Greetings from the Editor’s Desk  by Wajid Hassan

Hello Everyone
The long awaited Newsletter is finally here!! Yeah it took me a while to get enough interesting articles; but I am sure when your wait was worth it as you read through these fantastic articles.

Keeping up with the tradition, this time we decided to cover the European continent. Even though we tried to get more articles from the European students, it wasn’t possible because there are not many students from Europe at WSU. The article on page 8 covers the statistics on European students at WSU.

If you flip to page 3, you will read Bilal’s article on Turkey’s attempts in becoming a European Union member. Bilal covers through an emic perspective, Turkey’s struggle to achieve the membership in the backdrop of its cultural and religious obligations and differences.

In a little departure from the theme, on page 5, Dhreen describes what most of us have already witnessed or will be witnessing on campus. This article is a worth read for the incoming students so that they can be better prepared for what they are getting into, once they embark the journey of higher studies.

How about some amazing facts about Europe that will prepare you for some trivia? Be ready to be surprised with some rarely known information: For example, just compare the size and population of Europe to other continents. (Hey read the article for more information!!)

A report on airport welcome table sheds light on ISU’s active participation in welcoming new students with a smile, a helping hand, and a goodies bag.

One of the most engaging article in Russian Language by Taymur Hallal is on Campus Involvement for International Students. It is a must read. A lot of international students stick to their communities and don’t get involved with the activities on campus. (Continued on page 7)

Welcome to the Newly Elected ISU Executive Committee

Timur Madaminov, an enthusiastic and hardworking business student will lead the 2010-2011 ISU Executive Committees as its President.

Elections to the ISU Executive Committee were concluded on May 2, 2010. An impressive and diverse slate of experienced and new faces ran for various positions of the Executive Committee.

The election process was conducted under the watchful supervision of a special committee consisting of outgoing President Adeline Chai-Fan Tan, Director of Development, Zenas Tshitundu and Newsletter Editor, Wajid Hassan.

The outgoing committee members would like to congratulate the new executive committee members and assure to provide full support to the newly elected members in their dedicated efforts in promoting ISU.

The following people have been elected to the Executive committee of ISU:

President: Timor Madaminov, Russia
Vice President: Ashan Amaranayake, Sri Lanka
Secretary: Nenne Odochu, Nigeria
Treasurer: Wei Dai, China
Newsletter Editor: Adeline Chai Fan
Director (Development): Chiran Nawalage, Sri Lanka
Director (Publicity): Suranjith Perera, Sri Lanka
Director (Outreach/Student Organization Liaison): Merl Ralalalge, Sri Lanka
Website Manager: Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia
Representatives: Raymond Tay, South East Asia
Stephanie Rubinetti, Latin America
Taymur Hallal, SGA

Editors
The ISU executive committee had a get together on the 19th of March 2010 in the Club Room of the Wheatshocker Apartments, at 5pm. Originally it was planned as a barbeque in the Chisolm Creek Park, but due to the inclement weather, it was changed into an indoors activity. The event was attended by almost all of the committee members and advisors, Dr. Alan and Ms. Shan. The event began with a potpourri of food. The food was as diverse as the people who attended. There was fried chicken and fried rice, ice-cream and fruit drinks and soft drinks, and even ethnic dishes as vadas and biryani. The food and the conversation was followed by a lively game of “Guesstures.” Introduced by Karmen and Adi, this game is similar to charades, but in a different twist. In this game, each player plays out different acts without saying a word for a short period of time. it is a lot of fun trying to guess what the performer was trying to convey. Although this meeting was fun-filled, it also has a touch of business when ISU rolled out its final design for an ISU T Shirt. Also ISU wants to introduce a new program this year called Cultural Evening to be held in Fall 2010.

Zenus and Cameron playing Guesstures

(Continued on page 8)
Turkey on the way to “wonderland” - Turkey and European Union relations - By M. Bilal Kenasari

Turkey has been officially negotiating with the European Union to become its member since 2004. At the same time, having the geographical advantage of being a bridge between Europe and Asian/Middle Eastern countries, Turkey, has strong relations with its Eastern neighbors.

Turkey’s negotiation to become part of the European Union was boosted in 2004 with the current Turkish government’s administration. However, Turkey has as yet, not received any date on which it is to become a member of the EU. While the answer as to when this will happen is ambiguous, Turkey should be persistent with the process of preparing itself to the standards of EU communities.

Indeed, questioning the ultimate objective, which is to be a part of the EU, is one of the hottest topics of debate in Turkey today: What is the definition of being a member of EU? What might this bring to Turkey? What might it take in return? No matter what the outcome is going to be, Turkey seems determined to better its democracy and human rights.

In the 1970's, Turkish society was described as ‘walking west on the deck of a ship which is sailing east.’ Beyond geographical definitions of east or west, this description actually reflects the modernization of Turkish society: the concurrent state of having a Muslim identity and being a European country.

Being a Muslim country, and having a considerably long history of the Ottoman Empire with other Muslim countries, Turkey is one of the most important geographical regions in Europe. While being aware of the importance of having good relations with other Muslim countries, especially with the Eastern neighbors, Turkey still keeps the process of walking down the yellow brick road (as in the “Wizard of Oz”) to integration with EU community alive. Thus, at one point, Turkey is expecting to be an “Oz” of the west, while trying to create its own utopia in the East by brightening up its relations with Eastern neighbors like Armenia, Iran and the Arab world; hence it’s hard to see Turkey as a part of EU in the near future.

When Turkey raises its social and economic quality to the European Union’s standards, coupled with its healthier relationship with eastern neighbors, then Turkey will actually be much stronger than its EU counterparts, at least culturally. When this happens, the question would be “is there a need to be the part of EU?”

It could be Turkey’s turn to slow down, or even halt the complete integration with the European Union.

M. Bilal Kenasari, Turkey Sociology mbkenasari@wichita.edu

Airport Welcome Table for Spring 2010

The Airport Welcome Table for spring 2010 was held from the 8th till the 15th of January 2010, at the Wichita Mid-Continent Airport. The purpose of the table was to give a warm welcome and first hand information to newly arriving international students. I was given the chance to be the coordinator for this event, being one of the officers of the International Student Union (ISU). It was a roller-coaster week as there were lots of students coming in with lots of questions and problems which we successfully managed to solve.

Finding volunteers was a major challenge before the event was held but I somehow managed to get volunteers starting from the 4th of January. By the end of the week, the final count of volunteers was 20, which was impressive, considering few students available during January.

Before the event began, few ISU members and I packed the welcome bags to be given to all new international students. We were lucky to get help from the Hyde Elementary School students, who donated MANY of the items in the welcome bags as part of their fifth grade social work project.

(Continued on page 6)
Following the tradition, we have put together some interesting facts about Europe. This newsletter has several articles from the students of European countries and it is but natural that we need to be aware of some interesting European facts. Some of the facts presented are beyond common beliefs, and some of them are startling.

For example, it is amazing for the readers to know that not United Kingdom or United States, but France is the most visited country in the world!!

By the way there are 45 countries in the Europe, and due to the shortage of space all are not mentioned here by name.

- Unlike all other continents, Europe is designated as a continent not because of geographical regions, but because of political reasons. In fact, for most part, Europe and Asia are considered geographically one unit as Eurasia. With a vague eastern border, there is much controversy regarding whether particular countries are part of Europe. The borders of Europe are not very clear, even today. They just refer to socio-cultural boundaries.

- The smallest country in the world is the Vatican City, which is in Europe. It has an area of only 0.2 square miles - and a population of 770, none of whom are permanent residents. Nevertheless, it is the seat of the Roman Catholic Church with about one billion following in the world.

- The largest city in the European Union by population is London which has a population of 7,556,900 people.

- The largest urban area of the European Union is Paris with a population of 10,480,000 and density of 3,400 per km square.

- La Sapienza University in Rome is the largest university in Europe with a whopping 184,000 students.

- The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of only 27 European member states i.e. not all the European countries are part of it.

- Europe has one of the lowest fertility rates in the world.

- Adolf Hitler was not German by birth. He was Austrian, born in the small town of Braunauam Inn.

- The first country in the world to keep population statistics was Sweden.

- Macedonia in Europe has the lowest divorce rate of only 0.2% per 1000 annually.

- Russia is the largest country in Europe, and in Asia, and in the World.

- The population of Europe is over 700 million people.

- Many European countries have adopted the Euro currency; however the UK still uses the British pound!

- Finland is famous for lakes. There are nearly 250,000 lakes in Finland, which have a total area of at least 500 square meters.

- Greenland is the biggest island in the world, and it belongs to Denmark.

- Sweden and Switzerland have never participated in a war since the early 19th century. Both countries were involved in the Napoleonic wars, but not in any war after that. They were two of the very few European countries that didn’t participate in either of the two World Wars.

- Norway and Turkey are yet NOT the members of European Union.

- Germany covers an area of 137,803 square miles; it is smaller in area than California.

- Luxembourg is home to the European Investment Bank. It was established in 1958 under the Treaty of Rome.

- France in Western Europe is the largest in terms of area. With an area of 212,943 square miles France is easily the biggest country in Western Europe. It is also the third largest country in Europe as a whole, after European Russia and Ukraine. However, France is somewhat smaller in area than Texas.

- Brussels is the administrative capital of the European Union. Brussels is also home to the headquarters of NATO. Frankfurt, Germany is home to the European Central Bank (ECB). Strasbourg, France is the seat of the European Parliament.

- Luxembourg is home to the European Court of Justice (ECJ). The Court was established in 1952.

- Germany is the most populated country in Europe with a population of over 82 million.

- The highest mountain peak in Europe is Elbrus. Elbrus is the highest summit of the Caucasus Mountain. It is actually an extinct volcano with two craters reaching a height of 5,595m and 5,642m.

- Belgium has the 2nd highest concentration of diplomatic missions (159 Embassies) after Washington, D.C.
Throughout my lifetime I have listened to people reflect back on their college experiences and explain how college is supposed to be "the best experience of your life." Our freshmen year in college is a time filled with anticipation, some anxiety, and wonderful discoveries. College is a lot different than high school. Your freshman experience will definitely make an impression on you. Without doubt, though, the most dramatic freshman year is for those living away from home. What can you expect as you head off into the wonderful world of higher education?

First Few Days: My first couple of weeks at Wichita State University was rough and really tested my strength (mental and physical). I faced challenges and obstacles that I had never heard about in those conversations I had with people about the college experience. All of a sudden there was no one to get me out of the bed when I hit the snooze button on my alarm clock. There was no one to make me get off the phone or turn off the T.V and go do homework. A few no longer existed and my decisions were made based on only my judgment. I can remember missing 9:30am classes because I stayed out too late the night before. These were all new problems that could have easily escalated without the proper actions.

Academics: Generally, undergraduate college classes aren’t that much more difficult than high school courses. The big difference is that in college I have to do all of my homework outside of class. There’s no study hall in college. I have to take it upon myself to get to the library if needed or ask the necessary questions.

In high school the teacher would constantly remind the students when certain assignments were due, but this was not the case in college. I learned that the hard way my first semester. Sometimes I forgot to turn in an assignment because I didn’t properly read my syllabus and my professor never mentioned it.

Another big difference between high school and college academics is the importance of the test. Unlike in high school, where daily assignments can help to pad a grade, the main source of grading in college is the test. With possibly only three tests per semester in certain classes, I am under a heavy burden to do well on each test.

Also, with all of the independence I now have, homework and studying are not always my first priorities. I would much rather spend time with my friends, watch television, or go to a party than do my schoolwork. I have found that all the distractions that are present in college life lead to procrastinating. There have been many times when I have put off doing an assignment until the night before. It is obvious that as a college student, I have had to adapt to a whole new style of learning.

Living on your own: Another thing that I have had to adapt to is living on my own. Since I don’t have a curfew anymore, I feel more independent than I ever have before. I no longer have to worry about coming home late or tell anyone where I’m going to be.

Coming home means going back to my own place instead of my parents’ house. I don’t have to ask anybody if I can do this or that; I can, for the most part, do what I want to do whenever I want. This can have both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages are that I can do more than I have before and I can do more experimenting and exploring. However, this could lead to problems, such as with relationships and possibly even the police. As a rule, independence must be handled very carefully.

Meeting New People: College isn’t made up of all negative adjustments, however. In college I got to meet many new people and make new friends. I thought it would be more difficult to meet new people because I’m very shy and reserved, yet I was amazed at how easy it was to talk to new people and get acquainted with them. Everybody is in the same boat upon arrival at college; not too many people know each other, and usually they are very willing to strike up a conversation to get to know some people. I have thus far greatly enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends. I think I made the right choice by going to college.

Future Holds Promising: On some of those long, seemingly endless nights of studying and writing, it will be only natural for you to long for the good old days. Hang in there. These down periods will pass. You’ll be making a lot of new friends. Continue to be yourself. Don’t strike a pose or play the role of someone you’re not. Select your friends with the same care and patience you have always used. Believe it or not, your college friendships will be among the most satisfying and long-term of your life. It’s always exciting to discover how wonderfully diverse college relationships can be. It might be the beginning of your self-definition process. Going to college is as much about finding out who you really are as it is about getting that degree.

I think today that living at Wichita State University is a pleasant experience which I will cherish for all my life. I have made great friends, learned how to live on my own away from my home and in a foreign country and have now succeeded in my classes in fact I have truly learned the meaning of living on my own here. The support group of International students is an excellent source and you can actually depend on them. I am glad that I made a right choice and came to Wichita State University.

Dhreen Kumar Tulsiani, Electrical Engineering dept., sonutulsiani@hotmail.com
Airport welcome table (Continued from page 3)

We welcomed only two new students on the first day of the table; but as the days went by, we had more and more new students coming in to the airport. The biggest bunch of students came on the 10th of January 2010, when a large group of French exchange students arrived.

From the evaluations that were given out to the volunteers, I got very positive feedbacks regarding the experience and the overall setup. As far as experience is concerned, most of the volunteers had a very good experience volunteering at the airport and many showed their interest in volunteering again.

Incoming students asked several questions to the volunteers. Normally, the questions posed were related to campus life such as accommodation, grocery shopping, international students’ affairs and transportation. We managed to answer most of their questions very well. A lot of the newcomers were very glad to see us at the airport welcoming them, and since we gave out welcome bags to them, it was a blessing for them in times of need.

For the next Welcome Table for fall 2010, we are expecting half of the current volunteers to return back. Most of them would recommend this event to their friends but we welcome new volunteers, if you haven’t volunteered before. Come forward and be a part of this interesting event.

I will take this opportunity to thank the ISU advisors, the members as well as the volunteers who spared their time and effort in putting this event into a success.

International Students and Volunteer Comments

New students and volunteers when contacted and those who used the airport welcome table facility reacted with very positive comments. Some of the comments gathered are presented here in relation to the Raymond’s article on Airport Welcome Table. (Editors)

“When I first decided to come to WSU to pursue my undergraduate degree, I had no clue what would it be like here, I had no friends and knew no one accept a few people from the international office.

“When I reached the Wichita ICT airport, a strange sensation was running within me, when I stepped outside airport, I saw a booth, the International Student Union Welcome table. It was like oasis in the desert: the student volunteers of ISU at the table were very helpful and accommodating. They explained me a few important things.

“Today after 6 months I realize how important it was to be greeted by the international students, The airport welcome table was awesome idea and this tradition should continue as this is very much help to the new incoming students!”

Farhan Muhammad Tariq, Pakistan Freshmen, Barton School of Business

“Airport Welcome Table!!! An excellent volunteering opportunity for the international students. I did it and loved it. I could totally relate to the feelings of the incoming international students and hence thought it would be great to do it when Ray- mond mentioned it to me. I did it and enjoyed it.”

Goutham Sai Srinivas Muppala, India, EECS Department Volunteer Spring 2010 Welcome Table

“I am a freshman in WSU, I came to WSU this spring. Just after I landed in Wichita I was greeted by the volunteers of ISU airport welcome table, they gave me water and a goodie pack to help me, it was such a pleased surprise, I will never be able to forget the kindness and the help offered by the students there; Airport welcome table is a superb idea, I plan to volunteer too, the next time.”

Diallo Abdraman, Burkina Faso, Intensive English

“The good experience I have had from ISU is that I have been given the chance of helping fellow international students with airport pick-ups, airport welcome table, orientation, shopping etc.

Experiences: The good experience I have had from ISU is that I have been given the chance of helping fellow international students and they can expect life to be difficult. But ISU is there to help them as much as possible get settled easily. And I just want to be one of those helpers from ISU.

Role and Responsibilities: I spent my first year in ISU as a representative. Then I took the office of director of development in my second year. I have had some responsibilities since taking the office. I coordinated the first airport welcome table and last semester I had to look for sponsors for the welcome bags. I have been in charge of airport pick-ups for two semesters and served as orientation leader for more five semesters.

Final Thoughts: It will be great for many students (not only international) to get involved with ISU. It is a great college experience.
• Longest river in Europe is Volga. Volga is 3531km long. Despite this, it is still not one of the 10 longest rivers in the world!
• Highest active volcano in Europe is Etna. Etna is situated on the eastern coast of Sicily. Its current height is about 3,323m.
• Austria has German as its official language!
• The 0 hour World time table Greenwich Mean Time, GMT, is in Greenwich, London.
• Skype which offers free calls over the Internet to millions of people was designed by Estonian developers.
• The cell phone maker Nokia's headquarters are not in China, but in Finland.
• The company that makes Red Bull energy drink is headquartered in Fuschl, Austria.
• Finland has been ranked the least corrupt country for several consecutive years.

- France is the most visited country in the world.
- In 2004, the French built the Queen Mary 2, the world's longest, widest and tallest passenger cruise ship ever built.
- Germany is the world's third largest, and Europe's largest economy.
- Greece has the largest merchant fleet in the world.
- Three countries in Europe start with the letter "I": Ireland, Italy and Iceland.
- There are five peninsulas in Europe. The Iberian Peninsula contains Spain and Portugal; the Balkan Peninsula has Albania and Greece; the Scandinavian Peninsula has Norway and Sweden; the Jutland peninsula has Denmark and Germany; and the Apennines peninsula contains San Marino and Italy.
- The longest name for a town is located in Wales and named, Llanhyfrydawellehylynafolybarcdprindanfygythiadtrienusyrhafnauole. The name means "quiet beautiful village and a historic place with a rare kit under threat from wretched blades."
- And finally, Europe received its name from a princess in Greek mythology. Europa was a Phoenician princess kidnapped by Zeus who had transformed into a white bull to take her.

Taymur discusses how learning is more than just attending classes, it a comprehensive process.

Most of the international students would go back to their country after finishing their studies and it would be sad that they wouldn't have learnt much about American culture. I went to a baseball game last month, and I was surprised to see that there was not a single international student attending it except me and a couple of my friends. FYI, most campus events are FREE!!!

We need to get involved with the campus life as this is an excellent learning opportunity, and broadens our vision.

In the end, I would like to congratulate the new ISU executive committee members. I am already impressed with their enthusiasm and eagerness to help the organization.

Sadly, I am also leaving my position as the newsletter editor, as my studies no longer allow me to the pleasure of writing, editing and talking to you. But I am not leaving campus as yet and you can always find me here and there.

I hope you continue patronizing this newsletter, and thank you for all your positive comments about the issues that I have worked with.

Hope you have a good vacation...

Wajid Hassan, Pakistan, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
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Spring 2010 Enrollment of European Students at WSU

Spring 2010 enrollment for international students showed a steady trend of about 1,300 students from Fall 2009 to Spring 2010.

As in the past, the continent of Asia dominated the enrollment through the countries of India, China, Malaysia, and Vietnam - in order of numerical strength.

In terms of continents, students from Europe rank as the fourth largest group of international students behind Asia, Africa and Latin America. For Spring 2010 at WSU, 42 undergraduate and 8 graduate students were from Europe.

The top three European countries represented (in numerical order) were France, United Kingdom, and Turkey. Romanian students formed the fourth largest European group at WSU. The following Table shows their numerical strength in terms of the European Group (EG).

When the European Group is compared to the overall international population at WSU, they form a significant but small group. The adjacent chart shows the comparative strengths of the European Group in the overall WSU international student population.

Some European students organization such as the Turkish Student Association has been very active on campus. They currently run free Turkish classes for interested students.

Table: Top European Country Enrollment at WSU for Spring 2010

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<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Total % of EG</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
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Top European Country enrollment at WSU

Recent ISU Events

ISU being one of the most active organizations on WSU campus have participated/planned the following activities in next semester. These events are traditional events and happen every year.

- Identity Forum - Cultural Differences: International Students and Culture Shock. (April 20)
- Cultural Spring Fling (May 5)
- Camping (June 5th)
- Drive In movie (May 15th)
- Airport Welcome Table for Fall 2010
- ISU officer orientation (August 20)
- Interfest Fall 2010
- Around the World at Noon (Nov. 16)
- International Faculty Staff Appreciation Reception (Nov 17)

ISU Committee Members’ Gathering Spring 2010

(From page 2)

This event was helped as a retreat for members of ISU who had worked hard in the past one year in organizing many successful events, such as Around the World at Noon, International Faculty and Staff Reception as well as the Airport Welcome Table. Also, this event served as a purpose of interaction between members and advisors. Everyone had a very good time in this event and they hoped they could replicate this success in future events.

Now the question is why are you not a part of this fun and hard working group?

Raymond Kang Wei Tay, Malaysia
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Want to submit an article, an event or comment on the articles? send us an email:
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