

The Link

International Spouse Network

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Volume 1, Issue 2

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Proposed activities and groups:

Please get involved and start a group that interests you!

English Conversation Class

Book Club

Park play dates with children

Lunch at local restaurants

Cooking

Pot Luck lunches (bring your own food to share)

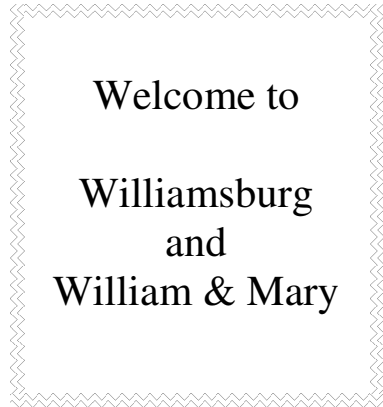
Couples Supper Club

Trips to local places of interest

Shopping trips

Crafts

and many other possibilities



What is the International Spouse Network?

It is a group of wives, husbands, and significant others who have accompanied their partners to Williamsburg and who have a connection to the College of William & Mary. Members are either here short term or as permanent residents who share a common bond and interest in establishing friendships, social opportunities, community involvement and family support for each other.

The Reves Center for International Studies sponsors the Network by providing meeting space, programs, W&M campus and community connections.

All W&M International Spouses/Partners are encouraged to participate and take an active role in organizing activities of interest to them. Volunteering in the community where you live is an important part of American life.

So, please join us at our “kick-off” (first) meeting of the 2010/2011 academic year in the Reves Room on Wednesday, August 25.

Membership is free and by signing up you will have an excellent opportunity to make new friends, improve your English and have fun! For more information and to join, go to: <http://www.wm.edu/offices/revescenter/programming/link/index.php>

Introduction to American Life

Taken from Denslow, Tinkham and Willer; U.S. Culture Series, Introduction to American Life
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Congratulations and good luck as you embark on a great life experience. By accompanying your spouse to the US to study you join a community of families from around the world who study and live in the United States.

Some of you have visited or studied in the US previously. Even for those who it will be the first US experience, the place may seem familiar. You can find McDonald’s and it’s easy to get a Coke almost anywhere. But the menu at McDonald’s is a little different from that in your hometown and the Coke has a slightly different taste. Familiar things are recognizable but not exactly what you expect. Furthermore, American life

as depicted on television or in movies is an inaccurate picture of what you will find.

In the United States, there is no single type of national behavior, no one life style, no one culture. We are a nation of immigrants and our country is physically very large. Individual differences, ethnic customs, regional traditions, the size and type of higher education institution - all these variables will affect your own experience of American life.

“What time is it?” You may wonder why Americans are always looking to see what time it is. They look at their



Introduction to American Life cont.

watches and check the clocks on their phones and computers.”What time is it?”, “How long we do have?”, “Am I late?”, “When is that project due?” These are questions repeated over and over. Americans seem obsessed with being on time, with their schedules and deadlines. Being *on time* in an American environment is considered a sign of respect. It shows that one values the other person’s time. If a class or meeting is scheduled to begin at 9 am, one is expected to arrive a few

minutes before the hour. It is preferable to be slightly early but not a minute late, especially for a class or meeting. Only in social situations, for example when dinner is to begin at 7 pm is it acceptable and indeed recommended to arrive five to ten minutes after the appointed time. On the other hand, if you are invited to a party that is scheduled from 8-11 pm or from 4-7 pm, it is fine to arrive anytime between the stated hours and leave any time up until the end of the time.

English Language Conversation Class

Improve your pronunciation, expand your everyday vocabulary and learn more about American culture in conversation classes designed for nonnative English speakers

15 hours of instruction

Professional trained TESOL instructors

Computer-assisted language lab

Certificate of completion

Small class size (7-12 learners)

\$100.00

For more information or to register contact:

Barbara Montieth at bmonteith@WM.edu

What Can I Talk About?

In America:

Topics generally discussed with acquaintances or those one does not know well:

- The weather
- One’s commuting experience & cars
- Classes, jobs, volunteer interests
- Sports
- Music, movies
- Fashion, shopping and clothes

Topics NOT to discuss unless you know the person well:

- Money, how much one earns
- Family
- Religion

| Communication | Strategies to help you communicate with Americans |
|--|---|
| Americans do not like to be interrupted when they are talking. | One person speaks, then another replies. It is as if the two people are tossing a ball back and forth. |
| Americans view that time is limited and the point needs to be made with a simple explanation. | Direct clear communication is best when speaking. Use simple and factual sentences. |
| American conversations tend to be a search for information. Americans ask a lot of questions and are often direct. For example, if the answer to a request is no, Americans will generally just say NO. The answer of no does not mean it is time to start negotiating. It is simply a piece of information. | Such directness can be puzzling for people who have a more subtle communication style. Americans rely less on people inferring meaning from other information. American will expect everyone to communicate in a similar way and are likely to miss subtle clues and indirect messages. |



CONNECTING YOUR EXPERIENCE: Reves Center

It is important to stay connected to your home culture and to embrace your new American culture. Through the *International Spouse Network* and *The Link* newsletter there will be information about ways to get involved in both.

If you find yourself feeling “starved” for international culture here are a few local international restaurants. They might not completely meet your expectations for authenticity but you will probably enjoying eating the American version.

Williamsburg’s International Tastes

Italian:

Florimonte's Deli
Carmine's Delicatessen
Buon Amici
Giuseppe's Italian Café

French:

Le Yaca Ma Provence

Chinese:

Mongolian Grill

Indian:

Nawab Indian Cuisine

Thai: Thai Pot

Japanese:

Kyoto Japanese

Mexican:

Casa Maya

La Tolteca

Tequila Rose

International Food Stores in Newport News

Jung Hah Oriental Market 13310 Warwick Blvd.
E-Mart 13270 Warwick Blvd.
Far Eastern Food Store 340 Oriana Road, Suite E

Keilbasa 113-P Palace Lane, Williamsburg

If it's the language or dialect you're craving, try watching film's set in your home country. www.ForeignFilms.com allows you to browse the films by category. Here is their list of Top Five Foreign Films:

1. [Seven Samurai](#) (1954), Japan directed by Akira Kurosawa
2. [8 1/2](#) (1963), Italy directed by Federico Fellini
3. [Rashomon](#) (1951), Japan directed by Akira Kurosawa
4. [Wild Strawberries](#) (1957), Sweden directed by Ingmar Bergman
5. [The Seventh Seal](#) (1956), Sweden

Williamsburg Important Contacts

W&M homepage

www.wm.edu

City of Williamsburg

<http://www.ci.williamsburg.va.us/>

Williamsburg police

220-2333

Emergency

911

Sentara Hospital

984-6000

Williamsburg Library

<http://www.wrl.org/>

Public Schools

<http://www.wjcc.k12.va.us/>

Williamsburg Bus

<http://www.williamsburgtransport.com/>

Williamsburg Train

www.amtrak.com

What Next???

Come to first meeting on Wednesday, August 25 at 10 am in Reves Room.

Sign up to receive newsletter and important program information.

Register for ESOL Conversation Class.

Volunteer to form a group of other spouses with the same interest.

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