



The Parrot

Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, new Californians, and, well, anybody really...

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Parrot Pecks at Psych Prof Stewart

Parrot: You've been at ARC for a while, right? Tell me how you got here.

Stewart: I started working here in 1989 as a part-timer and I got one class to teach and then I got another one and then in 1992 a full-time position opened up; I applied for it and got it.

Parrot: How did you get interested in your area of expertise?



Dr. Mark Stewart

Stewart: In 1973, when I was seventeen years old, I was studying here and I took a psychology class. I really liked it and did well and I think that's the thing that got me into psychology. Then in my family my parents and brothers are highly-educated so it just kind of made sense to me to get a degree and I got into the field I like.

Continued on page 17

Your Language Shapes your Health & Spending?!
See Pages 10-11

"At its best, schooling can be about how to make a life, which is quite different from how to make a living."
Neil Postman

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'World's Most Traveled' Man, Mike Spencer Bown, Heads Home After 23-Year Journey

Should 44-year-old Mike Spencer Bown ever find himself portrayed in pop culture, the best analogue would likely be Dos Equis' (fictional) beer endorser, the "Most Interesting Man in the World."

His promo would read something like this: "He invented the term 'Wanderlust;' His Facebook profile reads like an "Indiana Jones" novel. The odometer that tracks his frequent flyer miles has rolled over -- five times. He



is... the World's Most Traveled Man." More than two decades ago, Bown left behind Calgary with a dream to see the world. Now, after 23 straight years of travel and ample time in every country on Earth, he's called it a wrap and returned to Canada. According to the Calgary Sun, that makes him "the most extensively traveled person in human history."

Continued on page 18

Inside this Issue

Immigration Effects... 2-3
Uniform Requirement 4
Window 5
Boys and Girls Together 6-7
How to Fail a Class 7
Linda and Me 8

Student Chirpings

Immigration Effects on Families

On August 2011, when I left the US embassy in Abu Dhabi, UAE, I was thinking about nothing except returning to Iran and doing the tasks that I had to do in the two months ahead. I had to empty my house, write a letter of resignation from work and follow up its process, sell the cars, and address many other headaches. Immigration to the USA was one of the biggest decisions in my life. It was, however, a very different one; I was not the only person who would deal with that; all of my family would be affected by this move. On October 11th, at the San Francisco airport, I was tired from a 20-hour direct flight, and also worried about the family's unclear future, which looked like the cloudy sky of San Francisco on that day. We needed time and money to make a home in the USA like our home in Iran; however, it still took time. A new place brought new friends, new ideas, and new habits to my family, and there have been several bad and good effects until now. I've met many immigrants and talked to them about immigration difficulties and opportunities since I came to the US. As a result, I've come to realize families are affected by the migration process in many ways, regardless of its cause. The immigration effects on family can be classified into three categories: social, cultural, and financial effects.

The first effect of immigration on families is related to social affairs. Family is the core base of society; however, in today's individualistic world, the traditional definition of family has changed to a new style family. When a family immigrates to another country, the changes may accelerate and the family can be affected more than usual in discrete manners. One way is that when a family immigrates to a new country, some family members may not be allowed to immigrate at

the same time. For example, based on USA immigration rules, children 21 or over are not allowed to immigrate with their parents, so they must stay in the home country. It is a big problem for many immigrant families I know; indeed, it had been a problem for my family too. When we immigrated to the USA, my son was 24 years old and he couldn't come to the U.S. with

us until he got his H1-B visa (work visa) later. It was a very difficult time for us when he was in Iran. I knew a family in the same situation whose 22-year-old daughter lives in Iran and the mother of the family must go to Iran every three months in order to see her daughter. In addition, one of our relatives in Canada has such a problem with her 18-year-old son. Because of the compulsory military service in Iran, a boy who is 15 or older is not allowed to leave the country and get a passport, except under special conditions. So, my cousin's son can't be with his parents in Canada. My cousin says, "It is my biggest problem. I can't stay in Iran while my husband and my daughters are in Canada. Also, I am not satisfied and relaxed when my son has to

stay alone in Iran." She is nervous, as I was when my son was in Iran. Another form of social problem occurs when the immigrants have insufficient finance to sponsor their family, so they have to live separately. There are many young Iranian boys and girls living in the USA or other parts of the world far from their parents. Three of my daughter's friends are good instances of this situation. At first, the whole family immigrated to the US together, but after several years, when the family faced financial difficulties, the parents returned to Iran and their young children stayed in Sacramento. Consequently, the family didn't remain united; it was divided into two parts, one part in the home country and one in the new country. Another change in family



life style is even worse. When a member of the family does not want to immigrate, it disrupts the family. For example, when my sister-in-law immigrated to Germany, her husband didn't want to leave Iran; he stayed there, and three years' later they divorced, despite having a teenage boy and a 7-year-old girl.

The second effect of immigration on family is cultural circumstances. Differences between cultural and moral values in the original country and the new country sometimes create "culture shock" for immigrants. For instance, there are many differences between Iranian and American culture and sub-cultures regarding friendship, clothing, family customs, and social behaviors. Although some of these parameters are trivial, I know many Iranians who cannot bear this challenge. They lived in the US for a couple of years and after the culture shock, in particular when they have seen how their children are influenced by the new culture, many of them have returned to Iran. This has happened especially when they were aged or strongly religious. Another cultural issue could be seen when the second generation of immigrants who reside in the new country begins to create a new family life. It is a challenging issue between parents and children, especially if they are married to a person from another ethnic group. My physician was worried when she talked about her daughter's fiancé. She said, "He is Indian, and there are many differences between us. We are from Russia, and we don't have any similarities." With a nervous smile she continued, "My daughter has white skin and he has dark! How could it be possible?" These kinds of families will experience another difficulty: a bicultural family. They will be influenced by both the original cultural customs and the new ones; however, it is also different for both parties. For instance, my niece is married to an American and they are a gorgeous couple. Both of them try to learn their mate's family customs, yet I have sometimes seen how difficult it is for them and their parents.

The last, but not the least, impact of immigration on family deals with financial difficulties. Except the immigrants who have a work visa or an "investment visa", obtaining a proper job in the destination country is usually very difficult for newcomers. Employment in the new country often requires fluency in language. Sometimes the immigrants who have a bachelor's degree or higher can easily find a job if their language skill is good enough, but many of them can't find a proper job because of the lack of this skill. For example, there

are many people in ESL classes who are engineers, lawyers, chemists, etc., and they are unemployed; there are not proper jobs for them. Therefore, some of them don't work and are dependent on other family members, while they might have an outstanding job in their original country. For example, I don't work in the USA despite my educational level and professional background. Initially, I need to improve my English language skill. Another instance is a 57-year-old lady whom I met in the grammar class last semester. Despite having a M.S. degree in physics, she was unemployed and depends on her son. Professionals may work as cashiers, dishwashers, servants, etc. in restaurants, department stores and so on if they want to be independent, and keep their authority and parental rights in the family. One of my husband's friends in Sacramento is an engineer with 23 years' experience in his background, but in order to earn money he mows lawns and cleans the homes of other Iranians. One of my Ukrainian friends has a Ph.D., but she works at Wal-Mart. The other impact of financial problems comes up when the immigrants are neither professional nor have any sort of financial support in their homeland. In those cases, wages are insufficient to support the family and they live in poor conditions; they depend on social and human services program such as the welfare program in the USA.

In summing up, people leave their original country for many reasons and immigrate to another country with new social rules and a new culture. They will adapt to the new situation through their daily lives. However, in the migration process the family will be affected by many factors. The most important and common immigration effects on family, regardless of the ethnic group, are related to social, cultural, and financial affairs. Saving unity among the members of a family, resolving the cultural conflicts between generations and between the old and new culture, along with overcoming financial problems are the keys to the immigrant families' success. Immigrants are almost always looking for a better life, a dream that becomes reality, easy or hard, most of the time. In this process, when we, as immigrants, are disappointed and feel defeated, all clouds will be gone away and the sun will shine if we look, carefully, at American pioneer history.

Fariba Darvishi
ESLW50

Uniforms – Back to Schools!

"It's a great luxury to be out of style, to be above it, to be unique, to be you..." (Larissa Rubalskaya, Russian poetess) About thirty years ago almost each country associated school with a uniform. In my country, Russia, wearing school uniforms was cancelled during the revolutionary nineties. This action has probably had some advantages, but a decade later, many schools started returning to obligatory uniforms. It was not just an act of nostalgia, but awareness of the fact that the uniform is an essential part of the school process. There are three reasons why, as I strongly believe, high schools should require uniforms.

First, high schools should require uniforms to minimize the social discriminations among students. Not every student can afford expensive clothes for school. A uniform helps parents save money on clothes in many cases. Three or four sets of a uniform might be enough for the whole school year. Adolescence is a period when children are eager to be adult, look for their own style, and not really care about the feelings of people around them. Some high school students wear new clothes every day, and school becomes a fashion parade where students go, not to learn, but to show off their garments. These students try to get noticed through their clothes and wealth while others might feel embarrassed or envious because their parents can't afford such an expensive wardrobe for their children. Maybe, it's not so clearly expressed in the United States, but in many other countries it's very true. When I was in high school, my family, as were many others in my town, was having very hard times, and I didn't have any new clothes for years. Of course, it taught me creativity when I fitted father's old jeans or mom's blouse to my size, but it was hard sometimes when teachers required a certain dress-code for some school occasions, and I had nothing to choose from. One of my classmates, Natalie, always wore something new and expensive. Everybody knew that her mother could afford it through the many bribes she took at her work, but children don't care about that; they saw nice new clothes and felt embarrassed they didn't have anything similar. The school uniform balances the psychological atmosphere in class, helps stu-

dents feel comfortable and confident, and makes school an educational institution, not a fashion podium.

The next reason why high schools should require uniforms is to prevent sexual promiscuity among high school students. Girls often try to attract the attention of the opposite gender with sexual clothes. They aren't grown up enough to be women and take responsibilities for their actions, but just try to raise their self-esteem through interested boys' gazes. It often has an opposite result; very soon they realize that nobody needs them as interesting persons, but just as objects of sexual satisfaction. It destroys the young gentle souls and brings some psychological problems in their future lives. Boys, in their

turn, also have a lot of trouble trying to concentrate on algorithms among semi-naked, beautiful elements of young women's bodies. Girls' revealing clothes draw away some boys' and even teachers' attention from the studying process. From my point of view, the uniform also helps decrease the number of acts of sexual violence and teenage pregnancies in high schools. Of course, no uniform can displace parenting and moral purity, but, on the other hand, high school students spend the largest part of the day at school

learning to be adult with all its "side effects". The uniform is students' "business clothes" and it creates a business atmosphere in class. A bank worker can't come to work in pajamas. It's for sleep. Sport clothes are for sport, etc. Ergo, I think the uniform is a very useful and essential part of the educational process.

Finally, and most important, I believe high schools should require uniforms to help students develop their personalities. We often forget about this role of school, but, in my opinion, it's the most important one; teenagers should find their ways in this world and understand who they are and what they want in their lives. Of course, the uniform teaches humility; students can't express their tastes and styles in fashion and can't show off their lithe figures, and the only thing left for them to show off is their intelligence. Going back to "poor" rich Natalie, I remember the day she came to school in an amazing red suit. I admired



it during the whole school day; it fit perfectly, and she looked like a model from a glamor magazine. However, I never saw her in that suit again because her “best”, envious friend told her that she looked fat in it. Poor Natalie didn’t have her own opinion and couldn’t trust anything, but someone else’s comments. The further, the worse. Now she’s sitting in a “golden cage” which her mom bought for her new family, really fat now, depressed, and full of fears that her husband might leave her. Her mom visits her several times a week, makes food, cleans her house, and plays with her child. “Poor” rich Natalie always wanted to display herself, but she never learned to live and express her personality. I believe the uniform must be a part of the educational process. It doesn’t solve all school problems but it really helps students concentrate on their studying and become complete persons. Even-

tually, all famous people have been famous not because of what they wore, but because of what they thought, said, and did.

Summing up, I’m aware most high school students won’t be ecstatic about wearing a uniform, but they also prefer fast food to veggies and computer games to museums. We should provide a healthy atmosphere to our children for developing and studying until they can make their own decisions and take responsibilities for their actions. The uniform helps decrease the social disparity, prevents sexual promiscuity among high school students, and helps them express themselves in a proper way.

Svetlana Guseva
ESLW50

Memorable Window

Grandmother’s house always reminds us of our sweet childhood days. It is very important to spend time with grandparents in my country Iran. It is in our culture, like respect for the oldest people. I can’t remember everything in my childhood, but I always have a picture in my mind of a colorful window in the front of the living room in my grandmother’s house.

I remember her house was on an old street with many trees such as apple, oak, and pine trees in downtown Tehran. The old house in Tehran was not located very near the center. The houses had big yards at that time. You could see the mountains in front of you. They were not very far. My grandmother’s house had many trees and flowers like yellow tulips, sunflowers and red roses in the yard and also big windows. However, one of them was very special.

When I was six years old, I went to my grandmother’s house every other day with my parents. In the living room there was a big colorful window made of wood and colored glass. The frame was a big wood rectangle divided into small rectangles covered in glass. There was also a big wooden arch on the top, also divided into small wooden parts. In Iran we called these types of windows “Orssi”. Inside of the rectangle and arch there were many



pieces of blue, yellow, and red glass together to form the shapes of star and flowers. That is a symbol of traditional architecture in Iran. When I was in my grandma’s house, I always liked to touch the glass with closed eyes and guess what color it was. The glass was very polished and soft. The window was more beautiful than ever when the sunlight came into the room. It passed through the glass and shone on the floor. It was like she had a beautiful carpet

in the living room made of light. My father told me that it was light dancing on the wood and glass.

It was amazing when the sun was in the sky. I loved to wear a white dress when I went there, because I liked to see the colors on my dress when the colored lights shone. It was like a rainbow. In the middle, the colors were sharp, but in the corners it

was dark and the colors joined together. It was amazing.

I can imagine that 50 years ago my young grandma with long black hair and nice brown eyes watched through the window as her children were playing outside. I hope I have a chance to once again spend one sunny afternoon in that amazing room and see the colors if I ever return to Iran.

Nasim Ashratirad
ESLW50

The Schools for Boys and Girls Question

Almost all our sweet childhood memories are linked with a time when we were schoolchildren and when we were at school. School is the first institution that gives us education, teaches us how to behave in groups, and provides some moral principles that control or influence a person's behavior. Can you imagine your school without people of the opposite gender? The issue is separate schools. Is it better for boys and girls to attend separate schools or be educated together? Boys and girls should be educated together for three reasons.

The first reason to educate boys and girls together is learning social skills. When people do some activities together, they consider themselves a group: a piece of society. This applies to kids or teenagers as well. They learn how to respect each other, communicate politely, cooperate, work on a team, and help each other. If school children learn only with kids of their gender, they will develop these skills only with people of their gender. They will not know how to deal with people of the opposite gender. The education of boys and girls together helps in their future social life.

The second reason for educating boys and girls together is developing stronger self-esteem. When schoolchildren are in an environment of kids of the same gender, envy and spite often occur. There are different causes of envy, for example, noticing that somebody is more beautiful or more handsome, wealthier or even smarter. These teenagers begin to hurt morally or physically a person who they think has advantages over them. In addition, teenagers like to bully kids of the same gender who are weaker and different from them. As a result, victims begin to underestimate themselves, and that may have a disastrous influence on them; however, compliments from teenagers of the other sex work like a magic wand and raise self-

esteem. Competition between girls and boys, for example in solving math problems or in running, helps, especially girls, perceive themselves differently and better as well. Strong or high self-esteem helps people to achieve a lot of things in their lives. For example, when I was a schoolgirl, I was good in math. I liked to get higher grades on math tests than boys got. I felt that I won the competition with boys who are considered to have a natural ability for math. As a result, I had very high self-esteem and was the best math student. Thus, the company of teenagers of the opposite gender improves kids' self-esteem.

The last, but not least, reason to educate boys and girls together is lessening of the gender gap. Girls and boys

as well as women and men have different abilities and ideas based on their different physiology and their direct vocation. Girls or women are considered to know how to cook, sew, take care of kids, and run housekeeping. Boys or men, on

the other hand, are considered to know how to earn money, run businesses and management, build, and repair things. When boys and girls learn together, they communicate, find out something new for themselves from each other, and, as a result, their ideas and principles are changed. We can see these changes nowadays in comparison to the past. Now women can run businesses successfully, and men, besides their work, can help their wives with housekeeping very well. Thus, when boys and girls study together, differences between their abilities and ideas lessen and they become co-workers.

Supporters of separate schools say that the isolation of boys from girls and vice versa lessens the chance of them becoming sexually active too early. I'm sure that keeping girls and boys apart at school doesn't lessen the cases of early sexual life because there are a lot of



kids of the opposite gender outside of school. The issue about sexual life has to be discussed only between parents and their children. Parents' communication with their children on sexual issues and their explanations of the negative sides of early sexual life can lessen the chance that their children begin an early sexual life. Therefore, the separation of boys from girls and vice versa doesn't help in decreasing the number of cases in which teenagers begin early sexual activity.

In conclusion, there are many benefits of educating boys and girls together. Common schools for all genders prepare schoolchildren to communicate and live with all kinds of people; they help children develop the feeling of being satisfied with themselves and learn everything necessary for life and work. Thus, schools should be integrated for boys and girls in order to prepare teenagers thoroughly for their future.

*Olga Cuzeac
ESLW310*

How to Fail a College Class

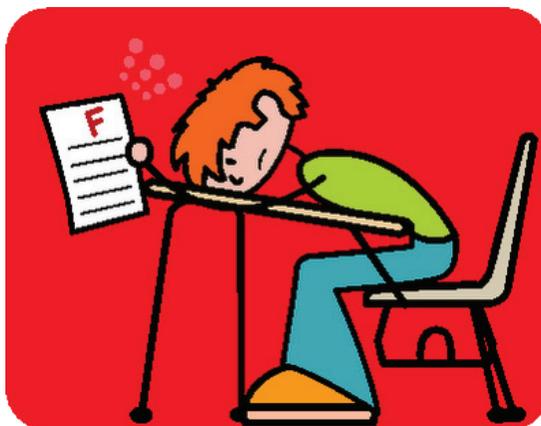
Have you ever wondered how to fail a class at the college level in a unique way? Maybe you are thinking to fail a class just for fun or a little laugh you can tell your friends in the future. Or maybe you want to fail a class because you don't like the professor or instructor. Well, I have three steps you may want to follow in order to fail a college class: forget work, lay off the attendance, and play pranks.

The first step on the list is to forget work and assignments your professor has given. This step is the most common step students take when they don't care about their grades. Unlike other students, in order to fail a class with this step, I'd bring it to a whole new level. For example, I'd never do work, in-class work or out-of-class tests assigned. This step may sound weak and easy to do, and in fact, it is. But it may take you the whole semester.

Next, lay off on attendance. This step is quite easy and fast to fail a class. For example, come late and never be present on test days. This step has no weakness because most classes in every college nowadays have a limit of unexcused absences, although it may not work if you have a teacher that doesn't care about attendance.

Finally, the step that I have been waiting to tell: play pranks on your professor or instructor. In order to complete this step, you don't need anything special to put your professor into the hospital. One example is to put

chewed gum on your professor's chair without anyone noticing, especially when he/she is wearing his/her favorite/ expensive looking outfit. Do this once in a while. On another day, write on the whole white board saying, "You're lame" or "This class is lame". This step might make your professor really angry because he/she may not know who did it. Another example would be noticeable to your professor. While the professor is giving a lecture or instructions, copy and say the exact same words he/she said in a funny voice. Do this in every class meeting until he/she has had enough of you and decides to drop you from class. I remember when I was in high school; I was quite a rebel. I had been sent to the principal's office quite a few times. One of the reasons was copying and saying whatever the teacher said. It sounded rude, but hey, it worked! When your professor decides to drop you, at that



exact same words he/she said in a funny voice. Do this in every class meeting until he/she has had enough of you and decides to drop you from class. I remember when I was in high school; I was quite a rebel. I had been sent to the principal's office quite a few times. One of the reasons was copying and saying whatever the teacher said. It sounded rude, but hey, it worked! When your professor decides to drop you, at that

exact moment, tell him/her that you are the one who put gum on his/her chair.

Failing a class may be hard and a waste of time. When you like the class and professor, it is more fun to fail the class if you are doing it in such a unique way: forget to work, lay off the attendance, and play pranks on your professor. By the end of your class, you will walk out of the class with pride. Not only pride, you will have a great story you can tell to your friends in the future. Good luck failing!

*Hansgemar Sitomeang
ESL W50*

My Dog Linda And Me

If you ask someone about their similarities to animals, maybe they will think you are kidding. It is because people are the only creatures that have intellect. However, some animals are very intelligent too. Although animals are not as intelligent as people, we can find some points to compare and/or contrast between people and animals. I never thought that I would compare myself to any type of animal. I had a dog when I lived in Armenia. She was a big dog. Her name was Linda. She had white and soft fur. My father brought her to our family when she was only three months old. Until now she lives with my family in Armenia. She is very nice to all my family members and she protects my father's house at nights. Initially, when I compared myself to my dog Linda, I saw that there was nothing similar: I am a person and she is a dog. However, while there are obvious differences between my dog Linda and me, there are also some striking similarities.

The first similarity between my dog and me is that both of us like to have fun. I like to play with children. In my father's house my sisters and I always went outside and played, ran after each other, and did very crazy things. My dog Linda likes to do that too. Whenever we went outside, she saw us and ran toward us to play with us. She liked when I ran and she chased me. One time, when she was still a little small, she ran out of the yard. It was winter and the snow was above our ankles. My father and my sister were wearing slippers. They tried to catch her to bring her back home, but Linda thought they were playing and didn't want to obey them. It took almost 30 minutes to catch her. It was very funny.

The second similarity between my dog Linda and me is loyalty. I am very loyal to my friends and rela-

tives. I never forget my friends, and Linda never does either. Two years ago I visited my family in Armenia. I thought maybe Linda would not remember me. However, she remembered me even after four years. I was shocked. In addition I see a similarity between us in that we are loyal to our bosses. I am not working now so I don't have a boss to be loyal to. However, when I was in Armenia, I worked there, and I was loyal to my boss, as she always told me. Linda is loyal too. Although she loves all my family members, she is especially loyal to my father, who brought her to our family.



The third similarity is that neither of us, my dog Linda and I, likes cats and rats. I hate rats. If I see a rat running under my feet or around me, I scream until I pass out. Linda hates them too. However, she is not afraid of them. On the contrary, she catches them and kills them.

After that she brings the rat and puts it in front of my father's feet very proudly. Like me, Linda doesn't like cats either. I don't like cats, not because they are not good animals, but because I don't see them as good house pets or friends. However Linda hates them. Whenever a cat walks around our house, even if Linda can't see it, she senses it and starts to bark very loudly.

To conclude, I see some similarities between my dog Linda and me. We are similar because both of us like to have fun, we are loyal to our friends and bosses, and neither of us likes cats and rats. This can be really very strange to your ears. Sometimes I see it as strange too. However, I love my dog Linda so much and I miss her.

Ani Margaryan

Amazing America

When I lived in Russia, I thought that America was a paradise where all dreams come true, where there are not any problems, where you can earn good money with ease, and that there is no place better than America. When I came to the USA, I was surprised. The USA was better than I had imagined! My first impression was, "Oh my goodness! What wonderful roads without any holes! What beautiful, picturesque streets without any garbage! What kind and affable people here!". Everything here seemed like in the American movies. However, after the lapse of time, I discovered that the USA is more different than I imagined. There are a lot of differences between my old thoughts about the USA and my current thoughts, but three of them stand out.

The first difference between my old and current thoughts about the USA is how Americans look. I thought that all people wore beautiful, elegant, fashionable clothes, and look perfect, like all American celebrities. However, I was surprised that most Americans don't even care how they look. They can go to a shop or to a doctor's appointment in their pajamas and slippers. They can wear t-shirts and shorts in winter during bad weather. They can wear funny clothes, and nobody even pays attention. However, one category of people impressed me most of all. They are old American ladies and gentlemen. I never expected that they would look so amazing! They wear elegant clothes, have fabulous hairstyles, have manicures, and have pedicures. They eat healthy food, travel, exercise and really take care of themselves.

The next difference between my old and current thoughts about the USA is the importance of American education. I thought that it was very easy to earn good money in the USA without any education. However, if you want to earn good money, you have to have good education or you should be very smart and have your own business. For example, if you earn eight dollars per hour (it's about one thousand per month), it's



not enough to live on in the USA because you have to pay for your rent, for gas, for the phone, and for all your bills. Of course, a lot of people work for cash and earn good money without any education, but there is another problem; it's the lack of insurance. When my husband came to the USA from Ukraine, he earned only twelve dollars per hour without any insurance. Then he decided to go to electrician's school. After five years he graduated, and now he has a wonderful high-salaried job with good insurance for our whole family.

The last difference between my old and current thoughts about the USA is the education system. I thought that the American education system would be very hard and to get an education impossible here

for most immigrants. However, I was surprised that not only is it possible, but the American education system is very interesting! To study here is not difficult if you do all your homework and don't miss your classes. It was unusual for me that it doesn't matter how old you are, you can study at any age (even if you are eighty, you can graduate

from Harvard!). Now I study at ARC, and every day I see a lot of older men and women who study here. In my opinion, it's amazing that the government gives immigrants this wonderful opportunity to learn in different programs of study, which helps people to find high-salaried jobs in the future.

There are a lot of differences between my old thoughts about the USA and my current thoughts; however, three of them impressed me most of all. First, it was very strange for me how people look here. Second, I was surprised that American education plays a very big role if you want to earn good money and have insurance. Lastly, the American education system is very interesting here, and any immigrant can get a good education.

Olga Strizheus
ESL W50

Nestscape -- Articles from The Web

How Your Native Language Shapes Your Health and Spending Habits

Do you prefer to save up your money for the future, or splurge on something you want right now? Do you like to hit the gym and go for a jog, or would you rather kick back and relax? Whatever your choices, we tend to believe that these are our decisions to make: it's totally up to us, and all we have to do is choose differently if we want.

Yet a growing body of research shows that we may not always have as much control as we think we do. Scientists have long predicted that the very language we speak can influence or even limit how we think -- and

how we behave. The words and grammatical structures of our languages might train us to think in quite different patterns. One of the earliest examples of this effect is how we see colors. Remarkable as it may seem, not all people interpret colors in the same way - because they don't have the same words for these colors. Some languages, like Vietnamese, use the same word for blue and green; other languages like Russian have no word for blue at all, and instead require choosing between the words for light blue or dark blue.

When your language forces you to pay attention to shades of blue - or lets you ignore the difference between two colors - this can train your brain to be more or less proficient at categorizing those colors. The science supports this: babies who haven't yet learned Russian are no better at telling apart shades of blue than any other babies, but when these children do learn Russian, they can distinguish light blue and dark blue more accurately than kids who

speak English. The skills we pick up from our languages can be even more useful than that. Certain Aboriginal tribes in Australia speak Kuuk Thaayorre, a language with no words for directions like "left" and "right" relative to the way they're facing. Instead, they only have words for north, south, east and west, and these words are

used in place of left and right. This means that, to describe directions, they must always keep an internal compass: if they want to talk about what we call left and right, they need to remember where north

is. As it turns out, that's exactly what they do. Even when they're led through unfamiliar buildings with no windows, they can still accurately point to north.

If a simple difference in language can impart such an ability, how else might vocabulary and grammar affect the way we behave? As Yale economist Keith Chen recently discovered, the impact on our lives can be extraordinary. Professor Chen's key insight was that, just as some languages may guide how we think about colors or directions, all languages fall into two distinct categories based on their grammar for referring to future events. While some require their speakers to indicate that they're explicitly talking about something in the future, other languages force people to talk about the future in the same way as they do the present, using the same grammar for both.

For instance, English is known as a "futured" language - it makes us talk about the present and the



future differently. We can say “it is cold today”, but if we’re referring to tomorrow’s weather, we have to say “it will be cold tomorrow.” Not all languages make this distinction: Finnish encourages its speakers to use a grammar akin to saying “today be cold” or “tomorrow be cold”, and they can say “be cold” whether they’re talking about the present or the future.

When people talk about the present and future in the same way, might they also think of them as being the same in certain ways? And what would that mean for how they behave? Chen theorized that a futureless language might lead its speakers to treat the future as being on an even footing with immediate, present-day matters, but a futured language suggests that long-term concerns can be seen as something separate and more distant from right now. Those who consider the future to be far-off and less important might not be as willing to endure present-day tradeoffs for the sake of their future well-being.

Compiling a number of surveys from around the world, Chen examined several metrics of how strongly people focus on the future: their spending habits, their retirement savings, and even how healthy they are. The surveys spanned 76 developed and developing nations on five continents, ranging from Africa to Europe to Asia to the Americas. With demographic information about the respondents’ age, gender, marital status, income, education level, children, and religion, Chen was able to make one-to-one comparisons of nearly identical households that differed in only one respect: their primary language.

What Chen found was remarkable. Out of all of these features, one stood out as the single strongest predictor of a person’s financial responsibility - whether their language was futured or futureless. Futured language speakers, presumably seeing the future as distant and less important, were only 69 percent as likely to save money as futureless language speakers. Even after Chen controlled for their countries’ GDP, unemployment, growth rate and interest rate, their language remained the biggest influence on their fiscal behavior.

This effect was as substantial in Africa as it was in

Europe - first-world or third-world, the trend is consistent across all continents. Even within the same country, there was an enormous difference: in Switzerland, speakers of German, French and Italian live next door to each other, but those who spoke French or Italian were only 36 percent as likely to save money as their German neighbors.

This isn’t just a matter of going out to eat more or less often, or springing for a new TV. These habits have a massive lifetime impact. Futured language speakers have, on average, 39 percent fewer retirement assets saved up than their futureless counterparts. The effect is even seen on the scale of entire nations: countries where a futureless language dominates saved 6 percent more of their GDP each year, making for quite a surplus - or for futured-language nations, a deficit.

Further supporting Chen’s theory, this pattern of future-oriented thinking repeated itself in various measures of health, and the difference is striking. Overall, futured language speakers were 29 percent less likely to exercise, 13 percent more likely to be obese, and 24 percent more likely to smoke. Their peak expiratory flow, a measure of how well they can breathe, was on average 16 fewer liters per minute. They were also less likely to have used condoms or birth control. By almost all measures of responsibility, futureless language speakers came out ahead: keeping the future in mind was clearly associated with forward-thinking behavior and planning.

Language inescapably saturates our lives; it is what enables us to reach the heights of human achievement, serving as the tool with which we think and express ourselves and spread ideas. Yet just as we must learn a language, it seems the language itself may train us: to focus on one area of life and disregard another, to acquire and practice a new skill while putting others on the back burner, to prioritize the present or prepare for our future. As we’ve now found, our language is much more than just the way we talk. It’s the way we spend and save, the way we eat and breathe, and even the way we live and die.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/annabelle-buggle/native-language-behavior_b_3900855.html

International Women's Day: March 8th!



International Women's Day History

International Women's Day celebrates and acknowledges the achievements of women. It also seeks to encourage and support women's equality. Organizations use this day to educate and bring awareness to the plight of women around the world; whether they be economic, human rights related, or political in nature. What started as a Socialist party initiative is now a recognized holiday, support by the United Nations. It is celebrated every year on March 8th globally.

International Women's Day Facts & Quotes

- There is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, cultures and communities: violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable. - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.
- The Socialist Party of America designated February 28, 1909 as National Women's Day. It was celebrated on this day until 1913 when it was moved to March 8th globally.
- On the eve of World War I, Russian women and women all across Europe celebrated the holiday by protesting the war and campaigning for peace.

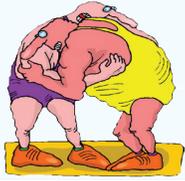
- On this day, the US Dept. of State and the First Lady award the International Women of Courage Awards.
- I am an example of what is possible when girls from the very beginning of their lives are loved and nurtured by people around them. I was surrounded by extraordinary women in my life who taught me about quiet strength and dignity. Michelle Obama

International Women's Day Top Events and Things to Do

- Organize a sporting event for women. Women that play sports are less likely to endure abuse.
- If you're a woman, try learning a chore that is typically done by men. Such a chore may be: changing the oil on your car, mowing the lawn, painting, and any home improvement project.
- Volunteer in your community to become a mentor to young girls and teenagers.
- Get together with your women friends and celebrate each other with a "Girl's Night Out."
- Let the women in your life know how much you appreciate their accomplishments.

<http://www.wincalendar.com/International-Womens-Day>

Parrot Warbling



Grappling with Grammar

Future with Going to

Form

This form is composed of three elements: the appropriate form of the verb 'to be' + *going to* + the infinitive of the main verb:

| Subject | to be | going to | infinitive |
|---------|-------|----------|------------|
| She | is | going to | leave |

Function

The use of '*going to*' to refer to future events suggests a very strong association with the present. The time is not important - it is later than now, but the attitude is that the event depends on a present situation, that we know about. So it is used:

1. To refer to our plans and intentions.
2. To make predictions based on present evidence.

Plans and Intentions:

- *Is Freddy going to buy a new car soon?*
- *Are John and Pam going to visit Milan when they are in Italy?*
- *I think Nigel and Mary are going to have a party next week.*

Predictions based on present evidence:

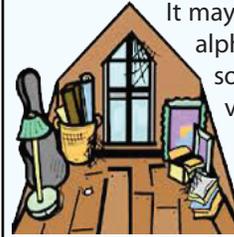
- *There's going to be a terrible accident!*
- *He's going to be a brilliant politician.*
- *I'm going to have terrible indigestion.*

NOTE: It is unusual to say '*I'm going to go to...*' Instead, we use '*going to*' + a place or event.

http://www.edufind.com/english/grammar/future_going_to.php

Idiom-Attic

Easy as ABC



It may not be easy for everyone to learn the alphabet but this idiom says it is. When something is (*as*) *easy/simple as ABC* it's very easy. "*That was an easy examination. It was simple as ABC.*" "*Who said sign painting was difficult ?*" Rubin smiled. "*I found it as easy as ABC.*"

Beak Speak

Learn English Pronunciation

(continued from Parrot 78)

Regarding Vowels

A - Before two consonants, 'a' is pronounced as in sand. This also applies when it appears before a single consonant at the end of a word, as in fan.

Before a single consonant followed by a vowel, 'a' is usually pronounced as in ate (the sound is ey).

Before 'l' and after 'q' and 'w', 'a' is usually pronounced as in call (the sound is like 'aw'). Other examples are squash and wall.

E - Before two consonants and before a single consonant at the end of a word, 'e' is usually pronounced as in desk or ten. This also applies when 'e' appears before a single consonant followed by a vowel (ever), although sometimes 'e' is pronounced 'ee' in such cases, as in even.

At the end of a word, 'e' is usually silent, as in ate, fate, etc; however, at the end of very short words, 'e' usually takes on the sound 'ee', as in be.

I - Before two consonants and before a single consonant at the end of a word, 'i' is usually pronounced as in fit or fill. However, in some cases, before two consonants, 'i' takes on the 'ai' sound (rhymes with eye). For example, wild.

Before a single consonant followed by a vowel, 'i' generally takes on the 'ai' sound, as in eye and tire.

O - Before two consonants in some words and before a single consonant at the end of a word, 'o' takes on the sound 'aw', as in rock and not.

In other words, it is pronounced 'oh' when it appears before two consonants, as in bolt.

The same applies when it precedes a single consonant followed by a vowel.

U - Before two consonants and before a consonant at the end of a word, 'u' usually takes on either the short 'oo' sound, as in pull and put, or the blunt 'uh', as in duck and jut.

Before a single consonant followed by a vowel, 'u' takes on the long 'oo' sound, as in June.

<http://www.englishleap.com>



Some More Parrot Fun Stuff

Refrigerator Wordsearch

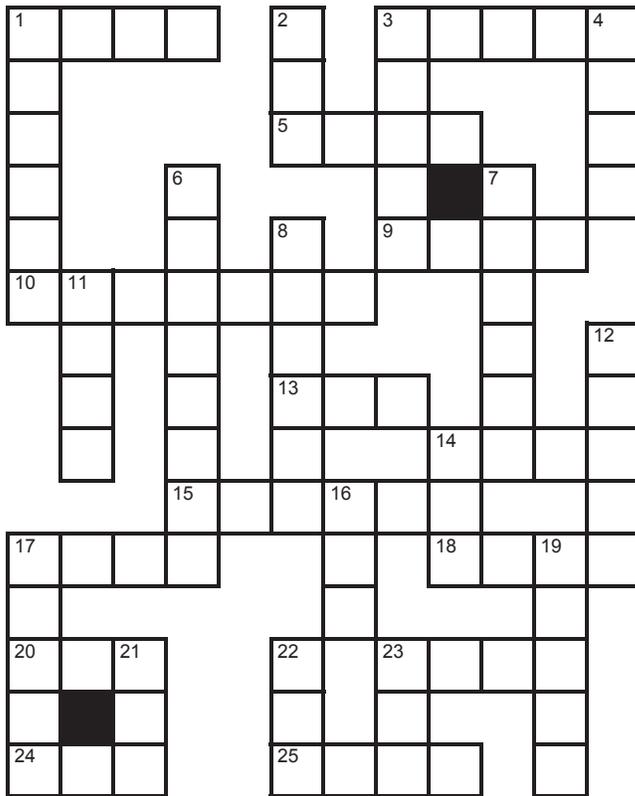
Find and circle all of the refrigerator items that are hidden in the grid.

The remaining letters spell an additional item found in many refrigerators.



| | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| APPLES | DRAWERS | LETTUCE | PEAS |
| BACON | DRINKS | LIGHTBULB | POULTRY |
| BANANAS | EGGS | MAGNETS | PRODUCE |
| BREAD | GRAPES | MAPLE SYRUP | SHELVES |
| BROCCOLI | ICE CUBES | MAYONNAISE | SPINACH |
| BUTTER | JAM | MEAT | STRAWBERRIES |
| CAKE | JUICES | MILK | WATER |
| CARROTS | KETCHUP | MUSTARD | YOGURT |
| CHEESE | LEFTOVERS | OLIVES | |
| COLD | LEMONS | ORANGES | |

Word Skills



Across

- 1 A farm animal that rhymes with boat. (4)
- 3 Another word for sniff. (5)
- 5 A forest animal that rhymes with here. (4)
- 9 A fruit that rhymes with hair. (4)
- 10 The opposite of deep. (7)
- 13 A drink that rhymes with sea. (3)
- 14 The opposite of soft. (4)
- 15 Another word for easy. (6)
- 17 An animal that rhymes with dish. (4)
- 18 The opposite of far. (4)
- 20 The opposite of young. (3)
- 23 Another word for jump. (4)
- 24 Another word for pull. (3)
- 25 The opposite of up. (4)

Down

- 1 A kind of fruit that begins with G. (6)
- 2 Another word for angry. (3)
- 3 A farm animal that rhymes with sleep. (5)
- 4 The opposite of first. (4)
- 6 A kind of fish that begins with G. (8)
- 7 A kind of fruit that begins with B. (6)
- 8 The opposite of top. (6)
- 11 Another way to say 'very big.' (4)
- 12 The opposite of over. (5)
- 14 A farm animal that rhymes with pen. (3)
- 16 A farm animal that rhymes with wig. (3)
- 17 The antonym of back. (5)
- 19 A kind of fruit that begins with A. (5)
- 21 A pet that rhymes with log. (3)
- 22 The antonym of good. (3)
- 23 The opposite of high. (3)



When Flowers Wake Each Morning

When flowers wake each morning
they don't have to make their beds.
And lettuce leaves aren't told to comb
the hair upon their heads.

You'd never tell asparagus
it shouldn't play with spears.
You'd never ask a stalk of corn
to wash behind its ears.

A mushroom doesn't have to
clean its room, and you'll agree
a tree won't have to study hard
to learn geometry.

I guess it should be obvious
from listening to my rant.
I'm tired of being a person;
I would rather be a plant.

Kenn Nesbitt

Rigoberto's Riddles

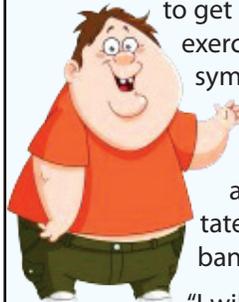
When one does not know what it is,
then it is something; but when one
knows what it is, then it is nothing.

A riddle



Silly Vasily's Chuckle Chamber

"OK, everyone," said the the instructor at the birthing class trying to get everyone's attention. "We are going to do an exercise now, whose purpose is to help the men sympathize with their partners."



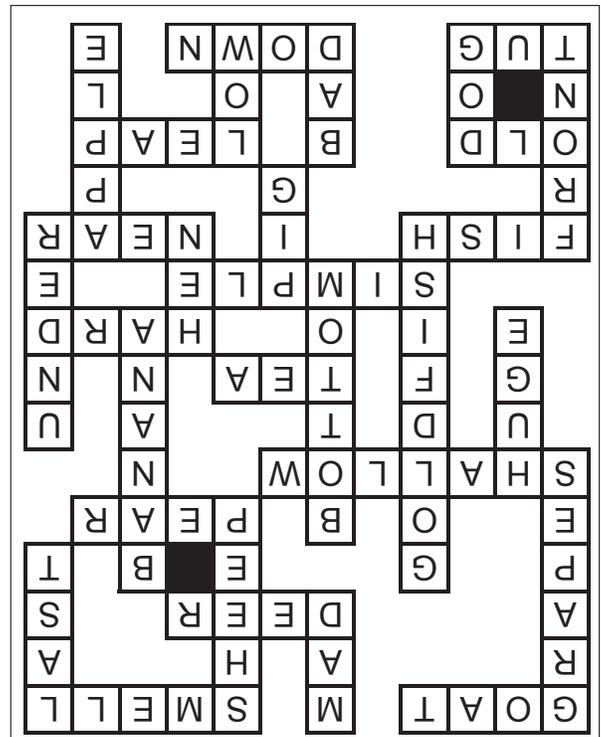
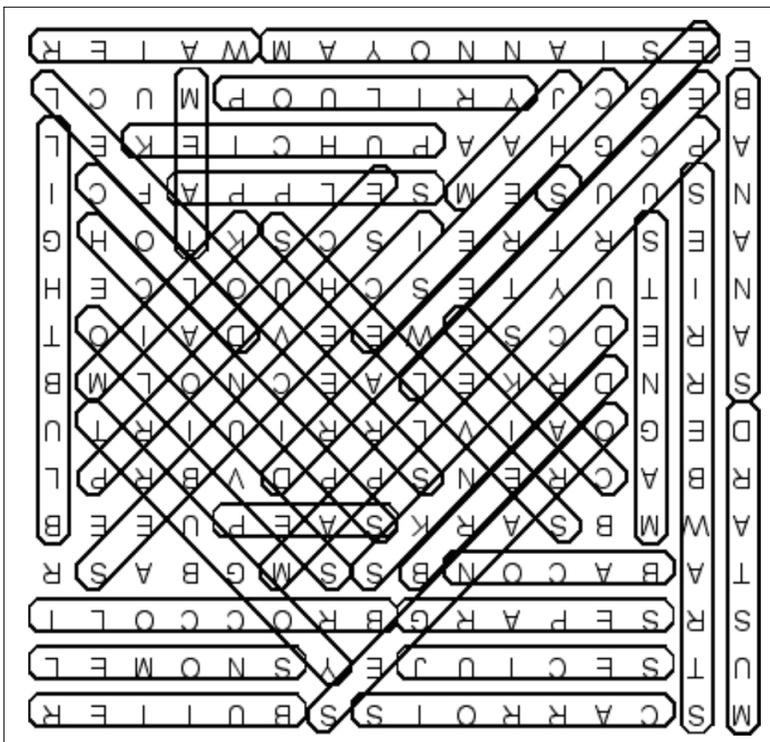
"We have here what's called a pregnancy suit," said the woman instructor, holding up an artificial stomach with a strap. "This imitates the feeling of being pregnant." Which husband volunteers to be the first one to try it on?"

"I will" said one man, taking the suit and trying it on. "This isn't too bad," said the man, walking around.

"I think I could get used to this." "OK", said the instructor, smiling, "now I would like you to bend down and pick up my pen from the floor."

"You want me to pick it up?" the husband said hesitantly, "just as I would if I was pregnant?" "Yes!" said the instructor.

"Honey," said the man turning to his spouse, "Do you mind picking up that pen for me?"



Prof. Stewart

Continued from page 1.

Parrot: How did you get into the teaching field? If you had to give up teaching, what other occupation would be appealing to you?

Stewart: I got into teaching because with a PhD in psychology, most of the jobs available for me were to teach. When I first graduated from school I didn't teach but I did research for marketing companies, and if I didn't teach I would probably go back to that because psychology research in a business setting makes a lot of money.

Parrot: What advice do you think is most important for your students or students in general?

Stewart: About career? In general, I think it's most important for you to find out what you like; what you are good at and go for it. I think too many people's careers stand on their family members, their parents, their friends; their teachers tell them they should go into it because there are a lot of jobs, because they can make a lot of money... The problem is that everyone is different, you should find out what you really like, and what you should do, how much money you should make, then go for it and it will work.

Parrot: When you call on students to answer a question, do you target the ones who sit in the front or the back of the classroom?

Stewart: I don't call on students to answer questions. I never single out a student and require students to say something in class. The conversations students have in class are voluntary and I do that because I don't like to put students on the spot so I don't call anybody.

Parrot: What comes naturally for you?

Stewart: In general, I think I'm naturally interested on people, anything educational that I can learn from.

Parrot: What are you most proud of?

Stewart: Probably my four daughters, my seven grandchildren, and my wife.

Parrot: What advice would you give to your younger self?

Stewart: Don't think too much or care too much about what other people think of you, just be what you want to be, don't be so self-conscious.

Parrot: What are the best words of wisdom you've received?

Stewart: Probably a lot of things I learned from my dad is all things I can repeat again and again. One of them was the idea that if you work hard enough you can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

Parrot: What do you like to do in your free time?

Stewart: I like to play golf, any kind of sports, and travel:

Parrot: What's your dream vacation?

Stewart: Well, in general to have a whole summer to just travel around, go to Europe and some fantastic places in Asia.

Parrot: Have you been to some places in Asia?

Stewart: I've been to Japan three times. I've never been to China, Thailand, Vietnam, Korea. That's what I want to do, to go to the places I've never been to. I want to go to Africa and I want to go to South America.

Parrot: If you had ten million dollars, what would you do?

Stewart: Well, first of all, I would make sure that I invested some. Then with the extra, I would travel and probably help out my kids.

Parrot: How old are your kids?

Stewart: Thirty-five, thirty-four, thirty, and twenty one.

Parrot: Looking back into your high school or college years, would you make any changes in what you studied? If so, why?

Stewart: I wouldn't change what I studied at all; the only thing I would change is how hard I studied.

Parrot: Do you have any tips for students interested in going into your field?

Stewart: Students going into psychology need to realize that there are many different subfields within the discipline. Yes, half of all psychologists are trained in therapy, but the other half receive a scientific based education in areas such as memory, intelligence, personality, child development, social interaction, and biopsychology. Many of those who are not trained in therapy become researchers and/or teachers, and some work in business or government organizations. The point is that there are many different educational and career options for a person with an interest in psychology. The student who is interested but doesn't know exactly which option to settle on should take a wide variety of psychology classes and then pursue the specific psychology topics that seem most interesting.

Parrot: Which of the following items could you not live without for a year: The Internet, TV, your car, your cell phone, or a nail clipper?

Stewart: You need internet, TV, cell phone. Obviously nail clippers are the most basic, so maybe a car.

Parrot: Would you prefer to have dinner with the

Pope, Lady Gaga, Hillary Clinton, or Donald Trump?

Stewart: Probably the Pope.

Parrot: Would you prefer a luxurious two-week vacation in Hawaii or two weeks trekking in the Himalayas? Why?

Stewart: I would prefer trekking in the Himalayas over relaxing in Hawaii, partly because I always like to try new things and I have never been to the Himalayas. I also like to be active and take on challenges. Trekking in the Himalayas sounds like a challenge.

Parrot: What is the biggest challenge you've ever had to face?

Stewart: Probably the biggest challenge I've had to face is stuttering and the social anxiety that is typically associated with stuttering. I had a moderate to severe stutter growing up and into my adult years. Somewhere along the line I began to put a lot of pressure on myself to not stutter which resulted in a sense of failure when I did. Persistence in pursuing the things I really wanted has eventually resulted in me putting less pressure on myself which has further resulted in less stuttering, but it still affects me a bit.

Phong Bui ESLL50

'World's Most Traveled' Man

Continued from page 1.

While others have visited every country in the world, perhaps none have had exhaustive journeys on par with Bown's.

He's met witch doctors in Mali, lived in a leaf hut with an African Pygmy tribe, and faced down Silverback gorillas in Rwanda. In detailing his top 80 experiences to the travel blog "Backpackology," Bown said he has been arrested "more times than he can count."

In 2010, Bown made headlines when he flew to Mogadishu, Somalia, to the bafflement of officials there.

"We have never seen people like this man," Omar Mohamed, an immigration official, told the Agence France-Presse of his visit at the time. "He said he was a tourist, we couldn't believe him. But later on we found he was seri-

ous. That makes him the first person to come to Mogadishu only for tourism..."

"They tried four times to put me back on the plane to get rid of me but I shouted and played tricks until the plane left without me," Bown recalled to AFP.

What's the takeaway from all this?

"People are basically good and worth knowing whatever the race or culture they hail from," Bown told the Calgary Sun in an interview Wednesday, just a day after ending his trip with a Guinness in Ireland.

And then, we imagine, he said with a nod to Forrest Gump, "I'm pretty tired -- I think I'll go home now."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/04/worlds-most-traveled-man-mike-spencer-bown_n_4044490.html

Granny Noetal

Dear Granny Noetal.

What do you think about this Obamacare stuff? Do you have it? I'm young and I hear I'm going to be paying for old people's medical problems with my payments. It doesn't seem fair.

Nelly Belle

Dear Nelly,

Everyone pays taxes and everyone receives benefits from them. If you're under five, someone's taxes might pay for your child care; if you're in your sixties, perhaps retired, someone's taxes pay for your social security benefits. Someone once said, "Nothing in life is certain except death and taxes." So on the long (hopefully) road to death, we pay taxes. What do we get? Roads, police, fire protection, education. Or we can pay health insurance premiums. The idea is that those payments – either taxes or premiums – will help us have a healthier medical system that will serve more people. A noble pursuit? Will this Affordable Care Act work? Time will tell.



You know, when I was a young girl, they started the social security system under President Roosevelt. There were a lot of doubters then, from what I've read. However, I remember my poor parents and their friends being so happy with that. It was really something new but they understood how it worked.

Now Social Security is a given; it's an institution. I think that in today's world, part of the hulla-baloo is that people don't understand how Obamacare works and are frightened by it. My belief is that it's "healthy" (maybe even patriotic!) to care about the next guy. Why do we support public schools? To have a "healthy" society. Why not support access to medical care for all Americans? That'll contribute to a healthy society too. I believe we can afford to do these things. Some would say we can't afford not to. After all, we're Americans – optimists all the way and supposedly "united". "United" is in our name and a can-do spirit in our DNA!

Feeling her oats,
Granny

Affordable Care Act (ACA) Outreach at ARC

Many community college students lack health coverage which puts their health, finances and educational opportunities at risk. **The Affordable Care Act (ACA)** requires most Americans to obtain comprehensive health coverage and provides assistance to make it affordable. Everyone must enroll no later than March 31, 2014. The next opportunity to enroll is *October 15, 2014.*



on campus providing in-person, consultations, and referrals for enrollment every *Wednesday and Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.* now through *March.* Covered California Educators will be located at a *table in the Student Center.* These representatives are also available for classroom presentations, workshops and educational forums.

To help ARC Students understand their options, Covered California certified Outreach Educators will be

held *Feb. 5, 19 and 26 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Community Rooms 1 & 2 in the Student Center.*

Out of the Cage

Informational Interviews/Dress for Success

Wednesday, March 5, 2014
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Discover the art of interviewing employers regarding valuable information about your chosen career path; how to approach employers, questions to ask, and how to evaluate their feedback. Topics on the importance of Professional Dress in today's work setting will be presented by Macy's.

Location: ARC Student Center, Community Rooms

Women's History Month: Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment In the Greater Sacramento Area.

Thursday, March 6, 2014
12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

Come learn about the accomplishments and contributions of local community activists who developed their organizing skills and applied them to improve the quality of life of all members of our community, particularly the economically disadvantaged and senior populations, while also enriching our community with enhanced knowledge of the arts.

Location: Raef Hall 160

Scholarship Seminars

Wednesday, March 19, 2014
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

A scholarship is considered a gift of money to assist a student in financing their higher education. The amount available for individual students varies. Private financial aid may come from foundations, civic or service clubs, corporations, &/or private individuals. Do you have questions about scholarships, the essay process, etc? Then please attend one of the hour-long seminars. We offer more in-depth seminars on private, public, corporate and other general scholarships. This is for students who need to explore alternative options for financing their education.

Location: Orientation Room, Student Services Building

Visits by Universities

Thursday, March 6, 2014
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

- University of Phoenix Rep Visits
- Sierra Nevada College Rep Visits
- Drexel University Rep Visits

Tuesday, March 11, 2014
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

- Brandman University Rep Visits
- DeVry University Visits
- University of San Francisco - Sacramento Campus Visits

Location: Library Quad

Questions/Comments?



Student Editors: Christian Valenzuela and Olga Cuzeac.

Please let us know what we can do to improve "The Parrot." We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Send us an e-mail, call, or just drop by Professor Bracco's office D337 (Davies Hall), call (916) 484-8988, or e-mail Braccop@arc.losrios.edu. To see The Parrot in color go to http://www.arc.losrios.edu/Programs_of_Study/Humanities/ESL/The_Parrot.htm