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Destination America

SEE WHAT'S NEW!



EJ|USA has a new look and format with this issue. Its more modern design emphasizes photography and eye-catching info-graphics. Its format offers an in-depth feature as well as regular sections on science, business, culture and other topics.

The staff has been digging into fresh topics, collaborating as a team of designers, writers and editors, and consulting expert sources.

MacKenzie Babb, former news writer, is excited about applying creative structure to her articles. In her new role, she says, she feels like “the writer formerly known as MacKenzie.” (She’s not Prince, but we think she’s a rock star.) Designer Lauren Russell, who set up a photo shoot with Terry Kramer (see “Last Word”), enjoyed talking policy with the former ambassador over coffee. Editor Mark Trainer will soon be living one of his stories. While researching MOOCs, Mark was drawn to sign up for an “Intro to Guitar MOOC.” We expect he will go far. Senior Designer Dori Walker has taken advantage of our new magazine template to explore trends in graphic design. I think you’ll like her game-board illustration for the crowdfunding article.

As I worked with writers on the “Destination America” feature, I thought of the hospitality I offer friends visiting Washington. There is my “extreme tour” that starts with a 4:30 a.m. wake-up call to join me for rowing practice on the Potomac River, and then there is my more traditional “museums-and-monuments tour.”

Whichever type of tourist you are, whether you would go for sports or museum visits, you will find ideas in these pages that take you well beyond Washington to explore lesser-known places in America. There are cliff-jumping adventures out West; music everywhere in Austin, Texas; hipster hangouts in Brooklyn; and a guide to the pure Americana of historic Route 66.

— *Managing Editor Elizabeth Kelleher* (pictured above, front)

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eJournal USA

IIP Coordinator Dawn L. McCall
Executive Editor Nicholas S. Namba
Director of Written Content Michael Jay Friedman

Cover Illustration Marcos Carvalho
Back Cover Photo ©Buero Monaco/Corbis

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor Elizabeth Kelleher
Production Manager Michelle Farrell
Editor Andrzej Zwanecki
Editor MacKenzie Babb
Editor Lauren Monsen
Editor Mark Trainer
Publications Editor Sonya Weakley
Senior Designer Dori Walker
Designers Lauren Russell, Lisa Jusino

Contributing Writers

Michael Gallant, Terry Kramer,
Jane L. Levere, Susan Milligan,
Tim Neville, Sohaib Sultan

Publisher

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Editor EJ|USA

IIP/CD/WC
U.S. Department of State
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20522-0501
USA
email: [eJournalUSA@state.gov](mailto:ejournalusa@state.gov)

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“If you
can walk,
you can
jump off a
cliff.”

ALL ABOUT ENGLISH

Words of note from this issue



Affluent | having a large amount of money and owning many expensive things, p. 19

Aficionado | a person who likes, knows about and appreciates a usually fervently pursued interest or activity, p. 16a

Artificial Intelligence | an area of computer science that deals with giving machines the ability to seem like they have human intelligence, p. 24

Authentic | real or genuine, not copied or false, p. 14

Beaten path | a path or trail made smooth, walked on by many people, p. 13

Blow-out | a party or celebration, p. 4

Bob | to move up and down in a short quick movement, p. 11

Borough | a village, town or part of a large city that has its own government; one of the five main sections of New York, p. 14

Chip on one's shoulder (informal) | to have an angry or unpleasant attitude or way of behaving caused by a belief that you have been treated unfairly in the past, p. 29

Chops | the technical facility of a musical performer, p. 13

Computer-adaptive learning | computer based testing that adapts to the learner's ability level, p. 25

Emigrate | to leave a country or region to live elsewhere, p. 7

Equity | a risk interest or ownership right in property or the common stock of a corporation, p. 31

Full-on | not limited in any way; fully developed, p. 14

Get one's kicks (from someone or something) | to get pleasure, fun, p. 16a

Gig | a job, usually for a specified time, especially an entertainer's engagement, p. 13

Gossiping | to talk about the personal lives of other people, p. 28

Grip(per) | a part or device for gripping, p. 29

Innovative | introducing or using new ideas or methods, p. 19

Persona | the way you behave, talk, etc., with other people that causes them to see you as a particular kind of person; the image or personality that a person presents to other people, p. 28

Pitch | to present or advertise something, especially in a high-pressure way, p. 30

Pyrotechnics | a bright display of fireworks, p. 4

Rural | of, or relating to, the country and the people who live there instead of the city, p. 21

Serene | calm and peaceful, p. 21

Slickrock | smooth wind-polished rock, p. 10

Telecommunications | communications over a distance by cable, telephone or broadcasting, p. 32

Tepee | a conical tent usually consisting of skins and used especially by American Indians of the Great Plains, p. 17

Thrifting | to shop for used clothes in thrift shops, p. 7

Unsolicited | not asked for; given or received without being requested, p. 32

Versatile | embracing a variety of subjects, fields or skills; also, turning with ease from one thing to another, p. 29

Vintage | of old, recognized, and enduring interest, importance or quality; or dating from the past, p. 18

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Snapshots of America



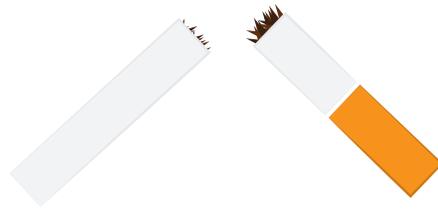
Americans Barbecue (Almost) Everything

Americans love their meat, veggies and, increasingly, fruit grilled.

Around 82 percent of U.S. households own a grill or smoker, and 97 percent of owners typically use it, according to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association. Grilling is even a “sport” involving hundreds of contests for making the best of an iconic American cuisine and cultural trademark: barbecue.

As New Orleans-based author Lolis Eric Elie mused in his book, *Smokestack Lightning: Adventures in the Heart of Barbecue Country*, “Barbecue alone encompasses the high- and low-brows, the sacred and the profane, the urban and the rural, the learned and the unlettered, the blacks, the browns, the yellows, the reds and the whites.”

Fire up your grills.

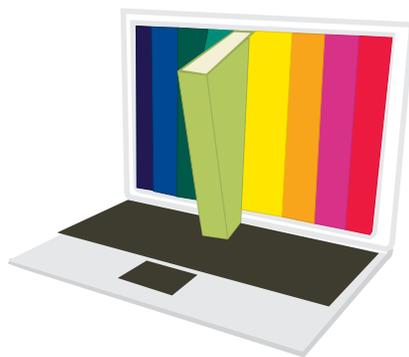


A Universal Trend

Following the country as a whole, more U.S. universities and colleges are banning cigarette smoking.

According to a recent survey, more than 1,000 U.S. campuses are 100 percent smoke-free — meaning all indoor and outdoor areas. The change happened quickly: The American Nonsmokers’ Rights Foundation says fewer than 60 colleges were smoke-free in 2007.

The reasons: Some universities responded to a college health association’s 2009 statement against tobacco. But thanks to U.S. cities and states, which took the lead in anti-smoking laws, social norms have changed, and non-smokers now are a majority of the population. By banning smoking in college, universities hope to expand that majority.



Libraries 2.0

Used to be that Americans went to libraries for books. Recently, a Pew Research Center study showed that library patrons rank access to computers and the Internet nearly as high as access to printed materials. Of library Internet users, 66 percent did research for school or work, 35 percent used social media and 16 percent took online classes.

Americans still want books, but they want technology to make getting them easier. The survey indicated patrons want online access to librarians and automated neighborhood kiosks. They also favored using technology to navigate the old-fashioned numbering systems for indexing books. Specifically, they would like GPS-enabled devices to help them find items they need among the library book stacks.



OK for Coca-Cola

Still guarding its “secret formula” somewhere in its Atlanta headquarters, Coca-Cola’s massive international marketing machine has established its brand as the second-most understood term in the world, following “OK,” according to the company. Makers of the mysterious ingredient send it to more than 900 bottling plants around the world, where distributors add water and sweetener. Some Coca-Cola fans say they can taste a difference among the various plant-bottled versions. Company executives stand by their brand, insisting the soda tastes the same everywhere.

Fourth (of July) and Main Streets

MARK TRAINER



The Fourth of July is, first and foremost, a birthday party. Americans mark the day in 1776 when 13 English colonies adopted a Declaration of Independence and the United States of America was born.

Just as birthday parties come in all shapes and sizes — from the small gathering of friends to the raucous birthday blow-out — Fourth of July celebrations across America run from very small to very big. If you happen to be visiting, wherever you are, there is likely to be a parade. If you're in a small town in Iowa, it might feature the town fire truck, neighborhood children riding bicycles decorated with streamers and not much more. If you go to Alameda, California, near San Francisco, you'll

join 20,000 spectators along a three-mile route to cheer for marching bands, horses and enormous parade floats.

Shown here is Anchorage, a small city of 300,000 in the south of Alaska, which starts its Fourth of July with a pancake breakfast on the Delaney Park Strip in the middle of town. "There are booths with different activities and food," said Paula Conru, a longtime resident. "Everybody hangs out there, and then you watch the parade. There are fire trucks, old fashioned cars and marching bands."

But since Anchorage is so far north, the fireworks run on a later schedule. "The fireworks go off at midnight," Conru said, "and it's still not really truly dark outside."

Darkness falls earlier 3,300 miles away in New York. There, the city's 8 million residents can watch 22 tons of pyrotechnics launched over a mile-and-a-half stretch of the Hudson River in one of the nation's biggest fireworks extravaganzas (page 6).

But don't be entirely distracted by the bright colors and patriotic music. Whether it's in a rural Midwest town square with a pie-baking contest and sparklers, or in Boston Harbor accompanied by an orchestra and cannons, Fourth of July celebrations are joined by a spirit of pride in folks' identity as Americans and a sense that communities — small, medium-sized or big — define them. ■



In New York, fireworks explode over the Hudson River behind the Empire State Building, lit red, white and blue for the Fourth of July.





“When I got my letter stating that my ceremony was going to be on July 4th, I said, ‘I have the dress to wear.’”

—KRISLEE NELSON

Stars and Stripes and Polka Dots

Krislee Nelson (above) emigrated at the age of 13 from Jamaica to the United States in 2004. Nelson became an American at a ceremony at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, on July 4th, 2012. We asked

her what she most remembers about this picture.

“Because of July 4th, it was a really special day and a really special ceremony. It was super-hot, I will say that. I had seen a lot of people taking pictures

by the flag. My parents were making fun of me because I was the only one coordinated with the flag. I’m super into ‘thrifting,’ and I randomly found that dress before I even found out about the ceremony. When

I got my letter stating that my ceremony was going to be on July 4th, I said, ‘I have the dress to wear.’”-M.T.

FEATURE

Destination America: Surprising Cities, Sights and Sounds

Explore Wild West towns where climbers outnumber cowboys, a melodious city where there's live music at the grocery store, hipster Brooklyn neighborhoods, and the quirky charms of a famous U.S. highway.





In a tandem cliff jump in Moab, Utah, a student gains the added safety of having an instructor along for the flight.

© CHRIS HUNTER

“**T**hat is so scary!” screamed a woman one day last summer as she peered over the lip of a 600-meter-high cliff in California’s Yosemite National Park. Below her a 26-year-old professional rock climber named Alex Honnold was slowly scaling the sheer face alone, using holds no bigger than his fingertips. It was a spooky thing to see. “He doesn’t have a rope!” she hollered. “If he falls, he dies!”

True, but Honnold didn’t fall. Instead, he reached the top, ate some cookies and answered questions from flabbergasted onlookers who wondered why anyone would want to do such a thing. “Because you get to go to some crazy places,” Honnold shrugged. “It’s fun.”

Honnold may be the extremest extreme athlete the United States has produced in recent years, but he also has a point. With the right

precautions, adventure sports can take any traveler to spectacular places not found in the mainstream guidebooks, and that can indeed be fun.

CRAZY PLACES

The United States has about 265 million hectares of federally owned public land — that’s more than four times the area of France — and no shortage of soaring mountains, tumbling rivers and moody forests for adventures. More and more Americans are heading outside. In 2011, nearly half of the U.S. population — a record 141 million people — did some form of outdoor-adventure recreation.

Moab, Utah, a former mining outpost on the Colorado River, is booming these days thanks to the trend. Here, nature has sculpted towering red rocks into stunning pillars that pierce a deep blue sky. People come to scale classic routes up formations like Castleton Tower or to mountain-bike on polished “slickrock” sandstone. The area is also an ideal spot for learning to BASE jump, that is to leap off a cliff with a parachute. “If you can walk, you can jump off a cliff,” said Mario Richard of Moab BASE Adventures. He straps himself to

students for tandem jumps that culminate in long flights to the valley floor. “The view from up there is always breathtaking, but you’re not just looking at it,” he said. “You’re part of it.”

Communing with the landscape comes in a different form in places like Bozeman, Montana, or Squaw Valley, California, especially in winter when the mountains pile up with as much as 12 meters of snow. In the backcountry around these towns, you’ll find skiers who hike or ride snowmobiles to the tops of ridges and then race down faces of the mountains on skis with a paragliding wing deployed overhead. Called “speed riding,” the sport made its way to the United States from France a few years ago. It allows skiers to fly off cliffs, land on the snow again and keep on riding. No U.S. ski resorts allow speed riding at the moment, though at Canyons in Park City, Utah, skiers can ride a chairlift to the top, hike out of bounds, and speed ride back to the base. Cloud 9 Toys in nearby Salt Lake City offers lessons on how to fly the wings.

If splashing around in the water on a warm summer day in a controlled environment is more your style, head to Charlotte, North Carolina, where you’ll find the U.S. National Whitewater Center, a \$37 million complex of rapids and waterfalls that punctuate a 1,140-meter-long river, all manmade. A guide can take you through the rapids in a raft, or you can explore the 32 kilometers of trails for mountain biking and hiking on your own. Climbers test their mettle on one of the world’s largest climbing walls.

“A lot of people know about this place, but I don’t think they know how fabulous it is,” an onlooker said one summer day as she watched kayakers bobbing through the currents. “I’m not a kayaker,” she said, “but doesn’t that look like fun?”

It did. And far less scary too. ■

With the right precautions, adventure sports can take any traveler to spectacular places not found in the mainstream guidebooks.

3.5

HOUR DRIVE from the **Columbia River Gorge**, one of the most picturesque natural wonders of the West.



3.5

HOUR DRIVE from **Portland, Oregon**, a bicycle-friendly city with a lively music scene.



Bend, Oregon

It’s a story that’s common all across the western United States: 19th-century settlers build a town around logging or mining jobs, the economy collapses, and the town struggles for years, even decades, until it reinvents itself as a hub for outdoor sports. Towns like these — Park City, Utah; Boulder, Colorado; Jackson, Wyoming — form part of what’s now commonly called the New West. Think of it as the Wild West but with climbers instead of cowboys.

One town in Oregon has done a particularly fine job of embracing its New West nature thanks to the multiple outdoor sports it offers year-round. Bend, population 80,000 or so and about a six-hour drive south of Seattle, sits on the east side of the Cascade Mountains, where the frosty volcanic peaks bleed into the high desert. Here, you can ski off the top of a 2,764-meter-high volcano at Mount Bachelor or fly-fish for trout in the Deschutes River. Hundreds of kilometers of mountain-bike trails wend through the forests, and kayakers ply the cool waters of mountain lakes. Bend has become the beer capital of the country too, with more than a dozen local breweries. There is even a 12-seater bicycle you and your friends can ride between pubs.

Sorry, you’ll have to be at least 21 years old to play that sport.



DESTINATION AMERICA

Austin: Where the Music Knows No Limits

MICHAEL GALLANT AND JANE L. LEVERE

If you're visiting Austin, Texas, remember one rule to ensure you'll have a good time: follow your ears.

Austin offers live music everywhere, from the airport terminal to grocery stores and even city council meetings, not to mention clubs, coffeehouses and concert halls. The city is home to the famous Austin City Limits television show and annual music festival, as well as to the wildly popular South By Southwest festival.

You only need to step foot onto 6th Street to see what this melodious city is about. "That street is devoted entirely to music," said Francis Preve, an Austin resident and producer of electronic music — a dance-floor sound created on a computer with driving drumbeats and electronic synthesizers. Sixth Street, Preve said, is "a solid 10 blocks of nothing but bars and clubs with bands playing. It's like Bourbon Street in New Orleans, except that the

theme is live music ... any night of the week."

Often referred to as the "live music capital of the world" and with 6th Street as its sonic epicenter, Austin boasts nearly 200 music venues.

For retro and roots music lovers, the place to go is the Continental Club, while blues fans love Antone's. Country music, a genre historically centered in Nashville, Tennessee, is in the spotlight at the Broken Spoke, where the songs tell stories, whether backed by acoustic guitars, fiddles, banjos and basses or amplified rock 'n' roll sounds.

Young, local bands are featured at the 29th Street Ballroom at Spider House, while the Cactus Cafe offers acoustic music. There is indie music, whose moniker refers less to a style and more to how the music is recorded — independently of major music companies. Indie is favored by adventurous musicians drawing on rock, electronic music, blues or beyond. Austin has spawned



Swedish group Movits! joins swing and hip-hop music in its show at the SXSW Music Festival.

a number of popular indie acts: Spoon, And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, Okkervil River, Alpha Rev, The Black Angels, David Garza, and Jad Fair, to name a few.

The Elephant Room is a great place for jazz, and blues and jazz are performed at the historic Victory Grill, where everyone from Billie Holiday to Janis Joplin once performed. If you want to take some music home, stop by Waterloo Records & Video, one of the country's last comprehensive record stores.

And that's just the beginning. "The diversity of the Austin music scene stems from the fact that the city just has so much going on, it's impossible to re-

ally narrow it down to any one genre," said Preve. On any given night, students from the nearby University of Texas campus find their way to 6th Street to fill dance floors or to play music themselves. "Having so many students leads to a really strong indie scene," Preve said. "You can hear lots of college bands playing gigs and honing their chops, but then you also have seasoned professionals who have been playing in pub bands forever."

A FESTIVAL'S INFLUENCE

Rachael Sage is a New York-based recording artist and the founder of MPress Records. This was her seventh year participating in South By Southwest (SXSW), the massive music festival and conference that converges on Austin every March. She called SXSW "the most diverse, exciting music festival you can possibly imagine." Thousands of artists like Sage perform up and down 6th Street during SXSW, making the city feel like a carnival of music.

"The city just seems to eat, sleep, and breathe music," said Sage. "But unlike Nashville, where you expect country music to dominate the club scene, you really feel like it is this wide open, adventurous place where the bottom line is: 'if it's great, it's great, and it will be respected.'"

In addition to the music portion of SXSW, the festival also hosts conferences on film and Internet technology. "All of these different forms of media cross-fertilize," said Preve, who, in addition to producing electronic music, runs the company Akademik Records and teaches at Austin Community College. He values the opportunity SXSW offers creative people like himself to connect and come up with new ideas, and he values the energy SXSW lends the city year-round.

"Austin shows no signs of stopping," Preve said. ▣

TRAVELING to America

DOs

- BUY YOUR AIR TICKET AHEAD AND BE FLEXIBLE ON DATES TO SAVE.**
- JOIN A GROUP TOUR FOR PLANNING EASE AND TO MAKE FRIENDS.**
- GET OFF THE BEATEN PATH. LESSER-KNOWN PLACES ARE THE REAL AMERICA.**
- TIPPING IS CUSTOMARY FOR WAITSTAFF, TAXI DRIVERS.**
- TAKE THE BUS. FOR SHORT TREKS, DISCOUNT BUS SERVICES ARE GREAT.**
- TALK TO LOCALS. THEY'LL STEER YOU TO THE BEST FOOD, MUSIC, SCENERY.**

DON'Ts

- DON'T KISS NEW ACQUAINTANCES. AMERICANS SMILE AND OFFER A HANDSHAKE.**
- DON'T LEAVE BAGS UNATTENDED.**
- DON'T SLURP YOUR NOODLES. :)**

SOURCES: STA TRAVEL, NYC AND CO., AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION, AND EJIUSA.

Brooklyn Abridged: Eat. Play. Shop.

JANE L. LEVERE

Want to visit the real New York? Forget Manhattan. Brooklyn is where it's at today.

One of New York City's five boroughs, Brooklyn is "rapidly relegating Manhattan to outer-borough status," said Mark Zustovich, spokesman for Marty

Markowitz, the Brooklyn borough president. And "outer-borough status," in New Yorkese, is definitely not a compliment.

While Zustovich has an obvious bias, he makes a good case for Brooklyn as "authentic," with its home-grown breweries and bowling alleys and locally sourced restaurants. He points out that it is not overrun by chains like the Hard Rock Café.

To get the full-on Brooklyn experience — particularly if you're visiting in mild weather — walk across the Brooklyn Bridge, which connects lower Manhattan to the Brooklyn neighborhood of DUMBO, whose name is an acronym for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass.

At the time of its opening in 1883, the bridge was the world's longest suspension bridge and the first bridge to span the East River. While representing a technical feat, the bridge also inspired art, including the iconic painting by Joseph Stella and the poem by Hart Crane. The Brooklyn Bridge was considered one of the "eight modern wonders of the world," said Robert Reid, U.S. travel editor for Lonely Planet guidebooks, and it continues to offer spectacular views of the Manhattan skyline and landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty.

Continue on it to DUMBO and Brooklyn Bridge Park, a green space between the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges (the latter also spans the East River) that has a restored 1920s carousel. You can snack happily here at Almondine Bakery and Jacques Torres Chocolate, or check out local art galleries and the art books at powerHouse Books.

Next stop, via the East River Ferry, is high-profile Williamsburg, considered by many to be the trendiest neighborhood in all five boroughs. Besides its own burgeoning art scene, there's Nitehawk Cinema, where dinner is served along with movies; Brooklyn Brewery, which offers tours; and posh new boutique hotels, such as the Wythe or King & Grove, where the rooftop-lounge view is memorable. At McCarren Park, weather permitting, you can listen to live music and play kickball, baseball, soccer and bocce.

Greenpoint, another stop on the East River Ferry, is heaven for beer-lovers: Spritzenhaus beer hall features communal tables

straight from Germany and a long list of German beers. Greenpoint's atmosphere, says Reid, is an intriguing combination of "Polish restaurants and hipster bars."

The subway can take you next to Park Slope, whose "other Fifth Avenue" (not to be confused with the one in Manhattan) has designer and vintage clothing shops. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden is also here. Saturday morning, before noon, admission is free. "I especially like it during the cherry blossom festival in the spring, when there's Japanese drumming, theater and music," Reid said.

Another must-see here for outdoor-lovers is Prospect Park, designed by the men who created Manhattan's Central Park, Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux. "I like it more than Central Park, it's just more alive. You can play soccer, picnic, bike. It's much more used than Central Park; you can really enjoy it," Reid said.

Via subway, continue on to Fort Greene, home of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, a 150-year-old institution whose mindset is very much in the 21st century: It has a vibrant, multi-national, multi-screen movie program at its BAM Rose Cinemas, a new theater offering contemporary plays and dance with \$20 tickets, and a café with live music on weekends by performers from around the world. A few blocks away is Brooklyn's newest landmark, Barclays Center, the home of basketball and hockey teams.

To get the full-on Brooklyn experience — particularly if you're visiting in mild weather — walk across the Brooklyn Bridge.

Finally, don't leave the borough without visiting its ocean-side attractions, including Coney Island, with a boardwalk offering tasting treats, the New York Aquarium, and off-beat entertainment like the legendary Cyclone, a 1927 roller coaster in Luna Park. Coney Island is also home of the Brooklyn Cyclones, the minor league team of the major league baseball team the New York Mets — where else can you watch baseball by the sea? Brighton Beach, which shares Coney Island's boardwalk, has its own unique atmosphere, thanks to authentic Russian markets and vibrant nightlife. Go to Tatiana Restaurant to dine on the boardwalk in summertime, then slip inside for a Las Vegas-style revue. ■



As seen from the neighborhood called DUMBO (for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass), the Manhattan Bridge frames the Empire State Building. Adjacent to Brooklyn Bridge Park, the area attracts foodies, art lovers and the young-at-heart.

DESTINATION AMERICA



Route 66: The Mother Road

Route 66 has forever meant “going somewhere,” according to author Michael Wallis whose book *Route 66: The Mother Road 75th Anniversary Edition* celebrates the legendary highway. Established in 1926, Route 66 was advertised as “the shortest, best and most scenic route from Chicago through St. Louis to Los Angeles.” It was popular among American drivers until the early 1960s, when some of its major sections were replaced by a modern highway system.

A major literary work — *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck — the 1946 song “(Get Your Kicks On) Route 66” by Bobby Troup and the TV series *Route 66* in the early 1960s have contributed to the highway’s legend, making otherwise mundane gas stations, motels and eating establishments roadside attractions. The legend survived the road’s 1985 decommissioning. Today Historic Route 66 enjoys growing ranks of aficionados, who travel it for a feel of 20th century America and its attractions, both authentic and kitschy.





OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City

Saigon Baguette, a Vietnamese sandwich shop, occupies the space of the 1930s-era Milk Bottle Grocery, whose **roof is topped by a supersized milk bottle**. Today, Asian soft drinks based on juices from exotic fruits are more popular than milk.



CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A seven-block-long **Broadway theater and commercial district** in its prime time boasted the highest concentration of movie theaters in the world. They were not regular theaters but rather palatial shrines of cinema, some of which can still be seen on walking tours offered by the Los Angeles Conservancy.



CALIFORNIA

San Bernardino

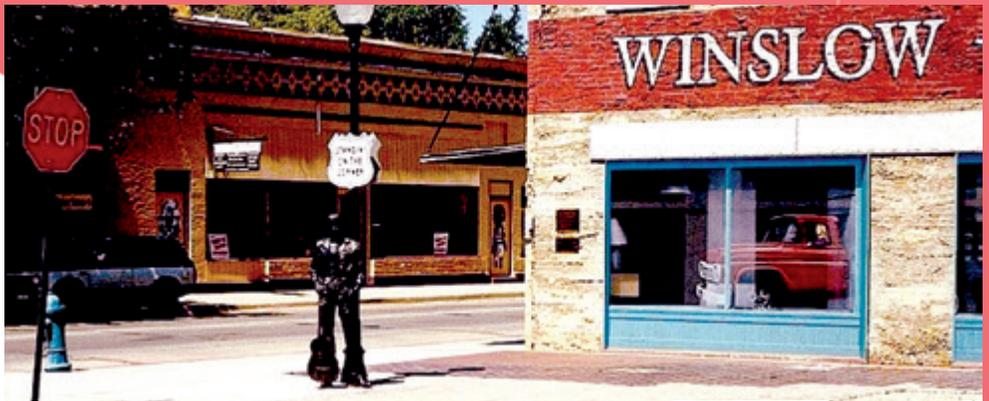
The **Wigwam Motel** inspired Cozy Cone Motel in Pixar's 2006 animation *Cars*. Each renovated 1949 concrete tepee has its own miniature bathroom and guestroom, complete with wagon-wheel bedstead.



CALIFORNIA

Victorville

Uma Thurman launched her revenge spree here in Quentin Tarantino's 2004 movie *Kill Bill Vol. 2* after stopping at Emma Jean's Holland Burger Café. At the Green Spot Motel, Herman J. Mankiewicz and John Houseman drafted the screenplay of a 1941 cinematic milestone — Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*. The California Route 66 Museum displays the best examples of Route 66 folk art including a “Cactus Garden” of wine bottles stuck to fence posts.



ARIZONA

Winslow

A street corner here was made famous by the Eagles' 1970s hit single “Take It Easy.” No less than a park, a statue and a two-story mural are dedicated to the song.



TEXAS

Near Amarillo

A “sculpture” of sorts, Cadillac Ranch is a row of **vintage 1949 to 1963 cars buried nose down in a field since 1974**. Floating Mesa is an optical illusion created by wrapping a narrow ring of blue plastic completely around a section near the top of a flat-topped hill. The “slice” appears to float in the sky slightly above the hill.



ILLINOIS

Springfield

The Cozy Dog Drive In claims to be **the first to serve a corn dog**, a batter-covered, deep-fried hot dog on a stick. The year was 1946. Today, the corn dog is still on the menu for \$1.95.



NEW MEXICO

Acoma Pueblo

Known as **“Sky City,”** this Native American community sits on a 113-meter sandstone hill, about 80 kilometers west of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dating back to 1150, it is one of the longest continuously inhabited settlements in the United States.

Ramadan



Ramadan at Princeton

SOHAIB SULTAN

For me, Ramadan is a time to appreciate letting go of daily concerns about eating and drinking. It opens up a lot of time in my day for introspection, reflection, contemplation and drawing nearer to God.

But also, and especially for my students, there's nothing like Ramadan for creating a sense of community. Students here get together for daily iftars and prayers. They always love it when Ramadan comes around, and they miss it when it's over. They ask, "How can we maintain this spirit throughout the year?" But that's

nearly impossible, and it's why Ramadan is so special.

I'm heartened to see how many students are committed to the spiritual discipline of a month-long fast, despite the academic pressures at Princeton. During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims here follow the same traditions as Muslims anywhere. But our students have also launched some new Ramadan-inspired initiatives that honor timeless Islamic principles, such as charity, in ways that reflect the concerns of their modern world.

At Ramadan, there's a heightened sense of awareness about the

“For the past few years, we’ve had an ‘Iron Chef’ iftar, which is a light-hearted cooking competit

— SOHAIB SULTAN, MUSLIM CHAPLAIN AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



needs of others, so we try to meet those needs in a variety of ways. For example, our community sponsors Project Downtown, an annual event that brings Muslims and non-Muslims together to make sandwiches for distribution to homeless shelters. Also, Princeton's Muslim Student Association organizes an annual fast-a-thon to encourage people to fast for a day, in solidarity with a "need crisis" somewhere in the world. Sponsors donate money, and participants also contribute whatever they would have spent on meals that day, to help victims of floods, earthquakes or other natural disasters.

Muslims at Princeton have introduced another innovation as well: a Ramadan that promotes environmentally-friendly practices.

For the past three years, we've been committed to a "green Ramadan." For iftars, we used to get the cheapest cups and plates we could find. But now we have an arrangement with Princeton's dining hall, where non-disposable cups and plates are provided and then washed up afterwards. This way, nothing goes into a landfill.

More mosques are trying to do this, too. The trend is driven largely by eco-conscious young people.

Ramadan can fall at any time of year, depending on the lunar calendar, so Ramadan programming varies at Princeton, according to whether or not school is in session. Because Ramadan falls in July this year, many of our students will be on vacation. But we do have graduate students who work on campus and undergraduate students who have summer internships, so we are holding informal talks with students. And, regardless of the season, during Ramadan, we host prayer services, Qur'anic readings, pre-dawn breakfast gatherings and iftars.

We diversify the iftar menus, since we have such a diverse Muslim community at Princeton. Sometimes we have South Asian food or Middle Eastern food or Italian dishes. Typically, iftars are catered by local restaurants, but sometimes students cook the food themselves, or two to three families get together to do it. For the past few years, we've had an "Iron Chef" iftar, which is a light-hearted cooking competition.

I think Ramadan creates a sense of solidarity among Muslim students: a sense of unity and belonging. Princeton's international Muslim students are often surprised to find such a warm, welcoming environment — not only at Ramadan, but year-round. It mitigates their homesickness. ■



A Souped-Up Van Feeds the Hungry

MACKENZIE BABB

For Muslims living in religiously diverse countries like the United States, Ramadan offers a time to demonstrate Islamic beliefs to neighbors who practice other religions.

It was during Ramadan in 2000 that community organizer Zamir Hassan felt compelled to help end hunger in his New Jersey town. Especially during Ramadan, "if you go to bed with your stomach full but your neighbor is hungry, you have not fulfilled your obligation as a Muslim," Hassan said.

When visiting a soup kitchen with his child's school that year, Hassan said, he was shocked to find so many hungry people in the affluent New Jersey community. He and his friends started Muslims Against Hunger, a nonprofit organization to feed the homeless.

A Community Effort

Because "hunger has no religion," Hassan said, since its start, his group has partnered with Christian, Jewish and Hindu groups as well as offices, schools, families and individuals.

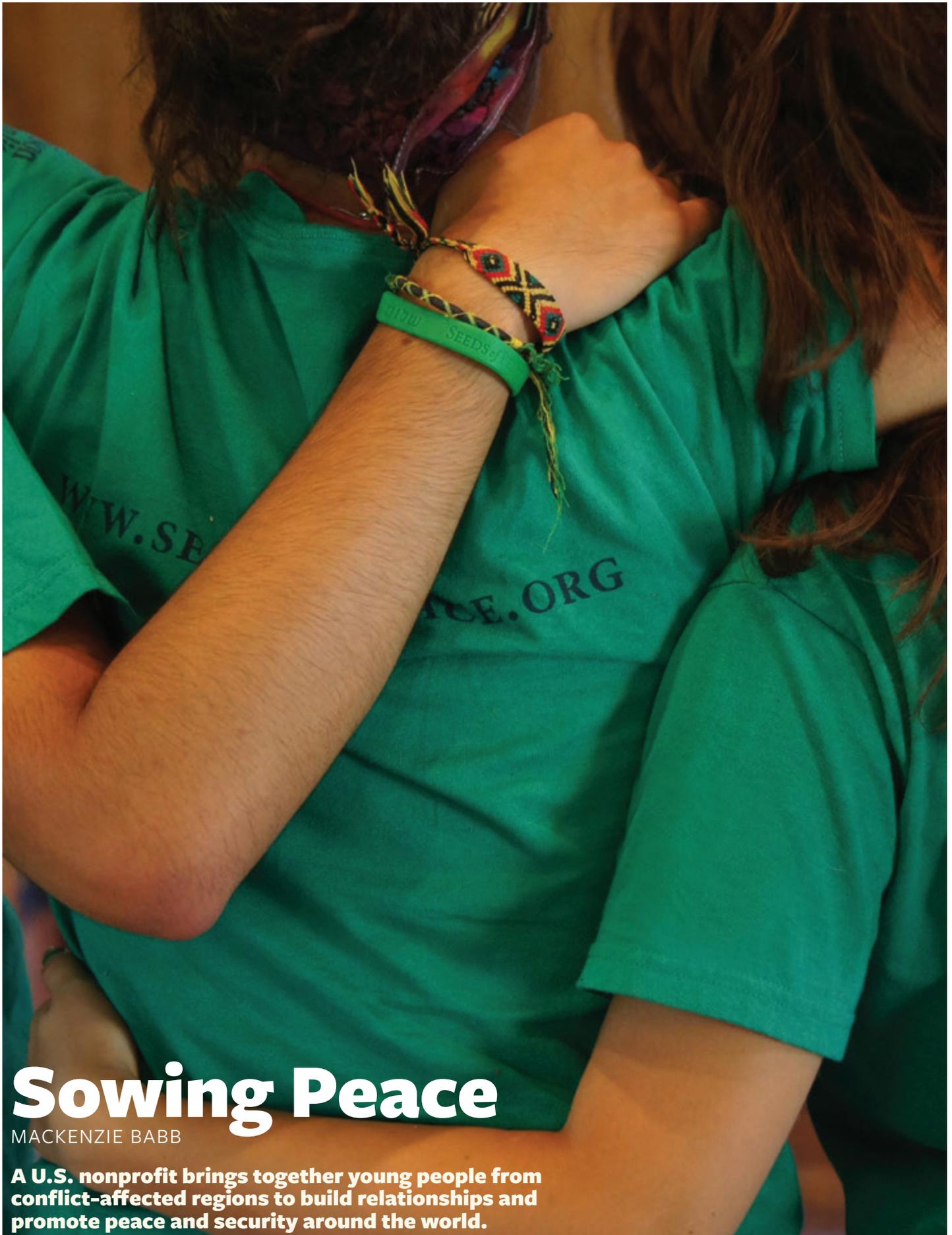
In the past decade, Muslims Against Hunger has mobilized more than 3,000 volunteers to work in 21 cities across the United States and Canada.

The group's latest project takes an innovative approach to serve the hungry. "Soup kitchens were only feeding people who were close by," Hassan said. "What about the people hanging out around the train station, or under the bridge, or living in tents in the woods?"

He and his group recently created the Hunger Van, essentially a mobile soup kitchen that volunteers fill with food before driving to serve homeless hangouts.

Small groups of volunteers register online to "host" the van, which arrives at a designated host location with a meal-preparation coach and ingredients to make up to 200 meals. After a couple of hours of cooking, the group then drives around to distribute the food.

The Hunger Van is currently serving the greater New Jersey and New York areas. Hassan said he hopes to start up vans in Boston and Washington in the coming months.



Sowing Peace

MACKENZIE BABB

A U.S. nonprofit brings together young people from conflict-affected regions to build relationships and promote peace and security around the world.

Anour, a Palestinian-American secondary school student, is headed to the Middle East this summer.

While it's not his first visit to the region, he says this trip is different.

Typically, Anour would spend his entire time catching up with his cousins in Kfar Kasem, an Arab village within Israel. This year, however, he plans to follow the family visit with two weeks traveling to see Arab and Israeli friends.

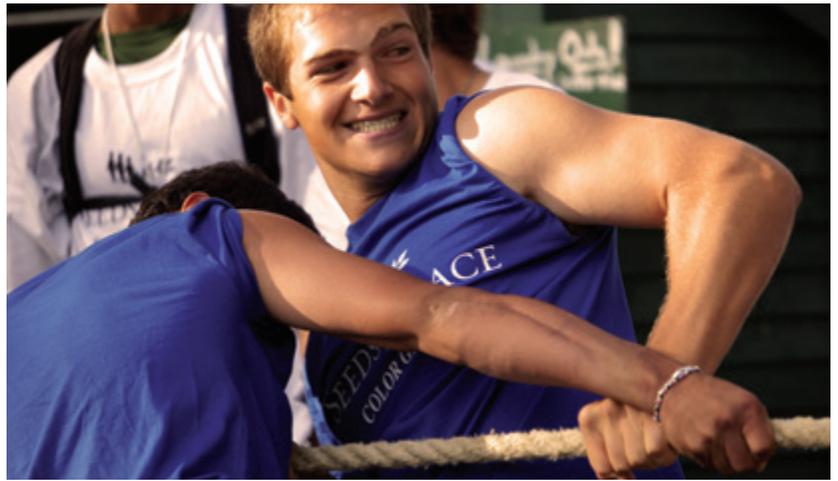
Although they live far apart, Anour and his pals have remained close since they met at summer camp in rural Maine.

Nestled in the western foothills of America's easternmost state, the "Seeds of Peace International Camp," where Anour met his Middle Eastern friends, sits on a quiet lake in the woods. Located near the small town of Otisfield, the site offers a serene setting for young people from around the globe to work at things like handling ropes on a sailboat and understanding each other better.

The camp, run by a U.S.-based nonprofit group, hosts 300 students each summer from conflict-affected regions for a program that mixes traditional summer activities with a lot of talking.

Campers meet daily in small groups for 90-minute conflict-resolution sessions. Aided by professional facilitators, they talk about what divides them back home.

Anour arrived skeptical about the prospect of discussing conflict in the Middle East with others his age from Israel, Egypt, Jordan, the United States and the Palestinian territories.



Top: Anour participates in a camp game of tug-of-war. Bottom: Two campers celebrate their birthdays together.



"I thought it was going to be a very, very long three weeks," he said. Indeed, he described his group's first discussion as "a large shouting match."

Seeds of Peace Director Leslie Lewin said that although these talks can be emotional, they foster understanding among students on all sides of a conflict.

"It's really easy to hate someone or something when you only have to hear about them or know about them on television. ... That changes when there are personal relationships [and] opportunities to discover similarities," she said.

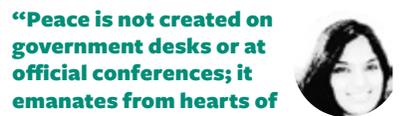
Anour said his group's conversations became more productive as camp leaders taught students to listen better. He said that despite his early misgivings, his camp experience encouraged him to think of ways he might promote peace and understanding around the world during his adulthood.

As a start, Anour will reunite in Israel this summer with a few of the 5,000 people from 27 countries who have attended the Seeds of Peace camp since it was founded 20 years ago. ■

Musings from Former Campers



"As much as people are capable of inflicting pain on others, we are also each other's windows to healing."
- Jenny, Israel



"Peace is not created on government desks or at official conferences; it emanates from hearts of people." - Shaili, India



"Camp is a place filled with potential future leaders being exposed to the 'other side' in their formative years and then unleashed back to their communities."
- Qasim, Pakistan

Young Americans Abroad

U.S. students show more interest in studying abroad than ever. Millennials, or 18- to 29-year olds, thirst to experience the world first-hand after getting a taste of it from cyberspace and television.



Makena Sage discovers the impossible



A samba school in Rio? Yes!



66%

HAVE PASSPORTS

Increasingly, U.S. colleges and universities make studying in another country, at least for a semester, a requirement. Many work with foreign counterparts to offer exchange programs. Some Americans on a budget are attracted to economical four-year degrees overseas.



49%

HAVE MAINTAINED
correspondence with
someone living abroad

Veraluz Deleon, who studied in Argentina, says that she has “an open mind to new cultures, people, ideas and a new life.”



68%

EXPECT TO TRAVEL
abroad at least once in the
next five years

The overwhelming majority of graduates who have studied abroad agree that the experience has influenced their perspectives on world events. “I’ve learned new things about culture, language, and myself every week here,” said Jasmine Sharpe on her semester in Spain.



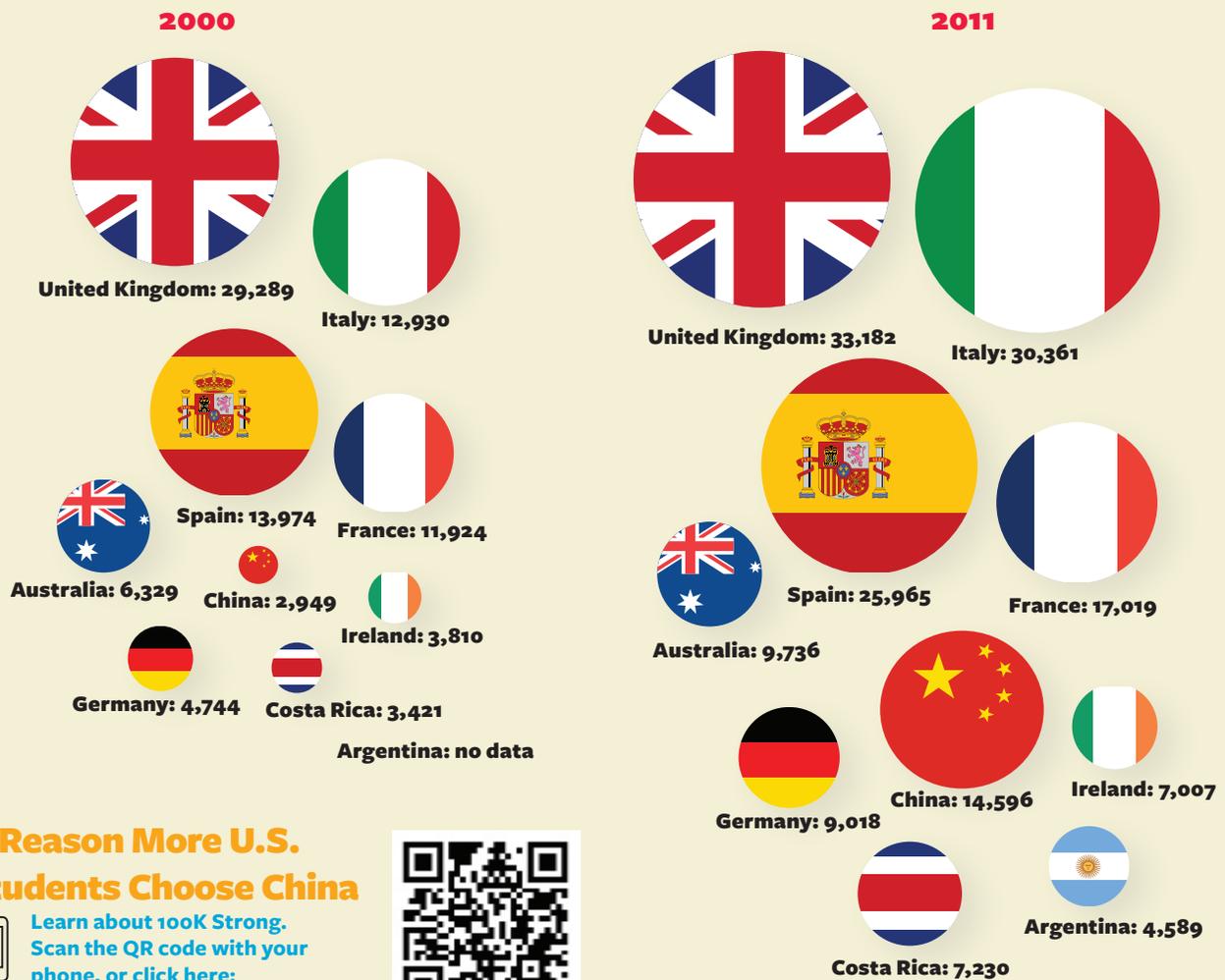
33%

HOPE TO WORK
in a foreign country
at some time in their lives

Makena Sage (pictured above), who studied in Argentina, says in her blog that the study-abroad experience was responsible for shifting her “perspective on life and what is or isn’t possible.”

Americans Without Borders

Between 2000 and 2011, the number of young Americans studying abroad almost doubled. China witnessed the largest jump in Americans enrolling: 400 percent.



A Reason More U.S. Students Choose China



Learn about 100K Strong. Scan the QR code with your phone, or click here: <http://goo.gl/m3eER>



SOURCE: INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, 2012 OPEN DOORS REPORT

A Pollster Predicts

Pollster John Zogby identifies Americans born between 1979 and 1994 as the First Globals generation. “They have a planetary sensibility like no other generation,” he said. “They remain optimistic although some of their enthusiasm has been tempered by the long recession and both public and personal debt.” Following are Zogby’s predictions on this generation:

- 1 These “global nomads” will travel together in packs seeking experience, gigs and connections with new people. They will be an informal “peace corps.”
- 2 Business and government will come to rely on them for their skills in problem-solving much the way they have relied on them to teach older office workers about technology. A special premium will be placed on their lack of experience in bureaucratic decision-making. They are particularly skilled at resolving issues via networks and small groups.
- 3 They will bounce from gig to gig, but their friendships will remain long-distance and a solid anchor in their lives.
- 4 Their offspring will be multi-racial “papooses” — i.e., from Native American folklore, babies who were packed tightly in blankets and always ready for long travel — who will be multi-lingual and home schooled, wherever home may be.
- 5 “First Globals” will place as much emphasis on their tribes — i.e., their communities of shared interests that cross country borders — as on nations. Being American is in the Domain Name System, but they will be “Americans Without Borders.”



What is a MOOC?

Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs, take education out of the classroom and make classes from top-rated universities available for free to anyone who can connect to the Internet.

MOOCs are in their infancy, but their potential is huge. To some, MOOCs offer a glimpse of education's future. But there are questions yet to be answered: Who will grade 100,000 papers? Can coursework completed through a MOOC earn the same credit as coursework undertaken on a campus?

Will Badges Replace Degrees?

Traditionally, employers have looked to university degrees to measure job candidates' qualifications. MOOCs could change that.

The American Council on Education will review certain free online courses offered by elite universities and might recommend that other colleges give credit for them.

Some providers of MOOCs are bringing in revenue by selling information to employers about high-performing students who might be a good fit for jobs.

Coursera, the largest provider of MOOCs, has contracted to license courses to Antioch University, which would offer versions of the MOOCs for credit as part of a bachelor's degree program.

Three MOOCs You Should Know

- 1** Sebastian Thrun, a computer-science professor at Stanford, and Peter Norvig, director of research at Google, offer a popular course on artificial intelligence through Udacity.
- 2** Bioelectricity: A Quantitative Approach is offered through Coursera. The number of students who completed Duke University's first MOOC was more than 10 times the campus enrollment.
- 3** CS50x: Introduction to Computer Science is offered by edX. The traditional campus version of this class is Harvard's largest course.



MOOCs By Numbers

190

Number of countries represented in the 160,000 participants in Stanford University's free online artificial-intelligence course in 2011.



Amount the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave to the American Council on Education to test the viability of MOOCs for college-transfer credit.

\$895,000

Who's Right?

To MOOC or not to MOOC — that is the question.

FOR

Alex Tabarrok, professor, George Mason University

Tabarrok sees a future in which MOOCs create learning opportunities that didn't exist before.



AGAINST

Siva Vaidhyathan, professor, University of Virginia

Vaidhyathan sees great potential in online learning but says MOOCs are actually a step backward in realizing that potential.



On MOOCs compared to traditional classroom education

"The reality is that more than a third of college students are over the age of 25, nearly half are enrolled part-time, and most are working. About one quarter of college students have children of their own. The traditional college experience does not meet the needs of most of today's students."

"[T]he difference between a real college course and a MOOC is like the difference between playing golf and watching golf. Both can be exciting and enjoyable. Both can be boring and frustrating. But they are not the same thing."

On MOOCs' ability to extend education's reach

"[O]ffline teaching requires that every customer consumes at the exact moment that the supplier produces. [MOOCs are] open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Learning on demand."

"Enthusiasts love to pump up the enrollment numbers but fail to cite the attrition numbers. [N]one of these most recent high-profile experiments offers anything more than the video version of the classic (and uninspiring) correspondence course of the snail-mail age."

Are MOOCs right for every style of learning?

"The adaptive nature of the test makes it possible to zero in more quickly on true ability. ... Computer-adaptive learning will be as if every student has their own professor on demand—much more personalized than one professor teaching 500 students or even 50 students. ... Surprisingly, the computer will make learning less standardized and robotic."

"MOOCs that have been deemed 'successful' tend to be math- and computation-based and vocational — rather than exploratory, idea-based, or laboratory-based ... The worst thing we can do is force every area of study into one mode just because some rich folks like Bill Gates think MOOCs are the key to the future."

FROM CATO UNBOUND, NOVEMBER 12, 2012

FROM "WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH MOOCs?" THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S INNOVATIONS BLOG, JULY 6, 2012



Former Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, a Harvard dropout, thinks MOOCs could help employers measure what you know, instead of where you went to school.

“The ideal would be to separate out the idea of **proving your knowledge from the way you **acquired** that knowledge.”**

— BILL GATES



Rie Takahashi, who composes classical music based on genetic information, says her work helps medical students.



Listen!



To hear gene music, scan the QR code with your phone, or click here: <http://goo.gl/zzVgf>

DNA, Like You've Never Heard It

Scientists in California turn genetic information into music

MICHAEL GALLANT

Rie Takahashi, a young scientist from Los Angeles, has discovered an unexpected new tool that can help anyone, anywhere, begin to understand the hidden secrets of human genetics — the iPod.

“In my junior year at the University of California, Los Angeles, I took a seminar that Professor Jeffrey H. Miller was teaching called Science and Society,” said Takahashi, who has also studied classical

piano for more than two decades. She said that one of the tasks he assigned that year, which was 2005, was “to break down the jargon that we often have in science and find ways to make it approachable to anyone.” Given Takahashi’s passions for music and science, she and Miller decided that her studies should pursue the nexus of those interests. “There are no language barriers when it comes to music,” she said.

Miller said that translating sequences of amino acids — a.k.a. the microscopic structures that help cells build important proteins like muscle — into music had been tried long before he and Takahashi began working together, and with no great success. “The naïve starting point is to assign a different musical note to each of 20 amino acids and whenever a certain amino acid appears in a sequence, you hear the corresponding musical note,” he said. The problem? Because any amino acid can appear next to any other one, the result can be music that chaotically jumps all over the place — “alien music,” he said, laughing.

To make genetically-sourced music more listenable, Takahashi instead created a computer program that assigned amino acids to trigger full chords instead of individual notes. She also paired certain similar amino acids together, having each trigger different inverted variations of the same chord. “Rie’s program created very pretty music,” said Miller.

But beyond making the results listenable, Takahashi’s program for translating genes into sound, dubbed Gene2Music by its creator, has compelling practical applications. “Sometimes it can be easier to hear patterns than to see them,” says Takahashi. “Huntington’s disease, for example, is caused by a repetition of certain amino acids, and if you listen to the Huntington’s protein, even if you don’t know anything about music, you can hear that same pattern repeating time after time and understand that something unusual is happening.” A medical school professor, years later, at UCLA continues to play that sound when teaching his students, Takahashi said.

Takahashi believes that continuing to examine amino acids through music could lead to scientific discoveries.

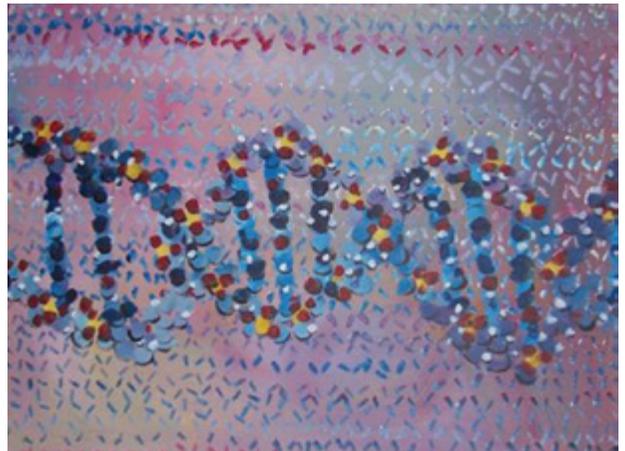
Gene2Music has earned international attention and been used as a teaching tool in Mexico as well as in the United States; Takahashi and Miller have published scientific papers on the subject and have been featured on the BBC.

Moving forward, Takahashi hopes to see the manifestations of Gene2Music expand beyond

a tool to teach future doctors. “Even though I orchestrated the music with synthesized instruments on my computer, it hasn’t been performed by a live orchestra,” she said. “I’d love to use the basis of this music to explore electronic and other genres of music. There’s a lot of information and data that we’d be able to creatively represent that way.”

Takahashi believes that continuing to examine amino acids through music could lead to scientific discoveries. Only some parts of amino acid chains actually create proteins, she said, while other parts of the same sequence control when that production happens. “There are lots of algorithms out there to predict that timing, but none are perfect,” she said. “Being able to hear the sequences ... could help us find patterns that we’d missed before.” ■

DNA, Like You’ve Never Seen It



“I was inspired by how important DNA is and how its magical structure informs so much of who we are. Packed in the little, tiny x’s, in a very special language, is a story about who you are and how you are going to live.”

KATARINA COUNTISS, A STUDENT IN SEATTLE, ABOUT HER PAINTING (ABOVE) OF DNA.



DNA, Like You’ve Never Read It

SUSAN MILLIGAN

William Shakespeare, it might be said, had great literature in his DNA. And because of groundbreaking research done by scientists in the U.S. and abroad, DNA is being used to store all of Shakespeare’s sonnets.

Researchers at the European Bioinformatics Institute in England, developing an idea they came up with while chatting at a pub, have stored the poetry on synthetic DNA that takes up a speck-sized space at the bottom of a test tube.

“You could fit a whole library onto your key chain,” said Dr. George Church, a Harvard Medical School geneticist who authored a September paper about DNA storage with his colleague, Sriram Kosuri.

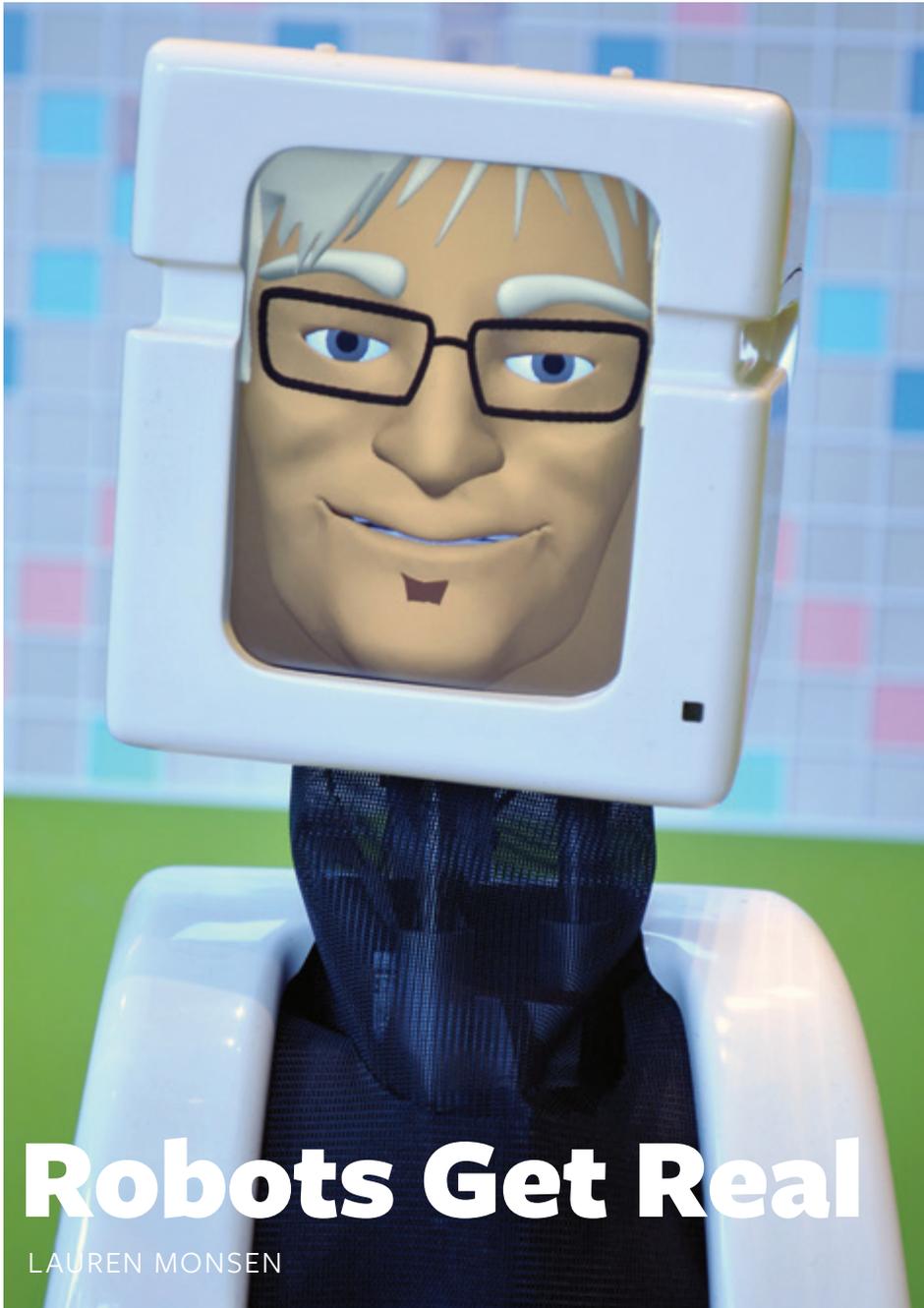
Along with Shakespeare’s sonnets, the Institute’s Nick Goldman and Ewan Birney have

stored a scientific paper and a recorded clip from Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

The two researchers employed error-free software so the information can be kept safe for thousands of years.

Why not just use your hard drive? “DNA is astonishingly stable,” Goldman said. “Because DNA is the basis of all life on earth, we’re still going to be able to read the information as long as there are technologically-advanced humans around. You wouldn’t trust your hard disk drive or a zip drive to work reliably after just a few years.”

Harvard’s Church isn’t throwing away his zip drive just yet: the synthetic-DNA technology is expensive. Right now, he said, we would not consider using it to store videos of our everyday lives.



Robots Get Real

LAUREN MONSEN

In science fiction, robots are sometimes indistinguishable from people, but until recently, robots used by industry, the military or law enforcement have been designed to look like machines and to complete highly specific, mechanical tasks.

Enter researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, who are creating robots with personalities.

Carnegie Mellon's robotics program is ranked No. 1 by U.S. News & World Report. The U.S. ranks alongside Japan and the European Union as a world leader in robotics, according to the National Science Foundation.

Valerie, Tank, Athina and Victor —

among the world's first story-telling robots — are the result of an interdisciplinary project between the university's School of Drama and its Robotics Institute. Professor Anne Mundell works with drama students to create each robot's persona, and Professor Reid Simmons helps robotics students develop the software to make robots interact with humans.

The project grew out of conversations about how technology affects people's day-to-day lives. Intrigued by the possibilities of marrying art to technology, the professors came up with the idea of "social robots," which would converse while performing tasks.

The robots are entertaining, but their purpose is serious. The robots provide information — directions, weather reports and so forth — but their quirky personalities encourage people to spend longer periods of time interacting with them. And that is a breakthrough. As robots assume a greater role in health care (assisting the elderly with their medications, for example), it will be important for them to be approachable.

The students' first robot collaboration produced Valerie, a "roboceptionist" who today is used for classroom demos. Initially installed in the computer science building, she answered visitors' and callers' questions while also gossiping (at times, complaining about her mother's attempts to run her love life).

Valerie's successor, Tank, took over as roboceptionist in 2005, "freeing Valerie to pursue her singing vocation," said Mundell, who is obviously fond of her students' creations.

Tank, conceived as a rugged military veteran, has enjoyed a longer tenure as department roboceptionist (although his eventual replacement, Miranda, is in the works). He has his own unique personality; for instance, he gets cranky if visitors are rude to him.

The students developed the serialized stories told by these robots. Visitors type questions into a keyboard, and the robots respond with computer-generated speech. "As you interact with the robots, their stories evolve. It's like a running soap opera," Mundell said.

Victor has the persona of an adolescent prodigy attending the university on a Scrabble [board game] scholarship. Designed to play against human opponents, Victor talks like a moody teenager. Installed in a student lounge, he taunts students by citing things that robots can do better than humans.

The robots have facial expressions, courtesy of software devised by Simmons, and they tilt their heads and move their eyes. They are equipped with motion sensors that detect where people are.

The collaborators have learned from successive creations; newer robots interact more naturally. Victor has "an emotional response spectrum, so he can respond appropriately when things happen during the course of a Scrabble game," said Mundell.

For her, social robots, despite their real-world applications, are "story-telling in a new format," she said. ■

Top to bottom:
Valerie, Victor and Tank.



→ **MY SINGING ... MAKES ME HAPPY. EVERYONE ELSE CAN GO AUTO-DELETE THEMSELVES.**



SOME PEOPLE SAY I HAVE A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER. ACTUALLY, I HAVE A CHIP IN MY SHOULDER. ←



→ **COMPUTERS HAVE FEELINGS, TOO.**

Watch!



To view a video of Valerie the robot, scan the QR code with your phone, or click here: <http://goo.gl/UeRqX>

Who's Afraid of Robots?

An interview with Matthew Mason, director of the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University

Q: Science fiction makes us believe that once robots reach comparable intelligence to humans, they could rise up. Are they coming to get us?

Matthew Mason: Not in the near future. Maybe 500 years from now. I wish we'd been so successful in researching artificial intelligence and developing robots that it was a realistic fear (laughs).

Q: What can today's robots do or not do?

MM: All things that are easy for us are hard for robots, and all things that are hard for us are easy for robots. The intellectual challenges related to the chess game were addressed quite successfully by artificial intelligence — computers won against human competitors. Yet if you want a robot to move chess pieces on the board, it's tough. Also, look at how humans and robots deal with uncertainty. Humans use their senses, but also common-sense physics. When they encounter obstacles, they can do a quick analysis to solve the problem. Robots have a hard time dealing with such obstacles.

Q: Is there a critical challenge to making robots more versatile?

MM: Generally, researchers are looking at different mechanisms, structures and materials that can advance robotics. They work on controls, perception, intelligence and machine learning. I work in manipulation, which involves motion planning and control, including how robots use their "hands." Today, we have robots with simple grippers that are more like a pair of tongs. Some people are designing better "hands," similar to humans'. But even if they succeed, I don't think it will solve the problem. A human being with a pair of chopsticks will still be vastly more capable than a robot dealing with a novel situation, at least in the near future.

Q: Mobile phones are changing our lives. Will robots affect us more radically?

MM: Robots have been changing our lives, but not our minds. Often, we see an automated device as too simple to call it a robot. I'm excited about applications of robots in education. At Carnegie Mellon we have an automated tutor, which listens to children read, corrects their mistakes, and guides and encourages them. Space exploration is changing. Our motion-planning software was used in the NASA rovers, which have explored Mars. The driverless car, medical robots, and technologies that can watch and pay intelligent attention to all the space around us and inside our bodies will cause amazing changes in our lives.

Q: You have the Robot Hall of Fame at Carnegie Mellon. Do robots themselves select inductees?

MM: That would take all the fun from being a judge ... and would scare me a bit (laughs).

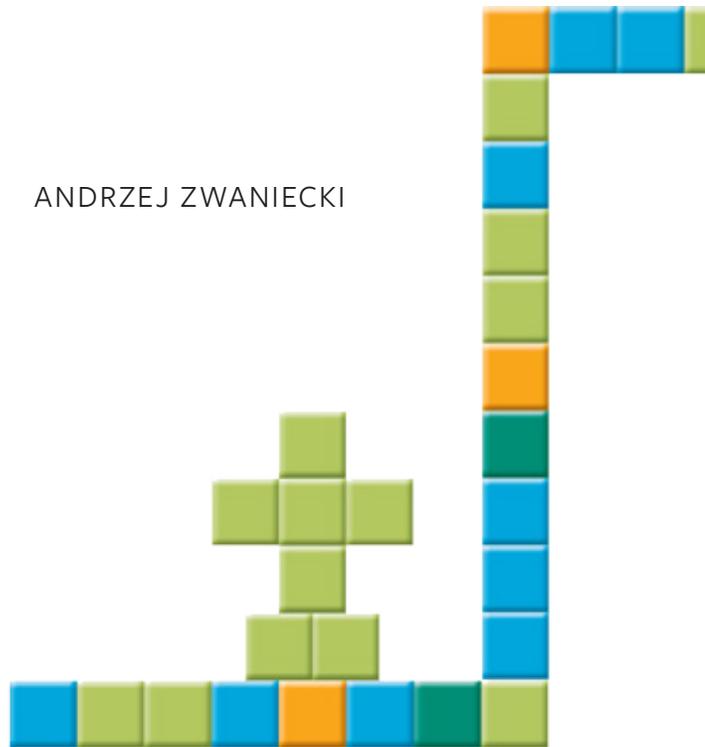
Matthew Mason



Getting In the Game

Got a million-dollar idea? Crowdfunding, which is boosting many game-related businesses, could be the ticket to financing your small business or artistic creation.

ANDRZEJ ZWANIECKI



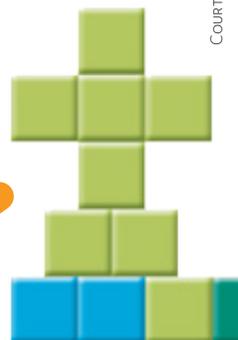
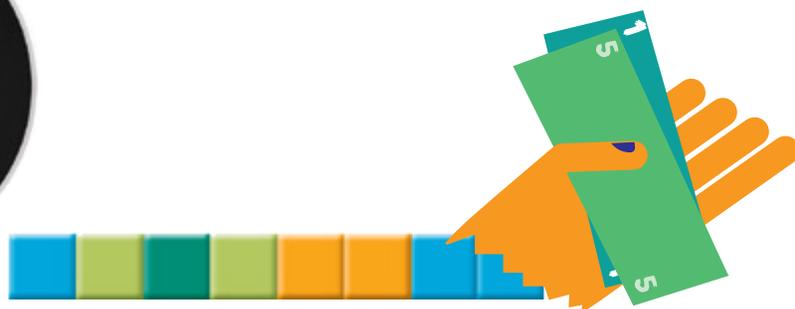
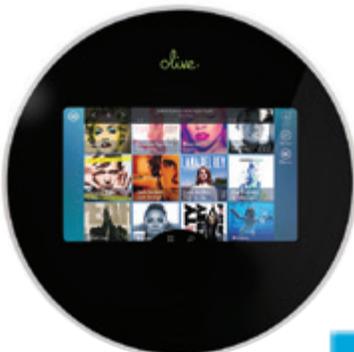
Finding the money to start a business or launch an artistic idea is changing, as bank loans or regular investors are nudged aside by Internet investors, unknown to each other and making small contributions.

Called “crowdfunding,” the practice of soliciting funds online from small investors or donors is growing in popularity, especially in Western countries. In 2012, around 540 websites — mostly in the U.S., Canada and European countries — were pitching ideas for financial backing, according to Crowdsourcing.org, an industry research group.

The trend has allowed budding artists, designers and entrepreneurs with no or meager financial resources to fund projects from among Internet users in return for future, often modest, rewards. (Rewards may include pre-ordered products, discount coupons, T-shirts, dinners, or sometimes, a phone conversation with a founder.)

When Kickstarter.com, a U.S. crowdfunding service, was launched in 2009 by three partners, it was supported only by the partners’ friends. Its first successes were small: two arts projects received funding — \$100 and \$37, respectively. Today, crowdfunding is a \$2.8 billion global industry, and many project owners ask for \$1 million in funding ... and get it.

Champagne corks popped early: Olive One, a unique music player, exceeded its funding goals two months before the deadline.



COURTESY OLIVE MEDIA, INC.



Click and Invest

Crowdfunding's proponents argue that the funding model democratizes the investment process, allowing thousands of the potential users of a service, buyers of a product or art lovers to invest in ideas that excite them. The money they put on the line is a vote of confidence in the project.

The crowd "is incredibly capable of identifying and validating a good idea," Carl Esposti, chief executive of Massolution, a crowdfunding consulting firm, told *Forbes* magazine in May 2012.

Crowdfunded projects are being pursued under the intense scrutiny of a crowd. For the most part, they are successful. More than 96 percent of those that met their funding goals on Kickstarter delivered expected results, according to a 2012 study by Ethan Mollick, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania. But that study also suggests that an easier access to capital may encourage launching projects that are not ready: only 25 percent of projects that had had successful campaigns on Kickstarter delivered results on time.

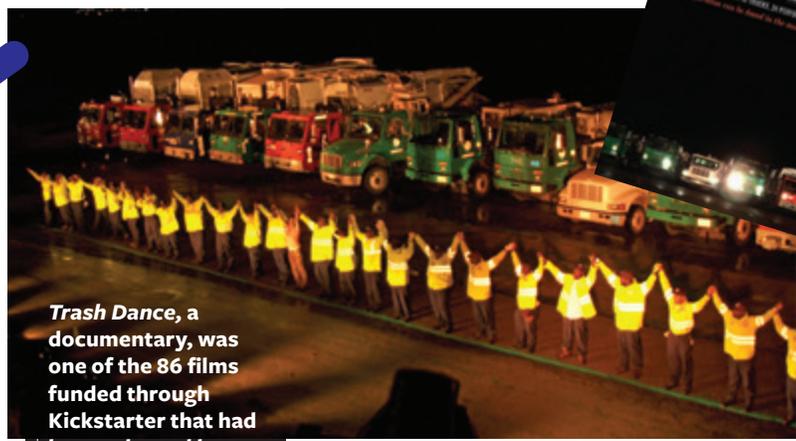
Another concern — that a shyster could raise funds for a project he has no intention of pursuing — has proven exaggerated. "The transparency and social networking dynamics of crowdfunding have been excellent at keeping fraud near zero," Kevin Lawton, a co-author of *The Crowdfunding Revolution*, said.

In the future, an entire crowdfunding ecosystem will emerge from cross-platform innovations, according to Lawton. In addition, government grants and philanthropy will transition to crowdfunding allocation, he said.

Crowdfunding Goes Global

In the United States, the stakes are getting higher. Under the JOBS Act passed by Congress in 2012, entrepreneurs can sell up to \$1 million worth of equity to the general public through accredited crowdfunding platforms. The law will boost U.S. small-business growth, but it will also put more pressure on entrepreneurs and website operators to become more accountable to investors.

In emerging markets, the crowdfunding revolution is only beginning. According to Crowdfund Capital Advisors, a consulting firm, this form of investment has a great potential in Muslim countries as it conforms to the principles of Islamic finance. In some countries in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East relevant platforms have either already been launched or are about to be launched. ■



Trash Dance, a documentary, was one of the 86 films funded through Kickstarter that had been released by 2013.

Top Crowdfunding Campaigns of 2012

1. PEBBLE SMART WATCH



2. OUYA, A MOBILE GAMING CONSOLE



3. STAR CITIZEN, A COMPUTER GAME



4. PROJECT ETERNITY, A VIDEO GAME



5. AMANDA PALMER & THE GRAND THEFT ORCHESTRA'S MUSIC ALBUM



SOURCE: TRIPLEPUNDIT.COM



Why We Walked Out

Terry Kramer teaches at UCLA. He's a former ambassador and headed the U.S. delegation to a contentious December 2012 conference in Dubai.



TERRY KRAMER

The World Conference on International Telecommunications in Dubai was supposed to be focused on telecommunications. The U.S. delegation had hoped to focus on getting broadband Internet access in developing nations. Instead, what ended up happening was that several alarming proposals having to do with Internet regulation came in.

In most cases, the people at the conference agreed on the problems. The question was, “How do you solve the problems?” Some of the players there said, “With government.” Spam, for instance, is unsolicited content. Somebody has got to make a decision as to what is unsolicited and what can be blocked. The U.S. view is that it’s not appropriate for a government to do that because it opens the door to censorship of content. That censorship can be oriented around democracy and free speech and people sharing their political views.

We just said, “We can’t support that,” and didn’t sign the treaty. We were joined in this point of view by Europe, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, India and Kenya. We believe groups that fully represent the citizens, consumers and societies that benefit from the Internet — such as the Internet Governance Forum — are better suited to deal with future questions of Internet regulation.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), discussed in this issue [page 24], are a good example of why it’s so important to guard against excessive government regulations.

One proposal made at the conference that would directly harm MOOCs was for a “sending-party-pays” price regime. Under a “sending-party-pays” regime, the universities developing free content and delivering it online would be subject to large fees. We’re concerned that they would decide not to send the content or to shift to a pay model, so the content would no longer be free.

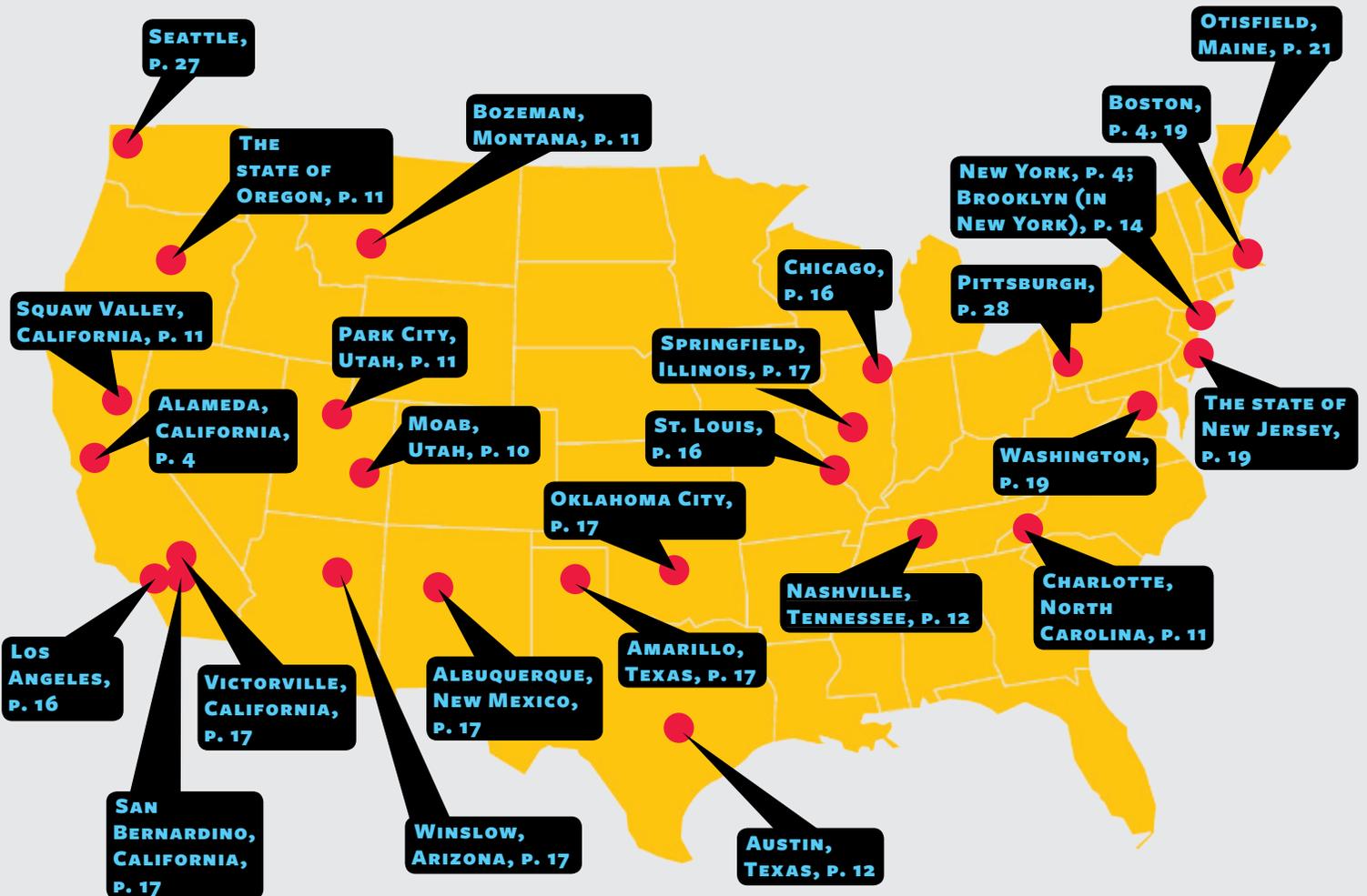
The Internet has created so many opportunities, because it’s free and open. That openness allows universities to share courses and entrepreneurs to develop unique content and applications. You’ve got to have a very, very light touch in terms of regulation on the Internet to encourage this environment. ■



**ANCHORAGE,
ALASKA, P. 4-5**

Connecting the Dots

The dots on the map refer to areas mentioned in this issue. Use the page number to connect a dot on the map with a bigger picture of the life in the USA.



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