



# The ESL Parrot

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

Issue # 17

Spring 2008

**Students, Staff! Want to Be on the Cover of The Parrot? Interview Yourself! Use the Questions Below . Send us the Answers and Your Photo!**

**Parrot:** So tell us about yourself.

**Parrot:** What's been the hardest part of learning a new language or what's the hardest part of your job?

**Parrot:** Do you enjoy being at ARC? Why?



**Parrot:** Briefly describe an average day for yourself at ARC.

**Parrot:** Would you say being on the cover of The Parrot is the highlight of your life or were there other big moments? Describe.

**Parrot:** Are there any changes you'd like to see on campus or on your job?

**Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush.**

**Doug Larson**



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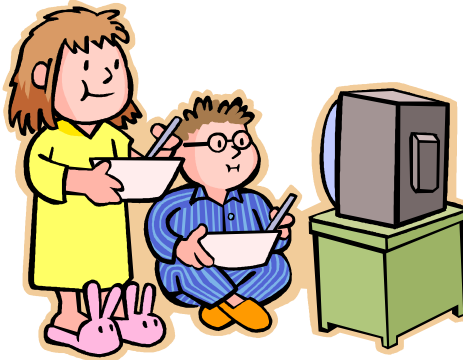
**Parrot:** What future plans do you have?

# Student Chirpings

## *Guise of Russian TV*

Like any TV, Russian TV is to entertain people. Russian TV includes news, sport programs, concerts, and movies for children and adults along with educational and documentary films. It also contains different kinds of shows such as talk shows, game shows, sitcoms, and soap operas. About ten years ago all soap operas were Mexican or Brazilian, but now Russian movie production has begun to release its own soap operas. I used to be into soap operas in the middle of 1990s, but now I am happy that I was able to get out of this swamp which kept me from doing my daily routine and my household duties. I remember that I rushed home to watch the next series of my favorite soap opera or put aside doing my household chores. Once my brother-in-law, Gena, came to visit us, and my husband offered him to watch a comedy show where the famous Russian parodist, Zadornov, brought down the house. My husband and his brother couldn't stop laughing. After a while, Gena asked me, "Why don't you watch it with us? Don't you like it?" I responded to him, "I do not watch it because I like it." I did not want to get stuck in that program and forget about my homework. Russian programs are very interesting. I remember when we first came to America, my husband, Sergey and I watched one long Russian movie until 4:00 am, and in

the morning we went to school. My teacher in adult school asked me to write my homework on the whiteboard, and I was dying while I was writing it on the whiteboard. The teacher even asked me what the matter was, and why I was so frozen; she knew that I always liked to study and was always ready to answer.



Luckily, it was not college. I do not want to be in the swamp of TV again.

TV in Russia and in the USA has some interesting similarities. I think that there is too much advertisement on both TV's. All TV programs are frequently interrupted by different kinds of advertisement which can be awfully inconvenient when we just watch TV, and which might be very convenient when we are cooking something while watching TV. Another similarity is that TV in both countries is equipped in high- technology; it is because the USA and Russia are both advanced countries. Next, I noticed that TV in both countries has a lopsided opinion. I think that there should be more participants in

making decisions. Both American and Russian TV entertain people 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

On the other hand, there are some differences in American and Russian TV programs. American TV has more educational programs such as geographical and historical features than Russian TV does. TV in the USA even has a few channels especially dedicated to show these different kinds of movies for different educational purposes, whereas Russian TV just has a few hours on certain channels to show them. There is also diversity of sport programs in American TV, while Russian TV has fewer sport programs at certain times. Another distinctive peculiarity that American TV has is too much violence, sex, homosexuality, and drug abuse. In contrast to America, Russian movies do not have so much of this stuff. I have never heard on Russian TV expressions such as, "Who said that I am gay? I am not gay." Even movies that are made for children teem with all of this obnoxious stuff. There are also too many scenes of divorced parents in American movies, and none of these movies show that children are happy about not having complete families. I strongly believe that American movies ought to set good examples.

Nailya Arushanova  
R320

## Differences between Russian and English Languages

Russian and English belong to different language groups. Russian belongs to the Slavic group of languages, and English belongs to the Norman group of languages. These two groups are completely different from each other, so the two languages have almost nothing in common; they have only differences.

The first and the biggest difference between Russian and English is grammar. English has a very simple grammar and it is easy to learn. For example, English has only three verb forms, and all its grammar is based on these three forms. Except for two hundred irregular verbs, verbs in English have easily remembered suffixes; it doesn't take a lot of time and effort to memorize them, so even small children and people who aren't good at languages are able to learn English quickly if they really want to learn it. In contrast, Russian has a very complicated grammar and is one of the most difficult languages to learn. Verbs in Russian have many forms, sometimes as many as fifty. All these forms have little or no logic, and it is almost impossible to learn all of them, so most people who aren't native Russian speakers mix them up all the time and their language seems funny. As I have learned so far, the main difference in languages is in verbs, but there are other differences, too. English has articles; it helps to keep the language simple and easy. Russian, which doesn't have

articles, had to develop in a more complicated way — it has not only many different verb forms, but also many different noun forms.

However, Russian still has some upsides. The main one is the alphabet. In opposition to crazy English spelling, Russian has a particular letter for every sound, and



all the letters are read and pronounced in always the same way. Americans who know Russian (but it happens very rarely), say that reading in Russian is as easy as a piece of cake, and wish English had as simple an alphabet as Russian has. The Russian alphabet is something like the pronunciation table in The Longman American English Dictionary, but it has only thirty-two letters — equal to the number of sounds in Russian.

Also, one of the most distinct differences in the languages is the sounds in these languages. Speaking, or I would say, pronunciation of the sounds in English is much more difficult than they are in Russian. One may think that I'm saying this because Russian is my native language and it is easier for me to pronounce only sounds

which are in Russian. It isn't really so. The best proof that Russian has sounds which are easier to pronounce is that every American or any other person who doesn't speak Russian can easily repeat Russian words which he hears for the first time. Never expect a Russian to repeat an English word in the right way. It is because in Russian all sounds are produced with the help of your lips, teeth, and the upper part of the inside of your mouth. These sounds are easier to pronounce. In English, many sounds are produced deeply in your throat. They are the most difficult sounds. An English "th" is something very special. It looks like it has to be easy for Russians; it is produced by the damp parts of your mouth as all Russian sounds are. However, it is difficult not only for Russians, but for all English native speakers. So far, I haven't made scientific research to explain this phenomenon, but I seriously promise to do so in the close future.

Despite differences in Russian and English, people around the world would have benefited a lot if these languages had intermixed and developed into one language in old times. We would have now a language with the simplest English grammar, and easy Russian alphabet and sounds. This language might be used as the main international language instead of modern English.

Leonid Novorok W50

## The Boob Tube and Flicks Abroad (R320 Students)

### Korea

Comedy is the fad these days on TV. However, sometimes TV and movies show traditional stories so that we will know our history. America is freer than my country. It features gay or incest stories. My country can't do that, even now.

Seung Won Baik

### Ukraine

Ukrainian TV has many similarities to American TV. First, there is a lot of advertisement. Second, the programs are similar. Ukrainian people even watch American shows like the Academy Awards. Finally, you can now see a lot of violence and action. There are differences in some ways

Borys Lahoda

### Syria

In my country television shows the same programs and the same news for the whole country; in America the television shows the same programs, but different news because the TV in every city shows the local news. Another difference is that the series in my country has a limit of 30 episodes. Some American series are not limited so they have many episodes. You can watch one series for many years. The big difference is that in my country the censors must inspect every movie. They have the right to delete sexual scenes and any scene that criticizes the president of the country. I know there is American censorship too, but I believe there is more flexibility.

Evelyn Tamim

### Russia

Well, in my country, Russia, producers and directors make movies outside the studio. Most work is done on the spot. They only do corrections and put music and sounds for the movies in the studio, compared to American movies, which are produced in the warehouse. It is a different style. Sometimes in the movies you can see different languages or actions to cover up the real situation. You can see that in the comedy, romance, fictional, or historical movies because if the moviemaker wants to say something about the government, he needs to hide and use different tactics. When we watched movies, we did not have advertisement in the middle of the movie. Russians try to make movies related to life and sometimes movies do not have good or happy endings like in American movies when one hero saves the whole city.

Vera Costin

### Mexico

In my country, Mexico, the movies used to be filled with lots of violence. Now movie production has started to produce different kinds of movies that are now described as the new Mexican cinema. The movies are more realistic, with a message to the audience, not only violence.

Leticia Moreno

### Vietnam

In Vietnam, television and movies do not serve to entertain people. They only serve the political objectives of government. There is no private TV. The whole TV system, from the center to localities, belongs to the government. The government has used the whole TV system for three major aims. The first aim is to propagandize. Through TV programs, the government tries to persuade people to believe in the Communist Party. The second aim is to "varnish" the communist regime. There are always many shows on TV that say Vietnam communism is the best, is number one, or something like that. The third aim is to praise leaders. The leaders are often praised on TV programs as heroes or great men of the world. In Vietnam, you will be disappointed if you want to look for something on TV to amuse. Similar to TV, there are no individual movie companies either. The movie companies belong to the government. The films focus on praising the leaders, praising the regime, or scorning capitalism. Because there is no competition, there is no development.

Dang Nguyen



### Russia

In my country, films are more realistic. People love to watch about real events in the lives of real people. There are many popular children's films such as "I Will Get You" and "The Adventures of Cheburashka and Friends" produced by Soyuzmulr Film Studio and loved by adults and children. They were popular in my childhood and they are still popular now. They have a sense and teach adults and children in a good way.

Ala Yarmaliuk

### Iran

Right now, Iranian movie and TV are very different from American movies and TV. The first difference is costumes. In my country, a woman in movies must have a scarf to cover her face and her neck. Also their dresses must be long and usually dark. Usually you don't see a man with shorts or a shirt with short sleeves. Another difference in movies is women and men mustn't touch each other even if they are supposed to be brother and sister, father and daughter, or any relationship like these. You never see a man kiss or touch a woman or even a little girl. A third difference is moviemakers in Iran don't spend a lot of money on the movies.

Jila Kianfur

### India

Compared to American movies, Indian movies are longer; therefore people fully enjoy them. The Indian movie industry makes more movies a year than the American movie industry does; furthermore, Indian films are made in more than 52 languages. American movie costs are larger than Indian movie co

Loveleen Kaur

*Continued on page 11*

## Parrot Warbling



### Going To

#### Intention

We use the special **going to** construction when we have the intention to do something **before we speak**. We have already **made a decision before speaking**. Look at these examples:

- I have won \$1,000. I am **going to buy** a new TV.
- We're not **going to see** my mother tomorrow.
- When are you **going to go** on holiday?

In these examples, we had **an intention or plan before speaking**. The decision was made before we spoke.

#### Prediction

We often use **going to** to make a prediction about the future. Our prediction is based on **evidence**. We are saying what seems sure to happen. Here are some examples:

- The sky is very black. It is **going to snow**.
- It's 8.30! You're **going to miss** the train!
- I crashed the company car. My boss isn't **going to be** very happy!
- 

In these examples, the present situation (black sky/the time/damaged car) gives us a good idea of what is going to happen.



**Questions/ Comments?** Please let us know what we can do to improve the "ESL 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 D387 ( Davies Hall) (916) 484-8988  
Student editors— **Christian Valenzuela , Andrea Carrero, Natalia Arboleda, Ivy Balansag, Vi Tran**

## Idiom Attic



**"Make a mountain out of a molehill"**

**Making a mountain out of a molehill** means to make something seem much more important than it really is.

"Calm down. There's really nothing to worry about. You're **making a mountain out of a molehill**."



### Rigoberto's Riddles

Q. What season is it when you are on a trampoline?

A. Spring-time!

Q. When do monkeys fall from the sky?

A. During Ape-ril showers!

Q. Can February March?

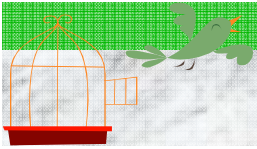
A. No, but April May!

Q. What flowers grow on faces?

A. Tulips (Two-lips)!

Q. Why is the letter A like a flower?

A. A bee (B) comes after it!



# Out of the Cage

## Resume Development Workshop (Career Center)

Tuesday, March 11  
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Your resume reflects your uniqueness. This workshop focuses on the physical appearance of a resume, including different types of formats and the kinds of information that should be included. Tips on writing an effective cover letter to send with your resume and formatting scanner friendly resumes will also be discussed.



## ARC Concert Band

Wednesday, March 12  
6:00 pm

With special guest: The River City Concert Band under the direction of Tom Seaton. Featuring the music of Frank Ticheli, Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, and others. Admission to the concert is \$8-General, \$5-Students/Seniors. For more information, contact Dr. Dyne Eifertsen at 484-8676.



## Sharing Over 50 Years of Experience in Community Organizing

Thursday, March 13  
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm

Please join Dolores Huerta as she shares her experiences as a community activist. For over 50 years, Dolores' mission has been to build active communities that work for fair and equal access to health care, housing, education, jobs, civic participation, and economic resources for disadvantaged communities with an emphasis on women and youth.



Location: Raef Hall 160

## My Favorite Lecture: How Imperfections Help Us Understand the Evolutionary Process

Thursday, March 27  
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm

Why do some disorders like sickle-cell anemia occur in high frequency in some populations? Join Anthropology Professor Patrice Gibson, recipient of the 2007 Patrons Chair Award and Honorarium, in a presentation of a favorite topic from her anthropology courses.



Location: Raef Hall 160

## Interview Success Workshop — Career Center

Wednesday, March 26  
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

This workshop includes information on researching the organization, reviewing anticipated questions, specific strategies, assessing your skills, making a professional presentation, and body language and presentation.



**Dear Granny,**

How “green” are you? We see a lot of Parrots around the campus and wonder if we’re not wasting a lot of trees. Can’t we just read The Parrot on-line?

**Lief Gruenbaum**

**Dear Lief,**

At first, when you asked me how “green” I was, I thought of an older, less-used meaning which refers to someone who is inexperienced, a bit “wet-behind-the-ears.” In that sense, I can assure you Granny is not green. I’ve been around and then some. In the newer sense, I do like to consider myself green. I try not to waste or over-consume energy. I avoid the elevator in Davies Hall even sometimes when my old bones are aching. I carpool to campus with a couple of



youngsters (invariably helping them with their homework in the car), and I even use an old, non-electric typewriter to write this column. As far as The Parrot goes, yes, you can read The Parrot on-line by going to the ESL website but you’re still consuming energy by running a computer. Kermit the Frog once said “It’s not easy being green.” (The Parrot quoting a frog – what a wonderful world we live in...) I agree. Nonetheless, paper copies of The Parrot are considered an investment in education. There are not that many publications about for English-language learners that promote reading and writing and that offer timeless wisdom from a bona fide “Granny”! It’s worth it, don’t you think?

**Granny**

**Silly Vasily’s Chuckle Chamber**



**Shall I tell you the joke about the butter?**  
 You’d better not. I might spread it.  
**What’s a waste of energy?**  
 Telling a hair-raising story to a bald man!

**What cheese is made backwards?**  
 Edam

**What’s round and dangerous?**

A vicious circle!

**What did the mayonnaise say to the fridge?**

**What’s out-of-bounds?**

Close the door please. I’m dressing.

An exhausted kangaroo!

**The Little Boy**

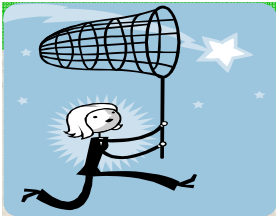
I look out my window and  
 What do I see  
 A little boy  
 Who looks up at me  
 Dressed in rags  
 Has no shoes  
 Reminds me of someone  
 I once knew

I look out my window  
 What do I see  
 A teenage boy  
 Looking back at me  
 Walking with his dog  
 Dressed in all blue  
 Reminds me of someone  
 I once knew

I look out my window  
 What do I see  
 A young man with a stroller  
 Looking up at me  
 Pushing a baby boy  
 Walking with his wife  
 Laughing together  
 Now he has a good life

Here I am  
 That little boy  
 All grown up  
 Can’t play with a toy  
 I realize now  
 You can’t judge a person  
 By clothes, money, or family  
 But accept them as they are  
 And they will forever  
 Keep you in their heart

Jordan & Katie Shoppell, age 12 from Angola



# NET Escape - Articles from the net.

## Daylight Saving Time — Whenever...

### Spring forward...Fall back....

Daylight Saving Time begins for most of the United States at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday of April. Time reverts to standard time at 2 a.m. on the last Sunday of October. Daylight Saving Time -- for the U.S. and its territories -- is **NOT** observed in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Eastern Time Zone portion of the State of Indiana, and by most of Arizona (with the exception of the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona). Some of the biggest reasons we change our clocks to Daylight Saving Time (DST) are the following:



**Daylight Saving Time saves energy.** Based on consumption figures for 1974 and 1975, The Department of Transportation says observing Daylight Saving Time in March and April saved the equivalent in energy of 10,000 barrels of oil each day -- a total of 600,000 barrels in each of those two years. California Energy Commission studies confirm a saving of about one percent per day.

**Daylight Saving Time saves lives and prevents traffic injuries.** The earlier Daylight Saving Time allowed more people to travel **home** from work and school in daylight, which is much safer than darkness. And except for the months of No-

vember through February, Daylight Saving Time does not increase the morning hazard for those going to school and work.

**Daylight Saving Time prevents crime.** Because people get home from work and school and complete more errands and chores in daylight, Daylight Saving Time also seems to reduce people's exposure to various crimes, which are more common in darkness than in light. The Department of Transportation estimated that 50 lives were saved and

about 2,000 injuries were prevented in March and April of the study years. The department also estimated that \$28 million was saved in traffic accident costs.

- It is Daylight Saving (singular) Time, *NOT* Daylight SavingS Time. We are saving daylight, so it singular and not plural.
- Daylight Saving Time differs in other areas of the world. Consult a good encyclopedia for additional information about DST in your own country. Or check out the "World Time Zone" or the "WorldTime" Web pages at:

[www.worldtimezone.com/daylight.html](http://www.worldtimezone.com/daylight.html)

[www.worldtimesaver.com](http://www.worldtimesaver.com)

[www.worldtime.com](http://www.worldtime.com)



## Spring Celebrations Around the World

### Basanth

In Pakistan, boys celebrate the first day of spring in the Muslim calendar with exciting kite-fighting contests. After putting powdered glass on their strings, they use the strings to try to cut off each other's kites. Whoever keeps his kite in the air the longest wins.



### Songkran

In Thailand, a special three-day water festival from April 13–15 marks Songkran, the Buddhists' celebration of the new year. Parades feature huge statues of Buddha that spray water on passersby. In small villages, young people throw water at each other for fun. People also release fish into rivers as an act of kindness.

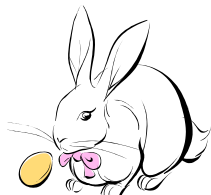


### Easter

On Easter, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. People attend church and also enjoy different Easter customs. In Germany, people make "egg trees" that are decorated like Christmas trees. In



Hungary, boys sprinkle girls with perfumed water — and in return, girls prepare a holiday dinner for them.



### Holi

For this Hindu spring festival, people dress in green. Children then squirt each other with water pistols filled with yellow- or red-colored liquid. They also blow colored powder on each other through bamboo pipes. Everyone gets soaked — and colorful — to celebrate spring.



### Aboakyere

The Effutu people of Ghana make a special offer to the god Panche Otu each spring with this deer-hunting festival.

Two teams of men and boys, dressed in bright costumes, compete to be the first to bring back a live deer to present to the chief. Then everyone dances together.



### Passover

The highlight of this major Jewish holiday is the Passover seder. During these two special dinners, families read from a book called the Haggadah about the ancient Israelites' exodus — or flight — from Egypt more than 3,000 years ago. While they honor their ancestors, Jews reaffirm the importance of freedom.



### May Day

To celebrate the return of spring, children in England dance around tall poles, called maypoles, decorated with ribbons. Their dancing wraps the ribbons tightly around the pole.



## Some Cool March Holidays



### National Pig Day

**When:** March 1st

*National Pig Day* recognizes and gives thanks to domesticated pigs. For some unknown reason, big, pot-bellied pigs seen in zoos are often the symbol of the day. Pigs are clever and intelligent animals. But, most people are unaware of this high level of intelligence. They can be taught to do tricks. Some people even keep them as pets. Today is a day to give pigs the respect that they deserve. National Pig day is celebrated by zoos, too. Activities include Snort Offs, Pig Outs, and online Pig Chats. However you choose, do not miss celebrating this day.

**Origin of National Pig Day:** Ellen Stanley, a Texas art teacher created National Pig Day in 1972. Her intent was to recognize and be thankful for pigs as intelligent domestic animals.

### Extraterrestrial Abductions Day

**When :** March 20th

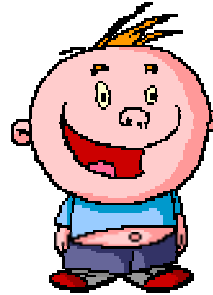
*Extraterrestrial Abductions Day* is a time to keep one eye on the sky and be ready to duck, dodge, and to hide. UFO's may be everywhere, looking to abduct humans. If you are not careful, perhaps they will find you! Of course, there are more than a few people out there who are looking to be abducted by aliens, so they can travel to another planet. Celebrate by reading and watching science fiction stories about UFOs and make sure to keep out of their sight.



### I Want You to be Happy Day

**When:** March 3rd

*"I Want You to be Happy Day"* is an unselfish day.



It's a thought that we wish upon others that we care for or love. Celebrate today by doing more than wishing someone is happy. Do something to make others happy. It can start with an Ecard that will put a smile on someone's face. Other ideas include a phone call, making positive compliments, or cooking a special meal. Be creative. There are endless ways to make others happy.

**Origin of "I Want You to be Happy Day":** Our research did not find the creator, or the origin of this day. Most likely it was created by a stationary or Ecard company, a candy company, or other gift giving venue.

### Everything You Do is Right Day

**When :** March 16th

*Everything You Do is Right Day* just might be a perfect day. Life is filled with ups and downs. Some days are good days. Some days are bad days. Most often, there's both good and bad in any given day. You take life's ups and downs with a grain of salt. Every once in a while, a day comes along where everything you do goes well.....the perfect day! Today is just the opposite of yesterday- - *Everything you Think is Wrong Day*. Sure, there is more than subtle differences in interpretation and meaning of the two days. But, you get the picture. Today is going to be your day... a good, errr make that great day!

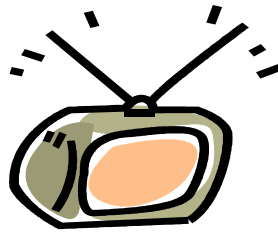


We hope everything you do goes right this day and every day.

# More Student Chirpings

## Showtime—Can We Compare?

Television and movies in my country, Ukraine, and America are very different, because they are two different cultures. Ukraine has only two the most popular movie productions: ADOvgenko in Kiev and AODessafilm in Odessa, but they can't be compared with American Hollywood, which is the motion-picture capital of the world. The differences are very evident. At first, Ukraine doesn't have money and brand new equipment, so it can't use new technology for making movies and popular programs. The reason for that is it a difficult economical situation in Ukraine. The U.S.A. has huge entertainment conglomerates which are very rich, popular, and highly-equipped companies. In spite of old equipment and lack of money, Ukrainian movie companies make good movies and TV programs. These movies show us nice light feelings like love, friendship, dignity, and responsibility for family and friends. These movies describe to us the real human relationships of trust and respect. Very often Ukrainian producers make movies from



the books of classical authors who are popular in my country. When people watch these movies, they are satisfied and sure they didn't waste time for nothing.

On TV in America, I've regularly seen movies which show violence, sex and a lot of blood. I don't like to watch these kinds of movies and fictitious movies with terrible, fantastic scenes. However, two things which I love to watch on American TV are the Food Channel and Animal Planet. They help me study English, make healthy food for my family, and learn more about the animal world.

I think that television and movies in my country, Ukraine, and America are very different. But the way they are similar is only in one thing -- their goal is to make attractive movies and TV shows to entertain people, but they do it in different ways.

Raisa Midasova R320

## The Boob Tube and Flicks Abroad (continued)

### Japan

In Japan, we don't need to pay to watch TV but we get only twelve channels. They repeat only shows that got high ratings. So mainly they play always brand new episodes. To watch a movie in the movie theater is about fourteen dollars in Japan and to rent a movie it costs about seven dollars. If you forget to return a DVD on the due date, the late due date fee increases rapidly.

Ayako Sonoyama

### Moldova

I remember when I was twelve years old. I lived in a settlement and for the first time I went to the cinema with my friend. The tickets were cheap, for ten cents. They showed the chronological movie of WWI and WWII. It was scary and I did not like the arrangement and the smell that was in the cinema.

Olga Legkiy

### Ukraine

Ukrainian people started watching "soaps" twenty years ago. I remember when people forgot about everything (even their jobs) when a "soap" started. It was the main topic in every conversation between men and women. Our people were watching "Santa Barbara" every evening for a couple of years.

Oksana Hutsul

### Korea

Korean TV dramas are so popular (historical and contemporary) in Asia and the Middle East. Therefore, thousands of Korean soap drama "maniacs" have formed and come to Korea to visit the place where the soap operas are made. Korea keeps a screen quota system to protect the domestic film industry from Hollywood. The foundation of the Korean film industry is not strong enough to stand on its own and to compete with foreign movies.

Sena Chung

### Ukraine

I see some differences in the news program. American news programs are usually concentrated on one state. But in Ukraine you can watch news and see all the facts about all over the world. And they do not hide. They explain everything. Sometimes I call my friends or relatives who live in Ukraine and they say a lot of interesting information about America that I do not know being in America.

Lesya Yantsevich

### Poland

In a completely different way movies are made in Poland. We do not have Polish Hollywood. Polish movies for sure don't have such huge movie stars with their salaries and production budgets are not so high like here. Also movies are different. They aren't as commercial as American movies. Polish movies do not always have happy endings like almost all American movies. For me it is very easy to predict the end in an American production.

Magdalena Sarniak

## *Sitting On My Bench*

Do you have somewhere, a place where you can stop from time to time and relax and think about ... maybe nothing. In these days life is running so quickly. People are so busy and very often depressed. It's really helpful to have a place to heal ourselves by getting good emotions. One of my favorite places is a bench in my front-yard. The bench is absolutely ordinary, wooden with metal fixtures, but I like it because I can see a nice view when I sit there, have a good short rest, and relax.

When I sit on the bench near my house, I see a beautiful picture: there are fifteen tall, old redwood trees along my street. There are also two pine trees and one is growing in the middle of my front yard. Always green and neatly-cut lawns make a good composition with these trees. In the evening when the sun sets, I can watch this wonderful scene, sitting on my bench, seeing how small pink clouds touch the tops of these huge trees and then suddenly disappear when the warm sun hides over the horizon. At night, when the sky is clear, I can watch another of God's

miracles — a lot of bright stars and a silver moon overhead.

Whenever I feel tired, I squeeze very quickly through my front door, sit on the bench, stretch my legs and stay there quiet for a few minutes. I leave a mess in my kitchen, noisy



fighting children, and a hungry husband behind the door for a while. I need a short rest and I successfully hide there. Sometimes when I am sick of writing my essays and smart ideas leave my head, I take a basket and my children with me to pick up cones and pine needles near our pine tree next to my bench. It is relaxing too.

When I feel bad or sad, I go to sit on my lovely bench and smell the nice coniferous aroma on my street. It reminds me of my light-hearted childhood. Our house was next to a big forest, and I went there with my

parents every weekend. On my summer vacations, I was always in a girl scout camp in the forest. Early in the morning, we jogged through the forest and breathed in deeply that clear pine air. Of course, it's not that wonderful forest from my childhood now, but on my bench, the forest still smells strong and the air is clearer than on the next street. I inhale deeply, close my eyes, and I am a little girl and there is no problem. A few minutes pass and I can smile again.

As you can see, what an amazing place the bench in my front-yard is! I can see such marvelous pictures there, I can have a brief rest, and I can start to work with new energy. If I feel bad or nervous, I can relax there and forget about my problems for a while.

My advice is if you still don't have a favorite place where you feel good and comfortable, try to find one -- it's really good therapy in our busy lives.

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