

# Highlights

- Volunteer Day
- Birthdays
- Activities
- Manners

# The ELI Weekly

The Weekly Newsletter of  
the English Language Institute  
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## Volunteer Day

*Help others while helping yourself!*

This Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, we are holding our first **Volunteer Day** of the fall term. This is your chance to help out the community while practicing your English in a real-life environment. Below is a description of the volunteer activities going on this weekend. We will meet at different times. Students, language assistants, teachers, and staff will meet and head to the different sites. Please sign up on the Activities Board for your choice of activity by 4pm on Thursday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. There is no cost to volunteer. Wear comfortable clothes and sneakers. You should bring water to each volunteering activity

**Project Downtown Gainesville**— Want to meet new American friends and UF students? Help serve lunch to the homeless with a UF student organization called Project Downtown Gainesville from 12:30-2:30pm. Meet at Norman Garage.

**Alachua Animals**— Come walk, wash, and play with the pets from Alachua Animals from 9:30am-12noon. Meet at Norman Garage.

**Keep Alachua County Beautiful Campaign**—Clean up around the roads and nature areas of Gainesville from 8:15am-10am. Meet at Norman Garage.

**Emeritus**—Play games and talk with elderly people from 1:45pm-5pm. Meet at the Cabana Beach Rental Office.

If you have any questions about any of the activities, see Ximena in the CIP Office, Room 318.

Have a great day, everyone!

### The Next Trip

Next weekend, we will be going **Tubing on the Ichetucknee**. Details about the trip will be on the Activities Board and in next week's *Weekly*.

### Daily Activities

The following is our afternoon activity schedule. Please check the Activities Board from time to time to see if there are any changes.

Day/Time	Activity	Location/Cost
Monday 6:30 PM	Pool Party at the Laurels (Jessica)	The Swimming Pool at The Laurels Apartments. Free Bring a snack if you want to.

Tuesday 7:00 PM	Soccer (Jeremy)	Normal Field Free
Wednesday 7:00 PM	Coffee Talk (Shelby)	Ben and Jerry's on Archer Rd. Free (Bring money for coffee and food if you like.)
Thursday 7:00 PM	Karaoke at Lolicup (Heather)	Lolicup Free. Bring money for a drink if you like.
Friday 8:00 PM	Movie Night (Alexis)	Lexington Crossing Free. Bring money if you want to order pizza.

### Birthdays

The following are ELI birthdays from May 28-June 3:

Students:  
May 29: Jinhyoung Kim  
June 3: Cosme Jaramillo

Staff:  
None this week!

Happy Birthday to one and all!

## Manners and Culture

*Q: What is the polite way to place my knife and fork when I finish my meal?*

A: On your plate. The arrangement doesn't really matter beyond that. You may also place your napkin beside the plate when you're completely finished, but if you just get up in the middle of the meal and come back, leave it on your chair.

*Q: Why do American Guys never kiss each other when they meet?*

A: Like so many customs related to greeting, ours come from Northern Europe, where this custom didn't develop the way it did in Southern European and Mediterranean culture. When two American men do kiss as a matter of custom upon meeting, there are multiple possibilities. If they kiss on the cheek, they probably have some connection to Mediterranean culture (this may be especially true in South Florida). If they kiss on the mouth, as is becoming more common these days, then they may well be a couple.

*Q: What is the polite form for religion questions? Sometimes people invite you to go their church before that they know you well. What can you do in this case?*

A: There is no really polite form for religion questions for people you don't know well. This is considered a taboo topic in polite American society, as we are a very pluralistic society and religion is a source of potential conflict.

That having been said, if you know someone pretty well or they know clearly that you are asking from a cultural point of view, then you may ask first politely if it's all right to ask about their religion. Just be aware that there may be a lively discussion.

As to the last part of your question, just like anything else, you have a choice. You can accept if you're curious and interested, or you can politely decline with a "No thank you." There is no further explanation required, and you may consider the person rude if they persist. In the case of people officially assigned to you such as conversation or EESEE partners, if there is a situation that makes you feel at all uncomfortable, you should please come and talk to Noreen or Ximena as soon as possible.

## Grammar

*Q: When can I write in the passive form?*

A: You should avoid it whenever possible. However, you may use it when the performer of the action is completely unknown or completely obvious and redundant, or if you are in a situation in which you really don't want to reveal the performer of the action.

*Q: Is there a specific rule to know when we should use a gerund or an infinitive as the object of a verb?*

A: The Holy Grail of grammar questions. The answer is, "No." Much as I would love to give you one, there is little logic when it comes to this situation. There are verbs that take only one or the other, there are verbs that take both with a change in meaning, and there are verbs that take both with the same meaning. The only absolute way to know them is to memorize.

## Quote of the Week

You're only given a little spark of madness.  
You mustn't lose it.

--Robin Williams

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