

Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2011 7:26 AM
Subject: Long Overdue Update

Hi Mr. Fisher and the rest of the Daybreak Rotary Club...

This is my very long overdue email update. Sorry that I seem to have forgotten to email you guys for...a few months. Life got a bit busy and I seemed to have forgotten about emailing. Sorry about that.

So, what have I been up to the past few months.

Well for two weeks in April, I went on my final Rotary trip. We started out with a very exciting bus trip up to Bangkok...we were supposed to take the train, but due to some very random flooding (got to love climate change) the trains weren't running. That didn't stop us though, and we got to drive through some of the flooding. We were in a giant double decker bus, and the water was up past the wheels of the bus-about two feet of water. Along the road, we saw at least 4 semi trucks that had tipped over and were stuck in the water. Wasn't all that reassuring, but luckily, we made it in one piece :) We spent a day in Bangkok before heading on a 14 hour train ride up to Chiang Mai. While in the Chiang Mai area (the northern part of Thailand) we did lots of things-umbrella painting, spent a few days up in a remote jungle lodge that we had to hike into (I learned that hiking in the rain isn't all that fun...), and then we did a bit more travelling around the North. My favorite two parts of the Northern trip was visiting the Long Neck Village, and going to an Elephant farm!! We got to ride elephants, watch a show-where the elephants painted pictures, played soccer and basket ball, and a few other little things like that. One of the elephants even gave me a kiss...it was extremely slobbery, but its a good moment :) We got to go river rafting on a bamboo raft, and then give the elephants baths. The elephant bathing was awesome, though a tad weird. The mahoots (the elephant trainers) let us ride them bareback which was cool :). The only part that wasn't all that fun, was watching the elephant poop float down beside us as we played in the water...um...yuck. I am pretty sure I got a lot of water in my mouth...needless to say I brushed my teeth very thoroughly that night :)

What else....My family came to visit, and they still are right now. I got to take them around the country and act as a tour guide. It was pretty awesome, and I got to amaze them with my Thai skills. Well, at least I think they were impressed...We started our trip in Bangkok, and did a whole bunch of temples there, before heading on a 16 hour train ride up to Chiang Mai. We did a zipline, an elephant camp, a Thai cooking class, a Batic art class, and a few other things before heading up the the Chiang Ria area. After that, we flew down to Phuket and spent a few days touring around there. Then what...we headed over to Krabi for a day (mainly beach time) before heading to Koh Samui. Instead of spending a lot of days on Koh Samui, we decided to head over to a more remote island called Koh Tao-and we spent three days there. We went on a snorkling trip one day, and then spent the next two diving. Our dive today was the best-got to see some sting rays (big ones, I think they are called Jenkins sting rays? not sure) and then we saw a coral snake (scared me), and finally the highlight, a hawksbill turtle. We all thought that it was the highlight of the diving trips. We all took in a little too much sun, and a few of us (mainly me and dad) resemble lobsters...oops. We have a few more days here before heading to my home town of

Suratthani where we will meet my host family and host rotary club, so that should be all good. Mom, Dad, and Hannah head home on the 21st to Bangkok and then to the 22nd to Canada. Should be an interesting flight since they seemed to have picked up quite a few souvineers...and then they will be bringing home some of my stuff.

Well, I think that is about it. I am feeling kind of hungry so I will go out and find me some Pad Thai or something equally delicious to eat.

Once again, sorry about my lack of emails....hope all is well with you guys.

See you soon,
Emily