Contents

Around the World .................. 3
One of the great things about studying in an international English program is the opportunity it presents to get to know people from all over the world. Here, you can get the inside story on various countries around the world and their special places, people, customs, foods, and viewpoints.

Around Here ...................... 13
Making a foreign place your home away from home is an important part of acquiring a second language. This section offers accounts of EPI students' experiences around here, a review of a unique Columbia restaurant, several personal portraits of EPI students and teachers, and an interview with Listening teacher Meg Campbell.

Stories & Poems .................. 29
What would life be without the inspiration that stories and poems provide? This section features the creative talents of some fine storytellers and poets here at EPI.

Personal Messages
You may have a secret admirer and not even know it. In the personal messages throughout the magazine, here's your chance to find out.
Editor's Note

For some reason, this term seems to have flown by especially quickly, maybe because of all the sudden changes of weather we've experienced this "winter." Anyway, it's been a lot of fun and very productive. On behalf of the Sunrise staff, I hope this issue of Sunrise will help make our special time together at EPI all the more memorable. Enjoy!

Dick Holmes

Sunrise Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor-in-Chief</th>
<th>Dick Holmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Walter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronia Holmes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Dean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Rogers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Discoe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Norwood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Janosik</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill McSweeney</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russ Harless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Around the World

Theerapa Thanatawee  Thailand
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Chul-Hee Cho  Korea
Marisela Ibarra  Mexico
Bin Zheng  China
Sang-Hyuck Kang  Korea
Myung-Eui Song  Korea
Candy Ferrer  Spain
How do you know that he or she is your real lover? Maybe you can feel it deeply, guess, take a risk or ask your fortune-teller. There is another way I am proud to tell you about. It involves an ancient Thai custom performed on Loy Krathong Day, which is celebrated once a year in Thailand.

Loy Krathong Day originated more than two hundred years ago during the Sukhothai Dynasty. A princess planned to hold a banquet in a park near a river and decided to decorate the park and the river. One decoration she made for her beautiful banquet was something that could float on the river: a Krathong, or floating lantern, made from the stalk of a banana tree and decorated with banana leaf, flower, joss stick, and candle.

This banquet became a tradition for us, not only to have fun celebrating but also to worship the angel of the river. Our Krathong represent a sacrifice we make to the angel. We believe that the angel will protect us and forever give us water, the most important factor for human life. She will also help us by taking on all of our sufferings and giving us ease and comfort. We cut our nails and hair at this time, put some money in our Krathong to leave our sufferings with it, and light the candle and joss stick. Then we pray for luck and float it in the river.

Loy Krathong Day is held on a full moon night sometime in November when the river is full during the rainy season. Many people and their families go to the banquet near the river to enjoy the show, to dance, and to float their Krathong. The successful floating of a Krathong means good fortune, and the overturning of one means bad fortune, so people use their Krathong to predict their future. It is also a special dating night for lovers. They pray and float one Krathong together. If it can float along the river keeping its candle lit, they have true love. If it overturns, their love is not true.

However, it is up to you to choose your lover, of course. It depends on your needs, your heart, and your decision. If lovers confide in each other, this will lead to deep love and happiness regardless of their Krathong’s fate.

To the EPI staff,

Thank you for everything. You have helped me a lot and given me a lot of good advice. So, my English is improving and I’m happy. I think that it has been good to come to EPI. Now I can talk and understand you a little more than I used to be able to. I will never forget you. Thank you very much.

An EPI student
Historic Kyoungju City

Hyun-Jeung Ko

Kyoungju city, the capital of the Silla Dynasty in Korea from 57 B.C. to 935 A.D., is an historic place that also held the Kyoungju World Culture Expo in 1998. Before leaving Korea to come to the United States, I thought this city, my hometown, might be famous among foreigners because foreign tourists often come to visit it to view its great examples of Oriental art. But it seems that nobody in Columbia or at EPI knows about Kyoungju city. This is a little surprising to me. So, I would like to introduce my hometown. To understand Kyoungju city, it is enough, in my opinion, to know three of its major places: Bulguksa, Sukuram, and Namsan. Bulguksa is a temple including two stairways and two pagodas. Sukurum, located on top of Tohmar mountain, is a stone cave temple. And Namsan is a mountain including more than 40 valleys, 106 temples and temple ruins, 70 Buddhist statues and carvings, and 61 pagodas.

Bulguksa is one of Korea’s most famous temples. Its construction was started by Dae-sung Kim in 751 A.D. Before you enter Bulguksa, the land of Buddha, you must pass along two stone stairways, called bridges, suggesting the passage from the world to the Buddhist paradise. Each of these bridges has 33 stairs, symbolizing the heaven of Buddhism. In the courtyard of the temple are two impressive pagodas. The western one is called Sokkatap, symbolizing the Buddha’s historic descent into the world, and the design is simple. The eastern one is called Tabotap, symbolizing the Buddha’s ascension into heaven, and the design is more complex.

Sukkurum, built of white granite in the form of a cave, enshrines a seated Buddha in the center surrounded by 39 Bodhisattvas, ten disciplines, and four guardian kings on the wall. It represents the pure land in which Buddha resides. This mountaintop stone cave temple represents the crystallization of Silla’s religion, science, and art, a monumental achievement of Buddhist culture during the Silla period. Modern technology still hasn’t completely figured out the secret process of the construction. Sukkurum is a great place to watch the sunrise on New Year’s morning. I had no choice but to admire God and nature after seeing a sunrise there. It was a really amazing and fantastic experience.

Namsan, located in the southern part of Kyoungju city, is a mountain that provided a spiritual refuge for the Silla people. The area became a center for Buddhist activity after the kingdom accepted Buddhism as the state religion in 528 A.D. Numerous temples were built and many stone images were erected or carved in the mountain’s cliffs. The history and spirit of the Silla kingdom lives on at Namsan. A museum in itself, it is a valuable cultural asset and a wonderful place to learn the Korean spirit.

There are many other historical places in Kyoungju city, but these three are sufficient to teach you a lot about the Korean spirit in only two or three days. Of all the places and things to do in the city, climbing Namsan provides the best way to learn the spirit of the country through historical artifacts and to get a good view of the city.

Korean history goes back over five thousand years. When I visited the South Carolina State Museum recently and saw the relatively young artifacts it displays, I freshly felt how especially old and excellent Korea’s historical assets are. If I had stayed in my home country my whole life, I couldn’t have known this kind of feeling. I want to try my best to continue to get opportunities to visit other countries so that I can escape narrow-minded thinking.
The Korean Economic Crisis
Chul-Hee Cho
Korea

At one time, the Korean economy swept away everything in its path as it marched into the world economy. Koreans were ecstatic and squandered away money without hesitation. Of course, there were some who worried about such intemperate conduct and attitudes. But their voices were thoroughly ignored.

By November 1997, however, those voices could no longer be shut out. The Korean economy was in such big trouble that it had to be bailed out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). And then no sooner had the government received the IMF loan than a gruesome scene spread throughout Korean society. Thousands of people were laid off from their jobs and many chaebal, or conglomerate companies, went bankrupt. The streets filled with unemployed workers. The foreign exchange rate shot up.

How on earth did Korea, designated as the Asian dragon of ascent into heaven, collapse so impotently?

A number of factors led to the IMF bailout. The flooding of international hedge funds into Korea, for example, played a major role in the crisis. For a few years before the crisis developed, numerous foreign investment firms had been agitating the Korean stock and bond market to make huge profits. Then suddenly they withdrew their investments, sending the Korean economy into a coma. Consequently, many international banks wanted to redeem their loans, so the Korean foreign exchange reserve swiftly decreased.

Another important factor leading to the bailout was the injudicious proliferation of large conglomerate companies dealing in an excessively wide range of products, from toothbrushes to shipping vessels. Even before the crisis began, several economists argued that these huge companies needed restructuring, but far from accepting this advice, they obtained bigger and bigger loans from foreign banks. Their debt-equity ratio declined further and further and became a huge burden on the domestic economy.

Governmental corruption and impotence also contributed to the crisis. In fact, these flaws comprised the main cause of our economic disgrace. Bureaucratic red tape and a peace-at-any-price principle among the bureaucratic ranks rendered the Korean economy spiritless.

These days, our economy is still in trouble, facing depression, restructuring, unemployment, and homelessness. Since the inauguration of the new government administration in December 1997, Korea has been absorbed in resurrecting its economy.

Fortunately, there have been some recent positive developments, including the ascent of national credit grade, the increase in foreign exchange reserve, some lively mergers and acquisitions, and other promising economic trends, that indicate tinges of recovery from this serious situation.

Korea, which accomplished democracy and the miracle of Hankang (the rapid industrialization of Korea), never falls down weakly. Someday, the magnificent redevelopment of the Korean economy will astonish people throughout the world.
In my country, Mexico, when a girl is going to be fifteen years old, her parents plan a big party for her, like a wedding reception. Two or three months before the party, they reserve a big hall and begin to invite around two hundred people or more. Then they need to look for Godparents who will pay for almost everything for the reception—the invitation cards, the church Mass, a band, wine, a big cake, a surprise gift, mementos, and sometimes the rental of the hall.

Next the girl has to choose four to six boys called chamelanes who help her prepare to dance the waltz and one or more modern or old dances such as disco, salsa, cumbia, quebradita, cha cha cha, or mambo—all typical Mexican dances. They practice these dances for two months before the party.

Around a month before the reception, the girl buys a beautiful dress, high-heeled shoes, a crown, a bunch of artificial flowers, and the clothes and shoes that she will wear for the various dances. Her chamelanes rent tuxedos, but they have to buy the clothes they will wear to dance.

Finally, on the day of the reception, the guests arrive between nine and ten p.m., most of them carrying gifts for the honored girl. At the entrance, a host greets the guests and leads them to their table. Special tables are reserved for the Godparents.

Soon, everyone is dancing. At around eleven o’clock, the girl presents her show dances, looking like a princess. When her dancing is finished, her father gives a kind of speech to the guests in order to present his daughter to society as a woman; she is not a child anymore. He also thanks all the guests for attending and celebrating the party with his family. After these words, the guests keep dancing and enjoying the party. The party is over between three and five a.m.

The party for this occasion can be luxurious or not, depending on the financial possibilities of the family and the Godparents. It may be celebrated on a small scale, as just a birthday party.

After the party, the dream is over. Life changes for this girl who has come of age. She starts wearing different kinds of clothes, and her behavior becomes more womanly. For the first time in her life, she is permitted to have a boyfriend. Since her parents have begun to treat her like a woman, she feels a big sense of responsibility. Now, she needs to learn how to cook, wash, and do housework. So, along with her new privileges comes a lot of hard work.
The People of My Hometown

Bin Zheng
China

My hometown, Dragon Mouth, China, has many beautiful mountains, and I like them very much, but I like the people of my hometown even more than the mountains because they are so kind and loving.

It is said that the more education we have, the better humans we are, but this isn’t always true. The people of my hometown don’t have much education, but they are kind and wonderful. When I was young, my grandparents’ home collapsed in a terrible storm. Fortunately, nobody was injured. This calamity broke their hearts, though, and they were very sad. The next morning, the townpeople came with all kinds of food. They also brought various tools to help my grandparents build a new home. My grandparents were very excited and couldn’t help crying. It took the people five days to build my grandparents’ new home. Although it was simple and small, it was special. My grandfather tried to pay them, but they refused and told him that they would help him anytime he needed. Today, my grandfather always tells me this story because the people’s kindness has remained in his memory all these years.

Money is very important, but love is more important. One summer, it was so hot in my city that almost all the crops died. Many city people had a hard time buying rice and were very worried about this bad situation. For all peasants, grain is an essential staple, but the people of my hometown gave some of their rice to the city people so that they wouldn’t have to go without rice. Later, the city people sent some money to the people of my hometown to repay their kindness, but they returned the money and told them that the rice was a gift. What a nice gift!

As each day passes, they always help other people in their hearts. I love them, and I always remember what they have done for others. □

Kana-san,
Do you remember when we studied together to improve our English last summer? We spoke broken English at that time. But now, don’t you think our English has improved? (Or are we still speaking strange English??)
Anyway, after going back to Japan, please take care. I’ll never forget you.
Your mother,
Yoshiko

Dear EPI,
First, I want to express great thanks to all of you, because you help so many international students. I like my classes and all my teachers. For the end of the term, I wrote a little poem for you:
English is not difficult
Permits me to meet and know people from other countries
I want to learn English
The L.B.V. girl

Bronia,
What’s up, my teacher? I’m very happy because you are my teacher. I wish you many good days. Okay, my teacher, bye!
Adel Al-Hosani
Tom Yam Kung
Theerapa Thanatawee
Thailand

Tom Yam Kung is a very special Thai dish. Whoever tastes it once will absolutely want to eat it again and again. Tom Yam means “hot and spicy soup,” and Kung means “shrimp.”

Ingredients
3 cups of water
1 sliced blade of lemon grass
1 diced onion
1 tablespoon of sliced galingable
1 sliced kaffir lime
2 tablespoons of Nam Prik Pao—a Thai spice—(or 2 tablespoons of chopped chili)
6 shrimps (or other seafood, chicken, or beef)
1/2 cup of sliced mushroom
3 tablespoons of lime juice
3 tablespoons of fish sauce

Preparation
Boil the water in a deep pot and then add the lemon grass, onion, galingable, and kaffir lime. After four to six minutes, add the Nam Prik Pao (or chili) and shrimps. When the shrimps are cooked, add the mushroom, lime juice, and fish sauce. Serve hot with rice.

Sin-Ra-Myon
Sang-Hyuck Kang
Korea

Sin-Ra-Myon, the most popular prepackaged Korean noodle dish, tastes good and is very easy to prepare. It smells so good and tastes like spicy beef stew. Try it! If it leaves a nasty taste in your mouth, I’ll refund your money.

Ingredients
1 package of Sin-Ra-Myon (containing dried noodles and two packets of dried soup ingredients)
550 CC (approximately) of water
1 egg (optional)
some vegetables (optional)
pepper (optional)

Preparation
Put the noodles and soup ingredients into plenty of boiling water (vary the amount of water according to your taste). Cook for four to five minutes. If you like, add an egg, some vegetables, and/or pepper according to your taste. Eat and enjoy!

Boolgogi
Myung-Eul Song
Korea

In Korea, each province has its special foods, but boolgogi is a popular dish throughout the country. When we have a party or when family members get together, we usually make this dish and enjoy it. It’s easy to prepare. Try this recipe!

Ingredients
1 large pear (or 1 1/2 onions)
1 kilogram of sliced beef
1/2 bunch of chopped green onions
5 cloves of minced garlic
6 tablespoons of soy sauce
2 tablespoons of rice wine
2 tablespoons of sesame oil
1/2 tablespoon of salt
1 tablespoon of black pepper
1 package of button mushrooms
1 large onion
several leaves of romaine lettuce

Preparation
Juice the pear (or 1 1/2 onions) and discard the pulp. Marinate the beef in the pear juice (or onion juice), chopped green onions, minced garlic, soy sauce, rice wine, sesame oil, salt, and pepper for five hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Then slice the mushrooms and onion and add them to the marinated beef. Sauté the boolgogi mixture in a frying pan. Serve with the romaine lettuce leaves. Wrap boolgogi in lettuce leaves and eat. If you want, eat boolgogi without lettuce.
recipes...

Arroz a la Marinera
Candy Ferrer
Spain

*Arroz a la marinera*, or “seawoman’s rice,” is a popular Spanish dish similar to the more famous *paella*. If you like rice and seafood, give this recipe a try.

Ingredients
8 tablespoons of olive oil
1/2 pound of calamari (or squid if calamari is not available) cut into small pieces
3 tablespoons of finely chopped tomato
1 tablespoon of finely chopped onion
2 cloves of finely chopped garlic
1 teaspoon of paprika
4 cups of rice
8 cups of boiling water
1/2 teaspoon of saffron salt
parsley
1/2 pound of rape (a kind of fish)
1/2 pound of mussels

Preparation
Heat the oil in an iron *paella* (or in a big, shallow cooking pot). When the oil is hot, fry the calamari and then add the tomato, onion, and garlic. Keep frying until all these ingredients are cooked. Add the paprika, rice, boiling water, saffron, and salt, and continue cooking. From time to time, stir the rice so that it doesn’t stick to the pot. When the rice begins to boil, let it cook five more minutes and then add the parsley, fish, and shellfish. Cook for fifteen more minutes or until you see that the rice is ready. Enjoy! 💜

Dear Jennifer,

When I met you for the first time, you greeted me in good Japanese. Ever since we have known each other, you have never spoken English to me. When I tried to explain the meaning of a Japanese word in English, you said, “Don’t speak English!” Nobody else here has ever said that to me. It’s a strange and opposite situation. But my dream is to teach English to Japanese people or to teach Japanese to international kids, so it has been very good practice for me to teach you. I’m very happy that you love Japanese. You have made me appreciate the beauty of my language. Thank you for calling me “Sensei.” Please visit Japan someday!!

Akiko

To all the students,

I’m lucky to have met you. We have had a lot of great times together. I will never forget you and the time we have spent together. I have had a good experience here and learned about the culture of so many other countries. Thank you very much, and I’ll always be happy to see you in the future!!!

a Japanese girl

To Veronica Garcia,

Before I came here, I had never met a Mexican girl. I knew that Mexican people were friendly and nice, but when I met you last term I learned that you and your country are the best. I’ve been missing you every day since you went back to your country. I miss your energy, self-confidence, and friendship. I will never forget EPI, and I will never forget "Pepia Garcia." You are and always will be my friend.

Liliana Castro (Colombia)

Dear Amer,

How are you, Amer? You are a very kind and shy person. You are also a good friend. I’m very sad because you will soon be returning to your country, but I hope the contact between us won’t end. I wish you success in your life and lots of usefu practice with English. Thank you for all your help.

Your friend,

Hamad

Dear Christine Discoe,

Really, I think your classes are the most fun at EPI. My classmates and I enjoy every class, especially our conversation seminar. Although we don’t speak English very well and we make a lot of mistakes, you are very patient with us. I want the best for you in your future at EPI and at home with the new little Discoe coming soon. Be careful with the fourteen famous Discoes in the United States. Don’t allow the new one to climb trees because he might fall and cut his tongue, as his mother once did. You are really nice.

Thank you,

DF

Dear Barbara,

I would like to thank you for all the time I have spent in your classes. These have been little holidays to me. You are a wonderful teacher. I have learned a lot of English and enjoyed the chocolate, too. Thank you.

Your student,

M.E.

To the EPI staff, teachers, and students,

Sometimes, we spend our time on things that we think are important and we disregard what is really important. Life is so marvelous. Let’s not waste our time. Let’s enjoy it.

With love,

Latica Monica Mendez C.
To the group in my van on the skiing trip,

This group was so nice. I really like all the people I hung out with on the trip. They are all very good examples of the meaning of friendship.

Let's start with the driver, Mehdi. Mehdi has a big heart and he can understand everybody. He is a very good boss you can give him any job, and don't worry because he will do it very well. Our DJ and samba queen was Claudia. Candy was like our tender-hearted big sister. She took good care of us and was always really nice. Marisela was the friendliest person in the group. In fact, she is the friendliest person I have ever met. She always smiles at life as life smiles at her. The perfect couple in the van was Diego and Lorena. They are like one body. I hope God blesses them. I have never seen two people dance better than they do. I really respect them very much. The one with the sunniest face was Rosana. And she is a very good teacher. She taught me some Spanish, and I learned a lot from her. She has a very big mind; her intelligence goes far beyond her years. The biggest fruit-eater on the van was Monica. She is very strong and has a lot of power. She likes to help people, and this feature of her character represents the best way of life. Another really nice person in our group was Myung-Eui. She has a great knowledge of life and you can learn a lot from her. The quietest and calmest people on the van, always sitting in the back and projecting a peaceful atmosphere, were Moon, Fukiko, and Akiko.

I just want to say thanks to all of you for being my friends. If I made any mistakes with you, please accept my apology. You are the best friends I have met in my life, and I don't want to lose the friendship of any one of you. I will keep in touch with you until I die. Maybe we will not see each other again after we leave EPI, but you will be inside my heart and I will always think about you. Thank you for everything you gave me. Wherever I go, I will not find friends like you.

Khaled Al-Bouloshi
Around Here

Ricardo Viloria  Venezuela
Patricia Leon-Ponte  Venezuela
Kana Sumiya  Japan
Rosana Hurtado  Venezuela
Salma Al-Maawali  Oman
Dana Fida Mohamed  Oman
Hebah Ali  Kuwait
Marisela Ibarra  Mexico
Candy Ferrer  Spain
Yukiko Iijima  Japan
Theerapa Thanatawee  Thailand
Tomoko Tokunaga  Japan
Sang-Hyuck Kang  Korea
Two Times Weeping

Ricardo Vitoria
Venezuela

When I came to Columbia seven months ago, I couldn’t say a single complete sentence in English. You can realize what that means. And, like anyone else who wants to live here for more than six months, I had to take on many challenging tasks at the beginning, such as renting an apartment, getting the phone and electricity connected, buying a car, applying for a Social Security number, etc., etc.

Living through all these situations, I got tired and disoriented and began to regret ever coming to Columbia. On top of all the difficulties I was experiencing in my new life here, I was far away from my wife, family, and friends. Finally, two weeks after moving here, it all got to me; one night when I returned from my EPI classes to my apartment, I started weeping like a child needing to be fed by his mother.

Yet things have changed. I have made friends, gained experience and maturity, and learned a lot of English. I have even begun to consider an MBA program. And, as if all of these good things were not enough, my wife and I have been awarded the possibility of becoming parents.

So, I think that when the time to go arrives I will weep again, and this time with even more emotion than before. I thank EPI and Columbia for giving me the opportunity to be who I am now. ☐

One Fine Day

Patricia Leon-Ponte
Venezuela

One day in January, I woke up and went to Russell House to celebrate Martin Luther King Day. EPI was not holding regular classes that day so that EPI students and teachers could participate in the special MLK Day activities the University had planned. It was a little cold that morning, but it soon became sunny and warmer.

First, we ate breakfast and picked up a ticket to the place at which we had chosen to do volunteer work. After breakfast, we went outside Russell House to hear a speech about Martin Luther King. We did some exercises to warm up our bodies and started the day with lots of energy.

Next, we walked to Martin Luther King Park in Five Points. There I found the bus to Denny Terrace Elementary School. There were quite a number of us going to this site, so we traveled in two buses.

When we arrived at the school, we went to the auditorium and listened to the instructions about what we were supposed to do. I was very lucky because my task was a relatively easy one; while others went to the garden to collect leaves and work with flowers, etc., all I had to do was recycle plastic bags. I spent three hours rolling plastic bags and talking with American students in my group. We drank some sodas and then returned to the university.

The final event of the day was lunch at Russell House, where we listened to the experiences of the various volunteer groups as we ate.

I am so happy because I did a job that I had never done before and I feel that I really helped. It was a wonderful experience for me, and I hope to have such an opportunity again. ☐
Who loves Chinese and Korean foods? If you do, or if you want to try these delicious foods for the first time, I suggest you visit Olympia China, in the Olympia area of Columbia.

This unique restaurant, situated in a small old convenience store, has the greatest egg rolls in Columbia. An egg roll is a kind of fried food shaped like a small pipe. The ingredients of Olympia China’s egg rolls include ground beef, cabbage, and other vegetables wrapped in thin rice paper. Most Chinese restaurants’ egg rolls are wrapped in thick rice paper, so they’re not as palatable as Olympia China’s.

At Olympia China, you order your egg rolls and other favorite dishes at the store’s register. Olympia China offers a great variety of Chinese and Korean dishes, including chicken broccoli, beef broccoli, chicken chow-mein, beef lo-mein, shrimp fried rice, bulgogi, chicken wings, etc.

There are so many dishes to choose from that you might hesitate when deciding what you want. I can never make up my mind as I stand there in front of the register. But you can always go for the weekly special, which is very inexpensive and includes an egg roll. Whatever you end up selecting, you can be sure that the waiter will bring you an abundant portion of an absolutely tasty dish.

One of the special dishes you should try is Kim-chi, a traditional Korean spicy pickled vegetable. The Kim-chi at Olympia China is homemade by the restaurant’s cooks, who are from Korea. After sampling their delicious Kim-chi, you’ll probably want to order a takeaway container of it so that you can enjoy it every day at home, but unfortunately you can get it to eat only in the restaurant.

I’ve been eating lunch at Olympia China since I came to EPI last summer term. I’ve become a regular customer that the restaurant staff remember by name. They say, “Hi, Hana!” when I arrive there with my friends. I’m glad they greet me, even though they mispronounce my name a little. In fact, I like their Korean pronunciation of my name.

After trying this good little restaurant, you too might become a regular customer. Once you start going there, you should eat there frequently, at least once a week. If you don’t keep up your attendance, the woman cook will say, “Long time no see!”

Olympia China is on Olympia Street, which intersects with Whaley Street. From Cliff Apartments go several blocks west on Whaley Street until you come to Olympia Street. Turn left and stay on Olympia Street for several more blocks. Keep an eye out for Olympia China on the left side of the street—it’s very small and easy to miss.

I love Olympia China’s food and the staff’s nice, warm character. I really recommend this restaurant to you. I know you’ll get hooked on it as soon as you try it! 😊

To my sister and mother, Myung-Eui,

When my heart was broken, you cheered me up. When I needed help, you gave me good advice. You are like my real sister and mother. I really appreciate you. Please take care and enjoy your life! I hope I can meet you again someday in Korea or Japan.

Yoshiko

Whaley’s Mill #103
Personal Portraits

Maria Leticia Andueza

Maria recommends that tourists who visit her home country, Venezuela, go to Margarita, a very beautiful island. There you can buy typical things from Margarita and go to casinos, but the most fun thing to do there is to enjoy the beach.

Maria is a very friendly girl, and she likes to study. She will study chemical engineering in Venezuela next September. She’s very excited about that. In five years, she expects to graduate from her university. In ten years, she wants to be working in a comfortable job. And in thirty years, she hopes to have a family with children, her own house, and a nice life. Her hobby is watching TV.

A car accident was the most terrible experience that Maria has experienced in her life. She says that it was horrifying to see a car coming toward her car. Fortunately, she wasn’t hurt.

Maria would like to meet Jacinto Convic, who found a cure for leprosy. If she had to leave objects of her generation for the people living in the year 3000, she would leave clothes, pictures of people and places she has been, and a watch. If she had the chance to go back to the past, she would go back to the year 1800 because she would like to see the lifestyle of the people at that time.

—Rosana Hurtado, Venezuela

Bill McSweeney

Bill McSweeney is my grammar/writing teacher and my communication seminar teacher, too. He is such a nice teacher, and despite the hard assignments we have to do every day, the class is fun!

There are many interesting things about Bill, one of which is that he has never gone shopping at a mall.

"Then how do you shop?" I asked him.

"Through the mail with catalogues," he said, "and if I like certain things I buy a lot of them so I won’t have to worry about shopping for them again."

Another interesting thing about Bill is that he doesn’t like watching TV. He watches just a little because he hates commercials. He says that they always tell you what to do, what to think, and how to lead your life.

Bill loves the students at EPI because we bring him so many interesting ideas. He loves to see our responses to America.

—Dana Fida Mohamed, Oman

Jong-Wook Sung

Jong-Wook, or Jack as he likes to be called in English, is from Korea, and he is twenty-four years old. He is an artist who likes to create and draw cartoon characters. He opened his eyes to creativity when he was nine, and since that time he has built his own cartoon world by using his imagination.

The thing that Jack most enjoys doing is imitating actors. He thinks that sometimes he becomes extremely shy and sometimes he becomes extremely crazy. He has a funny sense of humor.

—Salma Al-Maawali, Oman

Jong-Wook (Jack)
Emir Rojas

In Arabic, Emir means “prince,” and Emir Rojas, from Venezuela, is a prince of a guy. He has one sister, his mother is a veterinarian, and his father is a lawyer. Emir wants to be a lawyer, too.

In his free time, Emir likes to dance, sing, and play music. He has taken lessons on the most popular instrument in Venezuela, called the cuatro.

Emir is proud of his country and recommends that people visit Venezuela because it is a very interesting place and has great natural scenery. He hopes that he can go back to Venezuela before December 24th so that he won’t miss the great celebration held there at Christmas time every year.

—Hebah Ali, Kuwait

Akiko Nagayama

Akiko, from Japan, loves baseball. She doesn’t know why she became a baseball fan, but if she were a boy, her dream would absolutely be to play baseball as a professional in a huge ballpark. Once she went to Yankee Stadium alone when she was in New York. There was no game and no people there at the time because it was during the off season, but she was still satisfied. Akiko’s fascination with baseball began when she first watched professional Japanese baseball championships on TV with her friends. She realized that her heart was beating fast during these games, and ever since that time it feels like the blood in her small body is trembling when she watches baseball. When she sees a big home run, she feels as if she could burst from the excitement.

—Kana Sumiya, Japan

Francisco Preciado

His name is Francisco Preciado, but everybody calls him Paco. He’s from Jalisco, a typical traditional state in Mexico. He’s thirty-seven years old. He’s married and has two daughters. He works as a teacher in a middle school, where he teaches English, physical education, and folk dancing. He says that teaching teenagers is not easy, but it’s a good experience.

Paco’s hobbies are dancing, cooking, and going out with his family every weekend. At EPI he is known as “Papa” to some students because most of the time he feels and acts like a father, especially with his roommates.

—Marisela Ibarra, Mexico

Marisela Ibarra

Marisela’s undergraduate major was English teaching, and now she teaches English at the basic levels. Recently, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship, which gave her the opportunity to improve her English in the U.S. If she learns a lot here at EPI and passes the TOEFL test, she may get to teach Spanish somewhere in the U.S., hopefully in Washington, D.C. She would like to teach both English and Spanish. She really enjoys teaching.

Four years ago, influenced by her brothers, she started to learn and practice Lima-Lama, a martial art form that originated in the Polynesian islands. Marisela became so interested in this sport that she began participating in some competitions. Last year, she was the first Mexican woman on a team to compete outside Mexico. The competition was held in Long Beach, California, and it was a great experience for her.

—Candy Ferrer, Spain
Candelaria Ferrer

Candelaria is from Spain, and she has a very cute nickname, “Candy.” She has been here for about five months. Her husband was transferred to Columbia by his company.

Besides studying English at EPI, Candy is a homemaker and a mother. When she lived in Spain, she used to collect stamps and bags of sugar as her hobbies. Her favorite pastime now is spending time with her family. She especially likes playing, chatting, and watching TV with her daughter. The best thing that happened in her life was the birth of her daughter. She says that having a baby creates a mixture of beautiful feelings. She’s planning to get pregnant again. She would like to have several children, maybe because she has eight brothers and sisters. However, her husband doesn’t completely agree; he wants only one more baby.

Like many other people, Candy thinks that Columbia is a nice but not so exciting place to live. She tries to enjoy it the best she can by going to movies or taking short trips around here.

Candy is very happy to have this wonderful opportunity to learn English and make lots of international friends at EPI.
—Yukiko Iijima, Japan, and Marisela Ibarra, Mexico

Fatih Ozgen

Fatih, a new student from Turkey, seems to be getting used to his new life in Columbia. He wants to learn English in order to enter USC. Sometimes he feels some frustration about communicating with American people and about American food, but he manages to do well and he has made friends with Americans and international students.

Fatih likes all kinds of sports and listening to music. On weekends, he goes shopping and plays sports with his friends in the P.E. center. Unlike a lot of other people, he really likes Columbia because he doesn’t like noisy places, and he especially likes the strange weather here.

It is his character, Fatih says, to be flexible and optimistic, though sometimes shy. In addition to his attractive character, I think he is very cute.

Fatih says that he enjoys EPI very much because of its nice teachers and the many friends he has made here.
—Yukiko Iijima, Japan

Ryuji Misuda

We have a professional baseball player here at EPI, a guy who lives for baseball. Ryuji, from Japan, is twenty years old and has spent most of his lifetime playing and practicing baseball. In Japan, he was involved with the game almost eighteen hours a day. He says that baseball has built his personality and made him tough. Baseball has been everything in his life.
—Salma Al-Maawali, Oman
To the EPI staff and students,

How are you, everyone? Does anyone know how to sleep well? I'm bothered by sleeplessness. If somebody knows a remedy for insomnia, please let me know. I'm sleepless in Columbia.

Kenji

To the best teachers—Susan, Bernie, and Kathy,

Thanks for giving me and everybody else in the class your attention! You are fantastic! Now, my English is better than it was when I arrived here.

A grateful student

To the people from Recife, BH, and SP, Brazil,

I'm very happy to know you and to spend my moments here with you. I think if I didn't know you, I would be lonely, because my friends are in Brazil. Now you are my friends. Thank you for being here with me.

Aline Goncalves

Rafael,

What's up? How are you? I know you are from Brazil, but where in Brazil? Do you want to visit my country? It is very beautiful. When you are ready to come to my country, tell me, please. Okay, my friend, bye!

Adel Al-Hosani