

## KGC Newsletter

Issue 10, December 2002



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## KGC OPEN HOUSE 2002

By Tony & Pei



As international students, we are glad to introduce KGC's Open House and the anniversary of the EPP program. We would like to thank Rosa for her help because she provided us with a lot of information so that we could write this article that we also hope our readers will enjoy.

November 27 was KGC's Open House! "KGC's Open House" was a special day when KGC welcomed guests to visit KGC and to observe our facilities and environment. In fact, this was the first time that KGC had this type of event. At the same time, we also celebrated the anniversary of the EPP program. Actually, this was the first time that guests could observe classes in progress. KGC hopes to build many good relationships with different colleges, KGC and BCIT and also hopes that many new students will learn about opportunities at KGC.

Before the Open House, KGC invited many guests who were agents, alumni, media, staff from BCIT, colleges and universities by sending invitations, emails, press releases and posts which were posted to many countries such as China, Japan and Mexico. It was KGC's pleasure to have so many guests who observed the EPP program in progress. All guests were very excited! They were very happy to have this opportunity to observe the EPP program. KGC also hopes to build many new relationships with other great colleges and universities in the future. Therefore, students can have more educational choices in art, music, computer and business courses.

KGC's open house was very successful because many guests were able to observe classes, while the classes were in progress, so KGC hopes to have this kind of event at least

once a year. Then, the guests who observe the EPP program can see the changes. Guests were able to ask teachers questions and observe how students responded. This was a main reason why KGC chose to have an Open House instead of printing Ad to promote the EPP program.

KGC hopes that guests not only visited KGC and observed the EPP program, but that they also had fun here. KGC provided some snacks and invited our guests to celebrate the anniversary of EPP together. In addition, KGC also gave awards to many great teachers, employees and students. We interviewed one of these great students, Chung Bae Koo(Gary), who got the highest score in level 5 during November. He told us that he always organized the handouts and the notes that he took in classes after class and studies two hours a day. When Gary has a quiz on Friday, he always reviews his notes more than two times. On the weekend, Gary always talks with his homestay mother or some Canadians in order to improve his listening and speaking. He also suggested KGC's students can listen to the radio, watch English TV channels and read Canadian newspapers. Then, students will improve their English skills a lot.





# AIBO

By Phoebe

Ask you this question, do you know what AIBO is? Maybe you won't know. AIBO is one of a new breed of electronic pets which combines artificial intelligence such as sitting, crying, running and etc. Nowadays, robot dogs are becoming more and more popular worldwide and many people want to own one.

Let me tell you a real story about why AIBO is becoming so popular. According to the robot dog marketing research, AIBO sold out rapidly in both Japan and the United States, and its limited edition of 3,000 units sold out in 20 minutes in Japan, while 2,000 sold in four days in the United States. The company states that this kind of robotic pet sold in much greater numbers than expected, and they expect every household to have two to three entertainment robots within the next 10 years. It becomes a big business with market worldwide.

Do you know why it is becoming more popular? Firstly, the size of AIBO is so small that it only occupies a small area. Secondly, you can save time because you don't have to worry about feeding AIBO, taking it out for a walk and cleaning up after it. It is suitable for the people who are busy



with their life and yet want to own a dog. Thirdly, AIBO has similar characteristics to a real dog. Basically, it has emotional expression, which can let people know its emotion. For instance, when it is happy, it will wag its tail, dance with you or its eyes will show a green flash. Fourthly, AIBO can recognize some voices and over 60 different commands. You can program some simple commands such as "SIT" or "GO". If it hears your commands what you program, it will obey your commands to do these things in which you want it to perform. Fifthly, you can also change the software so that it becomes a puppy, complete with crying and demanding behavior. AIBO, which

separates it from other robotic dogs, has the ability to learn. For example, if you tap AIBO on the head while AIBO is looking at the pink ball, AIBO will learn not to look at the pink ball ever again. However, if you pat it gently on the head, it will learn to look at the ball more and may even play with it later on. Whereas, you can change AIBO's characteristics to a more mature dog by pushing a mature dog mode button. It is not difficult to understand why people like to own an AIBO.

There are so many things you can do with AIBO. It is like having a real dog. However,



AIBO has its downsides. Firstly, it grows increasingly difficult for people to train AIBO to obey commands. Indeed, some commands can't be recognized by AIBO easily such as "KEEP ON" command. Secondly, it is not smart enough to understand some voice commands like "COME". To talk to the dog, owners will need to use a remote-control device that emits musical tones that AIBO recognizes as commands. Thirdly, you can't develop a mutual relationship with AIBO because you can't communicate with each other by using language, and it can only recognize a limited number of commands. In fact, it can't understand what the owner's feelings are. Those are some of the disadvantages of AIBO.

From my point of view, owning a robot dog like AIBO has both its advantages and its disadvantages. Even though it has a lot of characteristics like a real dog, I prefer to own a real dog than to own an AIBO because I can't create a good mutual relationship with a robot dog.

## J.K. Rowling

By Mari Goto



Do you know who J.K. Rowling is? You may have no idea who she is, but all of you probably have heard about Harry Potter. Yes! She is the author of "The Harry Potter" series. I am going to tell you something more about her. J.K. Rowling was born in Chipping Sodbury, Gloucestershire, England on July 31, 1965. Her given name is Joanne Kathleen. She has been writing since she was 5 or 6 years old! While living in Winterbourne, she had next door neighbors whose last name was Potter. She never forgot this name because she liked

it very much. Then, when she was 9, she moved to Tutshill. She was shy and freckly, and she was not quite athletic, but she liked literature very much.

She went to Exeter University, and she studied French there because her parents encouraged her to be a bilingual secretary. However, she realized that the job didn't suit her. When she was 26, she moved to Portugal to be an English teacher, and there she met a man who was a Portuguese journalist. They got married, and in 1993, her daughter, Jessica, was born. However, shortly after her daughter was born, they divorced. Then, she moved to Edinburgh, Scotland in order to be near her younger sister.

The idea about "Harry Potter" struck her one day when she was traveling from Manchester to London. It took her 5 years to write first "Harry Potter". After it was completed, she sold the book to Bloomsbury publishing company for the equivalent of US \$4000. Before that, some companies

refused to buy it, and I think that they regret it now. In 1997, "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" won "The British Book Awards" for the Children's Book of The Year and "The Smarties Prize", too. By the summer of 2000, Ms. Rowling had earned over \$400 million for the first three books (Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, The Chamber of Secrets, The Prisoner of Azkaban). These books have been printed in 35 languages and over 30 million copies have been sold all over the world.

Have you read these books? If you haven't read them yet, you should. Once you start reading, you will not be able to put the book down! And you should see the movies, too. They are fantastic!

[http://gaga.essortment.com/jkrowlingbiogr\\_r\\_eak.htm](http://gaga.essortment.com/jkrowlingbiogr_r_eak.htm)  
<http://www.kidsreads.com/HarryPotter/jkrowling.html>  
<http://www.geocities.com/hpmaniacs/jk-photo> (Dec 10.2002)

# International Students Coping With Culture Shock

By David Yeh

Nowadays, studying abroad is very popular and common in every country. When people study abroad, the first thing they need to face is how to adjust well to the environment and cope with the culture shock. As an international student, what I have encountered is a journey that is full of excitement and adventure. I have struggled hard to fit in, so I can feel free in this country. My experience in this journey can be divided into several stages:

A. Excitement: Everything is great, nothing is wrong; I have a wonderful time in this country.

B. Shock: How come there are a lot of differences in this country? That's not what I thought before. I don't know how to deal with them.

C. Negotiation: I learn to cope with the problems and try hard to feel comfortable.

D. Acceptance: I am able to live well in the environment. Now I am used to living here.

Any international student may experience these four stages. How long does it take to overcome them? That depends on their abilities to get used to it. Some students are optimistic; however, others are not so open. The more you learn how to live in a place, the better you can fit in the local culture. From my experience and observation, there

are several symptoms of culture shock.

1. Homesickness
2. Depression
3. Unexplainable crying
4. Headaches
5. Inability to study effectively
6. Anger
7. Feeling of intense stress
8. Loss of appetite
9. Boredom

As far as I'm concerned, these symptoms may not happen to every international student. Probably just a few may apply to each student.

Once they have it, they'll need some help and suggestions to deal with culture shock. I have some advice to help students cope with it.

1. Make friends. By making friends, you can share your feelings; ask questions about something you don't understand. Having friends to talk to can help you to get rid of homesickness.
2. Exercise. Exercise is a way to release your stress and depression. A regular scheduled exercise makes your spirit thrive.
3. Study English. This is an important and quick method that helps you understand local culture. By studying English, you can also feel more confident about yourself.

4. Reading. Read whenever you can. For instance, you can read the newspaper, brochures or surf the Internet. By reading, you can catch information about the local news.
5. Participate in activities. Join activities in your church, community and student club. You can be a volunteer as well. That helps you become a member of this society while you are here.
6. Keep in touch. Write letters, postcards, and emails or call your family and friends. That always makes you feel better.
7. Take a walk. Taking a walk to shopping malls or parks is a way to meet people and reduce boredom.
8. Have an open mind. People who have an open mind may have a positive attitude to face their daily lives.
9. Be patient. The process of adaptation takes time. Do not feel bad about that. Time can help to release culture shock.
10. Look for help. When you feel pressured, there is always someone available to help you.

Studying abroad is a wonderful experience in people's lives. They'll never forget the time that they spend abroad. My suggestions are a way to help international students cope with culture shock. If you follow them, you'll handle it well. I hope every international student have unforgettable memories from the host country. Good luck!

## CHINESE NEW YEAR

By Amory Wu

Chinese New Year is very similar to the Western one, with traditions and rituals that start with the New Moon on the first day of the New Year and ends on the full moon 15 days later. The 15th day of the New Year is called the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night, with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade.

The Chinese New Year has 12 animal signs (Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, Boar), and the Chinese New Year calendar is based on a combination of lunar and solar movements. The lunar cycle is about 29.5 days. In order to "catch up" with the solar calendar the Chinese insert an extra month once every few years (seven years out of a 19-year cycle). This is the same as adding an extra day on leap year. This is why, according to the solar calendar, the Chinese New Year falls on a different date each year.

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are celebrated as a

family affair, a time of reunion and thanksgiving. The celebration is traditionally highlighted with a religious ceremony given in honor of Heaven and Earth, the gods of the household and the family ancestors.



The sacrifice to the ancestors, the most vital of all the rituals, unites the living members with those who had passed away. Departed relatives are remembered with great respect because they were responsible for laying the foundations for the fortune and glory of the family.

The presence of the ancestors is acknowledged on New Year's Eve with a dinner arranged for them at the family banquet table. The spirits of the ancestors, together with the living, celebrate the onset of the New Year as one great community. The communal feast is called "surrounding the stove" or weilu. It symbolizes family unity and honors the past and present generations.



Most people go to a restaurant on their first date. If you know about wine before you go on a date, you will have a better chance to enjoy your time with your special someone. To please her on the first date, most people go to an up-scale restaurant, and they order a good wine with their food. People use "wine" as a tool to create a good romantic environment. Most people have heard the phrase "wine and dine"; it means you take someone out to a nice restaurant and buy expensive food and drinks.

I think probably you have seen the "V.Q.A." mark that is on the top of some wine bottles; "V.Q.A." stands for Vintners Quality Alliance. This mark helps you identify wines which are made in Canada. Although you know France, Italy, and California are famous for wines, I recommend you try B.C. wines. There are 3 types of B.C. wines red, white, and ice wine. Red wine and white wine are the main dinner wines. Ice wine is a dessert wine. To impress your date, you should know how to drink wine. There are 3 steps; how to see it, smell it, and taste it.

## 1. See

To observe the wine, you should pour the wine into a clear glass and hold the glass up to a white background, so you can see the color clearly. First of all, the wine should be clear and bright; it should not be cloudy and hazy. Also, you should be able to see the bottom of the glass, and the color of wine should be the same at the rim as it is in the middle. Here are the colors of wine stages.

### White wines change their colors with age

From Green to Yellow to Gold to Brown

### Red wines change their colors with age

From Red to Purple to Garnet to Brick to Brown (The color of red wines are becoming lighter as they age)

Many things such as the age, grape, and vats affect the wine color.

## 2. Smell

Smell is one of our most important senses because people can only taste due to their sense of smell. Also, the nose is more sensitive than the mouth. Now, you can use your sense of smell when you drink wine. First of all, swirl your wine and take a quick whiff, and then take a deep breath of the aroma. Do you like the smell of the wine? Do you think the smell of the wine is mature? (The wine shouldn't smell moldy, vinegary, or oxidized.) However, it is difficult to recognize which wines are good or bad by the sense of smell because there are tons of smells in a wine. Although you may not recognize the aroma, don't worry about it. You will learn the differences of

the wines odors after trying many times.

## 3. Taste

People's tongues consist of 4 zones which are sweet, acid, salt, and bitter. A good wine satisfies these 4 zones of taste. Also, a good wine is well balanced between sweetness and acidity. There are two types of wines; one is sweet wine, and the other is dry wine. You can choose either sweet or dry according to your palate. There is one tip which helps you taste the wine, though, it makes you look funny; after you've sipped, hold the wine in your mouth, make an "O" with your lips, and draw in some air over the wine in your mouth. It helps you taste the wine more sensitively. Moreover, the good wine taste lasts in your mouth after swallowing.

## Food with wine

Some people don't know which food matches well with which wine. Here are some hints how to choose a good wine with food. Frequently, white wine is well balanced with fish and white meats like chicken and pork. Red wine is well balanced with red meats and red sauces. Ice wine is for dessert. Another tip is you should start to drink lighter wine and to move heavier wine because you can't taste other things if you drink strong wine at the beginning.

## Wine Trip

Have you been to any B.C. wineries? If you are interested in drinking wine, I recommend you visit Okanagan Valley which is a famous place where wine is made. It takes about 6 hours by a car from Vancouver to the Okanagan Valley which has many beautiful wineries and lakes. Also, you can enjoy good weather and tasting many kinds of wines especially since wine tasting costs a very little. However, if you plan to visit the Okanagan Valley in summer, you should book a hotel and a winery tour early because they will be packed during the session.

These sites are useful for you how to taste wine.

<http://www.tasting-wine.com/html/tasting.html>

<http://www.foodtv.com/wine/tasting>

<http://www.geerwade.com/gw/educenter/tasting.asp>

<http://www.soyouwanna.com/site/syws/basicwine>

These sites are useful for you about B.C. wine and how to go to Okanagan Valley.

<http://www.bcwine.ca>,

<http://www.okanagan.com>



## Wine Festival Schedule

### Icewine Festivals

Sun Peaks Resort- Kamloops

2003: January 23-26

2004: January 22-25

2005: January 20-23

### Spring Festivals

Throughout the Okanagan Valley

2003: May 1-4

2004: April 29 - May 2

2005: May 5-8

### Summer Festivals

Silver Star Mountain Resort

2003: August 7-9

2004: August 5-7

2005: August 4-6

### Fall Festivals

Throughout the Okanagan Valley

2002: October 3-13

2003: October 3-12

2004: September 30- October 9

2005: October 2-11



# Between Genius and Madman

By Steven Su

Vincent Van Gogh, born March 30, 1853, was one of the most famous painters in the history of art. He was so great that he made 800 paintings in his final ten years. Because he was not accepted by others, he sold only one of his paintings during his whole life. Before being recognized, he died from a mental disorder at the age of 37.

He got his first job as an art dealer in his uncle's gallery when he was sixteen. It came with the first refusal in love. He fell in love with the landlady's daughter and he thought that she felt the same about him. Unfortunately, she was not attracted to him. Because of the hurt he felt, he quit his career and insulted his customers. He behaved the same even when he had a second chance in Paris. He lost the post as a result.

As his father was a minister, Van Gogh intended to follow his father and started studying theology. But he failed in this course and couldn't be a minister as he wished. In spite of the failure, he still desired to be like his father and help out the poor. His superiors sent him as a missionary to Belgium, but his approach to fighting poverty made his superiors unhappy. 1876

saw Van Gogh move to his father's home and stay there for a period of time.

After he left Belgium, Vincent found an interest in painting. His brother, Theo, his only family member who, during his whole life, supported him financially and morally, decided to give him 100 francs per month. At the age of 27, he thought of himself as a failure. He tried all kinds of jobs with no success and had no choice but to be an artist. Theo supported his decision and they became closer. At the end of the year, he fell in love with his cousin and he was rejected again. As a result, all his relations turned against him. Therefore, Theo was the only one who cared for him.

Theo invited him to Paris. This gave him a chance to discover a world of art. He took advantage of learning all kinds of drawing styles from the most famous painters at that time. But after one year, he thought he should leave because he didn't get along with Theo well. In addition, no one ever considered his work.

He moved to "Yellow House" in Arles, which he used as a home and also as a studio for his work. But he was not used to living alone, so he wrote to his brother asking him to invite Paul Gauguin, the artist who he met in Paris, to live with him. At the end of 1888, Van Gogh had an argument with Paul and threatened him with a knife. When he

came back home, he cut one part of his left ear to release his anger.

With his mental health decreasing, he was admitted to a mental hospital. At the asylum, Vincent was locked up because he was violent. After being cured, he left the asylum and lived with Theo again. He recovered and created a lot of works under Theo's care. But when he heard that Jo, Theo's wife, was pregnant, he attacked her.

He regretted this and being a burden to Theo, he shot himself on July 27, 1890 and died in his brother's arms. His "Starry Night" is one of my favorite works; he used pure colors and thick layers to show the illusory interspaces. He used revolving lines and bright colors to describe fireworks and stars and so the sky looks mysterious. The town below is showed by dark colors and very realistic, so that the impact of the painting is very strong.



# The Last Pure Land- Tibet

By He Tian

As everyone knows, Tibet is recognized as the last pure place in the world. It is also a secret place for many people who never visited it. Many people who come from the western world consider that Tibet is an independent country. In fact, it is a part of People's Republic of China, and Tibetans are also considered as Chinese people. For thousands of years, Tibetans have lived amiably and quietly in the Tibet highlands. They love nature and believe in Buddhism, and they respect all wild animals. Therefore, Tibet becomes one of the most beautiful and pure places in the world.

Tibet, acknowledged as the highest altitude highland, has fantastic landscape, which another interesting place does not have. Furthermore, there is also a large quantity of various and rare animals one of which is Tibet Antelope. Himalayan range lies on the boundary between Tibet and Nepal, and Mount Everest is the highest peak in the

world. In fact, many mountain peaks in Tibet are more than 7000 meters high. Consequently, Tibet becomes the outdoor sports fans' paradise. Each year, thousands of mountaineers from the entire world visit Tibet, and conquer those great mountains.

Even though the great landscape of Tibet appeals to a lot of tourists, the environment on Tibet is really bad, especially the north and west part of Tibet, with large areas in which nobody lives. However, in the east of Tibet, you can see a lot of trees throughout the mountains. People live in a peaceful environment, so it is known as the last paradise. Lhasa, the provincial capital of Tibet, lies in the south of Tibet, which is the economic and political center. On the other hand, Lhasa is also famous and interesting place in Tibet. Budala Palace, which was built about 1200 years ago, is considered to be the symbol of Lhasa. So if you go to Lhasa, you should visit Budala Palace.

Tibetans are devoted to Buddhism. They believe that they are able to experience metamorphoses after they die. Many Tibetans will go to Mount Kalas which is a heavenly mountain of Buddhism. Each year they have to go around the mountain 108 times because they believe that, by doing this, they can become Buddha.

For the people who love nature, Tibet is the last Pure Land. When looking at the sky and the earth, you will feel that your spirit flies to the Pure Land, and your heart becomes pure and noble. Therefore, I think that if you go to China, you should visit Tibet because it is the last Pure Land on earth.



# It's time to plan your winter trips!



By Karen Yu

**A**s an international student, I have been in Vancouver for four months, and now I am studying at KGC. I love this city very much, and I heard Canada is the best country for skiing in the winter. Therefore, I checked the information on the internet and found some ideas about how to plan a great winter Vacation.

A lot of people like winter sports such as skiing, snow boarding, snow tubing, and snow shoeing. However, do you know why winter sports are so popular? Because they are fun, exciting, and challenging. For example, if you are a good snowboarder, you can cruise down steep slopes at over 50 miles an hour while balancing on a narrow wooden board. Sound exciting!

Have you ever attempted any winter sports? If you haven't tried one yet, you should risk it; if you are planning your trip, I would like to give you some good suggestions. Before you go, you should think about the following things:

## **(1) When do you want to go?**

There are two popular periods for a ski vacation. One is over Christmas and New Years when almost everyone has a few days off work or school. The other popular period is around Easter and in March when schools



have their annual breaks.

## **(2) How to make a booking before you go?**

As we know, when holidays come, a lot of people choose to go to ski resorts in the winter. If you don't make a booking, you will find it hard to find accommodations. Therefore, before you go to a resort, ensure you have already made a reservation for your holiday.

## **(3) What should you wear?**

First, you should wear several layers of clothes in order to stay warm and comfortable. Wool or synthetic materials hold heat, so they are a better choice than cotton. Also, your outer layer should be



water-resistant. Second, you need to wear waterproof winter sports gloves or mittens and a helmet that will help protect your head from serious injury during a fall. Next, you need to wear tinted goggles in order to protect your eyes from blowing snow and glare.

## **(4) How to prepare your equipment?**

One way is to buy some new equipment at a sports shop. However, new equipment can easily cost hundreds of dollars, so another alternative is to rent equipment. Most ski areas offer this service; you can rent all the equipment that you need such as snowboards, snowboarding boots, skis, skiing poles, skiing boots and snowshoes.

## **(5) How to get started?**

Lessons from a snowboarding or skiing instructor are a good idea. Some ski resorts have instructors and special areas for beginners. These areas usually have a gentle slope where beginners can practice.

## **(6) How to choose a good destination?**

Let me introduce three ski areas which are close to Vancouver and a world class resort in B.C----Whistler/Blackcomb. You can choose the resort which is most suitable for you.

### **Grouse mountain**

Grouse mountain is the peak of Vancouver, so you can easily see it from the city. It has become an appealing option after work because it is just 10 minutes from downtown.

(Web site: [www.Grousemountain.com](http://www.Grousemountain.com))

### **Cypress bowl**

Cypress bowl is the smallest of ski areas in Vancouver, but it has a good lift system and has great snow accumulations.

(Web site: [www.Cypressbowl.com](http://www.Cypressbowl.com))

### **Mount Seymour**

Skiing has been enjoyed on Mount Seymour since the 1930s, and the first lift was constructed in 1949. Nowadays, Mount

Seymour has three lifts which are good for newer skiers and the two higher chairs allow for more varied terrain. The mountain also has an area for tubing and has a few runs with night skiing.

(Web site: [www.mountseymour.com](http://www.mountseymour.com))

### **Whistler/Blackcomb**

Just 114km of driving north of Vancouver brings you to Whistler which is Canada's premier ski resort and one of the world's most highly rated ski destinations. It has a wonderful diversity of terrain and an excellent lift system which can carry over 42,000 skiers and snowboarders an hour.

(Web site: [www.whistler-blackcomb.com](http://www.whistler-blackcomb.com))

## **(7) How to reduce injury?**

As we know, during skiing or snowboarding knee and shoulder injuries occur frequently, and collarbone fractures are also quite common. If you are careful and aware, most injuries can be avoided. However, if you should fall, you had better let it happen, remain relaxed and don't fight the impact. In addition, before doing some winter sports, you should do some exercises which will help you stretch well.

Overall, playing winter sports provides people with lots of fun. I hope after reading my introduction, you will be able to choose a great location and have an exciting winter vacation. Just follow my advice and risk it, and you will have an unforgettable experience this winter.

## **Enjoy Yourself!**

