Changes in the SAMSA- Pro or Con?
By: Nili Sangani and Mai Lyn Ngo

Since the beginning of time, we have read of countless incidents of struggles over land, territory, and a place to call home. Many Asian students on campus speak of a similar struggle as they come together to question the changes within the SAMSA.

The SAMSA, short for Student Activities and Multicultural Student Affairs, houses its office on the third floor of the Hughes-Trigg Student Center. The office assists and advises a wide variety of student organizations officially charted by the University.

According to the SAMSA website, SMU is home to over 200 student organizations. Most of the Asian American organizations utilize the SAMSA to carry out daily tasks at the newly assigned workstations, make signs in the sign room, program events, hold meetings, seek advise from Nessa, hang out with friends, meet new people, play dominoes, and most importantly, build a sense of community.

At the beginning of the fall semester, students arrived at SMU to find a renovated and changed SAMSA. Most of the furniture has been moved, such as the television that was moved from the center of the office to the far right corner by the doors. The space in the center of the office has converted- with the help of partitions- to a temporary programming room for CHAS, ABS, and AC. The carpet has been replaced. The large organization cabinets have been moved into the sign room and the organization mailboxes have been converted into a file rack. The round table where many students gathered to socialize and eat lunch is replaced with sofas. The staff kitchen, which was formerly available for

Thinking Outside the Bubble
By: Daniel Liu

One of my favorite Chinese proverbs growing up was called Jing Di Zhi Wa or The Frog at the Bottom of the Well. This ancient proverb illustrates the story of a frog who lived in a well. For this frog, the world was only as big as the opening of the well. It thought it was the king of the world. The frog only realizes how foolish it is when a passing turtle describes the rest of the world to it.

Essentially, this proverb cautions us about becoming too narrow-minded. As students within the SMU community, we are prone to becoming “too comfortable” in what many call the “SMU Bubble.” Even more alarming is the fact that many groups and communities create their own mini-bubbles within the SMU community.

The fact that you are still reading my editorial must mean that you are curious about my motivation. So here it is: Given that SMU is such a diverse university with thousands of opportunities, I encourage – even demand – that you get connected with more than just the familiar. I’m not asking you to join another organization, but simply be aware and open-minded. Don’t simply surround yourself with friends that share the same ideals and values. We are not at some small-town college. We’re at a global university with students who bring many different perspectives.

In the end, you’ll be glad you stepped out of your comfort zone. Don’t be like the frog who looks back in four y–ears and exclaims, “College was so easy, all I did was party.” Do something with your talents. Seriously. Not only will you become a better person for it – companies will want to hire you, you won’t sound like an idiot talking to other people, and you will raise the bar on what it means to be an SMU graduate.

So whether your “well” in the Asian American community, or Meadows, Cox, Engineering, or Greek life, get uncomfortable!
Restaurant Review: The Mint
By: Winfred Ko

As dishes were served all around, the sweet aroma from the Red Curry Roasted Duck distracted the eyes. Soon palates were flooded with eagerness as the vibrant display of ingredients that composed the unfamiliar Pad Thai comes to sight. Senses tingle as I tasted the mixture of the seasoning in the Tom Yum Soup.

If you are a fan of The Asian Mint on 75 Central Expressway and Forest Ln., then you will be thrilled to know that they have finally opened their second location on Oak Lawn this past month, this time with more simplicity to the name: The Mint. Furnished with new refreshing colors and additions to the menu, here is what I’ve got to say about this new shindig!

Suffice to say that I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at The Mint. It is not every day you truly experience modern Asian dining in Dallas. With soft and relaxing jazz floating in the background, it is easy to lose yourself in the conversations with your friends or your date. The Mint is by no means a large restaurant. No larger than half of the Varsity (1st level of Hughes-Trigg), The Mint’s cozy size, mixed with the peaceful ambiance, creates its rare charm.

Inside, blue-green lanterns illuminate a tranquil vibe. Simple shapes of squares and circles in fixtures unconsciously bring you back to your roots. How is the service? Friendly, pleasant, and timely. To put it simply Nikki, the owner of The Mint, treats every customer as if they are her own guest in her home. Her wish is to create a “nice & mellow” environment.

If your appetite ever craves a little twist, I strongly recommend a little trip to Highland Park. You can never go wrong with Pad Thai. Yet, when the palate craves for a bit of adventure give any of the house specialties a try. There is no better substitute to taste than your own. I can say this, if you love green tea ice cream, you have not lived till you try their signature green tea ice cream cake. Homemade with a thick lawyer of sweet ice cream between two soft layers of cake and the clean finishing feeling, leaves you satisfied but not too full. It was voted “Best New Dessert of 2008” by D Magazine for a reason.

There are very few cafes that I feel at home. Yet, this secret is not for me to keep. I hope, slowly but surely, The Mint will become your own special corner in Dallas.

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Campus Event- VSA’s Pho Nite!!
By: Julianne Nguyen

The Vietnamese Student Association will be hosting its annual Pho Night in the “Pho-sity” also known as the Varsity on Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. Pho (pronounced fuh) is a traditional Vietnamese rice noodle soup dish.

In the past years, Pho Night has been an informal event in which guests are allowed to come as they pleased. However, the event revamped itself last year when VSA executives decided to add programs consisting of skits about Vietnamese legends and fables as well as a traditional dance performed by VSA members and executives.

Hoping to keep the new programs, VSA Programming Chair Jacqueline Nguyen plans to shorten the program from three hours to one hour. The shortened program will consist of a “How to Make Pho” skit and two dance performances featuring both traditional and modern Vietnamese dances.

Inspired by America’s Best Dance Crew, Nguyen hopes to create a program that will be entertaining and fun as well as educational and delicious. Being one of its main events of the year, VSA hopes that Pho Night will be a huge success.

Boba Tea Sale!

OCTOBER 8, 2008
11 A.M - 2 P.M.
WEST BRIDGE OUTSIDE HUGHES-TRIGG
I was told by my Editor to jot down Indian history in 300 words. Let me be honest. Being an Electrical Engineer, I can shrink an electronic chip but can’t contract Indian history in 300 words. But with a fear of losing my job and being outsourced to India (Out of Fortune 500 Companies, 220 outsource their work to India), I came up with some facts from India’s past and present. But let me be professional and pull out a disclaimer to avoid me being hanged by historians and other intellectuals: This article is a short informative piece on India and is in no context a percent complete. All references are taken from reliable sources; hence if you don’t believe me, go hang them but not me!!

0) This egg shaped number was discovered by Indians. We owe a lot to the Indians, who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made
   - Albert Einstein.

1) India is also known by the names of Bharat and Hindustan. The name India is derived from Indus, which is derived from the Old Persian word Hindu, from Sanskrit Sindhu, the historic local appellation for the Indus River. Bharat is named after The Great King Bharata who is believed to have ruled over India during Treta (Silver) Yuga - over one million years ago, although during his time India was called by the name of Bharat Varsha. And the last name, Hindustan is a Persian word for “Land of the Hindus” although India is now a secular country with majority of religions co-existing in peace.

2) Although India has never invaded any other country, its influence can be found in far off regions in East Asia and beyond. India conquered and dominated China for 20 centuries without ever having to send a single soldier across her border
   - Hu Shih, Former Chinese Ambassador to USA.

3) India had been under British rule for 200 years and gained independence after a non-violent movement led by a great man called M K Gandhi(also called Mahatma Gandhi). Influence of this movement can be found on great leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela and others. “Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of nonviolent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a real sense, Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation,” Martin Luther King, Jr said.

That’s all. I need to pack up as I have booked a ticket for a Bollywood film. Bollywood is the world’s largest film industry producing over 800 Indian movies a year. Namaste.

WHO’DA THUNK??

• The earliest recorded version of the story of Cinderella originated in China.
• The popular preschooler game of Chutes & Ladders is actually a Hindu religious game known as Snakes & Ladders, dating back to the 2nd century B.C.
• Chinese inventions we take for granted in our modern lives, such as papermaking (105 A.D), printing (1045 A.D.), gunpowder (800 A.D.), the compass (300 A.D.), and the umbrella (386-532 A.D.).
• We can thank Japan for the invention of the Walkman (1979), the Compact Disc (1982), the CD-ROM (1985), and the DVD (1996).
• “Ketchup” comes from the Malay word “koetsiap,” which describes a seafood sauce.

By: Jessika Chi
Sophomore and junior Chloe Chen and Yen Diep both seized the chance to be two of the six students from Southern Methodist University to attend the study abroad program in Beijing this past summer. They were among 76 students from various universities – including University of Texas at Austin, Rice University, Yale, and Harvard – with one common interest: learning the Chinese language. The girls spent eight weeks living in dormitories and attending class every morning, having individual sessions with native-speaking professors, and exploring Chinese history and culture.

**GWSJ: Why did you want to study abroad in the first place?**

**Chloe:** I’d always wanted to study abroad, and I wasn’t planning on going this year but because the Olympics were there this summer, I thought it’d be nice to see Beijing while it’s at its best! China is the prime place to go because you’re in a country where they’re speaking the language you want to learn. Buying groceries, talking to people on the street… it’s all in Chinese, and that makes all the difference.

**Yen:** Studying abroad is one of the best opportunities you can get in college. My professor said the best place to learn the language is in its mother country, and I didn’t think about implementing it until this year since I had no summer internships and I could just finish my minor.

**GWSJ: Would you recommend the study abroad program in Beijing to others? What would you say to them?**

**Chloe:** Of course. You can’t find the same experience in the classroom because you apply what you learn immediately afterward. You get to experience a different lifestyle, so when are you going to get another opportunity like that? It’s killing two birds with one stone – learning and traveling.

**Yen:** Do it!

**GWSJ: What did you not expect to learn in Beijing?**

**Chloe:** There were passionate teachers and our roommates are local people from the area and I guess they liked to be around foreigners. They’re learning our culture and we’re learning theirs.

**Yen:** You think you’re going there just to learn Chinese, but you start learning so much more, like how people live. It makes you more comfortable speaking it.

**GWSJ: Tell me about the language pledge.**

**Chloe:** They gave us a piece of paper to sign in the beginning and we were like, “Sure, whatever,” but it turned out to be a language pledge where we had to promise not to speak English. Once, the principal lady walked into our bedroom after roaming the halls and just welcomed herself. She was spying to make sure we weren’t speaking English. After you were caught speaking English three times, they said they would send you back home.

**Yen:** I got caught once over the phone. She asked me, “Why are you speaking English?” It just slipped.

**GWSJ: Why do you think learning Chinese would be useful?**

**Chloe:** I wanted to learn because my background is Chinese and I thought I should really learn to speak the language of my ancestry. Also, Chinese can help find a job these days. It’s really crucial to be bilingual. I found it disappointing to not be fluent in my background language. Now my parents are happier that I made the effort.

**Yen:** By knowing our mother language, I connected on a different level with my parents. There’s a whole culture around the language, like what’s implied by certain phrases or words. I’m fluent in Vietnamese but now I can speak more personally with my dad, who speaks Chinese.
“Hi, what’s your name?” is a common question to be asked especially with the start of a new school year, and when I was younger I used to dread it. My name is Udoka. A completely un-American name; however, not very hard to pronounce even though some people still do. I used to wonder “Why can’t my name be Ashley?” Until I got a little older, I developed a real sense of pride in my name.

It contains my culture, heritage, and a part of who I am as a person. I felt strongly about it, so I could not fathom why in the world most Asian people I would shake hands with give me an American name that is either not their first name or not even their given name at all! “Are you ashamed of yourself?” I would think. I saw it as a sign of major insecurity of the worst kind. Not only did it show insecurity of oneself, but it showed a shameful attitude of one’s own culture. I was appalled so much that I started to ask them questions. What I discovered really humbled me. As cliché as it sounds, everyone is a little different.

“Angela is my middle name... in kindergarten, my teacher asked me what I preferred to be called. I told her it didn’t matter,” said Yuli Uza. “I just got used to everyone calling me Angela. Even my family calls me Angela.”

SMU Sophomore Hanh Nguyen’s story is a bit different.

“Where I come from, it is insulting to mispronounce someone’s name because it is very special, so in general situations, I prefer they just say Jennie,” Hanh Nguyen said.

However, I still haven’t completely lost the theory of having an American name being attached to some kind of want or need to hide where someone came from. In some situations, it makes sense. Immigration in the 1930s practically required that people Americanize their names. Sometimes parent’s give their children American names so they can have a better chance of having

the same opportunities as white Americans (and even then, some children feel the way I do and change their name back to their cultural one). Then there are times where I just don’t get what’s really going on.

Just a week ago, I met a girl from Taiwan and I told her my name. “Yeah, but what’s your real name, I mean what’s your American name?” was her response. Wow, isn’t it supposed to go the other way? I would think someone would feel happier to know my cultural name. Is it true that some Asian people prefer American names to cultural names in almost all situations? When I asked for her name, she gave me her American name, and then her Asian name, but made sure that I understood that she really likes her American name.

Is an American identity so strong that it can completely take over? Does the Americanization of one’s name or even one’s own identity mean that their culture should become just another adjective? Sometimes I get an answer like this: “I have a Vietnamese identity and an American identity. Its nice to describe myself with both,” but I personally must disagree. I feel like one’s identity should not be used with nationalistic adjectives to the extent that you change your name to literally define yourself. I still see your given name as a part of who you are. There are many stories to the name-change-game. Some are not as serious as I once thought they might have been. But I still can’t help but feel a little offended when I meet a Tina and find out later she’s actually a Tuen.

If you would like to make a comment about this article, feel free to email us at mngo@smu.edu. Feedback is welcomed!
daily student use, is now restricted (although organizations may ask a staff member to open the kitchen for organizational use).

Jennifer Jones, the Assistant Dean of Student Life and the Director of SAMSA, addressed Asian Council Board about the changes explaining that the SAMSA has changed every year for the last eight years that she has worked at SMU.

Much of the changes were made to try and accommodate the needs of many organizations resulting from problems of theft, destruction of property and computer abuse.

“We just wanted to create more work space for the students of the organization,” Jennifer Jones said.

Despite changes in the SAMSA, a variety of concerns and criticisms have been raised.

EASA President Tiffany Nguyen feels that the SAMSA “does not give off that ‘inviting feeling’ to incoming freshmen and transfer students anymore.” "I know the SAMSA is supposed to be utilized specifically by organizations, but the organizations bring students together and since SAMSA plays a large role in the inner workings of an organization,” Nguyen said. “I think it is crucial to get that ‘inviting feeling’ back into the SAMSA.”

The renovations of the SAMSA are currently still a working progress with attempts to increase the number of available public computers to students not involved in organizations.

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**Letter from the Editor:**

*By: Mai Lyn Ngo*

If you have made it all the way back here from reading all the fascinating stories (which I know you did), I commend you for not already trashing this newsletter.

Just a small blurb about what this audacious *Great Wall Street Journal* is all about. We want to lighten the mood, address issues, act as a bridge for unity amongst our fellow students, and teach the community about things that get seriously misunderstood. Come on! How is anyone suppose to know that sushi is a finger-food and eating it with chopsticks is completely wrong?! Who better to inform you then us?

We want nothing more than to add some spice (not soy sauce) to your already large pile of reading material.

Thanks for reading!

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**ISA Celebrates Diwali with Pride**

*By: Mai Lyn Ngo*

The Indian Student Association will be celebrating Diwali, one of their biggest events of the year, on October 25th in the Hughes-Trigg theatre.

This program features a showcase of talent performances such as dancing and singing as entertainment for their guests. Indian cuisine will be served for dinner in the ballroom. A portion of ticket proceeds will be donated to Asha for Education, a charity dedicated to providing education for underprivileged children in India.

This event is open to all SMU students and the Dallas community. Ticket prices will vary between six and ten dollars, pre-sale and at the door. Keep a look out for more information to come.

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