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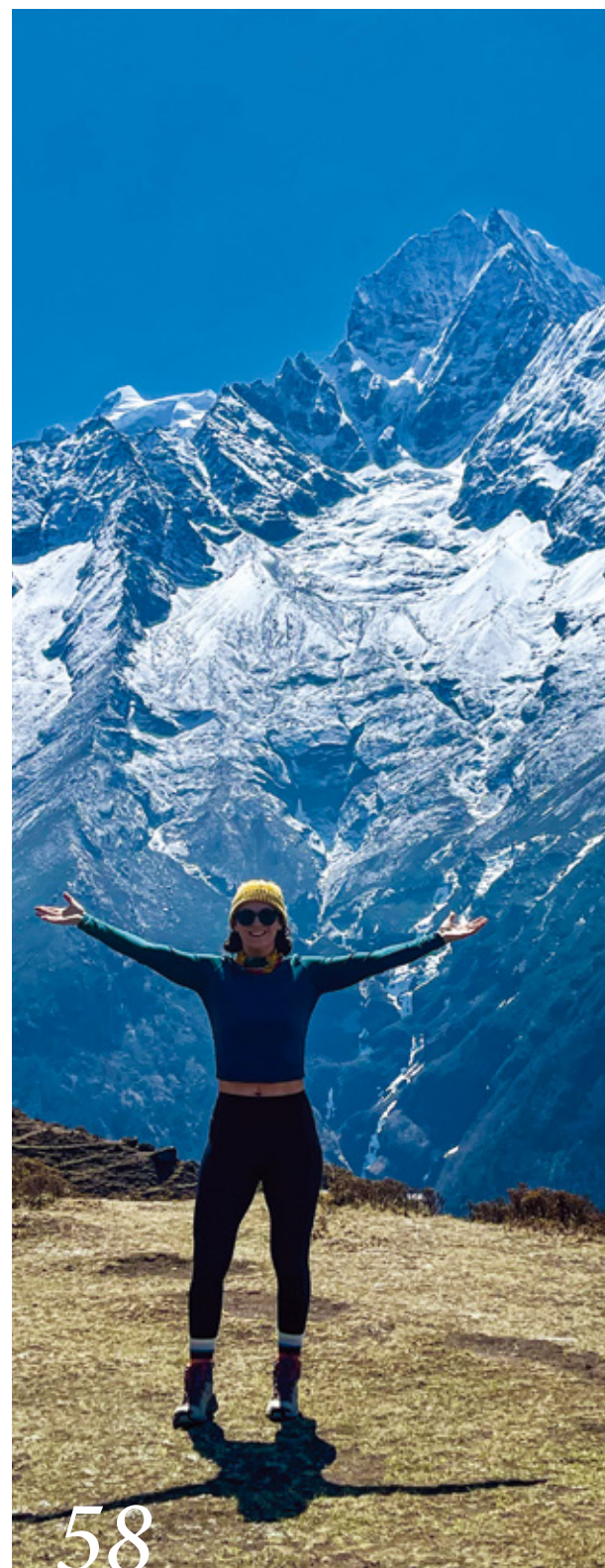


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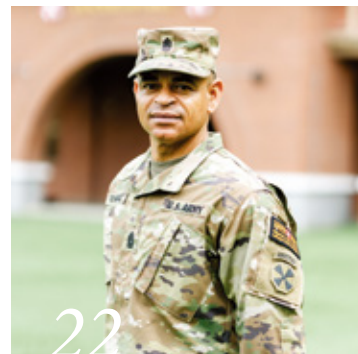
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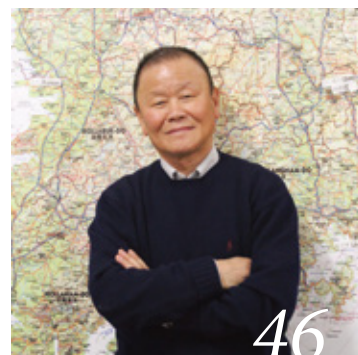
For those with wanderlust, check out the article by Nicole Spitzack about her trek of a lifetime to Mount Everest and how she prepared for the experience.

Cover: A waterfall on Jeju Island
(Photo by Erin Henderson)



Leader's Corner: Putting People First

Command Sergeant Major Andrew N. Rehedul, U.S. Army, writes in the Leader's Corner about a commitment to people-oriented leadership.



Spotlighting Charles Chong

Robyn Connell and Caitlin Ward put the spotlight on Charles Chong, CEO of Oriental Press and a stalwart supporter of the USFK community.



Celebrating a Free and Open Korea

In celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Korean War Armistice, Andrew Salmon shares an account of a real-life, Korean War exorcism.



E-C INTERNATIONAL LAW OFFICE



Ms. Annette M. Eddie-Callagain Esq.

Professional Experience

Attorney-at-Law

E-C International Law Office (1995-2019)
General practice, private law practice.

Judge Advocate (Major)

United States Air Force Reserves (1995-2006)
Served as a Judge Advocate in the Air Force Reserves, retiring in October 2006.

Judge Advocate

United States Air Force (1983-1995)
Active Duty Judge Advocate, practicing all areas of military law

Law School Professor

University of the Ryukyus Law School
Okinawa, Japan

Practice Areas

- Collections
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- Divorce
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E-C INTERNATIONAL LAW OFFICE

E-C LAW CENTER BUILDING, 1F
2-4-2, GINOWAN CITY
OKINAWA, JAPAN 901-2221
TEL: (+81) 98-898-0162
FAX: (+81) 98-899-2142

UNITED ON THE RoK

Published by
Oriental Press

Editor in Chief
Caitlin Ward

Art Director
Eric Young-Seok Park

Media Manager
Erin Henderson

Writers

Hoyoung Chang
Robyn Connell
Ashley M. Evans, MLS
Krista Fagala
Kimberly Kephart
Kim Jeong-Chul
Kim Jung-Kook
Amy Millican
Command Sergeant Major
Andrew N. Rehedul, U.S. Army
Andrew Salman
Nicole Spitzack
Christy Tremblay
Vikki Waits

Contributors

Epilepsy Alliance
Starbucks Korea
Trey Galloway
Eric Park
Grace Stables
Morning Calm Ministries

Featured HBBs

Amber Griffith Sweets & Treats
Flyga Twiga
LACTO CLEAN

Launched in July 2022, *United on the RoK* is a civilian information and lifestyle magazine distributed monthly at all USFK installations. The purpose of the magazine is to enhance connectedness within and across our diverse communities and to help community members adapt to life in Korea.

United on the RoK is monthly publication for members of the United States Forces Korea Community. Editorial content is the responsibility of *United on the RoK*. Contents of the publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or Oriental Press.

Oriental Press

Chief Executive Officer
Charles Chong

Chief Operating Officer
Chong N. Cho

Senior Adviser
Hyun Jong Shin
Myung Chan Choi

Interns
Ho Cheol Shin
Nguyen Thi Bich Loan

Marketing Director
Joseph Shim
Kye-Hwan Pak

Southern West District
Jong Kwon Noh
Gyeong Ho Lee

Commercial Advertising

Phone: DSN (315)738-2222 ext. 6815 / 02-6903-6815
E-mail: oriental.press.eric@gmail.com
Mailing address: PSC 450, Box 758, APO AP 96206-0758



Busan Port at dawn (Photo by Trey Galloway)

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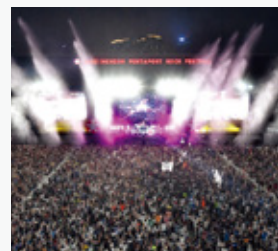
SEP01-02
Thunder From Down Under In Seoul

Yes24 Live Hall
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SEP23-24
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Concert Hall
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AUG04-06
Incheon Pentaport Rock Festival 2023

Songdo Moonlight Festival Park
globalinterpark.com



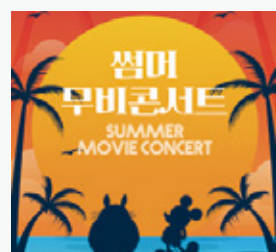
SEP02-03
RESFEET Festival 2023

88 Garden, Olympic Park
globalinterpark.com



SEP23-24
Seoul Forest Jazz Festival 2023

Seoul forest park
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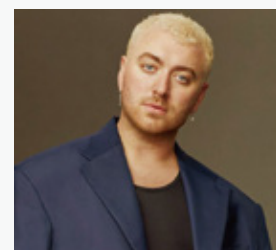
AUG08
Summer Movie Concert

Lotte Concert Hall
lotteconcerthall.com/eng



SEP10
Mikhail Pletnev Piano Recital

Concert Hall
sac.or.kr/site/eng



OCT17
2023 Sam Smith Gloria The Tour - Korea

KSPO DOME
globalinterpark.com



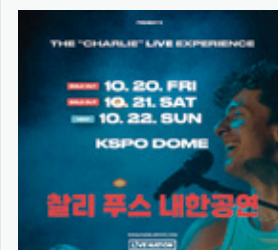
AUG22-27
2023 SAC Summer Music Festival

Concert Hall, IBK Chamber Hall
sac.or.kr/site/eng



SEP16-17
Joy Olpark Festival

88 Garden, Olympic Park
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OCT20-22
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EDITOR'S NOTE

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

— Helen Keller

This year marks the 70th Anniversary of the Armistice agreement signed on July 27, 1953 to stop the conflict that had resulted in immense suffering and bloodshed. The armistice called for "a complete cessation of hostilities... until a final peaceful settlement is achieved."

This year also commemorates the 70th Anniversary of the Alliance between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea. In recognition of this historical occasion, this issue features a powerful article by journalist, author and broadcaster Andrew Salmon about Korean War veteran Private David Strachan and the rise of the phoenix nation.

In the Leader's Corner, Command Sergeant Major Andrew N. Rehedul, U.S. Army, Commandant of the Noncommissioned Officer's Academy, speaks about the value of freedom and shares why he is proud to be a U.S. soldier. He reminds us to be committed to our responsibilities, our present and future, and to people-oriented leadership.

The issue also features a profile of Charles Chong, who has dedicated his life to supporting the wellness of military spouses, the USFK community at large, and by extension the ROK-U.S. alliance. Chong was a child during the Korean War and later served in the ROK Army. Currently he supports the USFK community through his work as the CEO of the publishing company Oriental Press.

Celebrating a free and open Korea, this issue features a number of articles to feed your wander-



lust, highlighting different adventures including a visit to Bukchon, a hiking trip in Seoul, a trek to Everest, a visit to Vietnam and a trip to Taiwan.

The issue also features a profile of a ballerina, a profile of a Jazz artist, and an account of a woman in her prime who opened a hair salon just down the road from Anjeong-ri gate at USAG Humphreys.

We hear from Coach K on her experience working at the Paralympics, from Vikki Waits about her journey to become a Life Coach, and from artist Christy Tremblay on how Korea inspired her. There is much more to this issue including a shopping guide, information about a volunteer opportunity, and book recommendations from SFC Ray E. Duke Memorial Library.

We are excited to kick off the second edition of this no-cost magazine created to enhance connectedness and improve quality of life. We build connections with each other and our local areas by sharing information about community organizations, initiatives, events, Korean culture, military history, adventures, experiences, lifestyle tips, and other human-interest pieces. We are more connected when we promote diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. Stories and articles that represent our diverse communities, that provide information, reassurance and support, and that lift our community members are the foundation of this publication.

If you want to contribute or get involved, reach out to editor@unitedontherok.com.

Thank you for your readership and support. Happy reading!

Caitlin Ward
Editor in Chief

Photo: Charles Chong, Caitlin Ward, Eric Park and Erin Henderson, pictured at Humphreys.



Ballerina Seyun Jeong Shares Her Passion

By Caitlin Ward

Seyun Jeong is an accomplished ballerina and instructor of ballet. She studied at Europa Ballet Conservatory, Steps On Broadway, Centennial College, The Cyber University of Korea and Ewha Womans University. Her teachers have included Gabrielle Lamb, Michael Blake, Max Stone, Enzo Celli, Jean Rodriguez, Mindy Jackson, Michelle Cave, Elena Kunikova, Drew Berry, Martha Hart, Jami Harper, Ryan Lee, Kevin Pugh, Lenato Zanella, and many other artists.

She has performed at Steyr Summer Festival in Austria, Buglisi Dance Theatre in New York, and South Korea. Currently, Seyun teaches at SALT International School, Cappel Academy, and La

and her deep love for Korean ballet, which is often centered around traditional Korean stories. In sharing Korean ballet, Jeong is sharing her country's culture and traditions.

With an air of understated elegance, Jeong sat with me and shared her passion. A student of ballet history, Jeong explained that ballet was born in the Italian Renaissance courts of the 15th century. In the 16th century, Catherine de Medici, the wife of King Henry II and patron of the arts, funded ballet in the French courts. Toward the end of the 17th century, a dance academy opened in Paris and ballet moved from the courts to the stage.

Initially, ballet was performed with opera until ballet masters insisted ballet could stand on its own and convey a narrative. In the 19th

ate the difficulties of the ballerina's movements and footwork. In the 20th century, Russian choreographers began moving beyond classical ballet form and story, eventually introducing neoclassical ballet.

Seyun Jeong started ballet when she was ten years old, and performed professionally at age sixteen.

"Before I graduated from high school in South Korea, I applied to ballet companies and universities in several countries," Jeong said. "I was accepted by Queensland University in Australia and Europa Ballet Company in Austria. I chose to join the Europa Ballet Company because it had been my dream to live in Europe since I was five years old. I had many incredible professional experiences and opportunities there.

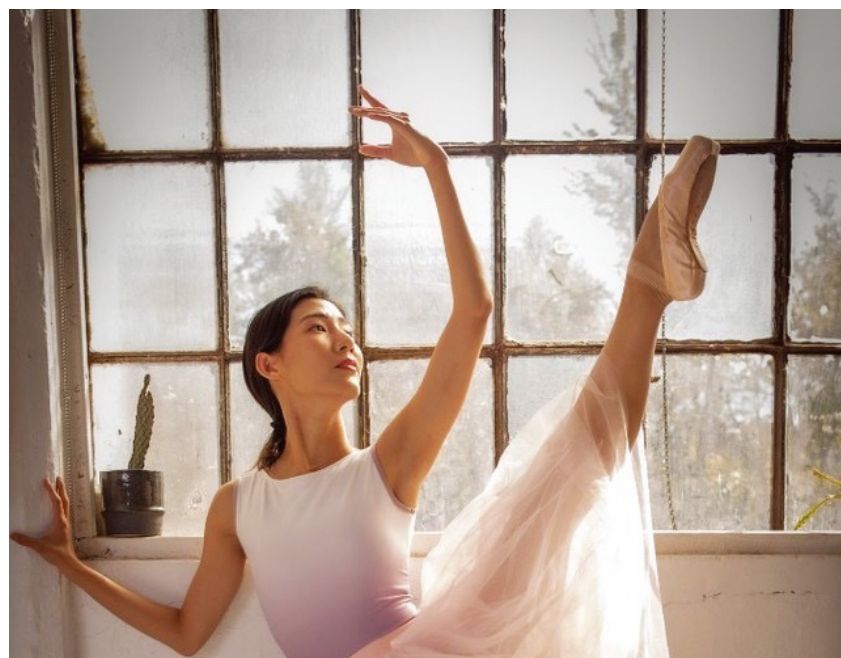


Vie Ballet, Seoul. Her dream is to share ballet with USFK community members through performances and classes.

Jeong's passion for ballet stems from her study of ballet, exposure to the art form around the world,

century, ballet became very popular in Russia where choreographers and composers began to expand ballet, emphasizing the precision of movement, showing complicated sequences, and shortening the tutu so audiences could better appreciate

"Following that experience, I had a desire to study various genres of dance. I moved to New York to continue expanding my study. It was a great experience to live there, meet people, and learn so many things. I took eight dance classes everyday



the University of Toronto. After one year of study, I ranked among the top students and graduated early. Subsequently, I passed Ewha Woman's University Master's degree course and I am continuing to study dance."

Just as ballet gradually expanded from the courts to the stage in Europe, Jeong explained that ballet is becoming a more popular in Korea. Formerly perceived as a luxurious art beyond people's means, ballet is frequently appearing in TV dramas, web cartoons and stage musicals. Additionally, the South Korean government has provided increased support for culture and arts programs and several ballet companies for children have opened their doors.

Jeong noted that ballet seems to be on the verge of a transition. She explained that Russians are widely regarded as the top ballet masters, largely because they have supported artists breaking the rules for so long. Russian ballet masters supported individuals who expanded from rigid and structured classical ballet mores to personalized gestures, total body involvement and creative expressions.

"Korea is in the stage of converging various dance styles," she explained. "I think a positive development is coming."

If you are interested in seeing a ballet performance while you are in Korea, Jeong recommends the Seoul Arts Center, a huge facility where many ballet companies perform each year.

If you are interested in speaking with Seyun Jeong about ballet, her classes, or arranging a performance, you can reach her at seyunjeong0612@gmail.com or (+82)10-5705-2380.

when I was in New York. I was just crazy about dance."

While she was in New York, Jeong realized she was drawn to teaching.

"I love dance, I love to learn something, I love to study, and I love teaching," she explained. "So, I decided to be a professor and I moved to Toronto, Canada. I have a younger brother and he is very smart. He wanted to study and go to school in another country so I chose Canada because many

Koreans live there, and I thought he might have an easier time adapting to their culture and being accepted there. When I was in Austria, I encountered racism and I did not want my brother to go through that.

"I studied at a college in Canada, and completed my studies at Cyber University of Korea at the same time. I also did a lot of work during this time because I had to earn my own living and tuition, and cover living expenses for my brother, who is now preparing to enter

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Seoul Children's Welfare Committee (SCWC)

Ceasless efforts to support helpless children

By Eric Park



The Seoul Children's Welfare Committee (SCWC) was founded in 1953 by Lucy Briggs, the wife of the US Ambassador to Korea Ellis O. Briggs, with her daughter and Korean friends.

SCWC is a volunteer-run organization that was started to help handicapped and orphaned children following the Korean war.. At first, it was called the Seoul Children's Hospital Supporters' Association, but in the 1980s, as the Seoul Municipal Children's Hospital moved from Jongno-gu to Naegok-dong, Seocho-gu (now Heolleung-ro), the name of the support group was also changed to the current Seoul Children's Welfare Committee. At that time, the wife of the mayor of Seoul and the wife of the US Ambassador to Korea joined as honorary presidents.

In August 2017, SCWC was registered as an incorporated corporation and has continued expanding and supporting other child welfare facilities and projects in



Former board members

various fields to bring about positive changes to the lives of the children who are economically and physically disadvantaged.

SCWC has hosted a variety of charity events every year, including bazaars and golf tournaments. SCWC hosted the 2nd Charity Bazaar at the Novotel Ambassador Seoul Gangnam Hotel on April 24, 2023, featuring eighteen different brands, including Bogsigpum, Caty Lang, Davida, Uniwrap, Fairliar and Bhstory. The participating companies donated goods such as fur clothing, foods, walnut oil, coffee, bags, children's clothing, bedding, cosmetics, and handmade crafts. The bazaar attracted an incredible number of guests to support the great cause.

At a corner of the bazaar, there was a special booth showcasing many items hand-made by orphaned children with autism and other disabilities at Kyonam House of Hope (교남 소망의 집), which is one of the several children shelters SCWC has supported for many years. The featured items included small paintings, bags and stickers.



Some of the current board members at the bazaar with the chairman of SCWC, Yu Shil Kim (center on back)

On May 30th, 2023 SCWC Charity Golf Tournament was held at the Lassa Golf Club. A total of sixty people participated in the event which was very successful and memorable.

All the members and volunteers expressed that they are happy to be supporting children with difficulties, especially orphaned ones with physical disabilities. Their devotion and desire to help the children is a key part in the success of every event hosted by SCWC. With the funds raised at their events, SCWC covers the costs for the children's medical treatments and their education expenses across six child welfare facilities in Seoul.

SCWC members also visit childrens' shelters on a regular basis and every Christmas, SCWC members prepare an exciting and enjoyable party for the children. The children also like to prepare a showcase to present for the loving visitors. The SCWC members and children both look forward to the special occasion every year.

SCWC has an enduring commitment to support children in need, to bring them joy and to help them dream of and make a better life. SCWC hopes that more people will get involved.

SCWC website: scwc.co.kr/em



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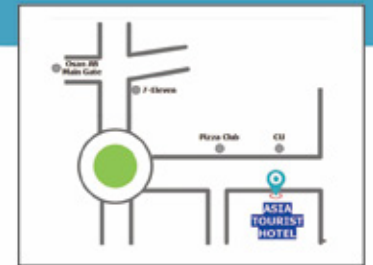
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By Command Sergeant Major
Andrew N. Rehedul, U.S. Army

Growing up in Jamaica, I had great admiration for the Jamaica Defense Force (JDF). They would occasionally visit my community and their presence was always reassuring. I saw strength and discipline combined. I was just a teenager, about thirteen years old, and I knew then I wanted to be a Soldier. After migrating to the United States, I followed that dream and over twenty years later, here I am, still serving strong in the United States Army.

My commitment is based on my understanding of freedom, which is a beautiful peace of mind. Each time I returned from deployments and witnessed how care-free Americans are compared to other countries, I felt proud to protect that freedom with the men and women with whom I served. My two deployments to Iraq twice were also meaningful, unforgettable experiences. For example, on one of the deployments, we provided necessities for the local citizens, especially the children who needed school supplies—a pencil and a notebook was a big deal for them. Seeing their appreciation first hand will always mean a great deal for me, because I know I made a difference in their lives.

As the Commandant of the Noncommissioned Officer's Academy (NCOA), I have the opportunity to see soldiers develop professionally and as leaders. When soldiers and Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) come to the NCOA to complete an Instructor Course, Basic Leader Course, or KATUSA training program, they have made a decision to invest in themselves.

Investment in oneself is an important part of anyone's life, with Soldiers this is no different. Numerous Soldiers prematurely exit the military for an array of reasons, later to realize the decision they made was not the right choice. The military provides great

benefits to all Soldiers, including family members. Educating and keeping Soldiers informed of these benefits, that they are deserving of, is key. I always say to Soldiers that they must not let one duty station determine their outlook on the military when faced with poor leadership or other challenges.

As an engaged leader I make it my duty to find out the "Why" and the root cause of their decisions. Once I know their reason then it is my job to provide meaningful influence on their career path. The military is not for everyone, however it is mandatory that we provide every Soldier with the right information and resources to help in their decision process, whether they stay or not. One of the most valuable things you can give a Soldier is your time and that is called engaged leadership with relevant presence.

People are the most valuable asset of an organization; people drive its performance and direction toward achieving tactical, operational and strategic objectives. It is critical to organizational success for leaders to approach their greatest asset (people) with a positive mentality that conveys genuine concern for their personal and professional development, as well as their well-being and quality of life, to build a cohesive and effective team, capable of achieving mission objectives.

Creating effective teams that perform at high levels of operational efficacy begins with building meaningful relationships among all stakeholders. Relationships are the bond between team members—that bond creates synergy required to operate at a high-performance level. Genuine relationships take time to develop through earning trust and respect among teammates and leadership. It is imperative for leaders to manage the organization's culture and team dynamics to ensure optimal success. This is accomplished by understanding individual perspectives, personalities, norms and behaviors.

Building high performance teams is a collaborative effort that can be accomplished by forming a diverse coalition (i.e., roles, levels of experience, backgrounds) of stakeholders with similar foundational characteristics capable of developing productive and enduring relationships throughout the organization. Positive relational engagement is an effective way to recognize, evaluate, and cultivate employees' human and social strengths, assist them in expressing their potential, and enhance their performance and well-being. From this perspective, the specific approach applied to human resources management acting within organizations could considerably affect employees' well-being and their attainment of crucial organizational outcomes.

When leaders are invested in and committed to their people, those people will be invested in and committed to themselves and their roles, assignments

"Leadership that operates at a higher level with direct communication with ROK Leadership is essential to strengthen the ROK Alliance. That relationship can transcend to subordinate units reminding them of the importance of keeping that Alliance alive through combined training and cultural involvement."

— CSM Andrew N. Rehedul

and broader mission. Commitment to anything is resource intensive and comes with an assigned value: time, financial, or additional resources. Commitment to a cause, mission or assignment conveys passion for performing at the highest level for individual and organizational success. Soldiers committed to their assignment or organization typically possess an inherent desire to succeed with a sense of purpose. This can instill a higher level of job satisfaction that can spread across an organization footprint, increasing the overall morale of the organization and its performance.

The level of employee performance is self-driven

and can indicate the organizational climate and its culture. Numerous variables affect employee performance, from internal desire and commitment to leader behavioral integrity. Employee trust and satisfaction in the leaders, as shown in authentic leadership, was demonstrated to drive follower-effective organizational commitment, performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Leaders' behavioral integrity and member work performance prove constant in a dynamic environment, and external variables did not affect performance once trust was built between the employ-



ee and leader. Relational engagement demonstrates the importance of a group trust climate in relationships between group-level leadership and individual-level leadership and individual-level employee work attitudes and performance. Culture is an organization's heartbeat based on trust and respect throughout the workforce and can determine operational performance based on efficacy.

BUKCHON

A charming neighborhood of Han-ok
in the center of Seoul

By Hoyoung Chang (장호영)

Bukchon, also known as the "North Village," is a place where tradition meets modernity. This neighborhood in Seoul is home to well-preserved traditional Korean houses called "Han-ok," which have been passed down through generations. Cafes, galleries, guesthouses, and tourist sites have been integrated into the town, creating an atmosphere that appeals to young people, families, and tourists. Visiting Bukchon not only offers leisure but also a deeper understanding of the beauty and history of Han-ok.

The location of Bukchon provides insight into who would have lived there in the past. This traditional village is situated in the heart of Seoul, with two palaces, Gyeongbok and Changdeok, to the east and west and another, Unhyeon, beneath the village. The perfect location for commuting made it a popular choice for high-ranking officials and the royal family as their place of residence. Additionally, the ground was ideal for living and building according to the Feng Shui Theory, an ancient theory that holds that the environment determines the fate of the people living there. The most propitious spot is said to have a mountain to the north and a river to the south, with the mountain acting as a natural barrier that blocks cold winds and foreign attacks, and the river providing a necessary source of water. Seoul was the most fortunate ground on the Korean Peninsula, with Bugak Mountain to the north and Cheonggye Stream to the south, which is why palaces and these villages have gathered in this region.

The close-packed tiled roofs in Bukchon indicate that the owners were more financially well-off than others, as the cost of such tiled-roof houses was tremendous. An average-sized tiled roof house in the 18th to 19th century would have cost approximately \$977,000 USD. Therefore, 70-80 percent of the people back then lived in thatched-roof houses, and even many nobles (Yangban) couldn't afford such luxury. Therefore, it's possible to see the houses of influential figures in history in this village, such as the residences of Korea's former presidents, Posun Yun and Myung-bak Lee.

Before visiting Bukchon, it is essential to understand the notable differences in structure between Han-ok and Western-style houses. As most of the houses in Bukchon are still residential homes, there are not many houses that visitors can actually go into. The city government owns some houses that are open to the public to provide information about Han-ok and hold regular cultural events. The Bukchon Culture Center is one such house, originally owned by a former minister of the Ministry of Economy and Finance during the late Joseon Dynasty, allowing visitors to explore the original Han-ok.

Heating System

Ondol is a traditional Korean underfloor heating system with a history dating back centuries. The system works by circulating hot air and smoke from a stove or furnace through a system of flues or pipes that are installed under the floor. The heat from the flues warms the stones, which, in turn, radiates heat to the floor and the room above. Even now, this system is combined with modern heating technologies such as gas or electric heating and is widely used in apartments and houses. Due to the weight and complexity of the structure, most traditional houses were single-story buildings.

Courtyard

The courtyard of Han-ok has coarse sand laid down to reflect sunlight and act as indirect lighting, allowing sunlight to enter the inner part of the house. The eaves of Han-ok take advantage of the changing altitude of the sun throughout the seasons, with the angle of the eaves typically around 30 degrees. In summer, when the sun is positioned higher than this angle, the eaves help block as much sunlight as possible, while allowing more sunlight to enter in winter. In the courtyard of the Han-ok structure, a layer of coarse sand is strategically laid to reflect sunlight and provide indirect lighting, allowing natural light to enter the interior of the house.

Eaves

The eaves of the Han-ok take advantage of the seasonal changes in the sun's altitude. Positioned at an angle of approximately 30 degrees, the eaves effectively block sunlight during the summer when the sun is positioned higher than this angle, while allowing more sunlight to enter the house in the winter.

Roof

The roofs of Hanok incorporate the principle of the 'cycloid curve' to efficiently channel rainwater off the wooden roof, preventing water stagnation and rot. The cycloid curve refers to a curve formed by rolling a point on a circle along a straight line, resulting in a curve similar in shape to an overturned bowl. As the height increases, the slope becomes steeper, enabling the water flow to increase in speed, allowing for quick drainage off the roof.

Windows

Traditional Korean paper made from mulberry trees, known as Changhoji, is used to cover lattice windows instead of glass. Changhoji acts as a barrier between the interior and exterior, while also allowing sunlight and wind to penetrate the space, creating a connection with the natural surroundings.

Aesthetics

Han-ok structures prioritize eco-friendliness and adaptability to nature, reflecting the Korean philosophy of harmony with the natural environment. These structures accommodate all irregularities and asymmetries present in nature and reduce the height of the house's boundary as much as possible to showcase the surrounding natural elements and become one with the landscape.

The aesthetic principles of harmony and beauty of emptiness are evident in the design of Hanok. The combination of curves and straight lines in various parts of the structure, such as the roof, external walls, and window frames, reflects the harmony of lines and the beauty of Korean aesthetics. Emptiness is also a prominent feature, with only the necessary furniture occupying the space. The courtyard, the most empty space, is often placed at the center of the buildings, providing a sense of spaciousness despite the small room size.

While some Han-oks in Bukchon exhibit Western and Japanese construction influences, many structures have maintained their traditional features despite aging. In recent times, the city government has regulated renovations of the outer structures of these historic houses to preserve their cultural value.

The story of Injae Baek's house, a famous surgeon and independence activist, is particularly intriguing due to its ownership by a pro-Japanese family during the colonization period. Injae Baek later purchased the house and went missing during the Korean War, with his wife maintaining ownership and waiting for his return. A hospital and a university were constructed in his name, and the house still stands as a testament to his legacy.

The study of Han-ok offers insight into the cultural and historical identity of Korea. Its philosophical, aesthetic, and scientific background represents the wisdom of Korean ancestors who lived on the land for centuries. When visiting Bukchon, it is crucial to practice respect and consideration towards the residents who call the neighborhood home. It is not uncommon for visitors to speak loudly or take photographs in front of Han-ok without prior consent, causing a disturbance to the local community. As responsible travelers, it is our duty to prioritize the comfort and privacy of the locals and make sure we do not disturb their daily routines. By being mindful of our actions, we can ensure that everyone can enjoy the beauty and tranquility of Bukchon harmoniously. For your information, exploring traditional Han-ok is also available in Namsan Han-ok Village near Chungmuro station.

About the Author

Hoyoung Chang is the founder and current president of the organization YECCO, the CEO of KOING, and a student at Sogang University, majoring in American Culture/Art and Technology.

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Community Strengths and Themes Assessment

Do you want the senior Army leadership to know what you like or don't like about your assignment in Korea? Well now is your chance. Eighth Army is conducting what is called the Community Strengths and Themes Assessment or CSTA. The CSTA is designed to capture the qualitative "pulse" of community member's feelings on quality of life, health, safety, and satisfaction or dissatisfaction within the environment of an Army installation. What you like about your situation and experiences and what issues you have encountered. The results and value of your survey responses will be to help identify and set the priorities for senior leadership to focus on and to improve upon.

The CSTA survey tool supports the Army's People First Strategy and will address your individual needs. To complete the survey, just scan the adjacent QR code according to what Area you are located in: Area I/II (Casey, Yongsan, K-16; Area III (Humphreys, Osan, Suwon); Area IV (any installation in the Daegu area). Eighth Army appreciates your input so please complete the survey and help them help you.



Area I/II



Area III



Area IV

We care about what you think

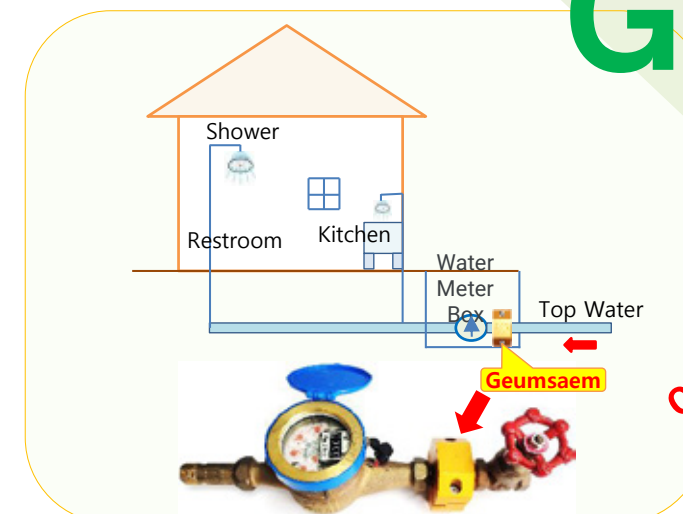
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Sterilization, Sterilization Experiment

Item	Unit	Time	Before passing	After passing	Remarks
Bacteria	ea/ml	24hr	1,000,000[10 ⁶]	100,000[10 ⁵]	90% decrease
		48hr			

Geumsaem experimental data(Hyundai Motor Co., Ltd)

Apricot Decay Experiment(4 days later)



Not washed

Washed with Tap water

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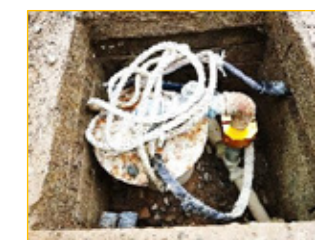
Application



Apartment



Common house



Underground water



Villa



Sauna



School



Plant



Hospital

Descale Top water pipe(Φ3")



Before



After(60 Days later)



A WEEKEND GETAWAY TO TAIWAN

By Kimberly Kephart

Hitching

to get away for a weekend? Want to explore a country that has an incredible past? Have you thought of Taiwan? Well, you should be thinking about Taiwan. Taiwan's bustling capital city, Taipei makes for the perfect weekend getaway. The streets are walkable and safe, and the transportation like the Taipei Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) make getting around feel effortless. I hope you will take a bit of inspiration from reading this and plan your own getaway.

Why Taiwan?

I chose Taiwan for my first solo trip abroad since the pandemic ended. You should know that I am a major fan of traveling solo. It is one of my favorite things to do. For me, I feel like we have such a limited time at each place we live, why wait on anyone to start traveling?

When my husband and I traveled to Vietnam during Christmas we met a couple who were teaching at the international school in Taipei, and it piqued my interest. So began researching and realized that it was completely doable. I chose China Airlines because there are direct flights from Incheon to Taipei, and the flight at 20:55 meant I could go straight from work. In Taipei, there are two flights leaving on Sundays, one early and one later in the day. Plus, the flights were cheap, less than \$250 USD. So, I was sold.

Additionally, Taiwan has traveler-friendly entry requirements. US Passport holders do not need a visa if your stay is less than 90 days, it is a level 1 travel advisory on the



State Department's website and the country just lifted their indoor mask requirements. You might be asked to monitor for any symptoms and report to the CDC.

It all came together quite seamlessly. The only issue I had was when I was heading back to Incheon. For a period of time, beginning on September 1, 2021, all DoD Civilians, Contractors and family members, including active duty dependents, traveling to Korea were required to have an approved Korea - Electronic Travel Authorization (K-ETA) prior to boarding. K-ETA is an electronic travel authorization ([https://m.k-eta](https://m.k-eta.go.kr)

.go.kr). I needed a K-ETA, so China Airlines called a representative from Korean Air over to get additional information. This is no longer required for travelers from most countries, but I'm sharing this because this was my only hiccup.

*Since April 1, 2022 the K-ETA is temporarily exempted for 22 countries, including the United States, until December 31, 2024.

Brief Overview of Taiwan

Taiwan has an amazing history. Allegedly, the island was exposed to immigrants from China as early



as AD239. Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese explorers came to the island in the 17th century and the island was briefly a Dutch colony (1624-1661) and then governing of the island was assumed by China's Qing dynasty from 1683 to 1895

In 1895, Japan defeated Chino in the First Sino-Japanese War and control of Taiwan was ceded from the Qing government to Japan, which occupied the country from 1895-1945. After WWII, Japan relinquished control to Taiwan and a very infamous figure, Chiang Kai-Shek, established the government of the Republic of China (ROC).

If you want to learn more about this period in Taiwan's history, I recommend looking up Chiang Kai-Shek, Chiang's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, and President Lee Teng-hui, Taiwan's "father of democracy."

Taiwan was once rich in natural resources like gold, sulfur, and iron. Prospectors looking for gold started coming into Taiwan after gold was discovered in a city just outside of Taipei. By the 2010s so

much of the resources had been mined or quarried that the remaining resources were negligible.

Over time, the country has experienced periods of rockiness and controversy, including the White Terror, with which modern-day Taiwan is now coming to grips. Despite setbacks and rising geo-political issues, Taiwan is one of the most accepting countries in Asia; for example Taiwan was the first country in Asia to allow LGBT unions, passing a special law legalizing same-sex marriage on 24 May 2019.

Where to Stay

Listen, I am not going to bog you down with hard recommendations like "you need to stay here." I'm a budget traveler, so I chose a hostel-stay with a private room in the Datong district. Meander 1948 has dormitory style rooms and private rooms. It was right by the MRT or Taipei Main Station, which was perfect for getting around.

On my many walks through the city I noticed boutique stays in many busy places around famous landmarks. If you like it posh and prefer 4 -Star service, they have hotels like the W, Marriott, and Hilton, more central to the illustrious Taipei 101 and all the luxury shopping malls.

If you're on a budget, what I do is scout out deals on Agoda, Booking and, because I am an Amex card holder, I'll look at their travel service (points please!) Often, I find a-lot of amazing deals on Agoda and Booking. Use the map function on each website to check out prices and filter to your needs.

SIM cards

Klook offers a chance for you to pick up a SIM card through Chunghwa/Senao telecom. Their location is the arrivals hall just after you exit from the baggage claim. It is super easy to pick up after you arrive and they are open till midnight. However, I noticed many

weary travelers did not reserve a sim before they arrived and were turned away. So, I say go ahead and take the offer on Klook. For three days, it was approximately \$9.19 USD.

Currency Exchange and ATMs

Currency exchange is a complicated topic that requires you to be knowledgeable about the current exchange rate and where the best exchange rate is offered. At the airport, Currency Exchanges are located just before you leave the arrival hall and outside of the arrival hall. However, another option you have is to withdraw money from an ATM and have your bank take care of the conversion rate. There were several ATMs in the arrival hall. My advice is to grab a bit of cash when you go to the ATM; as you may have experienced in Korea, some shop owners in Taiwan take cash over card, especially in remote areas and at the night markets. Be advised, some places like restaurants or tea houses will charge a service fee.

Transportation and Getting Around Taipei

There are several modes of transportation in Taipei from the airport. It's important to note, the MRT closes at 11pm so be prepared to have your hotel arrange pickup or you can go through Klook to arrange transfers if you land after the MRT closes. I did this for my departure flight transfer to the airport and it was seamless! Otherwise, you can easily get an MRT pass at a vending machine at any metro station.

Google maps works like a charm in Taiwan, and you can utilize this to navigate through the transportation schedules in real time.

Tours or going at it alone, the choice is yours!

There are so many things to do in Taipei and the surrounding areas. Viator, Get Your Guide, Klook, Agoda and Booking offer great tours. There are also free, yes free walking tours in Taipei, on certain days. You can find these on Klook. I will say leave space for some downtime as it can get overwhelming. If you want to book through a tour agency, directly check out Round Taiwan Round and Taipei Bike Works.

**DAY 1:
Jiufen, Yehliu Geopark, and Shifen from Taipei: A Tour through Taiwan's Northern Coast with Tour Agency Round Taiwan Round.**

9 Hours \$30.00 — bring money for food and any souvenirs you might want.

I started my morning early. Loaded up in a van with my guide, Jackson, and we headed out to pick up other participants. Together, we headed to Yehliu Geopark, which was about 45 minutes outside of Taipei. This is where the famous Queens head is situated. I assumed that since I had planned this tour on a Friday that it was not going to be slammed with people. I was so very wrong. There were lines to see each and every stone formation.

Situated on a cape of about 1700 meters long, Yehliu was formed by a mountain range that stretches into the sea. Yeh Liu is composed of sandstone, made mostly of limestone, and the park highlights some of the best examples of seaside erosion. The famed Queen's Head is the best example





of this erosion. Guess how long the line was? Twenty minutes to take a picture. I quickly found a viewing point where I could take a picture above the crowd. The view was breathtaking! You get a whole panorama of the seaside and the Queen's Head, with shrubs that block out the line below.

If you are lucky and the day is nice, you will get to stop off at Golden Waterfall. Golden Waterfall gets its name from the heavy metal elements that are deposited into the riverbed after rains. The river that it flows into is a rich golden hue. This river eventually makes its way to Yin Yang Sea. It is called this because of the dark minerals that flow into the sea and the light blue hue of the sea which provides a striking contrast.

Jiufen was next. This small town lies on a beautiful mountainside and has sweeping views of the coastline. Japanese were amongst the first settlers here during the Qing Dynasty. Gold was discovered here and bam! It brought in many prospectors. When the lanterns light up at night, it may remind you of the popular anime film *Spirited Away*. My time here was mostly spent meandering the winding streets, taking in the sights and smells of the city. You will find vendors selling many things such as Guey (a glutinous snack that can be stuffed with many different things), Stinky Tofu, Tanghulu, leather goods, and trinkets that capitalize on *Spirited Away*. The crowds were plentiful, and it only overwhelmed me as I was trying to squeeze through the

tight alleyways. So, I found the nearest Tea house.

There are two extremely popular tea houses in Jiufen: Ameicharu and Jiufen Chafang. Ameicharu is the iconic tea house you have seen in pictures. It was formerly a blacksmith shop, and it brings in tons of tourists daily. I could not believe my eyes when I saw the tea house. It is beautiful, but the wait time to get in was too long. I had a limited amount of time so, I opted for Jiufen Chafang. Jiufen Chafang lies right around the corner, and the menu and views are just as fantastic as Ameicharu. Unlike many other spots, they take all major credit cards, even American Express.

The waitstaff led me to an unbelievably beautiful greenhouse that the resident artist had created. The spot I was seated at had a beautiful view overlooking the valley below. As soon as I was seated, a young lady appeared with a menu that had tea choices arranged from light to dark, as well as cookies with oolong in them.

I went with Shanlinxi Oolong, which was from the high mountains in the middle of Taiwan. The tea had a faint smell of jasmine and a light taste. She explained the process of steeping the tea. The kettle sat next to me on charcoal bricks. She picked it up, cleaned out the cup with water and dumped that in a spare bowl. She then added the loose-leaf tea to the cup, poured hot water over the leaves and let me know how long to keep the lid on the steeping tea. When she was done, she poured it into my cup and left me in peace. I sat in silence with endless cups of tea for about an hour. It was such a wonderful way to relax and take in my surroundings.

I then proceeded to get lost on the streets of Jiufen. The streets wind and twist and are lined with beautiful architecture. It's an Instagram-worthy place to take pictures. If I could do it differently, I would have loved to visit Jiufen at night, I can see how folks think that this place looks like something out of *Spirited Away*.

Shifen was next on the list. This small town has a beautiful nature park with hiking trails and a waterfall. A neat activity you can do here is lantern lighting and setting off your lantern. The streets of Shifen are lined with small shops and the area still retains much of yesteryear's charm. You can walk into any of the lantern shops along the railroad tracks and ask to paint

wishes on a lantern to set it off. This was about 250 TWD (less than \$10 USD at the time of writing) for four colors. It was a fun activity. The shop owners help you set it off and are super fun about it. If you want, you can even get on the train that passes through to see some more mountain towns scattered throughout the area. It's a magical place.

DAY 2:
Taipei: 4-Hour Morning City Cycling Tour with Taipei Bike Works, \$60.00

Difficulty: Fair Distance: 15km
Duration: 4 hours

One of the highlights of my time in Taipei City was the morning



bike tour I took through Taipei Bike Works. I met my guide Beatrice at the shop. She is Taiwanese-American and found herself back in Taiwan wanting to reconnect to her roots. The coolest thing about this tour is that you get to see parts of the city you might otherwise not see.

As other participants started to arrive, we got to know one another then each picked a bike out. I was on a tour with six other people, five of whom were Aussies living and working in the tech industry in Hong Kong. The other was a solo traveler who worked in the foreign service industry. We set out in the city and had a fantastic breakfast at a local joint. Locals started snapping pictures of us eating our breakfast. One remarked how excited she was to see tourists and asked one of our tour participants to take a picture with her baby.

We ended up at the Memorial of Chang Kai Shek, where we were able to watch the Changing of the Guard. This happens at the beginning of every hour from 0900-1700. The Changing of the Guard was interesting to watch. Like in other parts of the world, everything was very precise. The soldiers had practiced their moves with laser precision, straight faced and on point. When walking the grounds of the Memorial you'll see expansive gardens and the marvelous architecture of the National Concert Hall.

Later in the day, when the tour group was at a stop light, an older man approached me to tell me how much he loved the US, that he thought I was beautiful, and then he proceeded to give me a balloon art flower. Sadly, this balloon flower did not make it on the plane.

This tour will give you a great introduction to Taipei and its wonderful people. I highly recommend it.



Taipei at Night: Din Tai Fung Dinner & Night Market Tour, \$50.00

Duration: 3 Hours, Bring cash for any incidentals.

No trip to Taiwan is complete without tasting Xiaolongbao! This renowned Michelin star restaurant has locations all over the world and it originated in Taiwan, so naturally you must put this on your itinerary. I had heard it was a nightmare to get in with long waits, and the trick around it is to join a tour!

The tour guide picked us up at a local metro station, and then took us over to Taipei 101, where Xiaolongbai is located. It took about twenty minutes to get us in. I was with a group of people from Japan and we connected over the tasty food. Among the highlights for me was the hot and sour soup. It was delicious. Sure, the Xiaolongbao was amazing, but this soup was the best! We

ate to our heart's content for about 40 minutes.

The creator of Din Tai Fung, Mr. Yang immigrated to Taiwan at twenty years old, with twenty dollars in his pocket. He decided to open his own shop to sell cooking oil and named it Din Tai Fung. He and his wife dedicated half of their shop to making and selling Xiao Long Bao, steamed pork soup dumplings. The word itself means "little dumpling in a basket." You can find a variety of types of these dumplings on the menu. It is absolutely fascinating to watch them work in the kitchen. I understand I could have gone to Seoul to have dinner at their location in Gangnam, but something about this experience in Taiwan was especially fascinating.

After dinner we made a beeline for Songshan Ciyou Temple. It was already getting dark outside and the city was lighting up. As we turned the corner to our next des-

tination, the view overtook me. It was Songshan Ciyou Temple lit up at night. Songshan is dedicated to the Goddess Matsu, the Goddess of the Sea. Our guide informed us that her believers think she roams the seas, protecting her believers, so citizens come here to pray to her for a safe journey and protection of the island. I spent much of my time here because it was beautiful with all the deep red hues of the lanterns. The smell of incense wafted through the air, and it was calming to take in. It is a great place to sit and reflect.

As part of this tour, you get a chance to wander the Rahoe Street Night Market. I went off to see if I could find anything sweet and that I did. I immediately made a beeline for the Donut man. If you have never had a Chinese donut, you are missing out. I am a firm believer that anything in donut form should be tasted!

The Last of It

Whatever district you end up staying in while in Taipei, the nightly street markets are delightful open across the city. No need to follow an itinerary step by step, but it could help you get a better sense of how much there is to do, such as plan a bike ride or hike around the country. Taiwan is open and ready for you to explore!

About the Author

Kimberly is an Army Spouse based out of USAG Humphreys and works for the USO at Osan Air Base as a Center Operations Specialist. When she isn't working, she is traveling or at least figuring out how to, it's one of her favorite things to do and she loves sharing her travels with others through photography and writing. You can find her on Instagram: @kimberly_kp_

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TITANIUM: My Experience with Paralympians

By Coach K (Krista Lynn Fagala)



► Melissa Stockwell
(Photo of her "The Power of Choice Book" she wrote/published)

"To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world."
- Krista Lynn Fagala

My name is Krista Fagala but my students call me Coach K. I was born and raised in Oklahoma and have lived and taught all around the world. I have been teaching for twelve years in health, physical education, safety, and exercise science. My passion in life is teaching everyone how to be healthy for a lifetime. At Osan, I am in my eighth year of teaching health and physical education to Pre-K through 5th Grade. I have previously coached at the high school, coached our security forces personnel and I am currently coaching at CrossFit Osan. My passion in life is teaching everyone how to be healthy for a lifetime.

Here I am sharing incredible memories from my intern-

ship with Team USA in Colorado Springs, working with the Paralympic Swim Team in Colorado. During this internship, I went to the 2008 Paralympic Beijing Games in China with 25 physically disabled young athletes and a few coaches to the Opening and Closing Ceremonies,

I'm sure you're wondering how I got into interning for Team USA with Paralympic and Olympic athletes. I went to the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO), which is a training site for Olympic and Paralympic athletes. The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) said they would choose one student intern from our school, to go with Team USA in the Summer of 2008 to the Paralympic Games in Beijing, China.



Top Left: Amy Purdee getting ready for the Xtremity Games WakeBoarding Competition in 2008 (Photo by Krista Fagala)

Top Right: Some of the young athletes and coaches brought to the games, pictured after watching a volleyball match.



Bottom: Team USA Paralympic Swim Team for the 2008 Beijing Games. Last practice before we all headed over to Beijing. Krista pictured next to Head Coach Jimi Flowers, who passed away, the following year in a climbing accident in Colorado, leaving behind a wife and 2 children.

I knew I was up against some of the best of the best students applying for this chance of a lifetime internship. So, I went to our Sitting Volleyball Team on campus and asked if I could do some volunteer work for them. My responsibility was getting up at 0500 to volunteer shagging volleyballs. When I found out I was chosen for the internship, they said it was because I went the extra mile and volunteered with the team. For my work ethic, I credit my parents, who taught me to do honest, hard work while enjoying the process.

On my first day at the Training Center in Colorado Springs I found out that I shared an office with the Paralympic Swim Team Coach Jimmi. I told him I was a lifeguard and a swim team coach as well. I asked if I could shadow him during practices (this was outside of my internship hours). This led to getting to volunteer alongside one of the best coaches I have ever met. It meant 0430 wakeups and late night practices, and it was worth every moment.

I met some of the most amazing athletes like Melissa Stockwell, who lost her leg in a carside bombing while serving our Country. And Rudy Garcia-Tolson who lost both of his legs due to a birth defect. Erin Popovich who

is a little person with almost as many swimming medals as Michael Phelps. Stories of determination, hope and the difference they made in this world.

Working with the swim team was amazing. My parents came up from Kansas one day and I was able to get them into the swimming pool area. The pool is very hard to get into if you are not a coach or athlete because all the different Olympic and Paralympic Water athletes practice in there. And before you ask, yes, even Michael Phelps.

As they entered the swimming pool area, my parents watched the swimmers' grace and speed in awe. They said that they thought we would be watching the Paralympic Swim Team, not the Olympic Swim Team. I said, just wait a minute, and one by one, the athletes started getting out of the water and my parents were amazed to see the outstanding athletes hopped into wheelchairs, and were missing limbs.

"You would never know they were Paralympic swimmers by the way they swam and the times they were hitting," my dad commented.

For clarification, a Paralympic Athlete has a Physical Disability such as loss of a limb, or blindness. Olympic Athletes are able-bodied athletes with no physical or cog-



Top Left: Athletes and coaches pictured before climbing the Great Wall of China

Top Right: Kristi Fagala and the Water Cube

Bottom Left: The story of the boy who wanted to go to the top of the Great Wall of China

Bottom Right: Trent (coach that carried the boy to the top), the boy, his mom, another student and Krista Fagala.



nitive disability. Special Olympic athletes are those with a cognitive disability like Down Syndrome.

The Paralympic Games are two weeks after the Olympic Games, held in the same Country and Venue as the Olympic Games, for both Winter and Summer Games.

In 2008, Team USA traveled with the 25 physically disabled students (ages 10-18) and a few adaptive coaches in two groups to the Paralympic Games. I took the first group over and flew home with the second group. We took them to the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, athletic competitions like track and field, swimming, and wheelchair rugby, and to a few places around China such as the Great Wall, and Palaces.

I also worked with friends and families of the Paralympic Athletes to assist with accommodations and getting them to competitions to see their athletes compete.

One of the most impactful moments happened with

a student athlete who was in a wheelchair. The students we brought over all had physical disabilities and were used to hearing "no" or "you can't do that" due to their disability. One of our main goals was to show them that they could indeed do anything they set their mind to. This student athlete was in our second group and we went to the Great Wall of China, which is not very accessible to physically disabled students. We got him on the Wall and he pointed to the top of the hill and said, "I want to go there." Knowing there were steps and a very steep hill that was not accessible for a wheelchair, I was not sure how to make this happen.

One of the coaches said, "Krista, you carry the wheelchair and I will piggyback him all the way up."

So we did, and I will never forget the look on his face when I sat his wheelchair down and the coach set him down. It is a look that still brings tears to my eyes just



Left: Trent and Krista Fagala at the top of the Great Wall of China.

Right: Erin (another intern) and Krista Fagala at the Olympic Day the USOC puts on each year.

thinking about it. He threw his hand in the air and said "I did it." He did something the world told him he couldn't do and he was soaring.

Another impactful experience during this internship was when I was sent to the Extremity Games to promote the Paralympics and recruit athletes. The Extremity Games are like the XGames but for people with a physical disability. We had Wakeboarding, Motor Cross, Rock Climbing, and more. I met athletes like Amy Purdy, who lost both of her legs when she was a teenager and was wakeboarding like a pro (flips and everything). She went on to snowboard with Team USA, appeared on Dancing with the Stars, and wrote a book. Logan Aldrige was just a teenager when I first met him. He had lost his arm in a wakeboarding accident and was back on the water, back at it. He went on to assist CrossFit in starting an adaptive division at the CF Games, was a CF competitor at the 2022 Games and is currently working for One Peloton, encouraging others to have a healthy lifestyle.

I completely understand if you are reading this and feel like this is out of reach. It's not. If you have disabilities and are interested in sports, go look up these athletes: Rudy Garcia-Tolson, Melissa Stockwell, Erin Popovich, Amy Purdee and Logan Aldrige. Read their stories, watch them on TV, commercials, and YouTube. You'll see them on Dancing with the Stars, in IronMans around the world, on the slopes and in the water. They will show you anything is possible even if you only have one arm or your legs are prosthetic.

I remember the words of one of my bosses with USOC, he would say of the leg he lost in a truck accident, "It's just a paper cut." Meaning, don't let what life throws at you, whether it's physical or mental, hold you back from being

who you were designed to be. You and I have two choices, we can focus on what we can't control or we can focus on what we can control.

If you are a parent reading this, let your child do things on their own. You have to let them figure out how to do things on their own. Yes, help them and love them where they are at, but let them know it's okay to fail. I tell my students, I fail and mess up everyday, but that is how I learn. I learn through my failures and mess ups.

Let them try all the sports and activities and please don't tell them they can't. We hooked up sprinklers at both ends of the pool so our blind athletes knew where they were at before they hit the wall. Where there is a will, there is way, you just have to find it. I have seen so many disabled people do things I wouldn't even think possible. I have learned not to tell my students they can't and when a student says they can't, I ask them, "what word is after can't?" They reply, "I can't do it, yet."

If you teach children how to have a growth mindset, they will know it's okay to fail and to mess up, but through failures and mess ups we learn and we keep going and before we know it, we've achieved what we thought was not possible.

The experience working with these athletes is like none other; you meet people from around the world, each with their own story of what they overcame, both physically and mentally to get there. Most of our students who came had never traveled outside of their state, let alone overseas. The students went away with hope. Most people with a physical disability are told they won't be able to do most things and are often told no. This trip they got to experience the opposite. They were told yes, actually you can do that and lets figure out how.

Make Time to Travel

By Kimberly Kephart



Sunset in Greece,
Archaeological Site of Sounion

I have always been drawn to exploring, traveling, and searching, which often happens all at once, as seen in *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert. The story is about her journey across the world in her attempt to rediscover herself. While not all of us can travel in the way she did, we all always have the opportunity to step away from our routines and explore, to learn and discover something new. I can't overemphasize that travel is necessary for your well-being; travel can be healing, transformative, connect you with your roots, connect you with other cultures, teach you more about the other parts of the world, and change your perspective of the world and of world events.

In my childhood, I would get lost in the neighborhood and in the creek near our house. At that time in my life, travel was purposeful; I moved with my dad's jobs, I moved when my parents divorced, and then I moved for college and work. It was not until I met my husband, and we would go on road trips to explore new places or visit his family that I was able to indulge in travel as an experience of losing myself and finding myself simultaneously. Every experience was a journey of rediscovering my former self and reasserting who I am now.

When my husband was stationed in Poland, I was able to visit some places from my childhood and people, such as my godmother, who had known me when I was a child. There's something magical about

being with someone who knows your true self before you have been molded by life. It's like pushing a reset button.

Not all of my travels were to familiar places, and some trips, especially the solo trips, required me to embrace the unknown with courage and accept that I didn't know everything and couldn't be in control. In this military life, that's a really big thing because so often we feel out of control and sometimes the mission-first mentality makes us think we should just drive on and we forget to take care of ourselves. But you can do both at the same time.

Let me give you an example. I was in Gdansk Poland, waiting to board a flight to Iceland and at the same time, my husband was embarking on a deployment to Afghanistan. As I was waiting, I began questioning whether I should have stayed home, if I had properly prepared for the trip, and if everything would go well when I was there. I could have gotten lost in those thoughts, turned around and gone home. But instead I took a deep breath, reminded myself that this was a great opportunity and boarded the flight. That solo travel experience had a huge impact on me. And I had a great time. I ate my weight in skyr, Icelandic hotdogs and licorice. I saw the northern lights and ate fermented shark. That would not have happened if I had let my fears and reservations hold me back.

Another example is when I went on a road trip to Bosnia. At a point, I crossed the border into Dubrovnik and lost all cell service, which meant I did not have directions or a map. Instead of throwing in the towel, I took a deep breath and asked for help from a man at a tollbooth. He gave me directions to where I was headed and along the way, I stopped to enjoy one of the most beautiful views of the bay of Herceg Novi. It was a calming experience watching the boats come into the harbor.

Sometimes travel is hard, such as when I went to California and saw my mother on her deathbed. We had not seen each other for over thirty years at that point, but the time with her and time with my brother in Yosemite, provided a degree of healing and closure.



Brasov, Romania Rainbow

Previously, I admitted that I did not indulge in travel until adulthood and I use that word intentionally because when I was younger, travel was a luxury beyond my means and seemingly impractical because at times I was working three jobs to make ends meet, working to get myself through school and briefly living out of my car. Who had time for self-care and travel? You do. You just need to reframe "travel" to your reality. When I was a kid, traveling meant exploring the creek. When my husband and I were dating, traveling was going to a different city or state when we could afford to. In this season of my life, I understand travel can be a solo trip to a Les Mills Fitness Day in Warsaw, or stepping into a church or temple just down the road.

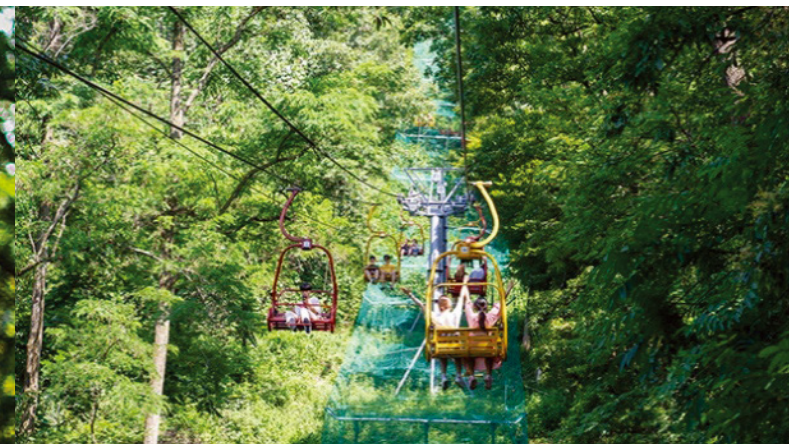
My husband and I arrived in South Korea during the pandemic when restrictions limited places we could visit. One day, my husband and I decided to get out of the house and visit Simboksa Temple, just outside of the Adams gate at USAG Humphreys. I loved exploring the temple and was captivated by the colors. As I was taking pictures, a young woman approached me and asked if she could teach my husband and I what the colors mean and how they give thanks to Buddha. We agreed and she and her mom guided us through the ritual, from lighting incense to the protestations. It was a wonderful cultural exchange, a unique way to be welcomed to a new country, and a memorable first lesson in Korean culture.

In summary, whatever travel means to you and is

within your budget, make time for it, for yourself. Make time to step away from your routine so you don't get caught up in the day to day, and let yourself be reminded that there is a whole world of experiences that can rejuvenate, teach and heal.



Picture of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina,
View from the Mosque and the historic bridge.



Mudeungsan Mt. National Park

Jeungsimsa Temple

The Jisan Recreational Area

The Asia Culture Center

Attractions and Cultural Heritage of Gwangju Dong-gu

By Kim Jeong-Chul

The city of Gwangju serves as a power plant for culture and arts in South Korea. The city is reinterpreting and developing tradition of Korea, as well as creating a new cultural trend. People all over the world simply enjoy and

blow off steam by visiting many tour sites in the city.

Mudeungsan Mountain National Park spreads over not only Gwangju, but also Damyang and Hwasun in Jeolla province. The mountain is 1,187m high and

regarded as a 'maternal mountain' for the citizens of Gwangju. The park has 61 scenic viewpoints, including columnar joints called Seoseokdae Rockface or Ipseokdae Rock Columns. It is also a natural habitat for 2,296 species of plants


and animals. It has several endangered species, including the Eurasian otter, Manchurian black water snake, leopard cat, yellow-throated marten, and so on.

Jeungsimsa Temple, the representative Buddhist temple in Gwangju Dong-gu, is located on the western foot of Mudeungsan Mountain. It was founded by Master Cheolgam in 860 (the 4th year of the reign of King Heonin of the Silla Dynasty). It offers a unique experience of learning about the spirit of asceticism and traditions of Korean Buddhism through the temple stay program. Visitors can live an ascetic life of Buddhist monks,

such as early morning service, Zen meditation, and barugongyang (Buddhist meal), tea ceremony, to name a few.

The Jisan Recreational Area is another attractive place for visitors in Gwangju Dong-gu. It is located at the foot of Hyangnobong Peak of Mudeungsan Mountain, which has an octagonal pavilion, an observatory overlooking the city of Gwangju. A thrilling lift car operates between the observatory and the Recreational Area. In the Area, visitors can also enjoy boat rides, honeymoon cars, a golf range, and assorted sports and entertainment facilities.

Located in Dong-gu, the Asia Culture Center is a landmark of Gwangju, known as the capital of culture. Replacing the former Jeollanam-do Provincial Office, it is a unique and beautiful place where visitors can enjoy various art exhibitions and performances in the heart of the city. It also has a grassy hill park with a size of a soccer field established on an artificial structure. At sunset, the park turns into a picnic spot where families and lovers come to enjoy chicken, pizza, and beer. The Asia Culture Center has many beautiful photo zones for visitors as well.



Spotlighting Charles Chong: A Hero in the USFK Community

By Robyn Connell and Caitlin Ward

The USFK community owes an enormous debt of gratitude to Charles Chong, CEO of Oriental Press, Inc. Publications like the one you're holding in your hands are tools that connect people and communities, allow us to share information to improve our day-to-day experiences and overall quality of life, and help build bridges of understanding between cultures. For over 37 years, through his company, Chong has facilitated the publication of these life changing publications and been a staunch supporter of spouse clubs.

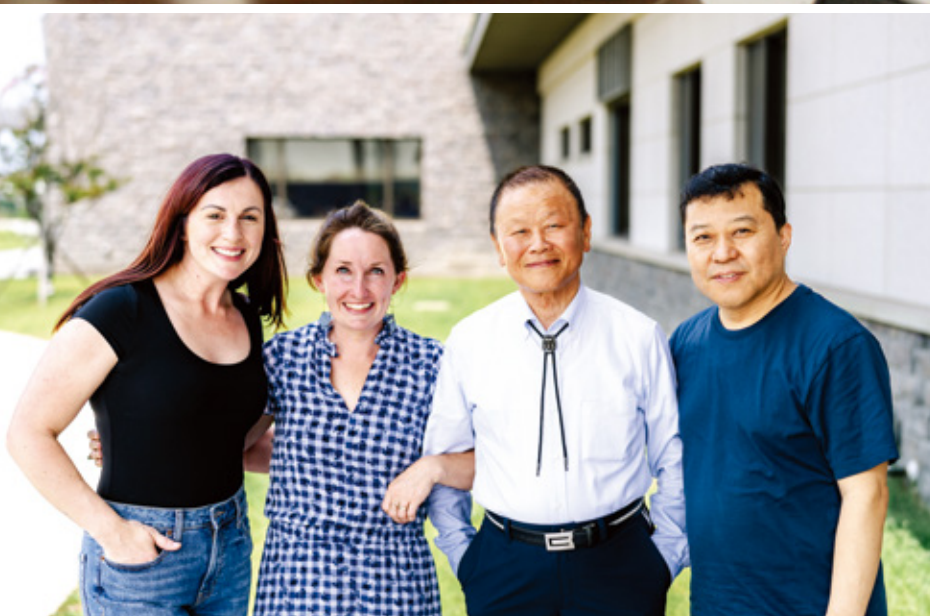
Especially if you are new to the peninsula, you should pick up the guidebook *DMZ to the Sea* that was created, and has been updated and revised by spouses since 1984. The original guidebook, *Seoul Survivor*, was created by Judy Bridenbaugh in 1984. When the spouse club at Yongsan closed its doors, the spouse club at Humphreys took over the publication, renaming it *DMZ to the Sea*. What began as typewriter pamphlets is now a robust guidebook that will save you when you are lost and need answers or reassurance.

As Editor for the 2023-2024 edition of *DMZ to the Sea*, I took the opportunity to feature Chong in the section of the



guidebook dedicated to Korean War Veterans. Chong did not fight in the Korean War, at the time he was a six-year-old boy. Born in Seodaemun (West Seoul) in 1944, Chong was the sixth of nine children. He served in the Korean Army from 1965-1968 with 1st ROK Army at the airfield on Camp Long. After complet-

ing his mandatory service, he attempted to join the U.S. Army, but did not meet the height requirements. In 1984, he followed his older brother who had immigrated to the United States, and incrementally invited and sponsored his siblings. By 1987, Mr. Chong had earned enough to return to Korea where he



With Erin Henderson, Caitlin Ward and Eric Park

founded Oriental Press and since then, has been diligently serving as the owner and operator.

"As a child, I witnessed the actual battle between the U.S. and North Korean troops in front of my house, and I saw the terrible sight of the corpses of the People's Army at a young age of six," said Chong. "My father's words, 'Don't forget the spirit of sacrifice and dedication of the U.S. military,' have continuously guided me.

"I did everything I could to create and supply military community media, which I believe is a very important theme and a necessary part of the U.S. military. I have always believed that the valuable sacrifice of young Americans and the help of the U.S. are essential—during the Korean War and since then, many young people from the U.S. have been a pillar of Korea's security and liberal democratic values on this land, and this is why I must continue moving forward harder, and embrace what my father always said."

For the past 37 years, Chong has printed publications for the U.S. military community, including the Mig Alley Flyer (the Command Information Newsletter of Osan Air Base in 1986), five newspapers and two magazines. Over the past 37 years, he has managed fourteen contracts with the U.S. government. He has also published books annually in support of spouse organizations including *DMZ to the Sea*, *Seoul Survivor*, and *Outside the Gate*—Osan Spouses.

Magazines published by Oriental Press include the discontinued *Pulse 65* magazine, and the newer *United on the RoK*. Because there were 235 display racks for *Pulse 65* magazine, Chong was looking for a new publication that would give him the opportunity to continue supporting the USFK military community, but he could not find an interested organization. He approached Caitlin Ward, who he had known and worked with through the Humphreys United Club, and asked her if she was interested in creating a community newspaper for spouses.

Sharing his appreciation for the impact of publications on individual wellbeing and community building, Ward took on the opportunity. She proposed a USFK-wide magazine that would be inclusive of the whole USFK community instead of a specific demographic. He kindly replied, "I follow you." From there, Ward reached out to various contacts across USFK communities and created the first issue of the USFK-wide publication. She presented the issue and concept at a Garrison Town Hall meeting and received approval from the Garrison Command teams for its publication and distribution.

In supporting Ward's initiative and the product she developed, Chong displayed again his enduring support for the USFK community.

Chong values the important role of *United on the RoK* as a link between Korean society and culture and the U.S. military and family society. He prints the



magazine on high-quality paper and distributes the publication throughout the USFK region. He proudly publishes and distributes the magazine to honor his father's wishes, and to provide free media service to the U.S. military community.

Mr. Chong says he treasures "the traces of his past"—the 37 years of USFK he has documented in his work, and through artifacts in his warehouse.

"While I'm very proud that I've silently walked my path, I wonder if others would regard me

as foolish," said Chong. "They ask, should he not have spent his money and his time on himself, rather than the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen and their families? Even now, there are 20 million of our compatriots in North Korea who hate a world without hunger and freedom, which is why my father left me with the understanding early on, of how grateful the role of the U.S. military is to South Korea. I will continue on this path until my physical strength shows me otherwise."

This man and his company are



With Caitlin Ward, Editor-in-Chief of *United on the RoK*

an important part of USFK-ROK history. For 37 years, he has given of himself to publish the resource guide that is currently *DMZ to the Sea* and now *United on the RoK* as well, without collecting one penny for his efforts. Again, he not only publishes it for free, but he also delivers copies to all installations

across the entire peninsula. He's getting older, but as long as his health allows him, he will continue to do his life's work.

If you pick up a copy of the guidebook, or you already have one, take a moment to reflect on the man behind the publication who is dedicated to the ROK-US alliance.



With Robyn Connell, Editor of *DMZ to the Sea*

Oriental Press has published the following newspapers (No Cost, U.S. Government Contracts):

- The Mig Alley Flyer Weekly**
February 1987 – February 1990
- The Mig Alley Flyer Weekly**
February 1991 September 1996
- Seoul Word Weekly**
June 1992 – March 1997
- Southern Star Weekly**
May 1994 – October 2002
- Morning Calm Weekly**
October 2002 – March 2014
- Morning Calm Bi-Weekly**
April 2014 – March 2017
- Crimson Sky Bi-Weekly**
September 2009 – Present

Total newspaper circulation by Oriental Press over the past 37 years is 17,961,000 copies! The newspaper printing plate size is 27.5 cm wide and 39.5 cm long. If you line up 17,961,000 copies issued at 39.5 cm in length, the total is 7,094,595 kilometers. The circumference of the earth is about 40,120 km. Therefore, when the newspapers published by Oriental Press for 37 years are placed end-to-end, it is about 7,094,595 km, which is about 177 times around the Earth—how is that for connecting communities?

The annual publications of *Outside the Gate*, *Seoul Survivor* and *DMZ to the Sea* total 146,500 copies. They are hard to get your hands on because the invaluable resource is quickly snatched off the racks.

ESSENTIAL SHOPS

Welcome to Korea! To help you get settled, here are some recommendations from people in your community on the best shops for essentials, the top apps in Korea, and tips to find great deals.

Reach out to *United on the RoK* if you have more suggestions!

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Daiso - for household goods
- NMart - for fresh produce
- Modern House - for home goods
- Costco - for stuff in bulk
- Olive Young - for skin care products
- Panda Mart - for household goods
- EMart - for groceries & household goods
- No Brand - for groceries
- Happy Quilt - for fabrics

RECOMMENDED APPS

- KakaoTalk - for messaging
- Naver Map - for directions
- KORAILTALK - for train tickets
- Kakao T - for taxi hailing
- Coupang - for online shopping
- Naver - search engine
- WAUG - for booking activities
- 1330 Korean Travel Hotline - for questions
- Papago - for translations
- Shuttle Delivery - for ordering food
- AirVisual - for air quality report

FOR GREAT DEALS

- Check out the thrift shop at the post nearest you: Osan Thrift Shop, Humphreys Thrift Shop, Daegu Apple Tree Gift & Thrift Shop, Second Hand Rose Thrift Shop (Yongsan)
- Ask about support organizations off base, such as Morning Calm Ministries outside Yoon Gate at Humphreys, which has clothing, kitchen items, and household goods. Contact Bobby McKnight @ 010-8015-2027 to arrange a time to pick up what you need.
- While you're there, Chris' Furniture is across the street. He has a wide inventory of household and office furniture at a reasonable price, with delivery service. Check him out on Facebook @chrisfurnituregallery
- Facebook is another great resource. Check out the Buy/Sell page for your area or the Giving page.
- Also check out thrift shops, street markets and farmers markets off base for great finds!

Seoul Hiking Tourism Center: A Hidden Resource for Hikers and Adventure Seekers

By Kimberly Kephart



Seoul is surrounded by various mountains including Bukhansan, Inwangsan and Bugaksan. These mountains draw people in for a variety of reasons. I hope for some, it is to see Seoul from a different perspective. I love hiking in Korea, but sometimes I have trouble navigating the rough landscape. Nevertheless, I am always motivated to reach the beautiful view at the peak of the mountain, especially at dawn, midday or sunset.

Romanticism aside, I have a love-hate relationship with Bukhansan and its various peaks: Baekundae, 836.5 m (2,744 ft); Insubong, 810.5 m (2,659 ft); and



Mangnyeongdae, 799.5 m (2,623 ft). The arduous treks dredge up the worst emotions in me. However, there is a jewel that provides some relief.

At the foot of Bukhansan lies a hidden resource, the Seoul Hiking Tourism Center. I was introduced to this wonderful place through one of the challenges that was part of the Seoul 7 Peaks Hiking Challenge program hosted by a well-known organization, Climbing in Korea. One of the challenges kicked off from the Seoul Hiking Tourism Center and I was quite simply floored away when I walked in. Not only was the hospitality amazing but all of the information in regard to hiking around Seoul was in one place, they offer a rental service for hiking gear and they offer free programs.

The center is easy to get to; you can drive up to Seoul and there is a parking lot just down the street from the center. If driving is not your cup of tea, you can take a train from your closest station to Seoul Station. Once there, you switch over to the Ui-Sinseol

Line (it's the lime green line) and head to Bukhansan Ui Station—it is the last stop on the line. If this sounds intimidating, grab a friend.

From Bukhansan Ui Station, turn left and about five minutes down the road lined with restaurants, convenience stores, food stalls that sell Gimbap, and coffee shops (no doubt to fuel and energize hikers for their trek), you'll end up at the Seoul Hiking Tourism Center. It is in the same building as Black Yak, one of the leading Korean clothing brands for hiking and outdoor recreation. Head to the fifth floor, and you will be greeted by their kind staff, rental services, and all the resources you could need for a hike into Bukhansan.

Renting hiking gear is an easy process, and you can reserve in advance through their website, at least 48 hours ahead of time. Rentable items include hiking shoes, gloves, trekking poles, crampons, jackets, shirts and pants. At the time of writing this, prices ranged from 1,100 won to 2,200 won. A whole outfit plus



trekking poles and gloves cost about 7,700 won for the day (about \$6.00 USD). The shop has a shoe conversion chart and staff will be more than willing to go the extra mile to assist you. When I was at the shop, hikers were walking in and being taken care of on the spot. The gear is quality, well constructed, attractive and on trend (hey, sometimes people like to make hiking a fashion show).

Their wide variety of brochures covered a range of topics including Accessible Tourism, Market Tours and Wellness Stays in Seoul. They also provide comprehensive guides of walks and hikes in various languages. The center also has a storage area for tourists on layovers who have luggage or any guests who brought too much and want to lighten their bags lighter.

Seoul Hiking Tourism center also offers guided hikes, the dates of these guided hikes are updated frequently on their Instagram page. The center also offers free programs for tourists, expats and service members such as a kimbap rolling and pine forest stroll.

My husband and I signed up for a program through Instagram and received the details the day before the program was set to start. After a brief check in, all of the participants got to know one another. There were people from various countries including Kazakhstan, China, and the U.S. From there, we headed to a restaurant next

door named 술이 익는 마을.

The owner of the restaurant greeted us and we were able to learn about rolling kimbap. She gave us a quick rundown in Korean while our guide translated. It was pretty amazing to be invited in and taught how to make a popular Korean dish. We were provided a plate full of items to stuff the kimbap, like fishcake, carrots, sweet radish, crabcake, ham and more. We were invited to roll as many as we wanted and to put as many pieces in a complimentary lunch box we were provided. While we rolled and stuffed the kimbap, the chef and owner provided pointers. My husband won accolades for the way he rolled and cut the kimbap with precision. Myself, on the other hand, that is another story.

As we were rolling the kimbap, a storm rolled in, so the stroll through the pine forest was called off. The event hosts had back up plans; they brought us back to the center where we competed in a few games for prizes. Before we left, we were presented with an assortment of goodies including socks, guides, a plant kit, a sweat towel, a bamboo toothbrush, a keychain and some yummy Korean snacks. It was quite a way to top off the day!

About the Author

Kimberly is a Center Operations Specialist at USO Osan who enjoys traveling, random adventures, time on her onewheel, and hanging out with her dogs and husband. You can find her on Instagram, where she creates reels, travel content and is trying to figure out the world of photography and SEO.

Instagram: Kimberly_kp_

Seoul Hiking Tourism

- Hours of Operation: 0900-1800
- Phone number: 1533-2608
- Instagram: seoulhikingtourism_official
- Website for Information & Reservations: www.seoulhiking.or.kr

For Hiking meetups check out Climbing in Korea on Instagram: [climbinginkorea](https://www.instagram.com/climbinginkorea)

Climbing in Korea offers great events on their Meetup.com. If you want to meet like minded individuals and explore Seoul, this is a great way to meet up with individuals from different backgrounds while hiking in the capital!

Olive Young Sunscreens

Written & Photographed by Erin Henderson

1. ROUND A'ROUND Greentea Cica Watery Sun Cream 1+1 Special Set: \$25
2. ROUND A'ROUND Greentea Cica Mild Sun Stick 1+1 Double Pack: \$32
3. AHC Natural Perfect Fresh Sun Stick: \$14
4. Dr. G Red Blemish Soothing Up Sun Special Set: \$28
5. TOCOBO Cotton Soft Sun Stick (not pictured): \$19



1



2



3



4



Jazz Artist Gilad Hekselman

By Caitlin Ward

Gilad Hekselman (Hebrew: גילדא הֶכְסֵלמָן; born 1983) is an Israeli-born, jazz guitarist based in New York City. Hekselman studied classical piano from age six and took up playing the guitar at age nine. From age 11 to 14, he performed with a band on a weekly children's show in Israel.

For high school, Hekselman attended the renowned and prestigious Thelma Yellin School of Arts in Israel, graduating from the jazz department at age 18.

"I started out as a rock player and got into improvised music, the ability to improvise over songs, but

I couldn't do it in a very advanced way," Hekselman explained of his chosen music genre. "I always heard people say that jazz is the most advanced genre to improvise. I got into fusions like jazz, influenced rock music, and started to get into more advanced rhythm and harmony, but it was only when I went to high school that I was exposed to real, old school jazz. They had a great jazz program there and that's how I learned everything I know about jazz, or at least the basic things about jazz."

He received the America-Israel Cultural Foundation Scholarship to study abroad at The New School

in New York where he moved in 2004.

Soon after arriving in New York City, Hekselman was sharing the stage with some of the city's top jazz artists including Chris Potter, Mark Turner, John Scofield, Anat Cohen, Ari Hoenig, Esperanza Spalding, Sam Yahel, Jeff Ballard, Gretchen Parlato, Avishai Cohen, Jeff 'Tain' Watts, Tigran Hamasyan, Aaron Parks and Greg Hutchinson.

"It was a dream of mine to move from Israel to New York City for many years, so the move was very natural," said Hekselman. "I knew a lot of the musicians in town so that made the transition smooth

and early on, I had a good amount of work. I was able to get on the scene, do my thing, and I had a pretty normal transition with the normal ups and downs of life"

Hekselman completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in performing arts in 2008. During his studies, he won the 2005 Gibson Montreux International Guitar Competition and opened for guitar legend Paco de Lucia at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2006, which led to a string of performances at the International Association for Jazz Education Conference and at Dizzy's Club in New York.

His debut album *SplitLife* (Smalls Records), recorded with bassist Joe Martin and drummer Ari Hoenig, was released in 2006. That album as well as his second album—*Words Unspoken* (LateSet Records), recorded and released in 2008 with Joe Martin, drummer Marcus Gilmore and tenor saxophonist Joel Frahm—received rave reviews from the press.

"The most impactful part of performing is playing with the people I get to play with," said Hekselman. "All the people I get to play with like Ari Hoenig, Mark Turner or Marcus Gilmore have a great impact on me. There are so many musicians I've played with over the years, who influence me a lot. Being on stage with them, and sharing notes with them, it's extremely powerful. The ones I named are true masters, as well as many others I've played with like Billy Hart. So many. You get transformed just by playing with them if you keep your ears open."

In addition to Dizzy's Club, Hekselman has played at all the major jazz clubs in New York including the Blue Note, The Jazz Standard, and Smalls.



"I like sophisticated stuff, when music can create a feeling. I don't like when music is only two dimensional, like it's only intellectual, or only about rocking really hard, or all the way on one thing at the expense of emotion, or expressing something in the human condition."
— Gilad Hekselman

"My most memorable performance, the first one that comes to mind, was my first time playing at the Vanguard with my own band," Hekselman recalled. "It was a residency of a week and that club is basically every jazz musician's dream to play in and I got to play it there for the first time with my band in 2019. I had played there before with Ben Wendell's band.

"That room is very special because all of my heroes played in the room like John Coltrane,

Monk, Bill Evans, Miles Davis, you name it. There's this feeling of duty, even more than usual, where you feel like you have to carry the torch, continue the legacy and be at a certain level. You also feel an energy in the room. Some call it the ghosts in the walls at the Vanguard Village. It's a special experience for a jazz musician to play on that stage. It was very memorable for me."

Hekselman has released ten critically-acclaimed records as a band-leader. He is constantly touring world-wide, has played most major jazz festivals, and has played in Korea three times, most recently in May 2023.

"Korean audiences are one of my favorite audiences because there's a feeling of being appreciated and listened to very carefully," Hekselman described. "But also the audience is not so reserved, so if they like something, they'll shout and clap after shows. They feel involved, and they want to talk to you after the show. It's the best combination of a lot of appreciation to the artists, and not being too reserved or timid."

Mount Everest: The Trek of a Lifetime

By Nicole Spitzack, CrossFit Osan Affiliate Manager,
Nutrition Therapist & World Traveller



*Mighty Everest. An adventure I never
dreamed possible but as I began to plan for
this trip it came to life faster and better than
I imagined.*





Upon

moving to South Korea I knew that I wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to travel and explore as much of Asia as possible. Logistically, it is just easier to visit these places when you live on this side of the world.

People tackle the Everest Base Camp trek for a variety of reasons such as adventure, adventure, bucket list, solace, spiritual journey, or maybe just for fun. For me, travel is important because it affords me the opportunity to make deep connections with other cultures and with the world around us. I travel to embrace a world apart from ourselves, to separate from the everyday ordinary routines, and to dive into the way other parts of the world experience life.

Everest was something I needed to do. Alone.



The struggle, the power of accomplishment, and the elation that you have at the end of each day is like none other. It's a mental, emotional and physical challenge that pushed me to my limits and left me wanting more. The moments I spent in those mountains will be with me my entire life. Seeing Everest for the first time... I mean there just are not words for what that feels like.

My Twelve Week Training Schedule:

- Monday—Saturday one hour of Cross-Fit Training
- Tuesday & Thursday—45 Mins of Weighted Vest Box Step Ups or Climbing Flights of Stairs
- Monday & Friday—three mile run intervals or long hike
- Sunday—rest day

Nepal now requires Trekkers to hire a Guide for the Everest Base Camp Trek as well as for most other hikes in the area. It goes without saying that the terrain is dangerous and the altitude heightens that reality. After much research, I opted to hire a guide through Nepal Trek Adventures company based on the five star reviews I read online and it was the best decision. As a solo female trekker, it can be intimidating to do a trek like this, far from home and alone. My guide Shiva gave me so much confidence and guidance along our journey together. He educated me about Nepali culture, tradition and history, and there was so much amazing Nepali food. He also helped to ensure I was safe, stayed on course, had plenty of water along the way, and had everything I needed before retiring each evening.

When choosing a trekking company, the details are everything. How people treat their people matters so much. Prior to the trip I spoke to the owner of Nepal Trek Adventures, Binod Sapkota, as many times as I needed to. Asking questions about what to pack and what to expect. Binod assured me that I would be well taken care of and happily





answered all of my questions. He personally greeted me on my first day and took a group of us to dinner on my final day out of Nepal. Even after my trek was over, he assisted me in hiring drivers and guides to take me to temples, restaurants or anywhere I desired to go. He handled my flights, and dealt with weather delays so I never had to worry or wonder. He was always one step ahead and took care of things. The attention to detail in his relationships are known around all of Nepal. Everywhere I went, everyone seemed to know Binod.

There are many options when considering the Everest Base Camp Trek. The following route is the one I chose. You must be sure to account for weather reports in planning your trip and be flexible as weather changes quite dramatically in the Himalayas.

- Fly direct from Seoul to Kathmandu (six hours)
- Stay one night @ Nepali Ghar Hotel
- Begin Trek first thing next morning
- Helicopter flight from Kathmandu to Lukla
- Trek from Lukla to Phadking
- Stay in Tea House overnight
- Trek from Phadking to Namche Bazaar
- Stay in Tea House
- Acclimate for one to two nights here; day treks around area
- Trek from Namche Bazaar to Everest View Hotel
- Trek or Heli from Hotel to Everest Base Camp
- Trek back down to Lukla or Heli to Lukla
- Helicopter to Kathmandu

Follow me on IG @nicolespitzack

Everest Base Camp Trek
<https://www.nepaltrekadventures.com/>

Binod Sapkota - General Secretary of TAAN;
Owner of Nepal Trek Adventures. Eighteen years experience in Nepalese tourism. Binod started as a trekking porter and then became a guide prior to starting his own company in 2006.



Pickled Garlic

By Kim Jung-kook

Now is the season to make pickled garlic, a stored side dish in Korea. There are two types of garlic, field garlic and non-field garlic. The garlic that comes out now is field garlic, which is soft and not spicy, so it's good to make pickled vegetables.

First, purchase garlic with a lot of garlic cloves. Then, peel off the root and outer skin of garlic and rinse it through running water. Next to remove the spiciness from the garlic, pour 2 liters of water and 700 milliliters of brown rice vinegar into a bottle, based on 50 garlic cloves, and add the garlic to the bottle.

After a week of storage, pour 200 milliliters of soy sauce, 600 milliliters of sugar, and 60 milliliters of salt into a pot. Boil the contents and then put it in the bottle right away. When the contents cool down, put the bottle in the refrigerator and store it for a week. After a week, put 200 milliliters of soy sauce into a pot, boil it, and when it cools down, put it into the bottle. Now the garlic bottle can be put into the refrigerator again and taken out when you would like to add it to a dish. Pickled garlic is a great complement to meat or greasy food.



FALL MENU

AVAILABLE STARTING AUGUST 1ST

CUPCAKES

\$4 each, Half dozen \$24, Dozen \$42
Topped with vanilla buttercream

Pumpkin Spice	Sweet Potato Pie
Cinnamon Churro	Caramel apple
Spice Cake	

MUFFINS

\$4 EACH

Pumpkin Cream cheese (Starbucks copycat)	Pumpkin streusel with pumpkin drizzle
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PIES

Pumpkin \$22
Pecan \$25
Pumpkin Pecan \$25
Sweet Potato \$25

COOKIES

\$25 A DOZEN

Pumpkin Spice
Pumpkin Chocolate Chip
Pumpkin Snickerdoodles
Apple Pie
Pumpkin Sugar

Wanna eat my cake?

AMBER.GRIFF

EST. 2021

AMBER GRIFFITH
Sweets & Treats

Battle Trauma, War Ghosts and the Phoenix Nation

By Andrew Salmon

Washington did not win the Korean War, but its long-term commitment to Seoul enabled the 20th century's greatest national success story.

Pre-dawn, Jan. 3, 1951. Northwest of Seoul.

Private David Strachan crouched, shivering, in a frosted fox hole carved into a hillside. Ahead, a gray half-light illuminated the rugged snowfields to his front. The forward sentry of his brigade, Strachan was the tip of the UN Command's spear.

Chinese forces had stormed across the frozen Imjin River in the early hours of Dec. 1. Their "New Year's Offensive" had pushed all before it. As the UN Command's strategic reserve, the UK's 29th Infantry Brigade – Strachan's unit – was rushed into position to cover the strategic road entering Seoul from the northwest. Nothing lay between him and the advancing enemy.

A Chinese soldier stood up directly to Strachan's front – so close that his rifle muzzle touched the enemy's chest. He squeezed the trigger. The Chinese reconnaissance soldier shuddered from the impact – then, shot through, tumbled on top of Strachan.

Strachan thrust him off just as the hillside below his position stood, roared and surged upward. This was the "human wave," in dawn attack.

All day, battle was a blur. Close melee combat; air strikes; a counter attack with tanks and bayonets. As the winter day waned, urgent orders came: pull back!

Breaking contact, the rearguard rattled through Seoul in U.S. trucks, heading for the Han bridge. Lurid red clouds reflected blazes as dumps were fired. Crowds of refugees, bundled against the chill, stumbled across Han's ice.

The following day – "The Jan. 4 Retreat" – remains the most traumatic date in South Korean history.

Strachan's numbed mind was on the man he had killed. Throughout the battle, the young soldier had lain dying, his uniform dusted with snow, helplessly choking on blood from ruptured lungs.

Strachan had no idea that, decades later, he would again encounter the Chinese soldier he had killed.



Stalelated War, Victorious Peace

Korea was the second of the three major wars America fought in 20th century Asia. Their outcomes display a deterioration in Washington's political-military fortunes.

Imperial Japan unconditionally surrendered in 1945. The Korean War ended with an armistice in 1953. South Vietnam fell to Communist North Vietnam in 1975.

Some believe the rot set in in Korea. The agonized war-time efforts of Americans, South Koreans and their allies – 16 nations, including my country, the UK, fought in the United Nations Command - were not enough for victory.

Consequences linger. A defiant North Korea cast a long, nuclear shadow over the region. America never again disarmed after Korea: The military-industrial complex became permanent.

But if the UN Command did not win the war, the South Korean people won the peace.

In August 1953, a bilateral Mutual Defense Treaty, that included the ongoing stationing of U.S. troops in Korea, was signed. That bound the U.S. to a long-term commitment, but 1950s Korea was a basket case.

That would change. In the 1960s, Seoul, leveraging Japanese war reparations and US payments for Korea's Vietnam deployment invested brilliantly, creating infrastructure and heavy industry.

With access to the US-led global trade system, Korea sold across the non-communist world. "Most-favored nation" status granted Korean exporters entry to the world's richest market. Seoul's economy soared. Borrowing a West Germany phrase ("The Miracle on the Rhine"), Koreans branded it "The Miracle on the Han."

Prosperity birthed a middle class – which began demanding representative leadership. In 1987, after years of often-bloody protests, Seoul's authoritarian government caved. One-man, one-vote elections took place.

In three decades, Koreans engineered an economic and a political miracle. Today, they are engaged in a social miracle – a transition away from conservative attitudes toward a liberal world view close to that prevailing in North America and Western Europe. They enjoy the full gamut of freedoms – of expression, association, movement.

The country, now a G10 economy, has membership in multiple international organizations, while its film, TV and pop is admired globally. Its brands are hits among consumers of everything from smartphones to supertankers, and Korea is a critical node in the global value chain in products including memory chips and EV batteries.

As an Englishman, I am sometimes critical of America. But Korea's rise from the ashes of war argues powerfully for the excellence of the U.S.-led global system that, in the 1990s, won the Cold War as European communism imploded.

Granted, during that long struggle, Washington allied itself with dubious regimes in Buenos Aires, Madrid, Santiago, Saigon, Seoul, Taipei. But all - bar overthrown Saigon – have since transitioned to democracies.

The nations that fought against have fared less well.

China grew rich after adopting capitalist economic practices, but politically, remains a one-party, communist state, regarded with suspicion by multiple neighbors.

North Korea, led by a third-generation, ultra-nationalist, militarist neo-monarchy, is arguably the world's most insulated state. Its people are bereft of rights and racked by poverty, for Pyongyang sacrifices its economy on the altar of atomic militarism.

The Haunted Soldier

Strachan survived Korea, but like many veterans, remained haunted. Literally.

Decades later, retired, he was sleeping in his home in England. Unconsciously sensing menace in the early hours, he jerked awake.

A figure was sitting at the foot of his bed.

As his eyes adjusted, he made out the Chinese soldier he had killed: the frosted uniform, the bleeding chest. It stared silently. Dawn broke. The ghost evaporated. But night after night, it returned.

Strachan saw doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists,



priests. None helped; he was suffering extreme PTSD. Finally, a fellow veteran urged him to revisit Korea.

It was the early 1980s. He shook as he exited the aircraft, but boarding an express bus, was astonished. Once-barren hills shimmered green. Dust tracks had been paved with multi-lane highways. Apartment complexes had replaced thatch cottages.

In his hotel, while unpacking, he broke his belt. In the hotel gift shop, he chose a new belt, and took it to the counter. There, the elderly shop keeper refused payment, insisting it was a gift to a veteran.

Stunned by that kindness, Strachan broke down. But a great weight lifted: He realized that the hellish carnage of the '50s had been justified.

Change was permanent. Never again, would his ghost appear.

2023 marks the 70th anniversary of the 1953 armistice. Reader: Should you encounter one of that dwindling band of Korean War veterans this year, shake his hand.

He did not create today's South Korea, but he held the line when its existence hung by a thread. That fight was the first stage of the zero-to-hero process that would later birth this phoenix nation.

Seoul-based Brit Andrew Salmon is Asia Editor of The Washington Times. He is also the author of Korean War combat histories To the Last Round and Scorched Earth, Black Snow.

Seizure First Aid

How to help someone having a seizure

1

STAY with the person until they are awake and alert after the seizure.

- ✓ **Time** the seizure ✓ Remain **calm**
- ✓ Check for **medical ID**



2

Keep the person **SAFE**.

- ✓ Move or guide away from **harm**



3

Turn the person onto their **SIDE** if they are not awake and aware.

- ✓ Keep **airway clear**
- ✓ **Loosen tight clothes** around neck
- ✓ Put **something small and soft** under the head



Call
911
if...

- ▶ Seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- ▶ Person does not return to their usual state
- ▶ Person is injured, pregnant, or sick
- ▶ Repeated seizures
- ▶ First time seizure
- ▶ Difficulty breathing
- ▶ Seizure occurs in water

Do
NOT

- ✗ Do **NOT** restrain.
- ✗ Do **NOT** put any objects in their mouth.
- ✓ **Rescue medicines can be given** if prescribed by a health care professional

Learn more: epilepsy.com/firstaid



epilepsy.com

24/7 Helpline: 1-800-332-1000

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Seizure First Aid

뇌전증 발작이 발생했을 때의 응급수칙

1

함께 발작이 멈추고 완전히 깨어날 때까지 곁에 머무른다

- 침착함을 유지하며 발작 시간을 재세요
- Medical ID를 확인하세요



2

안전하게 주변에 위험한 물건을 멀리 치워줍니다



3

옆으로 의식이 없을 경우 옆으로 돌아눕혀줍니다

- 기도가 막히지 않게 하고, 부드러운 것으로 머리를 받쳐주며 꼭 끼는 옷은 목 주변을 헐겁게 해주세요



Call
911
if...

- ▶ 발작이 5분 이상, 혹은 반복 될 때
- ▶ 평소 상태로 회복되지 않을 때
- ▶ 부상을 당했거나, 임신 중 또는 병에 걸렸을 때
- ▶ 생전 처음의 발작일 경우
- ▶ 호흡곤란이 있을 때
- ▶ 물 속에서 발작이 일어났을 때

Do
NOT

- ✗ 압박하지 마세요
- ✗ 입안에 아무것도 넣지 마세요
- 의사의 처방에 따른 응급약을 줄 수 있습니다



Learn more: epilepsy.com/firstaid



END EPILEPSY



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Dreams of Korea

By Christy Tremblay

This time around - in 2019, I was with my family, and we lived in Red Cloud Circle on Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek. It felt like coming home.

I am an artist and art has always been a part of me. I can't remember not wanting to do art. One of the ways I express my world is through the artwork I make. When you experience my art you see a glimpse of the world through my eyes, and this includes my personal perspective on memory, emotion, place and hope. As a military family, we move often. My art keeps me grounded and is inspired by the places I live.

During my time in Korea, I loved visiting the temples, and they became an inspiration in my art. I always noticed how beautiful the light was around and on the temples. It was breathtakingly beautiful. It's as though the temple monks knew I was coming and magically made it a perfect display just for me. The traditional coloring found on the wooden temple buildings and artifacts are known as Dancheong. These colorings are used in the style and decoration, and can be seen on ancient murals from the Goguryeo Kingdom. I was drawn to the vibrant color combinations of bright pink, blue-green, purple, and yellow, and incorporated this color palette in my paintings.

Throughout my years of living in Korea, I soaked in as much of the scenery and unique beauty, so that I could use it as inspiration in future artworks. Along with daily painting and roof tile artwork, I also created several large commissions of Korea-inspired paintings, a new ornament collection, a series of painted kimchi pots (Korean pottery,) a pear blossom canvas series (featured at a local farmers/art market) and numerous other custom pieces of art.

Being so in love with the temples, I can definitely say that these were my main inspiration, along with lotus, cherry and pear blossoms, mountains, traditional dress materials, and the many different color combinations found in the pottery and landscapes; the inspiration was plentiful. I found ornate roof tiles in various antique shops and painted colorful abstract temple and floral scenes. These became unique keepsakes for collectors to remember their time in Korea.

I was also fortunate to have been selected to participate in an art exhibition titled, "Manchun: Wake Up The Spring Within Me." The purpose was to help people overcome "corona blues" and by sharing art that expressed the happiest times in your life. The art show was in Pyeongtaek city at the City Hall in the spring of 2021. There were local artists and international artists.

My artwork, "Dreams of Korea" is a mixed media painting on canvas and depicts my love for Korea and its beauty, especially in the springtime. The following describes my inspiration for this piece:

"If I were to dream of Korea, this is what I would see. My first Korean experience was in 1997. I lived and taught English for one year in Pyeongtaek City. Coming back to Korea (for my husband's job at Camp Humphreys) twenty-four years later, my impressions remained untouched."

I am a mixed media artist, using many different types of materials and mediums to make my artwork.

It was such an exciting adventure in Korea, searching for art supplies, unique pieces to paint on (such as roof tiles and kimchi pots) and exploring Insa-dong, my favorite neighborhood in Seoul. Insadong is crammed full of little shops hidden throughout alleyways, housing unique art supplies such as paint brushes, mulberry paper (hanji), canvases, and local artists' artwork. Historically, it was the largest market for artwork and antiques in Korea.

My favorite local art shop called Dream Depot in Paengseong (near Camp Humphreys) was a shop



where I could find many acrylic paint colors, canvases and papers. I loved shopping in this quaint second story store and always wished that I could have a conversation with the store clerk. She was usually there on my visits and was always so helpful. I loved how she would gently wrap my hanji papers, rolling them so carefully and tying a ribbon around to secure them.

If I was up for an adventure and a stop for lunch



for some of the best dumplings in Korea, I would jump on the train and head to Seoul to shop at the Alpha Art Store in Namdaemun-ro. Alpha shop is a dream for artists! There I could find a huge selection of affordable art supplies from all over the world. The fun would begin as soon as I entered the door

- seeing all of the choices of unique art supplies awaiting me. And it continued on the train ride home carrying my bags stuffed full of newly chosen tubes of cherry blossom palette colors, temple blues, and pear blossom whites. Sometimes I could find a spare seat to cram a canvas on, but usually I

would have to awkwardly hold it or stand in the train connector section with my treasures in tow. It didn't seem to matter to me if I was uncomfortable standing for the one hour trip back to Pyeogtaek station - my thoughts were always dancing with highlights of the day spent in Seoul amongst culture, art, markets, coffee shops and historical sites. These magical adventures carried me through the week until another train ride could be had.

As I reflect back on 2021, I recall my family's adventurous and beautiful time while living in South Korea, along with our many changes since moving back to the U.S. We left Korea in June with tears in our eyes, as we absolutely loved our two-year stay. We were heading to Fort Benning, GA. knowing that many changes were upon us. Our oldest daughter would be leaving for her first year of college in Colorado and our youngest daughter would be starting high school. We would eventually find another puppy to welcome into our family. And we would experience

reverse culture shock as we reacclimated to the U.S. With all of these changes, I found it very difficult to begin my art again and I soon realized that maybe this time in my life wasn't about producing, but more about reflecting. I knew that I also needed to create to keep myself grounded.

I think a part of me was grieving for the beauty I had in Korea, all of the inspiration I had at my fingertips, and my special friends and our travel adventures.

So, I started to do what I always do when we move somewhere new, and that is, to find my inspiration and to see what is unique to the new area. It just wasn't going to jump out at me, as it had in Korea. I found it through quieter presentations and maybe this allowed me to continue to reflect on past moments.

Website: www.christytremblayart.com

Instagram: @christytremblayart

Facebook: @christytremblaygallery

Starbucks Korea: One Cup and One Neighborhood

By Caitlin Ward

Starbucks opened its first branch in Korea in 1999 in front of Ewha Womans University. The chain has grown steadily since then as a result of its high-end image, its cafe-study ambience and its localization. The first branch on a United States Forces Korea (USFK) installation opened on Osan Air Force Base in December 2006. Currently, there are a total of seven stores on USFK installations.

The men and women who work at Starbucks at USAG Humphreys are delightful. They know my name, my daughter's name, and my drink. They are surprised when I order something different and elated to see my other children. This warmth and welcome is not a small thing—it brightens my day, makes my kids feel special, and creates a sense of community. Here, members of the Starbucks team—Elo, Beagi, Heart, Taki and Dia—share with United on the RoK what brightens their day and makes them feel like part of the USFK community.

How long have you worked at USAG Humphreys Starbucks?

We currently have six partners at our Starbucks Pyeongtaek Humphreys Troop Mall, working for as little as a month or as long as three years.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

I enjoy working with my partners, but most of all, I really enjoy interacting with customers. There is a slightly different atmosphere from other stores in Korea, there are many customers who look at our name tags and call our names and share their stories with us. Whenever that happens, we are very intrigued and grateful for the warm attention given to us.

These special experiences inspire us to try harder to remember each of our customers and remember their beverages. Whenever we remember our customers and their orders, they thank us for remembering them and again for making them delicious beverages.



"Starbucks Korea, which has been listening to customers' demands for twenty-four years, has applied Korean sensibility to the world's best coffee and led a new coffee culture. Our vision is to provide an experience where human relationships and emotions communicate beyond coffee shops."

— Starbucks Korea PR Team



It's not just about selling coffee. I think it's these moments of meaningful interactions we have with our customers as Starbucks partners that make it worthwhile.

How do you hope to impact your customers?

For customers who visit Starbucks, we would like to bring morning cheer on their way to work, deliver bright energy during their lunch hours, and offer them time to unwind comfortably at the end of the day. In order to convey these feelings to our customers well, we will always provide delicious coffee and greet you with bright energy, every visit.

We hope our customers will visit Starbucks with anticipation, thinking 'What will they say to me today?', 'Who is working today?', 'Can I start my day with delicious coffee?'

And in response to their expectations, we hope our store will be a restful third place for everyone, full of bright energy and delicious drinks.

How do your customers impact you?

Working at Starbucks, I meet hundreds of customers a day. As a result, every word from our customers, every little action, impacts us with great energy. When customers greet us brightly, it makes us reciprocate with a pleasant smile, and when praised with a thumbs-up saying that the drink is delicious, we feel rewarded. When they reach out first, telling us to have a good day, it gives us the extra power boost to make it through the day.

This communication with our customers is the driving force to provide better service, and helps us grow.

We would like to say thank you to all customers visiting our store for always giving us that positive energy.



Tips for Traveling with Small Children to Vietnam

By Erin Henderson

Growing up, the most exotic vacation we took as a family was to Disney World in Florida. Our usual family vacations were to Pennsylvania to visit my mom's family, or to the nearby beaches—Myrtle Beach and eventually Holden Beach, NC. The thought of going overseas never even crossed my mind until I was in college and several of my friends decided to do study abroad programs. I've said this before, but deciding to study abroad that summer in England lit a desire for travel in me that still burns to this day.

When we had our son in 2021, my husband had a brilliant idea to do what I called the U.S. baby tour to visit friends and family so they could meet him. He booked the flights before I really had a chance to view this itinerary, but when I saw it, I was a little panicked.

"You want to fly from North Carolina to New York, Montana, California and Colorado then back with our three-month-old?" I asked in disbelief.

As they say in the blockbuster hit "Dodgeball," "It's a bold strategy, Cotton."

The trip went extremely well, our son slept most of the time on every flight and truly was a dream to travel with. That trip made us cocky; we can totally travel the world with kids! As our son got older and more inde-

pendent (he's two now), his napping on planes diminished and the need to be entertained the whole time and not constrained to our laps increased. We added our daughter to the mix in August of last year and suddenly traveling with two children under two seemed way less appealing. I am sure many of you are remembering the flight over from the States to Korea with your young ones about now.

After a grueling sixteen-hour flight back to Korea from North Carolina last winter with both children, it took us a month to even consider the thought of getting back on a plane with them, despite it being something we are both extremely passionate about. A conversation I had early on when I arrived in Korea just kept playing in my head. I was chatting with Colonel Gwen Devera-Waden and her husband mentioning how we would love to travel more while we are in Korea, but our kids are so young and it's just so exhausting. Their response? "Do it anyway."

They were right of course. We booked our first family trip within Asia to Vietnam for April.

Here are some tips for traveling to Vietnam with small children (and many can be applied for travel to many places in Asia).





it, traveling with kids can be hard and exhausting—your ability to adapt to whatever the travelverse throws your way will shape the outcome of your trip. Like when your two-year-old has a screaming melt down and refuses to fasten his seatbelt on the plane, or when your shuttle from Ha Long Bay gets a flat tire on the way back to Hanoi and you are stranded on the side of the road for over an hour while your husband helps the driver change the tire in the blistering heat. Or when you are sitting in the wonderful restaurant Tok, and your daughter has one of the worst blowouts of all times and you and your husband are both frantically rinsing off her bum in the bathroom pondering your life choices. Things are going to happen, how you react will make or break your trip.

4. Download Grab. The Grab app will allow you to easily get a taxi or order food should you need, and you can pay cash directly to your driver. According to their website, Grab is currently available in Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.



1. Leave the stroller at home. Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City especially are extremely busy, filled with motorbikes and a lot of the side roads in Hanoi do not have walkable sidewalks. Carrying your kids in a backpack carrier is the best (and safest) way to explore with them. We have the Osprey Poco child carrier from REI for our two-year-old, and a Moby baby carrier for our eight-month-old.
2. Check the visa requirements for the country you are visiting and complete them a few weeks in advance of your trip. For Vietnam especially, they kicked ours back a few times to change the photos and it took almost two full weeks to process with the back and forth. Make sure you print the visa out prior to checking in at the airport, this is very important, they will not accept it in digital form! It's \$25 USD to process and the site can be found here: <https://evisa.xuatnhapcanh.gov.vn/web/guest/khai-thi-thuc-dien-tu/cap-thi-thuc-dien-tu>
3. Pack your patience. There is no sugar coating





5. Familiarize yourself with the local currency and have cash on hand. Cash is still king in a lot of places in Asia, so we brought USD with us and just converted it to Dong at the airport when we arrived in Hanoi. We used it for entrance into sights, paying for cabs and purchasing small items in the markets. In almost every place we used a credit card, they added on a 3% processing fee so just something to be aware of when you go.
6. Interact with the locals, that's the whole point of being in a new country, isn't it? Our AirBnB host in Hoi An, Chi, was fantastic and had three children of her own. Our son played with her kids in the pool and even though they didn't speak the same language, they happily splashed around, shared toys and it completely melted my heart to watch them all together. On a bike ride through the quiet rice fields nearby, we stopped to watch a local farmer holding his oxen on a leash while they worked on clearing a field. When he saw our interest in this, he happily handed over the leash to our friend Jordan who was traveling

with us and she got to walk her first ox—what an experience!

7. One thing we have learned while living in Korea, and experienced again while traveling to Vietnam with two very small children is that Asians absolutely love children and it's not uncommon for them to come up and touch your child's hands or feet or ask to take their photos. If you experience this it's certainly nothing to be alarmed about, but if it makes you uncomfortable you can simply shake your head no or say khong (no in Vietnamese).
8. Schedule a morning activity and an afternoon activity but be adaptable. Though we know we can't keep our children on their exact schedule from home, we do our best to still allow them a nap time mid-day, if possible, to keep them as happy as we can while we are out exploring. Some days while we were in Vietnam nap time ended up being mid-morning (or not at all when we were hopping flights) since they were so worn out from the day

before and when that happened, we just adapted our schedule and ventured out when they were up. Vietnam is hot, so we noticed this also made our kids a bit more exhausted than usual.

9. Bring a well-stocked go bag for your outings and pack some of your kids' comforts of home. Our kids both sleep with a sound machine so we brought those with us, as well as familiar snacks, toys and of course the beloved blankie.
10. Book the trip. The more you travel with your kids the more they will adapt and get accustomed to it. By no means are our children super chill and easy, but we feel so strongly about travel that we will continue to explore this wonderful planet in the hopes that these experiences will mold our children into kinder, compassionate and empathetic humans. Next up for us as a family, the island of Jeju, Cambodia and Thailand!

If you go, here are some recommendations from my favorite stop on the trip, Hoi An. The charm of the ancient city with the yellow walls and lanterns will immediately lure you in. That charm paired with the endless variety of shops for art, custom clothes and leather goods, frozen coconut coffee, fantastic restaurants, the street artists and wonderful people made this stop in Vietnam unforgettable.

- Dine at Mango Mango, Tok, The Field and Peanuts (Peanuts has amazing Vietnamese vegan food)
- Enjoy coconut coffee at Puff Puff Café (in ancient town) and Tin Coffee
- Take a nighttime boat ride among the colorful silk lanterns
- Have a custom suit/dress made or leather shoes tailored to you in one of the many shops in the ancient town. A custom pair of leather sandals cost me \$40 USD and were ready in one day.
- Bike through the quieter outskirts of Hoi An among the rice fields

About the Author

Erin is the Media Manager, photographer and regular contributor for United on the RoK. You can reach out to her any time by emailing media@unitedontherok.com or following her on Instagram @erinhendrsn.



Who's in Our Community:

A Brief Profile of Local Business Owner Han Sung-su

By Caitlin Ward



"Happy customers make me happy." — Han



Han was born in a southern province of Korea in 1969. Han and Sun met in their hometown when she was a freshman in high school and he had graduated. They could not date then because she was too young and he had to leave. In 1985, there were not enough jobs in their hometown, and Han, like many of his peers, moved to Seoul.

At that time, the country was experiencing rapid economic development, and transforming into a prosperous, industrial society. Korea's economic growth rates had increased to among the highest in the world. There was also tremendous road infrastructure development and a

rapid increase in the number of cars on the road. It was a great time to be in Seoul and to work in the auto industry.

"In the 1980s, only the wealthy had cars," Han explained. "After the Olympics, there were more, but cars were not common until the early 2000s. Initially, the most popular car models were the Hyundai Pony, the Hyundai Stellar, and the Hyundai Grandeur. Those models were replaced with upgraded models."

In 1986, the auto shop Han worked at in Seoul started serving military members. Han liked interacting with Americans and they connected over cars.

During the years that Han and Sun were apart, they did not have cell phones to keep in touch, so, in their words, they "patiently waited" until the time was right, occasionally sending messages via pagers. After graduating from high school, Sun moved up to Seoul. Han and Sun dated and then married in 1995.

In 1999, Han opened his own auto shop.

"Initially, foreign cars were only found around the military bases," he recalled. "The Cadillac was the most popular car among higher ranking American soldiers. Service members who had American models either brought parts to auto shops, we made needed parts, or as a last resort, parts were ordered from the states. In the 1990s, Americans started buying used Korean cars. Around 2000, US soldiers brought Japanese models such as Honda, Nissan and Mazda. The Japanese auto industry left Korea in 2015 and without a dealer store here, it could take a while to get parts."

Han had many customers from Yongsan frequent his shop in Seoul and when soldiers moved to Humphreys, they would still call him for advice on car problems. Han moved his shop from Seoul to Humphreys in 2020 at the encouragement of his customers.

The office at his auto shop is full of photos and certificates of appreciation from his customers. He also keeps two albums with photos of customers, as well as an album of business cards. He said he loves to look back through the photo albums and be reminded of the wonderful people he has met over the years. Every year, he sees customers return to his shop who left the peninsula years ago when they recognize his sign.



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CREATING UNA'S

Adventures in Courage, Growth & Entrepreneurship

By Amy Millican



Eunha Son was born in 1972 in Seoul, South Korea. Being raised at a time when South Korean women were beginning to gain greater independence, Eunha bravely forged her own path in life. Today she is the Owner of “Una’s”—a stylish hair salon catering to American clients. Her entrepreneurial path is

intertwined with her Korean heritage and culture. With the courage to push past her fears, Eunha is an example of what one can achieve if you believe in yourself and your dreams.

At the age of 26, Eunha was given a chance to work in the United States. She decided to become a hairstylist, as she felt that job was needed in the United States, especially in the Korean Community.

“They really needed a good hair stylist, one who understands Korean people’s hair,” Eunha explained. “That was about the time my friend, opening her own business in the States, was offering jobs for hairdressers. So, I decided to study and get my license. Then she brought me to the States. She became my Sponsor for the Green Card.”

Once in the United States, Eunha began to have clients who were not from the Korean community. As she got more non-Korean clients, her creative side started to shine through. With her American clients requiring an extensive array of hair colors, Eunha’s artistic strengths blossomed. Soon, she found a passion for not only creating the cutting style for her clients, but also the perfect color to compliment them as well.

Eunha’s path changed when she had to return to Korea, upon the death of her father. After eleven years in the United States, Eunha went to assist her mother during the trying time of her father’s passing. Once home, she realized that she wanted to continue her education in hairdressing and styling. She decided the best next path forward for her career development would be in Europe.

In Europe and the United States, Eunha believes she had the opportunity to experience a different mindset.

“I wanted to have the experience of different cultures,” she said. “Also, for hairdressing in the United States and Europe, they offer more higher education [opportunities]. I wanted to be more creative and develop my skills and techniques. That is why I went to Europe and the States.”

After being based in Germany for two years, Eunha’s fate turned again. This time her Korean heritage and traditions would supersede her continuing education and

career development.

“I found out my mother has Alzheimer’s,” Eunha explained. “I am the first child. In our culture, it is mandatory for the first child to take care of the parents. Then also, I did not marry. So, I have a more flexible schedule than my other sisters. I wanted to take care of my mother. I made the decision and came back to Korea for her.”

But, that did not stop Eunha’s desire to keep growing and excelling in her career. For the past eight years, while taking care of her mother, Eunha has worked within the United States Forces Korea (USFK) community. First, she worked four years at United States Army Garrison (USAG) Yongsan, followed by four years at USAG Humphreys.

“I feel comfortable speaking English,” said Eunha. “At the same time, I love doing hair colors and highlights. I also feel comfortable working with American people. They are creative with their hair. This made me want to stay connected with USFK.”

Earlier this year, Eunha made the courageous decision to open her business. Una’s, is located in the Ville outside USAG Humphreys. The shop offers the USFK community hair services, with a deep understanding of American clients. With jazz music playing in the background, the shop has a modern, relaxed feel, embodying Eunha’s unique style and passion for her craft.

“I wanted to have more freedom and to be more creative,” Eunha elaborated regarding her decision to start her own business and serve the USFK community. “I wanted to sell the brands and the colors I wanted to use. The brands I knew were the best for my clients. Then also, I wanted to offer full services for my customers. This means I can fully take care of their hair. Not only to give them a great style and color, but also to support their hair to be healthy. I know what chemicals are being used and I can make decisions I am comfortable with.”

One example of Una’s dedication to her customers is offering her American clients vegan shampoo and conditioner. By offering vegan products, Eunha honors the need for ethical, animal-free options of her vegan clients. It is this level of detail, knowing so well American interests, tastes, and desires, that sets Una’s apart from competitors.

Being an entrepreneur in South Korea has its challenges.

“I have to take care of the taxes, pricing, and scheduling,” Eunha shared. “I am so busy throughout the day. But then, I am also very happy that I’m learning new things. I feel like I am growing.

“I love creativity. I love art. I see doing hair as one piece of art. So, then I want to see perfection. I am the one who decides the design of my shop. I put a lot of effort into it.

And then, selecting the good products and taking care of the hair, I see it all as one masterpiece. You know? That’s what I like about it.”

For any readers who may be contemplating starting a business, Eunha advises you to go for it.

“What I believe is if I don’t push myself a little further, then I don’t know about my limitations,” Eunha explained. “So once people think or feel that it is the time, I wish they will try. Do not fear failure. Once they decide in their mind to try, they will figure out answers to problems as they come up. When you have fear inside, keep looking for the answer. Keep going and that will lead to success. One step at a time.”

For Eunha, creating Una’s has been a lifetime of courage and growth. And now, the added adventure of entrepreneurship in the “Art of Hair Styling.” You can find more information on Facebook @Una Son.



A Pair of Stylists

At Una’s hair salon, Eunha has the company of her friend and fellow hairstylist Joanne. Previously the friends worked together at Clippers hair salon at Dragon Hill Lodge where both women enjoyed serving the USFK community. Joanne specializes in color and highlights.

To make an appointment, call Eunha at 010-7597-3132
Naver Address: Gyeonggi-do Pyeongtaek-si Anjeong-ro 53
<https://naver.me/FhdeqRhq>

Grab Your COAT

By Vikki Waits, ACC, CPC, ELI-MP, CTDS



We met on an airplane. He was living in Vilseck, Germany, flying home for a funeral.

I was on my way home after a week in Prague. On the cusp of turning 50, it had been my first solo international trip, launching a journey of rediscovering "me". My youngest was graduating from high school, my 25-year marriage had ended several years prior and I was ready for a career pivot. I had spent so many years focused on others that I had lost track of the brave, vibrant Vikki I once loved.

I never imagined that a chance meeting would land me on a flight to South Korea just two years later. The kids were living their life, my career was transitioning and I had found love. As many military spouses can relate, the military had plans for my love, their soldier, and those plans conflicted with my career goals. I was faced with the choice of continuing my career transition on my terms, or taking a risk and following my heart.

The warnings of South Korea's difficulty for military spouses, especially a new spouse entering the community later in life, were loud and persistent. I had persevered through those tumultuous years of raising teens, a contentious divorce, career shifts, life upheavals and most importantly, I had done the work to regain a life of happiness and independence. I was confident that I was equipped to navigate this move. Besides, I



had a plan. A plan filled with adventures and travels to exotic locations with my new husband. I had secured a job that inspired me and building friendships had always come easy. This was just the next stop on my journey to rebuilding that brave and vibrant Vikki.

What I didn't factor into my plan was the reality of transitioning to a military community, especially an overseas military community, during Covid. Yes, I was told, but how can you really know until you have lived it? The acronyms, ranks, protocol, gates, security, and rules were all more foreign to me than the Korean people and customs. Oh, and all those beige buildings and barbed wire fences—that much beige and barbed wire just does something to a colorful, free-spirited girl's soul.

As a new military spouse at 52, I had lived life. A rather bumpy one at times, but my life experiences were vastly different from many of the spouses I encountered, and bonding over coffee in the afternoon just didn't happen. Far away from friends and the support network I had depended on through many life transitions, I felt alone and isolated. Given the circumstances around living life abroad during covid, opportunities for relief were limited. However, I took note of a common play

from the well-worn playbook of a resilient military spouse and just like just a seasoned spouse, I "adjusted fire" and found a new plan.

Unlike many military spouses in South Korea, I had the fortune of securing a job before arriving at Camp Humphreys. Like many military spouses, available jobs don't always fit our career path, and the ability to easily pivot is often required. My time working with the USO at Camp Humphreys provided the sense of purpose I craved. Engaging with the military community and their families during the stressful days of learning to navigate Covid more than made up for those missed adventures and the misaligned career path, but I wanted more. All the energy I had anticipated investing in friends, adventure and travel needed a new direction and I chose to refocus that energy on my career transition.

Financial planning had been my most recent career but the Vikki I was rediscovering didn't want to go back to numbers and spreadsheets. I longed for a purposeful career, a career investing more directly in others. Discovering and aligning that purpose with my passion and experience seemed daunting and just outside my grasp.

I knew a friend who hired a Life Coach during some

major life transitions. She loved the process but I was skeptical. In the past, I had used a therapist and in the States, I had friends and mentors who would be thrilled to help me. Surely, I could figure this out on my own without investing in someone who didn't know me, but I was curious. I pushed aside all those pesky negative thoughts, the "what-ifs" and "how-tos" that keep us from finding our way. The first coach wasn't the right fit, but through our conversation and more research, I discovered a path that was right for me.

Sprinkled through my life was a theme of empowering women, from teenage moms to recently widowed women. Walking alongside a woman as she is growing and transitioning to a new phase of life is what brings me joy. I had spent a lifetime mentoring, counseling and giving advice. I wanted to become a

I was able to join a cohort training in Asia. The program structure allowed me to continue full-time work while attending school. Because of Covid, everything was virtual, but I formed lasting relationships with classmates, and that sense of loneliness and isolation was gone. I had found a direction and this new career choice proved to be a great opportunity for me to build something lasting, even with transatlantic moves. I am now able to continue pursuing my passion and I have built a business that I can take with me anywhere.

There is so much mystique and confusion about Coaches. The industry is booming and the barriers to entry are low. The term "coach" typically conjures up an image of a sports coach, someone who is an expert in all things baseball, and will help you master that perfect stance for batting a home run. Apply that logic to life

advice. The International Coaching Federation (ICF), the preeminent global organization governing the Professional Coaching industry, defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. The process of coaching often unlocks previously untapped sources of imagination, productivity and leadership.

"Previously untapped sources of imagination, productivity and leadership"—I can't think of a better descriptor for the many talented, highly educated but sadly underutilized military spouses living in our military communities. Are you one of those spouses? Do you know there is something more for you but you just haven't been able to put a name to it yet? Possibly you know exactly what that "something more" is but you can't seem to make it happen on your own. Maybe it's not a career change you seek, but you are a new mom learning to navigate life. Or a spouse whose kids have launched and you are on a quest to rediscover yourself after a lifetime of taking care of everyone else. The scenarios are as endless and varied as each of you and there is a coach for YOU. The prospect can be frightening, I know I was there not that long ago. But you are worth the bravery. If hiring a professional coach has you intrigued, take the chance, do the research and just see where it takes you.

For some practical advice on finding a coach, the International Coaching Federation's website (coaching-federation.org) is a great place to start. Their user-friendly website has listings for coaches certified through their organization and loads of information about the coaching industry, including suggestions on how to find a professionally certified coach that fits YOU. If you have been inspired by the opportunity to launch a career that you can take with you across all your PCS moves while positively impacting your clients' lives, the ICF Website is also a goldmine of information for aspiring coaches. And if you happen to be a military spouse living in South



Korea while reading this article and you are feeling alone and isolated, I see you. I know you have probably heard all the thoughtful suggestions and even tried several. I am a Professional Life Coach, so giving advice isn't my norm. However, as someone who recently found my way through the isolation, I would say, trust yourself and do what you need to do to BE WELL—only you know the right way to "adjust fire" for you.

Grab Your Coat Coaching

GrabYourCoatCoaching.com

Vikki@grabyourcoatcoaching.com

832-326-9625 on Telegram/WhatsApp/iMessage



Life Coach, certified by a reputable governing body. For that, I needed to go back to school and learn a new skill. My time in South Korea proved to be a perfect opportunity to invest in myself and gain the education, training and credentials I needed to transition to my next phase.

The school I selected was an international school and

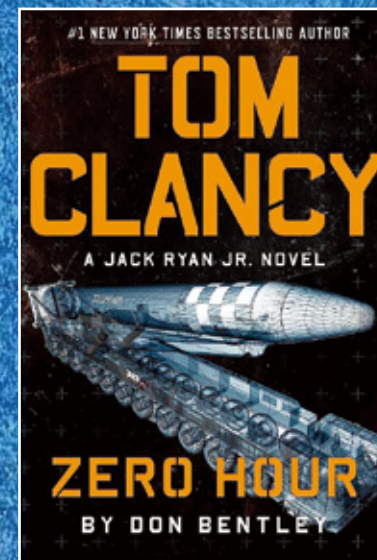
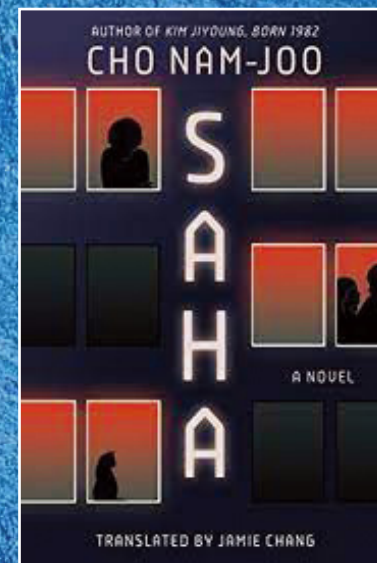
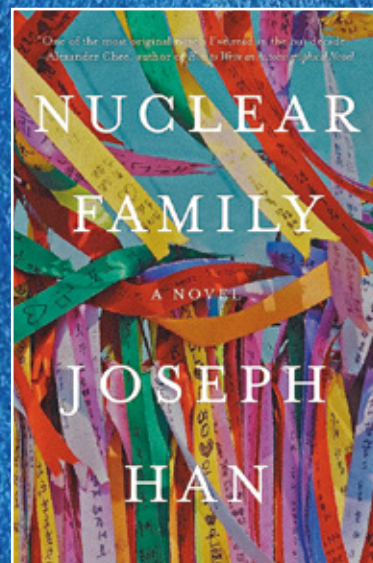
and you have how many perceive a Life Coach—someone who is an expert in all things life and will help you master that perfect stance for a successful life. The truth is, coaching is a process with research-backed methodologies and well-documented results.

Many people believe that coaches give great advice. However, coaches are not in the business of giving

From SFC Ray E. Duke Memorial Library – Standout 2022-2023 Fiction

By Ashley M. Evans, MLS, Supervisory Librarian (Library Director)

South Korea is proving to be an exceptionally trendy setting for modern fiction! Over the past year, we've seen an increase in the number of books set in South Korea and we've put together a list of some of the top standout titles for you to check out and enjoy.



I Guess I Live Here Now, Claire Ahn

After acting out, Melody's parents decide it's time for her to move from her home in New York City to Seoul to live with her father. Tossed into a new luxurious world, Melody thinks she's living the charmed life. Until she begins to learn that all that glitters is not gold.

– Released May 2022

Nuclear Family, Joseph Han The Cho family is thriving in Hawai'i with their Korean delicatessen until Jacob, the son of the family, travels to Korea to teach English. Nobody could have anticipated how much their world would start to tumble when Jacob is suddenly possessed by the ghost of his lost grandfather and attempts to cross the demilitarized zone.

– Released June 2022

Sasha by Cho, Nam-Ju

If you are a fan of Squid Game, this is a book for you! Follow one woman's journey as she confronts a broken dystopian reimagination of Korea while also seeking the truth behind the tragic murder of a young woman. – Released November 2022

The All-American, Milan Jr, Joe

A seventeen-year-old adopted boy living in America is suddenly sent back to his native country of South Korea, a country entirely foreign to him. Join Bucky as he rebuilds his life, learns a new language, adjusts to a new culture, and begins to understand his biological family's legacy and heritage. – Released April 2023

The Noh Family, Grace K. Shim

Chloe's life has just turned upside down. She's lived her whole life thinking her mother was an orphan and her father passed away in Seoul before she was born. But her recent DNA test says something different. Faced with this new knowledge, Choe travels to Seoul to meet the family she never knew she had. – Released May 2022

Tom Clancy Zero Hour, Don Bentley

Jack Ryan Jr. is back and it's up to him to stop a second Korean War. When the leader of North Korea is gravely injured, he sets in motion the activation of an army of sleeper agents throughout South Korea. Can Jack work with North Korean insiders to prevent total devastation? – Released February 2023

Other standout fiction books released in the past year: Cursed Bunny by Chung, Bora, Y/N by Yi, Esther, and Violets by Shin, Kyung-Sook.

Contact your local installation library to find out which of these titles are available to check-out for free. You can also visit the DOD Virtual Library at dodmwrlibraries.org to get eBook or eAudioBook versions of the titles with Overdrive or the Libby App.

Emergency Numbers

- 119 - Fire and medical emergencies that require an ambulance
- 112 - Police
- 1339 - Korean Help Center for Disease Control (foreigner helpline that provides information about first aid and diseases in English, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Mongolian)
- 1345 - Immigration (for simple immigration-related questions)
- 1331 - National Human Rights Commission of Korea (for questions related to human rights law and social justice in Korea)

National Suicide Prevention Crisis Line

Commercial: 1-800-273-8255/080-855-5118
DSN: (315)263-8255/118
Chat: www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat

Osan Emergency Room (ER)

A Mental Health provider is always on call to assess mental health emergencies.
DSN 784-2500, or present to the Emergency Room

Domestic Abuse Victim Advocate (DAVA)

This is a 24/7 resource for those in need of Family Advocacy support.
DSN: 784-5010 (business hours) or COMM: 010-9300-8753 (24/7)

Sexual Assault Response Program (SAPR)

This is a 24/7 resource for those in need of Sexual Assault Response support.

SAPR Hotline: 031-661-7272; DSN 784-7272
Osan DSN (during duty hours): 784-2832
24/7 SHARP Hotline: DSN 158 or 763-5700
Daegu Local Cell: 0503-363-5700
From the States: 011-82-53-470-5700
DoD Safe Helpline: +1 (877) 995-5247
Safe Helpline Website: <https://safehelpline.org>

Non-Emergency Resources

Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLC)
Licensed professionals who can provide problem-focused counseling to service members and their families outside of the medical appointment system. No medical record documentation.
Camp Walker: 010-6445-9001
Camp Carroll: 010-5960-3287
2-1 ADA: 010-5960-3287

Military & Family Readiness Center

Osan AB: 784-5440 or <https://www.facebook.com/OsanMFRC>

Osan Chaplains

Chaplains provide 100% confidentiality.
DSN 784-5000 during duty hours, contact via command post after hours
DSN 784-7000

Osan Mental Health Clinic

Active Duty Outpatient Behavioral Health Services: DSN 784-2148
Behavioral Health Walker: 0503-337-4784 (DSN: 737-4784)
Behavioral Health Carroll: 0503-337-4236 (DSN: 737-4236)

Off Base Counseling Resources near Osan AB and USAG Humphreys (TriCare approved)

- Adaptable Human Solutions 02-749-7915
- Mind Care Institute of Korea 010-8263-8277
- Seoul Counseling Center 031-692-5556
- You & Me Psychological and Consultation Services 02-6929-3014

Military OneSource: 1-800-342-9647

Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS)

Resilience enhancing services for service members and their families.
Offers telehealth appointments ('TeleFOCUS')
www.focusproject.org or call +1-703-784-0189 or email at TeleFOCUS@focusproject.org

Spouse Resilience Toolkit:

<https://www.afpc.af.mil/Airman-and-Family/Spouse-Resilience/>
9 online, skills-based and self-paced modules to build healthy family bonds and overcome the unique challenges of military life.

Holidays - 4 Month Outlook

Korean Holidays

15 August – Liberation Day
*28 September-October 1 – Chuseok

* The celebration takes place on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month. Date is adjusted every year according to the lunar calendar.

US Holidays

4 July – Independence Day
4 September – Labor Day
11 September – Patriot Day

Main Airports

Incheon International Airport is the main airport on the RoK, located on the coast west of Seoul. It is one of the busiest airports in the world and is full of entertainment for travelers with time before, between, or after flights including a spa, a golf course, a casino, an ice-skating rink, and much more.

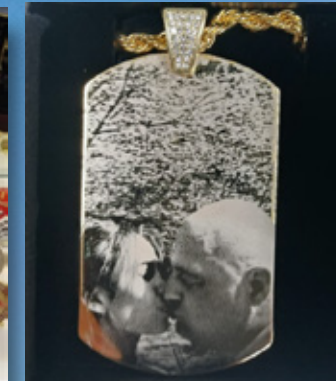
Other airports include:

- Jeju International Airport
- Gimpo International Airport
- Muan International Airport
- Yeosu Airport

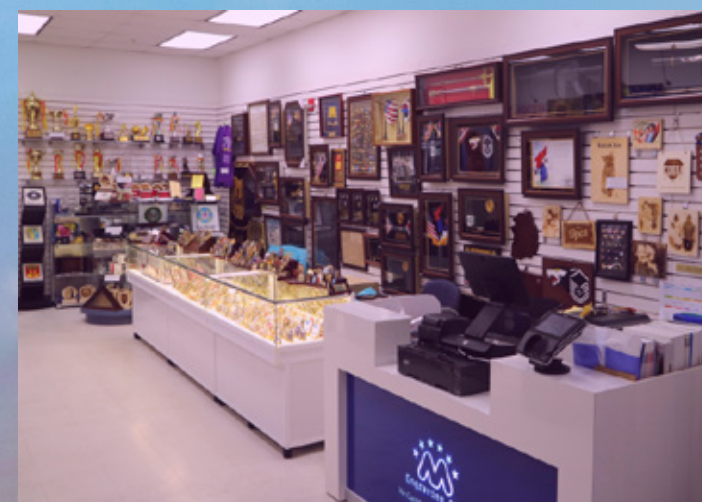
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