

November 2012

Ashley Dahl

Called to Serve

Interesting Facts

Malaysia has three National Languages

- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Bahasa Malayu
- English

Keningau is located in a mountain valley—everywhere I look, I see beautiful mountains!

Summer is Malaysia’s only season!

TGSH Class Names

- Year 1 Mercy
- Year 2 Grace
- Year 3 Joy
- Year 4 Love
- Year 5 Hope
- Year 6 Glory

Afternoon Teenage class

I teach classes 3-6 daily and the Teenage class once a week. I am currently teaching English.

The Good Samaritan Home, Keningau, Sabah, Malaysia

TGSH: The Good Samaritan Home

The Good Samaritan Home is a school run by the Basel Christian Church of Malaysia and is also sponsored by Korean Missionaries. The students at TGSH are primarily undocumented youth from Indonesia and the Philippines.

Our school currently has 187 students and 7 teachers. We teach Bahasa Malayu, English, Science, Mathematics, Morals, and Art.



TGSH Class Love

Teaching in Malaysia

This is what happens during every class

Enter Class

Student Leader:

“Class, stand up!”

(Class stands in attention)

“Good Morning, Teacher”

(Class repeats after leader)

“Teacher, we pray now”

(One student prays before each class)

When the prayer is finished I tell the class to please sit down.

Teaching at first was difficult because there is no set lesson plan or standards. Basically, you teach what you know. Luckily, I was told to spend my time reviewing for exams, which happened October 13-17. The next difficult task was determining what to review!

For the most parts my classes are fantastic and filled with eager learners. I have started to implement discipline with disruptive students, but language is still a barrier in that aspect.

When class is finished, it ends similar to how it began.

Student Leader:

“Teacher, are you finished?”

(Yes)

“Class, stand up!”

(Class stands in attention)

“Thank you, Teacher!”

(Class repeats after leader)

Then, on I go to the next class!

Special thanks to those who have helped to prayerfully and financially support this year of service! I couldn't be here without you.

“What I did understand was love; a language of its own without a specific dialog”



Teachers crossing the bridge that leads to TGSB with exams to be graded.

“You’re More Than Just a Teacher”

A few weeks into school, I sat through a teacher’s meeting. All of which I did not understand.

At the end, another teacher told me that the following week we would not have school on Tuesday, so that we could go and see a student whose father had a stroke.

That morning we met at school to go to the boy’s Kampung (village). We walked through a narrow dirt and rock strewn path that surrounded our school. In the center of two rows of houses was a grass road filled with children playing games.

Most were students that I recognized who lived here. We walked to a house, took off our shoes, and went up some stairs. We were greeted by an entire family who welcomed us and fed us. We sat on the floor making a big circle, so that we all had the walls to our backs to support us.

We brought with us a gift to give to the family, and as we signaled to do just that, the boy’s mother led us all into a room where the father was bed ridden.

I didn’t know what to do or say. We made a circle around the bed and

someone started praying. I have never seen anyone as close to death as that, and as we prayed I could not help but cry. I’ve never felt so helpless or out of place. Who was I to be there in that time of need? I didn’t even understand what they prayed or what they said to the father as we left his bedside.

But what I did understand was love; a language of its own, without a specific dialog.

We were there to support our students and their families, to show that we care.

Conquering Fears

I am afraid of heights, but walk across a rickety bridge every day.

I worry about not knowing what to do, or knowing if I am doing something correctly, but that has become a daily occurrence.

I was nervous that worship in another language and culture

would make my faith focus difficult, but it has proven to be a building block to a stronger faith.

I am a fairly finicky eater, but as you will see on the next page, I have tried many new foods here. Mostly because with such hospitable hosts wherever you go, you cannot say “No thank you”.

Holiday Break

Every three months YAGM’S in service around the world meet together for reflection, devotions, and a chance to be in community with one another and be able to share experiences. This group is a huge support network for me in Malaysia. On November 13, I am going to Kota Kinabalu to meet with other Malaysia YAGM’s. We will leave for Singapore and Kuala Lumpur on the 16th of November.

I don’t start teaching again until the beginning of January, so I will be spending my time like many Sabahans (people in Sabah, Malaysia), visiting Kampung (villages).

For Christmas I will be joining my Site Supervisor and her family to go to a Kampung in Kudat, Malaysia (Also known as The Tip of Borneo). I was told to be prepared for people who only speak in their native language (They may hardly speak the National Languages). So that should be interesting and awesome!

Hospitality

If anything, I am learning what it means to serve. The people here are the most welcoming and hospitable people I have ever met!

A beautiful tradition here when saying hello or goodbye, is to shake someone’s hand, and then touch your hand to your heart. This is to show respect and also means that they feel a certain warmth towards you.

Learn Bahasa Malayu

“Good Morning”

Selamat Pagi

Suh-la-maught Paw-gee

(gee: think of glee)

New Foods

- Wild Boar
- Seaweed Soup
- Seaweed Pringles
- Corn Juice
- Oysters
- Chicken Liver
- Duck
- Rambutan
- Quail Eggs
- Ostrich
- Tofu
- Soy milk

Fundraising

Each YAGM is asked to raise support for their year of service

Currently I have raised \$3,150 of my \$4,000 goal

What Else is Happening?

I recently went on a road trip—my first one ever! We went searching for a bred of flower that is the largest in the world! Below is a picture of said flower.

Starting on October 26, I will attend a meeting to get involved with an international organization called The Girl’s Brigade. It is a faith-based organization that focuses on bible study, fellowship, creativity, courage, teamwork, discipline, and survival skills.

Next year at TGSB I will also help lead the Environmental Club with another teacher. We meet once a month to learn about being Eco friendly as well as put our knowledge into action!



TGSB Staff at Lunch



Rafflesia Flower @ Rafflesia Info Center

When you don’t even know what questions to ask

There have been many days when I have been completely aback with questions that never crossed my mind.

Grading: Here they

only put a line are complete, all through answers that teaching stops for the are correct—whoops! year.

Exams:When exams

I’m still adjusting but every day I learn more of the language and culture. It’s hard to believe that I’ve already been here two months! Time seems to go by so quickly! I hope that this newsletter allows a peak into what I am doing in Malaysia, but know that there is still so much I can’t wait to share with you!

Send me a letter!

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I’m on the Web!

See what’s happening at:

ashley-in-malaysia.blogspot.com

Important Dates:

- Retreat for Year 6 and Teenage class
October 30-31, 2012
- Sports Day at Keningau Sports Complex
November 6, 2012
- Year 6 Graduation and start of school break
November 9, 2012
- Malaysia YAGM’s go on retreat to Singapore and KL
November 16-23, 2012
- School Resumes
January 3, 2012