Hot! Welcome To Hell!

By: Jaylia Yu
From: Hong Kong

Hot, red, dead people were the symbol of Highline's Halloween Party this year. Hell yeah! It was one hell of a Halloween Party in hell!

It was my second time attending the Halloween Party at HCC. Unlike last year, there was a new section this year—the Haunted House. I could not believe that we were going to establish a haunted house in the Mt. Constance and Mt. Olympic rooms. As a volunteer, and as the leader of the Haunted House Reception Team, I had to decorate the entrance and exit, and organize the schedule for that night. It was a huge responsibility and challenge for me, because this was my first time as a leader. In other events I had participated in, I was the member who listened to orders and received emails from the leader. However, this time, I was the one who sent the emails and gave orders to my team members. It was a task I had never had before. The hardest thing that I needed to do was use English to explain the process of making decorations and to communicate with my diverse group members, from different nations across the world, such as, China, Malaysia and Japan. However, with their help and kind personalities, we did an excellent job with our decorations.

And so, on the night of the Halloween Party, the Student Union became hell. I could see blood, fire and dead people everywhere, and I heard horror music in the Student Union. At 7 pm, people came dressed in costumes that were cute, sexy, scary and creative. With people dressed in costumes and Halloween themed music playing, the Student Union had a very dark mood.

As people came inside the Union, we, as the volunteers, had to prepare to serve those who wanted to go into the Haunted House. During the first ten minutes I was very worried. There were not line up and some of our materials accidently broke; the whole situation was out of control. Fortunately, we adapted to the situation and everyone had fun in the Haunted House. When I heard screams coming from the Haunted House, I was satisfied because I knew we did a great job.

Time went very quickly. Around 11 pm, everyone started to leave except the volunteers. I was grateful that most of the volunteers stayed and cleaned up the Union. As we were cleaning up, some of the decorations were destroyed and I felt a little sad; we had spent lots of time on it. But I remembered in the end, the most important thing was the experience we had been through and the memory will stay in my mind forever. Here, I want to say thank you to all the volunteers who helped us establish the successful Halloween Party in 2010.
Trip To Mt. Rainier
By: Yuri Nishizaki
From: Japan

The Mt. Rainer trip was held Oct. 16th by Highline's International Student Programs (ISP) and more than 50 people partook in it. The weather was great with a cloudless blue sky, the best condition for climbing a mountain. I didn't have many experiences with mountain climbing, so I was really excited about it. Soon after we arrived, we were provided with some sandwiches and bottled waters and we started climbing. The higher we climbed, the smaller the groups became. I was with my friends, chatting and doing whatever. I was having fun until I noticed one thing. Sadly, I found empty water bottles along the trails and they looked the same as the bottles our group was provided before we started climbing. I wondered why people would do such a thing. As I continued climbing, a passing climber handed me a littered candy wrapper and said, "Please don't." She couldn't tell who threw the wrapper away, but she handed it to me. When I noticed that Chinese words were printed on the wrapper, I was really embarrassed. It was likely someone from our group who threw the wrapper on the ground and the climber must have thought I too was a littering international student. I was very embarrassed and the experience changed my view of the mountain. It was dirty. There was a lot of garbage everywhere. After the incident, I kept picking up the garbage I found while walking around. Mt. Rainier looks really beautiful and majestic from the distance, but you can find a lot of trash there when you get closer. I saw this reality with my own eyes, and it greatly changed my mind and my actions. After the trip, I joined the Highline Environmental club and I have since then been involved in improving the environment. I now attend weekly club meetings and participate in the club's activities. As a club, we clean up littered trash around Highline's campus and discuss environment issues and solutions.

Through the Mt. Rainier trip, I think each participant obtained something valuable. Some people made many friends, others enjoyed mountaineering for the first time, and all of us had fun and experienced the grandiosity of Mt. Rainier first hand. I personally became very interested in and concerned about the environment. I will keep this feeling and concern, and I will continue tackling environmental issues now and in the future. My act itself is small. But together with people who also care about the environment, our effort will become so enormous that, in the end, we'll be able to fix any environmental situation.

Vacation in Bali
By: Yuliana Sari
From: Indonesia

In May, as a part of the process in coming to the United States, I had the chance to go to Bali, the most exquisite island in Indonesia. I went there to attend a Pre-Departure Orientation before leaving my country, Indonesia. However, Bali, which is also called “the land of God,” is too perfect for just an orientation so I tried to make the most of my time there.

After the three hour flight from my hometown, I arrived in Bali at midnight and met my friends. It was raining that night and the wind was blowing, but as soon as we got out from the airport, the town was surprisingly crowded. People dressed in various costumes were walking around. We could hear them talking in English, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and many other languages. I soon realized that most of them were foreigners. Bali is totally different from other places in Indonesia I had lived before and I call it the “international world” of Indonesia. We continued our journey until we reached more crowded places where music was playing everywhere. We were really in Kuta, the most visited city in Bali.

The next day, we woke up on a sunny morning. Walking along Legian road, we met more and more tourists. On the road side, we could see many buildings built with unique architecture. There were also many temples unique to Bali. We walked toward Kuta beach, which is very close to the hotel we stayed at. Although the beach was so crowded, the view was amazing. Many people surfed, swam, or sun-bathed on the beach. I simply slipped off my shoes and felt the sand between my toes; what a wonderful feeling! In the afternoon, we went to a food court nearby. We were surprised because as soon as we entered the food court everyone stood and clapped. “Wow!” We were amazed and couldn't help but laugh because it was our first time going to a place like that. In the evening, we went to a club where we could try “all you can eat” sushi at a price of only $5 per person! Talking about food, Bali actually has a wide variety: from American to Asian, European, Australian and African restaurants. We could also easily find traditional food if we wanted to try “the taste of Bali” (Bali typical food). But $5 for “all you can eat”? Who can beat it? Besides eating, there were many other activities we did in Bali. We went to the traditional market, the historical sites, the festivals and of course the orientation for coming to America. On the last day in Bali, on the way to the airport, I appreciated the many new friends I had met and the experiences we shared together. I thought of this while I enjoyed seeing Bali's beautiful view through the windows. There are too many things to see and enjoy in Bali, and for that reason my trip to Bali has become my most exciting vacation.
May 1999 was the month that I made my goal clear: working in health care. My younger brother, Ho-Kyeong Ra, went out with his friend for a bike ride around town. After an hour, his friend rushed into our house and screamed at my mom and I. He said "Ho-kyeong got seriously injured, come out now!" Fear and horror went through me. "Is he going to die? Oh God, please," this kept running in my head over and over again.

When I got to the place where the accident happened, there was only a huge area on the ground dyed in red but I was not able to see him. Luckily, my brother’s friend went to his house first and called an ambulance before he came to my house. I stood there motionless, not knowing what to do or what to say, and not even knowing what had happened. It wasn’t until his mom shook me saying "You have to take this to the hospital, time is crucial, you must hurry!" and gave me a cup filled with milk with my brother’s teeth in it. I didn’t know what I was thinking but I still remember I was just looking into the cup with no reaction. I was soon sent to the emergency room. I handed over the cup to a doctor who was waiting for us. Three beds from where I was standing, I saw someone lying down wearing a familiar shirt and shoes covered with blood. He was surrounded by surgeons and was rolled into the surgery room. At that moment, time stopped around me and I still remember it was like yesterday. I didn’t cry nor was I scared. Everything seemed very calm around me and I did not want to miss a single moment.

He came back home a few weeks later with his face covered full of bandages. That night after he went to sleep my mom told me that he was lucky that he survived. The fact was, when he fell from the bike, he landed on his face sliding on the asphalt road and seven of his front teeth came out. The doctor also mentioned to my mom that losing even four teeth when conscious can lead to immediate death due to extreme shock. He could not go out for almost half a year. When he came back from the doctor, he had a very hard time eating food and sometime even breathing.

After this incident happened, I changed. I’m now a much more involved person and trying to share this joyful new life of my brother’s with others. I’m now a more caring person. I look out for those who are around me, my family and my friends. I act like a big brother to them to compensate for not being helpful enough when my brother needed me. I’m now here at Highline Community College and I have volunteered for the tutoring center as a math and chemistry tutor for two years.

Since the moment I entered Highline Community College, I have been meeting a lot of people from different backgrounds. Everyone has very interesting goals and experiences. These helped me mature. One of the interesting things that I experienced is many people come here to study health care and trying to become one. And that is how I learned about respiratory therapy; help patients to improve their ability to breathe comfortably through a variety of medications and equipment. This is exactly what I want to do. With all the social services experiences I have obtained and my sophisticated leadership skills, becoming a RC is definitely what I want to accomplish. I expect to be given more opportunities to share my energy, optimism and caring personality with all the patients. With the education I will receive from Highline’s RC program, my potential of being a successful respiratory therapist will be expanded to the highest degree.
**Thingyan Festival**
By: Yan Naing Linn  
From: Burma

Min-ga-lar Par! (Hello! In Burmese) Myanmar, also known as Burma. In our country, we have three seasons—Summer, Winter and Autumn. April is the hottest month of the year and it is when the Myanmar New Year takes place. April is when we celebrate “Thingyan Festival.”

Thingyan Festival is how Myanmar people celebrate the Myanmar New Year by pouring and splashing water on each other. The splashing or sprinkling of water is intended to “wash away” one’s sins from the previous year and to make other people cool in the hottest month of the year. Thingyan Festival has 4 days of celebration. We call the first day “A Kyo” (Welcoming Day), the second day “A kya” (the first celebrating day), the third day “A kyat” (second celebrating day), and we call the final day “A Tat.” Temporary water-spraying stations, known as “Mandat,” are set up around the city. Some large Mandats have dance floors accompanied by DJs. People visit and jump and shout as the water from high-pressure pipes are spraying above them. It is very nice to go around in the city and then visit the Mandats; since the weather is very hot, the Madnats can cool you down with the splashing surfaces. I subconsciously grabbed a plate, reaching my hand to the nearest moon cake… “Put it back Luna!” The scream of my mom woke me up to reality. “It’s not ready yet, you porker.” As my mom giggled to herself secretly, I reluctantly placed the delicacy back to its place.

Every year on the 15th day of the eighth month in the lunar calendar, when the moon is at its fullest and roundest, comes my favorite holiday- Moon Festival. There are several versions of the original of this beautiful holiday, one of the most well-known ones is the story of Houyi and Chang Er. Houyi was a talented shooter who married a beautiful girl named Chang Er. One day he met a philosopher when hunting in the forest. The philosopher was impressed by his brilliant character and talent; therefore, he gave him some pills that could grant him eternal life. Not wanting to leave his wife alone as a mortal, he gave her the pills and asked her to hide them. Unfortunately, one of Houyi’s friends discovered the secret. He sneaked into Chang Er’s room and threatened her to hand out the pills. In her haste Chang Er swallowed all the pills and amazingly she started to float to the sky. Eventually she landed on the moon and became a supernatural being. To commemorate Chang Er, the tradition of celebrating Moon Festival was developed.

During this, my mom and I would be busy making moon cakes. Eating moon cakes has been an important tradition in Taiwan, which symbolized the reunion of family. On the day of Moon Festival, family members will gather together to admire the gorgeous full moon, enjoy delicious moon cakes and pomelos,-chatting about their recent lives. Since 1980, barbecuing outdoors has become a widespread way to celebrate the festival in Taiwan. People carry their barbeque appliances to outdoor picnics or simply on their balconies. My neighbor would have a small picnic in their back yard and invite us to dinner together.

Under the silver moonlight, children put pomelo peels on their head, chasing each other around naughtily. Their parents, on the other hand, drink hot tea and share homemade moon cakes. In the cold, desolate autumn, people’s laughter spread around the lanes, and so did the warmth and happiness.
A Holiday To Be Thankful
For
By: Ron Keller
From: America

While Thanksgiving may not be my favorite holiday, as I equally value any day that brings family and friends together, Thanksgiving is surely a holiday to be thankful for, if only for reminding us of what we value. From the colonists who founded this country, creating a government that allows the coexistence of a multicultural community and the freedom to express subjective opinions, to my parents who raised me in a fundamentalist Christian family, allowing me to have unique, religious experiences while growing up—I am reminded of all that I am thankful for on this Thanksgiving day.

I’m thankful for my multicultural parents, as I’ve learned to appreciate diversity, differences, and exploration, and to my brothers, as I’ll remember our conversations late into the night, more than the homework that I should have been doing.

I am thankful for Highline Community College for the possibility of shifting from being a student who failed classes and (only) played video games for hours after school every day, to a student who now earns excellent grades and is actively involved around campus. I am thankful for my position as a Writing Consultant at Highline’s Writing Center, where I earn money to pay for tuition while conversing with insightful fellow students about their lives and the writing process. I am tremendously thankful for Highline’s international student community, as my best friends and finest memories have come from our moments shared together. I am very grateful for the clubs I am apart of (and for the opportunity to be a part of clubs); from Skeptic and Philosophy Clubs, discussing issues of science and philosophy relevant to our lives today, to Phi Theta Kappa, volunteering and promoting events that help the Des Moines community, I feel connected to Highline more than I would just as a student. Though, as a student, I am especially thankful for Highline’s wondrous and brilliant faculty and staff, from whom I have learned to seek understanding and strive for unity, and with whom I have made friendships more valuable than my lifetime.

I am thankful for my mentors and friends that console me when life is hard, and from that I learn to better support my friends when they’re struggling. Collectively, I am thankful for Highline’s wondrous and brilliant faculty and staff, from which I have learned to appreciate diversity, differences, and exploration, and to my brothers, as I’ll remember our conversations late into the night, more than the homework that I should have been doing.

Merry Christmas
By: MinJung Kim
From: Korea

Once a year, for one day, there is a time of deep love between couples, warmth within families, kindness shown to children, and presents waiting to be unwrapped. Christmas is my favorite day during the year. Some people like Christmas because they can get presents from people; however, in my country, Korea, we don’t exchange gifts. Nevertheless, the reason I like Christmas is because everything is so beautiful. When Christmas comes, all the stores, streets and homes are decorated with sparkling trees, light bulbs, candy canes, and a variety of carols are heard. It is so beautiful, which makes me excited and animated about my life. For people who want to break out of the daily routine, I think Christmas is the perfect time to do so.

In English, the Christmas greeting phrase is Merry Christmas; in Spanish, Feliz Navidad; in Chinese, Sheng Tan KuaiLeh; in French, Joyeux Noel. Many languages in the world celebrate Christmas. We all wait for this one day during the year with thrill for hearing these greetings and enjoying the holiday.

Christmas originated from an old English word: ‘Cristes Maesse,’ which means Christ and Mass. December 25 was originally a Roman pagan holiday, called ‘natalis invict solis’, celebrating the birth of the Sun god, but the Roman church chose this day as Jesus’s birthday. Traditional Christmas customs like exchanging gifts and decorating trees, started from the Roman pagan holidays. We associate Christmas trees with Christmas. However, winter festival’s branch decoration and a laurel tree decoration originated from the Rome’s worship of the holy tree. We use fir trees as Christmas trees; this originated from Roman mythology about Odin. Odin pointed at a fir tree and said, “Bring this branch to home, and celebrate baby Jesus’s birth.”

So Christmas trees and Christmas originates from Rome, but how about Santa Clause? Santa’s chubby, rosy-red cheeked figure is from a Coca-cola commercial in 1931. His name originated from St. Nicholas, born in the country of Lycia in 270.

St. Nicholas gave alms to the poor and had a charitable spirit. He was a respected catholic saint, especially in the Netherlands where they called him ‘Sante Claus’ as symbol of person who gives charity.

On Christmas Day, each country celebrates. England sings Christmas carols, a long tradition of Christmas festivals. The Irish light up candles and put them near each window in the house. This represents that there is no more room in the Inn for Jesus. In the morning, a woman blows out the candles. Russia’s Christmas is on January 1, because they use the Julian calendar. They have Ded Moroz (ice grandfather) Santa, but this Santa comes on December 31, with a female Santa who is called by Snegurochka (Miss snow). I hope you all enjoy your holidays!!! Merry Christmas!
Mosaic Editors
Peter Hsieh
Ron Keller

PAST EVENTS
HIGHLIGHT

Trip To Mt. Rainier

Rotating Restaurant: Tita's

2010
Halloween Party
Welcome To Hell

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