



New Neighbors News



A Newsletter Written By and For Our Students

New Neighbors English Language Learning and Family Literacy Program Volume III, Number 2 May 6, 2016

Here Comes Spring!

By Level Introductory A-2

We talked about the spring and summer seasons. Farmers plant seeds in spring and summer to grow fruit and vegetables. We looked at pictures of fruit and vegetables and said which we liked best. Masooda likes blackberries and corn. Roya likes grapes and cucumbers. Hirut likes apples and carrots. Asma likes bananas and peppers. Antonia likes oranges and green beans. Sitara likes bananas and potatoes. Sima likes oranges and potatoes.



Starbucks has *nothing* on New Neighbors!

By Eileen Wallace, Student Council Advisor

At a New Neighbors Student Council meeting last Fall, talk turned to coffee. And there it stayed, with students reminiscing about coffee traditions in their countries. From Africa to South America, coffee breaks are a special time of day. I shared that while working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, I would visit friends every afternoon and sip sweet, strong coffee with a simple piece of bread or cake. It was a time to stop, rest, chat and recharge. As a result of our conversation the Student Council decided to plan two cultural coffee breaks for the New Neighbors community.



The first was held on March 16, and featured drink and food from Latin America and Asia. Students and teachers were treated to Columbian coffee, green tea from Japan, a sweet Korean beverage, Sikhye, along with Salvadoran quesadillas, homemade Bolivian “pan de queso” and Japanese cookies and candies. Students made brief presentations about the traditions in their countries, while videos about the Japanese tea ceremony and Latin American coffee harvest played in the background. According to Student Council member Claudia Campos, the Latin American “merienda” (or snack break) is about “taking a moment to relax to appreciate food, family and friends, which creates a thankful spirit.” A second cultural coffee break took place on April 15 and featured coffee, tea and treats from Africa, Pakistan and Afghanistan. A good time was had by all!

From Our Director

By Marcia D’Arcangelo

Our littlest learners are also our biggest delight! We have 69 boys and girls in our child care classrooms this semester. They range in age from babies through 4-years-old. While their mothers and fathers are in class learning English, their children play with toys, sing songs, color, and listen to stories read by the child care teachers. Once they get over the initial shock of being in a new place without their mothers, they begin to have fun. And yes, they are learning English, too. They now know their letters, numbers, and the names of everyday objects. This is real progress because most of these children did not know any English at the start of the year. In addition, they are learning to listen to the teachers (most of the time), and learning how to behave in groups with other children. These important skills will help them be ready for kindergarten. Parents tell us that they are surprised and delighted that their children are learning so much when all they expected was a place where their children could be near them, safe and cared for.



In Memoriam

This Spring the New Neighbors community lost a dear friend, when student Samra Elawad died from complications after the birth of her third son. We will miss Samra's electric smile and gentle spirit. Our hearts and prayers go out to her family.

I am a New Neighbor!

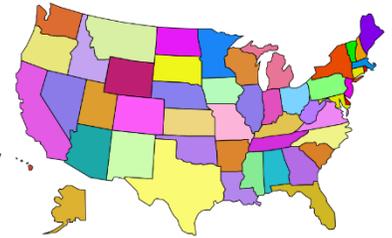
By Lady Maldonado, Level 4

My name is Lady Maldonado. I am 27 years old. I am from Guatemala. I came to the U.S. six years ago. I got married in 2010. I have one child, named Jazmin. She is five years old. I came to the U.S. because I wanted a better future for my family and me. I have a job working in a restaurant. I like my work but I need to speak English. It is very hard when you come to a new city and you don't speak English. I want to speak as well as I can. I wish to get a better job and to help my daughter at school. My life in this country is hard because I work early in the morning from 6 am to 4 pm. I watch my daughter. I study English. I work in my house. I cook for my husband and play with my daughter. I am very busy. I hope to teach Kindergarten. But I need to study a lot. I miss all my family from my country.

Advice for New Comers to the United States

Given by the students of Level 4:

- You should learn to drive a car, it is very important.
- You must be on time in the U.S. since they respect time.
- You shouldn't drive fast because you will get a ticket.
- You should know that in the U.S. that paying taxes is good because they use the money to repair roads.
- You must learn English very well because it is important for a better life in the U.S.
- You must give a tip for service because that is U.S. culture.
- In the U.S., you have to know your address and zip code.
- You must follow the rules for crossing the street.
- You must follow the law.
- You must take an English class and you should practice English by listening and watching TV.
- You must pay the insurance money in the U.S. because it is very important for your car.
- The children must wear a seat belt.
- You should know how to use Metro and buses.
- You should know that the rules change in each state.



Who Knew?

By Elise Reeder, Teacher, Level 2

Teaching English at New Neighbors is a learning experience for students and teachers alike. Our Level 2 Class is alive with questions, many of which my co-teachers and I can't answer!

The arrival of the New Year sparked the inevitable conversation about calendars unique to different parts of the world. This year we had a lively conversations about calendars. Is it 2016, 1394, 1437? What is Year 1 in the Islamic Calendar and why? No one seemed to be able to provide a clear answer and the dialog got a little heated. This teacher was particularly befuddled.

The class agreed that research was in order. Muslim students did research on the Islamic Calendar and other students, the Gregorian Calendar.

The results were fantastic with written reports, verbal presentations. We all learned that in the Afghani calendar, this year is 1394 and one year can have 336 or 365 days. In the Arabic Calendar the year is 1437 and there are 335 days in the year. The first Islamic year began in 622 (Gregorian) with the emigration of Mohamad (P.B.U.H.) from Mecca to Medina (the Hijarah). The Islamic Lunar year is between 11 and 12 days shorter than the Gregorian Year. Whew! So many things to learn about. So much to be grateful for! I love teaching at New Neighbors. I learn something new every day!

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Submitted by Katherine Hoffman, teacher

"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color."

-Maya Angelou, poet (b. 4 Apr 1928, d. 28 May 2014)

Hopes and Dreams

By Marie "Mado" Madeleine, Level 2



I am from Rwanda. I grew up in Rwanda. My parents were small farmers. If I were President of the United States I would help the countries of Africa to establish democracy. If I had ten million dollars, I would go back to my country to help survivors of the genocide against Tutsis especially children born after mom's rape because the children are traumatized by their mothers who don't love them or like them.

Job Skills Class

By Julie Kerhli

In the Jobs Skills class this Spring, students studied job titles and responsibilities in the United States. It was interesting to learn about the jobs these students held in their own countries. Yasmine was a teacher in Syria, as was Nabila in Morocco and Shahin in Afghanistan. Mohamed supervised a printing shop in Sudan and Zinash was a secretary in Ethiopia. Marie was a logistics officer in Rwanda, Fakhera was a doctor in Afghanistan and Nadia was a translator in Ethiopia. Avacely worked in a restaurant in Guatemala and Aziz was a cashier in an ice cream shop in Morocco. It's a pleasure to work with all 18 students in the class as they learn about working in the U.S.

An Evening of SUP (Stand Up Paddle)

By Claudia Campos, Level 7

Two weeks ago, on Sunday afternoon I decided to do a little exercise in the Potomac river, initially I thought it was going to ride a Kayak but on reaching the river, I decided to ride SUP (Stand Up Paddle), only this exercise required more than rowing, and required balance.



I thought this is what I need at this point in my life, a little balance. It was windy, which made it harder to balance, but I thought of a phrase "when the winds are stronger is when a sailor learns to navigate your boat" and so it is in life, when we leave out of our comfort zone and explore new directions. Always when we start, we will be in front of many challenges, but once we learn to handle the boat, the same wind guides us.

It was an afternoon of much reflection, to tell myself that although sometimes it feels that the wind is so strong and I would like to say "No more," I must change the thought and "see" the wind like my best teacher, through which I will improve myself as a person and as a professional.

Of course on the road of life, we must find time to have fun, and I did. At various times when I was tired of paddling, I stopped to play with water, to take photos, to enjoy nature, listen to the river, the wind and be guided by the breeze. Sometimes we just let it go and allow the universe, God, and nature, guide us on the path that we have drawn in this life.

Poems from Level 7

(Patterned after the first stanza of Emily Dickinson's poem #13 (« Hope is the thing with feathers... »))

Hold fast to the moments

For if moments die

Life will change

From laugh to cry (Helena)

Love is to live with honesty

This virtue is infinite

And it makes a world happy

When all we want is to live (Jovana,)

Life is a big adventure

That every day is built for us

As the kids create with Lego pieces

Full of colors and shapes (Pati)

The soul is a mix of feelings

Which join or fight all the time

But finally is the mix of

What each of us are and what makes us so special (Pati)

Painting is how I can express

What is inside my soul

Sometimes in my dress

Sometimes in the wood (Nhora)

Love is the most powerful thing in people's lives

Which can overcome any hard thing

And the reason that we live

And it never fails -- ever (Esther)

Life is a colorful book

Which is full of different stories

And we add a page every day

With our passion and energy (Kuddus)

Level 5 Students Give Back to New Neighbors

The students in Level 5 expressed their thanks for the New Neighbors school by a service project to help other students.

They translated several basic instruction sheets from English into Arabic, Amharic, Dari and Spanish. The sheets cover study tips, what to do in a fire drill, and school policy on weather related closures. Teachers in the lower level classes will be able to use the sheets with new students.

Thanks to all the Level 5 students who took on this important service project.

If...

By Aurelina Lopez, Level 3

If I touch your hand, will you feel my warmth?

If I feel sad, will you make me smile?

If I cry, will you cry with me?

My Disabled Son

By Fakhera Fekrat

I had a forceps delivery of my son in my country, Afghanistan. A few days later, my son had a high fever and convulsions that caused septicemia. He was in the ICU for 18 days. He was in coma. After special treatment and so many struggles, he woke up and started crying. I was very happy. But he was uncomfortable and grew very slowly. He was hospitalized several times for congenital hip joint dislocation. He couldn't walk, sit, speak, or do anything because he had cerebral palsy. Now he is my 17-year-old disabled son. My family moved to the U.S. a few months ago. In Afghanistan, there was no facility for my son, which was our big problem. One month after moving, we went to see a doctor for him. The doctor told us he had to

be admitted to the children's hospital in Fairfax for a consultation with other doctors. The children's hospital in Fairfax is an updated hospital that has expert doctors and very kind nurses who work hard.

After a lot of tests and examinations, my son was diagnosed with anemia and malnutrition. He was given a blood transfusion, some formula from the NG tube, and special treatment for anemia. The doctors gave us information about the companies, such as Care Connection, Walgreens, and Maxim, that could provide him with formula, diapers, a hospital bed, physiotherapy, NG tubes, etc. Now his condition is good. We are very thankful especially to Fairfax hospital and the companies that helped my disabled son.

Wisdom Sayings From Around the World

From Level 7 students

"The apple does not fall far from the tree." **Helena Towes, Germany**

"The early bird, God helps." **Luis Leon, Colombia**

"If you cannot help, don't hinder." **Jovana Arsic, Serbia**

"You're going to heaven and you're crying?" **Danisa Guerrero, Venezuela**



News From Intro B

In late February, the Intro B class held a joyous baby shower for two of the students. Both ladies just gave birth to girls and are home caring for their babies. We have two more expectant moms and plan to have another shower before the end of the term.



Level 7 visits the Library of Congress and the US Capital

Fall Semester 2016 :

Register online at

<https://campagnacenter.org/schoolforms.org/newneighbors>,

starting August 1, or

Register in person on September 7 and 8, at Christ Church.

Fall classes start on September 12, and end of December 9, 2016.



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118 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA (703) 549-1450 www.historicchristchurch.org

