

Sent: Friday, October 01, 2010 1:37 AM
Subject: Monthly Update

Hey My Fisher and the rest of the Daybreak Rotary Club.

This is the end of the month of September, so I thought that I would update you on what I have been up to for the last few weeks.

For the most part, school takes up most of my weeks, and even though I don't really understand what is going on in the classes, I have fun listening and attempting to figure out what is going on. It is really weird to be back in grade 11, but it makes learning a bit easier because I have already done the work. Strangely enough I still struggle with some of the concepts, but I think it's just because I don't know all of the vocabulary that they use. I am still hopeless at Thai Dance...dancing doesn't run in my family, and it shows in my less than graceful dancing. I still enjoy it, and the other students all like to try and help me, showing me what way to put my hands and helping me to follow along. We all have a good laugh at times when I don't get it and stand there with a very confused expression on my face. My other classes are good though, and now school is out for the month of October for a break. Their school is on a semester system, but you don't change classes for the second semester. After the midterms (September 20-24) students go on a break and will not return to school until the 26th of October. I think that it is quite nice.

On September 11th-12th, I had my Inbound Orientation in Trang, Thailand. It was pretty cool, there are only 9 exchange students in District 3330. Originally there was supposed to be 18 or 19, but for some reason most of them backed out. It can get quite confusing at times with the other exchange students because there is Emy from Japan, Emmi from Finland, Emily from New York, and myself, Emily from Canada. So sometimes I will hear my name get called, and I will look, only to find out they are calling the other Emily, or one of the other girls. So we stayed for two days in Trang, going over the rules and regulations, and some of the trips that we will be going on. There are three main ones-a trip to Phuket for a Vegetarian Festival, a Northern Trip, and a North-Eastern Trip. I don't have much details on them, but on October 11-15 I will be in Phuket for the Vegetarian Festival. I am looking forward to it :)

On September 25th I went to an Intercity Meeting for Rotary and District 3330. It was going to take all day, so they hired someone to take myself, and the other two exchange students who showed up, around the town. We did a lot of things including a big market, temples, and a waterfall that was pretty spectacular. After a long day of travelling we headed back to the hotel where the conference was held, and we listened to my host club do a speech on Rotary. It was all pretty cool.

Due to the fact that they were doing midterms and I wasn't involved in those because I missed over half of the information, I didn't have to go to school from the 20th on. My host mom decided to take me to her place of work, so I could see what was going on there. She kept saying sheep farm, sheep farm, so I assumed she meant a sheep farm. So we got in the car and drove. Her "sheep farm" was actually a shrimp farm, and it was pretty cool. My host moms family owns 2 shrimp farms GN 1 and GN 2 and each farm has 60 units, so in total they own 120 units. A unit

is very big, and I got to see how they catch the shrimp, as well as help out. My first job was to check the size-seperating the big shrimp from the small ones, but I soon got moved from that job to a different one, because I couldn't tell the difference. It wasn't by size, but by color, and to me, they all looked the same. My next job was counting in a "quality control" type job. I was good at this one because all I had to do was count, and didn't have to decide what shrimp was big, and what one was small. This helped my counting immensely because the other workers didn't speak English, so I would have to say my numbers out in Thai. I worked on her shrimp farm for 4 or 5 days.

On September 30th, I had a Rotary Meeting with the two Rotary Clubs that are in Surat Thani. From what I can tell there is a womens club (the one I'm with) and then the mens club. I'm not totally sure if thats true, but my club has all women, and the other club was all men. So that is my best guess. At this meeting I had to do a short 3 minute speech about myself and how I am enjoying it here. I was a little nervous because it was all in Thai, but I only had a few slip ups with the tone of the word (rising tone, falling tone, middle tone, high tone, and low tone.) I sometimes get confused about what one I'm supposed to use. The clubs didn't mind it though, they all said I did very well, which was a confidence booster.

Now that schools out, I am still continuing my language learning. My host mom has hired me a tutor named Sam. Sam is originally from Burma, but speaks both English and Thai, so he is able to teach me the language, with me understanding his English. We have started out by me learning how to read and write, with some vocabulary as well. The Thai alphabet has 44 consonents and a lot of vowels, so it is taking me a while to learn. But now I can remember all of the names, I just need a picture to remind me what it is. Slowly, I am learning to connect the name to the actual letter, and not just the picture that it goes with. That sounds confusing, so I'll explain it. Gor Gai means chicken, and so I can remember Gor Gai by looking at the picture of the chicken, and not the actual letter. ? is the actual symbol for gor gai. I am now working on matching the name of the symbol to the actual symbol. I thought it would be easy, but many of the letters look alike, and I have the tendancy to get them confused.

Well I think that is all for now, I don't know what else I can tell you. I hope that you are all enjoying your time in Campbell River as much as I am enjoying my time in Thailand.

From
Emily