

# THE NEW COURIER

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Institut d'Estudis Nord-Americans

Monthly Publication

## IF YOU ARE UNDER 18, TRAVEL THIS SUMMER TO USA OR EUROPE WITH THE IEN



This summer, thanks to an agreement between the Institute of North American Studies and INTERWAY, the younger students of the IEN can study English in the USA or other European countries. Interway, a company that has been offering language courses abroad and is the leader in its field with the Certification of Quality ISO9002/94, celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

INTERWAY is offering IEN students a special 5% discount on all courses abroad, including those in the USA.

### UNITED STATES AND CANADA

#### General Programs:

Classes + accommodation with a family or in a residence hall + activities and excursions Maryland, New York, Massachusetts (Boston), Florida, Illinois (Chicago) and other points in the Midwest, California (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Barbara), and Canada (Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto)

#### Special Programs:

**CALIFORNIA SURFING OR GOLF - Excursions + activities + golf or surfing**

**Excursions & activities:** It is a program where you live with families in southern and northern California, with 12 excursions, cultural activities, and sports for student's ages 13 to 18.

**Golf:** Students will have 12 golf classes a week. Professional players will teach you the best way to improve your swing.

**Surfing:** Students will have the possibility to go surfing on the waves of the Pacific in southern California. There are 12 surfing classes a week, plus three all-day excursions and six midday activities.

#### MIDWEST + ENGLISH OR TENNIS

Here students live with families and have 40 English classes or 40 hours of tennis classes for five weeks in the Midwest, in Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota or Wisconsin. The classes are held in public schools in the towns and are given by US teachers.

#### MINNESOTA & CAMPING OR SPORTS

This is a 5-week experience in the state of Minnesota. It is a combination of living with families part of the time, and 10 days with young people in an American summer camp (Camp Warren) or at a Sports Program (basketball or tennis) in a University.

### ENGLAND AND IRELAND

Classes + accommodation with a family or in a residence hall + activities and excursions

If you are interested, visit our Customer Services Department at the IEN or call 93 240 51 10, Monday to Friday from 1 PM to 8:30 PM

## St. PATRICK'S DAY

### CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

The person who was to become St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. His given name was Maewyn, and he almost didn't get the job of bishop of Ireland because he lacked the required scholarship.

Far from being a saint, until he was 16, he considered himself a pagan. At that age, he was sold into slavery by a group of Irish marauders that raided his village. During his captivity, he became closer to God. He escaped from slavery after six years and went to Gaul where he studied in the monastery under St. Germain, bishop of Auxerre, for a period of twelve years. During his training he became aware that his calling was to convert the pagans to Christianity.

His wishes were to return to Ireland, to convert the native pagans to Christianity. But his superiors instead appointed St. Palladius. But two years later, Palladius transferred to Scotland. Patrick, having adopted that Christian name earlier, was then appointed as second to Ireland.

Patrick was quite successful at winning converts. And this fact upset the Celtic Druids. Patrick was arrested several times, but escaped each time. He traveled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches, which would aid him in his conversion of the Irish country to Christianity.

His mission in Ireland lasted for thirty years. After that time, Patrick retired to County Down. He died on March 17 in AD 461. That day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day ever since. Much Irish folklore surrounds St. Patrick's Day. Not much of it is actually substantiated. Some of this lore includes the belief that Patrick raised people from the dead. He also is said to have given a sermon from a hilltop that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Of course, no snakes were ever native to Ireland, and some people think this is a metaphor for the conversion of the pagans. Though originally a Catholic holy day, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into more of a secular holiday.

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## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### SPRING TRIMESTER REGISTRATION

Here are the dates you need to remember

#### SPRING 2005 REGISTRATION MARCH 29 - APRIL 12

Registration Office schedule 10 AM to 2:30 PM and 3:30 to 8:30 PM

Monday through Friday

Remember you can both register and pay for your course by calling 93 240 28 50. You can use your debit or credit card, or if you prefer, use direct withdrawal from your bank account.

#### MICHIGAN ECCE: YOUR FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH!

The ECCE (Examination for the Certificate of Competency in English) is an official English language examination offered by the University of Michigan that measures competency in English at an upper-intermediate level, and is the North American alternative to the Cambridge First Certificate Exam.

The ECCE is designed for individuals who have basic linguistic competence to perform essential communicative transactions in all four-skill areas: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

The examination is intended for learners who have acquired at least intermediate competence in English language use. Such learners can communicate adequately with users of English who are able and motivated to make allowances for a non-native speaker of the language.

Who should take the ECCE? The Examination may be useful for adolescents wishing for some external measure of their competence in English, or adults wishing to obtain documentation for employment or promotion purposes, international business, or tourism. We recommend the exam for adults who have completed the Institute's Upper Intermediate 2 and above.

#### Format and Content Listening Section (about 25 minutes)

There are 50 multiple-choice items, delivered via audio recording. The tape is played only once and items are not repeated.

Grammar, vocabulary and reading section (80 minutes)

There are 100 multiple-choice items in this section. The grammar, vocabulary and reading items can be answered in any order.

#### Writing Section (30 minutes)

A problem or topic of interest is to be presented briefly in a short letter or an article, like one that might appear in a newspaper. The task is to produce a short letter or essay (one page or about 150-175 words).

#### Speaking Section (10-15 minutes)

Face to face interaction with an examiner

#### ECCE EXAM REGISTRATION

##### Test Registration:

May 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20 (9:30 AM - 2:00 PM and 4:00 - 7:00 PM)

##### Test Dates

##### Speaking Test:

May 23: 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

May 24: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

May 25: 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

##### Written Test:

May 27: 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Test Price: 155€

Price for IEN Students: 140€

If you have any question please contact the Academic Office at 93 240 5110

#### ECCE PREPARATION COURSE

The IEN offers a special preparatory course for students who want to take the University of Michigan Competency Certificate (ECCE, Exam for the Certificate of Competency in English) in May. This course is a 5-week intensive (6 hours a week), which runs from March 24th to May 5th. This course is open to adult students who have finished Upper Intermediate 2. Junior/Teen students should consult the Junior/Teen office for level equivalency. Price: 295€

Days and times to be announced

## WORDS-INTO-IMAGES CYCLE AMERICAN NOVELS TURNED INTO FILMS



### Words

James M. Cain "The Postman Always Rings Twice", 1934

This spare, steamy, hard-boiled little book was Cain's first novel, and helped secure both his reputation and his notoriety. Said to have been the inspiration for Camus' *The Stranger*, it also joins excellent company in having been banned in Boston. In its terseness and amoral perspective, it was highly influential on a generation of crime fiction writers, most notably Jim Thompson.

As the novel starts, Frank Chambers drifts into a roadside restaurant, having hitchhiked and stolen rides through much of California. The restaurant is run by a Greek man and his much younger wife. The attraction between Chambers and the wife is instant, and it is also established (partly through a series of ethnic slurs) that her marriage is merely one of convenience. Soon she and Chambers are a team, and see the restaurateur as the only obstacle to their happiness.

Some of what follows is predictable, but the detail and cold-bloodedness that Cain brings to the telling are striking. A bonus is the nice courtroom puzzle in the center of the book, which pits Chambers against the wife in a true Prisoner's Dilemma.

Although obscenity is not what it used to be, this is quite a sexual book for the 1930's. You can see why the combination of sex with unrepentant villains might have been a bit unsettling at the time. To more modern readers, the overall impression will be one of extreme directness and even bluntness of style -- while Cain includes everything that is necessary, he puts nothing in that isn't. The result is a lean, mean, classic thriller that holds up nearly perfectly after more than 60 years.

### Images

Tay Garnett "The Postman Always Rings Twice", 1946

Tay Garnett's 1946 version of *The Postman Always Rings Twice* is a classic little noir film version of the James M. Cain novel that smoulders where the ugly and much more explicit 1981 remake starring Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange overstates. Lana Turner as Cora, lights up the screen from the moment she makes her almost legendary first appearance in front of Frank. She brilliantly captures the vulnerability of a young woman married to an older man with no ambition or drive, who suddenly meets a handsome, romantic drifter, and is willing to do anything to break free, even if it means murder. Garfield is also brilliant as Frank, outwardly tough and ruggedly handsome, his weakness shows in need to wander and his Together they manage deep raging passions needing to show them each other. A silent, an intake of breath, and the passionate are all that the film the intensity of their slight toning down of and bigoted aspects of



Smith is Nick Papadakis in the novel and the remake -- a Greek immigrant, which makes Frank's jealousy of his possession of Cora a little more intense), the 1946 version is almost identical to the novel in characterization, pacing and emphasis.

The film also boasts a superb supporting cast featuring Hume Cronyn as the clever, double-dealing lawyer Leon Ames as the suspicious district attorney and Audrey Totter as the 'other woman' who adds spice to an already explosive relationship. As good as the similarly themed *Double Indemnity*, based on another James M. Cain novel, is, there is something much more convincing about the Lana Turner and James Garfield's 'couple fatale' than the Fred Mac Murray & Barbara Stanwyck pairing, something that convinces you that they could be driven to any lengths necessary to have each other.

March 9th at 7:00 PM Theater

## Jubilee Jazz Club

This month we're having:

### March Calendar

March 17<sup>th</sup>

BOOK PRESENTATION "JAZZA  
BARCELONA 1920-1965"

March 31<sup>st</sup>

"ARTIE SHAW"

Directed by Enric Nart



Free! Thursday March 17<sup>th</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> at  
8:00 PM, IEN Conference Room



# March 17th, celebration of St. Patrick's Day

With its Irish origins, it is obvious that the Day is also holiday there, as it is in the US.

But in Ireland, it

is more of a religious holiday similar to Christmas and Easter, with grand parades, community feasts, charity shows, and mass. The parades, shamrocks, and green beer are provided primarily for tourists. In fact, it has turned out to be one of the most celebrated events in Ireland and a major tourist attraction.

With so many activities and programs it may seem a little confusing about what actually is the theme of this multi-dimensional celebration. The early Irish immigrants like the English, Dutch, German, and French, brought their traditions to the United States. But it was not until 1737 that the immigrants really celebrated the Day. And it was in Boston that the Day was first celebrated in a public way. Gradually, other states took it up. And it was New York that had the largest ever St. Patrick's Day parade. Held since 1762, the New York City parade on St. Patrick's Day draws more than one million spectators each year.

Meanwhile the city of Chicago has developed a unique tradition of coloring the river water green. It started in 1962 when 100 pounds of green vegetable dye were added to its river, enough to keep it green for a week. The tradition has continued to this day. Now, 40 pounds of a green food coloring keep the river green for only a few hours.

Apart from that, Irish communities in various cities celebrate the Day with social and community work: having charities, attending

mass, promoting their own culture, and feasting with their foods.

Despite all this variety, everything is driven by a single theme: be Irish for a day. It's a celebration of being Irish and enjoying Irish things. It reminds us about St. Patrick, shamrocks and leprechauns. It tells us to cook and feast the Irish way, to laugh away all our worries with

Irish jokes, to dance to the tunes of the Irish bands, all these things to let us know the real fun of being Irish.

## Traditions and customs

Legend has it that Saint Patrick drove all the snakes out of Ireland and they all went into the sea and drowned. The snake was a revered pagan symbol, and perhaps this is a metaphor for the fact that he drove paganism out of Ireland. Whatever the truth of the matter, there are to this day no venomous snakes in Ireland.

The wearing of the Green: green is the color associated with St. Patrick; leprechauns wear green... shamrocks are green... IRELAND is green, on account of all that rain... Leprechauns are Irish fairies. They look like small, old men (about 2 feet tall), often dressed like shoemakers, with a cocked hat and a leather apron. According to legend, leprechauns are unpleasant little characters, aloof and unfriendly, who live alone and pass the time making shoes. They also possess a hidden pot of gold, and treasure hunters can often track down a leprechaun by the sound

of his shoemaker's hammer. If caught, he can be forced (with the threat of bodily violence) to reveal the whereabouts of his treasure, but the captor must keep his/her eyes on him every second. If the captor's eyes leave the leprechaun (and he often tricks them into looking away), he vanishes and all hopes of finding the treasure are lost forever. Banshees are female spirits who prophesy a death: if you hear the wailing of the Banshee (they are never seen) beware - they could well be looking for YOU! (But of course we would then have an excuse for a good old, Irish-style wake - a wonderful send off and celebration of the life of the dear departed!)

## The Blarney

Stone is a stone set in the wall of the Blarney Castle tower in the Irish village of Blarney. Kissing the stone is supposed to bring the kisser the gift of "the Blarney" - the ability to talk persuasively and eloquently. Blarney castle was built in 1446 by Cormac Laidhiv McCarthy (Lord of Muskerry) and its walls are 18 feet thick (necessary to thwart attacks by Cromwellians and William III's troops).

Thousands of tourists a year still visit the castle.

The origins of the Blarney Stone's magical properties aren't clear, but one legend says that an old woman cast a spell on the stone to reward a king who had saved her from drowning. Kissing the stone while under the spell gave the king the ability to speak sweetly and convincingly.

The Blarney Stone is very difficult to reach: it lies between the main castle wall and the parapet. If you want to kiss the Blarney Stone - and thousands of tourists do - you have to lie on your back and bend backwards (and downwards), holding onto iron bars for support. Whether all the germs

have anything to do with it is not known, but it's said of anyone who can "talk the hind leg off a donkey" that they must have kissed the Blarney Stone!



## DELICIOUS IRISH RECIPES FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY!

### St. Patrick's Day Cupcakes

One of the easiest treats to dress up for holidays and birthdays is the cupcake. All you need is food coloring, cake decorator gel, frosting, and a little imagination.

#### You will need

your favorite (sprinkle cake, any flavor) chocolate icing (recipe below)  
green decorator gel  
green decorator frosting  
green and white sprinkles  
green sugar  
cupcake liners

Prepare cake mix as directed. If desired, you can make green cupcakes by adding a few drops of green food coloring to a prepared white mix. Put cupcake liners into muffin tin and fill liners as directed on the cake mix recipe. Bake as directed and allow to cool thoroughly before frosting and decorating.

Prepare the chocolate icing by following the recipe below.

### Chocolate Icing

6 tbsp butter or margarine  
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 2/3 cups confectioner's sugar, sifted  
1 tsp vanilla  
1/3 cup milk

Cream butter and vanilla in a small bowl with mixer and medium low speed. Mix until completely creamed together. Alternating, add cocoa and confectioner's sugar, beating at medium speed until creamy. Add some of the milk with the remaining sugar and cocoa until

you reach desired consistency. You will use all the cocoa and sugar, but may not use all the milk, depending on your desired consistency. Set aside.

## DECORATE

There's really not much to decorating cupcakes, especially in the eyes of admiring children. Just a dollop of frosting is artistic enough for them! Here are a few simple tips that will help you decorate your holiday cupcakes.

### Sprinkles -

Open the container, hold frosted cupcake upside down and dip into the sprinkles. Another option is to roll the outer edge of the cupcake in the sprinkles.

### Sugar -

Using decorative sugar, follow the same instructions as the sprinkles. The green sugar creates a sparkling blarney effect that is very eye-catching! It almost appears to be velvet.

### Decorator Gel -

Use gel to draw on a shamrock. Shamrocks are simple: think of them as three heart shapes, all three meeting in the middle with their bottom tips. Then simply add a stem.

### Combinations -

Roll the edges in sprinkles and dip the center in sugar, or vice versa. Or dip edge and decorate center with gel.





## TEACHER PROFILE

## Mónica Tacón

**1. Where were you born?**

I was born in Madrid, Spain but moved to Orlando, Florida when I was eight years old.

**2. What is your city like? If you prepared a trip to your state, what would you recommend visiting?**

Well, Orlando is in central Florida and has high humidity and hot weather almost all year round. We usually wear short-sleeve shirts and shorts most of the year. Orlando is very green and it has many beautiful lakes that most locals take advantage of to go jet skiing, to fish or just to walk around. I say locals, because Orlando has a lot of tourists too, because of all the Theme Parks like Disney World, Epcot, Sea World, MGM Studios, Universal Studios, Islands of Adventure, Animal Kingdom, and about five water parks.

I always advise people not to visit Florida during the summer time. It's way too hot and most people who are not used to the heat get tired and frustrated. My suggestion is to go to Disney World! It is a must. No one should leave Orlando without visiting this famous park. I also recommend renting a car since the distance from Disney World to the beaches is pretty far. Our closest beaches are Daytona Beach and Cocoa Beach, right next to Cape Canaveral. Daytona Beach is where they have MTV during spring break, and the Grand Prix. I'd also suggest driving to St. Petersburg beach, which is 1 1/2 hours from Orlando. Not only is it located in the Gulf of Mexico, where the beaches are white and sandy, but you can also visit the Dalí museum.

**3. Why did you decide to leave the US and move to Barcelona?**

I left Orlando, Florida just about four years ago to go teach abroad. I first taught in Japan, and then I moved to Seville, Spain, South Korea, China, England and then to Barcelona. My dream was to travel and live in different countries, so I made it come true by really going far away from home and learning about each culture. It's one of the greatest things I have ever done.

**4. Have you always been a teacher?**

No, I graduated from the University of Central Florida in legal studies and

started working as a legal assistant specializing in criminology. I used to visit federal correctional Institutions to reduce clients' sentences by getting them to cooperate with the government. I worked with the FBI and the D.E.A., because our cases mostly dealt with money laundering, kidnapping and drug trafficking. After working with prisoners for 3 years, I decided to change careers. I wanted something that would allow me to travel around the world and have time off during the summer. So I went back to school to get my Florida teaching certificate and taught Spanish for 3 1/2 years to get teaching experience.

**5. What do you like best and least about Barcelona?**

What I like best is the choice of beaches to go to in the summer time. I love just lying out and having a drink by the sea. I usually stay there for 3 or 4 hours a day. I also like the fact that everything is so close and you can walk to the supermarket, other shops, movies, and the gym. Back home, you have to drive your car for half an hour just to go have coffee somewhere. Also, I enjoy the variety of restaurants and bars in Barcelona. There is a lot of ethnic cuisine available in the center and cute bars that have authentic decor.

What I like least about Barcelona is getting directions. I am not used to hearing "go up and go down" when I need to know if I need to turn left or right. I get all confused and never know what is left or right?

**6. What about your hobbies and interests?**

For about 12 years now, I've been working out about 4 or 5 days a week at the gym. I really enjoy it and even though it sounds boring, it makes me feel as if I am doing something good for myself. My favorite hobby is learning new folkloric dances from different cultures. So when I get a chance, I try to take a dance class like Middle Eastern dance, Afro Cuban dance or Caribbean dance. Traveling is another thing I never get tired of. Once you start seeing the world, you can't stop wondering what else is out there that you have missed.

## March Activities

9 Wednesday	7:00 PM	FILM CLUB THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE Directed by Tay Garnett	Theater
17 Thursday	8:00 PM	JUBILEE JAZZ CLUB BOOK PRESENTATION "JAZZ A BARCELONA 1920-1965"	Conference Room
17 Thursday	22:00 PM	DINNER IN ENGLISH	Restaurant "La Cratera"
31 Thursday	8:00 PM	JUBILEE JAZZ CLUB "ARTIE SHOW" Directed by Tay Garnett	Conference Room

## Upcoming Activities in April

13 Wednesday	7:00 PM	FILM CLUB DEATH OF A SALESMAN Directed by Alex Segal	Theater
14 Thursday	8:00 PM	JUBILEE JAZZ CLUB JAZZ AT THE PHILHARMONIC Directed by Vicenç Planas	Conference Room
27 Wednesday	7:00 PM	FILM CLUB THE LONG GOODBYE Directed by Robert Altman	Theater
28 Thursday	8:00 PM	JUBILEE JAZZ CLUB JIMMY SMITH Directed by Joan Giner	Conference Room
28 Thursday	22:00 PM	DINNER IN ENGLISH	?

## MONTHLY REGULAR EVENTS

Twice a month at 7:00 PM	FILM CLUB in the IEN Theater. American novels turned into Films.
Every two Thursday at 8:00 PM	JUBILEE JAZZ CLUB Concerts and lectures.
Once a month at 10:30 PM	DINNER IN ENGLISH Practice your English in a natural setting while you eat, drink, and socialize with IEN teachers and fellow students!

\*Tickets are available at the reception desk (approximately €20.00).

## CONCERT

## TXELL SUST &amp; AUGUST THARRATS TRIO



On January 27th, we enjoyed this fantastic concert in the IEN theater. We listened to good blues and swing, and, why not admit it, we followed the beat of the music with our hands and feet.