

Hi everyone,

LA-news headlines are as follow :

I am licensed to drive in California. I passed the eye test, the written test (with an excellent grade, I should add), and the driving test - that in the second time. In the first time I was unprepared, apparently. I didn't know that in right turns, in red light, I still have to make a full stop before going on (and as you can guess, I didn't). My driving tester - a huge mass of fat of the female sex (seriously, it was difficult for her to get into my family size car) - told me in the end, when I was so much satisfied with the way I drove : "Well deary, you didn't pass". I wanted to tell her that "it's Mr Tassa and not deary" (in the spirit of Murphy Brown's episode from the previous night, which dealt with such non-p.c. remarks), but I kept my mouth shut. She was also quite mean and talked like a "rassar". The next day I was wiser, and I had this beautiful young tester who was, in fact, much younger than I am. She told me at the end: "You did a wonderful job." So - standing in line, fingerprints, a photo - and that's it.

The class I teach improves from day to day. If in the first lecture (1/10) they looked like a bunch of dead faceless dull corps. However, now, after less than two weeks, there are questions asked, smiles and even bursts of laughter. But still, they are not too good and the pace I have to take is extremely slow and it's clear that I won't cover more than 60% of the assigned material. I understand that no-one ever does . . .

Yesterday I began to live again: I finally bought a stereo set, after a long and tedious search. Since it's difficult to find a serious store that sells components that are compatible for both 110 and 220 volt, I decided to buy a small set that can be used in Israel with a transformer. I bought the, probably, most sophisticated Sony discman there is, and a set of small speakers with a built-in amplifier. The sound is very full and amazingly "big". The discman is protected against shocks: I can shake it, throw it and flip it and the music continues with no jumps (I tried that in the store). After listening yesterday night to the 6 Israeli CDs I brought with me, I understand that it wasn't a wise thing to bring here. I enjoy this Israeli music (Hava Alberstein, Shalom Hanoch, Yossi Banay, Boaz Sharabi, Matti Kaspi, Tslil Me-khuvan, Ha-neshamot He-tehorot etc.) very very much, but it increases the longing amplitude exponentially . . .

The following local culture helps to decrease those longing feelings: David Letterman, who left NBC to CBS (for 14 million dollars!!) goes better and better. He's much funnier and crazier than he was 2 or 4 years ago. Need to see in order to understand the phenomena. Simpson started the season with two fantastic episodes (in the first, Homer sings in a successful quartet; in the second, he returns to college to take the basic nuclear physics courses). The word funny does not do justice to those hilarious episodes. Besides that - there's nothing else on TV that worth writing home about.

That's it,  
Bye, Tamir.