Welcome from the Editor’s Desk by Mariyana

We, the ISU team members are proud to present our first newsletter: International PERSPECTIVES...

As a voice that represents international students, ISU would like to bring more cultural diversity and awareness on campus.

I realized that there are still many students on campus who are clueless about cultural issues. It is imperative that international students understand more of American culture in order to integrate into WSU community. However, sometimes it has been a challenge to interact with fellow American students.

Hopefully, this newsletter will create more understanding and acceptance among both international and American students.

The global voice of Shockers

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Ramadan: The Month of Fasting

by Zaigham Lilani

The Quran (The Muslim Holy Book) says: “O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint.” (Al-Baqarah 2:183).

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar calendar and one of the holiest months. It begins with the sighting of the new moon after which all physically mature and healthy Muslims are obliged to abstain from all food, drink and any kind of sexual contact between dawn and sunset.

Ramadan is a Godly prescription for self-reassurance, inner reflection and devotion to God. Muslims think of it as a kind of tune-up for their spiritual lives and I agree with this statement; the most important reason being that it teaches self-control.

Fasting is a way of experiencing hunger and developing sympathy for the less fortunate, and learning to thankfulness and appreciation for all of God’s bounties.

During Ramadan, it is common to have one meal, known as the Suhoor, just before sunrise and another known as the Iftaar, directly after sunset. The Iftaar is often observed by different Muslim friends and families coming together to share in an evening meal.

This year in the first few days of Ramadan, the Iftaar timings coincided with my evening classes. So I used to carry a water bottle or some kind of snack with me to my classes and ended my fast.

On weekends, I go to one of the two Mosques Al-Noor or (Cont. on page 3).
QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONS: When I think of international students, I look back at my first experiences, when I came to America on an F-1 Visa, in September 1965. On the flight from New York to Cleveland, a passenger asked how was I to reach my destination was. At my response, “By taxi,” the passenger mentioned that it would be too expensive, the distance being more than fifty miles and advised to take a limousine to downtown and, then, take a taxi. When I asked, “What is a limousine?” the passenger smiled and promised to help me get to a limousine. For me, it was a lesson that if you need help, for whatever reason, does not hesitate to ask.

Hiding one’s ignorance does not help. In the class, if you do not understand, ask a question. Students, in particular international students, shy from asking questions to avoid giving a “bad impression” to the instructor. But nothing pleases an instructor more than questions and participation, from the students. If there are no questions from the class, the instructor comments that either every student knows everything, or every one is lost. It is easy to guess which one of the two is true. “There are no dumb questions, there ARE dumb answers” says it all.

YOU’RE GOAL: EDUCATION OR INSTRUCTION? You have left your home-land for education and not just for instruction. What you learn in a class is more instruction than education. If you restrict your social life to students from your country, you miss a lot.

Mix with people of different backgrounds and you will realize the benefits.

When you mix with students from other countries, you will face many questions. Your answers will influence the impressions of others about your country. You are, in fact, an ambassador of your country. However remember that no one is expected to know the answer to every question; if you do not know the answer, say so plainly.

Research the question for a later time; every question gives you an opportunity to understand your own country better.

LOOK AHEAD. Job market is competitive. Strengthen your credentials. Take part in various WSU associations. Participation in these associations speaks well for you. This results in very good references, when you look for a job.

First thing is knowing the distinction between a “recommendation” as commonly understood in many countries and a “reference” as commonly understood in this country. The weight of “recommendation”, as understood in many countries, depends upon the status of the writer - mayor, governor or whatever. A “reference”, in this country, is YOUR evaluation by the letter writer. To know some ways to get good references, and related matters, pick a two-page hand-out, "LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION/REFERENCE", from the office of Dr. Alan D’souza, in Grace Wilkie Hall (Room No. 112).

Volunteering, through an organized group, is an excellent way to strengthen your resume. When you help someone, you feel good about yourself.

Be a good consumer and use the many opportunities offered at WSU. Participate in Student Government Association (SGA). Make your suggestions/ideas known by writing letter(s) to the Sunflower. Be an active participant in campus life, at WSU.

Dr. Prem Bajaj (India) is Associate Professor Emeritus in the Mathematics & Statistics Department, and can be reached at Ext. 5196 (Campus Box # 33).

World Wise - Proverbs from around the world

"If work were a good thing, the rich would have grabbed it a long time ago." - Haitian

"When spiders unite, they can tie down a lion." - Ethiopian

"When you drink the water, think of the well." - Finland

"There will be a day for the oppressor when he will be crushed like garlic." - Palestinian

"Any rogue is often in good dress." - Irish

"Food, no matter how concealed, begets resistance." - Lakota

"A wolf will hire himself out very cheaply as a shepherd." - Russian

"A rocky vineyard does not need a prayer, but a pick ax." - Navajo

"The day of the storm is not the time for thatching." - Irish

"Talk does not cook rice." - Chinese
A
fter spending nearly 2 years living, working and studying in Germany, I returned to Kansas to complete my degree at Wichita State.

I had heard of ‘culture shock’ in a foreign country but readjusting to life in the States was more difficult for me. I no longer felt connected to my friends here in Wichita; it seemed we spoke a different language. I felt weird about peoples’ ignorance about other cultures.

I had no idea the Wheatshocker apartments would be the place where I’d rediscover that cultural flair I was beginning to miss. I loved walking through the halls, smelling the bouquet of spices in the air.

Once my friend Yaw (from Ghana) and I spent an evening covering every floor in an attempt to pronounce the names that adorned each student’s door and guess the country of their origin.

At the Wheatshocker apartments, multicultural experiences are a part of daily life. Riding the apartment elevator could prove to be the highlight of the day after meeting someone from Morocco and discussing memories of my stay in that country, reminiscing over delicious Moroccan cuisine.

At times, I was invited to a friend’s apartment for late-night Turkish cooking. Fatma, an engineer graduate student from Turkey, always made all the Wheatshocker residents aware of Turkish holidays.

I can still remember the cake she made one night: it was almost midnight, but she was so excited that she had successfully made a traditional cake from Turkey with ingredients from the U.S. that she came knocking on each of our doors serving the cake to us while it was still warm.

I truly enjoy the spirit brought by the international population at Wichita State. I’ve made so many new friends from all over the world without having left the U.S., or even Wichita for that matter, in the past year. WSU would not be such a colorful and unique school without the international flair that the students bring from all corners of the world.

I can only hope that we, the American students, have made them feel as welcome as they would make us feel if we were to travel to their country, and have helped overcome some of the culture shock that comes with being a sojourn abroad.

Jamie Hofling (U.S.A.) is a Junior in the International Studies Program at WSU.

Facts to know *

- % of Undergraduate Students - 5
- % of Graduate Students - 19
- Total Number of Students - 1138
- % of Teaching Staff - 27.6
- % of Non-Teaching Staff - 3.4
- Total Number of Faculty/Staff - 454

Graph showing number of internationals by gender

All data representative of Wichita State University, 2005

Ramadan: (from page 1).

This year, Housing and Residence Life, along with WSU Dining, Pakistani Student Association and Muslim Student Association, will be hosting an Eid Celebration Dinner on Friday, November 4, 2005. The location will be Fairmount Towers Café from 4:30-7:00pm.

The cost of the dinner is seven dollars and is open to general public, so please feel free to attend.

The end of Ramadan is marked by a three-day period known as Eid ul-Fitr, the "Festival of Fast-breaking." It is a joyous time beginning with a special prayer, and accompanied by celebration, socializing, festive meals and sometimes very modest gift-giving, especially to children.

At the beginning of Ramadan, it is appropriate to wish Muslims "Ramadan Mubarak" which means "Blessed Ramadan." At its conclusion, you may say "Eid Mubarak." I hope God accepts our prayers and fastings and guides us towards the right path (Ameen).

Zaigham Lilani (Pakistan) is a graduate student in the MBA program with emphasis in Finance. He also works at a Statistician/Computer Technician for...
Meet International Student Union

Tony Ngansop, Interim President
Tony is from Cameroon (Africa) and is majoring in Accounting

Twambi Kalinga, Interim Vice President, Twambi is from Malawi (Africa) and is majoring in Communications

Mariyana, Treasurer/Secretary
Mariyana is from Indonesia and is a senior in International Business

Jamie Hofling, Events Chair, Jamie is from USA and is a junior in International Studies

Yaw Amoah-Poku, Events Committee, Yaw is from Ghana (Africa) and is a junior in College of Health Professions

Dr. Alan J. D’Souza, Staff Advisor
Dr. D’Souza is from India and is the Policy Analyst
Director, Division of Student Affairs, WSU

ISU would like to thank former ISU president (2004-05) Vikram Krishnamurthy for his continued support for ISU; and welcome a new member, Patrice Jones to ISU. Patrice is from USA and is majoring in Music & Spanish.

Visit us at http://webs.wichita.edu/isu

* Webpage is best viewed with IE 5.0 or higher.

Don’t Miss...

Eid Celebration Dinner
Friday, November 4, 2005
Fairmount Towers Café from 4:30-7:00 PM.
Sponsored by Housing and Residence Life, along with WSU Dining, Pakistani Student Association and Muslim Student Association. Event is open to all.
Dinner costs $7.
For more information, contact housing.wsu@wichita.edu or sxasad@wichita.edu.

India Nite
Friday November 4, 2005
Hughes Metropolitan Complex, 5:30 PM.
Sponsored by Indian Students Association, SGA, Wichita Asian Association and Boeing. Event is open to all.
Tickets: $15 (General), $10 (WSU students), $6 (Children)
For more information, contact Sandeep at 519-5134

13th Annual WSU Pride through Diversity Week
November 14-18, 2005
Various Locations and times
The 13th Annual Wichita State University Pride Through Diversity Week is an opportunity to celebrate those unique cultures which make our campus community a more vibrant university. Sponsored By SAC Issues Committee
For more information, contact SAC at 978-3495

Ice skating
Saturday, November 19
Office of International Education, 11:45 AM-3:30 PM
For more information, contact OIE at 978-3232

Trip to the Movies
Saturday, December 3, 12:45-4:45 PM
For more information, contact OIE at 978-3232

Want to submit an article, an event or comment on the articles?, send us an email:
isu@wichita.edu