

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

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The World of Reporting

By Viviana Bernal (Colombia)



From left to right: Huang Lin, Yan Li, Hong Zhu, Eunkyung Heo, Viviana Bernal, Nga Slough, Kate Andrews, Leslie Furlong, Myung Jin Oh, Francisco de Sousa, Jr.

On January 18, 2006, a great reporter, Kate Andrews, came to our newspaper class and gave an interesting speech about the world of reporting.

First, she told us about her story and her background. After her graduation from college, she worked as a babysitter, but her parents

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From the Editor

Greetings!

Happy New Year to all both from a Western perspective and from an Asian perspective (Asian New Year was on January 28 this year)!

As the new term began, the ALC Newspaper Class had an auspicious beginning by having a special visit from Kate Andrews, a staff reporter from the *Daily Progress*, who described to us what it is like to be a newspaper reporter. Inspired by her, students in this issue have emphasized their skills in direct reporting. Viviana Bernal, on her first day in class, volunteered to write a report on Kate's visit.

Yan Li and Hong Zhu each took on a report on ALC's third Annual International Health Fair day and evening sessions respectively. Yan Li also is the first to contribute to a new feature we hope to include on a regular basis in the newsletter: students and teachers from different classes will write reports of some of the exciting things that happen in class, class projects, or tell us about particular classmates.

Yan here describes a trip to Monticello as part of the ESL@Home class.

While we hope to continue to develop our skills in direct reporting in future issues, we also will continue to include our more personal insights and perspectives about adjusting to life here in Charlottesville. Selina Qu combines direct reporting and her own responses in a movie review of *Treatment*, a film that looks at some of the more heart-rending issues that arise when we approach health care from a cross-cultural perspective. Huyen Thanh Hoang describes some of the painful choices that have to be made in beginning a new life here and the courage that is needed to make a better future possible.

If you would like to write to us your opinions, comments, or ideas, we would love to hear from you and will try to publish them whenever possible!

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.

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!

To submit material or to receive the *Multi-Cultural Brief*, visit us at 1000 Preston Avenue, Suite D, Charlottesville, VA 22903 or call 434-245-2817.

The Third Annual International Health Fair

By Yan Li (China)

The Third Annual International Health Fair was held at the Adult Learning Center (ALC) on January 19th, 2006. The daytime session was from 11:00 to 12:30 p.m. The Health Fair was open to the public. Most of the visitors, however, were teachers and students of ALC.

Diane Hoffman, MSW (Master of Social Work), gave a speech on Financial Services at the UVA Medical Center. She offered a lot of information on Medicare, Medicaid, and especially emphasized the **Discount System**. Medicare is a health insurance program for people age 65 or older, people under age 65 with certain disabilities, and people of all ages with End Stage Renal Disease. Medicaid is available only to certain low-income individuals and families who fit into an eligibility group that is recognized by federal and state law.

The Discount System is especially useful for internationals as well as people from the U.S. It helps drop the cost of needed medical treatment not only for indigent or uninsured patients, but for all patients. There are only three

state-sponsored discount systems in the state and in the Charlottesville area, "this program is only [available] from UVA and is in the West Complex of UVA hospital," said Ms. Hoffman. "It covers all necessary medical care except the dental clinic."

If someone would like to apply for a discount, he/she needs to fill in a **Financial Screening Form**. This form is available in English and Spanish. The financial screening evaluates a patient's annual household income and number of

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dependents and assets (such as cars and real estate). The level of the write-off is set according to a sliding scale tied to income in the state university teaching hospital guidelines. Besides filling out this form, **all documentation** is required to be returned in 30 days. Patients typically qualify for a period of one year, at which point financial advisors reevaluate their

qualifications.

After the speech, the whole audience was invited to look around at the displays in the hallway. Tens of ALC students presented plenty of health projects in posters. Each person could pick two posters you liked the best for any reason, and put a dot on the preferred poster. The poster that won was made by the daytime Low Beginner ESL class, and its topic was the importance of washing our hands. There was also a "Scavenger Hunt," where participants looked on the different posters for answers to a list of questions.

There were two other displays: one on Breast Care Awareness and one on Planned Parenthood, which offered information about health care services for women, couples and teens. A few visitors also enjoyed massage provided by one of our teachers, Mr. James Gordon, who is a massage therapist.

At the end, the acme of the event came. A raffle was held at about 12:30 p.m. and an ALC student from France won the prize, a healthy gift basket from Whole Foods.

Annual International Health Fair at ALC

The Adult Learning Center conducted its Third International Health Fair on January 19, 2006, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. This fair provided much beneficial information

about health for people living in Charlottesville, and particularly for the international community.

The students of ALC designed

many elegant posters to explain how the body works and what we should do to stay healthy. The audience went around and looked at all the beautiful health

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Annual International Health

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posters in the hallway. I saw many people surround and read a poster in the corner. This was a poster of a food pyramid. The creator used colorful clay to make many models to present each kind of fruit and vegetable. The “food” looked so real that a girl tried to pick it. The poster also gave a clear opinion: we should choose not junk but nutritious food for our bodily needs. The audience put dots on the poster they like the best. The poster with the most dots would be the most popular one for this evening. As with the daytime event, the poster that won was the one that emphasized the importance of washing hands.

At 6 p.m., Dr. Rama Goswami gave a speech about dental care. At first, she explained how decay forms in our teeth. She told us, “If you eat a lot of sugar and don’t brush as you are supposed to in order to remove plaque, you will have bacteria sitting on the teeth and eating away at the teeth.” She drew a picture of an upper tooth for further explaining. She said, “But this cavity doesn’t hurt you at all. You don’t feel any pain. If you don’t go to the dentist to put a filling in it, the bacteria will keep growing. Finally, the decay, which is bacteria, will eat the inside nerve. Then you will feel sensitivity to hot or cold, and start hurting. By then, it is too late.” When an audience member asked her how often a person should go to the dentist, she answered, “Every six months, so the dentist can find decay and remove it in time.”

Then she talked about how the bacteria eat away the teeth. She said, “The bacteria produce acid, which dissolves away the teeth and removes the calcium, so the tooth will break and need to be pulled out. When you have hot and cold sensitivity, you need go to the dentist and make sure the bacteria don’t get to the nerve.” In addition, she also discussed how the dentists treat the decay and rebuild the fake tooth instead of the

missing one.

Finally she told us how to keep the gums healthy. First of all, we have to brush our teeth at least twice a day and we should use toothpaste with fluoride. She said, “When you eat food, you have bacteria in your mouth, and these bacteria normal live in your mouth. You have a soft layer in your teeth that is called plaque. That’s why you use a toothbrush to brush your teeth to remove your plaque. If you don’t take off plaque for 24 hours, it becomes hard and chalky and you can’t brush it away. You should go to the dentist to use metal instrument to clean up. Otherwise, the bacteria cause inflammation of the gums. They get red, swell, and start bleeding. So if you floss your teeth and you get bleeding in the gums, that means you really need cleaning.”

“If you eat a lot of sugar and don’t brush as you are supposed to in order to remove plaque, you will have bacteria sitting on your teeth and eating away at the teeth.”

Her speech lasted for about 50 minutes. When she finished, the audience gave her ardent applause. Also, she was requested to leave her name and her office number, which

is 434-296-8034.

Next, Dr. Toni Stupski, a primary care doctor, gave a brief introduction to the UVA International Family Medicine Clinic. The IFMC services include full a range of medical care for all ages. It provides free of charge interpreters for many languages. Of special note, they provide more time for each visit: 1 hour for the first visit and 30 minutes for the second visit. You can call the clinic 24 hours a day, which is 434-924-5348.

The final event was a raffle. The sponsor of the raffle, Whole Foods, provided a nice healthy food basket for the winner. A South Korea visiting scholar won the prize.

Everyone who came to the event felt that they learned a lot and received some useful information. This was a meaningful program.

The World of Reporting

(Continued from page 1)

were upset about that. Then, she worked as a freelance writer and now she is a staff writer for *The Daily Progress*. She has been a reporter for 5 years, covers Orange, Greene, and Madison Counties, and works very hard, even when she is in her car. Often while she is driving home, she thinks about her next report, and she organizes in her head the order of the article. She said, "You need to decide what you are going to write first."

She then showed us a copy of the newspaper. Two of her articles were on the front page. This is a big honor for a reporter. Her minimum time on one column, or article, is 30 minutes, and the maximum time is a few weeks. She could not be more precise than this. She writes about different topics. She doesn't have a favorite subject, but covers business, crime, court proceedings, housing construction, among other things.

In addition, she told us about the daily routine at the newspaper. During the day, they do interviews, write stories, and take pictures. During the evening, they have two city editors. The editors read all the columns and give them titles. Then the articles go to the copy desk. The copy editor needs to make sure things are consistent. Also, in that office they need to check the style book for appropriate title and spelling format. At around midnight, they begin printing. Then they add inserts, like advertisements, and then they prepare to distribute the newspapers.

Finally, she gave us a few reporting recommendations, or tips:

- **Make sure you have a good relationship with people in the community.** She gave us an example from a story she wrote about a Santa who visited an elementary school. It was about a person who was a sex offender and she needed to contact both parties: talk with him and with the school that was involved because she needed to listen to both arguments and she must take care of her relationships with the school as well as the "Santa" (the sex offender).
- **Know what kind of sources you can use if people contact you** (eg., anonymous phone calls; e-mail messages; or meetings);
- **Be careful with your words** because maybe you can affect people's reputation;
- **If you don't have any information to report, you need to find it using different sources.** Find people in the schools, talk with neighbors, go to different events, go to places where you know people, and talk to people face to face;
- **If you go to an event or want to conduct an interview and you don't know people, you can introduce yourself (your name, where you work, and what article you are working on)** and then you can start with your reporting;
- **You need to have questions ready;** and
- **(the most important thing in my opinion) if you find your article interesting, for sure your readers will be interested, too.**



To Watch, To Think... After Watching the Film *Treatment*

By Selina Cong Qu (China)

between China and America which can bring Chinese people who live in America a lot of trouble and pain.

Recently I watched a Chinese film, *Treatment*. This film tells a story about a Chinese grandfather who used a treatment on his grandson that caused trouble with social services in America. This film shows some of the huge cultural differences that exist

First, I want to introduce the whole story to you. Datong Xu is an immigrant from China who immigrated to the

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United States eight years ago. Now he is a successful engineer in a software company, and he has a happy family. One day, his son has a high fever, and nobody is at home except the grandfather. However, the grandfather doesn't understand the English instruction of the medicine. So he uses a traditional Chinese medicine treatment, coining, to heal the boy. The next day in school, the teacher finds red marks on the back of the boy. She thinks the boy is the victim of child abuse, so she calls the police. The boy is taken to the child welfare agency. Datong Xu has to be involved in a lawsuit to get back his son. This is a heart-rending story. The cultural difference almost breaks a happy family.

What is "coining"? In fact, coining is a traditional Chinese medical treatment, which has been used for more than one thousand years. The method of coining is to use a coin or special instrument that is dipped in oils to rub against the patient's chest, neck, and back. Traditionally, coining is used for some "wind illnesses." It also can be used to release the stress of some illness symptoms, such as headaches, muscle aches and pain. The practice produces red marks and bruise on the chest and back and disappear over several days. In this film, Americans confuse the red marks with child abuse.

In fact, this is the second time that I've watched this film. I still can't help crying for the main characters. The first time I watched *Treatment in China*, I didn't think a lot about it. At that time, it was just a film, a fiction for me. I never thought the different cultural backgrounds could cause such a huge conflict and impact on real life. Since I came to America, I began to experience some negative feelings caused by cultural differences. Now, I have to acknowledge, for a Chinese person who comes to America, the main barrier is not language, but the different cultures. It is so hard for a person to put down roots in a strange country.

In this film, on one side is the grandfather who loves his grandson and uses our Chinese traditional treatment to cure his grandson. On the

other side is the American child welfare agency, which thinks, "We should give our children a safe environment, and we won't allow them to be abused." Which side can you say is wrong? No side! Love has no country border. As a Chinese audience, we can't accept American law and logic in this film. But from an American's eyes, it is also difficult to understand and accept Chinese tradition. People are always affected by their own cultures. It's "human nature."

Cultural differences between different nations can't be avoided. However, we can see that people from different countries are trying to decrease the misunderstandings and gaps, which are caused by different cultures. Many of us also feel that Chinese culture and Western culture are being accepted by each other more and more. I hope everyone can learn more about the culture of others and be more understanding, so the world can be a more beautiful place.



SNOW DAYS
 For information about
 whether classes are canceled
 due to inclement weather,
 call 245-2401, or watch
 Channel 29 News.





Before I came to the U.S. four months ago, I had an interesting plan. I

wanted to have another baby. It sounded great for me. I was so excited about that. Bringing up children is very hard, and it will make my life much busier and more responsible. I don't worry about this difficulty. I have had a lot of experience taking care of children after my first baby was born. I even had an exact time for my plan.

However, it was totally changed one month ago. One night, my husband said to me, "Honey, do you think it will be better for you to study something here?" "What? Studying? Are you kidding me? How about my plan for the baby?" I opposed his idea strongly. I had so many reasons for that. The most important thing was my ability. I had stopped studying many years ago. I did not believe that I could have a good result at the TOEFL test since it changed the version and required a lot of listening and speaking. Also, I am not a person who wants to spend too much time working and making money. I am just a person who wants to take care of the family well. I gave him a stupid idea that I could not have both of them at the same time. My husband tried to persuade me by pointing out a lot of ad-

New Challenge

By Huyen Thanh Hoang (Vietnam)

vantages if I go to school. Both of us can have a chance to find a job here, so my family can stay here for several more years, which will be enough for our kids to speak English fluently. And we can bring some saved money back to Vietnam, instead of returning with empty hands. Or if we cannot stay in the US, we can easily find a well-paying job in my country. We will have a better life, and then, we will think about having the baby.

We have talked a lot, and we each have tried to protect our own opinion. Sometimes we had so strong an argument that both of us kept silence for a long time, and turned our backs to each other. I just kept thinking and thinking in my mind. Finally, I found out that he was right. To be honest, I am much luckier than so many people in Vietnam. I am now living in the most powerful as well as the most educationally developed country in the world. I have a good chance to study, instead of staying at home most of the time. Why am I wasting of my life? I am spending too much time on unimportant things, such as shopping, chatting, writing emails, or reading Vietnamese news, of course in Vietnamese. Furthermore, I need to share the burden with him. He has to do his research, has a TA job and has a part-time job at one of the centers at UVA as

well. He is doing a lot for our family.

What about the thing that I was concerned about the most, my English? It was no need to worry much. As he said, even if I did not have a good score for English tests for going to universities, still my English would be improved. Studying has never been useless.

From now on, I will spend all my energy on studying English. It is hard, but let me try my best. I am ready for that. I have a TOEFL class at the International Center beginning last week. I am going back to English Distance Learning and Dialogue Café at the Adult Learning Center (ALC) starting this week. And I am here now, in the Writing class at ALC also, with my first paper in my very first class. I want to show him that I am very proud of him and he is always a person who gives me a right direction in my life. Just make a new challenge and you will feel your life to be more interesting!



The Home of Thomas Jefferson

By Yan Li (China)

I was looking forward to visiting the home of Thomas Jefferson when I came here.

One day, Holly, who teaches ESL@Home at ALC, invited us to tour Monticello. Holly has been to Monticello several times; however, this is the first time she had been there in winter. It was wonderful to stroll through Monticello in the warm sunlight and to breathe in the fresh air. Holly was a good guide who acquainted us with a lot of information about Monticello and President Jefferson's history.

Jefferson's house is located at the top of Monticello. Most of us thought Monticello was the name of Jefferson's house, but, in fact, Monticello is the name of the mountain where the house is situated.



Photo by Yan Li 2006

While we were hiking on the walking trail, we were all surprised to find a strange tree entwined by a giant vine that reminded us of a giant ginseng root.

When we were walking around the Jefferson gravesite where Thomas Jefferson was buried, another interesting thing happened: someone threw coins at the gravestone and prayed for good luck. Holly was surprised to see it, and she tried to get the reason but failed.

During the visit to the home of Thomas Jefferson, we were deeply impressed by his amazing talents. The dome room on the third floor was used at times as a bedroom and storage room. Unfortunately, for some reason, we couldn't go upstairs to visit it. Despite that, when I got home, I found a multimedia webpage with interactive 3D models of the house on the Internet and had an in-depth look at the dome room, which left me without any regret.

In conclusion, if you like traveling around Charlottesville, Monticello is my first recommendation. After your trip, please don't forget to visit their website (www.monticello.org), which could help you revisit the tour in your mind.

Massage @ Home

J.W. Gordon

823-6152

Swaleview@worldnet.att.net



Swedish and Deep Tissue Massage in your home or in mine. Call for details.

VOICES OF ADULT LEARNERS

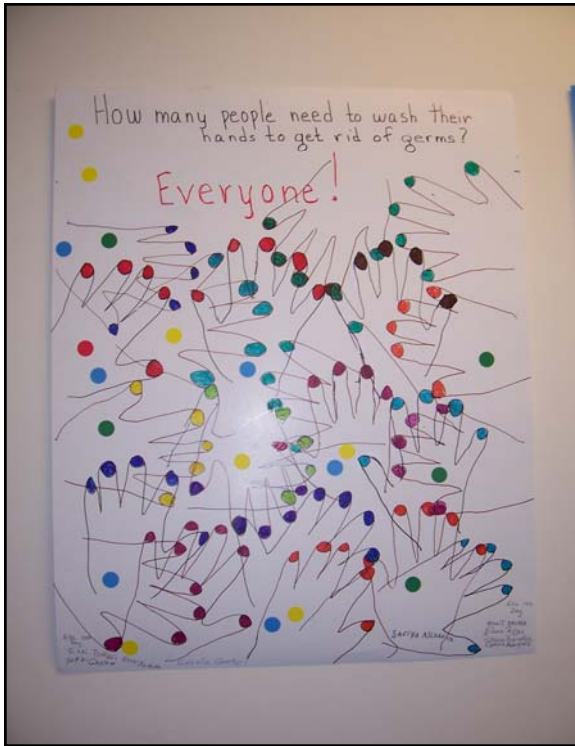
Voices of Adult Learners

A Virginia Festival of the Book

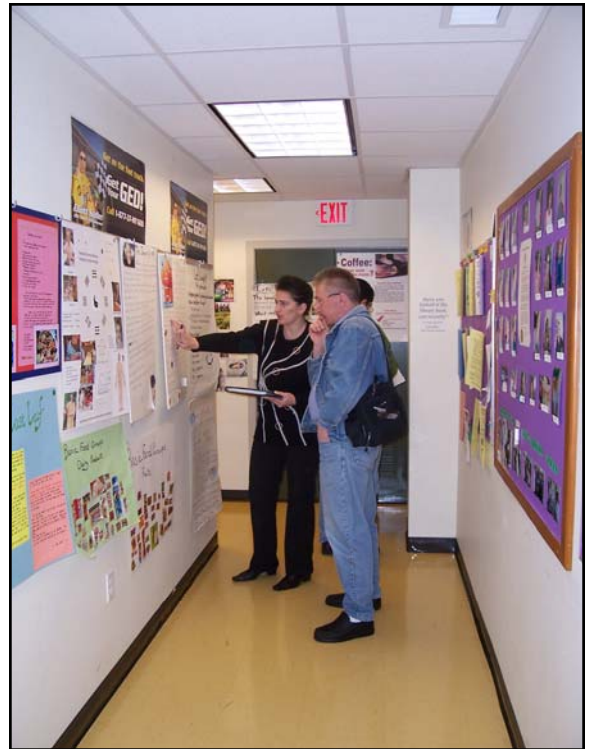


**Burnley-Moran Elementary School
1300 Long Street
Charlottesville, Virginia
March 23, 2006, 6:00 PM**

Please mark your calendar and come to this wonderful event, the tenth anniversary of Voices of Adult Learners. It is part of the week-long Festival of the Book here in Charlottesville! Learners from the entire region will read their stories and receive awards for exceptional writing. Refreshments will be served from 6 to 6:30 p.m. You will have the opportunity to speak with the writers in person. This is an occasion not to be missed!



Winner of the ALC Third Annual International Health Fair P2006 Poster Contest



Third Annual International Health Fair at ALC

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