidden to litter in public. If a factory pollutes over standards, citizens will report it to the government, and the factory will get a punishment.

All in all, the world deserves better treatment.

My Understanding of the Spirit of Freedom at GFU



By Edward Cai

Before I entered this land of freedom, the most important thing of American culture I knew was freedom. That is what this country values and brings to the rest of the world. Now I have stayed at George Fox for over a month. I am not surprised to see that what I have learned about this culture is in accordance with what I knew about America before I came here. At George Fox, the most impressive thing I feel about this school is how it encourages its students and what it instills in the students. What is the value the school expects us to learn?

Actually, I think the value which this school values and inspires us to value is surely based on this key concept in American culture, but is not confined to it. I have found that people studying here are from all over the world, without being seen as a special minority, but as an essential part of the school's students, and can equally share the opportunities to develop, cooperate and compete. At first, I understood we are fortunate that we may have taken advantage of the spirit of freedom in the USA. However, soon enough I realized my limited understanding of the spirit of freedom when I see more and more GFU students traveling abroad to the developed, developing and even undeveloped countries and sharing their exciting experiences with those who have a tremendous aspiration to explore more about the

world in the future. It is the worldwide spirit of freedom, rather than one limited to the US, that this nation of America proclaims as it preaches around the world in spite of difference in religion, ethnicity, culture, technology, economy, politics and society. That's why the two kinds of viewpoint "change in the world" and "faith in God" can tolerate each other and live together in harmony at George Fox.

Serve Day

By Zhang Pei



GFU's Serve Day is set up for helping others. In that day, the students in GFU will go out and do something helpful for others. Some students go to the church and do some cleaning. Some students go to the school's playground to uproot the grass or do other good things.

I joined the last Serve Day. My housemates and I went to the kindergarten to paint. That was really fun. First, we mixed the paint together, Then, we painted the wall. The lovely kids in the kindergarten said "thank you!!" to us. And during that time I told many things about myself and my country with my housemates. After that, we got closer to each other: we helped each other and painted together. That made me feel warm inside.

I think we both benefited from the Serve Day. Since all the people in the world are like a big family, in the Serve Day, I felt everyone is important since we need each other.

What I Wish Americans Knew About China



By Fang Lingzhi

When I asked my roommates some questions about China, they all just knew a little. So I

wish Americans could know more about China.

Our China has 5,000 years' history; we have colorful cultures. Now, we have many historical sites, such as the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, and so on. I wish Americans knew our Chinese history because it is very interesting.

Of course, I wish Americans knew about our cultures. You may find many interesting cultures and the differences between different cultures in China. There are many festivals in our country, such as, the Spring Festival, the Mid-autumn Festival, the Lantern Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival. These festivals have been held for thousands of years.

Our China is developing very fast. Our imports and exports trade is improving better and better. Our governments are great; they help us solve problems and make our country become better and better.

In a few words, I wish you could know all of China, not only the history, the culture, the government, but also the whole China.

A Different Pace of Life



By Shen Song

Jiaxing is my hometown, a famous city for many high buildings. In a big city, everything

goes faster than in the country. For me to live in a big city, it is always fun because every store is open early and closes late. Living in a big city with a population of two million people in a small land area, it is always crowded and noisy on the street.

Compared with my hometown, Newberg, Oregon, is famous for a natural environment and farms. When I first arrived in Oregon, I felt free because there were no high buildings around me. Then, it was hard for me adapt to the lifestyle here. Everything is very slow for me, such as checking out at the cashier or buying food in fast food shop. They are very relaxed and slow, so I got annoyed very often at first. As the time passed, I started to like living here. I enjoyed having a relaxing lifestyle and having a lot of plants everywhere. It makes me happy and relaxed every time when I see it.



My Adoption Journey



By Kailee Wilson

Throughout your life, you have either met or know someone who was adopted. But do you know how the kids being adopted really felt inside of them? It's different when you're the one actually experiencing it. People often ask me if I remember it and I tell them yes. For those of you who want to know about my adoption I will talk about it in the next three paragraphs.

I lived half of my life in China and half in America. I was adopted at age 11 from Chengdu, China, from Sichuan province. I remember attending school during spring. I was in first grade when I should have been in fifth because I started school late. One day I came home from school and I was told that I was going to be adopted by an American family. To be honest, I didn't believe them because I felt nothing good could ever happen in my life. Then a week later a care package arrived for me from my American family. In the package were a photo album, clothes, toys and a backpack. The orphanage started preparing for me to leave. They changed my name so it would be easier to pronounce.

A week later it was time for me to leave. I was getting more anxious every moment. I arrived at the hotel where I was meeting my new family wearing every single layer of clothing they sent me. The first moment I walked in this room there were about ten other families. I was the oldest of all the other Chinese children. There I saw an American guy who stared at me and it turned out to be my dad. It hit me that moment I was really going

to be living in America. I remember I started bawling and they were trying to calm me down. I had no clue what they were saying and it just scared me. Later that night they took me back to the hotel room and I saw my new mom, grandma, and little brother who was about my age. What caught my attention the most were the toys that were on the bed. In the orphanage I didn't have any toys, so my eyes lit up when I saw them. One of the most challenging things was not being able to communicate with my new family, so we had to use sign language.

We stayed in China for two weeks before we went to America. During those two weeks in China I got to see the world outside of the orphanage. We went to the mall, the zoo, the temples, and we went shopping a lot. The one thing I enjoyed the most was all the tasty food I had never gotten to eat. I remember feeling if I didn't behave they would send me back to the orphanage, so I ate all the food I could every time we went out to eat. I discovered shopping was really fun so, whenever I pointed or looked at something, my dad would grab it and buy it for me. When we walked the streets of China, I would hear people talk about me. They would say, "Look how lucky she is" and "Be good to your family." Some of them said mean things and I would start crying, and my American family would have no clue why. Those two weeks in China were the most memorable moments of my life. I will never forget them. I plan on going back to China during juniors abroad and visiting my hometown with my dad.

Far from Home



By Li Yueling

Hi. My name is Yueling Li. I have never been so far from my home since I was born.

At home, my father and my mother help me do everything. But here, at George Fox University, I do everything myself. But anyway, this is good for me. Although we don't want to be separate from each other, studying at George Fox University is what I have been longing for.

Although I miss parents and my younger brother, I'm so excited to be here. I am faithful to my purpose here. I embrace everything with a thankful heart. Maybe everyone feels lonely when they first come to a new place, but I think it's not a big problem because I can and will make many new friends here, for the people here are all friendly and patient. Of course, I will send e-mails to my parents frequently so that I won't miss them so much and they won't worry about me.

Anyway, my purpose here is to study and to get self-improvement, so I will do my best to study well to let my parents feel proud of me.



High School



By Liu Yipeng

I studied in No.1 middle school of Xiangtan. It is a beautiful place and I love it so much. Now I will introduce it to all of you.

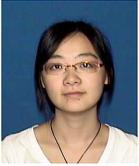
First, there are beautiful places – a beautiful garden, many trees and flowers. You can go into the garden, but don't step on the flowers. Then, you can understand why we love it there so much. We can read and chat in the garden, and there are so many apples in the tree that you can pick by yourself. I'll tell you a secret: I like it because it is warm in the summer and cold in the winter.

Now, I will tell you more about my friends and teachers there. The teachers are friendly to us and I would never say anything bad about them. Because of those teachers, the students can get good grades. Does this sound like a good school for you to come to?

I think my school is one of the best high schools in China because we have good teachers, good students and everything is beautiful. I like it; everybody likes it. Welcome to our school. If you come, I will show you around!

A Beautiful Garden

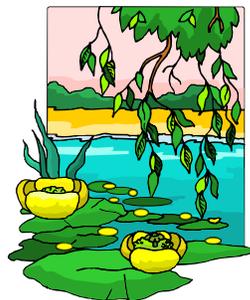
By Li Yang



There is a beautiful large garden near my home. On Sunday, I always go to the garden. I can see a lot of flowers which smell very fragrant, tender bamboo and green grass when I enter the garden. Butterflies and bees are flying around the blossoms. While I walk on a small road in the garden, I feel very comfortable. The birds are singing songs between the trees.

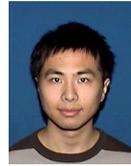
There is a big pond which has a large number of gold fish in the center of the garden. The water is very clear, so I can see the fish swim in it. In the summer, the pond is full of water lilies which look very beautiful. I like sitting in the grass, reading, and having a nap near this pond. Old men often sit on the bench nearby to play chess. Many children play games there.

To the west of the pond is a majestic mountain. On the mountain, there is a pagoda with a yellow roof and red pillars. There is a small shop in the corner of the garden that sells delicious pastries. I often buy a piece of bread, and sit in the grass that touches me softly. I adore this garden.



Voice from a Chinese Friend

By Stanley Li



Hello! My name is Li Junzhe. I come from China. I also have an English name, Stanley. I would like to be called the latter one because it makes me feel I am in a different culture. This is the first year I have been at George Fox University and also this is the first year I have been in America. I am extremely glad and excited to get this opportunity to come to America and get to know you guys as an international student. I feel so happy in this month since I have been here. Furthermore, I wish we can understand each other better and get closer to your heart.

I would like to introduce myself first. My hometown is Changsha, the capital city of Hunan Province, and it is located in the south of central China. My city is famous for its food and entertainment, like TV programs and bars. I would like to recommend our food in Hunan, because it is hot and spicy and very delicious. I like to play basketball and my favorite hobby is music. I love all kinds of music, including American country music, jazz and hip-hop, which all originate in America.

I have been in America for just one month. I have been very happy during this time. You are so kind and helpful to us. I lived in a host family in my first week here. They showed Americans' kindness, humor and optimism, which really affected me. During the orientation, I got to know many American students. All of them are very nice persons who are really friendly. I love staying with them and I would

Voice from a Chinese Friend— continued

like to make more and more American friends here.

Cultural difference sometimes made some misunderstandings. There are cultural differences between American and Chinese, such as being talkative and silent, independent and dependent, and frank and reserved. There might be some little problems in communication between two cultures. We have different ways to talk and different words to express ideas and emotions. In many Americans' view, Chinese don't like to talk much and seem unfriendly. This situation can be seen on campus. But I would like to clarify that Chinese do like to communicate and are very friendly. This misunderstanding happened because our English is not good enough to communicate fluently. In Chinese culture, we would not like to speak too much before we can speak very nicely in order to avoid embarrassing situations caused by language. So I think if you give more patience and tolerance, and talk more actively, we will communicate much better.

I would like to share my cultural experience with American friends and invite American friends to come to taste Chinese food. If you are interested in it, you can email me, and we can have a party at my house. My email address is jli10@georgefox.edu. We can play together; it should be really fun. I expect more and more Americans and Chinese to become close friends.



My House

By Wang Yuhang



Wherever I go, whenever I come back, there is a house waiting for me. I love my house just like I love my family members.

In spring, every family member becomes energetic. My parents always sing songs in the living room. Their songs become a part of the room. It makes me feel warm and comfortable. The flowers that we plant begin flowering. What a beautiful scene it is!

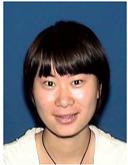
I feel excited in summer. Everything becomes noisy. Lots of insects come out, and their sounds make up of a song. I will change many things in my room. For example, I paint the walls pink and hang wind chimes, which make me excited. My friends will visit my house and enjoy hanging out with me. I enjoy my life in summer.

My mother always cooks many foods in autumn. Those foods include dumplings, noodles, rice and moon cakes, all my favorites. I always enjoy them in the kitchen and leave many precious memories there. I love my mother, and also I love the kitchen.

Winter is much different from summer. I feel quiet and relaxed in my house. Insects are sleeping instead of singing. I think the most relaxing place is the bathroom; I can lie in the bathtub and listen to my music. What a pleasurable time it is.

I have these different feelings in different seasons; all of feelings make up my precious memories. I love my house; there are so many memories!

High School Life in China vs. College Life in America



By Zhengyi Liu

I can still remember my college life in China. I was extremely excited on the first day I went into my college. The campus was new to me, the students were new to me, and the teachers were new to me. All the new things were exciting. However, after a few weeks, I felt disappointed. The students were bored with their studies. They didn't listen to the professors, didn't do their homework, and even didn't participate in any activities. They just stayed by themselves, moaning. Before college they were full of dreams but now they were filled with disappointment. The reason Chinese students had such changes was that the stress that they felt before they got into the college disappeared suddenly.

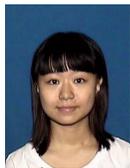
Before we went to college, we were full of dreams, for the high school life was full of stress. We had to take eight or even more classes every day, from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Even though the continuous classes were boring, we wished the classes would last longer because after classes we had to do tremendous homework, which made us not only tired but also frustrated. Furthermore, most parents went to extremes to provide their children with several tutors during the weekend. Even though I went through such a terrible experience, I can't imagine how I stood the stresses at that time. We couldn't spare any

time to do any fun games to relax. In this case, we were full of bright dreams to let our spirits get free from darkness. We just dreamt of wonderful pictures of college life to reinforce our motivation to study. However, the marked contrast between the reality of the college life in China and the one in our dreams disappointed us gradually.

Now, I am studying in America. All the Chinese students who have studied in America said the college life in America is as tough as high school life in China. In my opinion, to some extent, the statement above is true. Now, I have to listen to the professor carefully. I have to do lots of homework, which sometimes makes me frustrated. And I have to put lots of activities into my schedule so that I can make friends with Americans. This was kind of like my high school's schedules—numerous homework assignments waiting for me to finish, doing lots of things that make me feel tired all the day. What makes the difference is that the people around are dynamic, so I feel obliged to be happy all day, especially when I meet a person who says hello to me with a huge smile: I feel happy.

My House—My Oasis

By Fang Tianqi



Beijing is a noisy city. Cars, factories, people, all make Beijing into chaos. But in this busy area, there is a place that can make me feel quiet, safe, and peaceful. That is my home, which my father, my mother and I live in.

The basic colors of the house, white and yellow, make my heart feel warm. We have one living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom.

Our living room is very big and comfortable. It is also the place of entertainment for the three of us. On the weekends, we sit in the living room to play chess and watch different kinds of movies. Then we lean against the white soft sofa and discuss the news, affairs, and each other's problems of this whole week. In front of the sofa, there is a glass table for Tea Time. On the other side of the living room, a long wooden table is put in the corner. We usually have dinner at it.

Every time when mum is cooking in

the kitchen, I always try to guess what she is making for us today. Her cooking skill is really magic. She can produce a colorful meal for us that is full of different flavors—spicy, savory, even a little sweet.

In my parents' bedroom, there are a lot of pictures of our family: we went to the beach where my father and I played in the water; we visited my grandma and had a wonderful meal together; we went to Europe, with the three of us in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris... From this room, I always can hear my parents' voices or my father typing on the computer—he is always a hard worker.

In my bedroom, it looks like a bookstore: I have a lot of books. They are the best things I can think to decorate a room. In the corner of the room, stands my wardrobe, which is full of my clothes. That is also my favorite place. In my room, there is always a bunch of fresh flowers under my window. That is my mother's masterpiece. She knows that I like flowers, so there are always opening flowers in my room.

Stereotypes

By Shuang Zhang



I have been at George Fox University for six weeks. During this time, I have experienced a lot. I have talked to Americans and got to know their ideas. Though I haven't felt discrimination here, I still know some stereotypes about Chinese students here.

First, you may think all the Chinese students come from wealthy families, even though most of the people in China are poor. It is true that we need the support of our families to go abroad, and because our tuition is so high in America, it is natural for you to think in this way. In addition, because we have the only child policy, the students here may seem a little spoiled. But I have to say, that opinion is a stereotype. Some of the students come from common families in China, and their parents use their retirement money or houses to support their children to go abroad and get a higher education. We believe this decision will change our life through hard work.

Second, most of the American students at George Fox are Christians, so there may be some American students who feel confused about Chinese students because we don't have religion. Even though we have not believed in God yet, we still have a similar tradition in China. We have been taught Confucianism since we were little boys and girls; we have learned to love people, be polite, be moral, etc., too. We share a similar culture but not the same name. No matter what religion you are, the essential thing is to be a good person.

I hope we can make a lot of American friends after American students in GFU read this. Break the culture obstacles and you'll find your friends not far away.

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.

Read All About It!

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