



Charlottesville City Schools  
 Adult English as a Second Language Program  
 Adult Learning Center  
 Www.charlottesville-esl.org

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## The Festival of Cultures

By Nathalie Huet (France)

This morning was a sunny morning, typical of what you like in spring. Even if very soon it was hot, we (my husband and I) decided to go for a walk to the Downtown Mall. I had heard that the First Annual Festival of Cultures in Charlottesville was taking place in Lee Park this whole day. So, after going to the flea market, we spent time in Lee Park.

It was the first year the festival was organized, and the ESL community of the Adult Learning Center was very present. I thought it was a good

opportunity for me to introduce my husband to my friends from the school. At the same time, we could learn a lot from other cultures through observing hand-made art crafts, songs, and dances.

When we arrived, we discovered songs from Russia. The singers wore beautiful traditional dresses with very pretty wreaths of fresh flowers. Then, we listened to traditional Chinese songs. After that, it was the turn of the dancers. The first ones were Tahitian; they were my favorite because it

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## From the Editor

The 2003-2004 school year is coming to an end with yet another wonderful edition of the *Multi-Cultural Brief*. Among the highlights this time is student coverage of the first annual **Festival of Cultures** that took place on May 22nd at Lee Park in downtown Charlottesville. The festival was a huge success. Despite the unusual heat, it was well represented both by service organizations as well as by local artists, performers, and students from the Adult Learning Center. The event was a festive occasion for international students and their families to have fun in the park; it was also an opportunity to share the fun with the larger Charlottesville community. Throughout the day, people strolled through the park amid dancing, singing, balloons and flowers, and beautiful clothes and artwork from around the world. Of all the international fairs I personally have been to, this was perhaps the best. We look forward to next year when the second annual festival of cultures returns to Charlottesville.

As you will see from other articles in this issue, the Newspaper Class was once again filled with animated discussions on many diverse topics. We compared customs different cultures take regarding the birth of a new baby as well as different attitudes toward drinking alcohol (rest

assured, in class, while both topics were fascinating, we do not mean to say that one was related to the other). We also talked about the kinds of activities that give us pleasure both here in Charlottesville and in students' home countries. Included here is an article on running a half-marathon in Charlottesville, memories of a grandmother's garden in Germany, and the importance of community that bible study groups can offer both at home in Korea and here in the U.S., especially during stressful times.

We also talked about some of the more challenging aspects of living in a new country. One student shared her first encounter with chiggers, one of the hazards of enjoying the great outdoors in our area. In "Americans I Have Met," a student compares the difference between "friendliness" and "friendship" and how difficult it can be to form deep, meaningful relationships in the U.S. Finally, we talked about the importance of change and in particular the kinds of change that can occur from one generation to another even within the same culture. "Ideal Mothers in China" looks at the different expectations and roles of women, particularly of mothers, in China over the past thirty years.

Throughout these articles we hope it is clear, first, how richly unique each of these perspectives is as well as how much we all do share and, second, how exciting and also challenging the experience of being an international in Charlottesville really is. Just remember, "Be alert although you are caught in a tiger's cave. Then you will survive."

Have a wonderful summer!

Leslie A. Furlong, editor

### Mission Statement

The *Multi-Cultural Brief* is an ESL newsletter created by students who want to improve their English and is produced as part of a newspaper class offered through the Charlottesville Adult Education program. Its purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to

- share their experiences of being from another country,
- offer multi-cultural perspectives on life in Charlottesville,
- help inform people who are new to Charlottesville of issues and opportunities around town,
- build a bridge of communication between the ESL population and Americans living in the Charlottesville community.

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# Unexpected Success

By Hera Lee (South Korea)

Everybody has the opportunity for success at least one time in his or her life. Make sure to take the chance and do not give up hope. Here is a story.

There was an American businessman who at first wanted to make a very strong and durable material for tents. So he made denim for tent material. But it did not sell at all. He failed in his business and went bankrupt. He was miserable, as all men who are in deep red ink are.

He was disappointed and frustrated for a

*“Be alert although you are caught in a tiger’s cave. Then you will survive.”*

long time. But one day he thought about making pants with that huge amount of material in his warehouse instead of making tents. And he made a new business with that denim. He made what we now call “blue jeans.” Unexpectedly, it was a big hit. He finally made a fortune and got success. He became one of America’s richest men in *Forbes* business magazine.

Do not give up, and always think positively. There is a Korean proverb that says: “Be alert although you are caught in a tiger’s cave. Then you will survive.”

# Baby Showers

By Nathalie Huet (France)

When I first heard the expression “baby shower,” I guessed it was a celebration of a newborn child. But what I didn’t understand was why it was called a “shower.” For me, “shower” means “rain.” So I imagined it’s like a “shower of gifts” because the baby receives a lot of gifts. I checked if I was right. And, oh surprise, I was wrong! The word “shower” here comes from the verb “to show,” like “to demonstrate.”

Indeed, a baby shower permits the mother-to-be to share the joy of welcoming a new life (here we can see the meaning of “shower”) and to provide emotional support to the often nervous expectant mother (and father, too). It’s often organized by the closest friend of the mother-to-be and her family. It’s a joyous occasion for friends and family to be together in order to congratulate the mother-to-be, to play games,

and to eat. But it’s also an opportunity for the family because the expense of a first-born baby can put a strain on the parents. A baby shower can help with the costs. People can offer practical things, toys, hand-made gifts, and everything that is going to be memories for the future baby.

Another thing I didn’t know about baby showers was that, in the U.S., they are celebrated, most of the time, between women and, above all, *before* the baby’s birth. For me, it was surprising because in my country, we don’t offer anything for the new baby before its birth: it’s considered to be “bad luck.”

What happens in France? First, just after the birth, only the closest friends and family go to visit the mother and her baby at the maternity ward (they stay there for around 5 days). Then, others can

visit them at home. It’s at this moment we offer a gift to welcome the new baby and to congratulate the new parents. A party can be organized but only in specific cases, such as baptism (a religious even in Roman Catholicism where family and friends are invited for a big party) and/or at the mother’s workplace to show her baby to her colleagues. In this case, they just have a drink to celebrate the baby. Usually, they offer a practical big gift.

Luckily for me, a few weeks after being informed about baby showers in the U.S., I received my first invitation. I was very happy to have the opportunity to participate at this event and very glad to be invited. We had a lot of fun. This invitation made me feel as if I had made another step in my integration into American life.

# Running in Charlottesville

By Sang-Kuk Yang (South Korea)

“Why do I run in Charlottesville?” I thought the whole time during the race. My legs were getting stiff due to the rolling hills. Finally, I could finish running at historic downtown Charlottesville. There were people shouting, “Good job!” I always give my thanks to those who greet runners with a hearty cheer. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. This was my first half-marathon in the U.S.

I didn't like to run in my youth. I started running four years ago in Korea. During my summer holiday, I suddenly wanted to run. It was probably because I felt it natural to run under the sunshine on the green grass. After running, I felt myself refreshed. My history of marathon running had begun. At first, I could not tolerate more than 15 minutes of running at one time. Therefore, I had to repeatedly alternate walking and running. I read a number of marathon books to get some information. The books taught me several important facts necessary for adequate training. Finally, two years ago, I finished a marathon race in Korea. It was at this moment that I realized that running can be more than simply physical activity.

When I want to run, preparation is very important. The first thing required is a good pair of running shoes. Comfortable clothing made of breathable fiber is another

prerequisite. After I tie the knots of the shoes, I initiate stretching my legs and arms. At first, I usually start to run at a slow pace. The initial fifteen minutes are always difficult. During this initial period, I have realized, “it is always slow and hard at the beginning.” I feel my heart beating. Gradually, my muscles warm up and I'm ready to continue. I find my legs and arms moving automatically and naturally.

On rare instances, I can feel a runner's high.

I have experienced several kinds of running-related injuries in my

knees and ankle. Most of them were related to excessive training. Now I control my running, which means I don't let my exercise control me. I understand that adequate shoes and proper training methods are extremely important in preventing injuries during running. Also, I understand how to deal with such disappointing injuries. I try to listen to my body before, during, and after running. I have learned that the marathon is the reward and the training process is the goal.

My cheerful colleague joked with me when I told him I had finished a half marathon in Charlottesville. He said, “Don't

punish yourself. Why do you try to increase your free radicals?” We laughed. He had a reason for saying this. Does exercise help you live longer? This is a question that has been debated for years. Based on the current research, it is evident that regular exercise may indeed help us to live a longer, more active and productive life. On the other hand, some researchers recommend light eating and light exercise for

longevity because heavy exercise can produce free radicals. Free radical accumulation is the most popular and widely accepted theory to explain the aging process.

Why do I run in Charlottesville? I cannot answer the question exactly. To lose weight? To stay in good shape? Maybe. To feel runner's high? To get a sense of well-being? To live long? To learn how to control this race-like life? These reasons may be right but not enough. Emil Zapotek (1922-2000), one of the greatest Olympic runners, once said that “birds fly, fish swim, people run.” This reason may be the best of all.

*“Emil Zapotek (1922-2000), one of the greatest Olympic runners, once said that ‘birds fly, fish swim, people run.’”*

**Editor's Note:** The Women's Four Mile Training Program meets every Saturday beginning June 19 at UVA Track (near Klockner Stadium) at 7:45 a.m. for 12 consecutive Saturdays. \$15 for all 12 weeks. Come join the fun!

# My Grandmother's Garden

By Maria Rieger (Germany)

I enjoy most summers in my grandmother's garden. There are trees. Our biggest is a cherry tree. When I was little, my three cousins (Simone, Markus, and Christian), my mom, my grandmother, and I all spent our Saturdays there. My Grandma made cake, my mom decorated the table under the cherry tree with flowers, and we children made coffee, beat the cream, and prepared our milkshakes. This big yard was our heaven. Everybody waited for the weekend, especially for Saturdays.

Sometimes we cut the grass together. Everybody had a job to do. My mom cut the grass. My grandmother, Simone, and Markus made piles of grass, and Christian and I put the grass in a wheelbarrow and took it away.

*"My Grandma made cake, my mom decorated the table under the cherry tree with flowers, and we children made coffee, beat the cream, and prepared our milkshakes."*

My grandmother had a lot of fruits and vegetables in her garden, and we loved to eat them fresh from the tree or plant. She had strawberries, raspberries, an apple tree, a pear tree, a cherry tree, a walnut tree, cucumbers, carrots, tomatoes, onions, and potatoes in her garden.

In the evening time, my mom cooked for us. Sometimes she made fresh pizza, Hawaiian toast, or hot bread with ham and cheese fresh from the oven. It smelled so good. My grandmother always used to say, "Mmh, fine!" We drank tea and talked. Later, we played card games, children's Scrabble, or Memory. There was never a boring time. My mom kept us busy.

We all grew up and moved to study or work in different cities. My grandmother still makes

cake every weekend. The yard is still peaceful and silent. There are no longer so many fruits, vegetables, and flowers in it, but my mom still visits my grandmother every weekend. They still sit under the cherry tree, and my mom still decorates my grandmother's house with flowers. They still play games and cut the grass, but what's missing is the happy laughter of children.

My grandmother turns 93 this year. Her sister died at the age of 100. I woke up, and I saw that there will be one day in my life when I will lie in my grandmother's garden under the cherry tree enjoying the silence, hearing the birds, seeing a plane in the blue sky, and there will no longer be a grandmother in the house. No grandmother outside taking a foot bath. No grandmother telling stories you know. No grandmother making a cake. No grandmother who has more milk in her coffee than coffee. Nobody will be there. Only me.

# Chiggers!

By Carrie Zhou (China)

Summer in Charlottesville is so beautiful that I couldn't help going out for fun. But troubles always come with fun.

When a friend of my husband's suggested that we go fishing, we agreed at once. We spent more than five hours around the river and had a lot of fun there. We were excited although, in the end, we went home without any fish.

Unfortunately, the trouble came the next day. We were so tired that we slept until noon. Itchiness instead of sunlight woke us up. My husband found hundreds of red spots on his legs. I also got some around my arms. We thought they were mosquito bites. My husband is sensitive to mosquitoes in summer. We tried different kinds of ointment, which were especially useful against the mosquito bites. But it seemed useless after two days. He had to make an appointment to go see a doctor.

Then we learned it was

chiggers, a kind of red mite, that caused us such trouble. They can be found in grassy fields, along lakes and streams, and even in forests.

*"Once attached, they are able to pierce the skin and suck the blood, then cause itching. It will bother the host for two or three weeks."*

Chiggers are so small that you cannot see them with the naked eye. But they can attach tightly onto people and animals. Once attached, they are able to

pierce the skin and suck the blood, then cause itching. It will bother the host for two or three weeks.

The doctor suggested that we wear protective clothing, such as long-sleeved shirts and long pants, to reduce the incidence of chigger bites when going to the riverside or grasslands.

Afterwards, put all of the clothes and bags into hot water and wash them thoroughly. Take a shower as soon as possible. The chiggers may spread

everywhere and can be alive for more than one week. Remove them as quickly as possible before they settle anywhere in your house.

If you are bitten by chiggers, don't be scared. You have several choices. Go to the hospital for professional advice right away. Or you can buy medicine which is useful for chigger bites in any pharmacy store. Some people also apply clear nail polish to the red spots, which is said to relieve the itchiness.

Now both my husband and I have recovered from the bites. We really hate chiggers, but we won't be afraid of them anymore. We know how to protect ourselves from them and how to deal with them in the future.

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# Language and Children

By Nathalie Huet (France)

Six months ago, I met a German woman (now, she's my friend) and her young son, T. To converse with her was very easy because she spoke English fluently, and she had a very good knowledge of French. So, if I didn't know an English word, I said it to her in French. In this way, I improved my English while she improved her French. But with her son, it was different.

First, he was a very young boy (only 2 1/2 years old). Like other children at this age, he didn't speak a lot, and the only words he pronounced were in German, his native language. Actually, in his home, the spoken language is German because his parents don't want their children to miss the opportunity to speak two languages very early, and, I think also, they understand German very well but not really English and not French at all.

The first time I met T., I tried to speak to him.

He was a little scared. Then, after a while, he listened to me and always answered "No" to whatever question I asked him. His mother explained to me that when he didn't understand a question, he always replied in the negative. Therefore, he and I established a kind of private language with a lot of gestures translating the words.

Since then, he has been speaking more and more and, of course, mostly in German. When he plays alone, he likes speaking and singing. In his speeches, he uses a few words in English that he heard before. Actually, he just juxtaposes words for the pleasure of saying something, imitating the sounds of the grown-ups.

At the same time, he really became aware that everybody doesn't speak in the same language that his family does, the only, or almost only, language he understands. Lately, I think he has felt the necessity to learn English if he wants to communicate with other

children. But now, he and I have found the best way to communicate: to "speak" more by gesture than by words is more understandable for both of us. Even now, even if he understands more and more English words, we continue to communicate like this. That works so much that, now, it's very easy to stay together, just him and me.

What touched me the most in this now 3-year-old boy's adaptation was his awareness of the difficulty of communicating with others when you don't speak the same language. I think it's because it really was what I felt when I arrived in the U.S.: it was difficult for me, too.

But the barrier of language for young children is not as big a problem as it is for adults because, for children, gestures and facial expressions are languages as important as the words themselves. Moreover, they learn so quickly.

*"... for children, gestures and facial expressions are languages as important as the words themselves."*

# Americans I Have Met

By Hera Lee (South Korea)

My first impression of Americans I met in the U.S. was that they were kind. When I first came to the U.S. with my two-year-old son and tremendous luggage, I met a girl who might have been a person working in customs. She rushed to me to help me and said, "Is someone meeting you?" I clearly remember her voice now, after almost 15 years.

But as time passed, the first impression changed. It didn't take long until I realized that not every American was as kind as the girl I met there. When I visited the government or county offices, they were not much different from what I experienced in my country, Korea.

One of the things that I would never get used to is the "Hi" of somebody I encounter when I pass them while I am taking a walk. It seems to be friendly now although I am not used to it at all, but it seemed to be more embarrassing at the beginning.

A few weeks ago, when the sun shone again as if the rain

had never poured, everybody came out to enjoy the sun, and neighbors didn't hesitate to express their joy to every person they met. "What a wonderful day!" they said. I was surprised again at the brightness and cheerfulness of Americans.

*"One of the things that I would never get used to is the "Hi" of somebody I encounter when I pass them while I am taking a walk."*

invitation in my mailbox. It was an invitation to a housewarming party, which I had never been to in the U.S. She was my first neighbor. I moved to this undeveloped area first; actually, I had no neighbors around my house. I went to the party with a small Korean-style gift, and we began to know each other a very little. But since that first encounter, I've never had the chance to talk with her except, "How are you?" I came to realize how difficult it was to make friends in America and how superficial a relationship it was.

I found the difference between friendship and friendliness soon. Americans are very friendly upon first encounter, but they never become close, and they are too difficult to get to know.

Koreans do not say "Hi" or talk to each other until they get to know each other. They are neither kind nor friendly. They tend to be indifferent, bad tempered, and even rude. But once they get to know each other, the relationship is very close and intimate, knowing each other almost completely, sharing everything.

Psychologists in Korea used to complain that they had nothing to do for patients' conflicts because close friends take that role instead of psychologists. We talk to our friends about almost everything about our lives: someone we love and someone we hate, every problem and conflict between family members, even very private things.

I have thought about what makes American relationships so superficial. Is it because they live in such a huge country and they are afraid of parting and losing close relationships once they are made? Or is it because they are raised as independent people and do not need anybody close to them?

I don't know. I don't have the answers yet.

# My Church in Korea

By Maria Young-mi Ku (South Korea)

When I was a sophomore in dental college, my friend said that she had started a bible study group, and she said it was cool. I was curious about this, so I told her I wanted to do it also.

From that time on, I went to church. I had a regular bible study with my bible teacher. She was a nurse and a colleague. Now she lives near Pu Page College and works as an RN in the U.S. When I was studying for the final examination, she visited me at the library with a big smile and snacks.

I tried to manage studying and bible study together. A professor advised me to devote my attention to the class first and bible study later. God helped me to manage them both.

In fact, during the two years of pre-dental coursework, the campus was in the turmoil of political issues. Often, there were

rallies in the beautiful springtime, and sometimes we skipped class to gather; once we boycotted the mid-term examination. The campus was filled with anger against corrupt and cruel political leaders. We went to the pub and to

friends' houses and talked about the present and future for ourselves and our country.

I was excited when I started the first year of dental college. There were too many things to study to be alluded to here. I finished first semester successfully, but I felt empty. I wanted to be happy and really wanted a real friend.

In church, I got friends and an extra family. After Sunday worship service, we had lunch together. On holidays, we climbed a mountain or spent good times playing table tennis and kickball together. Friends encouraged me and prayed for me to pass the intern exam. Also, I met my husband at the church.

I miss my brothers and sisters in the church as much as I miss my own family in Korea. I met two best friends for life there: my husband and Jesus Christ.

I received news that a friend of mine just got married to a beautiful lady. I met him when he was a sophomore in the college of music. We were in bible study together for several years before I came to the U.S.

Time flies so fast. Nowadays nobody knows the rallies about political issues on the campus. Korean campuses are full of young folks with energy, similar to UVA grounds.

Thinking of my friend, I remember my marriage. I congratulate his blessed marriage here in Charlottesville.

*"I miss my brothers and sisters in the church as much as I miss my own family in Korea."*

# Drinking around the World

## Germany

By Marie Rieger (Germany)

When I turned 21 here in the U.S., I went to the grocery store to buy beer for my birthday party. The cashier asked me for my ID, and I proudly gave her my German driver's license. She looked very confused. I showed her my date of birth, and then I realized that she was surprised about the spelling: in a lot of countries, you write "6 May, 1983" instead of "May 6, 1983." This difference was especially important for me this year because this was the date I turned 21, the legal age to buy beer in the U.S.

When I arrived in the U.S., I was really surprised that I couldn't drink alcohol. I was "under age." Not that I'm an alcoholic, but in Germany, you can consume alcohol, like beer, at the age of 16, and harder stuff, like liquor, at the age of 18.

To get alcohol in Germany is no problem. Nobody asks for your ID when you buy something in a store. Also, you can visit a bar, and you can get a drink.

Very often alcoholic drinks are less expensive than non-alcoholic drinks. The law says that only one non-alcoholic drink has to be cheaper than an alcoholic one. And you always have to pay for a drink; no tap water is for free.

There are people, like me, who can handle their alcohol

consumption, but there are a lot of teens who think it is cool to fall around drunk. They think they will be treated like an adult while using alcohol. One of the latest problems is the drink that tastes like soda. It is like lemonade, and so "under-age" people like it without realizing the risk of alcohol. Because the alcohol tastes harmless, young teens are tempted to consume it. We have a high rate of alcoholism among people between the ages of 16 and 18 in Germany, and sometimes a fun party ends at the hospital.

I think it's good that

you can only consume alcohol at the age of 21 in the U.S. You have to be older to realize what's right and what's wrong and how far you can go.

*"Often people underestimate alcohol, and they don't see the risk of getting used to it."*

Often people underestimate alcohol, and they don't see the risk of getting used to it. Alcohol is a part of every adult's life. No birthday party, no wedding, no Super Bowl takes place without alcohol to celebrate.

I think we all should take using alcohol more seriously to show young people what's really important in a successful life. Alcohol is the number one drug in Germany, maybe the world.

## France

By Nathalie Huet (France)

In France, it's very similar to Germany. Legally, we can consume alcohol from the age of 16. To buy alcohol, whatever it is (wine, beer, and strong alcohol), is very easy and common. We

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## Drinking around the World

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can buy it in the supermarket like we buy our food or our clothes. Specialized stores exist but they are considered fine stores. In every case, we are never asked for an ID.

Moreover, alcohol is “social” in our country. We (men and women) are used to drinking alcohol at home, with friends, at restaurants and bars, everywhere. We call it “the drink of friendship” because it’s said it permits the loosening of tongues.

But, of course, we have the problem of alcoholism, which concerns people from every age and every social class. We haven’t found the solution to this problem yet, even if the government and associations try to find a way to reduce it.

### Israel

By Ronan Kraus (Israel)

If I were requested to write about drinking in Israel 6 to 8 years ago, I wouldn’t find much to write about. At that time, relatively few people used to drink some good wines in fine restaurants or a couple of

beers in a bar. To see any drunks in the street was very rare. I would not exaggerate if I said that I could count on one hand the number of drunks I’ve seen over 30 years. However, in the last few years, things have changed. More people drink alcoholic beverages, and we are in the process of developing a “drinking culture” resembling European countries.

I think that the reasons for this change are:

1. The recent large immigration from Eastern Europe, which brought many people who like and are used to drinking more than the Israelis.
2. Adult people who were exposed to the habits of the rest of the world during their trips or business matters abroad.
3. Young people in Israel, as in other countries, are searching for shortcuts to temporary happiness, relaxation, and loosening feelings.

*“People prefer enjoying drinking to suffering from drunkenness.”*

It is very easy to buy alcoholic drinks in Israel. Even a child can purchase them in every supermarket although the law states that you must be older than 18. Young people buying alcohol are usually not requested to show their IDs.

Today, people in Israel are drinking more alcohol, mostly during events, but, in spite of this fact, we don’t have a national alcoholism problem.

To know someone who was stopped by the police to do an alcohol blood test is very unusual, and I personally never heard that anyone actually had one. To go out and drink more than 3 cans of beer, which is considered a huge amount of drinking, is still not very common.

### China

By Carrie Zhou (China)

The situation of drinking in different areas of China varies.

As far as I know, there is no specific restriction on purchasing drinks in our  
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# Ideal Mothers in China

By Xihui Lai (China)

The standard of an ideal mother is changing with the developing of the economy and the society in China. In old times, when people were poor, mothers would be satisfied only if their children were not hungry. Nowadays, this is certainly not enough. Mothers want to spend more time with their children. Mothers give the term “ideal mother” a new meaning.

Thirty years ago, a mother never thought that an ideal mother could be at home without working in China. A family usually had more than two children, and mothers had to work to support their families when their children were young. A mother who is now sixty years old recalled sadly, “At that time, most people were extremely poor. In our minds, if children could be healthy, studying well, and not hungry, we could feel satisfied enough. We could hardly think something more...” Staying at home and taking care of their children were extravagant hopes for them. Those were not even their dreams.

Being poor was the major problem for mothers thirty years ago. They dreamed their children would never be hungry. They dreamed their children would have a good future. A sixty-two-year-old woman said, “When we were young, we usually thought that we should do the best for our poor country. We worked hard and hoped that our children would have a future. If a child was honest and studied well, then we admired that mother of the child. We thought she was a good mother, an ideal mother. Mothers worked diligently to financially support their families.

The old images of an ideal mother linger. Some people still have to work hard for their living. In their minds, if children are healthy and study hard, then they feel gratified. However, the reality is changing. During the past thirty years, Chinese society has dramatically changed because of social reforms and open policy. A

new door is opened for people. This brings people new viewpoints. Now many mothers are able to make their own choices. An “ideal mother” has a new meaning. Mothers are no longer satisfied with teaching children to be polite and study hard. They also want to spend more time with their children. A young mother said, “I cannot imagine letting other people take care of my child. You see, in society, there are so many spoiled children.” Mothers believe that a mother’s care is the best care for their children.

On the other hand, some mothers want to work for self-fulfillment. They do not think that being at home all day with children could let them be good mothers. They think that there should be more important meanings to get into their children’s lives. A woman who works in a foreign company said that an ideal mother is one who lets children understand

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*“A new door is opened for people. This brings people new viewpoints. Now many mothers are able to make their own choices.”*

## Ideal Mothers in China

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that there is nothing waiting for them unless they strive for it.

The new image of an ideal mother affects young mothers' attitudes of this generation. People think that good mothers should let their children become more independent and more confident. Besides what children learn at school, mothers send their children to learn to play piano, draw, and dance or learn English. They believe that learning something more could make their

children's lives more perfect. They think those are the right things that an ideal mother should do for her children.

China is moving ahead. People are becoming richer and richer. Mothers will have more choice to work full time, part time or stay at home. Children will get better care from their mothers than before. People's thoughts are changing. Therefore, more meanings will be added into the standard of an ideal mother.

## ***Want to Contribute to the Multi-Cultural Brief?***

Do you have a story, an opinion, a skill you want to tell people about, a recipe, a good idea, a complaint, or a response to what you learned here?

Share it with others!

All submissions are considered. You don't have to be part of the Newspaper Class to contribute!

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## The Festival of Cultures

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was my little-girl dream to go to this paradisiacal island and because they were so esthetic, so beautiful. The second ones were African. These dances were more known to me because I had had several occasions in France to see some demonstrations. But I still appreciated them. All the dancers and singers deserved credit for doing their exhibits in the burning sun. The dancers who usually dance in bare feet couldn't dance on

the stage; it was too hot (just to show you how hot the day was).

During the performances, we strolled around the park to appreciate all the hand-made crafts from different countries, like Japan and Venezuela: poetry, paintings, sand art, origami, wreaths, etc. There also was a woman who was reading a story.

What was funny for me was that at almost every stand, I knew somebody. So it was a very beautiful morning and a very beautiful festival which permitted me to visit with people from so many different cultures, some of whom I haven't seen for a long time. I was so glad to go there, and I had a good time even under such a hot sun. I hope I will still be living in Charlottesville for the second celebration of the Festival.

## Drinking around the World

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country. In other words, everybody is allowed to buy beer, wine, or even alcohol in grocery stores. In supermarkets, we can find all kinds of drinks, from homemade rice wine to the products of world-famous brands. Most of the customers are middle-aged men, while others may be women or old men. Actually, I have never seen a teenager or child buying alcohol in my hometown, Shanghai.

Although I have heard some bad news resulting from alcohol before, I don't consider it a wide-ranging social problem in China. "People prefer enjoying drinking to suffering from drunkenness," as one of my friends said. "Limited drinking can warm the body and protect the health, which is helpful. But always being drunk is surely harmful, not only to yourself but also to society. If you hurt your own body,

you will bear the pain. If you harm society, you will be punished heartily. Either is unwise."

I think what he said is right. I also believe that many drinkers have the same opinion. That may be an explanation of why alcoholism is not a nationwide problem in China.

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