Hoggetowne Medieval Faire

Join us for a great day of fun!

This Saturday, February 4th, we are staying right here in Gainesville for the Hoggetowne Medieval Faire. This is a festival where people remember and celebrate Medieval times. Step back in time, cheer on royal knights as they joust on horseback and charge head-on at a full gallop with only a lance and a shield to defend themselves. Watch a chess game played out with human chess pieces on the Living Chessboard. Laugh along with jugglers, musicians, and a colorful cast of characters. There will be plenty of great food and fun! This is a wonderful place to bring family and children. For more information on the Medieval Faire, visit their website at gvlculturalaffairs.org and look under programs-events, or call 352-335-ARTS.

We will meet at the Norman Garage at 11:30am. We will probably return around 3-4pm depending on when your car leaves. If it is raining on Saturday morning, call 392-3354, x230 after 10am and listen to the message to see if the trip has been cancelled. This is a carpool trip, so you must sign up on the Activities Board by 4pm on Thursday, February 2nd.

Entrance to the festival is $10 for adults, $5 for children ages 10-17, and free for children ages 4 and younger. Bring money for food. You should also bring spending money. The festival is a great place to buy gifts and souvenirs.

Join us! Don’t miss out on the fun.

Notes from the Office

- **Immunizations** - Don't forget; we must have proof of your immunizations for you to be allowed to attend classes. Please don’t get caught unaware; if we don’t have them, we must pull you from classes. The deadline this semester is Friday, February 10th.

- **Class Attendance** - Remember, your attendance is very, very important. Your teachers are taking note of both your absences and your tardies in every class every day.

- **Student Mailbox** - Don’t forget to check the student mailbox in the main office from time to time. There is mail for some returning students already.

- **Smoking** - We have noticed that some folks are smoking right under the “No Smoking” signs outside the Florida Room. Remember, students, that it is state law now that not only is there no smoking inside state buildings, you must be at least 50 feet from the building to smoke at all. Smoking is permitted at the picnic tables adjacent to the small parking lot on the northeast side of Norman Hall (right across from the Credit Union).

The Next Trip

Next weekend, we will be here in Gainesville for fun in the great outdoors with Hiking on Paynes Prairie. Details will be on the Activities Board and in next week’s Weekly.

Birthdays

The following are ELI Birthdays for the week of February 3-9:

Students:
February 4:  Min Hwi Shin
February 5:  Ramón Padilla

Staff:
None this week!

Manners and Culture

Folks, first off, we have a couple of questions that are not exactly manners and culture here:

**Q**: I want to take the short term next semester and I want to stay in the U.S. Is this possible?
Q: How can ELI students work and still maintain their visas?

A: Both of these are the kinds of questions that you should ask of Barbara or Chris. Unfortunately, while they are excellent questions, your manners columnist isn’t really qualified to answer them. We’ll leave them to the experts!

Q: If the teacher is bad or boring, can we tell Megan to change the teacher? Is it possible?

A: Well, first of all, we certainly appreciate that you may have differences of opinion about our teaching styles and methods. Remember, though, that all of our teachers are very experienced and well-trained, and we want you to succeed! If you are wondering about your class and why things are being done a certain way, you should first talk to your teacher about your concerns. We find student feedback to be very helpful! Of course, if there are serious problems, you should definitely go ahead and talk to Patti, our Assistant Director and Academic Coordinator. She is the person who makes the decisions about classes and supervises the teachers. Naturally, Megan is always happy to talk to students about anything, but Patti is the person to see about Academic matters.

Q: Why does the bus not run on Sunday?

A: Because very few people would be using it. Bus service in Gainesville is actually unusual; most cities this size don’t even really have much bus service. In Gainesville, the bus system is subsidized by the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College, in addition to Alachua County and the City of Gainesville. Since space for parking is so limited, and we have so many people heading every weekday to these destinations, it just makes sense. Bus service on Saturdays was only instituted a few years ago; the response has been okay, but even then, the routes are limited because so many fewer people ride. Unfortunately for the few who really depend on the bus, it just isn’t cost effective to run them on Sundays.

Q: I was in a public restroom recently. At that time, I could see others’ feet beside me. I was a little nervous in a public restroom because I thought a restroom is the most private space. I hadn’t recognized it until then, but I found the partitions didn’t block the lower parts. I think Americans regard privacy as important, but why do they allow this kind of partition? I know restrooms are totally protected and blocked from others in Korea and Japan. Is there any special reason or don’t Americans care about physiological things?

A: This is an interesting point. I guess the simplest answer is that it’s just easier to construct the stalls in this way. Culturally speaking, men in the US, at least, do regard this kind of privacy as important; we simply don’t notice the feet of the other people. If we did, it would be totally out of the question to indicate in any way that we knew who else was there; it’s not like we would strike up a conversation, for example. A female colleague of mine tells me that this is somewhat different for women. She says that it is more common for women in this particular situation (especially if they do recognize the feet next to them) to speak up.

Q: Why do all the clubs close at 2am?

A: Well, the official reason is that it’s supposed to get people off the streets earlier. In practice, there’s a lot of debate as to just how effective this is. Some people feel that it really doesn’t matter what time the bars close—you’re just as likely to have drunk people on the road no matter what. Gainesville is not the only place in Florida with 2am closing times; even places as large as Orlando also do this!

Q: Why do Americans smile and say “Hi” to people they have never met and nod at each other on the road?

A: It’s not all Americans. Someone from New York might ask the same question. It’s really a Southern and rural thing. The culture in this part of the US dictates that we should be friendly to strangers as much as possible.

**Quote of the Week**

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain.

--Maya Angelou