



Welcome to the sixth edition of the ELI *Melting Pot*, a newsletter where advanced ELI students share their culture. Students chose “home sweet home” as the theme for the newsletter this semester. The concept of “home” means different things to different people. For some the idea of home is seeing beautiful pink cherry blossoms in bloom in Korea, while for others, “home” is a relaxing trip with friends to a water park in Brazil, or a weekend away with Mom in Nha Trang, Vietnam. Home is where the heart is, and so, whether near or far, ELI students carry the memory of home in their hearts, even as they are away from their family and friends. This semester, students wanted to share what home means to them, so I hope that you will enjoy reading their articles and getting a glimpse of their home life outside of the States.

Rose-Marie Speck
ELI Coordinator

*ELI 35 students at Crowder College:
their home away from home.*



Cherry Blossom Festival

By Jae Kwang Kim



In Korea we have many festivals. The most popular festival is the cherry blossom festival. Nowadays, people in Korea are always busy and work hard; however, during the cherry blossom festival they enjoy time with families. It used to be that the cherry blossom festival was mostly a time to spend with families, but now even couples and friends go to the festival to spend time with each other. Just looking at one cherry blossom tree is not very impressive, but seeing hundreds of cherry blossom trees all together in bloom is beautiful and amazing. In spring, the cherry blossoms become pink and have a really sweet smell. Some blossoms are big, and some are small. When you look at them individually, you can tell the blossoms are all different, but when all the cherry blossom trees are together, they look like one big cherry blossom. The most important thing about the festival is that it makes people aware that spring weather is here. The cherry blossoms do not last very long. Once summer approaches, the cherry blossoms fall off the trees. The festival only lasts a month or two while the blossoms are in bloom. People enjoy the special festival because it happens only once a year. When I think about my home in Korea, I think about the sweet smell of the cherry blossoms and their beautiful colors because I have cherry blossom trees outside of my apartment window in Korea.



Cherry blossom trees in bloom.

Sebatian Street Festival

By Mayra Vazquez



My home

is in Puerto Rico, but I have lived in Neosho for about one year. I miss my country so much. Puerto Rico has a big party that lasts for two weeks in San Juan, the capital city. This party, or festival, takes place on and around a famous street called Sebatian Street during the end of January, and celebrates the end of the Christmas holiday. At the festival there is dancing, food, hand crafts, and art exhibits at the different museums in the city. The festival lasts all day. In the morning you can find homemade food like fried food. You can also see handcrafts and art such as paintings and pictures of famous Puerto Rican actors. The activity takes place in the most touristic area in San Juan. You can enjoy live music in the evenings, and on the streets you can see different people touring the museums and looking at the artwork. There is also a beautiful oceanfront view where you can fly kites. Some of the food that you should taste if you go there is mofongo (mashed fried green plantains) with your choice of meat, or the rich and famous piña colada (pineapple mixed with coconut). I miss going to this party because it is an activity that I often did with my family and friends.



This is a picture of the Sebatian Street festival.



Encarnacion

By Nicolas Escobar

One of my favorite places in my country, Paraguay, is located in the city of Encarnacion where I was born. Encarnacion is located five hours from the capital city. The Parana River is in Encarnacion ,and the coast is a beautiful place to go and spend the day with family. At the coast, there are many activities like sand soccer, volley ball, and swimming. There are also many things to eat and drink. When I go to the coast, I can see the sun reflecting on the refreshing water, I can smell the delicious barbecues at midday, and I can have a great day with my family or friends because this is a place with few technological distractions. This is a great place to enjoy nature and to see the sunset. At night time, there are places to dance on the sand where many important DJ's come to play, and there are also big concerts. Near the coast you can find many places to go and have dinner, and the cost is cheap. Many new hotels were built to accommodate the amount of people that continue to visit there. I really like to go to Encarnacion to get away from technology and the routine of life, and instead, play some sports, get in the water, and have fun with people. It is a great place to go and rest. It is a beautiful place where I can find many things that I identify as my home, sweet home.



The Encarnacion coast, Paraguay

Nha Trang

By Chau Nguyen

When I was in Vietnam, I loved to travel with my mom. We went to a lot of places, but the most memorable trip was Nha Trang. It is located in the Khanh Hoa Province. It is a wonderful place for traveling and relaxing, and it is also a common choice for foreigners who want to tour my country. I love Nha Trang so much because it is a busy, but not very noisy, city. It has fresh air, sunshine, a clean, blue beach, and very nice weather. In Nha Trang, there are coconut trees and willow trees along the coast line that make the air smell really good and make you feel relaxed. The beaches also have lounge chairs so that people can take a break during the time they spend on the beach. Nha Trang also links to a lot of other small islands and beautiful places like Bamboo Island and Swiftlet Island. We can get to those places by canoes, ships, and boats. Traveling services in Nha Trang provide some water activities like scuba-diving, boating along the coast line through the coral reef, and yachting. There is a big market with fresh seafood and the most famous food for Nha Trang: bird's nest. Bird's nests are collected by people who live near the beaches. The nests are made from the swiftlet bird who make the nests with their saliva. After the nests are cooked, they turn into a thick liquid, and people eat it with a bit of sugar to make it taste better. At the market in Nha Trang there are a lot of souvenirs to buy like shirts, necklaces and wristlets made from seashells, and beautiful pictures of Nha Trang at sunset. Vinpearl Land is a famous park in Nha Trang. It has many games that you can enjoy after a long day of playing on the beach. Vinpearl Land has a lot of lights at night that make it beautiful, attractive, and romantic. Nha Trang is a wonderful part of my home country, and I would love to visit it again.



Caption: Nha Trang and the coast.

Karaoke in Japan

By Hirotaka Aida

While there are many leisure activities in Japan, the one I like best is karaoke. There are so many karaoke places in Japan that I cannot count them all. Big cities in Japan have many karaoke places downtown, but even small towns have karaoke places. People of all ages, from children to adults, go to karaoke places in Japan. There are many reasons people practice

karaoke. Some people go alone when they want to sing to get in a better mood. Some people go just to practice a song. Some go just to listen to their friends sing because they hate to sing. So anyone can enjoy karaoke, even if they hate to sing. I usually go to karaoke with my girlfriend, friends, and sometimes family.

Karaoke in Japan is often different than karaoke in America. In Japan, karaoke rooms are private rooms, and I choose the room size by the number of people who are with me. There are many room sizes. There are small rooms, and there are big rooms that hold more than fifteen people. In some rooms, if you turn off the light, a special glow-in-the-dark design emerges on the walls. There is a scoring function where the score of the song is displayed on the screen when you finish singing. I like this scoring function because it shows me how well I sang my song, and I can see that I get better and better at singing. It is not uncommon for people to stay a long time in the karaoke rooms because you can drink and eat food there if you want to.

Also, each karaoke room has a fee that you must pay. Fees vary by each karaoke room, but it is roughly \$10.00 for 30 minutes per person. Nighttime fees are usually more expensive than daytime fees. Fees in the nighttime are double or more daytime fees.

Nighttime is considered to be after 7:00 p.m. Accordingly, you should not do karaoke at nighttime because the fees are so high.

Because I sing karaoke a lot when I am in Japan, when I think about my home sweet home, I think about going to karaoke rooms with my family or friends and having a good time.

This is glow-in-the-dark karaoke room.



My House, My Home

By Nsimba Nsemi



There is nothing sweeter than home. Everybody has a place where they feel more comfortable than anywhere else. I miss a lot of things being away from home, but the thing I miss the most is my house. My house in the Democratic Republic of Congo is one of the biggest houses on my street. The first thing I see when I enter in the plot of land that goes to my house are the flowers, lawn, a path that takes me to the entrance of the house, and then a welcoming veranda. After the veranda, the second things I see are the living room, dining room, and the kitchen on the first floor. Then to the right of the living room, there is an entry way for the stairs that go to the second level of the house. My entire house has seven bedrooms, three bathrooms, two kitchens, two living rooms, and a dining room. Even though we have a lot people in my house, it is quiet and peaceful. It always smells of delicious food. My parents, sisters, one of my nephews, and my cousin are there. People go to my house because it is a welcoming and loving place. My house is the only place where I truly feel safe, and where I can be myself and be with people I love. I was born and grew up there, so I always want to be there.

I like the unity, love, joy and togetherness that come from being in my house. My house is my home sweet home.



This is a picture of my house in the DRC.



Caldas Novas

By Thays Barbosa

When I hear people talk about my country, Brazil, they often talk about soccer, beaches, parties, and beautiful people. But not many people know about my city, and the capital city of Brazil, Goiania. My city doesn't have a beach, but it's a very big city, and it's my home.

My favorite place is a water park near Goiania called Caldas Novas. This water park is a beautiful place to go with your family or friends. At this water park, there are many heated pools, regular pools, and a waterslide. The park is in a natural setting so you can see birds, monkeys and different types of trees at the park. The park also has a zip line. There are many fun things to do there, so it's good for kids to play and for adults to relax. When the warm wind blows, and you are sitting under a tree at the water park, the feeling is very good and very relaxing. I like to go to this place to hang out with my friends and relax. This is a perfect place to relax and enjoy yourself. Even if I visit other beautiful countries, I will always think, "There is no better place than my home!"



Caldas Novas in Brazil.

Things we like about our home in Neosho:

Thays Barbosa



I like the basketball team because it is like a family.

Nicolas Escobar



I really like the cold weather and the peace I have to study.

Jaekwang Kim



I like that there are not many distractions in Neosho so that I focus on my studies. At Crowder, people are really pretty kind, and if I need help with something, they just help me without compensation.

Mayra Vazquez



I like Neosho because it is very quiet and calm. The people here are very polite and there are family activities. One activity is in the spring when there is an event to show children safety rules, like if there is a fire. I also like that here you can play in the snow, and when the snow falls, it is very beautiful.

Hiroataka Aida



I like my baseball teammates and playing baseball. Playing baseball here is fun and exciting.

Chau Nguyen



I like that Crowder is a quiet place to study so that I can stay focused on my work. People are also very nice to each other here, and I feel

Nsimba Nsemi



Neosho is a good place to study without being distracted, and there are good colleges like Crowder that help and prepare students for their future career.

Crowder is a good environment for learning because teachers seem to appreciate and help students as much as they can for the students' success.



DAVIDSON HALL

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AT CROWDER COLLEGE (2014)

Argentina

Population- 41.3 Million
Capital- Buenos Aires
Language- Spanish
Currency- Austral



Haïti

Population- 9.7 Million
Capital- Port-au-Prince
Language- French and Creole
Currency- Gourde



Senegal

Population- 13.5 Million
Capital- Dakar
Language- French, Wolof, Soninke, Jola, Fula, Serer, and Maninka
Currency- CFA Franc



Brazil

Population- 193 Million
Capital- Brasilia
Language- Portuguese and Tribal Languages
Currency- Real



Ireland

Population- 4.5 Million
Capital- Dublin
Language- English, Irish and Ulster Scots
Currency- Euro



South Korea

Population- 50 Million
Capital- Seoul
Language- Korean
Currency- South Korean won



Burundi

Population- 9.8 Million
Capital- Bujumbura
Language- French, Kirundi, and Swahili
Currency- Burundi Franc



Japan

Population- 12.7 Million
Capital- Tokyo
Language- Japanese
Currency- Yen



Swaziland

Population- 1.1 Million
Capital- Lobamba
Language- English and Swati
Currency- Lilangeni



Canada

Population- 33.7 Million
Capital- Ottawa
Language- English and French
Currency- Canadian Dollar



Kenya

Population- 40 Million
Capital- Nairobi
Language- English, Swahili and tribal languages
Currency- Kenya Shilling



Sweden

Population- 9.6 Million
Capital- Stockholm
Language- Swedish
Currency- Swedish Krona



China

Population- 1,388 Million
Capital- Peking
Language- Mandarin and numerous
Currency- Renminbi Yuan



Mongolia

Population- 3 Million
Capital- Ulan Bator
Language- Mongolian
Currency- Turgrik



The Gambia

Population- 17 Million
Capital- Banjul
Language- English and tribal languages
Currency- Dalasi



DR Congo

Population- 70 Million
Capital- Kinshasa
Language- French
Currency- Congolese Franc



Nigeria

Population- 158 Million
Capital- Lagos
Language- English, Hausa, Igbo and tribal languages
Currency- Naira



Uzbekistan

Population- 30.1 Million
Capital- Tashkent
Language- Uzbek and Karakalpak
Currency- Uzbekistan Som



England

Population- 51 Mil
Capital- London
Language- English
Currency- Euro



Paraguay

Population- 6.8 Million
Capital- Asuncion
Language- Spanish and Guaraní
Currency- Paraguayan Guaraní



Vietnam

Population- 89.6 Million
Capital- Hanoi
Language- Vietnamese
Currency- đồng



Gabon

Population- 1.4 Million
Capital- Libreville
Language- French, Fang and Myene
Currency- Central African CFA franc



Philippines

Population- 94 Million
Capital- Manila
Language- Filipino, Spanish, English and tribal languages
Currency- Philippine Peso



Zambia

Population- 13.4 Million
Capital- Lusaka
Language- English and tribal languages
Currency- Kwacha



Guatemala

Population- 13.5 Million
Capital- Guatemala City
Language- Spanish and Mayan
Currency- Quetzal



Saudi Arabia

Population- 29.9 Million
Capital- Riyadh
Language- Arabic
Currency- Saudi Riyal



