The International Connection

International Student Services

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Update from the Association of International Students (AIS)

By Ahlam Al-Battashi, AIS President

The International Bazaar, one of the biggest events of the year organized by AIS, is on the way. This is an event where International TU students from different parts of the world get to share their cultures and traditions and present their home customs to their fellow students and friends. This event is part of learning and exchanging knowledge, and is considered an important opportunity to explore the communities abroad in an interesting and creative way.

In preparation for the event, in order for the event to go smoothly, AIS has requested the countries participating to inform the association earlier than usual about their plans for the fashion show, cultural dances, and presentations of their country's food. AIS officers agreed to reimburse representative countries for the food they purchase, but they must stay within the budget they are given. The purpose of this idea is to give our guests the chance to test different combinations of international food and enjoy the variety of choices

As a way to spice up the event and get countries to put more effort into their presentations, we would like to introduce the idea of Mr. and Mrs. International of the night based on best presentation according to the guests' votes. The details of this idea will be given in our preparation meeting, so we can keep you excited!

AIS Treasurer Jose Moreira poses at a past Fall Bazaar

This year's Bazaar will be on Saturday, November 10, 2012 from 6 to 9pm in Great Hall A and B in Allen Chapman Activity Center (ACAC). The event will be held as part of the celebration of International Education Week featuring countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Angola, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Iran, and many other countries. Please join us to experience gastronomy, art and the international atmosphere. Remember, it's a free event with delicious free food!

Spotlight: Omani Student Association

By Issa Al-Yahmadi, Omani Student Association Vice President

On October 12th, almost 40 new Omani students arrived to Tulsa. They all joined the English Institute program at TU. They were divided into different levels based on each student's performance on the English placement test.

Including our newly arrived group, the total number of Omani students at the University of Tulsa now is now over 80. This is the biggest group that TU has ever had of students from Oman. Almost all of the approximately 50 Omani students who came to TU last year finished the English Institute program, and have already started their first academic year.

The Omani Student Association has organized a meeting for the Omani students twice since the new Omani students arrived at TU. The first meeting, on October 13th at Keplinger Hall, was for the purpose of helping the new students and providing them with information on how to open bank accounts, how to deal with the housing rent, how to use the TU website, and many other things. Besides, we were able to deal with many of their concerns, answer common questions, and have some fellow students volunteer to help in the settling in process of the new group. This meeting was a good chance for the new Omani students to make friends and meet the old Omani students at TU.

The second meeting was held on October 28th. This meeting was simply Omani students gathering to celebrate Eid. We provided some Middle Eastern food that was funded by the members of the association.

OSA's next upcoming event will be the Omani International Night that will be held on November 30th, 2012. This event will be the first major event for the association presenting Oman and its culture and lifestyle in a fascinating way to the TU family and friends. Please join us in Great Hall A in ACAC from 6-9 pm.

Upcoming TU Events:

- Thursday, November 1—ISS Coffee Hour, 3PM-4PM in ACAC
- Thursday, November 1—English Conversation Hour, 5PM-6PM in the International Living Community (LaFortune)
- Thursday, November 8—Kazakh Movie Night, 7PM-10PM in Mayo Village SAC
- Thursday, November 8—English Conversation Hour, 5PM-6PM in the International Living Community (LaFortune)
- Saturday, November 10—International Fall Bazaar, 6PM in The Great Hall of ACAC
- Thursday, November 15—English Conversation Hour, 5PM-6PM in the International Living Community (LaFortune)
- Saturday, November 17—Football vs. UCF at Chapman Stadium
- Monday, November 22—Friday, November 26—NO CLASSES
- Thursday, November 25—Thanksgiving Day

Update from the International Student Services (ISS) Office

October has been another busy month in our office as we welcomed a large group of Omani students to the English Institute. In addition to this, the first International Student Mentor Program has been established, pairing up international freshman mentees with international junior mentors who have a proven record of leadership and outstanding academic achievement. Partners agree to meet several times throughout the 2012-2013 academic year and will receive a certificate upon completion of the program. We have held two ISS Coffee Hours this month, one which introduced students to the potential mentors and featured officers from AIS, the Saudi Student Association, and the African Student Association.

The other Coffee Hour featured a workshop for Chinese students. During the hour, Dr. Thomas Buoye, Associate Professor of History, and Dr. Tao Wang, Associate Professor of Education spoke to students about the differences between Chinese and U.S. educational systems and how they can adjust to the new environment of TU.

Our next ISS Coffee Hour will be held on November 1st and will discuss how to communicate effectively with professors. Guest participants will be present for role plays.

Dr. Tao Wang speaks to students at the October 18th ISS Coffee Hour

International Student Mentor Is No Stranger to Intercultural Experience

By David Kobel

Rui Su has always had a natural curiosity about the world that led her to want to explore other countries and other cultures. In high school, she left her home city of Hefei, China to go to Italy for one year as an exchange student. From week to week, she traveled to new Italian cities to live with host families, spread the culture of her home country, and soak in the culture of Italy.

"Communication was the most difficult," says Rui, who had no experience with the Italian language prior to her move. Fortunately, it only took her two to three months to pick up the language and she had a great deal of help from classmates and host families. She also had to adjust to new food and the Western way of life. Time was one concept that took some getting used to. The punctuality of China was replaced by the more flexible scheduling of Italy. "Now I prefer the more relaxed view of time," she laughs.

This year of cultural exchange opened the door to new opportunities to explore the world. Having already studied the English language, Rui was well-prepared to lead 20 students to the United States on a tour of Ivy League schools. This solidified her desire to come to the United States and study, so she found TU. Initially, it was the ranking and prestige of TU that attracted her. After communicating with TU, it was the quick and friendly response that impressed her. In addition, she was thrilled to receive a scholarship from the university to help pay her tuition fees.

Now a junior majoring in Finance, Rui is heavily involved in campus activities and continues to be a cultural ambassador, spending just as much time with students from the U.S. and other countries as she spends with students from China. She can add Spanish to the list of languages she speaks after three semesters in TU's Department of Languages. Most recently, she has volunteered, along with several other accomplished upper class students, to be a mentor to an international freshman. In the future, she hopes to learn French, obtain a Master's degree, and become a diplomat to the United Nations.

When asked how she became so interested in intercultural relations, Rui says it just developed naturally for her. Her parents, both engineers for a state electric company, did not encourage or discourage her to travel the world. "I believe I have actually helped my parents develop an awareness of the world," she says. Given her past accomplishments, she is likely to help many others do the same in the future.

Great Places to Visit in Oklahoma

Ouachita National Forest (Image source: www.travelok.com)

www.fs.usda.gov/ouachita/

Fall is the best time of the year to visit this mountainous park in Southeastern Oklahoma/central Arkansas. The swimming, fishing, camping, hiking, and horseback riding attract visitors throughout the year, but fall is when you can witness the breathtaking changes in the colors of the foliage. Many visitors enjoy viewing the beauty from their vehicle via the Talimena National Scenic By-way. The Ouachita National Forest is located approximately 3 hours to the southeast of Tulsa.

Cain's Ballroom, Tulsa, OK (Image source: www.travelok.com)

www.cainsballroom.com

Located right here in downtown Tulsa, Cain's Ballroom is one of the most famous music venues in the world. Since the 1920s, this historic site has featured a variety of music, from country/western to rock n' roll to heavy metal. Today, Cain's Ballroom still holds popular concerts with performers from every imaginable genre of music. To get the true feel of Tulsa's rich musical heritage, go downtown to the corner of Easton and Main and visit this gem.

Golden Saddle...Golden Choice

By Mahmood Al-Hinai

Have you had a hard time finding a delicious restaurant in Tulsa? If so, Golden Saddle Bar-B-Q and Steak House is what you are looking for. It is a classic Iranian restaurant on the east side of Admiral Place. Golden Saddle restaurant serves a lot of delightful Persian dishes such as Chef's Choice and Meat Chunks. The Chef's Choice consists of yellow or white rice with chicken, Grilled Kebab, and soup. Sometimes, it contains French Fries and a salad. Usually, we Omani students like to order the Chef's Choice because it is quite similar to the food of Oman. The Chef's Choice costs about $9. Another delicious dish served at Golden Saddle is Meat Chunks. It is yellow rice with lamb. It costs about $13. Definitely, Golden Saddle is a good destination for students who like Persian food.

Golden Saddle
BAR-B-Q
AND
Steak House

Location: 6618 East Admiral Place

Phone: 918-835-2882

Hours: 6am—11pm Monday-Sunday

English Conversation Group to Meet in International Living Community

- Practice your English conversational skills
- Receive feedback from a native English speaker
- Learn more about American culture
- Make new friends

Where: The International Living Community (LaFortune)

When: Every Thursday from 5:00pm—6:00pm

Come and practice your English in a casual and relaxed environment. Elissa Stiles, a native English speaker, will be there to help you along and correct your errors.

TU Campus Mystery Location: Do you know this place?

Each month, *The International Connection* will feature a photo of a "mystery" structure or area located on The University of Tulsa campus. The first student to correctly guess the place shown in the photo will win a special prize!

If you believe you know what location this is, send an e-mail to david-kobel@utulsa.edu. Be as specific as possible when explaining where this is located (you must give the name of the building). The first student to send the correct answer by e-mail wins. The answer and the name of the winner will be printed in next month's newsletter.

October Mystery Location: Southwest side of Kendall Hall

October Winner: Maria Borjas Romero

Thanksgiving Kicks Off the U.S. Holiday Season

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated throughout the United States on the fourth Thursday in November. Where and when the "first Thanksgiving" occurred is a matter of some debate, though the general idea is the same—colonists arriving to what is now the United States shared a meal with the Native Americans who were already present in the area.

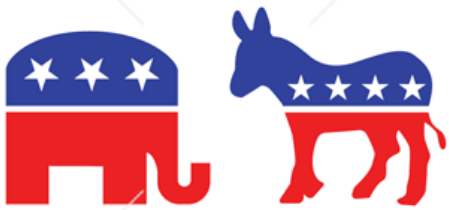
The widely accepted first Thanksgiving was held in 1621 at Plymouth Rock. This is where Pilgrims (settlers from England) arrived on their ship *The Mayflower* and shared a large feast of locally grown and harvested fruits and vegetables as well as wild game (goose, duck, and turkey). Interestingly and not often taught in traditional history books, this was not a planned gathering—the Wampanoag Indians actually showed up and surprised the Pilgrims who were celebrating the fall harvest. However, they brought their own contributions to the meal (fish and corn), and the meeting led to a peaceful agreement between the two groups.

Other Thanksgiving feasts were said to have been shared between settlers and Native Americans in different areas prior to the 1621 event. Several meetings were said to have involved shared feasts between Native Americans and Spanish explorers along what is now the Texas-Mexico border. El Paso, Texas claims to be the actual site of the first Thanksgiving, held by the Spaniards and the Tigua Indians in April of 1598.

Whatever the early roots are, its official beginning can be traced to President Abraham Lincoln, who declared Thursday, November 26, 1863 a national day of Thanksgiving. Since then, Thanksgiving has become a major federal holiday that kicks off the winter holiday season. Today, Thanksgiving is celebrated with large family meals involving ingredients associated with the fall harvest—corn, cranberries, pumpkins, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Thanksgiving meals commonly consist of items such as turkey, ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, sweet potato pie, pumpkin pie, and cranberry sauce.

Lingo Lesson of the Month: Political Terms

With Election Day coming on November 6th, it may help to know some of the political terms commonly heard leading up to this major event.



Agenda = A plan and/or list of issues to be addressed; The two presidential candidates have different economic **agendas.**

Bipartisan = Describes an effort of two political parties to work together. The bill has **bipartisan** support from both Republicans and Democrats.

Hot Button Issue = A very controversial issue that produces strong emotional reactions; Abortion has always been a major **hot button issue**.

POTUS = Abbreviation for **P**resident **o**f **t**he **U**nited **S**tates

Pundit = Someone who is an expert on a particular topic. The political **pundits** believe that Obama won two of the three presidential debates.