

PAPAYA POST

2013 November December

The Sound of Music - A Summer Episode



Hsin-Hsin Yang 楊昕昕

Our coach was picking up the tour passengers early in the morning at the outskirts villages of Munich; then when everyone was on board, I realized I was the only Asian person (a non-German speaker) of the tour group; It had happened twice before when I travelled from Melbourne to Sydney, and also to the Highlands of Scotland, so it's not a big deal to me. We were passing the southeast of Bavaria, Germany, and heading for Vienna, Austria. This is a region worthy to visit with rich cultural heritages and natural sites.

The splendid views welcomed us in the summer sunshine. In my heart the melody that started to sound was:

*The hills are alive with the sound of music
With songs they have sung for a thousand years
The hills fill my heart with the sound of music
My heart wants to sing every song it hears
My heart wants to beat like the wings of the birds
that rise from the lake to the trees.*

(Sung by Julie Andrews, written by Robert Wise 1965)



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“This is it”, I told myself. Julie Andrews and those children must be singing and dancing somewhere near here as the movie showed.

Here I particularly introduce a city and a village which were particularly impressive to me, i.e. Vienna(Wien) and Dürnstein.

The views started to show the classical buildings while the coach was approaching the city of Vienna; that really excited me. The historic center was pleasing the visitors with the architectural ensembles, including Baroque castles and gardens, as well as the late-19th-century Ringstrasse lined with grand buildings, monuments and parks.

Vienna, a leading European music center, from the great age of Viennese Classicism to the present time, has always gained its fame in the fields of arts and music with countless musicians, composers, artists, etc., contributing their talents for decades. Among them Mozart is the one whom you will see everywhere in the city, still the nation's icon over 200 years after his death. On advertising exhibitions, and concert posters, he is inviting you to try chocolates, or join the concerts.

Our tour guide led us to walk on the cobbled streets toward the Mozarthaus, Domgasse 5, where Mozart spent four happy years in Vienna with his family from 1784 to 1787. During those years he wrote the world-famous opera “The Marriage of Figaro” and three of the six Haydn Quartets. Those small streets around that area, though plain, with old trees shading over the pavements, were the most likable to me – cool and enchanting with the old stories repeated in such a hot summer day.

After Vienna, our last stop on the return journey was Dürnstein . It is a small old town on the Danube river in the Krems-Land district, in the Austrian state of Lower Austria, near the border of Germany. It is one of the most visited tourist destinations in the Wachau region and also a well-known wine growing area. Dürnstein has kept its historic character and is regarded as the most romantic place in this region.

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After getting off, and walking the Esplanade into the town, we saw the exquisite blue and white steeple of the Blue Church in an unusual color, but actually originally-painted as the guide told us.

It was a comfortable walk, flat and level, and right beside the Danube river. As from there I had good views of the ruins above the town on the right-hand side. Meanwhile, I saw houses, built near the hills on the other side of the Danube, painted in many different bright colors. Then the river was flowing in between, on and on in a tranquil way.



The main street was where the gentle-hearted hosts or hostesses of restaurants and shops were welcoming the visitors. This place has not yet lost its natural features as a wine village with vineyards around, even though it is both a local and international attraction. I should have bought some local wine back home, but I didn't due to limited space of my luggage. Nevertheless, a stuffed turtle to remember the river, an embroidered pad, and postcards were musts.

The sun was setting while we were heading home. The vineyards and farm houses were left behind as the coach passed by, which made me little sad. The old German couple in our group told me they visited Vienna and Dürnstein every ten years, and this was their last one. Hopefully, this was my first, but not my last visit. Next time might be a folksong and dance trip to hear real music sounding in the mountain area.

References:

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The Christmas Festival in Wanchin

Jia-Ying Li 李佳穎

With Christmas around the corner, one of the biggest events in Pintung, the Wanchin Christmas Festival, has also started since November 25th and will end on December 25th.



In 1861, the first Spanish preachers started preaching in Wanchin and a small amount of people, which were the first disciples, were converted. As time went by, more and more people received baptism. Though there were several clashes at the church, arson or group fighting out of the differences of the faiths, the preachers and Fathers survived through the tough times and set examples being so selfless that people changed to believe and accepted the Catholic faith. As a result, Wanchin has become a Catholic town.

There is a Catholic church there, which is the oldest one in Taiwan. It is a long history of why it became a tourist spot, but I would like to introduce more about the leisure part than its history.

The main spot there is the Catholic Church with Mather Mary inside looking down on everyone mercifully and kindly. The outside of the Church is decorated according to the theme of the year. Beside the basic giant Christmas tree, there is a deer and sleigh, and a 3-D painting of a pot of lively roses growing out from the bottom of a cliff.

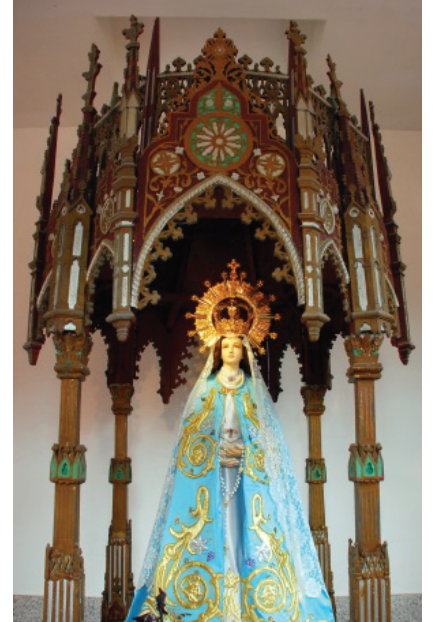
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Surely, there is a night market around the Church for tourists to fill their stomachs with various delicious foods. Further, paintings of Mother Mary, and Jesus can be seen everywhere; works about the birth of Jesus that are made by youngsters are exhibited around Wanchin, so we can learn stories as we walk there without paying too much attention trying to learn something.

The Christmas Festival in Wanchin takes place only once in a year. It is a good place to go and experience the atmosphere of Christmas even though you are not a Catholic.



CULTURAL REFLECTION

Tian-Jing Jou 趙天徑

Today was a special day; it was the birthday of NPUE. Around the school there were red lanterns hung with best wishes on them. I was looking forward to the evening party because several singers would come to perform. I should have been very happy at the party but something unexpected happened to ruin my mood.

During the interval of the two performances the host said, "Don't throw your glow-sticks on the ground; we're not from the Mainland after all." Instantly, we students from China were very angry and our mood fell down from the sky down to the earth. I was on the edge of crying upon hearing these words. Although the host apologized sincerely at the end of the program, we still felt humiliated.

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Most Taiwanese are very hospitable toward us, but there is still a minority of people who are hostile and look down upon Mainlanders. There are indeed some backward habits among our Chinese such as spitting in the street, anticipating traffic lights, and so on, but with the development of China, the more education we get, the more civil we will be. We're trying to change others' point of view towards Chinese. Please, be more tolerable to us in the future.

The Importance of Sports & Social Activities in Universities

Yi-Shiuan Tsai 蔡依軒

Jogging the memory of my senior high school life, I found out that I almost immersed myself in textbooks without any holiday for a rest. I meditated many times that if I had had an opportunity to take part in sports and social activities, what my life would have been? Therefore, I agree with the statement that at universities and colleges, sports and social activities are just as important as classes and libraries and should receive equal financial support. More reasons and detail will shed light on this issue in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, students spend too much time studying their schoolwork, and this brings forth that they do not have any extra time to exercise and the chance to interact with one another. Lack of communication is perhaps the most common and one of the most deadly forms of relationship trouble. In other words, good communication serves to bring people closer together. As a result, if sports and social activities are regarded to be as vital as classes and libraries this problem might be solved.

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Next, under the highly competitive pressure of this fickle society, unfortunately, it becomes tougher and tougher for people to gain an edge in the job-hunting competition. What companies need is a well-rounded person, not a bookworm. Therefore, I firmly believe that those who have the ability to deal with thorny problems more than ordinary people do are more likely to ride out the fickle society.

In a nutshell, because most students will be faced with more problems in the future, they should equip themselves with the ability of multi-tasking. Thus, I agree with the statement that at universities and colleges, sports and social activities are just as important as classes and libraries and should receive equal financial support.

Reflection of the *Happy Prince*

Pin-Rung Chen 陳品蓉
Fang-Ru Ye 葉芳如

In this story, the happy prince as a high statue saw all the ugly and pitiful events in his city, which also happened in our society. There are many miserable people who have no food and no home. However, how many kind-hearted people really care about them? Many people are very selfish and only care about themselves; only a few of them have the heart to help people. However, there are too many people lying to kind people for money by using the sympathy of them. Therefore, those kind

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people are afraid of being cheated by those malicious people and gradually ignore those really in need. This is a terrible situation that also takes place in our society.

The swallow stayed with the happy prince, helping the poor who had no food and it finally died when the cold winter came. The swallow's sacrifice touched me a lot. If I had the ability and enough money, I would donate the money to charity to help the disadvantaged social groups. I remember my first time to give my seat to an old man on a bus; he thanked me and praised me as a good child. I was very happy not because of the compliment, but because I did my best to do good thing. When I was little, mother always taught my sister and me to help people if we could. I didn't understand why we had to help strangers, but later I finally realized the happy mood after helping people. However, the important meaning my mother tried to teach us is that everyone may have problems sometimes and they need other people to give support, so I have to have empathy when other people need my help.

The relationship between the happy prince and the swallow is not only about friendship, but also the admiration from the swallow to the prince. At first the swallow loves the reed, but the reed can't talk with him. He flew away because he is a traveler, but the reed is domestic. During the stay with the happy prince, he finds the prince's kindness. In spite of losing his eyes, he also wants to help people. The swallow is touched by his behavior and promises to stay with him. The love between them turns to the highest friendship and I hope to have the same relationship as them with someone someday. In the end, I learned a lot from the kind heart from the happy prince and the true relationship between the swallow and the prince.

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Food Catastrophe

Jong-Yu Chang 張仲羽

The food scandal of Taiwan seems to be getting more ridiculous these days. A few months ago, news about plasticizer and poisoned starch took over social media and caused panic around the country. Several months later, another edible oil problem was reported. A large company, Tatung Changchi Foodstuff Factory Co. Ltd. (大統長基食品), which sells adulterated olive oil but labeled 100% olive oil, was brought into the spotlight. These adulterated olive oils may not be 100% olive oil. Instead, additional unhealthy oils have been added to the olive oil. There are also products found in domestic markets that are supposedly made with peanut and chili oil yet contain none of these oils. Researchers recently discovered that people who overly consume “fake oil” would have higher risk of suffering from obesity, cardiovascular disease and infertility. In light of these new findings, read labels carefully and choose products wisely.



National News

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Thanksgiving

Chian-Chian Wang 王倩倩
Bing-Jie Wu 吳冰潔

As one of the most popular and traditional festivals in America, Thanksgiving is always treasured by Americans. They cook a big feast for their families and friends with all their efforts. However, the following statics provide data showing that eating and drinking too much at Thanksgiving has become a potential problem.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture National Center, about 2.5 billion turkeys were killed during the holiday in 2012. Compared to 2011, the statics increased around 2%. Meanwhile, it was reported by the National Turkey Federation that there were 46 million turkeys brought to the table, which meant that about 7.3 billion pounds of turkeys were eaten. In addition, the output of cranberry rose to 7.6 billion in 2012, which was stated by Fedstats. The report also added that 27 billion sweet potatoes and over 11 billion pounds of pumpkin were produced and consumed.

We can conclude from the rising statics that if Americans keep eating unlimitedly, it may do harm to their health and cause sleepy doldrums. Hence, the best way to celebrate the festival is to eat properly and in smaller portions. Gobble Gobble.

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Christmas

Pei-Pei Hung 洪佩佩
Ruo-Ping Li 李若萍
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Yun-Fang Lin 林筠芳
Jia-Yi Jheng 鄭佳怡

Christmas is coming soon! Nearly everyone loves Christmas and they seem to be very excited. However, some people don't like Christmas. According to Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), about 47%(4000 people) feel anxious about Christmas. In addition, about 40% of single people are fed up with this holiday because they feel lonely because nobody can accompany them. All they can do is see other people reunite. Nevertheless, Christmas doesn't seem to be all bad. It can bring benefits for society. For example, it can reduce the rate of crime.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau states that the number of stolen cars was the lowest during Christmas time in 2012, only 1,432 cars were stolen. However, the highest number of stolen cars was over 2,400 during the summer. A policeman from Florida claimed that Christmas is the day for family reunions. Even very poor families celebrate the holiday. On Christmas, people generally have a big feast and spend their time visiting families and friends. Therefore, car thieves indulge in the delighted atmosphere of Christmas as well, so they are too busy to commit crimes. During the summer, it is the time for car thieves to take action because students begin their summer vacation, families take trips more often, and there are more drivers on the road. Places are crowded and this increases the possibility for car thieves to commit crimes.

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According to the above statistics, we can find that not everyone loves Christmas so much because single people will feel solitary especially when they see other people get together. Nonetheless, there are still some advantages to Christmas, that is, the crime rates will decrease sharply. As a result, the general atmosphere is still blissful and peaceful. All in all, Christmas is the festival filled with merriment, so we hope everybody can enjoy the good part of it. Merry Christmas!

Taipei 101 fireworks on New Year's Eve in past 10 years

Pei-Yi Li 李培意

Yu-Shin Lin 林郁馨

Wei-Shiuan Li 李唯瑄

Mu-Shiuan Ji 紀沐暄

Taipei is the capital of Taiwan and is known for its tallest building, Taipei 101. It was constructed from 1999 to 2003. Since 2004, Taipei 101 has started to hold the most magnificent fireworks performance on New Year's Eve. This performance is famous because it sets off fireworks from the outside wall of the skyscraper. The tallest setting off spot could reach up to 508 meters, which is located on top of the building. It's the tallest setting in the world according to the record. The amount of fireworks that were set off on the New Year's Eve countdown party in 2008 and 2009 was more than 17,000. Since the fireworks performance started, Taipei 101 attracts about 100,000 people to enjoy the show. This paper will discuss the amount of fireworks that have been set off in the past 10 years.

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According to the Taipei local government, in 2003, instead of fireworks, lights were used. However, in 2004, the building was finished and the first firework show on Taipei 101 was on December 31, 2004. The amount of fireworks was 2,200 which lasted for 35 seconds. The firework show in 2005 extended to 128 seconds, setting off 8,100 fireworks. The amount of fireworks grew every year and became more creative. 9,000 fireworks were set off in 2006 and this grew to 12,000 in 2007. This gradually increased to 18,000 in 2008 and 22,000 in 2009. Then, it jumped to 30,000 in 2010. The amount of fireworks increased sharply in 2010 because this was Taiwan's 100th year of existence. The amount maintained 30,000 in 2011 but in 2012, it decreased to 29,000. In the 10th year, 2013, the amount of fireworks was 30,000.

The statistics show that the amount of the fireworks set off on Taipei 101 has had a gradual rise each year. Especially, from 2011 to 2013. The amount of fireworks set off has risen because they try to attract more people to visit. As people pay more and more attention to the entertainment on New Year's Eve, the countdown party has become the most popular activity in Taiwan. Therefore, Taipei 101 increases the time of the fire work show every year and more people get together near Taipei 101 to watch the beautiful scenery at the end of the year. The show time keeps increasing and thus reveals that Taiwanese people want to have something special to present to the audience. They want Taipei 101 to be creative and it can also bring the attention to other foreigners. This is not only entertainment but also a way to introduce Taiwan to the world.

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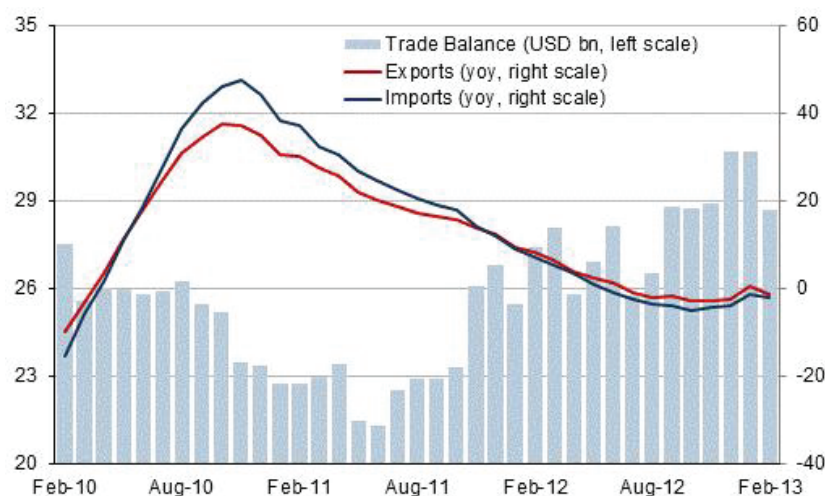
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Exports and Imports during the Lunar New Year

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Miau-Ying Tsai 蔡妙瑛
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Pei-Ling Yang 鄭舒怡

When the Lunar New Year is close, people will go shopping, and buy many kinds of things, such as, new clothes, new pants, and lots of food to celebrate this traditional holiday.

According to the Focus Economy website, we can see the economic change during the Lunar New Year in Taiwan. The sale of exports increased gradually in February 2010 to August 2010, and then it had a sharp decrease in August 2010. While from February 2011 to August 2012, sales gradually fell. However, there is a slight growth in February 2013. Imports sales were almost the same as the export sales, but import sales rose sharply between February 2010 and February 2011.



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To sum up, the statistics show that the exports and imports have a wide margin of variation among these years. The reason for the big difference is due to the financial crisis a few years before. As a whole, exports and imports during the Lunar New Year increase steadily.

Moon Cakes Are More Affordable

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Tsung-Han Hsiao 蕭琮翰
Guan-Ting Liu 林冠廷
Jing-Yun Fu 傅敬云

The Moon Festival has come and gone! More people turned their bellies into big balloons because the prices of most moon cakes this year were stable. With more affordable prices, more people had the chance to enjoy delicious moon cakes. If you are a moon cake maniac, you must know about what happened to the price of moon cakes this year.

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The Consumer Protection Commission searched for 366 items from famous moon cake stores, 7 hyper-markets, supermarkets, and convenient stores to get the statistics and found that 83% of the moon cakes they investigated did not have a price increase from last year. However, the report also added that some items of famous moon cake stores did have a price increase. For example, the price of red bean moon cakes had increased about 26.7%, and egg yolk pastries increased by 25%. In addition, there was a 21.2% price increase for mung bean and meat pastries. In addition, 8 items from the hyper-markets and supermarkets also had a price increase, including 5 items from Carrefour, 1 item from RT-Mart, and 2 from Far Eastern AMart. The reason why those moon cakes still have a price increase is that those stores changed their design of the packages, the formula of moon cakes, and most important thing is due to the increase of commodities.

If you want to enjoy your Moon Festival with lots of moon cakes next year, don't forget to check the price before you buy them, 83% of the moon cakes did not have a price increase. That is really a good news, isn't it?

Black Friday -- Not Black at All

Black Friday is the name given to the day following Thanksgiving Day, traditionally the beginning of the Christmas shopping season. Most major retailers open extremely early, often at 6 am on this day, or earlier, and offer promotional sales to kick off the holiday shopping season. People go flat out on Black Friday.

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Black Friday is the busiest shopping day of the year. These are the facts that came from National Retail Federation (NRF) and BBC News. According to NRF, most retailers make between 20% - 40% at their annual revenue. Also, as NRF reported, over 600,000 people were hired in this holiday season in 2011. The number raised to 700,000 in 2012, and about 780,000 in 2013. We can see that retailers hired more and more people to make all the consumers happy.

What about the shoppers? According to NRF, from 2010 to 2012, the average consumers spending on Black Friday continued increasing year by year. People flowed into shopping malls and department stores to purchase items. This might have caused some injuries. According to BBC News, sadly, since 2006, 4 people died, and 67 were injured in the rushing crowd. Some people disagreed with the holiday shopping season because they thought it represented consumerism. They refused to buy anything on Black Friday, and called it "Buy Nothing Day."

While consumers love to buy things on this holiday season, the way they spend money is changing. Since the recession, people not only search for the lowest price items, but also for the best value. In order to successfully find the products that were both cheap and of good quality, smartphones and tablets were being used. People used their smartphones and tablets not only searched for products, but also to go ahead and buy them directly online.

Although the purchasing habit of the consumers is changing nowadays, the atmosphere of the holiday season still remains the same. After all, this year on Black Friday, 92 million people shopped, and this set another record. Black Friday is not black at all.

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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

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