

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

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.

Do You Know Sushi?

By Masako Wada (Japan)

“I love Sushi!” an American says.

“What kind of Sushi do you like?” I ask.

“Everything, except raw fish! Avocado, smoked salmon, crab.....,” the American answers with confidence.

I often meet with such a situation. It is often that a particular thing in a foreign culture spreads to other countries as something different. This Sushi story is one of the experiences of culture shock for me.

“This is not Sushi at all. You don’t understand Sushi!” I cried in my heart.”

What the American above mentioned is talking about is so-called “Sushi Roll.” It is the most popular Sushi cuisine in America.

Especially California Roll (avocado, crab stick, and egg) is the basic type of Sushi Roll.

Most Americans I have met think that California Roll is the exact Sushi from Japan. But for Japanese, California Roll is not real Sushi actually. Sushi is a food made of vinegared rice combined with various

(Continued on page 6)

In This Issue

Do You Know Sushi?	page 1
From the Editor	page 2
Settling Down in Charlottesville, a Mixed Experience	page 3
Getting Through	page 4
Spanish Language	page 5
Even Though You Visit Many Times	page 7
What a Small World!	page 8
No Matter What	page 8
Where Is His Wallet!	page 9
A Call to Harris Teeter Management	page 10
The Small Spider	page 11

From the Editor:

The Adult Learning Center has come to the end of its stay at 1000 Preston Avenue in Charlottesville. It has been a wonderful 4 1/2 years, and our hosts, Legal Aid, have been generous, gracious, and supportive neighbors to us. We will miss them.

Now, we are moving on to our beautiful new home in the Frank IX building at 935-A Second St., S.E., and will be open for classes in September. Most of our current students have gone on field trips to visit it, and we hope they will spread the word to others in our community.

We end the school year with another collection of commentaries on the process of cultural adjustment to life in Charlottesville. We may remember that at the beginning of the year, writings were filled with the excitement of exploring a new life in this wonderful city and country, what is often called the “honeymoon stage” of cultural adjustment. Nine and ten months later, our students have grown to combine these feelings of excitement and wonder with the complexities of feeling misunderstood and even how difficult it can be to survive here. It is not that the honeymoon has to end. It is that, as we come to know a place, we begin to experience the contradictions. On the one hand, we laud the kindness and integrity of the person who returns to us the wallet we have lost. On the other, we notice that not every business honors the needs of the

most vulnerable in our community, women with infants and children. On the one hand, we are pleased with the progress we have made learning a new language. On the other, we continue to experience frustration not only that others may not appreciate the extra steps we have to go through to communicate, but also our own tendencies to sabotage ourselves because of our fear and embarrassment.

The newspaper class talked a lot about the concept of “fusion”, where aspects of one culture are introduced and blended with a new one. It is often true that we want to adapt our traditions so that they become more palatable to others, helping people in the new culture to open doors to new tastes and perspectives, but we also can experience great loneliness and loss when communication stops there, when others do not make the effort to move beyond “fusion food” to really try to understand and appreciate the unique world from which we come.

Equally moving, however, is the realization of the smallness of the modern world, both geographically and emotionally. How extraordinary it can be to see a friend, a fellow world traveler whom you have not seen in years, at the table next to you in a restaurant in Charlottesville! Furthermore, there are some experiences that are universal. As the class read “No Matter What,” there was not a dry eye in the room as each person remembered their own mother, no matter if the relationship was easy or difficult.

Finally, we all hopefully learn at some point in our lives that no matter what our difficulties in adjusting to life wherever we are, all we really have is the moment, which can disappear in a second. It is our job to remember to not dwell too long on the past or pine too much for what has not yet come to be, but to be in the moment, to see its possibilities, and to treasure it.

Have a happy, safe summer, and we will see you in the fall.

Leslie A. Furlong, Editor

© 2007 Charlottesville Adult Education. All Rights Reserved. The entire contents of this publication are protected by copyright. All rights reserved.

This project was funded in part by the VA Department of Education under the EL/Civics Grant. However, opinions expressed herein do not represent the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Settling Down in Charlottesville, A Mixed Experience

By Akammu Matthew Olufemi (Nigeria)

Whenever we are present at the newspaper class of the Adult Learning Center in Charlottesville, one thought usually comes into my mind. I always find myself in the midst of beautiful faces, mostly women when compared to the numbers of men. They usually have very bright faces with full smiles.

Many times I keep wondering in my mind what is making them happy, considering that they are aliens as I am and need to settle down and face many challenges.

My coming to Charlottesville with my wife has been a mixture of blessings and sorrows. On many occasions, I have looked up and believed I have been the luckiest alien in Charlottesville, while on others, I believe coming to Charlottesville has not been worth it. At the conclusion of all these thoughts, I always remember my opinion when I was coming that the bridge behind me had been burnt and there is no turning back.

“...the bridge behind me has been burnt, and there is no turning back.”

Charlottesville has been a refuge for me and my wife when my host in Rahway, New Jersey, could not accommodate us even though I am a legal alien with my wife in the U.S.

Our initiator, who brought us to Charlottesville, too, did not hesitate to show his family's limitations in accommodating us. Movement to our self-rented apartment was arranged with a loan from our initiator. This cost me a post-dated check, which would be a criminal offense if the check were not honored.

Our income for the period of two months was calculated, and arrangement for the repayment of the loan was based on this without considering the house rent, taxes that were deducted from the gross income, the bills and even that my wife's income would be based on the condition of being a part-time and not a full-time worker. It was tough.

However, the employees of Trinity Mission of Charlottesville, my employer, did wonders. All that was affordable was given to us to make us at least average or above average comfortable. Our center of

worship, Lighthouse Worship Center Congregation, too, didn't leave us alone, providing various gifts. We live in a two-bedroom flat.

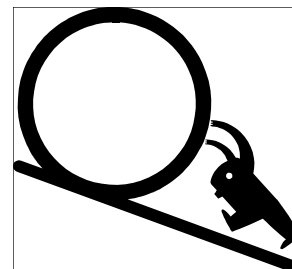
The work that was given to us at Trinity Mission of Charlottesville was that I would work as a house cleaner and my wife, who was at least seven months pregnant, would work in laundry personnel. Initially, I found it very difficult to cope because I was in a managerial position in my country before I came to the U.S., but with hope for a bright future, I keep moving on. My wife did laundry work for some time and later opted for a nursing assistance course, which she finished on May 18, 2007, two weeks before the delivery of our first baby.

Since she stopped the laundry work and opted for nursing assistance work, the family income has dropped. As newcomers to the U.S. with no insurance, we are still processing Medicaid. The rent for accommodations is \$750 per month. The bills for electricity, gas, water, and telephone are there monthly for payment.

A good diet is compulsory. Going to the prenatal clinic must not be neglected. I looked for a part-time job with no luck. My heart was heavy.

All these thoughts always go through my mind, and I keep wondering if I am the only alien that is going through this kind of experience which I can define as odd.

I shall like my readers to share their experience, too. By putting it down, I or any other people may learn from it.



Getting Through

By Soon Ho Lee (South Korea)



Are you planning to go abroad and settle for a while? I think you might as well learn the language that the people speak there long before your departure if you don't want to regret not having acquired the communication skill and feel uncom-

fortable. The language skill that you learn at school is different from that which you learn while you live in the country, though. On the other hand, as long as you don't find a reason to be ashamed that you can't communicate confidently or comfortably, you don't have to take my word.

I flattered myself that I knew a good deal, although now I admit I don't. Going shopping used to be fun. There were tons of things to shop for, but after the first night, I tossed about. When I go shopping, I see the cashiers and the customers who mostly appear friendly and likely to share their thoughts with each other. I wondered if they fear the silence.

As for me, I have a sort of fear whenever I need to articulate in front of native speakers if I cannot be understood well or if I cannot understand the other person. When I say or ask, it's better because I'm prepared for what I will say. But the moment the other answers, I'm drowning in "blah, blah, blah..." because I don't know what she was going to say and am not prepared.

As a result, I barely say "Hi" in a cold sweat, which might make the other wonder why this lady zipped her mouth, which is not polite. Then, I see her face turn blunt, which makes me feel something knot up in my stomach. "Did I do something wrong to press her button?" My excuse, "It's not me, but my English, if I seem to be rude," cannot be uttered out.

While I struggle to find proper words, my personality is gone. I doubt if there's something in me that repels people. I blame my disposition, which is not talkative even in my mother language.

Even ordering a burger in a fast food restaurant is a hard task. When I see a long line behind me, I stutter still more, and it takes me quite a time to have the fidgeting cashier understand what I want. I feel my back sweat. At the same time, I feel sorry for the people waiting behind me patiently. When I get nervous, I become all thumbs. In turn, I start to feel frustrated. Luckily, meeting a very patient person who willingly tries to understand what I say saves my day. Addressing the success with my great English, I encourage myself, saying, "Yes, you did well." Then next day, blaming my clumsy English, I feel miserable again.

"It isn't so much that I mind speaking ugly English. It is being afraid, uncomfortable that I mind."

I don't think I should demand natives to be patient to communicate with people who are limited English speakers. They may well not have had a chance to get used to those unique accents, intona-

tions, and rhythms of non-native speakers' English. I heard from a girl who was once employed in a grocery store. The employer complained about her English and criticized her lack of good communication skills. She quit the job because she regarded that as discrimination. He could have helped her. I'd rather think it's up to the personality of each person.

It isn't so much that I mind speaking ugly English. It is being afraid, uncomfortable that I mind. It is inconvenient to go through life without guts. Even though I was not born with guts, I could leave the United States with them. Why don't I turn it into a chance to use living abroad to achieve what I've been longing to make mine?

Spanish Language

By Tatjana Okuneva (Russia)

I have lived here about three months. America is a fabulous country!

I was impressed by the English language and culture two years ago. After this, I started to learn it more seriously. It seemed to me that English is similar to mathematical construction — there is a strict order of building the sentences. I was fascinated by learning a foreign language.

When I decided to attend Spanish classes at the beginners' level, I was already here in America. I didn't know yet what difficulties I would face. I speculated that if I learned a foreign language, it wouldn't be so difficult to learn another one. That is why I found the Spanish Center. Its teachers are famous for their methods.

I was so naïve! I didn't know that I would have to translate twice. My class consisted of Americans only. Consequently, the teacher explained new materials in fluent English. She mixed English phrases with Spanish ones. I didn't suspect that my brain, which is used to thinking in Russian, could not follow her explanation exactly. I had to translate from Spanish into English and then into Russian. Oh, it was a really long process. I wasted my time trying to do it.

When the teacher came to me, for me she looked like a monster. She said to me, "Mucho, mucho, Como te llamas?" I couldn't understand her. My forehead began to sweat, and I did my best to respond to her grammatically correctly. Sometimes I answered in Russian because I didn't have enough time to translate. I thought, why did I decide to make myself suffer? Actually, it was a really unpleasant lesson. In addition, all my classmates had no problem understanding her. I felt very stupid.

Hence, some Americans felt sorry for me, trying to spend their time on explanations of the most

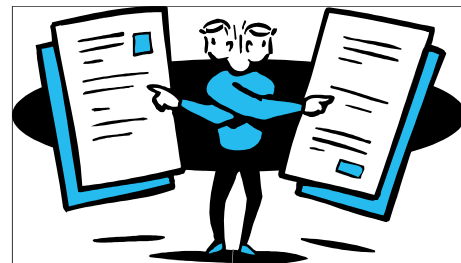
difficult rules of Spanish. I was in that group of students only once.

After the lesson, an American lady came up to me. She asked if I liked to learn foreign languages. I nodded my head, "Yes." She suggested spending time together over lunch one day. She added, "You have a beautiful Russian accent. Can you teach me Russian?" She made me happy, and I haven't forgotten her name, Robbie. She belongs to those people who understand how sometimes it's difficult to live as an immigrant! Now, I attend the other group of students. No one helped me at all. I felt very uncomfortable.

This story makes me understand better the immigrant children's problems when they first arrive in America. Some people said to me that at the beginning of their lives in America, children usually have bad grades in school. I understand how it could be difficult for a child to appear in an unfamiliar environment. Children have to learn different subjects in a foreign language, but it takes some time to translated from their native language. Our brains work automatically, and it's impossible to force them to work suddenly in a different way.

Most of us would like to find a new job here. To have it, we need a good education in America. For this reason, we should speak and understand English fluently. It is a long and difficult process. I wish all of us a lot of patience and tolerance!

"I had to translate from Spanish into English and then into Russian. Oh, it was a really long process."



Do You Know Sushi?

(Continued from page 1)

toppings or fillings, especially seafood (most of them are raw). Even though Sushi has some types — Nigiri Roll, Chirasi, Inari, — we don't have California Roll in Japanese traditional Sushi. We never use avocado or crab stick, much less cream cheese (except when we try to make California Roll)!

Below is the history of California Roll.

A Japanese Sushi chef in Los Angeles invented the roll in the early 1970s. We have Sushi Roll, which is wrapped with Nori (seaweed). He was worried about it because Americans did not like seeing and chewing the Nori on the outside of the roll. Then, he conceived a bright idea, that is, making the roll "inside out." He also thought that they didn't like raw fish. Then, he realized the oily texture of avocado was a perfect substitute for Toro (oily raw tuna).

When I talked with Americans and learned of

their misunderstanding about Sushi that "California Roll is traditional Japanese Sushi," my feeling was always complicated. "This is not Sushi at all. You don't understand Sushi!" I cried in my heart. That's maybe my spirit as a Japanese.

Meanwhile, if the chef had not invented California Roll at that time, Sushi would not have been well received by Americans and could not have been in great vogue for a long time.

Now I understand. To hasten our cultural exchange in the world, we can't avoid the fact that when we introduce some things from our culture to someplace new, it changes to suit the taste of the people who live there. It is a shortcut to communicate and understand each other.

It reminds me of this proverb, "Do in Rome as the Romans do."



Summer 2007 English Conversation Opportunity!

Tuesday Afternoons, 2-4 p.m.

**at Shenandoah Joe's Coffee Shop!
(across the street from Washington Park)**

Free to all ESL adult learners!

**[contact info= Holly (434)960-7177 and/or
dilatu1@ccs.k12.va.us]**

Even Though You Visit Many Times

By Fumie Morita (Japan)

Last weekend, I had a guest who was one of my best friends. She came to Charlottesville to see me. She had never been either to Charlottesville or Washington, D.C. My husband and I decided to pick her up from Dulles International Airport to give her a tour of Washington. After we met at the airport, we went to the city at once. It was her first time to visit there, so she wanted to see the Washington Monument from the car. We also took her to the Natural Air and Space Museum, the Capitol, the White House, and the Lincoln Memorial.



Actually, it was the fourth time for me. The first time, we visited there in the middle of September sightseeing by ourselves. It was a little cool and there was a cloudy sky, but the trees were still green. The second time, we visited there after Thanksgiving Day because our mother came to see us. There were a lot of tourists because of the holiday. There were already colored leaves, but the weather was so nice. We didn't need to wear a jacket. The third time, we visited there on Christmas Day at night. We just looked at the Christmas Tree in front of the White House. It was a little rainy, but the illumination was so pretty.

Then, this time was the fourth. But the scene was so different from the times I came here before. Last Tuesday, it snowed, and the snow still hadn't melted everywhere. How fantastic it was! The road was already maintained, and we could drive our car safely, but the tops of the buildings, the parks, and the ponds were covered with a lot of snow. For example, the Mall, the Reflecting Pool, and the pond which was in front of the Capitol. It was hard to walk in our shoes, but many children enjoyed sliding on the ice. Especially, the pond was like a skating rink. But there were so many people. Some children went onto the pond easily. We tried to go there, too. But ... my friend and I

slipped soon. Fortunately, we received no injury at all. We laughed at each other because we were pretending to be like the children on the pond, but we couldn't do as they did. We only took a picture to remember it by, and we returned from the freezing pond to the ground as soon as possible. Anyway, it was a nice experience for us.

Washington, D.C. is one of the biggest sightseeing places near Charlottesville. Every time guests come, I will go there for my guests if I have enough time. But I think that there are various sides, not only every season, but also every day. Even though you visit there many times, you might see a different side from what you saw before.

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 935-A Second Street S.E., Charlottesville, VA 22902 or call 434-245-2817.

What a Small World!

By Lihong Xia (China)

Last week, I went to East Garden Restaurant in Charlottesville, a small, pretty university town. When I picked up my dishes, suddenly I found someone who looked like my old friend. I couldn't believe it. I thought maybe I had an eye problem. I was so curious and went closer to her. When she saw me, her eyes opened wider and looked at me until I called her name. She responded and said to me, "Ah, my god, it's really you. What a small world!" I nodded, and tears came into my eyes, but I tried not to blink.

"Ah, my god, it's really you. What a small world!"

Most of us may have such experiences. Why is the world getting smaller and smaller? For one thing, I think modern technology has made various means of transportation more and more advanced. People can be taken by them to everywhere they want to go. For example, it took me 13 hours from Beijing to Washington, D.C. by

airplane. I crossed half the world. I took off at 6 p.m. from Beijing, China, and arrived in D.C. at about 7 p.m. the same day. It seemed that time stopped for 12 hours due to the time difference. For another thing, the more advanced the society, the more contacts with others we can make. If I miss my mother, I will hear her voice by calling her on the telephone. It only takes several seconds. We also can talk with our friends on the Internet using a video-camera, and we can see each other just as if we lived together.

In a word, with the development of modern society, the world will be getting smaller and smaller. One earth, one family.



It was May 10th when I called my mother to say congratulations to her on Mother's Day in Mexico. She said, "I love you" before hanging up the phone, and I felt something inside that I cannot explain with words. That was the moment when I realized how important she has been for me.

I look back on my difficult times and wonder why I always keep on going. The answer is that I have a mother who has always been with me, giving me advice. She believes in me and accepts my own decisions. My mother is the woman who makes me strong. She is the one who was with me the first time someone broke my heart. She caught all my tears and gave me strength when my father died even though she was suffering as much as I was.

No Matter What

By Laura Hernandez Juarez (Mexico)

This year is the first time I am far away from her who is always supporting me no matter what, and something that she always said comes to my mind: "You don't belong to me forever. One day you will go to reach your goals and build your own life." I know it was difficult for her to let me go because even though I have grown up, she won't stop seeing me as her little girl. Surely it is a mother's universal feeling.

In this writing, I want to say thank you to her for helping me to fly, for her time, her wisdom, and her love. She said that I don't belong to her forever, but I do because she is part of me, and even though I cannot see her because of the distance, she is always in my heart and my mind. She is the wonderful woman who raised me in the best way ever. Thank you, Mommy, for your lifetime lessons. I love you.

Where Is His Wallet?

By Fumie Morita(Japan)

Last Friday, my husband didn't have a class at Darden. He slept until past noon, but, after waking up, he said to me, "If you want to go anywhere, I'll take you." I was so glad for his words. I asked him if he wanted to go to the bookstore and have an afternoon tea in a coffee shop. After having lunch, we started to go out around 2 p.m. Then, the event happened.

Unexpectedly, he asked me, "Where's my wallet?"

I remembered that I kept his wallet last night. That day, we went to the restaurant by car. When we went back home on our way to the house, he passed me his wallet in the car. I forgot what I did with it after that.

My face turned pale. I desperately looked for his wallet the length and breadth of our rooms. Of course, I checked my bags and my coat pockets, too. But I couldn't find it. I thought that it might be in the car. We went to the parking lot and checked the car, but it wasn't anywhere. My face turned much paler. I couldn't remember... Where did I put his wallet last night?!

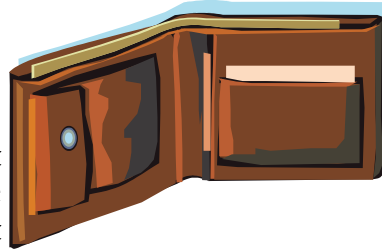
I looked in our car and our house again and again. But it wasn't anywhere. The parking lot is in front of my house, and it takes only thirty seconds from our house to the parking lot. But I couldn't think that I dropped his wallet when I got out of our car. But it wasn't there around the parking lot. We visited our apartment office and asked the staff, "Do you have a wallet?" But it wasn't sent to the office. Did someone take it?

My husband said to me, "If you lost my wallet and didn't notice, I can't believe it! Why didn't you notice it?" The biggest reason for his anger was that he would have to reapply for his driver's license, credit card, etc. I could see his feeling well, but what could I say? I could only apologize to him. It had taken two hours of our day. He

told me that he decided to stop the credit card. I went to check our car one last time. Suddenly, someone talked to me.

"Do you live in 114-9? I think I found your wallet."

Oh, my god! It was his wallet!



I hadn't talked with her before, but she was one of my neighbors. What a kind woman she is! Besides, it seemed that she tried to send his wallet to us, but we didn't notice that she came to our house. I expressed my sincere thanks to her. As soon as possible, I came back home and reported to my husband the news. I was so excited! I couldn't believe it yet! We visited her house soon, and we paid her with a present for her kindness.

We couldn't go to the bookstore and coffee shop, but I felt really relieved to have found his wallet, thanks to my neighbor.

Anyway, I think that I have to get a grip on myself next time.

Our Website

Visit the website for the Adult Learning Center! Included there you will see current and back issues of the *Multi-Cultural Brief*, the latest schedule of classes, and much, much more!

www.charlottesville-esl.org

A Call to Harris Teeter Management

By Akammu Matthew Olufemi (Nigeria)

Harris Teeter is one of the best chain supermarkets in the U.S. It was their watchword that attracted me the first day I entered it. Your neighborhood food market. There is a proverb which says, "When hunger is taken out of poverty, there is a way to prosperity."

The services at Harris Teeter are enormous. The way goods are set out is incomparable to others in such categories of service. One may not stop until he/she has walked around the store 360 degrees. The setting looks attractive.

The staff at Harris Teeter always dress beautifully in a uniform of double colors that is hard to describe. The staff look fresh and smart any time you see them.

The staff attitude toward work is more beautiful than their mode of dressing. Smiles are on their faces anytime one comes in contact with them. They are ever-ready to assist any time one calls on them. To Harris Teeter employees, according to my observations, the slogan, "The customer is king," is their key word.

The price offers at Harris Teeter are unbeatable compared with other chain supermarkets. The sales promotions every week are unbeatable. It tempts one always to spend the last cent in the hand.

The Harris Teeter at Barracks Road Shopping Complex is very accessible. Either if you ride in a commercial vehicle or a private car, you have no problem in locating the big supermarket.

One does not need to bother about heavy loads when buying in bulk. Carts can be found everywhere that is appropriate to see you through the task. This does not even include the different types of bags that are offered.

Visa, Mastercard, and debit cards are dealt with at

Harris Teeter. They also accept manufacturers' coupons.

However, there is something that is giving me concern. The management of this widely known company is rejecting "Women, Infant, and Children" (WIC) checks.

This has been a heavy load in the hearts of many of their very important customers, especially mine.

"Harris Teeter needs to show their love for expected babies, new babies, and women because all of these people in a country make a very significant part."

Harris Teeter needs to show its commitment the Charlottesville community. Harris Teeter needs to show its love for expected babies, new babies, and women because all of these people in a country make a very significant part.

Harris Teeter needs to consider the task their customers always face after buying needed goods from their store and still go to other ones all because WIC checks are not being honored.

Harris Teeter should always think that despite the fact that they have great numbers of customers now doesn't mean that customers are blind. Customers are looking for the cheapest prices and conveniences to make their shopping a very purposeful one.

I am hereby advising Harris Teeter management to consider accepting WIC checks to show their love for children, women, infants, and their numerous customers. If this could be done, the sky is the limit for Harris Teeter stores.

Editor's note: WIC is a service offered to women who are pregnant and/or have small children. There are 10 grocery stores in Charlottesville who accept WIC. For more information, call the Thomas Jefferson Health District Department of Health at 434-972-6206.

The Small Spider

By Tatjana Okuneva (Russia)

Do you know about the small spider? It is a very small bug who appears very suddenly. There is a Russian proverb that says a spider brings good news. I believed in this proverb until one event happened to me...

It was a very good international party. We gathered together to celebrate our teacher in a beautiful white house. There were Iranian, Russian, Peruvian, and Japanese students with their intelligent teacher. We ate delicious Iranian food, laughed, discussed the wedding of friends, and there was a lot of laughter. At last, it was time to go home. My fiancé drove there to take me home. On the way, we were very happy and excited, telling each other stories from the party. Suddenly,...

My fiancé noticed a small spider crawling along his arm. He held the steering wheel and could not brush it away. I decided to help him catch the spider. But the spider disappeared. We both looked around and down, trying to find where he went.

It lasted one second. But it was enough to see a glimpse of Death. I couldn't understand anything. I just felt a wave of heat, which shook me from one side to another. I saw something very white flash in front of my eyes. Something then continued to hit me. In fact, our small car collided into a big Jeep.

Finally, after our car stopped, I jumped from it, frightened for my hurting eye. I was in shock, which is why I forgot all the English that I knew. Shortly, there gathered many other drivers and cars with people from the fire department, as well as the police and rescue workers. A policeman came up to me and asked, "Are you okay, ma'am? Do you need to go to the hospital?" I forgot everything, and my fiancé became my interpreter. Later, they immobilized my head and body on a stretcher and carried me to the ambulance. I

could see the wide open Dark, Scary, Heaven and asked, "Why does this happen to me at the beginning of my life in a new country?"

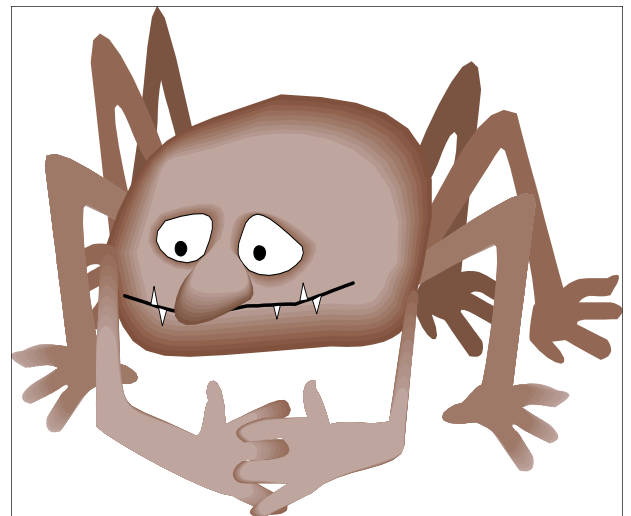
I wished someone would speak to me in Russian. Because of the shock, I forgot all English words. A nurse in the Emergency Room could speak a little Russian, and he helped me a lot. When they brought me to the Emergency Room, I could see a lot of injured people. It was horrible.

***"It lasted one second.
But it was enough to see
a glimpse of Death."***

We had lived not thinking about the meaning of life. We had thought only about earning money and worried about things that were not important. Every time we speed through life, we don't see the

value of our lives. We are given this life only once, and we must see the value in it. How wonderful it is to be alive. How wonderful it was to find I had no serious injuries or broken bones. In my opinion, my fiancé and I are lucky. We were kept healthy and alive wrapped in angels' wings.

People, please be careful with your health and your lives. Try to think about your environment and keep your attention on the road. Life is a gift from God. Enjoy it.



THE ADULT LEARNING CENTER IS MOVING!!!!

The Adult Learning Center is moving to a new location.

On June 22nd, 2007, we will close our doors and say good-bye to our wonderful home for the past 4 1/2 years at 1000 Preston Avenue.



Our new location will be in the Frank Ix Building at 935-A Second Street S.E., Charlottesville, VA 22902. Fall classes will begin September 10th, but all students must complete the assessment process first to determine which classes they will be attending. Assessments will be held in late August. For more information, call 434-245-2817.

ADULT LEARNING CENTER
CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOLS
ADULT ESL PROGRAM
935-A Second Street, SE.
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(434) 245-2817
[Http://www.charlottesville-esl.org](http://www.charlottesville-esl.org)
For School Closings: (434) 245-2401

