

STORIES FROM OUR LIVES:
LWTECH ENGLISH LANGUAGE
STUDENTS IN WORDS AND
IMAGES, VOLUME 1

Lake Washington Institute of Technology

OPENWA

OLYMPIA



Stories from Our Lives: LWTech English Language Students in Words and Images, Volume 1 by Lake Washington Institute of Technology is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

Contents

Introduction	1
My Neighborhood Gregoire Monnou and Elizaveta Andreeva	5
Living Near the Pacific Mie Ohno and Andressa Albuquerque	7
My Neighborhood Sasmita Nanda; Duncan Arnold; and Dylan Lettice	9
Life Course of My Friend Denis Gregoire Monnou and Bogdan Banica	11
How I Bought a New Car Gregoire Monnou and Jacob Arasim	13
About My Neighborhood Hamidrizza Khosravi and Dayle J Bowers	15
My Day at a Mountain Hamidrizza Khosravi and Maya Burris	17
Snoqualmie Waterfall Jennifer Alvarado and Lizbeth Delacruz-Perez	19

My Role Model Jennifer Alvarado and Trevor Ellis	21
How I Bought a New Violin Jennifer Alvarado and Christopher Kaufman	23
My Day on Phu Quoc Island Lien Thai Tran and Manami Kawai	25
How I Bought a Used Car Lien Thai Tran and Daorunee Ky	27
How I Bought a Couch Syuzanna Ziroyan; Reign Manalang; and Edgar Velazco	29
When I am in Armenia Syuzanna Ziroyan and Linda Musa	31
Afraid to Fly Thuy Tran and Nahid Namiranian	33
How I Bought a Used Car Thuy Tran and Jazzmyne Nelson	35
My Role Model Sasmita Nanda and Michael Stocklin	37
Puri Sasmita Nanda and Irene Rodas-Rivera	39
My First American House Sasmita Nanda; Stevie Soracco; and Savannah Walenczak	41
Have You Ever Bought a New Car? Misook Eum and Hannah Svedberg	43
My Healing Place Misook Eum and Dillon Truax	45
How I Bought a Comfortable Sofa Mie Ohno and Cicilia Campos	47
Memories of My Childhood Iryna Mironyuk and Gabby Coughlin	49

How My Husband and I Bought a Used Car Iryna Mironyuk and Samuel Friesen	51
I'll Do My Best! Hyekyung Jo and Nakhari Yoeum	53
A Day Full of Flowers Hyekyung Jo and Eric Santaella	55
My First Car Hyekyung Jo and Gryphon McLaughlin	57
The Sunshine Trail Rui Wu and Paige Miller	59
My New Home's Furniture Rui Wu and Jack Naig	61
My Classmate Lily Rui Wu and Nigel Neely	63

Introduction

This project is a collaboration between students from the English Language Learners and Art programs at Lake Washington Institute of Technology. As a librarian, I tried to increase our collection of readers for the adult population of English language learners. Much of the easy reading books available have content more suitable for children. They also tend not to represent the diverse populations on our campus. After hearing stories from English learners in Talk Time discussions on campus, I decided to attempt to create books from local talent. I was able to convince David Fox, an English Language Learner instructor, to gather student stories from his classes, with their permission. Realizing that illustrations are helpful for easy readers, I contacted an art instructor, Jason Sobottka, in search of visual content to accompany the stories. This is the story of this publication. Student work was produced between 2019 and Spring Quarter of 2021. The physical book will be found in the LWTech library, while the ebook version is available to anyone as an open source publication. I envision this as the first version, as I hope to

continue this as a new tradition on our campus.

Sue Wozniak, Librarian

The teachers of the writers and artists share their experience with this project. Working on this project has been an honor for me. As the authors' English teacher, I had the privilege of inviting them to contribute their homework assignments to help lower-level English students advance their reading skills. Though not apparent through their writings, the life experiences of these individuals go way beyond the musings they've expressed on these pages. Their professions back home included, among others, those of real estate developer, farmer, IT professional, teacher and accountant. With talents such as violinists, multi-linguists, chefs and folk dancers, they are now establishing themselves in our communities in roles as varied as manicurists, volunteers, deli-counter attendants and construction workers. I am proud of them for their bravery in sharing their life experiences after having taken the courageous steps to begin their lives anew in the USA.

David Fox, English Language Learner Instructor

Faculty Librarian Sue Wozniak approached me with the idea of having students illustrate the stories written by David Fox's English Language Learning students. Our college has a two-year degree in Illustration and is currently designing a bachelor's degree, but at the time of inquiry, we had no specific narrative illustration classes. I thought about which class might best fit this challenge into its existing curriculum and knew that my final project for ART 121 Introduction to Drawing involves visual storytelling. I slightly modified my existing *Narrative Illustration* creative brief and assigned the challenge to my Winter and Spring 2021 fully online drawing classes.

Professor Wozniak and I agreed that having beginning

drawing students illustrate these stories was a great idea, while respecting the challenge involved. Intro to Drawing is a foundational class, and as such brings together students with a wide range of skills and experience. It would be a fair assumption to think some students would push back on illustrating the personal stories of fellow students, especially in a beginning drawing class. However, all my students rose to the challenge.

In human evolution, images and gestures predated language. Communicating through drawing is core to the human experience. There is an honest beauty in these drawings, and the showcasing of many levels of past drawing experience and comfort levels in a published work celebrates the power of drawing. My sincere desire with this project is that each drawing and language student sees their contribution as proof positive that their message and creativity is valued. Hopefully that value will foster a desire for lifelong creativity, an appreciation of Humanities, and a love for their brothers and sisters.

Jason Sobottka, Art Instructor, Humanities Department Chair

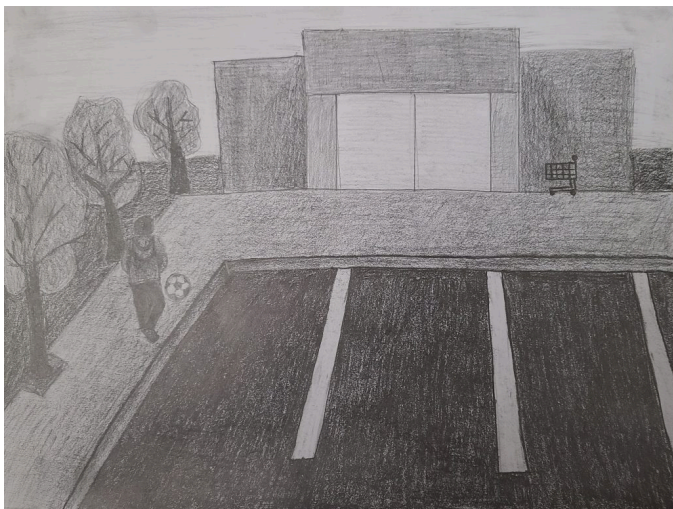
My Neighborhood

GREGOIRE MONNOU AND ELIZAVETA ANDREEVA

I live in the West Totem Lake area of Kirkland and I love it. There are a lot of reasons why. The first is because it's a quiet area and there isn't much traffic. The second reason is that it's beautiful. I enjoy walking everywhere in the neighborhood. I also feel relieved to be safe from cars when I walk because every street has a sidewalk on both sides. Also, I don't need to walk very far to shop at a nearby grocery store.

There are some minor things I don't like about my neighborhood. For example, there is not a Department of License office for taking a driver's license test. Also, there aren't any African supermarkets either, so I have to drive a long way to buy African food. Finally, I wish there were a playground in my neighborhood to play soccer. But overall, I am so glad that I found such a nice place to live.

By Gregoire Monnou



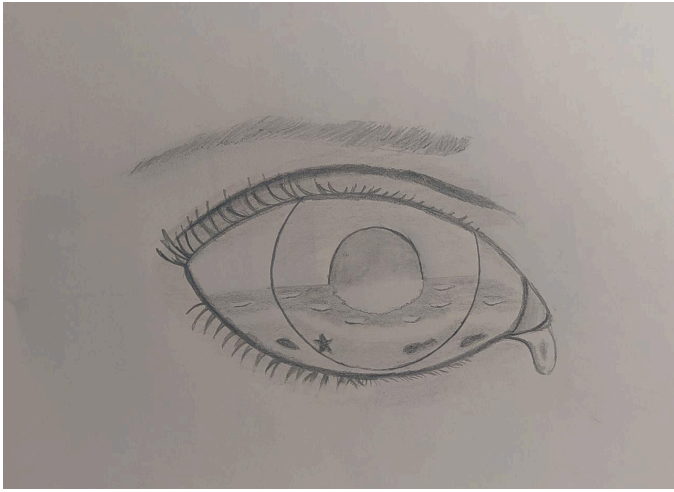
By Elizaveta Andreeva

Living Near the Pacific

MIE OHNO AND ANDRESSA ALBUQUERQUE

Do you have a nostalgic place where you dream of returning for a visit? For me, that place is the Pacific Ocean because my hometown in Japan is close by there. When I see the blue sky, blue ocean and whitecaps, I feel so relaxed that I prefer to stay there all day long. I especially like to hear the sound of the waves because it is like my mother's voice to me. When I get angry, the sound calmly soothes me, and when I feel sad, the sound gently comforts me. Standing on the shore, I enjoy the sensation of rippling sand under my feet. I can stand there for hours. When I take a rest in my beach chair, the hot sand warms my cold feet. I soon sense the smell of grilled clams coming from the stalls, and the smell makes my stomach growl. When I go to my hometown, I am so overjoyed that I realize I should take my whole family there with me next time.

By Mie Ohno



By Andressa Albuquerque

My Neighborhood

SASMITA NANDA; DUNCAN ARNOLD; AND DYLAN LETTICE

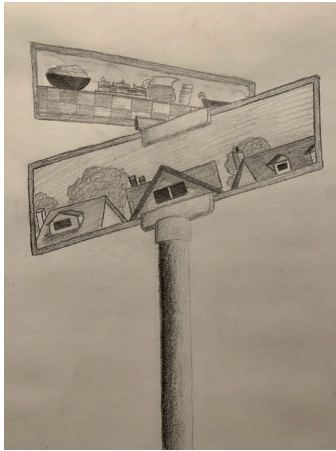
Life becomes so exciting when you live in a neighborhood that you like.

I have been living in Redmond since 2015, and I like it very much. There are two reasons why. The first is because of its great location. My daughter's school bus stops in front of my building, my husband's office is not very far, and it's very close to the highway. Also, there are lot of stores and good restaurants nearby, so it is a very convenient place to live.

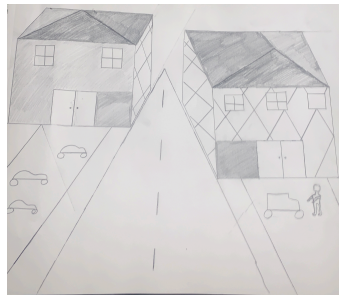
The second reason is because I have a great community there. I have many close friends living in my neighborhood. We organize potlucks, movie outings, and get-togethers to make it a more interesting and fun place to live.

There is one small problem: the traffic is very heavy during morning and evenings. It takes a long time to commute anywhere. I wish there were alternative routes with less traffic. Overall though, I am very happy in my neighborhood and am having a great time there.

By Sasmita Nanda



By Duncan Arnold



By Dylan Lettice

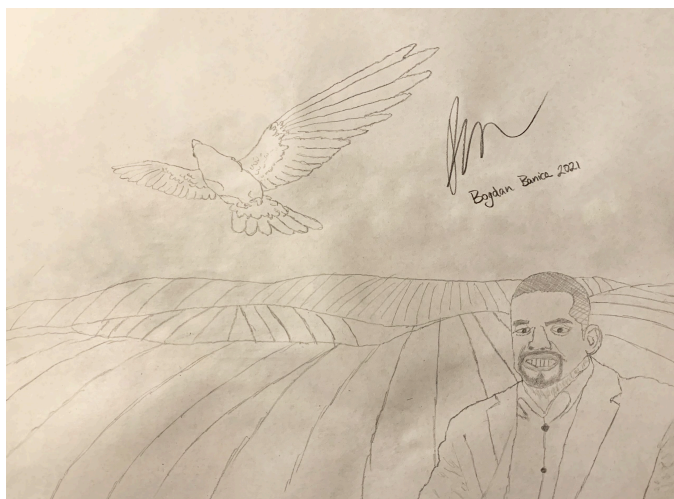
Life Course of My Friend Denis

GREGOIRE MONNOU AND BOGDAN BANICA

My name is Gregoire, and I'm from the country of Benin in West Africa. I have a friend whose name is Denis. He was born in nearby Cameroon in 1985. He studied in school from 1991 until he earned his bachelor's degree in agronomy in 2005. He had excellent grades throughout this time. Two years later, he started working at the Ministry of Agriculture.

In 2012, Denis decided to move to the U.S. His first goal here was to become a nurse, so he started taking English classes to prepare for them. After spending some time in the USA, his plans changed a bit and, eventually, he eventually got a bachelor's degree in management in 2018. Now he has many more opportunities and has decided to start his own business. I admire my friend Denis because he is a lifelong learner.

By Gregoire Monnou



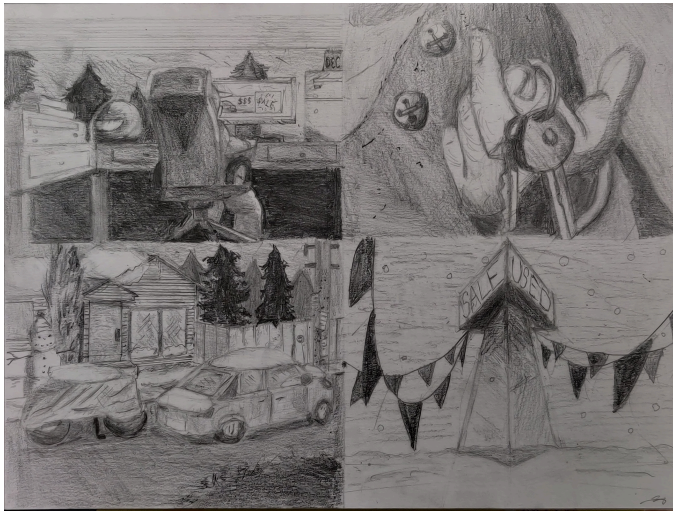
By Bogdan Banica

How I Bought a New Car

GREGOIRE MONNOU AND JACOB ARASIM

Have you ever bought a new car ? I bought one recently. Two weeks ago, I bought a car that I really love. I had bought a motorcycle before, but it was difficult for me to use in the snow. So, I preferred buying a sedan to make my life easier. First, I went online to check the price and color that I would like. Then, I saw the kind of car that I wanted. After that, I went to the dealership to see it, and I liked it. So finally, I bought the car. I love it because it is very efficient, and I can also use it if we ever have snow, too.

By Gregoire Monnou



By Jacob Arasim

About My Neighborhood

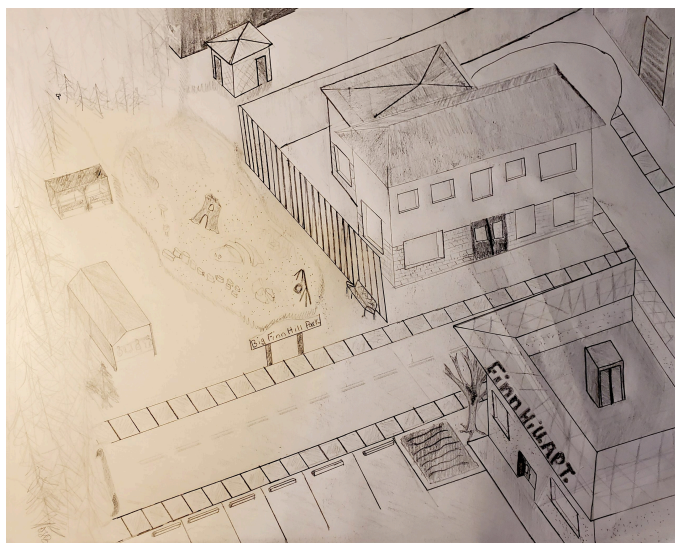
HAMIDRIZA KHOSRAVI AND DAYLE J BOWERS

I live in the North Finn Hill neighborhood of Kirkland, and I love it. There are a lot of reasons why I do. The first is because it's a quiet area, and there isn't any traffic. The second reason is that it is beautiful.

I enjoy walking everywhere in the neighborhood. I also feel relieved to be safe from cars when I walk because every street has a sidewalk on both sides. There is a big park near my home aptly named Big Finn Hill park. My family likes to go there because it's very beautiful.

There are some minor things that I don't like about my neighborhood. I need to walk very far to go to a grocery store, so I have to drive to get there. I also wish that there were a shopping center in my neighborhood. But overall, I am so glad that I found such a nice place to live.

By Hamidriz Khosravi



By Dayle Bowers

My Day at a Mountain

HAMIDRIZA KHOSRAVI AND MAYA BURRIS

Mountains are one of the places I like to spend my time because I enjoy hiking. I get excited when I go to the mountains. There I enjoy hearing the sound of my steps breaking the silence, which makes me feel pleasant and uplifted. I climb and climb with just my own ability, and when I get to the right state of mind, I look down. The combination of silence and fatigue is pleasurable for me. When I go to the mountains, I don't eat or drink until I reach my destination. I'm so out of energy when I arrive at this point that I know that I've entered my pleasant trance.

By Hamidrizha Khosravi



By Maya Burris

Snoqualmie Waterfall

JENNIFER ALVARADO AND LIZBETH DELACRUZ-PEREZ

Have you ever visited the Snoqualmie waterfall? It is amazing! During my last vacation, my family and I went to Snoqualmie Falls. I saw a strong stream of water falling with a lot of trees on both sides, and I saw many people taking pictures. I was cold because the waterfall was powerful, forcing its strong mist on us.

It was so rainy that day that we were getting all wet. I thought we ought to buy some hot coffee. So, I invited all my family to drink some coffee with me. The flavor was so delicious that I felt warm and relaxed. I also enjoyed seeing my niece as it was her first time to ever see a waterfall. We all loved it!

By Jennifer Alvarado



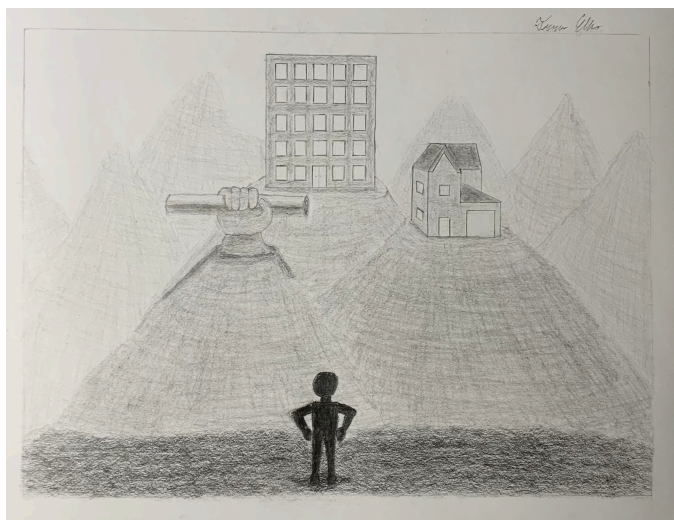
By Lizbeth Delacruz-Perez

My Role Model

JENNIFER ALVARADO AND TREVOR ELLIS

A person whom I admire is Marcos. He is my older brother and lives in El Salvador. In 2010 he started to learn English in the Computer Data Systems Institute, and he learned it in only one year. I was very amazed that he learned so fast. Then he applied to work at The Sykes, a company of English dental service call centers. He worked there for three years: from 2011 to 2014. While he was working, he started to study tourism administration at the UES, which means University of El Salvador. In 2013 he graduated and got a job at the Intercontinental Hotel as a manager. His salary is so excellent that he could buy a car, motorcycle and pay for his house. He recently told me that he wants to get a loan to start his own business. This year he is now studying for a master's degree at the University UTEC. He is my best example of living a successful life!

By Jennifer Alvarado



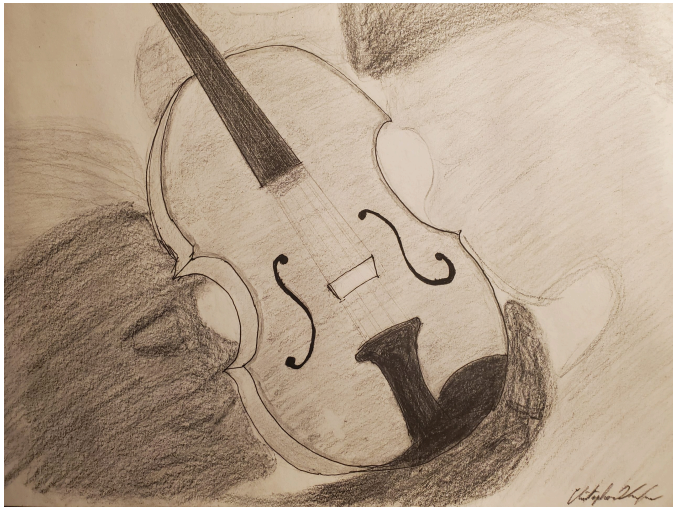
By Trevor Ellis

How I Bought a New Violin

JENNIFER ALVARADO AND CHRISTOPHER KAUFMAN

I never had a nice violin until last week when I bought a new one. First, I checked ads online to compare brands and prices. I decided to buy in Renton because I realized that it was cheaper there. Then I went to the store to see it and try it out. After that, my sister asked me, “Would you prefer buying it today or tomorrow?” She asked me that because the violin was expensive and I didn’t have enough money to buy it. Then she decided to lend me money to buy it, so I finally bought the violin. I had had another violin when I was growing up in El Salvador, but the sound was not as good as this one. I think my new violin is wonderful!

By Jennifer Alvarado



By Christopher Kaufman

My Day on Phu Quoc Island

LIEN THAI TRAN AND MANAMI KAWAI

Do you feel good when you go to an island? And when you feel tired and stressed, do you want to go to a place where your senses relax you? For me, the place to go is Phu Quoc Island. When I go there, I feel so happy because the wind is very fresh. I close my eyes and everything is so quiet that I only hear the sounds of waves and birds. The sounds of them is so lovely that they relax my soul.

I see the deep blue sky and water from the beach. I can see a lot of birds flying in the sky. It all looks so beautiful. I slowly walk along the beach in my bare feet, which makes me comfortable and happy. With my hands, I touch the sand and to draw my dream house, and it turns out wonderful.

The smell of salty air makes me feel alive. I can also swim at the beach, where the water is so warm that it feels better than relaxing in a tub at a spa. After swimming, I eat a delicious dish of seafood with vegetables, and it's awesome.

I am so glad when I am at Phu Quoc Island that I feel I should go there with my family and friends more often. I

think they would enjoy it, too because I love it there.

By Lien Thai Tran



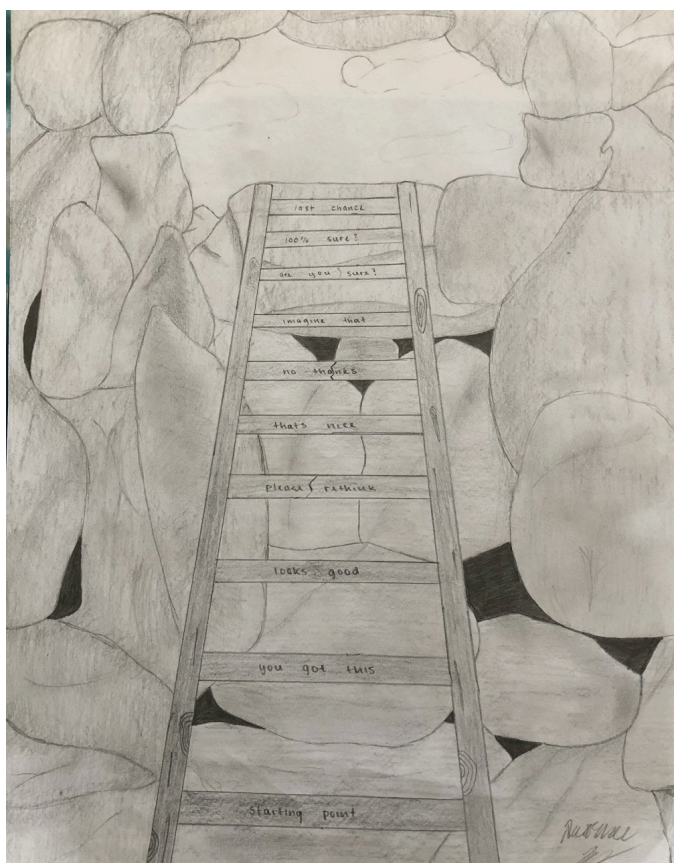
By Manami Kawai

How I Bought a Used Car

LIEN THAI TRAN AND DAORUNEE KY

Have you ever shopped for a vehicle before? I did last year when I bought a good used car. First, I thought about what type of car was necessary for me and researched different kinds of cars online. Next, I went to the auto dealership and asked them about the car. There were a lot of options, but I preferred to have a car that got good gas mileage. Also, I'd have rather had a big car than a small car because it is more practical plus I am also concerned about safety. Then I checked ads online to compare prices. After that, I spoke to my friend, Ty, who is a mechanic. He helped me find out what kind of car I needed. I eventually decided I'd rather buy a used hybrid. I used the VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) to check online to see if the car had ever been in an accident. Everything was good, so I finally bought the car. I am very happy because the car is working out just great so far. I love it so much.

By Lien Thai Tran



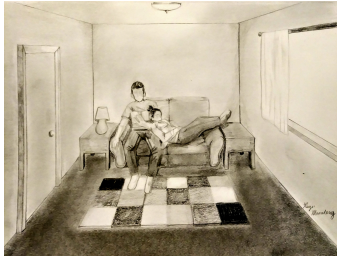
By Daorunee Ky

How I Bought a Couch

SYUZANNA ZIROYOAN; REIGN MANALANG; AND EDGAR VELAZCO

It's hard to feel welcome in your own home when it doesn't even have a couch! So a few months ago, my husband and I bought a sofa. The first thing we did was research them online. We found two designs at different stores where one couch was cheaper and the other was more expensive. Next, we went to test out the couches. My husband said he would rather have bought the cheaper couch to save money. As we tested out the couches, the more expensive couch was more comfortable. So after sitting on the more comfortable couch, we decided to spend a little extra money for it. Finally, we bought the couch and set it up at home. Had we bought the cheaper couch, we would not be enjoying such a comfortable couch that we do today.

By Syuzanna Ziroyan



By Reign Manalang



By Edgar Velazco

When I am in Armenia

SYUZANNA ZIROYOAN AND LINDA MUSA

Do you feel your five senses when you're back home in your country? I always feel them whenever I'm in Armenia. When I walk down the streets there, I see the beautiful mountains from the middle of my city. It makes me so happy to be surrounded by such a sight. I can feel the rich history as I enter each shop and touch the walls of the thousand year-old buildings. It amazes me that the buildings are so old but yet they still stand. As I continue down the street, I start to smell all the amazing Armenian foods being cooked on each corner. I start to walk faster because the smell is making me hungry. I finally arrive at the restaurant where I like to eat my favorite traditional dish of dolmas, which has a taste that reminds me of my childhood.

When I am in Armenia, I feel at home. I hope that everyone can somehow experience what I feel when I'm in Armenia.

By Syuzanna Ziroyan



By Linda Musa

Afraid to Fly

THUY TRAN AND NAHID NAMIRANIAN

Have you ever flown before? Did you fly to another country to visit family, or did you travel around the world? For me, I like to travel but I'm afraid to fly. Last week, I got on an airplane and visited my family in Boston. I had such a bad headache that I felt terrible and couldn't sleep. I was always afraid and closed my eyes while the airplane took off and landed. I couldn't look outside the window because it made me feel dizzy. My ears hurt so bad due to the sound and air pressure on the airplane. The food tasted very good; unfortunately, I couldn't eat because I had a bad headache. In fact, I was afraid to even smell the food, so I just drank water. I kept trying to sleep though and eventually succeeded, so my trip got better.

I still don't like to fly, but I do like to travel. I was very excited because I had been waiting for this trip since last month. My husband advised me for the next trip that I had better take medicine before I get on the airplane, and I have to agree with him. I think I should do that for my next trip because it makes me feel more relaxed. I just hope I won't

be afraid to fly next time.
By Thuy Tran



By Nahid Namiranian

How I Bought a Used Car

THUY TRAN AND JAZZMYNE NELSON

The thought of buying a car was never in my head because I usually don't have enough money. I needed to save more money, but my son really needed a car for his work. He wanted me to help him buy a car, and he would have rather bought a used car than a new one.

First, I figured out which website would be good to use for purchasing a car. Then, my husband helped me research different dealership sites and the option of buying a car directly from an individual seller online. After a week of researching and looking for the right car, we found a used, blue Toyota Camry that was a good price for my budget and had low mileage at Toyota of Kirkland. We really liked it. We preferred the blue color over others because it looked nicer. Next, we searched that same car model on other sites to compare prices. After that, we knew we had made a good deal. My husband checked the car's history by reviewing every single detail that was listed on the site, and then we went to the dealer. We preferred to see the car and negotiate the price with the dealer directly.

Finally, we purchased the blue car and got a good deal on it. We felt very happy and excited to now own that new car since it met all our expectations.

By Thuy Tran



By Jazzmyne Nelson

My Role Model

SASMITA NANDA AND MICHAEL STOCKLIN

There are some people who are born with a never-give-up attitude. They set a goal and work hard to achieve it. I always like and respect such people. One of my cousins, Neha, is such a person. She is my role model.

She was very good at her studies and always wanted to be an engineer, but her family didn't have money to pay for her college fees. Therefore, she couldn't go to an engineering college because of her financial conditions, so she enrolled into an evening college to learn computer and software engineering. She had to work in the mornings to earn money for her family while she studied at night. After four years, she earned her engineering degree in computer science and became a software engineer in a very good company.

I admire her very much for her never-give-up attitude. I also want to work hard like her to achieve my goals.

By Sasmita Nanda



By Michael Stocklin

Puri

SASMITA NANDA AND IRENE RODAS-RIVERA

Do you have a dream place where you can visit on any given day? For me, this place is “Puri.” This place is about a one-hour drive from my hometown in India. When I visit this place, I feel so satisfied that I don’t feel like coming back. The beauty of the great Jagannath temple of the 12th century always catches my eyes. I keep looking at the beautiful art in this temple. When I enter inside the temple, I get a great feeling and feel very peaceful in my mind. The smell of the delicious food inside the temple increases my appetite. The food is so tasty that I always end up eating more. The sea beach here is so beautiful. I feel very relaxed sitting on this beach in the afternoon. I am enjoying the variety of tasty street food nearby. Every trip to Puri is so enjoyable that I never miss any opportunity to visit there.

By Sasmita Nanda



By Irene Rodas-Rivera

My First American House

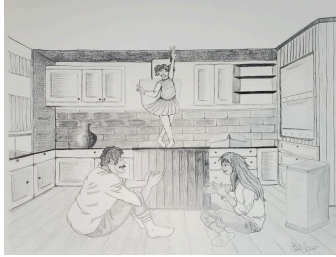
SASMITA NANDA; STEVIE SORACCO; AND SAVANAH WALENCZAK

Have you ever bought a house that you thought was a bad deal but turned out to be a good one? It happened to me when I bought my first house in the US. In 2019, I bought my first house here, and I think it was a good deal. I was living in a rented house for four years and the rent was very high. My husband and I decided to buy a new house, so we looked for a spacious house in a good location, closer to our daughter's school, but the houses were very expensive.

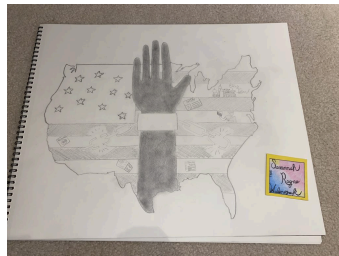
First, I went through the online listings on Redfin and Zillow to get information about houses available for sale. I found a few that were newly built and in a good location. Next, my husband and I visited the construction sites to see their model houses. We found a suitable one that we both liked, but the cost was a bit higher than our budget. My husband had told me that the value of this house was going to increase in the future, but I didn't believe him. But since it was a very beautiful house in a good location, I decided to buy it anyway. Then we bought the house, thinking it was not a very good deal. Now, just after three months, the price

of similar houses has increased by five to seven percent. I am so happy that I bought the house at the right time. Now, I don't regret buying the expensive one.

By Sasmita Nanda



By Stevie Soracco

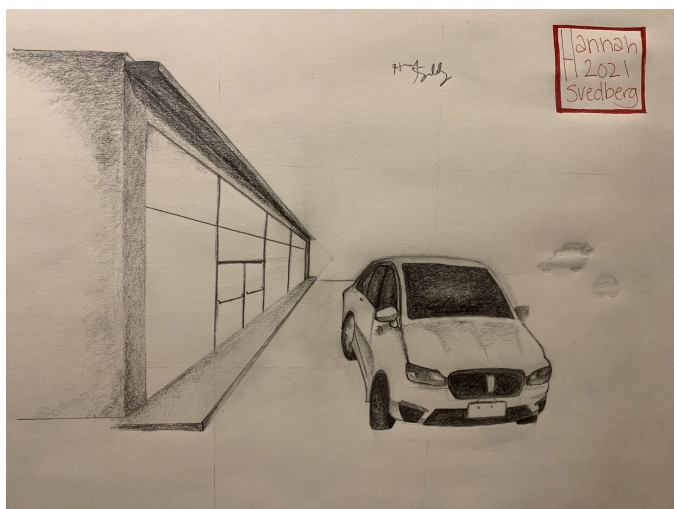


By Savanah Walenczak

Have You Ever Bought a New Car?

MISOOK EUM AND HANNAH SVEDBERG

I bought a new diamond white car, and I love it. First, I researched different kinds of cars from catalogs and the internet sites. Then I visited a few dealerships in Bellevue to see many cars and get catalogs. Next, I preferred to buy a sedan to an SUV because I have already had two SUV in my house. After my husband and I had gone to dealerships to test drive the cars, we decided to buy a car. After that, I checked the car for its color, various options, four-wheel drive and warranty. I also wondered for how many years the warranty was. Before I bought the new car, I had gone to the bank to cash a check. Finally, I bought the new car. I was so happy to drive it. It's my best friend because it takes me anywhere and at any time. I love my diamond white car.
By Misook Eum



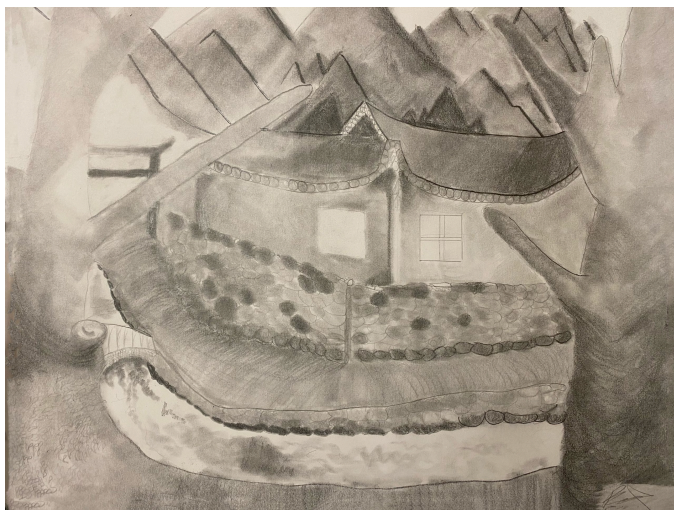
By Hannah Svedberg

My Healing Place

MISOOK EUM AND DILLON TRUAX

Kyerong Mountain is where my husband and I visit near my house in Korea. It gives me precious gifts. There is fresh air, many trees, various rocks, wildflowers, narrow paths and benches for resting there. When I walk along its narrow paths, I am so comfortable that my stress goes away. I breathe deeply, drawing in the fresh mountain air. I feel so happy and grateful for nature. When I see wildflowers or smell them, I feel warm and alive. I hear the sound of the birds and water coming down from the mountain. I get a taste of water that is so fresh and cold. There are so many soothing experiences that they heal my eyes and calm my mind. I should recommend my friends to go to the mountains, too.

By Misook Eum



By Dillon Truax

How I Bought a Comfortable Sofa

MIE OHNO AND CILILIA CAMPOS

What do you usually do on weekend nights? My family just stays home and does nothing. We had wanted a comfortable sofa to sit on, so we bought one last year. First, we had visited some friends' houses before we went to a furniture store. We sat on their sofas and asked some questions about them, such as about the sofas' prices and furniture stores' names. Next, my husband measured the size of the place to put the sofa with a measuring tape. Then we went to several furniture stores the following weekend. We confirmed the comfort, design and sizes of the sofas at all the stores. We decided we would rather buy an electric reclining sofa than a manual reclining sofa because the electric one can keep a good position better than another one. After that, we negotiated the sofa's price with the store's salesperson, and he accepted it. Finally, we bought the sofa. Now, we have a fun time on our new sofa every weekend!

By Mie Ohno



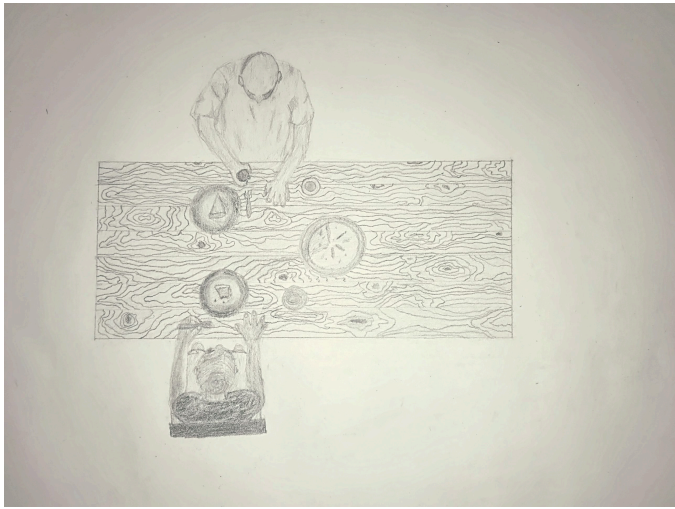
By Cicilia Campos

Memories of My Childhood

IRYNA MIRONYUK AND GABBY COUGHLIN

Do you have warm memories of your childhood? I have some moments that make me nostalgic about mine. One of these is of my mother baking pies in the morning. In it, I wake up but still lie in bed when I smell fresh baking. This smell is so good that it always makes me want to run to the kitchen quickly and eat a piece of pie. I hear my mother setting the kitchen table. At these moments, I am feeling warm memories of my childhood: calmness, warmth and happiness. I want this moment to last longer. I go to the kitchen and cut a slice of pie for myself. It's soft and warm to the touch, and it tastes heavenly. My mother and I drink tea with our pie and talk. The pie is so delicious that I slice another wedge for myself. You should try my mother's pie sometime. I'm really happy when my mother comes to my home and, especially, when she bakes for us. I would like to have more warm moments such as these in my life.

By Iryna Mironyuk



By Gabby Coughlin

How My Husband and I Bought a Used Car

IRYNA MIRONYUK AND SAMUEL FRIESEN

Have you ever bought a used car? My husband and I recently bought a used car. I preferred to buy a car that had good safety records and gas mileage. Also, I would have rather had a mid-sized car: something between a sedan and an SUV. First, I researched to find a car that I wanted and for a price that I could afford. Next, I checked ads online to compare prices. Then we went to a few dealerships to test drive cars that we liked. When we had found a car that we loved, we used the VIN (Vehicle Identification number) to check online if this car had ever been in an accident. Because we didn't have enough money, we asked the salesperson to help us get a loan from a bank. We filled out some forms and got a loan. Finally, we completed the paperwork and brought our car home. My family and I are very happy to have this car because it is very comfortable, safe, has more space in it than in our previous car and looks beautiful. I love it.

By Iryna Mironyuk



By Samuel Friesen

I'll Do My Best!

HYEKYUNG JO AND NAKHARI YOEUM

Chloe Lee is my cousin. She is also my best friend. I admire her because she always focuses on her dream even in hard times. Chloe moved to Canada from Korea in 2004 when her parents got divorced. She was depressed, but she took control of her mind and moved on to pursue her dreams.

Her first goal was to learn English. In 2006, she went to high school. She only slept between four and five hours a day and studied hard. Since she is good at persuading and debating, she participated in the debate contest as a representative of the school. I want to learn her confidence. Finally, when she graduated in 2009, she had the highest GPA in her high school.

That same year, she got on academic scholarship to UBC (University of British Columbia). Her second goal was to graduate from university with good grades and work for a Korean company. She studied international business while at UBC. She graduated in 2013 and went back to Korea because Samsung wanted her to work with them.

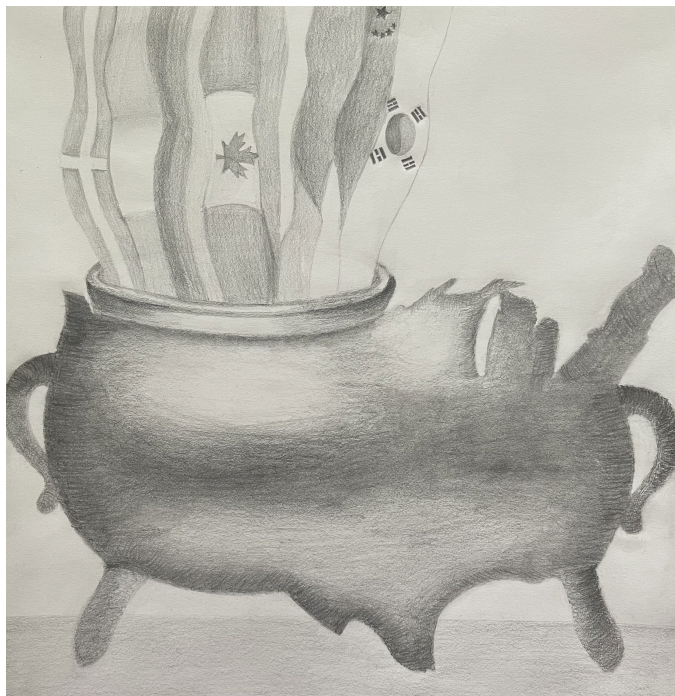
She always did her best and was responsible. She was

the youngest on her team, but she became its leader. Now, she is a team leader in the field of international business, working at Samsung.

She is younger than me, but she always sets a good example for me to follow.

I always want to do my best like her.

By Hyekyung Jo



By Nahkari Yoeum

A Day Full of Flowers

HYEKYUNG JO AND ERIC SANTAELLA

Have you been falling in love with the smell of flowers lately? I like so many of them that I'm going to the flower garden every day. When I go there, I can see my favorite flowers and plants. And I love the sweet smell of them. You may fall in love with the smell of flowers too, but you must not pick them.

I went to the Tulip Festival in Mount Vernon last April. The sight of tulips covering so much ground was wonderful. They had so many colors: red, yellow, orange, pink, purple, and so on, and the clear air in the blue sky made my family feel so happy. That day I began to look forward to a new life in America.

By Hyekyung Jo



By Eric Santaella

My First Car

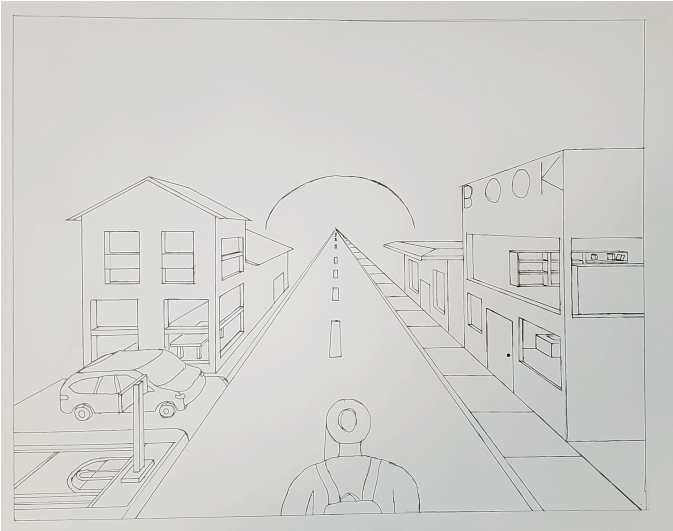
HYEKYUNG JO AND GRYPHON McLAUGHLIN

Do you remember when you bought your first car? I can't forget the time when I bought my first car. South Korea's public transportation was well developed, and I hated traffic, so I used the subway to get to work. I had decided to come to America, so I got a driver's license. As soon as I came to America, I decided to buy my first car.

First, I thought about the style of car I wanted. I preferred an SUV to a sedan. I'd rather have a small, compact car than a big, long car. Next, my husband and I compared the brand, the type of car, and the price on the internet. We picked two things: a Jeep Renegade and an Audi Q3. Then we went to two dealerships. The Audi Q3 was not yet available with a new model, so we headed the Jeep store. When I saw the Renegade, which I had only seen previously in pictures, I liked it. After I test drove it with the dealer, I liked it all the more. Finally, I bought my first car and drove it home.

I was so excited and happy that day! Now I drive to

school with my son, listening to music every morning.
By Hyekyung Jo



By Gryphon McLaughlin

The Sunshine Trail

RUI WU AND PAIGE MILLER

In winter, I like to walk on the sunshine trail. There is a wonder in most everything I see there. The sun shines continuously through the trees to the leaves on the ground, and I can see that the sky is blue. When the breeze blows in my face, I smell such fresh air. I often hear friendly greetings from runners, It is such a lovely day that I cannot help singing a happy song. Sometimes, people should get away from the hustle and bustle and get under the warmth of the sun. They will enjoy the peace of nature.

By Rui Wu



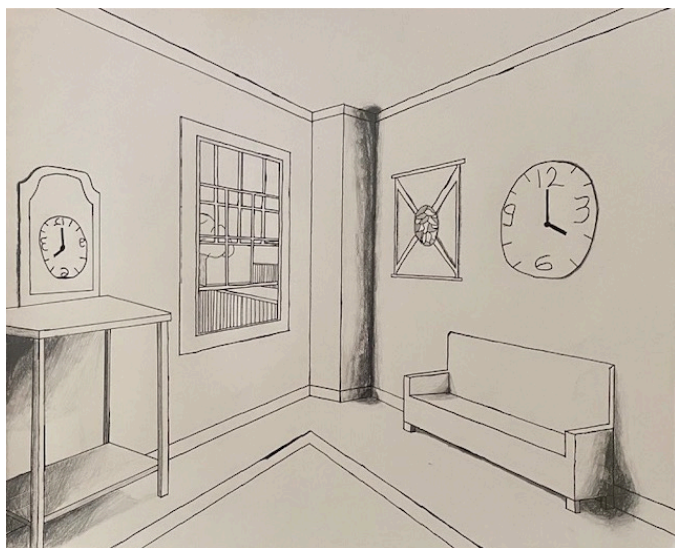
By Paige Miller

My New Home's Furniture

RUI WU AND JACK NAIG

Two years ago, I bought a house in Kirkland. I wanted to make my home more beautiful and warmer, so I planned to buy some furniture. First, I looked through a lot of pictures of home decorating and design, and I decided that I prefer to buy the more traditional types of furniture. Next, I searched the Internet for the addresses of some well-known furniture stores. Then, to find my favorite furniture, I spent a week looking in many different stores, and I compared the price in each of them. After that, I asked my friends to give me some advice about furniture quality. They told me a lot about their experience and some mistakes in buying furniture that they had made. Finally, I bought my favorite furniture, and my husband and my son like it very much.

By Rui Wu



By Jack Naig

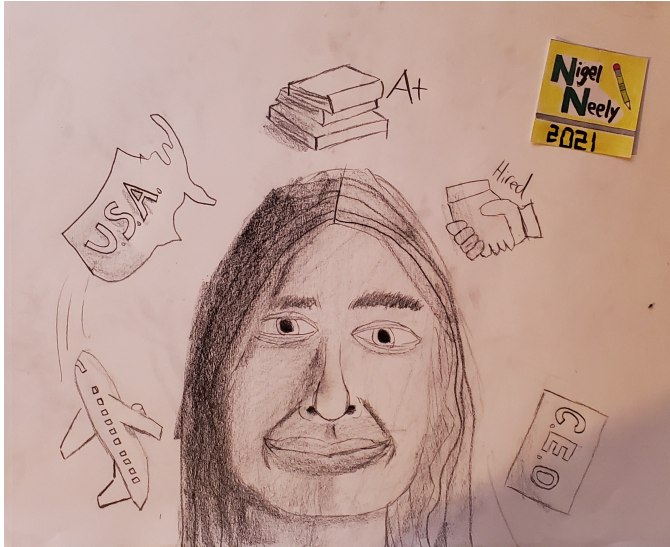
My Classmate Lily

RUI WU AND NIGEL NEELY

Lily was my classmate in high school, and I admire her because she is a very hard worker and has an optimistic view of life. She came to the U.S in 2008. Unable to speak English, she had to work in a restaurant to support her family. She thought that she needed a better life, so she decided to become an insurance agent. Her first goal was to learn English, so she took classes at the local community college in 2009 and spent a lot of time to studying every day. Through two years of constant effort, she improved her English very well. Her next goal was to get an insurance license. It was very difficult for her, but she didn't give up. In 2012, She got an insurance license through online study and, during the same year, she started working for an insurance company. She was very earnest in her work and often helped many clients. After just three years, she became a Gold leader in her company. When I feel tired of studying, she always encourages me with her experience. Now she plans to start her own company, and I hope she

will succeed.

By Rui Wu



By Nigel Neely