

Projects Abroad Thailand Official Newsletter December 2013

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Editors' notes

Greeting from Thailand!!!

Here we are; the last month of the year again... December is meant to be the month of celebration. So, everyone is excitedly looking forward to that. Many people have already set their plan for the upcoming year but many people never do anything as they planned because they think they have plenty time to do it and then found out they ran out of time. Then people realize and start lament for the thing they wishes to do but never done. It happens logically and it will not change until you change yourself.

Have you ever seen the movie named „Bucket List“? Have you ever had your bucket list written down? If not... do it before it's too late... our life is the same, each year, which come and goes very quickly, we will never realize it runs out of time until the last minute... so, spend the time to be very worthwhile... again, have your bucket list written down... then you will never have regret about your life....

Happy New Year 2014



A typical day of Care Volunteers at school

Visiting a Care Volunteers at NongKok School in Krabi town on Wednesday 25 November was so much fun. NongKok School is a small and quiet school situated among palm plantations. There aren't many buildings in the school but there is a beautiful pond full of fish behind the canteen. The day begins with volunteers who arrive at the school and clean the classes. They simply do everything that the staffs at school do for example they help open the doors, windows, sweep the floor and so on. That is before the activities start.



Activities start around 8:30 when almost every student gets to school. The class I visited is probably the smallest class and students are between two and a half to three years old. They are pretty active and it is not easy to control the class but that is what is challenging. The first activity is morning exercise. They play some English and Thai songs so that volunteers, teacher and of course all student are dancing and exercising together. The next activity is learning alphabet. Our volunteers will be teaching

alphabet from A to Z by using flashcards and songs and some other things that will grab the children's attention. After the English session, there's a Thai alphabet session taught by a Thai teacher. There after it is art and craft, normally provided and created by Projects Abroad volunteers. On the day I visit, they make picture frames from ice cream sticks. Children glue them together to make a square frame and then they add color paper and feathers to make it colorful and beautiful. After the art and craft session ends, it is lunch time. Our volunteers and teacher serve food and clean after the meal. They eat after the children. After that normally the kids will take a nap. The day I visited, there was another special activity! The teacher brought ingredient to make pancake! Yummy! Our volunteers and children really enjoy this activity as in the end everyone gets a piece of pancake with strawberry jam. That is each day's activities at the school.. I hope this gives some idea to those who are thinking about doing a Care Project, of what a typical day might be like. It's so much fun spending time with young children!



Stephanie Chu's great experience in SuratThani hospital

Soon I will be departing Thailand to return to Canada after a two month internship, with the Occupational Therapy (OT) department at SuratThani Hospital. I can say that my experience in Thailand was amazing!! My hope is that by reading this article those of you, who are thinking about volunteering abroad, whether to Thailand or another country, take the opportunity while you can. You will have a fantastic experience and Projects Abroad does as much as they can to ensure you are well taken care of and have a great time while you are visiting.

I had always intended to travel and volunteer abroad, but school and work were always a priority. When the opportunity arose, I researched various companies, and ultimately decided that Projects Abroad was the best fit for me. Although I had no previous experience in occupational therapy, I was still accepted into the program as I was interested in pursuing a career in health care. With this in mind I started to prepare for my placement by reading as much as I could on Occupational Therapy.



Before coming to Thailand, Nou from Projects Abroad gave me all kinds of information to prepare me for my time in Thailand including details on my accommodation and work placement. When I arrived in Thailand, she was the first person who greeted me at the Krabi airport. Soon we began talking and she gave a cultural orientation to Thai culture and language. The following day after my induction, I met with Ruang, another staff member from Projects Abroad, who took me to SuratThani. Before meeting with the host family, she gave me a tour of the city, where I was shown all the important places like the hospital, shopping malls, tourist police station, market and the transportation hub for bus and minivan departures. Like taxis, Took Tuks in Thailand are very common and can drop you off at places around the area. Learning how to take one is essential to your stay in Thailand. After being acquainted with the city, I met with my host family. I was arranged to stay with Pi Kwan, who is a physiotherapist at the same hospital as the OT placement. Pi Kwan is really smart and funny. She has shown me a lot about the way of life for Thai people, we've also travelled some beautiful places in southern Thailand. Pi Kwan has taken me to some really good places and I've been to more coffee shops than I can count! When I travelled on the weekends, Pi Kwan is the first person I talk to, she knows the best way to get around and the best places to stay at. I'm very thankful to have lived with Pi Kwan, which has been like a home away from home.



At the hospital, the occupational therapy department primarily focused on patients recovering from stroke injury, brain trauma and adults or children with different mental and physical afflictions'. My supervisor, Pi Yom is a wonderful person and practitioner, who taught me about OT and stroke rehabilitation. The first few weeks, I spent my time in the OT room observing and taking notes as the therapists worked with the patients. Later, I began to spend time with the staff, shadowing them as they go visit patients in another ward or we would discuss different cases as new patients come in. When meeting a patient for the first time it is a little difficult and sometimes overwhelming because of the language barrier, but they are really nice and genuine people. It wasn't long before I had memorized the exercises patients did while doing their required activities. One thing I observed was, for many patients when they came in to do their exercises, their family members would often be there to encourage them to do their acts, which was great to see. After all the beaches, sunburns and bug bites, I leave Thailand with fond memories of places I've travelled to and the friendships I've made. I'm so very grateful to everyone who has helped me along the way, everyone at Project abroad And the OT staff at Surat Thani Hospital; you have made this an adventure of a lifetime.

KhapKhunKha!

Sawadeekah!



Outreach shark campaign

On Friday, December 13, 2013, Projects Abroad held our Outreach activity at NongThale School, presenting an educational workshop on our Global Shark Campaign. There were games and activities that we did with the children to get them interested in shark conservation. Normally children are drawn to sharks as they are mysterious and known as wild and dangerous, meanwhile in reality they are more afraid of humans than we do from them. So, next Friday would be a good opportunity for us to take effective action by raising awareness and educating children so they realize the importance of saving shark populations.

We started our day by presenting “Global Shark Awareness”, talking about shark species and their roles in the ecosystems and how humans decrease number of shark populations. After that we had a role play, our volunteers acted on stage telling story about “Sheldon, the misunderstood shark”. The kids loved this show so much and all day after that the children kept calling the volunteer who played Sheldon as a lovely shark and they wanted to play with him. After the show we had a Mangrove presentation which was prepared by our Conservation Volunteers. The students also loved this one because when talking about mangrove, it’s related to their neighbourhood and their daily life and they felt like they’re involved in very much.



After all the show and presentations, it was a fun time for both volunteers and students as we had set our game stations in school. 100 students were divided into 5 groups and they went to 5 stations set by Projects Abroad volunteers. We had pictures of different kinds of shark and shark in a cartoon version on our puzzle station. We had word search game and ball game which the children had to learn how to spell different species of shark names. Diving station where they can experience wearing a mask and dive into the pool to see different kinds of sharks. We also had art and craft to stimulate their imagination. We had a coloring station and with a shark hat, where the students made shark hats and design/color the shark. They were so happy about it, as they could have some souvenirs to take home.



Father's Day in Thailand

Thailand National Father's Day is celebrated annually on December the 5th, throughout the country. Apart from celebrating fatherhood, on this day people actually celebrate the King's birthday! Yes, Father's day in Thailand is celebrated on the King's Birthday. Commemorating the birthday of the King BhumibolAdulyadej is observed as a National holiday and as National Father's Day.

On Father's Day, people shout "Long Live the King" and wave the flags in front of the palace where his majesty stays. People also decorate their houses by hanging the yellow flag which is the king's flag and also Thailand national flag to symbolize their love to the king and towards the country. The king is loved by every Thai person. For all his life, His Majesty has done so much for the country as you surely have seen Thailand Royal's Project. His Majesty the King once said....

"One of the reasons underlying the creation of the project was humanitarianism; the desire that these people living in remote areas should become self-supporting and more prosperous. Another reason, and which has received support from all sides, was to solve the problem of heroin.(...) A further reason which is very important is that, as is well known, the hill tribes are people who use agricultural methods which, if left unchecked, could bring the country to ruin. In other words they cut down trees and practice „slash and burn“ methods which are totally wrong. If we help them it is tantamount to the country, in general having a better standard of living and security."

His Majesty the King on 10th of January 1969 at the Faculty of Agriculture, Chiang Mai University

Everything His Majesty has done shows his love towards his people. His happiness is to see Thailand filled with prosperity, stability, and normalcy. His Majesty has pointed out that Thailand will be normalcy, and prosperity and stability when Thai people of all groups play their roles with mindfulness, wisdom, honesty, and sincerity, as well as focusing on the public interest for the sake of the whole country.

A blissful hike (KhaoNgonNak)

Want to see a great spectacular-panoramic view of Ao Nang, Hong island and Yao island at the same time? KhaoNgonNak Bellevue, a low mountain by the Andaman Sea is the place to go! Located in Baan NhonThale, half an hour away from Krabi town, KhaoNgonNak is like a paradise for hikers who wish to see the awesomely awesome view of mountains of PhanomBencha Crest. The hike to its peak is 3.7 km up the hill through the green forest, a habitat of various species of wildlife.



Along the way, you surely will enjoy the forest music which is the mixture of the high pitched voice of gibbons and monkeys and other insects such as grasshoppers. All their voices make such wake up music for the hikers. There are two spots that offer you great views of Andaman Sea and green jungle. The first stop is like a green path along the cliff with a long line of wooden fence. Another spot is my favorite (before you reach this spot you will find the most difficult path that you walk up a small wooden steps and they are very steep and unstable)

My favorite spot is up almost to the top. It's like a limestone hill covered with green moss and beautiful pink and white flowers. It's a very shady area full of beautiful wild flowers. A big stone perfectly makes a seat off the cliff. White sand covers the limestone hill that makes you

feel like you are walking on the beach. The cool breeze wipes off the heat of the day. You feel like you are in a beautiful Eden.

From there it takes like 25 minutes more to the top of the mountain. The whole trip took me like 3 hours and a half. It is so worth it because it's obviously paradise on land.



Remember me: KohJum

Koh means island and Jum means remember. This Reber melsmland is very memorable as it is the loveliest island I have ever been to in Southern Thailand. The beach area was very quiet because it's not touristy at all. There is a lot of hermit crab in their borrowed shells walking on the beach. They are friendly and don't seem to be afraid of human either. I took a ton of videos and pictures of them and also saw a lot of eagles flying in the sky. I wish I have brought my camera with me but I have got only an iPhone so I couldn't really capture them. But ncoatn hin capture better than your own eyes so if you wish to see these amazing creatures you got to visit this place yourself.



KohJum is located an hour away from Krabi town. Last weekend was my first time visiting this amazing place. It was beyond my expectation. Everything was cheap so I was economically travelling and exploring corners of the Koh. The bus I took from Krabi town to the pier coasted only 140 for round trip. The boat from LeamKruat pier to Mutu Pier cost another t140. The hotel which was really nice was only 400. I got a room for myself. It's a very nice and clean bungalow with one bed big enough for two people, bathroom inside, small front porch by the beach and little space upstairs which we can't climb up but adeit mit looks really nice. The staffs

were so friendly. They just gave me discount without me asking them to. The food was so good. I ate at the restaurant next to where I stayed. It's called "Bow Deang" or Red Bow in English. They served very fresh sea food which was directly bought from local fisherman. It was the best seafood restaurant in the world. I really mean it.

