



International Voices

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Inside this "Blue" Edition

Chinese Food—Zhang Zhenya
The Forbidden City—Yuan Yao
My Favorite Place: Malaysia—Ho Alin
Taiwan's Night Markets—Wang Szu-Han (Sonia)
Convenience Stores in Taiwan—Liao Fan-Yi
Snake Soup—Li Mei-Hsiu
Building Styles—Liu Ying
Chinese and Americans Express Opinions—Wan Qianhui
Eye Contact—Ouyang Congrong
Visiting the Statue of Liberty...by Helicopter—Liu Jibang

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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Other Editions

Inside the “Rose” Edition

Sanya City— Wang Zihui (Gary)
“Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner”— Chen Qiang
A Successful Language Learner— Yu Y
Basketball and Soccer— Hu Guizhang
America and China— Li Qingquan
Tipping— Meng Ren
Personalities and Food— Li Sha (Stella)
The Different Education— Lin Xiaoxue (Denise)
The Popularity of Western Festivals in China—Yan Kelong
Lifestyles of the Elderly in the USA and China— Lin Jinwen

Inside the “Cream” Edition

My Favorite Place: Disneyland—Yuan Runzhi
Education in America and China —Peng Li (Penny)
“A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush”—Li Yasi
Cultural Differences Between China and America—Xiao Xiong
The Great Wall—Luo Minqi
Chinese Tea—Fu Jingjing
The Attitude Toward History—Xie Bozheng (Bo)
Be a Christian—Gong Lirong (Albee)
Fashion Styles in America and China— Jian Pei (Virgil)
My Story— Ni Ni

Inside the “Gray” Edition

Serve Day—He Lifang
“A Bird in the Hand...”—Li Yasi
My Favorite Place: Daming Palace—Chen Mulun
Spring Festival—Jiang Xingxing
Culture Shock—Liu Duan
Gongfu Tea—Jin Bo
Differences in Education—Kuang Xian
Different Styles of Self-Expression—Wu Xiangying
Sweet or Spicy?—Zou Xuan (Zou)

Chinese Food

By Zhang Zhenya (Eason)



I come from China, so I like Chinese food. My favorite food is hot pepper with pork. I come from the center of China, Hunan Province. So I like hot food. Most people from there like hot food. We think it is a delicacy, and we think it is good for our health. This food is made by stir-frying. Let me teach you how to make this food. At first, cut the hot pepper and pork into strips, and add the garlic and ginger powder. Second, take a little soy sauce, salt and monosodium glutamate for the pork, and mix them. Third, put oil in the cooking pot on the stove. Wait a minute, and then you can put the pork into the cooking pot, and begin to stir-fry. Put the hot pepper in, and cook it for a moment. You can pick it up, for it is finished. I really like this food. I hope you will like this food, too, although it is very hot!

The Forbidden City

By Yuan Yao



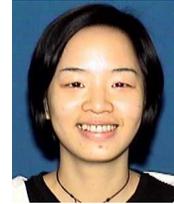
One summer vacation, my parents, my sister and I went to the Forbidden City. Because my parents liked the Forbidden City, my sister and I very much wanted to know about it. I was only 17 years old, and my sister was 15 years old. We were very shocked at the large size of the Forbidden City. Inside the Forbidden City, there are 999 rooms. Chinese emperors lived inside. We found that there are three palaces in the Forbidden City. Each is decorated luxuriously. A lot of gold ornaments were produced.

My sister and I, after discovering these things, were very surprised. The guide told us that in ancient times, ordinary people could not enter the Forbidden City. The Forbidden City is China's logo. We know that the Forbidden City has existed for hundreds of years. The Forbidden City has symmetry in its construction. It is in central Beijing. My sister and I felt that we conquered the majestic Forbidden City on our visit. We also now know why my parents like the Forbidden City so much.



My Favorite Place: Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur

By Ho Ai-ling (Alin)



It was my first time to challenge myself. I wanted to fly to a place that I have never been before. I had spent several months to figure out where I could go. I have friends that live in Malaysia. I thought maybe that would be a good place to go, and I could visit them while I was there. So I decided to be a “backpack traveler” to Malaysia.

I spent four hours in the plane looking at big fluffy clouds outside my window. They looked like they would be soft if I could touch them.

How roomy is Malaysia's airport! One of my friends came to the airport to pick me up, and we left the airport. The city is “Kuala Lumpur” (KL). I think it is a strange place. There are many kinds of people there: you can see Malaysians, Indians, and Chinese who pass by you. I stayed in Malaysia for half a month, and most of the time I stayed in Kuala Lumpur. At 6 o'clock in the morning I would wake up because Muslim people will use a loud speaker to remind people it is time to worship. They worship six times each day.

The normal transportation in Kuala Lumpur is taxi or MRT. Their MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) stations are funny. It is hard to find them because the appearance of the MRT doesn't look like MRT stations in other places I've been.

One of famous places in Kuala Lumpur is the Kuala Lumpur Tower. The people who live in Kuala Lumpur told me that it looked like a fish ball on a stick. That tower is for broadcasting. The Petronas Twin Towers are also famous. My friends also told me that these two towers are like two cornstalks standing in Kuala Lumpur. Even though they look like a fish ball on a stick or two cornstalks, still both of them are the most famous sights for tourists. You may go to the height of the two towers to see the whole of Kuala Lumpur city.

The Kuala Lumpur Tower and the Petronas Twin Towers look different in the morning and night. They decorate the outside of the building with sparkling lights at night. I still remember when my friends took me to the top of a nearby mountain; I saw the beautiful night view that includes the two famous towers.

In this experience I saw many things that are different from Taiwan. It made me realize that the world is not as small as I thought it was. To experience different things for me is one of the best ways to learn.

Taiwan's Night Markets

By Wang Szu-Han (Sonia)



In Taiwan, you can do many things at the night markets. We have many night markets in Taiwan. They are a big part of Taiwanese culture. So I want to introduce you to Taiwan's night markets.

The night markets are my favorite place in Taiwan. They are bustling with noise and crowds every day. I think they are messy, but everybody still likes to go there, because you can find pretty clothes or many things you want, and it doesn't cost you very much. In the night markets, there are many kinds of games. You can play video games, basketball machines, and baseball machines. When you feel hungry, you can find food from many countries. For example, there is sushi, pasta, and KFC. The most important type of food is Taiwanese food. In the night markets, you can eat many kinds of yummy Taiwanese food. These foods are different than American foods. We have pan-fried dumplings, little-cake-in-big-cake, Shi-Lin sausages, a dessert called frogs-laying-eggs, Chou Dou Fu, and wok-fried squid in the night markets. My favorite is Chou Dou Fu. So many people don't like to eat it because it smells bad. Chou Dou Fu is bean curd, and we put bean curd to fry in oil. Even though it is smelly, I still love it. Chou Dou Fu is very delicious.

I always go to the night market near my high school with my friends after school. We buy cheap clothes, eat Chou Dou Fu, and play basketball machines there. We have a lot of fun.

Taiwan's night markets are like a garden. If you come to Taiwan, you must come there. You will have a good time in Taiwan's night markets.



Convenience Stores in Taiwan

By Liao Fan-Yi (Faye)



If you ask me what the biggest difference between Taiwan and America is, I think I will say that nothing is convenient in America. The obvious example is shopping. People need to drive at least half an hour to an hour for shopping. Taiwan is a small island country, and there are about twenty-three million people living there. People can buy things very easily because the convenience stores are everywhere in Taiwan.

What is a convenience store? It's like a grocery store that sells candies, drinks, food and any kind of items that you are going to use in daily life. You also can go to the convenience store to pay utility bills, fines, credit card bills, cell phone bills, and mail packages. You can do many things in the convenience store and it is open 24/7. The convenience store is very popular in Taiwan. The number of convenience stores in Taiwan is comparable to Starbucks in America. According to a survey, there are approximately 9,300 convenience stores in Taiwan.

The convenience store is an important part of Taiwanese life. I think if you visit Taiwan, you might be very impressed at how many convenience stores are on the same road. The convenience store really is convenient and saves a lot of time. The most important part is that you don't have to feel hungry at midnight, and I think this is a significant difference in living style between Taiwan and America.

Snake Soup

By Li Mei-Hsiu



Have you ever been to Taiwan? Do you know there is a very famous and unique place in Taiwan? We call it the *night market*. In the night market, especially in Taipei, there is one reptile that we can eat and it is good for our health and skin. What is that? It is snake in “snake soup.”

My skin is not very good because it is really dry. I had used many body creams, but I still felt itchy in the winter. I always scratched my skin until it became red. That is not very good. I also felt that was a big problem for me. One of my friends suggested to me, “How about going and trying snake soup?” I said, “So disgusting, I would never try that, never!!”

One day, I went out with him and he asked, “How is your skin? Still itchy?” I said, “Yes.” As we were driving along, I asked, “Where are we going?” He answered, “Going to Wha-Si night market!” It is very famous for snake soup. I thought he was so enthusiastic, so I accepted his advice. When we arrived at Wha-Si night market, there were many people. We looked around and ate some things we liked. Then we started to choose which store was better. Then we tried the famous store. There was a big snake in front of the store. I was very afraid of snake soup, but I still tried it. There was not only snake soup, there was snake’s blood, snake’s gall and other kinds of things made into wine. After tasting it, I thought the soup was very good, but I still felt a little bit strange. After that we went to eat ice cream as soon as possible.



I never forgot that experience. But honestly, I tried snake soup three times. In a few months when winter arrived, strangely I did not feel cold as usual. Why? I do not know. Maybe it is because of the snake soup. My skin also is much better. How do you feel about snake soup? If you have the chance to come to Taiwan in the future you can try it. I think it will be unforgettable.

Building Styles

By Liu Ying (Shadow)



As we know, different places have different building styles, and so do different countries. I was born in China and have lived in China for many years, but now I am continuing my college study in America. So I found there were many differences about building styles between China and America. I will describe two types of buildings: houses where people live and the colleges where people study.

In order to find these differences, I did some research. That is to say, to learn more, I surveyed 20 people who study at George Fox University, half Chinese and half Americans. I asked them about the location of their home, the height of the building where they live, and what they like about the buildings of their college.

Regarding the location of their homes, about 70% of Chinese and 40% of Americans said that their family lived in a big city of a province or of a state. And the other Chinese and Americans lived in a small place or town. In addition, both Chinese and Americans who lived in big cities told me that this is because their parents have jobs there, and also that it is very convenient to live in big cities, but it brings much noise, bad environment and so on. In contrast, the other Chinese and Americans who lived in a small town said that they don't like living in a small place because there are few vehicles and things that they need. From this result we can know that there are more Chinese who lived in a big city than Americans in this school. Why? In my opinion, this is because there are so many people in China and they also want to find jobs in big cities to earn much money. But in America it is different because there are fewer people here, so they can find good jobs easily, and most of them are relatively rich, and they would like living in a town close to nature.

Regarding the style of their family's home, I found that about 85% of Chinese and 35% of Americans lived in tall buildings with many floors. The great reason is that they lived in big cities that have a lot of tall buildings. In contrast, the other Chinese and Americans said that they lived in a single house with only one or two floors. As my experience, because I was born in the south of China, my family live in a tall building with many floors, and most cities in the south of China have the same situation, so that people also live in tall build-

ings. But when I came to America, I lived in Newberg with my host family. I found that people here lived in a single and small house. But it was very nice and warm. I liked the building style.

Finally, many people told me their ideas about the building style of their colleges. About 50% of Chinese and 70% of Americans like the building styles of their colleges. The other Chinese and Americans don't. According to their answers, I found that there were many differences about the building style of colleges between China and America. As far as I knew, the colleges in China mostly have many tall buildings with many floors, and there is a very long wall and many doors around the colleges. When I came to George Fox University, I found that the tallest building in this college has only three floors, and there wasn't a long wall and any doors around the colleges. And I also found that many buildings in GFU were made of wood. But in China the buildings were made of cement and brick. It made me very amazed about the different college building style between China and America. I found the reasons, because China and America have a lot of land, but China has a much larger population, and it takes less land to build tall buildings, so that would be the preferred building type where there is a high population.

Also, I thought different cultures have different building styles. But it was good, whether you live in a tall building in a big city or you live in a single house in a small town, whether you are Chinese or American, it is okay where you live if you feel comfortable. Different building styles give us a wonderful view and let us lead a happy life.



The Ways Chinese and Americans Express Opinions

By Wan Qianhui (Cheyenne)



I have noticed many differences between America and China. An obvious difference is how we express opinions. One time, my friend bought some clothes and another friend said she liked them. In fact, the other friend didn't like them, but she didn't want to say so. The other friend said to me: "I think the clothes are ugly, but I don't want to hurt my friend's feelings." One day, the other friend needed to attend a banquet, but she didn't have suitable clothes, so she wanted to borrow the clothes from the first friend. Then, the first friend gave the other friend the ugly clothes because she thought she liked them. After all, before, she had said the clothes were beautiful. So it was a pity. I think if you express your opinion and be honest, this event wouldn't occur. In America, this situation doesn't occur as frequently as it would in China, where people don't like to express their true opinion as much. Thus, I think in expressing their opinion Chinese people are different from American people. Now I want to know the true facts. So I did research to discover what differences there are between Chinese and American people in the way they express their opinions with a friend and in a group.

I found there is a big difference between Chinese and Americans in sharing a negative opinion with a friend. My question was: "Your friend bought new clothes, but you think they are ugly. What do you tell your friend? Why?" I interviewed 20 Chinese people and 20 American people. Eighty percent of Chinese people wouldn't want to tell their friend because they don't want to hurt the friendship or friendly feelings. They don't want to break the relationship because they think the relationship is important. Fifteen percent of people would tell their best friend, but not a casual friend. Just five percent of people would tell any friend. But they don't want to lie. Then, I asked American people. The result was different. Eighty five percent of American people would tell their friend because they think: "I must be honest with her because she is my friend. At the same time, I must keep my individuality." Ten percent think: "I would probably tell her that I am not sure they are really her style, and that we could go shopping together." Only five percent of people wouldn't want to tell their friend because they just don't want to hurt her feelings.

Chinese and Americans also differ in sharing their opinion in a group. In my interview, I also asked this question: "You are a member of a group that is discussing whether to spend money on a certain project. You have a strong opinion about this. What do you do? Or what do you say? Why?" I asked 10 Chinese people and 15 American people. Seventy percent of Chinese people don't want to explain their opinion because they don't want to deny other people's opinions. At the same time, they are afraid if their opinion is wrong they will make themselves lose face. Twenty percent of Chinese people don't know how to decide. They said: "If people will think my opinion is good, I will express it. But if people will think it isn't good, I don't want to express it." Ten percent of Chinese people will express their opinions, and they think: "My opinions are important; I need to tell other people my opinions. I hope other people can receive my strong opinions." American people are very different. Ninety five percent of people will express their opinions. They think: "I am a part of the group, so my opinion is important. I need to explain my opinions, and then we can choose the best option." Only four percent of American people don't want to explain. They say: "If I don't have an idea, I don't want to speak a lot. I just listen to other people's opinions, and then we can choose the best thing to do."

Chinese people are different from American people. Most Chinese people think that being centered around relationships is important. It doesn't matter if they are in a group or just two persons. When these people have a strong opinion, they don't want to express it. But American people are different. Most American people think individuality is important. When they want to explain their opinion, they are all positive. I think that this situation is good. We can express our opinions to make things better. From the results, we can see that Chinese people are modest in expressing their opinion. When American people express their opinions, they are straightforward.

Eye Contact

By Congrong Ouyang



I feel very happy to have such a chance to study as a foreigner in our university. I have found that the greatest difference between my country and the United States is civilization.

The first thing I was shocked by was the custom of eye contact. In China, it is not polite to look into a person's eyes when they are talking with you, especially between a girl and a boy. If a boy looks in a girl's eyes seriously when they are talking, the girl would feel very angry because it would show that the boy is too flirtatious. What's more, in Chinese custom, girls are appreciated to be soft and traditional. In this situation, the girls are always too shy to give eye contact to others, even to the female.

To my big surprise, things are opposite in America. As soon as I arrived at the airport in the United States, I found everyone would look at my eyes seriously even if I was just asking a very small question. Then, I began to live with my host family, and I found that every family member would make eye contact when I was talking with them, even the youngest child in the family. In addition, the mother always told her children to make eye contact even if they are just saying "hello" to a little animal. As I came from a traditional country which has very special customs, I was deeply shocked by the very different customs.

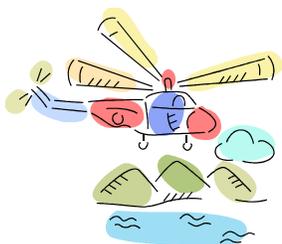
After I asked about my puzzle, the friendly hostess told me that to make eye contact when you are talking with each other means to show respect to others. It is a very polite behavior in western culture.

From then on, I began to adapt to this custom and try to use it, because I want to be polite and learn the different culture here.



Visiting the Statue of Liberty...by Helicopter

By Liu Jibang



New York City is a huge city, and countless famous places are there. However, I think the Statue of Liberty is the most celebrated place in New York City. I saw the Statue of Liberty on TV lots of times in the past. Finally, I got the chance to visit her on my own.

I went to the harbor that is located on the other side of the river from the statue. Many kinds of transportation tools are provided to visit the Statue of Liberty, such as barges, speedboats and helicopters. Each of them has a different character and experience. It was extremely difficult to make a choice, because I could visit the statue from different angles and get diverse scenes in different ways. I hesitated about this a long time. At last, I decided to visit the Statue of Liberty by helicopter because I thought I would not have many opportunities to take a helicopter and now was a good chance.

This is the first time when I went somewhere by helicopter. The helicopter was a little bit small. It could carry only six visitors at a time. There were some other Italian tourists going with me. Before the trip, the pilot taught us the basic knowledge of safety. Then we got in the helicopter and put on the earphones. The pilot began to talk with us with a microphone and a few minutes later the helicopter took off.

There was an amazing scene of the Statue of Liberty when I looked at her in the sky. I felt she was closer and smaller than when I saw her on the ground. Every angle attracted me very much. After 15 minutes of a fantastic trip, we started to come back to the airport. I was still staring at the Statue of Liberty and did not want to move my eyes anymore. Suddenly, the helicopter began to shake. I had no idea about what was happening. I looked around and found all the people were perplexed. The pilot started to comfort us and said this was a normal situation whenever we meet air currents. However, there is a huge difference between a helicopter and an airplane when we meet air currents. The helicopter was very small and its whole body was shaking ceaselessly, so we had to still hover in the sky. Everyone in the helicopter caught the safety handle tightly; an Italian even began to pray. I could not believe this was true. I was scared and could not help thinking about my life, my family and a lot of things I wanted to do. The pilot still told us it was safe, but the helicopter was still hovering in the sky. The noise of crying, praying, and cursing filled the air. A few moments later, the pilot demanded that we wear life jackets. Everyone put one on without any hesitation. After this, everybody began to keep quiet. It was like waiting for something. This feeling was too terrible to bear. I told myself again and again that I know how to swim and I could save myself even if the helicopter dropped into the water. The helicopter kept flying and changed direction a long time. Our helicopter did not arrive at the airport, but it landed on an enormous dock safely in the end.

This experience was too exciting for me; I think my heart could not survive this situation again. I felt life was so great when I left the helicopter and decided to never take a helicopter anymore.

