

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



The Parrot



My Little Superman's Big Struggles

It was the fall of 2016 when we first arrived in the state of Virginia. I still remember my husband's first sentence as the plane landed: "A better land, a better future for our kids." Then he turned to my 4-year-old son, Abaan, who was fond of "Superman," and told him, "You will be a real Superman one day."

Soon after that, Abaan was enrolled in a kindergarten, Samuel Tucker pre-elementary school, which was a mile and a half away from our apartment. Abaan's English was very poor. He knew some alphabetic letters and a few numbers, but he still



Continued on page 23

ESL Scholarship.....	2
Finding Happiness.....	3
My Mistake.....	7
Oh, no! Public Speaking!.....	9
ESL Certificates for You!.....	12
Dragon Tea Cafe.....	16
Las Vegas for Families?!.....	18
Ghandi: A Book Review.....	25
IR-5 Visa.....	27
Chopsticks Etiquette.....	29
Mahnaz Peroz	33
Moorish American Sect.....	39
Beautiful Buttes.....	41

Shipwreck ARC Student Lost at Sea...Almost!

Parrot Staff Writer: Phong Nguyen

Editor's Grammar Note: There are four boats named in this article: the Ken, the Captain Jimmy, and the Sensational 1. The names are in italics.

Because these are the names of boats, English uses "the" before the names.

I went on a trip to the Caribbean Sea as a Vietnamese-English interpreter in November, 2023. The captain could only speak basic English, so I went with him.

Continued on page 32



Would you like to contribute to The Parrot?

Page 15

Free Museum Day March 2-3.
[Register](#) for tickets.

The Susan Pezone Memorial ESL Scholarship

The Susan Pezone Memorial ESL Scholarship

Thanks to the generous donations of the family and friends of Professor Susan Pezone, the ESL Department at American River College has established a **\$500** scholarship to honor the memory of Professor Susan Pezone, a dear ESL colleague, who passed away in Fall 2020. Professor Pezone was a wonderful teacher, colleague, and writer, who is sorely missed.

Requirements:

This scholarship will be awarded to three ARC ESL students who have the same **love of learning and writing** that Professor Pezone showed in her teaching and in her own writing, with preference going to students who have already completed a **minimum of 30 units in ESL at ARC**.

Timeline:

The application time period for the Spring 2024 scholarship will be from 03/05/24 to 03/29/24, and the the winner of the scholarships will be announced in early May 2024. The application closes on March 29, 2024 at 5 PM.

***Please complete the form below to apply for the Susan Pezone Memorial ESL Scholarship:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeniTrH2B5ipduelz-delMeg-nUbxuh-sevpPjeG8AdTs-iOQ/viewform?usp=sf_link



"I love words though they sometimes get the better of me. Being a writer has always been my dream. For me, writing is kind of like studying a language. I know I'll never master it, but it doesn't matter because it's so much fun along the way." --Susan Pezone in A Collection of River Rock Writing: Sacramento (page 65)

Student Chirpings

Finding Happiness

Have you found yourself living in an ordinary moment of your life, but in that moment, you found happiness? People can find happiness in many things. There is not a manual of instructions for being happy. However, it is not too hard to find. Happiness can be enjoying nature, enjoying a moment with family, or trying new things.

Some people can find happiness simply by enjoying nature. It is hard to imagine a world without nature, without beautiful trees, mountains, or valleys. When they see the sunlight shining through the leaves of the trees or when they feel the touch of the wind, they find happiness. Some people find happiness just by listening to the sound of the ocean or the whispering water of a river. Happiness can be found by contemplating and appreciating the beauty of nature. Breathing fresh air, enjoying a sunset, or watching the moon rise can bring happiness. And of course, having someone special or family with whom they can share all these things can make them feel happy.

For some people, being able to share and spend time with family brings them happiness. Celebrating birthdays, holidays, weekends, exploring nature, or going on vacation together makes them feel happy. Sharing memories with them, making jokes, and telling stories about their adventures do the trick. There are some people who find happiness in friends who become family, in special individuals who bring joy to their lives. Instants like watching a sports game, laughing with each other, and playing

board games are now moments that might last forever because they make them happy. And one of these moments can also be when they try new things.

Trying new things can be scary at first, but when someone risks themselves to do it, they might find happiness. Who doesn't remember the first time when they were driving a car? That feeling of accomplishment and freedom made them happy. Learning how to sew clothes, how to bake a cake, or how to fly an airplane might make somebody find happiness. When someone faces their fears and overcomes them, that is happiness. So, it might be a good idea to try to do something new and learn a new ability because happiness can be there.



In conclusion, people can find happiness in simple and ordinary things. Simple things like enjoying nature, enjoying a moment with family, and learning new things are some ways to feel happy. There are many moments and circumstances in which people experience happiness. Happiness is simple. It doesn't require much effort, but it may

last forever in their memory. Learning to enjoy the small and insignificant moments in life is one way to find happiness.

Erika P. Madrid - ESL 47
Opinion Essay

Those Who Built the Real Ones

Every immigrant coming to any country is attentive to details; for example, its details of architecture, people's lives, and monuments. Also, I'm an immigrant, and I can confidently say that I saw everything. When I see interesting buildings or places, I try to find out about them. When you are in a new city or country, you are not familiar with everything. So you are interested in knowing everything. I think it's right to learn the history of the city where you live.

As the saying goes, "If you know the history, you know the future." I would like to tell you what I had to learn about our city of Sacramento. In fact, I'm going to talk about every famous and important personality in the city. I think we need to start with the founder of our city.

This is John A. Sutter, who is of Swiss origin, who once saw the banks of the American River and the Sacramento River and began to build the future city. The first that was built was a sawmill. Thanks to the sawmill, gold was discovered. This prompted a large influx of settlers. John A. Sutter built the fort and thus the solid foundation for the city. However, his son continued his father's work, and in 1848 he invited an engineer-topographer to build the city. And, he drew up the plan of the city, which included 31 streets from north to south and 26 streets from east to west. This is how the city of Sacramento was founded.



The next important personality is Hardin Bigelow. In 1850, this man became the first mayor of our city. He built the first dams in Sacramento and built the dams at his own expense. It is also worth saying that he was to rebuild Sacramento after a big fire. By the way, the city was rebuilt not of wood, but of steel, iron, and bricks. Hardin Bigelow became a significant personality for the city.

Another personality is the woman who gave Sacramento the best private art collection in the West.

This is Margret Eleanor Rhodes. Her husband was an active opponent of slavery. This wedded pair had many tricks, but they had to do an incredible amount for the city. They collected a large collection

in Germany. When they returned home, they set up a large gallery complex. Margret became a famous philanthropist and a significant community leader for Sacramento. Her credits include the construction of the Bell Conservatory, the orangery on the 9th and the 10th streets, and homes for women who needed these.

All of these people are integral parts of Sacramento's history. It was very interesting for me to learn the stories of these people.

Liliia Surzhykova - ESL37
Opinion Essay

What Do You Miss from Your Country?

In our world, we have a hard life. That's why any good things in our lives become something special. We keep them in our memory for all our lives. In my old life, I had a good life in my hometown. I had good friends, good summer times, and a car, and now I miss all those things.

I was born in Far East Russia in Vladivostok city. All my good memories from the past are associated with this city. The city was located on a peninsula. So, there were bays around it. I love that city, but especially I love my home area. I think it was in a perfect location. It was not so far from downtown, and at the same time it wasn't on the border of the city. It was such a perfect location, so my family never even thought about changing

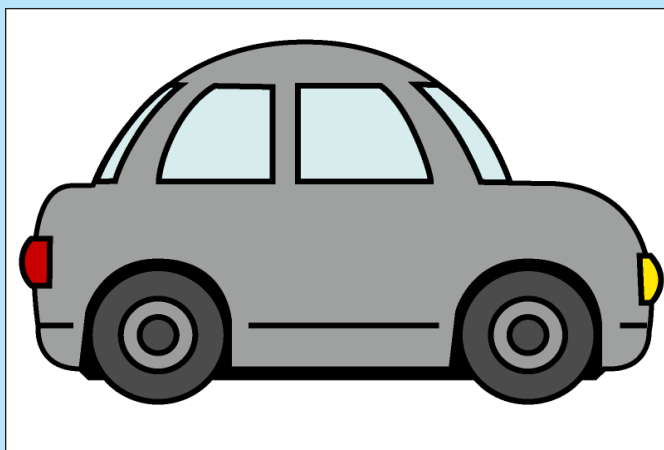
this place for living. So, I was born and lived there. All my childhood was spent there and I think it wasn't bad. Even when I became an adult, I loved sometimes just walking in my home area. Looking at the old garages, trees, and homes of my old friends and remembering some good things about them. Also, I loved

my school where I spent ten years of my life. Walking along these streets that were dear to me. I met people I know. I was glad to meet many people and learn how their lives were changing. Sometimes I also loved to ride in my home area. Once I even rode with my friend until 3 a.m. Sometimes I even went far from home to the sea, and there I had a special place for me. It was a very beautiful place, where I loved to see the sea and think about life. I loved to think a lot, but I especially thought about my friends.

In our lives, we meet a lot of different people. Some of them even become our friends. Sometimes I love to remember my friends from my childhood. It's very interesting for me to imagine

how they live now. Also, I like to think about my school friends. I spent years with them and have some good memories about spending time together. Some of them weren't only school friends, they also were friends from the street. So I really loved to spend time with them after school or on summer holidays. Sometimes we played together, went to the movies, played video games, or rode skateboards or bikes. I'm very glad that even right now I have a connection with them and I'm very glad about that. I really loved spending time with them and I think that they were a treasure.

Another thing I really miss from my country is my first car. Having my own car was a great benefit for me. This allowed freedom of movement. I



remember how my friend helped me to make a decision to choose the model and looked at it physically. It was a long process for me, so I even tired. Finally, we found a good one, but it wasn't our city. So we went to look at it in another city. It was a small JDM (Japanese Domestic Market) gray color car with a manual transmission, 0.6-liter turbo engine, and all-

wheel drive system with central diff lock. So, it was a perfect choice for me and we bought it. From 2012 until I went out of the country, it was my favorite car. I was even sad when I parked that car in the airport parking and saw it for the last time in my life. Even though I live here now, I still miss my car. I found out some information about it. I wish that my car could had a good life even without me, but unfortunately, I discovered that my favorite car finished its life in the junkyard.

The last thing I want to write about here is my summer times. Living in Russia, summer was a special part of my life. The summer was short, so my whole life was waiting for this. It was only three months, but it was the best time of my life. All my

best memories were in the summertime and I really loved it. The weather in summer was warm but not too hot. So, we lived comfortably even without air conditioners. I really loved sunny days because on those days I felt happy. I loved spending time with my friends and my family. Also, I really loved riding my bike along the sea. I could go very far and return home late in the evening. Sometimes I went with my friends and sometimes alone. I liked stopping at different beaches and swimming in the water,

relaxing, and then moving on. Now, I understand how little I needed to feel happy.

In our lives, we always lose something and find something. I don't know. Was my past life the best part of my life or was it only the beginning? But I'm glad when my family, my friends, and other people have something good in their life.

Artem Levchenk - ESL 47
Descriptive Essay

I am from Afghanistan. I moved to Sacramento in 2019 from Afghanistan. I moved because my dad had a job with the American army, so we were in danger. I miss many things in Afghanistan. I miss my grandfather's cat. I miss the restaurants. I miss the food which we call *kabuli pulo* because it was very yummy. I miss my grandmother. She taught me how to pray. She bought me food and I love her so much. But the things I miss the most are my village, my dog, my car, and my friends.

I had a dog in Afghanistan. The color of my dog is white. The dog was very silent and respectful to people. He did not fight with other dogs. He came with me to go shopping and we went to the park to play together. I miss my dog. He was so smart and ran so fast. The price of the dog was 800 Afghani. Everybody came to me and said, "You wanna sell your dog?" My answer was no. He was with me for years, then I came to America. I miss him so much.

I miss my village for many reasons. The name of my village was Pachkil. There were a lot of fruit trees such as mango, apple, and banana. There were good people. We helped each other. If something happened to my home, all the people in my village would come to my house and they would be respectful to each other. In addition, I played cricket. Every Friday there was a game in the stadium. I also had a restaurant in my village. I sold soup. Every day, 100-200 customers came to my restaurant. I was so happy in my village.

Another thing that I really miss about my

country is my car. The model of the car was a 2001 Toyota Corolla. The color of the car was white. The car had 5 seats. This car was my first car in Afghanistan. It was a good car. When school was off, I went to have some fun with my friends. After three years, my dad sold my car. I was very sad. I asked my dad why he sold my car, and he said I was driving too fast. I told him that I never drive too fast. Finally, he bought me another car. I was very happy, but I still miss my first car. I really enjoyed driving. The car was clean, but the wheels were not. The cost of my first car was \$6,000. It was a treasure.

Finally, I had a special group of ten friends in Afghanistan. We were friends. When I was 7 years old, we solved problems with each other. We had a cricket team. Our team was called the Pachkil team. We played with each other. I miss many things about my friends. I miss our conversations. I miss eating in the restaurant with my friends. The thing I miss the most is when two friends in the group fought. We all slapped those two. I miss my stories. I love my friends and I miss them all the time.

I am living in America now. I have a very good life right now, but I miss a few things from my native country, especially my village, my dog, my car, and my friends. Even so, I am happy in America.

Jahanzeb Tofan - ESL 47
Descriptive Essay

My Mistake

My Travel Mistake

I made the biggest mistake of my life three months ago. I didn't check my children's passports before booking our tickets. However, I noticed after my husband asked me to have a cross-check 7 weeks before our flight. I took my kids to the USPS office immediately and applied for their passports as an expedited service. Due to the backlog, their passports took almost 7 weeks and finally, we received them 1 day before our flight. It was a miracle that happened in my life. I didn't expect their passports to arrive on time. I shouldn't have made this mistake. I should have updated their passports ahead of our travel.

Shabana Danish - ESL 37
Descriptive Paragraph



My Mistake

When I was younger, I lived in Afghanistan. One day, my mother was sick. We had so many guests. I wasn't very good at cooking. I cooked meat and rice for guests, but I didn't put salt in my food. My guests didn't eat food properly. I was so sad. I decided to be a good chef. I watched cooking on YouTube until I learned how to cook. My mom was so happy.

Shakira Danish - ESL 37
Descriptive Paragraph



My Thanks



People around the world are grateful for many different things. I come from Ukraine. I came to the United States two years ago. I immigrated here because there is war in my country and America is a safe place for my whole family. As an immigrant, I am thankful for Sacramento, my car, and for the opportunity to learn English.

First, I am thankful for Sacramento. This is a perfect place to live. Sacramento is in California – the Golden State of America. This state got its nickname because of the large deposit of gold that was found here in 1849 during the Gold Rush. Another reason why Sacramento is the perfect place to live is its climate. It is dry and hot. This is interesting, but if we move two hours from Sacramento the weather changes. It becomes colder. This fact makes this place just right for me. I feel comfortable here. Furthermore, there are many kinds of plants in Sacramento. I was surprised when I saw palms and oaks growing together. There are so many kinds of fruits and vegetables here that are cheap. My kids can eat healthy food every day of the year. It is great. Moreover, Sacramento is an economically developed city. There are many possibilities for working and to become more successful. In brief, Sacramento is the place I am really thankful for.

Second, I am grateful for my car. It is a gift from relatives. When I first came to America, I didn't have a car. I chose only the most necessary trips so that my relatives would take me there. Everything changed when I got my car. Now I feel free to go wherever I need to. My car is nice and comfortable. It is economical. It is very important to me. I had never driven a car before in my country, so it was a new experience for me. It is so exciting. I'm very grateful for the fact that I can go to work, college, shopping, or vacation in my car, and I feel good when I'm driving. I am thankful to my relatives for my car.

Lastly, I am grateful for the opportunity to learn English. In Ukraine, I learned English, but it seemed impossible to speak English well. It was my dream. In America, I have an opportunity to develop my skills, and my dream will come true. Now, I can learn English not only in theory but also in practice. I went to school last year and now I am in college. I use my English everywhere. English creates a big possibility for me to have a good job in the future. The more I know English, the more confident I become in America. Learning English is important because it is a chance to have more friends from different countries and understand different cultures. In addition, with my English, I will help other Ukrainians who just arrived in the United States. I am really thankful for the chance in my life to learn English.

Indeed, Sacramento, my nice new car, and the possibility to learn English are the things I am grateful for. To be an immigrant is very hard, but there are so many reasons to give thanks.

**Iryna Danchuk – ESL 47
Opinion Essay**

How did I feel during my first public speaking in English?

Have you ever delivered a public speech in a foreign language? If so, how did it make you feel? I want to share a story that happened in 2023 at American River College in Sacramento. During the fall semester, I challenged myself to enroll in Communication 301. So that you understand, I have always been afraid of public speaking, although I have a higher legal education and I have had experience speaking in front of an audience in Russia. However, I still had a fear of speaking, and here I had to speak in English. I was very confused by the fact that in my class all the students come from high school, and they speak quickly, using idioms or new words that I have never heard before. It is not even a matter of age difference because I feel like I am eighteen years old, but I speak like a robot compared to them. In this blog, I will share my experiences and emotions as I prepare for my first public speaking assignment.

First, for my Communication assignment, I was required to watch a 23-minute-long video and analyze it. Then, I had to write a three to four-minute speech explaining how the author of the video uses ethos, pathos, and logos. I can explain what they are. Ethos is about trust and reliability; pathos involves appealing to the audience's emotions, and logos involves using facts and evidence to make a point. I have begun to learn new vocabulary. To be honest, it was not an easy task to accomplish. I had to

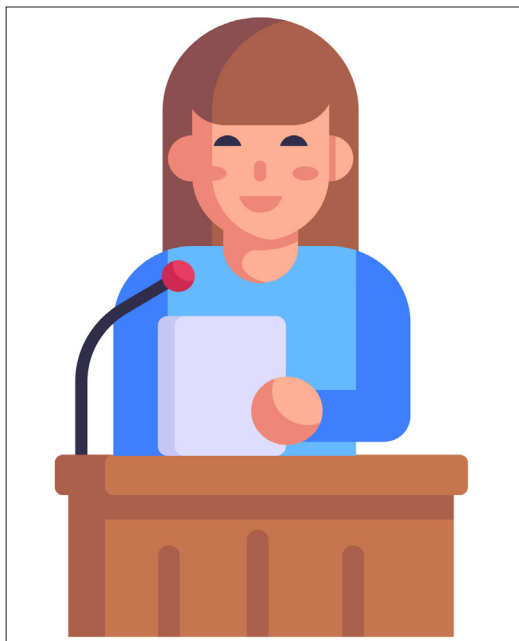
put in a lot of effort because the words were long and difficult to pronounce. For example, words that I would need to use for my assignment included: approximately, heartbreaking, incarceration, empathetic, persuasive, etc. Well, I learned these words by constantly saying them out loud.

The more I did this, the more I realized that I would not be able to pronounce them correctly. I was so overcome with fear and understanding that I would not be able to make this speech. I decided to talk to the professor and drop out of his course.

My next step was to have an honest conversation with my professor. The professor and I met online on Zoom. His name is Professor Adam. The professor is a young man of 32 years old. I told the professor about my worries and that I wanted to drop out of his course, that I only understood 30 percent of my classmates. The professor listened to me and recommended that I try

to finish this class and that I could count on his help. After our speaking, I felt relief because I let him know about my fear of public speaking and the professor was incredibly understanding and supportive. This conversation gave me the confidence that I was not alone and that I had support.

After a conversation with the professor, I began to practice speaking a lot. The best method was to practice my speech in front of the mirror. For several days, I stood in front of the mirror and practiced my speech repeatedly.



It was hard for me, but thanks to consistent practice, my pronunciation improved, and my throat discomfort decreased. Difficult words became easier to pronounce. Next, I practiced my speech with my family. Unfortunately, my husband was at work during this period, and since he works as a truck driver, he was not lucky enough to listen to my speech. I tried to rehearse my speech in front of my children, imagining that my children were the audience I was supposed to speak to. However, my children are too young to understand this test. At first, they laughed at me, and then they asked me to be silent. It was fun. The next thing I did was record my speech on video. It was a little uncomfortable but very helpful. This allowed me to see where I needed to improve my delivery. For example, the way I used my hands and the tone of voice. All these methods helped me improve my pronunciation and memorize my speech, but the fear and uncertainty of whether I could speak in public in English did not leave me.

When the day arrived for my first public speech, I experienced a whirlwind of emotions. I was haunted by the fear of being stupid and the thought that I might make pronunciation mistakes. The thought of embarrassing myself or looking stupid because I had experience in public speaking as a lawyer drove me crazy. Doubts began to creep in: "Can I really do this?," "Can I overcome my fear and doubts when speaking in public?" These questions kept ringing in my head, but I knew I could not let fear hold me back.

Finally, the day of my first public speaking assignment arrived. I stood in front of the class, feeling ready, but fear took over me. I could not maintain eye contact. I read my speech. I was afraid that I would not be able to speak English clearly and that my class-

mates would not be able to understand me.

Even though I read my text and practically did not look at the audience, I am proud of myself that I went and faced my fear, did not get scared, did not drop out of class, but stood up and read my speech. There are many challenges ahead of me and I am sure each of them will be better than the previous one.

**Tatiana Chueva – ESL 325
Narrative Essay**





Parrot Pastimes - My Hobbies



One of my favorite hobbies is learning the English language. There are a lot interesting and exciting things in the world around us. A person's hobbies are something that the person does not only because he or she needs to, but because that person also likes it. I like to learn the English language because I need more friends. I like to watch movies in English, and the most importantly I want to have a good job.

First, I want to have more English-speaking friends and more communication in English. For this, I need to learn this language. Furthermore, I understand that English is very important in this country. College helps me a lot in learning English. I learned a lot during my first semester at American River College. I like to learn English in my free time. I like to practice this language and I am happy about it. In summary, I believe that learning the English language is very important, and I am glad I have the opportunity to learn this language. I hope that I will have more friends when I know this language better.

Second, I like to watch movies in English. My favorite movie is *Titanic*. The *Titanic* was the most colossal ship ever by modern standards. Its tragic disaster will always be remembered as the ship that sank on its maiden voyage with great loss. In my opinion, the plot is particularly interesting, and you can immerse yourself in this film when you watch it in the English language. This is a very impressive film. In addition, it is a touching love story. For example, when I watched this movie, I always got emotional and cried. In short, I advise

everyone to watch the movie *Titanic*.

Next, one of the most important reasons why I like to learn English is that I want to have a good job. To have a good job, you need to know the language, understand everything, and communicate freely. If you don't know English, you can't have a good job. If you don't have a good job, you will not be able to provide for your family, pay for housing, and everything else. Furthermore, I really like to learn English and it is my hobby. Although sometimes I think it's quite difficult, I continue to study. I have a goal and it motivates me even more and gives me strength. Lastly, I hope I will be able to learn English well and get a good job.

Indeed, I am happy that my hobby of studying English helps me a lot in life. I hope that in the future, it will help me in many ways. Then, I will have a good job, many friends, and opportunities.

Ivanna Pnivchuk - ESL47
Opinion Essay



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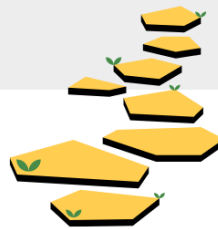
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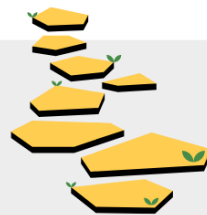
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What is an ESL Guided Pathways Milestone Certificate? Watch this video to find out!

https://youtu.be/_fUQhLPNMV4?si=Tb5Jvc1zUJnvJpSW

Beginner Reading Comprehension



Bug in a Bottle

Charles found a glass bottle. He found the glass bottle in his back yard. It was a pretty glass bottle. It was dark green. He looked inside the dark green bottle. He couldn't see anything. He shook the bottle. Something came out of the bottle. It landed on the ground. It was a bug. Charles picked up the bug. He looked at it. The bug looked at Charles. Charles put the bottle back on the ground. He put the bug on the ground, next to the bottle. The bug crawled back into the bottle.

Want to listen to this story? Click on the website below:

<https://www.eslfast.com/supereasy/se/supereasy016.htm>

Can you answer these questions?

1. What is the color of the bottle?

- A) It is a red bottle.
- B) It's a dark green bottle.

2. What came out from the bottle?

- A) A parrot.
- B) A bug.
- C) A tooth.
- D) A lady bug.

3. What did Charles do to the bug?

- A) He didn't do anything.
- B) He killed it.
- C) He picked up the bug.

4. Did the bug run away?

- A) No, it went back into the bottle.
- B) Yes, it flew away.
- C) No information.





Hello
Spring!

Would you like to
contribute to *The Parrot* ?

If you want to share your work, art,
opinion, or anything else with
The Parrot, please email us at
TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. We would be
happy to hear from you and will try to
respond ASAP.

The Parrot welcomes all ESL student
matters!



Restaurant Review

DRAGON TEA CAFE



Dragon Tea Cafe is a delightful Vietnamese restaurant located in Antelope. It offers a variety of options, including coffee, desserts, and, of course, an impressive tea selection. Whether you're in the mood for a cozy dine-in experience or prefer to enjoy their delicious offerings at home, Dragon Tea Cafe has got you covered with multiple service options: delivery, take-out, and dine-in.

If you are fascinated by boba tea and *banh mi* (sandwiches), this is your place. You can adjust the sugar level of your drink, which is helpful for some people who prefer less sugar in their diet. Additionally, they offer dairy-free boba milk tea for those who are lactose intolerant. Some people want caffeine-free but like to drink tea, so they offer some caffeine-free milk tea, too.

We loved the jasmine milk tea, and the winter melon milk tea comes along with various selections of boba. They are so good with the choice of less sugar and less ice. For the food, we ordered *banh mi* (sandwiches) with the option of level of spicy and three kinds of meat (beef, pork, or chicken). The

sandwich is crunchy and full of flavor together with cucumber, cilantro, and pepper. It's kind of spicy. The price of milk tea is reasonable, but the sandwiches are a bit pricey. We love the decoration of the restaurant. It's very clean and neat. The service was fast and good. We will surely come back here again. Come and check it out.

Location:
4400 Elverta Road #180
Antelope, CA 95843
Hours: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

**Reviewed by:
The Parrot Staff Writers**



VISUALS CAN BE DECEIVING: A FILM REVIEW OF DRISHYAM

Drishyam is a crime film made in India and which was directed by Nishikant Kamat and released on July 31, 2015. *Ajay Devgan*, *Tabu*, *Shriya Saran*, *Ishita Dutta*, *Murnal Jadhav*, and *Rajat Kapoor* played the lead roles in *Drishyam*. It is quite interesting that a whole family acted together in this movie. In real life, *Ajay Devgan*, who played the role of "Vijay Salgaonkar," is an orphan who dropped out of school in the fourth grade. Working hard in different capacities, ultimately, he became the owner of a cable TV service in Goa, India. He is married to *Shriya Saran* (who played the role of "Nandini"), and they have two daughters, *Ishita Dutta* and *Murnal Jadhav*, who played the roles of "Anju" and "Anu" respectively. Apart from his family, his only interest is watching films.

In the movie, when Anju, the elder daughter, attends a nature camp through her school, a nude video of her gets recorded. *Meera Deshmukh* is Inspector General of Police (played by actress *Tabu*), and her son, *Sam Deshmukh*, is the culprit who recorded the video to take advantage of Anju. After the nature camp, Sam meets Anju at her house to blackmail her to get sexual favors. Even though Sam asked Anju not to share the issue with anyone and meet him in her storage room at night, she shared the issue with her mother, *Nandini*. When Sam arrives, *Nandini* shows up and requests him to delete the video. He agrees on the condition that *Nandini* have sex with him. Anju attacks Sam and hits him on the head with a rod that kills him instantly. *Nandini* and *Anju* bury Sam's body in their house garden, but this is seen by *Anu*. Later, when *Vijay* comes home, his family informs him of the incident, and he plans strategically to save his family from the police.

Meera the Inspector realizes that her son has gone missing, and with the initial investigation, she begins to suspect *Vijay* and his family. Learning from

the movies and predicting that this would happen, *Vijay* plans a cover-up to protect his family. *Vijay* coaches and trains his family on how to stick to the plan and change their statements when they are questioned individually. *Vijay* practices the plan with his family to stick to the alibi no matter what happens. *Meera* arrests the family to beat the truth out of them. During the investigation, *Meera* learns from *Sam's* friend *Alex* about the video that *Sam* made of *Anju*. After the police thrash the family for a few days, *Anu* reveals that she saw *Nandini* and *Anju* burying *Sam's* dead body in their house garden.

The police dig up the house garden but only find the remains of a calf. *Vijay* walks to the crowd to let them know that the police had beat his family including his children. The police attempt to attack *Vijay* and his family but are stopped by the public.

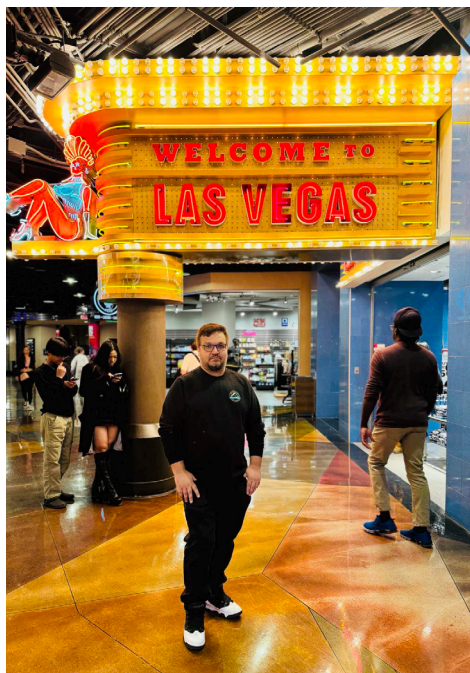
I watched *Drishyam* several times. It is very thought-provoking and asks some difficult questions. Besides asking the audience very tough questions, *Drishyam* teaches us that family comes first and that the whole family needs to support each other, but there always should be a limit for protection of our families to not break law and commit any crime. Helping family members to hide the truth and lie is also a crime that leads individuals, families, and communities to com-

mit more crimes and creates chaos. What we learn from the movie is that we should support our family members during their hard times to the extent of not breaking any laws as there is rule of law and government systems to determine what is right/wrong or what happened intentionally or by accident. This film also looks closely at the need for family members to have each other's back no matter how powerful your enemy is. The film not only entertains you, but also makes you think about how to love, care for, and support your family members in their hard times.



Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi

Family Fun in Las Vegas? In Las Vegas!



Let me start with this, it is very important how you see the world through your glasses, not how people want you to see the world. Migration to the United States of America taught me that diversity is power, strength, skills, and accessibility to so many things that you don't even know if you don't live in a diverse environment. It is so pleasant and joyful that I am working at American River College, a diverse environment, where you can find people from so many countries, speaking multiple different languages but studying or working under the same roof. It is a good part of the American lifestyle that people talk about their holiday plans with each other. In late fall 2023, at the end of my shift, one of my co-workers asked me, what is your plan for the holidays. I answered I was planning to have a 5-day family trip to Las Vegas. She was kind of shocked and wondered. First, she said, a family trip to Vegas? Then she asked, do you like gambling or do you like drinking? I said, no. Then she said, why then are you going to Las Vegas? I said it was not my first time going to Las Vegas. There are so many clean and fun

things to do in Las Vegas with family too.

I remember it was 2019 when I visited Las Vegas for the very first time. It was an engagement ceremony for one of my friends



there. I traveled to Las Vegas with a group of good friends. So, I was familiar with the area when I planned to go with my family to Vegas for the New Year celebration. I knew exactly how to plan the trip and what should be on my trip list. Hence, I booked my hotel in the strip area of Vegas a month in advance, where you can have access to basically everything even by walking. I drove from Sacramento to Vegas and it took me about 11 to 12 hours to drive with the breaks I took to eat and rest along the way with my family. Once I arrived at the hotel and settled down in my hotel room with a great view of the Vegas fancy decorated resorts. Initially, I reviewed my trip list and went over the trip list and the trip plan for the next day and then rested till the next day to get enough energy to be ready to explore Vegas.

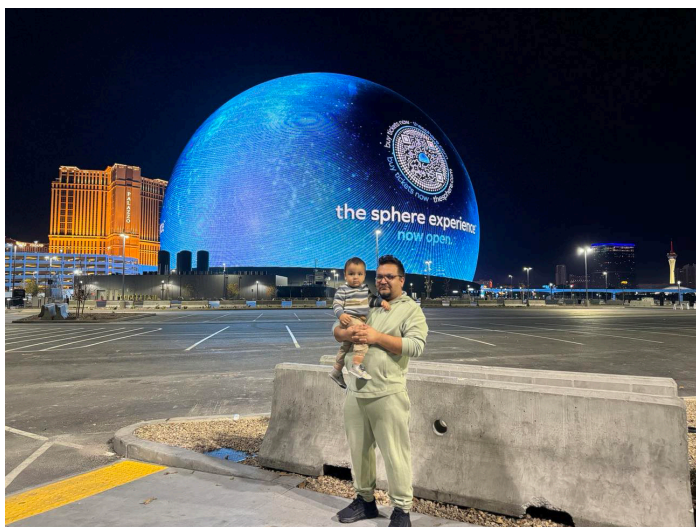
The first day of my trip to Vegas started with getting a proper breakfast and then taking my family to MGM Garden. MGM Garden is a huge shopping mall inside the MGM Resort. There are so many nicely decorated shops and super nice restaurants with so many options of food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner with live music. It was great shopping and we had noodles in a Chinese restaurant, which was a good experience. The next thing that was on our plan for that day was to visit the Sphere, which is a 366-foot tall and 516-foot wide structure. The exterior of the building is a rounded structure encased in 580,000 square feet of LED screen- fittingly named the Exosphere. According to its developers, it is the "Largest LED Screen on the earth." I think it could be one of the world's wonders.

The second day of our trip started and I should mention that it is always good to start the day by getting out of your place of stay at Vegas in the afternoon because most of the places, good views, and entertainment locations are better to experience when it is getting dark. On the second day around the evening time, we went to see the Fountains of Bellagio. Thousands of people were there and were watching the beautiful and free entertaining musical fountain show performed in an 8.5-acre man-made

lake in front of the resort. It is said that the attraction was built in 1998 for \$40 million and was the most expensive fountain in the world until the Dubai Fountain opened in 2009. Later on, we had dinner at Mon Ami Gabi, a restaurant in the Paris Hotel and Casino where we had a direct view of the Fountains of Bellagio musical and fountain show, and we had American steak with French fries and mashed potatoes. It was really enjoyable and we had a really great time.

On the third day of our trip, we had so many places left to still go and visit. So, the first thing we did was go to a very famous Afghan restaurant in Vegas for lunch. The restaurant is called Green and Grilled. It has really a great taste of Afghan food in America. It is one of the best. Following that day, in the evening time, we went to the Vegas Strip and bought tickets for the Las Vegas High Roller. It was an outstanding experience being 550 feet above the center of the Las Vegas Strip on the tallest observation wheel in North America. The wheel took 30 minutes to complete one revolution and within that 30 minutes we had the chance to see the whole city of Las Vegas from a great top view, and it was truly an amazing experience being with my family at that moment.

The next thing on our trip list was to go to a location to see the fireworks at the New Year celebration time. Fortunately, we were at the heart of the Las Vegas Strip, and by the time we got out of the High Roller, all the streets to the Vegas Strip were blocked and millions of people gathered to celebrate the New Year 2024. So, we had to spend long hours rooming around the Vegas Strip waiting for the New Year celebration time which was fun and fantastic. A short video link is there to see how big and amazing was the New Year celebration in Las Vegas.



On our last day in Vegas, we had an amazing time going to the Mandalay Bay Resort Shark Reef Aquarium. It was the first experience for me and my family seeing sharks live and not on TV, and we really enjoyed spending our time there. Later on that day, we went to Fremont Street Experience, which is a pedestrian mall and attraction in downtown Las Vegas where there are ziplines people can ride and it feels like flying in the sky. I really wanted to try the zipline; however, my wife said it is super scary, and she was afraid of something going wrong, so we did not try the zipline. The environment, shops, restaurants, and lots of beautifully decorated lights, especially the LED screens above the street, were so interesting and unique and really worth visiting.

Overall, we had a really great and family-friendly trip to Las Vegas. We visited so many places and still, there are more interesting attractions place to visit with family, which we will plan in our next trip to Vegas. The New Year celebration and fireworks were super amazing and I think very few locations of the United States celebrate the New Year in so big a way. Finally, I just want to say that it is more important how you see the world rather than how people want you to see the world. If I were listening to people's views, most would say that a family trip to Vegas is not a good idea. However, I think it is a great idea and we really enjoyed having this trip without any gambling or drinking which Las Vegas is so famous for.

Parrot Staff Writer: Sayed Edres Sadiqi





English Conversation Group

● ● ● *Fridays 5:00-6:00 | North Natomas library*

Want to practice speaking English? Join our friendly group!

All languages and levels welcome. No registration. Meet new people and share experiences. This is not a class; it's more a social group for practicing.

Check "Events" for **more locations and times** at www.saclibrary.org.

Topics:

- Everyday life & things to do
- American culture
- News, pop culture
- Other...You help decide!

Groups are led by a trained facilitator. We hope to see you there!

Some More Parrot Fun

Finding Hidden Words



Challenge:
Find 6 hidden words.

See the answers on page 35.
Click [here](#) to see more fun stuff.

Continued from page 1

couldn't understand the language and the task given to him.

Sometimes, teachers would use sign language to facilitate things. He could not make friends because he could not understand them. As a result, he was always seen alone in the library, cafeteria, and playground. Abaan used to come back crying; he wanted to go back home because he hated both school and language. My mother (Abaan's grandma) received many phone calls from Abaan telling her that he has no friends and hates staying there!

My son's suffering continued not only with the language but with the new culture. One day he needed his classmate to pass him the green crayon, so he put his hand on her shoulder and pointed at the green crayon. Shortly after this incident, I received a phone call from Abaan's classroom teacher to the effect that she wanted to see me.

Immediately, I dressed and went to the school. Mrs. Shelton, the classroom teacher, asked me to teach my son how to keep his hands to himself and not tap someone's shoulder when he asks for things! Well, Mrs. Shelton, you could have saved the day by teaching him how to say: "Excuse me"! We could have avoided all this hustle and bustle!

Abaan's struggle continued. His limited vocabulary was not helping him enough to express or convey what he wanted to say. Even when he tried to say something, he was called "weird" or was laughed at! This had a great impact on him emotionally, psychologically, and physically. He started having ulcers in his mouth, and urinated in his bed. He was not a happy, comfortable child who enjoyed life like any other kid of his age. My heart burned and broke for him as I watched the apple of my eye suffering at this young age!

There was nothing I could do. I know learning a language is not an easy task; it takes at least six months to speak the language and gain back

someone's confidence. The matter with Abaan might take longer because he hated everyone around him. Another reason is that when someone learns a language, he/she always uses his/her mother tongue to compare and contrast, but the case with Abaan was that his "limited" and "fractured" Arabic could not help him enough at the time he needed to make such comparison and contrast, and that poured more misery onto his problem!

The only happy time my little boy had was when his ESL teacher took him out of his classroom to her room, taught him, played with him, and motivated him by using positive emoji stickers like "stars" and "good boy," and high five him.

On a snowy day, kids did not get to go outside during recess time. They stayed inside and had indoor activities, like playing with Legos, cards, stuffed toys, and others.

In Virginia, bathrooms are inside the classrooms. One day while the kids were having one of their indoor recesses, the teacher had them sit on the carpet and

everyone played with his/her favorite toy, when suddenly my silly bean stood up and hurriedly went to the bathroom. He moved fast, and accidentally stepped on one of his classmates' Legos and continued to the bathroom.

When he was out of the bathroom, he saw "Aero" standing beside Mrs. Shelton, pointing at Abaan, crying and saying, "He stepped on my Lego, Miss"!

Abaan looked very puzzled; he didn't know that he had stepped on Aero's Lego when he was rushing to the bathroom. Mrs. Shelton asked, "Abaan! Did you do this intentionally?" Abaan repeated after her: "In ...ten...ally"!! Abaan was taught by his ESL teacher to repeat new words without knowing the meaning of the word, so he said "intentionally," and then the poor boy said, "yes," with a smile. Well, Mrs. Shelton: Don't you think the word *intentionally* is too big for a four-

*A boy who speaks
one language is
just a boy, but a
boy who speaks
two languages is
a Superman!*

year-old boy who has just started to learn the language?

As a result, he was grounded the entire recess time to sit on "a grounded mat" alone not playing with anyone! When he returned home, he told me this incident with eyes filled with tears. Wiping his tears, he looked up and asked, "Mama! What is the meaning of intent...ally?" In simple Arabic I explained it to him and added, "From now on, when the teacher asks you for something you don't understand, just reply to her with, "Sorry! I didn't get you."

The very next day, after I sent my little prince to school, I called my father, who is my problem solver at all times and in all situations, and I told him about my son's suffering. I told my dad everything. After an hour of listening, my father asked me to convey this message to Abaan: "A man who speaks a language is one but a man who speaks two languages is two."

I know that Abaan will never understand Grandpa's beautiful words. The whole time, I was thinking how to convey it to him in his 4-year-old language.

Just as I was doing the house chores, I entered Abaan's bedroom to vacuum it and saw his Superman toy lying there on the floor. I immediately knew what to tell my sunshine when he came back from school.

At the dinner table, I told Abaan that Grandpa phoned today and asked me to tell you this: "A boy who speaks one language is just a boy, but a boy who speaks two languages is a Superman!"

Abaan suddenly looked at me smiling. Such a smile, I have not seen on his face for ages. My cute boy's white pearl teeth were showing. Leaving the dinner table, my bird started roaming around the

apartment saying, "I'm a Superman. Yes...Yes...I'm a Superman." These words changed my boy 180 degrees. These words were very motivating and refreshing. That night was the first night that Abaan's bed was not wet in months!

Soon after that, Abaan's ulcer started to diminish, and he was seen around everywhere, trying to socialize with his peers and ignoring their negative comments. Mrs. Shelton noticed the difference. Abaan was no longer that introverted boy who sat alone all the time, so she asked me what happened. And what changed him?

Abaan's trouble with English continued, but with time my wizard was able to surmount it. His interaction with his peers helped him to acquire the language faster, and his stickers all over the kitchen appliances, bedroom furniture, and bathroom were an excellent tactic that helped him rack his brain to memorize new words. His punctual weekly visit to the public library was very effective; reading his favorite books was a challenging experience. All of these helped him to gain more

vocabulary and familiarized him with English sentence structure and its grammar. On top of that, Dr. Suess's collection of books played a significant role in improving his listening and pronunciation.

It was the end of the year already and Halloween was knocking at the door. I bought my hero a Superman costume. When he came back from school, I handed him the costume and a note. As soon as he saw what was in the package, he said: "Look! It's a Superman costume. Is it for me?" I nodded my head, "yes." The note says, "King Abaan, you rock this year. Today, you are a real Superman. Put on this costume and get out to collect your treats!"

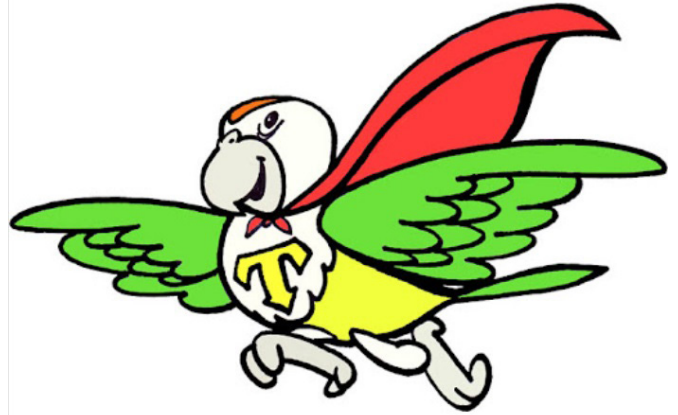
Finally, Abaan's hard work has paid off.



Today my champion is 13 years old, and he speaks like a native. In fact, sometimes he corrects me, and sometimes he laughs at my mispronunciation. Abaan has climbed every step of that difficult ladder that is called the "English language" without missing a step until he was capable of reaching the last and the highest step of the ladder.

Indeed, his determination and perseverance proved that he was competent enough to carry out his tasks by himself and without the need of others. Abaan's tremendous efforts and a strong desire to be a Superman helped him achieve great success in the language.

As a mom, watching my kid's daily suffering taught me a great life lesson: "It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop, and if you get tired, learn to rest, not to quit!"



**Anonymous - ESL 325
Narrative Essay**

Book Review: *Ghandi*

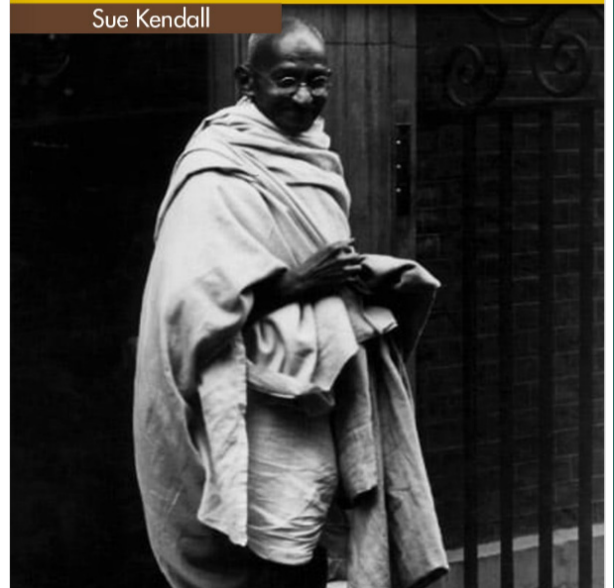
Gandhi is one of the stories in the Burlington English intermediate-level platform, which is available to you if you take the class ESLLAB through the [ESL Center](#) at American River College. (See the note at the end of this article.)

The book *Gandhi* is a beautiful educational story in a simple and enjoyable style. The story is a biographical account of Mahatma Gandhi's early life, struggles, personal growth, and the beginnings of his fight against injustice. The story emphasizes Gandhi's early awareness of social and personal injustices, which paved the way for his later activism. This is evident in his confrontation with the caste system and his rebellion against it, which is confirmed by his saying when criticizing ideas that classify people: "This is the work of the untouchables, the lowest class of people in India." This highlights his early awareness of social-class division.

After a monotonous life in India, and because

Gandhi

Sue Kendall



of his academic excellence, he was given the opportunity to move to England, the country that was occupying India at the time. The period that Gandhi spent in England can be considered a period of cultural and intellectual awakening, but it was also a period of unity and struggle to preserve his values. This clash of civilizations that he faced constituted a kind of mental stimulation for Gandhi. This prompted him to begin asking questions about colonialism and the possibility of a life other than the one imposed by the occupier and entrenched in people's minds.

The narrative then turns to Gandhi's experiences in South Africa, which have been pivotal in his development. There he began to become aware of the necessity of confronting all forms of racism and injustice because of the discrimination he faced. For instance, he was thrown off the train and not allowed to ride in first class just because he was not white. This ignited his determination to fight injustice. He said, "But I will fight in any way I can. . . . I will explain my ideas, I will resist, but I will not become a victim of their prejudice." South Africa can be considered the dividing stage between the personality of the "shy Gandhi," who was unable to say a word in front of people, and the "revolutionary Gandhi," who was skilled at rhetoric and persuasion. South Africa is where he changed from a young man who aspired to improve his financial and professional situation into a leader committed to the concerns of his people, whether in India or abroad. Taken together, these elements show Gandhi's transformation from a young individual unsure of his abilities into an assertive figure committed to social change, laying the foundation for his later achievements in India. The story uses these early experiences to illustrate how personal challenges and adversity can shape a leader's character and principles.

The story then highlights Mahatma Gan-

dhi's evolution from a South African civil rights activist into a leader of the Indian independence movement. He believed in the necessity of adopting nonviolent resistance, and in this context, the narrative emphasizes the power of nonviolence, as Gandhi's ideas influenced major social and political change. His tireless activism, including the famous "[Salt March](#)" and his leadership during the "[Quit India Movement](#)," are hallmarks of his approach.

The final chapters of the story detail the culmination of Gandhi's struggle for Indian independence and his commitment to nonviolent resistance. Despite suffering imprisonment and personal loss, including the death of his wife, Gandhi persevered. His leadership during the Quit India Movement and negotiations with the British government eventually led to Indian independence. However, the partitioning of India caused great conflict and violence, which Gandhi protested by fasting to promote unity. The story culminates in Gandhi's assassination in 1948, which shocked the world; but his legacy lives on, inspiring global movements for civil rights and freedom.

The story also explores Gandhi's personal life, revealing his struggles and reconciliation with his wife, reflecting his broader philosophical journey towards nonviolence and compassion.

Parrot Staff Writer: Mohammed El mrani

Note about Burlington English: If you would like to read this book or other books written for English learners, you should enroll in ESLLAB at the American River College [ESL Center](#). Burlington English has dozens of books at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels to help you practice English. Ask about them at the [ESL Center](#) in the LRC (Learning Resource Center).



IR-5 Visa: Bring Your Parents to the U.S.

Disclaimer: This information is based on the author's experience and can be used for reference only because each case is different. It is not professional instruction.



I filed an IR-5 visa to bring my parents from Vietnam to the United States after I became a U.S. Citizen in 2022. After one month of receiving my Certificate of Naturalization, I started filing form I-130 Petition for Alien Relative online through <https://my.uscis.gov/>. I created an online account through this website to keep track of all my paperwork because I didn't file through mail. I think it's easier to file online because you won't lose your paperwork in case of mailing issues.

After filling out form I-130 for both parents, I needed to gather evidence and documentation from Vietnam, such as my parent's marriage certificate, their divorce certificate, birth certificates, passports, my birth certificate, my marriage certificate, and other evidence of our relationship. After that, I paid the fee for form I-130.

Around 11 months later, USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) sent me an email and mail about approval for my cases. They sent our cases to NVC (National Visa Cen-

ter) <https://nvc.state.gov>. This includes 12 steps from the beginning to finish the application.

I went to the IV website <https://ceac.state.gov/IV/> to continue filling out the document for my parents. I needed the 2 important serial numbers to be able to log in to my parent's case which was sent in the email.

NVC Case Number:

HCM2023xxxxxx

Invoice ID Number:

IVSCA0000xxxxxx

On this page, I paid the Visa fee and Affidavit of Support (AOS) fee. I added a Joint Sponsor (if needed) to this page without paying an extra fee. Two days after paying the fee, I received an email about starting my application. I went to the NVC website to see which documents I needed to submit. I gathered all the documents and submitted all immigrant visas to this IV website which took me 2 months. You could do it faster if you had all the paperwork in English. My parents' paperwork needed to be translated, so it took longer to complete. This paperwork includes DS-260, civil documents, sponsor, and joint sponsor documents.

After all the documents were submitted, it took me 3 weeks to receive an email from NVC for my parents' interview. The interview email is usually sent 3 weeks to a month before the



interview date. We had this whole time to go to have medical exams and get vaccination records ready.

On the interview date, my parents needed to bring all the documents that I submitted to the IV website. They came to the US Embassy an hour early before the interview time to be ready for it. The interviewer asked them a couple of questions that were related to me and their marriage. After the interview, they said my parents would receive their visa in a couple of weeks and kept their passports. Two weeks later, a courier

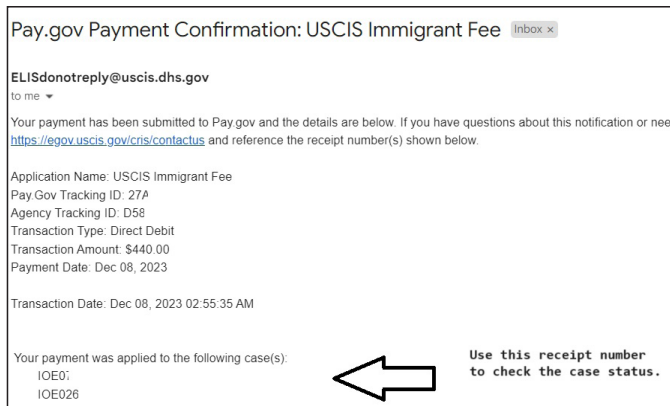
sent passports with the US visa to their house.

I waited at least 10 days before paying the Green Card fee for my parents on the USCIS website <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees/uscis-immigrant-fee>. This website has all the information you need to pay the fee. I kept track of transaction numbers and added my email to make sure the process went smoothly. I used the receipt number that was sent to my email after paying the fee to check the status of my parents' Green Card <https://egov.uscis.gov/>.

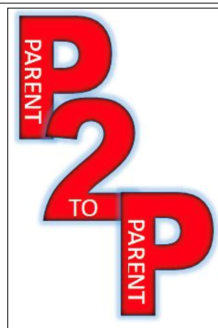
Finally, I bought the flight ticket for them to come here. There are many videos and websites that help you fill out the application; however, you need to check the reliability of the resources before using them. It will help you save time and not delay the process of your documents.

After all this hard work, I'm looking forward to my parents finally joining me in California on March 9, 2024.

Parrot Staff Writer: Snow Le



Parent to Parent Program at ARC



It is really challenging being a parent and a student at the same time. Managing studies in addition to routine life responsibilities and work is making the parent-student's life harder in comparison to that of single and younger students.

contact their mentors and seek for assistance and guidance whenever they need to. The mentors are the success buddies who introduce all the resources and opportunities that are available to the student-parents and will assist them in finding solutions for any challenges and problems that arise when they are at ARC.

Detailed information about the eligibility, criteria, and the benefits of the Parent to Parent program will be shared through an interview with relevant CalWORKs or Mentor Collective staff in future *Parrot* issues.

ARC's CalWORKs department through Mentor Collective offers the Parent to Parent (P2P) program to CalWORKs students by connecting them with a mentor. The mentors are a success buddy for the parent-students and are ready to listen, inspire, help navigate challenges, and recognize opportunities that are available at ARC for the parent-students. The mentees can

Around the World



Let Lorot tell you about the fascinating differences between America and other countries. Today, we will check out the different cultural habits with chopsticks!



Chopsticks Etiquette

A **highly important factor** in Asian cultures. They can also vary greatly from country to country and from person to person, but in general:



CHINA - It's poor etiquette to:

- Spear your food with your chopsticks.
- Dig around your food for a particular item.
- Tap your chopsticks on your bowl.
- Kids holding their chopsticks wrong.



JAPAN - It's poor etiquette to:

- Cross your chopsticks on the table.
- Stick your chopsticks vertically in rice.
- Transfer food from your chopsticks to another persons.



TAIWAN - It's poor etiquette to:

- Bite on your chopsticks.
- Let them linger in your mouth.
- Use your chopsticks on a soup bowl.
- Place your chopsticks on the table.



VIETNAM - It's poor etiquette to:

- Place you chopsticks in the shape of a V once you've finished eating.
- Pick up food directly from the table.
- Place your chopsticks in your mouth whilst choosing food.



N. KOREA & S. KOREA - It's poor etiquette to:

- Pick up your utensils before your elders.
- Brings your bowl closer to your mouth.
- Use chopsticks to eat rice, Spoons should be used instead.

RW





Scan QR Code

Zoom Hours

MON - 8am to 1 pm
THU - 11am to 7 pm
FRI - 8am to 1 pm

ESL Center

Spring 2024

On Campus in the LRC!

Mon - 8:00 to 6:45 pm

Tue - 8:00 to 6:45 pm

Wed - 8:00 to 6:45 pm

Thu - 8:00 to 4:00 pm

The ESL Center helps all multilingual students with their classes and questions. We speak Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Russian, Ukranian, Spanish, and more. Come see us!



Poem

Onion

By Lorna Crozier

The onion loves the onion.
It has its many layers,
saying O,O,O,
each vowel smaller
than the last.

Some say it has no heart.
It doesn't need one.
It surrounds itself,
feels whole. Primordial.
First among vegetables.

If Eve had bitten it
instead of the apple,
how different
Paradise...

Source: <https://www.lornacrozier.ca/poems/index.html#!>



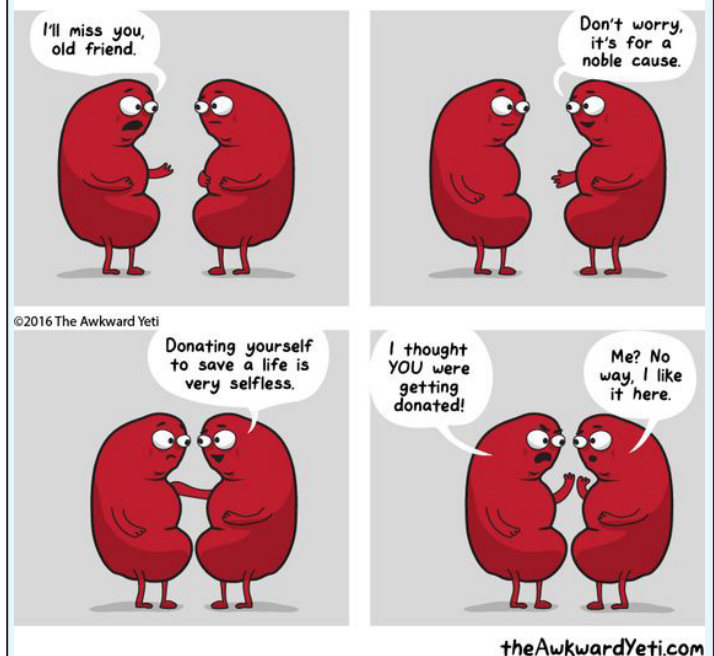
Rigoberto's Riddles

There's a one-story house
where everything is yellow. The
walls are yellow. The doors are
yellow. All the furniture is yellow.
The house
has yellow
beds and yellow
couches.
What color are
the stairs?



There are no stairs—it's a one-story house!

Silly Vasily's Chuckle Chamber



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/450993350193551746/>

Continued from page 1

At first, I was super excited about the trip because I would have a chance to go overseas to so-called "Third World" countries. However, my voyage became a nightmare for me when I was stuck in the middle of the sea for over a week.

On the night of November 24, 2023, around 12:45 a.m., the fishing vessel *Ken*, which was green and white in color, about 100 feet in length, and 20 feet in width, grounded 45 nautical miles off the coast of Cuba in the Caribbean Sea. There was only the captain and I on the boat. We called out to the Florida branch of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to try and get some help. They transferred us to the Cuban Coast Guard to get help because we were outside the jurisdiction of the USCG. We called many times to the Cuban Coast Guard branch but couldn't get help

from them because we had radio complications. Around 5 a.m., a small local boat came up close to us, and we were able to see if they could help in the meantime. At the same time, I was able to get in contact with John, who

was the agent for my boat, to see if he could help us with the situation. We were able to get a big local fishing boat, the *Captain Jimmy*, to come and try to pull us out. They tried three times but couldn't, so they left a little while later.

In the meantime, John was able to get in contact with the Cuban Coast Guard and have them send one of their ships. They arrived sometime later in the afternoon and were able to try to pull us out a couple times but to no avail. The tide was too low at that time, so they couldn't try to pull us out again until the next morning. Around 6 or 7 p.m., the Cuban Coast Guard had us go with them onto their ship to spend the night for safety reasons. There was only one member in the Cuban Coast Guard who spoke English to communicate with me.



While all of this was happening, John was able to get in contact with another large fishing vessel, the *Sensational 1*. The next morning, November 26, the *Sensational 1*, which was flying a Jamaican flag came and working together with the navy ship tried to pull our boat out about five more times, but it did not work. At this point, everyone there was starting to lose hope, but none of us wanted to give up yet.

The tide went down and then the boat rested leaning about 45 degrees onto the right side. Both boats that came to help us backed off and anchored for the night nearby. The captain of the *Ken*, five naval guards, and I stayed on the boat to rest. The next day, November 27, only the *Sensational 1* tied up to the stern of our boat and tried about three or four times to pull the *Ken* out but couldn't. The Coast Guard vessel couldn't help

with the rescue anymore because they had some mechanical problems. A little while later, all captains met up together on the *Ken* to talk together and to figure out a solution. The naval ship said that they could not continue to help pull our boat due to engine problems,

which they weren't able to disclose, but they could still stay there for security and to help in any other way, as they had guns with them. The *Sensational 1* said that they would try pulling again the next day.

That night, the *Ken's* captain, five of the naval ship's guards, and I stayed on the *Ken* again. On November 28, the *Sensational 1* tried pulling again at high tide a couple times but still could not pull the boat out. We decided to stop pulling and to just drop an extra anchor that the *Sensational 1* had and tied the *Ken* to it so that the waves wouldn't push the boat any deeper onto the reef. At that time, a small storm came through and brought 3- to 5-foot-high waves, which caused some delay in the rescue. We decided to wait for another boat and some more supplies to come before continuing the rescue.

During that time, we were short on supplies, water, and food. The local boat that came on the first day asked for a lot of food from the *Ken's* crew and stole many supplies, tools, and water from us. We couldn't resist for our safety; however, they did help us a bit with buying some of the supplies to pull the *Ken* off of the reef. We were lucky that our boat had Wi-Fi and a satellite phone so that we were able to communicate with people for help. We had to go fishing for some food while we were stuck in the middle of the sea for survival. We caught a lot of different types of fish that we didn't know and it helped us relax our nerves a little.

On the 8th day, two more boats came to help rescue our boat. It took many hours for the three boats together to pull the *Ken* out of the reef. They were using multiple ropes that were about three inches in diameter. We met many difficulties during the rescue like storms and disagreements between the captains. In the end, they were able to

pull the *Ken* out of the reef. Everyone was overjoyed and clapped their hands and celebrated our hard work. We all were so happy because we could return home safely. After that, it took three days for the *Sensational 1* to tow the *Ken* to the dock where we were originally headed before we needed to fix the damages which the reef caused.

I believe that I was lucky to be able to return home safely because the whole experience was terrifying. Being stuck in the middle of the sea, having low provisions, and facing rough weather made me feel like I was in a horror movie. I had watched many movies and heard many stories similar to this situation, which made me feel awkward. Now, after experiencing a shipwreck firsthand, I realize that anything can happen at any time. We need to be prepared and train ourselves to face any situation.

The Untold Story of Afghan Women: Mahnaz Peroz

Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi

In 2001, when the nascent democracy of Afghanistan started, a young woman named Mahnaz Peroz was a feminist with an important goal. She hoped to influence and create a positive change in the lives of many Afghan women. She lived with this goal since childhood, as she had witnessed many restrictions and problems that women faced for decades in the history of Afghanistan. Having the goal of becoming a social activist and human rights defender in her mind, she entered Herat University to study International Relations. In addition to pursuing her education, she started working with a team of like-minded people as the manger responsible for the journal of the Faculty of Law and Political Science. After graduating from Herat University in 2011, she started working with a group called the Women Activities and Social Services Organization first as the Deputy for Advocacy and then as Chairwoman of the shelters in west region of Afghani-

stan. At the same time, she was volunteering as the Family Protection Committee Secretary of the Herat Provincial Council. Following her career and life goals, she continued providing services to women and defended their rights by occupying the lecturer position at Jami Private University and Youth Affairs Manager of Herat province for a period of two years. As the first woman occupying the Youth Affairs Manager position, she faced many challenges that she overcame with hard work and dedication. Serving for three and a half years as the Youth Affairs Manager, she started working in Herat Press Department as the first woman in this department's 100-year history.

During her working life in Afghanistan, the biggest challenge that she faced that stood in the way of her bold activities was the gender and sexual view of women. She suffered the most harm from this area. Despite performing her duties and

responsibilities well, she still was targeted by men because of her gender, and she faced different problems because she refused to consent to men's abusive treatment and sexual discrimination. Moreover, threats to her safety from the Taliban and other opponents of the previous regime created additional challenges.

It was a complete disaster when Afghanistan fell into the hands of the Taliban. That was August 2021, and since then, the welfare centers in Afghanistan have decreased greatly and poverty has reached the door of families more than ever because many offices and institutions have been closed. Thousands of individuals have become unemployed since the fall of Afghanistan, and many women who were breadwinners of the family were now imprisoned in their homes for the crime of being a woman. Following that, for more than two years, girls have been prevented from going to school and university, which has led to collective despair in the people, especially among the women of Afghanistan, because they see their future and dreams completely blown away. They feel there is no hope and they will not be protected.

Throughout her career in Afghanistan, Peruz has always tried her best to support girls and young women. An example of that is the arrangement of various educational and cultural programs for girls. These efforts include encouraging girls to go to university by getting a discount on tuition fees in private universities and encouraging girls to use foreign scholarships. She also encourages them to participate in civic and social activities. Among her goals was to help young

girls who have a passion to serve their fellow women, but they did not know the possibility or they were struggling with family restrictions.

To guarantee the progress of women in Afghanistan, she believes that everyone needs to work to eliminate the extremist and the nationalist government of the Taliban. When the Taliban overtook the government, it affected the entire work and personal life of Peruz and many other women like her. In fact, they either were imprisoned in their houses or were killed by different opportunist enemies. Due of the fear of being killed or abducted, she left the country and started a new life in Germany. She didn't give up; she started to learn German and started to work as a volunteer with two different institutions which provide services to immigrant women in Berlin.

Living safely in Germany, she has been able to enjoy some hobbies, such as yoga, watching movies, and traveling, but she continues to work for women and girls by organizing and participating in protests for social services and to defend women and human rights. Furthermore, she has created her own

group of women activists in Germany to meet people in the international community who can advocate for girls and women in Afghanistan. She also believes that creating a standard educational system in Afghanistan can help women's self-awareness, self-confidence, and empowerment. That is the reason she always tries her best and continues to encourage girls and women to pursue their dreams of an education.



Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi



English Practice Hour

It will be in person and online.

Talk Time meets in Zoom once a week on Wednesdays and in-person once a month on Saturdays. We talk about holidays like Labor Day, but we also just check in with each other, telling highs and lows of our week. Students can email me, Professor Denise Saur, at saurd@arc.losrios.edu to get the time, locations, or link.

Answer: Friends, balloon, cake, party, gift, games



Did you find them?

DIY

Peanut Shell Night Lamp



Materials:

- A bunch of peanut shells
- A balloon
- Acrylic paint - your favorite color (optional)
- A string light or a tea light candle
- A long rope (optional)

Tools:

- Scissors and a needle
- Glue gun



Instructions:

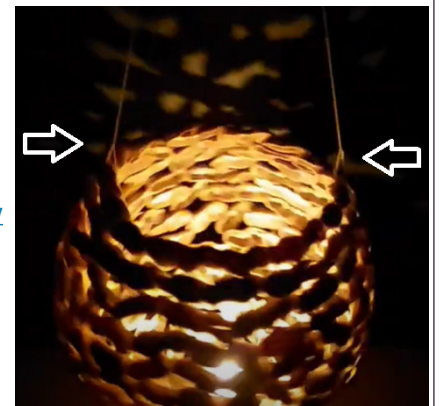
1. Paint the shells with the color you like and let them dry (optional).
2. Blow up a balloon.
3. Stick the peanut shells one by one around the

balloon, but leave the top open. (Avoid applying glue on the balloon).

4. Burst the balloon.
5. Use a string light or a tea light candle.
6. Tie the rope at two sides to hang the lamp (optional).
7. Your peanut shell lamp is ready.

Source and video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0SL8C_359w



Volunteer Opportunity



Help for Refugee Children



Starting Point is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting newly arrived refugee children in the greater Sacramento area.

The organization strives to give them a warm welcome by providing basic necessities and programs as they begin their new lives in the U.S. They do things like meet refugee families with children at the airport, give them welcome baskets, and provide basic ESL and computer lessons, and they have even started a very popular soccer team for the kids. Visit the website and click on [REQUEST HELP](#).

Starting Point is directed by Vickee Moy, a professor of English as a Second Language in Sacramento. She launched Starting Point in June 2017 after being deeply touched by her refugee students' stories about their lives in their native countries and about their new lives in the U.S. Starting Point is one way she hopes to honor and

remember their incredible stories and beautiful lessons about perseverance, strength, hope, and humanity.

As a child of immigrants, Vickee feels a connection with new arrivals and is passionate about helping them begin successful lives in their new country. Along with her husband and three sons, she is excited to reach out to this growing community of newcomers.

<https://www.startingpointworld.com/>

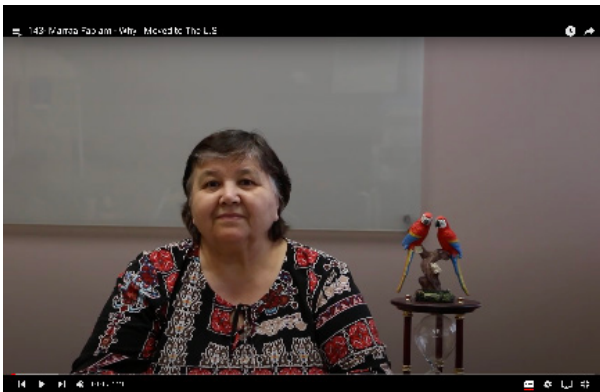
Want to Help?

There are several ways that you can help Starting Point to help children. You can put together a welcome basket, assemble a backpack with supplies, help buy shoes, assist with lessons and program development for SPARK (Summer Program for Arts, Recreation and Knowledge), or even coach and support a soccer team!

Donations to Starting Point are tax deductible. Please visit the [Starting Point Volunteer Page](#) for more information.

Parrot Student Voices

Listen to ARC ESL students tell a story from their past. Their stories may be about happy days, or sad events, but the stories are always told in their own words.



"When I came to the United States, I was 54 years old. Now, I am 60. I have been living here for about 6 years, and now, I will tell you why I left my country..."

-Maria Fabiam, from Moldova

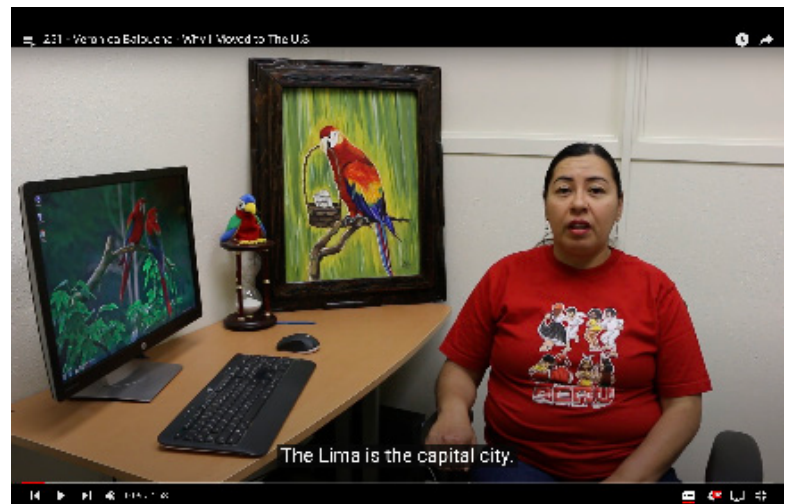
Click on *Maria's* photo and hear her story.

"Why I Moved to the U.S."

"After my both my grandmother and mother passed away from cancer, I was all alone. I was single, and I didn't have any kids; only a lot of work..."

-Veronica Balbuena, from Peru

Click on *Veronica's* photo to hear her moving personal narrative.



"Why I Moved to the U.S."

Identity and Legacy: Exploring the Moorish American Sect

Parrot Staff Writer: Mohammed El mrani

What does the word "Moorish" mean in general?

"Moorish" is a term used in various contexts to refer to the peoples and cultures that existed on the Iberian Peninsula (which today includes Spain and Portugal) during the Middle Ages, especially those with Islamic origins from North Africa. The word is derived from the word "Morocco" and historically referred to Muslims who lived in Al-Andalus, the Islamic lands of the Iberian Peninsula, from the 8th to the 15th centuries.

What is the peculiarity of the term in the American context?

In the American context, especially concerning the American "Moorish" community, the term "Moorish" refers to African Americans who embrace the cultural and religious identity promoted by the "Moorish" community. Followers of this movement consider themselves heirs to the ancient Muslim traditions and culture of North Africa and Andalusia (a region in southern Spain), emphasizing their Moroccan and Islamic origins as part of their identity.

What is the "Moorish" sect, its founder, and its teachings?

The Moorish sect, officially known as the "Moorish Science Temple of America," was founded in 1913. The founder was Noble Drew Ali, who was born Timothy Drew. Noble Drew Ali began founding the movement in Newark, New Jersey, to improve African Americans' social and spiritual conditions by strengthening cultural and religious identity.

Noble Drew Ali worked to educate Af-



rican Americans about their alleged origins in the Maghreb and North Africa and urged them to embrace Islam as a religion and way of life. He also encouraged them to adopt a new identity as "Moorish Americans," claiming that they had heritage and rights that needed to be reclaimed. His teachings and approach to combining religion and cultural identity are integral to the broader movement for African American empowerment during the twentieth century.

As the founder of the Moorish American community, Noble Drew Ali taught his followers that African Americans were not "Negroes" or "coloreds" but rather "Moorish Americans" with a rich heritage and history that they should re-

claim and be proud of. By adopting this identity, African Americans who follow the movement's teachings seek to redefine themselves and their history, asserting independence, dignity, and a distinct cultural and religious identity.

The American Moorish community adopts Islam as a religion but with a unique interpretation and practice that distinguishes it from traditional Islam. It combines elements of Islam, Christianity, and other philosophies. The sect also adopts teachings that emphasize many moral values, such as self-reliance and personal dignity, and adds distinctive elements to them, such as its emphasis on belonging to the Moorish

nation, which is considered part of the identity of its followers. The movement also uses the "Circular Qur'an of the Moorish American Scholar," a central religious text within the Moorish American sect presented by Noble Drew Ali, containing his own teachings and interpretations of Islam to

suit the movement's goals. Also known as the "Moorish Qur'an," it is considered the holy book of the sect's followers, containing the movement's teachings and principles, including the



ethics, laws, and spiritual directives that Moorish Americans are supposed to follow. Although he uses the name "Qur'an," the text completely differs from the *Holy Qur'an* known in Islam. The book includes topics such as

character, virtue, ethics, and personal responsibility, emphasizing living according to certain principles that promote dignity, self-reliance,



and awareness of cultural and religious identity. It aims to provide a spiritual and moral framework that helps improve African Americans' social and spiritual condition through reconnecting with their claimed heritage.

What is the "Moorish" relationship with the state of Morocco?

The American Moorish community's relationship with

Morocco goes back to the cultural and historical claims made by the movement's founder, Noble Drew Ali. According to his teachings, African Americans, especially the Moors, are believed to originate from the Maghreb and have historical roots in the ancient Moroccan Empire. Noble Drew Ali claims that African Americans are "Moorish" by identity, citing Moroccan and Islamic origins as part of their lost identity that must be reclaimed. Therefore, the red flag of the Moroccan state with a green star is present in the sect's forums and gatherings, and one can also notice some types of traditional Moroccan clothing, such as the red fez (a fez is a round, red hat with no brim and a flat top) which is made in one of the oldest cities in Morocco, Fez.

This relationship, therefore, is not based on direct political or diplomatic ties between the sect and the modern Moroccan state but rather is based on cultural and historical claims aimed at strengthening the cultural and spiritual identity of the movement's followers. Some scholars believe that by adopting this Moorish identity, Noble Drew Ali and his followers sought to redirect African Americans toward a deeper understanding of their history and culture, away from the stereotypes and labels imposed on them during the period of slavery and beyond. This alleged relationship also forms part of the movement's endeavor to provide a cultural and spiritual framework that Noble Drew Ali believe would allow African Americans to reformulate their understanding of themselves and their place in the world, relying on the idea of connection to history and culture that transcends the modern geographical and historical borders of the United States and Africa.

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Explore California: The Sutter Buttes



Nestled in the heart of the Sacramento Valley, the Sutter Buttes stand as a testament to the Earth's ancient volcanic history. These unique geological formations, often referred to as the "world's smallest mountain range," offer a mesmerizing blend of rugged landscapes, rich flora, and a sense of timelessness.

The Sutter Buttes are remnants of a once-active volcano that graced the

landscape approximately 1.6 to 1.4 million years ago during the Pleistocene Epoch. Imagine molten lava surging forth, shaping these majestic buttes that now rise above the flat plains of the Central Valley. Their formation is a testament to the Earth's dynamic forces, leaving behind a legacy of awe-inspiring beauty.

Both the town of Sutter and the buttes themselves bear the name of John Sutter,

who received a vast land grant in this area from the Mexican government. Imagine the pioneers and indigenous peoples who once roamed these hills, their lives intertwined with the rugged beauty of the Sutter Buttes.



I had the opportunity to drive up to this wonderful area a couple weeks ago and captured the mysterious fog covering the mountains. It was truly remarkable to see this scene: fog rolling in as the sun was fading away, and some geese resting on the water and some others flying away.

For those seeking adventure, hiking trails wind through the buttes, revealing hidden vistas and allowing you to immerse yourself in this geological wonder. As the sun sets, the warm hues of the rocks create a magical atmosphere—a canvas painted by time itself.



If you like my photos and would like to see more, please feel free to follow me on [Instagram](#).

By Manny

Out of the Cage

Cash for College Workshop Hosted by CSAC

Thursday, March 14, 2024

6:00 to 7:45 pm

Have questions about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA)? Attend a California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) statewide [Cash for College webinar](#)! All students, families, and guardians are welcome. Bring your questions!

Online Event!

Register in Advance [here](#).

Contact: California Student Aid Commission

studentsupport@csac.ca.gov

(888) 224-7268

Floriculture Program Floral Sale

Thursday, March 7, 2024

10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Floral Sales will be held in the southwest corner of the Student Center, lower level, across from the dining room.

All floral arrangements are created by our talented Floriculture Students. Cash, check, or credit cards are accepted. All proceeds purchase department supplies.

Contact: Marianne Sala: salam@arc.losrios.edu; (916) 484-8743

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Student Editors: **Tuyet Le, Emmanuel Madrid, Mohammed Elmrani, Sayed Edres Sadiqi, Phong Nguyen, and Asila Sadiqi.**

Faculty Advisors: **Patrick Hoggan and David Evans**

Please let us know what we can do to improve *The Parrot*. We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Contact us at TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to <https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>

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