

Amplifier

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Students explore heritage in Iran

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Co-Editor-in-Chief

The thought of traveling to a Middle Eastern country so near the war in Iraq may not seem to be an ideal summer vacation to most Americans. But for me traveling to the heart of the Middle East was the opportunity of a lifetime. It was there that I had the chance to learn about my heritage which had always felt so distant.

Attending the Iranian-American Scholarship Awards at Portland State University first peaked my interest about Iran. I was among 300 people, most like my dad, who came to the United States from Iran. Listening to the guest speakers talk about the standard Iranian hospitality and the copious amounts of history hidden away in the depths of the country gave me an unlikely push. I decided to take a trip back to visit my father's homeland with him and my brother, Kian, a sophomore.

Traveling to Iran, I knew there would be certain dangers. My main concern, of course, was terrorism and

also the fact the the U.S. and Iran aren't on 'good terms.' Being an obvious American, I didn't know how I would be accepted by the Iranian people. Another worry I had was how I would take to the wearing of a montage (long sleeved dress) and the scarf over my hair that is required by Islamic law. Changes like these don't usually come easy for people, especially if you're from halfway across the world.

My first impression of Tehran, Iran was that it was really big. We landed at around 2 a.m. (2 p.m. in West Linn time) and you could see the enormity of the city just by standing in the airport parking lot. The air in Tehran is very thick with smog and the blast of heat you feel walking outside made me feel very uncomfortable. My Iranian relatives had been waiting hours in the airport to see us, and as a custom, each of them brought us bouquets of flowers.

My grandparents, known to me and Mamani and Bababazorg, live in an apartment in the north central part of Tehran.



Part of the Ghorbani-Elizeh family: Kian, Bababazorg, Sara, Mamani, Roya, Fatahni and Edison visits the village of Elizeh, the birthplace of the author's father.

Photo submitted by Roya Elizeh

Although it would be considered tiny by American standards, their new apartment was perfect for them. Made up of two bedrooms, a family room, two bathrooms, and a kitchen, I came to love this place in the Sahdat-Abad neighborhood where I would spend most of my 18 days in Iran. The décor in the apartment was very traditional. Rugs would line the floors and framed

photographs were hung up around the house. Most of the photographs were of my family, but some were taken by my 24-year-old cousin, Kaveh, who has a passion for photography.

Most of my Iranian family knew how to speak some English. Although the language barrier was present, it didn't stop us from getting to know each other. We'd all sit around the family room while Mamani made

dinner just talking about the differences between our lives. My dad did some of the translating, but I also had an unlikely translator always with me. My 14-year-old cousin, Sara, has been taking English classes yearround for four years. Education is very important to Iranian teenagers, and classes turn into competitions about who can get the highest grade.

Roya in Iran

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Green and Gold, Amplifier Editors Named for 2007



Clockwise: Editors Alex Spady, Alicia Becker, Nathan Fisher, Lauren Levine, Roya Elizeh and Annie O'Kain head the student publications for 2006-2007.

Photo by Cole Fiala

Green and Gold Yearbook Staff won "Most Excellent Overall" for the 2005 yearbook, "Another Brick in the Wall" along with numerous other awards at the Oregon State University/Jostens Summer Workshop held in August.

Hillary Krippaehne, freshman, also won for best sports

design, and Alex Spady and Katelyn Beck each won honorable mention for page layout.

Editors for 2007 year are Alicia Becker, Annie O'Kain and Alex Spady.

Amplifier editors include Roya Elizeh, Nathan Fisher and Lauren Levine.

Construction finally over; parking back on track

COLE FIALA

Sports Editor

After three years of waiting, construction at the high school is complete. Over the summer, the finishing touches were put on the theater, the studio theater, costume shop and the scene shop. The dedication of the newly constructed South Wing will take place on Oct. 10 at 6 p.m.

The completion of construction also means that the parking has returned to preconstruction levels. This year there are 254 parking spots are for students, up significantly from the 111 spots offered to students last year.

The situation is much better than last year, according to Brian Bailey, Dean of Students for ninth



The new 600 seat theater will be dedicated along with the rest of the South wing on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at 6 p.m.

Photo by Cole Fiala

and tenth grades, who took over parking duties this year.

"(It's) unbelievably better. It's never going to be perfect but we're trying our best to give every senior a parking spot," Bailey said.

A select group of juniors got the last few parking

spots in the Tripp Lot by a lottery drawing. Seniors had until the Sept. 15 to claim spots before they lost their chance for a spot until second semester.

"(Parking is) much better than last year," Jessica Houck, senior, said.