

January 2015

Sticky Rice

Peace Corps Thailand's Volunteer Magazine

2014 Through Your Lens

*Everything You
Wanted To
Know About
Phichit*

**The First Step
to Learning
the Language**

*Get to Know
Thanyalak*

**Diary of a Thai
XVII PCV**

*Health Stories
Not to Tell Your
Grandchildren*

*What's Next?
Grad School*

Evacuation: Ukraine



From the Editors

Happy 2015, PCVs! As the 125s get ready for the home stretch of their service, and the 126s celebrate their one year anniversary in Thailand, it's a good time to reflect on 2014 and set unrealistic goals for 2015.

2014 saw the 125s get settled in their second year of service. Some projects came together, others fell apart, but as the upperclassmen of the PC Thailand cohort, you handled it all like pros you are. Much like freshman, the 126s arrived in Thailand excited, terrified and not sure that they were wearing the right clothes.

In this issue, Sticky Rice looks back on 2014 with our annual photo contest. The contest was a huge success, as we received many fantastic submissions. We also take a look at the evacuation of PVCs from Ukraine, one of the biggest Peace Corps stories of the year. And for a look farther into PC Thailand's past, read Tales from the Beyond by Burgess Needle, PC Thailand 18, and the most wonderfully named volunteer in our history.

Now that 2014 is over though, we need to start thinking about what we're going to do with the year ahead. Whether you're staying in country, or headed back home, Sticky Rice has got your back with health tips from Ana, tech tips from Linzee, and an overview of the Coverdell Fellowship process.

So, สวัสดี, PCVs, and we here at Sticky Rice can't wait to see what you do with 2015!

- Christine, Nancy, Maddie and Carrissa

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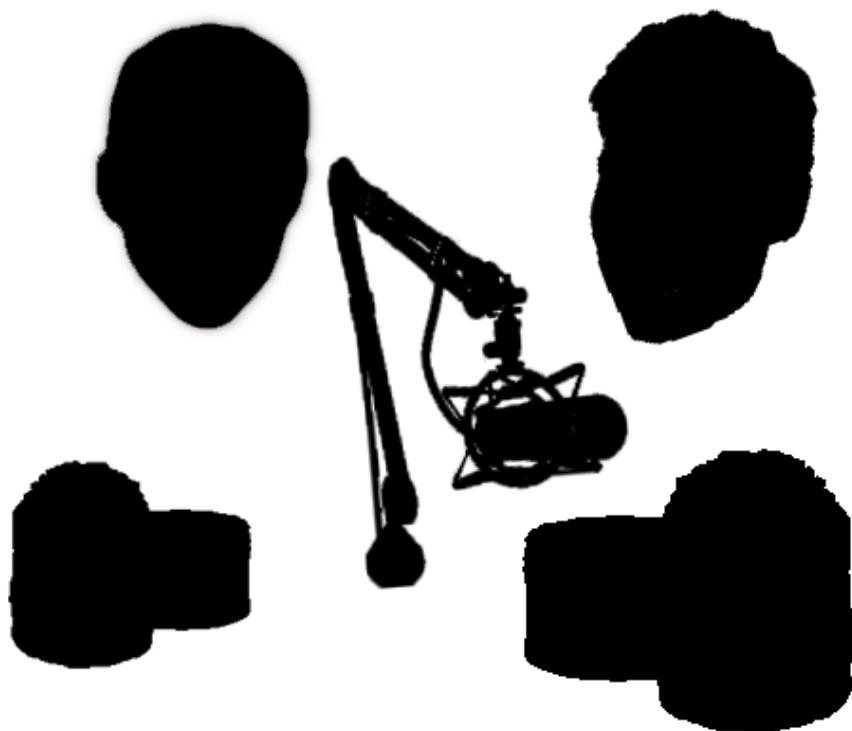
The T4D committee reviews an app you can use in your service

Next edition's theme will be announced soon! Stay tuned!

*Send your submissions to:
stickyrice.newsletter@gmail.com*

Have You Eaten Yet?

A Peace Corps Thailand Podcast



Each week, Dan Rudolph and J.M. Ascienzo, volunteers in Group 124, produce a podcast in which they interview other Thailand PCVs, RPCVs, Thai dignitaries, Thai counterparts and PCVs from around the globe in effort to work towards Third Goal.

You can find all of the episodes by joining the Facebook group "Have You Eaten Yet?"

Sticky Rice

*Peace Corps
Thailand's Volunteer
Magazine*

Sticky Rice: Peace Corps Thailand's Volunteer Magazine is an all-volunteer produced, quarterly publication. Peace Corps Thailand was founded in 1962 and has had uninterrupted service in Thailand since then.

Editor-In-Chief

Christine Bedenis, TCCS 125

Senior Editors

Madeleine Aggeler, TCCS 126

Nancy Bunyea, TCCS 125

Carissa Sutter, YinD 126

Health Writer

Christiana Lang, YinD 126

Tech Writer

Linzee Prescott, TCCS 126

Contributing Writers

Rich Ambuske, YinD 127

Jim Damico, TCCS 126

Ashley Dezen, YinD 126

Burgess Needle, Thai XVIII

Rebecca "Spook" Sulek, TCCS 126

Julia Ward, YinD 126

Maggie Wright, English Education,
Moldova 29

Upcoming Events

Feb. 2-6 Medical Week for Mar. 1-7 Peace Corps Week
124/125

Feb. 11-14 Gender and Development Camp
Mar. 18 Swearing-In Ceremony
for Group 127

Feb. 27-Mar. 1 Thai Youth Theatre Festival
Mar. 20 Group 125's Official End
Date

Big thank you to all of our photo
contest submissions:

Lauren Anderson, Molly Cook,
Brandon Julian, Angela Koontz,
Adrianna Neuenschwander, Mayumi
Rebiero, Katherine Sivret, Ryan
Stannard and Meredith Wipf

Gin Khao Ru Yang?

In an effort to help the volunteers get to know the Peace Corps staff better, the Sticky Rice editors posed five questions for the staff to answer. This edition we hear from Thanyalak Promsingh.

Thanyalak is a registered nurse (RN) and is the Regional Medical Officer Assistant. Thailand is the regional medical evacuation hub, so when Peace Corps volunteers are medically evacuated from other countries and come here, she collaborates the medical evaluations at the hospitals and other logistics.

Sticky Rice: Where is your hometown and can you describe what it's like?

Thanyalak Promsingh:

Phuket, the very beautiful and famous island in the south of Thailand!

SR: Where is your favorite place to visit in Thailand?

TP: Isaan (Northeastern region)

SR: Can you share a favorite recipe?

TP: Sorry, I don't cook.

SR: Tell us about the first time you interacted with a PCV.

TP: It was 20 years ago, so I vaguely remember. But, that shows my stay with PC has been so long!

SR: The most people you've seen on one motorcycle?

TP: 5, two adults and 3 kids



Photo from Peace Corps Thailand's Facebook Page

Texts from Thailand

i think it'd be funny if every time someone called me a farang i called them chinese

i recommend the fetal position and if you have internet arrested development will make everything better.

A: have you eaten dog?

B: no, not that i know of.

A: okay. also my sister wants you to learn how to catch red ants so you can teach me because she has some in her garden and wants to try to

make a red ant omelette

B: haha i have ant omelets about once a week, but they're usually the black ones and only because they crawl in there and i don't pick them out

A: So this whole eating like you thing isn't really working for me. I just burped and farted at the same time and i still feel like I'm gonna throw up. How do you do it?

B: Its an art form. but basically i burp and fart a lot

i keep having the uncontrollable urge to walk up to white people just bc I'm so desperate to speak english slash have non thai human contact

went 2 chiang mai over the wknd n brought bak some knoms 4 my host fmly. they put em up 4 sale in their store. oy.

I made pat graprao 4 dnr 2night! N it only took an hr n a half!!



Fast Facts

From the top of Wat Rup Chang

Photo: Ashley Dezen

Area: 4,531.0 km² (1,749.4 sq mi), the 47th largest in Thailand

Population: 549,688 with 1 Peace Corps Volunteer

Number of Ampurs: 12

Rainiest Month: September, with an average of 235.8 mm (9.283 in.)

Provincial Motto: The province of Chalawan the Crocodile King, the fun and exciting annual boat race, the land of exquisite rice and the delicious Tha Khoi pomelo; the center of the province is the Luang Phor Phet.

To get to Phichit from Bangkok, take a bus from Mo Chit, get your ticket from the first floor. You can also take the train. Many busses going to Chiang Mai and all the ones that go to Phitsanulok stop there on the main highway, although that's not close to the muang. You may have to go to Nakhon Sawan or Supan Buri first and then transfer. There are also vans that go to Phichit that run every few hours and are a bit cheaper.

Wat Rup Chang is the best bpai tiao I've taken. It's famous for having an imprint of the Buddha's footsteps, so there is a large walking Buddha. There are three levels of the temple, and the last one provides a stunning view of Phichit!

I wouldn't recommend going to Wat Tha Luang. It's quite beautiful on the water, but honestly it seems like most other temples.

Other tourist attractions include Muang Gao,

or Old City Park, which is thought to be the original city and is estimated to be about 900 years old. Bung Si Fai is a large fresh water lake with a pretty cool aquarium. Both make for nice resting places.

My province is famous for crocodiles. The ancient legend of Chalawan, the crocodile king, originated from here and there are large crocodile statues that line the highway.

- Ashley Dezen, YinD 126

Better Know a Province

Phichit

Game Corner

Here's a fun way to get the kids up and moving, review vocabulary and reuse some of those dozens of milk boxes that are hanging around the school - Bean Bag Toss Tic-Tac-Toe.

Find yourself nine of the boxes that the school milk comes in; it's the perfect size to fit a piece of A4 paper in it. Assemble them together into a 3x3 grid. Print out pictures of your vocabulary words, or the words themselves if you want to practice reading, and place them in the boxes.

Divide the students into two teams - X's and O's. Allow the students to take turns throwing small bean bags into the boxes from a short distance away. If they can say the word that their bean bag lands on, then that picture gets marked for their team.

Play until one team gets three in a row, just like a game of tic-tac-toe.

Some of the younger students make have a difficult time picking up the strategy of tic-tac-toe. No mind, they still enjoy the activity!

- Jim Damico, TCCS 126



Peanut Butter Fudge-Like Candy

Rebecca "Spook" Sulek, TCCS 126

8 oz creamy peanut butter
1 cup unsalted butter

1 lb powdered sugar (454 g)
1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)

Microwave (melt and combine) peanut butter and butter. If using a microwave 2 min and stir, then another 2 min and stir. A lid or some plastic wrap to keep the microwave clean is a good idea! Add in the (sifted) powdered sugar a bit at a time and the extract. Candy will be very stiff, so a wooden spoon is great. If adding chocolate chips or nuts or cranberries or anything else, do it now and then turn out candy into a greased 8x8 pan. Smooth the top so it looks nice and put in the freezer until it hardens. Thaw in the refrigerator before eating!

I didn't have a pan so I foil-wrapped a box, making it the right size by putting boxes of tea at one end, then I greased the foil. Once I figured out that folding the foil around the outside of the box would give me nice creases and approximate the inside dimensions, it worked well!

Creamy Pumpkin Pasta Sauce

Ashley Dezen, YinD 126

2 c. pureed pumpkin
2 T oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 c. milk

1/3 c. grated Parmesan
cheese
1 T. white wine vinegar
1/4 t. red pepper flakes

1. Heat the oil in the pan and then add pumpkin puree, garlic, milk, vinegar, red pepper flakes and 1 c. of pasta water.
2. Heat thoroughly.
3. Toss pasta to coat. If sauce is too thick, add more reserved pasta water.

Better Homes and Kanomes

Itchy Bite Relief

Christine Bedenis, TCCS 125

Thailand is full of creepy-crawlers and so many of them bite. Not only do they bite, but they often strike at inopportune moments (late night visit to the squat toilet) and you may not even see them (literal ants in your pants.) These little parts of our ecosystem are just trying to get along, but do they really have to leave you feeling so itchy? Well, if you are stuck scratching away, try these home remedies for so relief.

- 1) Lemon or lime slice, apply directly to the bite.
- 2) Aspirin, get some from your med kit, crush it up, make a paste with a water and to apply to the bite.
- 3) Apple cider vinegar, rub on the affected area.
- 4) Peppermint toothpaste, dab on the bite.
- 5) Salt, rub on after getting the area slightly wet.
- 6) Banana peel, rub the inside of the peel on the bite.
- 7) Baking soda, make a paste with some water and apply to the bite.
- 8) Ammonia, dab a little bit on the bite.
- 9) Lavender and Tea Tree essential oils, mix together and dab on the affected area.
- 10) Tiger Balm, the old Thai stand-by. Golden Cup also works.

Dry Shampoo

Christine Bedenis, TCCS 125

Let's be real. Sometimes, you just don't have the will to stand there naked and dump a bowl of water on your head to get your hair clean. Especially when it's a chilly 70 degrees out! Dry shampoo is the perfect solution, but it's either expensive or you have to wait for those precious care-packages. But what if I told you that you could make your own? And from stuff that is easily available at Tesco Lotus? Well, you can and they are!

Ingredients:

Cornstarch

Cocoa (optional for brunettes)

Cinnamon (optional for redheads)

Sprinkle a little bit of cornstarch on your scalp and roots. Massage in and finger comb through. If you are worried about the cornstarch making your hair look white, mix in some cocoa or cinnamon to make it easier to rub in. Shake it out and style as desired. If you are feeling extra fancy, use a make-up brush to buff the cornstarch into your roots, but it's not necessary.

Inspiring Anti-Drug Leaders

Julia Ward, YinD 126

The month of October was a turning point for me. I lead my first project, which I had created, with the help of my wonderful counterpart. This project was a youth leadership program empowering teens to become involved in keeping their schools and communities alcohol and drug free. To begin my youth led drug awareness program I, along with my counterpart, trained a group of about 20 students, ages 13-15, on the effects of drugs and their impact on the community. The training went extremely well! I was able to create a program with activities that were both fun and informative. The students seemed to enjoy doing skits and playing games, and were active in the follow up discussions. I also realized how open these students felt they could be with my counterpart and I. Many students disclosed to us about their past experiences with drugs and alcohol. Their openness to discuss this information was slightly shocking to me, but also appreciated.

My initial expectations of this project were that it would be a total flop. I was nervous that many students wouldn't show up to participate as the project was held during one of their school breaks.

However, about 2/3 of the invited students came, and the ones that didn't attend were the more difficult students. I was also nervous that the students wouldn't enjoy the activities, or would make a mockery of the program. They surprised me and actually were pretty engaged and enthused. Next on the agenda is to have the trained group of students to educate the younger students on drug use and drug prevention methods. I am excited to see how the students handle their roles as leaders and mentors to the younger students.



Counterpart's Helpful Hints

Interested in replicating Julia's Anti-Drug Leadership Camp at your own site, but don't know how to approach the project with your counterpart? Having trouble finding the words to explain what you want to do? Julia's counterpart provided a short write-up in Thai that you can show your own counterpart to get the conversation started.

เยาวชนให้กับเยาวชน

กำหนดการต่อต้านยาเสพติด

I. หลักการและเหตุผล

ชุมชนมีการระบุนการใช้ยาเสพติดในหมู่เยาวชนเป็นปัญหา

การใช้ยาที่ไม่ดีต่อเยาวชนและชุมชน หากเยาวชนใช้ยาเสพติดที่พวกเขาสามารถทำร้าย

การพัฒนาสมองของพวกเขา

การศึกษาเกี่ยวกับอันตรายของยาเสพติดเป็นสิ่งจำเป็นเพื่อลด

การใช้ยาเสพติดของเยาวชน

II. โครงการที่นำโดยเยาวชน

เยาวชนสอนเพื่อนของพวกเขาเกี่ยวกับอันตรายของยาเสพติด

เยาวชนปฏิบัติภารกิจร่วมกับเสียขวัญเกี่ยวกับ

- อันตรายของยาเสพติด

- แรงกดดัน

- บอกว่าไม่มียาเสพติด

กลุ่มของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่

- ผ่านการฝึกอบรมเกี่ยวกับผลกระทบของยาเสพติด

- นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ก็จะเดินทางไปยังโรงเรียนประถมศึกษาในหนองโพธิ์

- ใช้งานนำเสนอและการละเล่นที่จะสอนคนอื่นถึงอันตรายของยาเสพติด



So, You're Looking at Grad School

Madeleine Aggeler, TCCS 126

Are you at a loss for what to do after your Peace Corps service? Are you not sure how to apply your skills of muddling through a foreign culture and serving as an ornamental American? Is that degree from Clown College proving less useful than you thought? Have your parents changed your old bedroom into an at-home gym because “you really should be moving on, Maddie”? Then a Coverdell Fellowship may be for you.

The Paul D. Coverdell Fellows program provides financial aid for RPCVs at over 80 partner universities across the country. In addition to pursuing their degree, Coverdell Fellows complete a degree-related internship in an underserved American community.

Danielle D. Kerchmar, an RPCV from Ukraine (2010-2012), earned a Master's degree in International Administration from the University of Denver as a Coverdell Fellow. She stresses the importance of the essay in the application process: “I don't remember much about the application process from

my own experience, except that the GRE was brutal. However, I did work with the admissions office during my studies, and the essay is by far the most important part of your application. Make it honest; don't use over-used quotes; and talk about how PC changed you.”

“Part of me wishes I did Peace Corps after my degree because I think I would have been a better volunteer,” Kerchmar continues, “but ultimately I think I did it the best way around. Most of the people I knew who started out doing the Masters International program (PC after the degree) either didn't do their service or came home early.”

In Kerchmar's view, having the Peace Corps experience on her resume was ultimately beneficial. “I was able to bring a lot of real-life experience to my studies that many other students couldn't. Peace Corps volunteers are definitely respected in the classroom. Additionally, a lot of the information I learned expanded on vague knowledge I had gained from my service. I think Peace Corps helped me think a lot about what I really wanted to do and learn about, so when I went to DU, I already knew which areas of study I wanted to focus on. There are a lot of choices!”

One important part of applying for graduate school is to leverage your past experiences to make you a more competitive applicant. “I think as long as you think you are a good volunteer, you are probably good to go. Try to start thinking of ways where you think you have actually changed your community and ways they have changed you for the better for your essay. Those kinds of stories are good for your application. Your essay is probably the most important part. I would also recommend getting in touch with your references now and telling them about your Peace Corps work. If you have a blog, pass it on to them. DU's career office always said that your best reference is from someone who has heard your PC stories.”

For more information about the Paul D. Coverdell Fellows Program, visit the Peace Corps website at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/graduate/fellows/>.

Evacuation: Ukraine

Carissa Sutter, Yind 126

In late February 2014, Peace Corps Ukraine volunteers received an email from headquarters informing them that they must evacuate from their communities and the country, leaving behind host families, students, counterparts, projects and a dedicated Peace Corps staff. The volunteers were asked not tell anyone that they were leaving and to bring only a single bag of their belongings. All remaining items were packed and left be-

hind to be shipped by PC staff months later. Some volunteers, like Lukas Henke, were able to leave without alerting anyone in their community, others were living with host families and unable to completely conceal their departure.

Not being able to explain the situation to counterparts, students, or friends was the most difficult aspect of the evacuation for many volunteers. Grace Ansaní said the hardest part was

knowing that the special needs children that she worked with would not understand why she did not say goodbye.

Volunteers were warned that travelling might be dangerous because anti-government forces were blocking roads and some people had been stopped at bus and train stations to verify identity and travel plans. Though this seems like an ominous warning, volunteers like Maggie Mitteis, 27-year-old TEFL volunteer, did not feel threatened because the protests were centered in Kyiv.

"I never felt unsafe or that anything was changing. I really think the paranoia came from the American media," Mitteis told *The Independent* in May.

"Because there were 230 volunteers being evacuated the logistics involved forced volunteers to leave in groups rather than one unit. Some left the next day, while others had to stay a day longer. These groups all took different routes back to Washington D.C. and it was interesting to compare how each group traveled. I know one group hadn't slept in like forty hours. There is a process though, and we had been preparing for a potential evacuation for over a month," said Thomas Dahlke, a Youth in Development volunteer and former Warden.

Once they returned to the United States there were three options for the evacuated volunteers. They could choose to end

*Locals set up road blocks to make sure no "enemies" were entering their towns.
Photos: Allie Holtzer*



their service, start over in another country or take a job with Peace Corps Response - an intensive, short term assignment in a specialized field. According to Teschner, 11 out of 230 volunteers chose to be transferred or to remain in Ukraine on their own.

The protests in Ukraine began in November 2013 when Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich announced Ukraine would not join the European Union. Many Ukrainians believed this was a lost opportunity to modernize and bolster national education and employment. At the same time, Yanukovich accepted a 15 billion dollar bailout from Russia, strengthening old ties and further enraging Ukrainian supporters of the EU. This increased the divide between many Ukrainians in the west and the ethnic Russians in the east, as the former protested to distance the country from Russia and join the EU and the latter widely supported the bailout as the best hope to confront the financial crisis.

At that time volunteers were placed in standfast or alert status, and many could not travel without special permission from the staff. The Country Director, Doug Teschner, was in regular contact with the volunteers to keep them apprised of the political climate in Kiev. Underscoring the safety concerns, while volunteers were forced to stay in their villages, Teschner had to evacuate his own home in Kiev twice.

By February 2014, the protests escalated and police violence became a focus for the international media. This culmi-

Allie with students who were not able to say good-bye at school, and so came to her apartment.



Photo: Allie Holtzer

nated with the shooting deaths of around 76 protesters and at least three police officers within a few days, which led to the full evacuation of Peace Corps volunteers from the country.

The Peace Corps volunteers were forced to leave Ukraine, but for many evacuation did not mean disconnection. Mitteis is still in contact with her counterparts and Kristina (Johnson) Karpicus uses Facebook to keep in touch with her students and friends. Others are still building or assisting with projects online, a practice which Teschner has described as the "Virtual Peace Corps."

Phil Roffman, a TEFL volunteer in Kirovograd, was not satisfied with a "virtual" experience and returned to his village independently of the Peace Corps as an English tutor and occasional volunteer for his former counterparts.

"I decided to return before I boarded the plane to leave. In fact, I left all of my clothing and housing materials here because I knew I would return," said Roffman.

This January, Peace Corps Thailand is welcoming

an evacuated Ukraine volunteer to Group 127, Allie Holtzer, as well as at least one other evacuated volunteer from Azerbaijan. Peace Corps Ukraine volunteer Phil Roffman and PC Ukraine staff member Roman Oleksenko wanted to convey their support to their former volunteers.

"I think, and hope, your pre-service training will be rewarding since you have traversed those three months before. I wish you inner peace, great humility, and my admiration for what you are doing. Stay positive and enjoy the culture, the people, the food. Do not compare the two countries too much. It is a different experience at a different time in your life. You are a veteran!" said Roffman.

"Dear Allie, I would like to wish you much success as begin your service in Thailand! I've always been impressed with your motivation, professionalism, and cultural awareness. Peace Corps Thailand is very lucky to get you! I hope you make the most of your new assignment. Best wishes!" said Oleksenko.

Reporting help from Skylar Gingrich and Viktoriya Zhukova, a member of the Peace Corps Ukraine staff.

Hello and Thank You

Rich Ambuske, YinD 127

I met an American ex-pat visiting from Thailand this summer. He offhandedly offered his slant that Thailand is referred to as the Land of Smiles not so much because of the friendliness of the people, but rather because of their language. He went on to explain that the smiles were more from the contortions one's mouth needs to make while forming and pronouncing the sounds and words of this ancient language. My initial reaction, unstated of course, was that he was just an ungrateful, cynical American, and likely wrong.

A few months passed and I started thinking that maybe I should get a jump on learning some basic Thai before I headed out with the Peace Corps in January. I looked at the alphabet, its 44 consonants, shook my head at the squiggles and went back to polishing off an Inspector Lynley mystery instead. Another month elapsed and I got up the fortitude to buckle down and listen to the language tapes I had downloaded onto my phone months earlier. After that first high hurdle, I made it a habit that whenever I was taking a walk in the woods, I'd put on my headphones and repeatedly hit play, pause, rewind until I could mimic a half dozen easy sentences. I figured I was exercising my body, my mind, my soul, and particularly my thumb in hitting the stop button. Each lesson runs a half hour long. Two months in and I'm finally nearing the end of lesson 5.

Somewhere around week four of my self-led tutorial through these lessons, I walked humbly into a local Thai restaurant and mustered the courage to mumble "Hello" in Thai. *Sa-wat-dee khrap*, I said under my breath. No one heard me. I sat alone at a table facing the door, looked blankly at the menu and repeated the words over and over to myself until I became more comfortable with "*sa-wat-dee khrap*." Hello. When the waitress came back to take my order my confidence evaporated and I simply told her I would try the pad thai. I felt I had even wimped out on my dinner order, ordering the most basic of Thai-American cuisine. I kicked myself for not being more adventurous, more daring in my approach to this outing. So I sulked and while I waited for my meal to arrive, I repeated the Thai words for thank-you: *kaap khoon khrap. Kaap khoon khrap.*

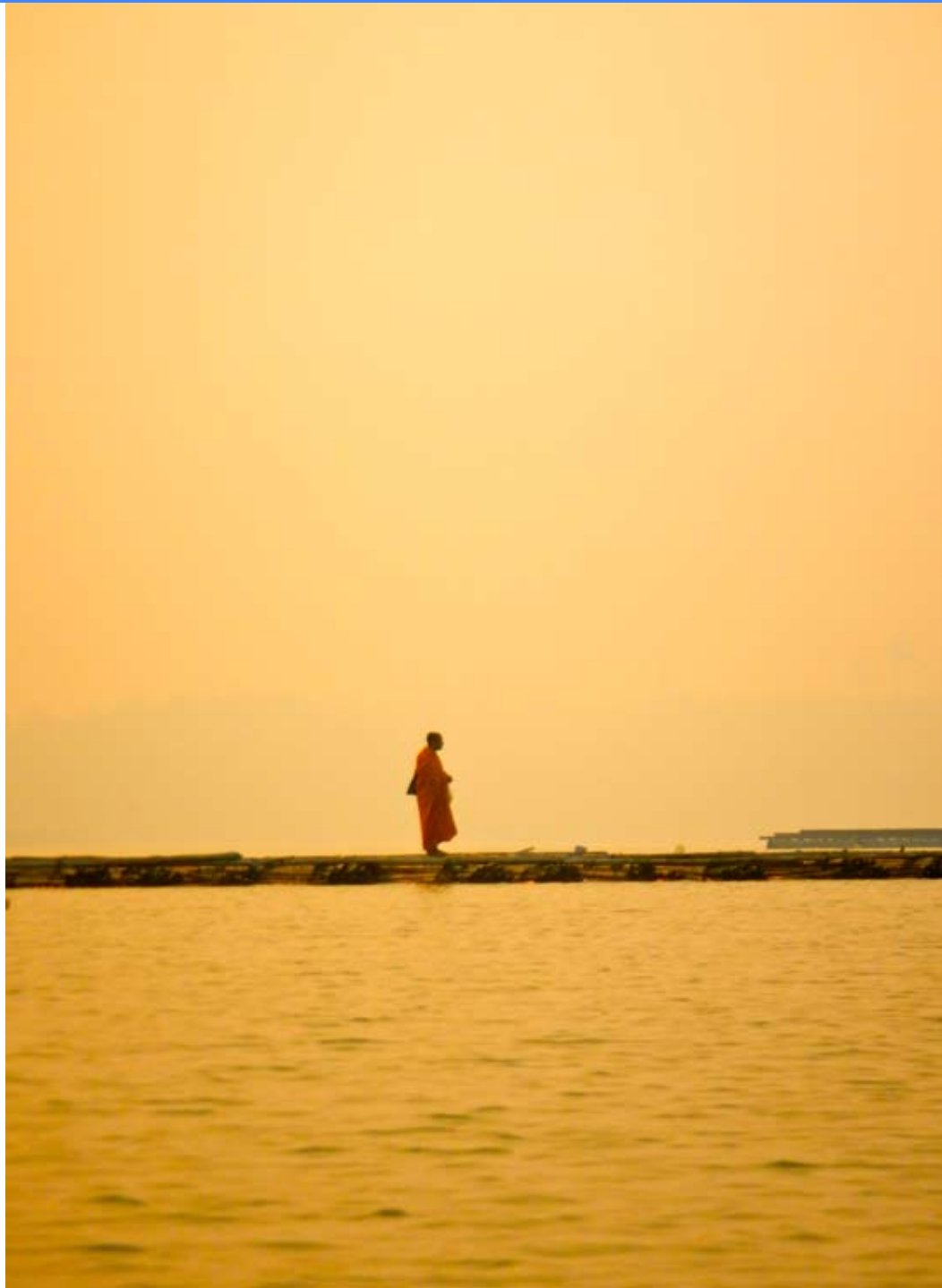
Thai is a tonal language, words can rise, fall, rise and fall, fall and then rise, or simply be said in a flat tone. One little word can have five different tones and five different meanings. Then there are the vowels, short ones and long ones, extended sounds where the vowel is held for two beats and the mouth follows suit. It's when these different tones are jammed together that the facial contortions are most noticeable. With the simple phrase for "hello," *sa-wat-deeeee*, the mouth automatically forms a smile around the *deeeee*. The window of opportunity for saying "hello" had closed and it was

time to gather the courage to say "thank you." I was trying to remember the tones used by the speakers in my lessons. Did my utterance of the first word fall in tone? Was the second word flat? Did the last word rise? I repeated the words aloud, softly. *Kaap khoon khrap. Kaap khoon khrap.* Before I knew it the waitress was at my shoulder placing the dish on the table in front of me. I looked up, she spun around and was back to the kitchen before I had a chance to finish the first *k-aa-aa-p*.

I stared at my pad thai and considered my next steps. With my right hand I picked up my fork, stabbed the rice noodles and twirled, Italian-style. I practiced my *kaap khoon khrap* in rhythm with the twirling. After I finished my meal and the leftovers were bagged, I stood up and walked a few feet to the counter to pay. I handed the waitress the bill and the money telling her to keep the change. Before I turned to leave, I stood shock-still and slowly, cautiously uttered, "*Kaap khoon khrap*," loud enough so I could be heard. The waitress smiled a beautiful, natural smile and responded in turn, "*Kaap khoon ka*". I turned and floated out of the restaurant onto the busy city sidewalk, smiling from pure joy and not from the contortions of the words I had just spoken, my first public Thai.

2014 Photo Contest

They say a picture is worth a thousand words and that the stories you tell should paint a picture. Our theme for this issue was "Stories to Tell Your Grandchildren," and we asked you to take a look through the photos taken over the previous 365 days in Thailand and submit images, a story in their own right, that you thought best represented the categories of "People," "Places," "Things" and "Holidays." All of the submissions are published below, along with the winners of each section and a Best Overall. Our gratitude goes to everyone who submitted and congratulations to the winners.



Best Overall Winner - Molly Cook

People

Clockwise from right: Winner - Molly Cook; Lauren Anderson; Angela Koontz; Angela Koontz.





Clockwise top left: Lauren Anderson; "It took awhile, but the shy children of our village are finally warming up to us. This little girl greets me and Chris with a huge smile and a bright "Good Morning!" no matter what time of day it is." Adrianna Neuenschwander; Brandon Julian, Lauren Anderson, Angela Koontz



Clockwise from top: Winner - Bang Ma Pha Sunrise, Mayumi Rebeiro and Meredith Wipf; Angela Koontz; Lauren Anderson



Places



Left to right, from top: "The cliffs of Pha Taem provide a great view of the river valley that separates Thailand and Laos. This national park is located in eastern Ubon Ratchatani, and advertises itself as the place to see 'The first sunset in Siam.'" Adrianna Neuenschwander; Angela Koontz; Angela Koontz; Angela Koontz; Ryan Stannard





All photos this page: Molly Cook





Clockwise from top: Winner - "Class is cancelled, and the rice plant bends with the heavy weight of the grain as students harvest the rice they will eat at school lunches throughout the year." Adrianna Neuenschwander; Angela Koontz; Angela Koontz

Things



Clockwise from left: Winner - Lauren Anderson; "Manora Festival" Katherine Sivret; "Sweat drips from the faces of the dancers as they celebrate Bun Bang Fai, the rocket festival. This festival is held in many Issan villages, as villagers herald in the beginning of the rainy season." Adrianna Neuenschwander



Holidays

When I first got my invitation to serve in Moldova as an English Educator with the Peace Corps I did a happy dance and after being here for 7 months and one school semester down I couldn't be happier with my placement. Don't get me wrong - it's rough some days. Especially now that it's winter and I think my toes are literally going to fall off despite the numerous layers I have on. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

My name is Maggie Wright, I'm 24 years old, from all over, and am now living in Ermoclia, Stefan Voda Raion (district), Moldova. Ermoclia is a small village of a supposed 5,000 people but it feels more like 2,000 people. Many people in Moldova go abroad for work, and my village has many people aboard; most of my students have one parent abroad, if not both.

An Outside Perspective

Maggie Wright, EE M-29

On being a Peace Corps volunteer in Moldova.

I teach 2nd-8th grade at my village's school with two Moldovan counterparts. The school serves 1st-9th grades and we also have a village Kindergarten. My village doesn't have enough students to have a high school, so the students who go to high school travel to Causeni or Stefan Voda every day or live there during the week. Some high school students live and attend school in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. My host sister, who is in the 12th grade, lives in Chisinau and hopes to attend university abroad one day.

I live about an hour and a

half to two hours away from the Capital and can get there by *rutiera*, which is the major form of transportation here in Moldova. It costs me 45 *lei* one-way from my village to the capital, which is about \$2.87 American dollars.

At site, I live with my host parents, a *bunica* (grandmother) and two younger host sisters, who are 19 and 23. My host parents own a little store in our village that is attached to our compound of a house and is directly across from the school. I have my own room with a *soba* (a source of heat), and a window that

Clockwise from top left: View of Chisinau; sunset over a lake; masa, a Moldovan meal; sunset
Photos: Maggie Wright



"My bunica makes the most fantastic homemade bread, which I usually devour in one sitting; bring on the carbs!"



overlooks where our pigs used to live. I say used to live because they got slaughtered for food recently.

The whole knowing exactly where my food is coming from is a weird concept that I am still not used to; I'm still squimish when I see the duck heads just chilling on the kitchen counter, even though duck is probably my new favorite meat. My *Bunica* makes the most fantastic homemade bread, which I usually devour in one sitting; bring on the carbs! Moldova is known for being the breadbasket of the former Soviet Union and for its wine!

My host dad makes fantastic red house wine which is usually taken as a shot when drunk. Also in the summer there is an abundance of fresh vegetables and fruits, plus lots of sunflowers.

My host family takes tremendous care of me, has made me part of their family, accepts my weird, American behavior most days and puts up with my broken Romanian that sometimes turns into Spanish. I speak Romanian, though in Moldova people sometimes speak Russian, or a mixture of Romanian and Russian.

I work with two Moldovan counterparts who teach English at my school, so I speak English with them. But there is a lot of translating for my students into Romanian. I love my students, but, man, oh, man, teaching is tough! It is the first year learning English for four of my classes and we meet only once a week, while all the other classes meet twice a week. The students learn Russian, French and English at my school. Most days I stand in front of the classes making jokes and being silly while trying to teach our well planned lessons.

Most of my students think I am a crazy American who is not married and has no children, which is strange situation for a woman of my age here. I think I've gotten a few marriage proposals, but I'm not quite sure. Lack of language is sometimes a good thing.

My time so far in Moldova has been a constant roller coaster of emotions, learning, struggles and small successes. Being a Peace Corps volunteer will be the hardest job I have ever and the most rewarding experience that I will ever have. I love this country and it's people; I can't believe that 7 months has already gone by.

To read more about Maggie's service in Moldova, check out her blog at <http://wanderlustoflife.blogspot.com/>



From top: winter in Moldova; Moldovan dancing; cat and clothes warming; hitchhiking to provincial capital
Photos: Maggie Wright

Tales from the Beyond

Burgess Needle, Thai XVIII

Burgess Needle was an Education volunteer from 1967-1969 in Thai XVIII. He has shared some of his journal entries with us, which we have edited to stories about the schools. If you would like to read more of Burgess's stories, let us know, or check out his book of poetry, "Thai Comic Books," available on Amazon in paperback and Kindle formats.

"Consequently, they were rather shy about objects that hurtled down at them from the sky, such as fly balls."

July 2, 1967

Preeda, the social studies teacher, asked me to explain and demonstrate the rules of softball to a group of Nangrong School students. After all the horror stories I've told the world about my junior high school physical education classes, this was what it had come down to. Mr. Eldert, my old PE teacher from Day Junior High, would have been proud of me. I walked out to the main playing field where a group of boys waited. They grasped the basic rules very quickly and ran about the field with enthusiasm. A few minor problems quickly became apparent. These Thai children were accustomed to games that involved only feet (soccer) and something called *takraw* (passing a small, rattan ball bag and forth with every part of the body but the hands). Consequently, they were rather shy about objects that hurtled down at them from the sky, such as fly balls. Their batting practice turned out well, although most had a tendency to step a little too much away from the plate when a pitch came in. They naturally had terrible fielding skills. Most of them prepared for pop-ups far too slowly and ended up being walloped in the chest. Another problem was first base. No one wanted to cover such a dangerous position. Short stop wasn't exactly viewed as an enviable spot either. *Adjan* Suraporn grunted something to me about students possibly getting hit on their sacred heads, so there's a strong possibility softball may never catch on.

July 6, 1967

Now that I'm in the rhythm of work, know my students names, actually like what the janitor's wife drags over every day for lunch, I'm beginning to allow myself a sense of finally fitting in. My weekends flash by in a haze of sato, bike rides and excursions to tiny villages whose names always seemed to reflect something about their natural environment. I keep telling myself it's time for me to start a formal study of Thai script, but myself doesn't listen. Every time I think my oral comprehension is getting better I bump into someone who doesn't know me, who lives outside of town and speaks rapid-Thai with many Cambodian words thrown in and I'm totally lost. Don't they know I'm an idiot and need help? Many of the town's older citizens stop me in the market and try to strike up a conversation, but if the topic wanders too far from small talk, I'm stumped.

When I left Massachusetts for training in Hawaii I weighed 175 pounds and now I'm down to 145. No matter how many plates of fried rice I eat or how many *patongos* I nibble, there's no way I'll ever replace all the calories of Big Macs and double-thick shakes with French fries.

Going over my accounts for this month I noted I spent 300 baht for food, 70 baht for Pepsis, 64 baht for newspapers, 135 baht to have film developed, 90 baht for Wisai who buys me eggs and various delicacies for breakfast, and 60 baht for flour, sugar and margarine. I no longer think of a baht equaling a nickel. A baht is just a baht.

Wisut was out playing



Needle with two students who were competition winners. The prize was to go to the provincial capital of Buriram for a day.

Photo: Burgess Needle

cards until late last night while I was home listening to moths hammer against the shutters and crickets searching for my clothes. I was told I had to have all my test results in early because I'll be leaving soon for a Peace Corps conference in Korat.

Earlier that day, while going over my students rolls with Prayun he pointed out that I'd been calling about 70% of them by wrong names. I complained to Prayun that the kids always mumbled when I asked them their names and when I tried to pronounce what I thought they'd each said, they always nodded and smiled and said, "Yes, my teacher."

"They will always say, 'Yes, my teacher,' because you are the teacher," Prayun explained. "They will never tell you that you are wrong."

"But, I've been taking attendance for weeks now and they all answer to the names I called out."

"That's because they memorized the names you gave them and always raised their hands when you asked if they were present."

"I never gave them names," I said. "They just never gave me the right name."

"Well, now you know the correct names," he said. "Forget the other names you wrote down and learn the new and proper ones."

"Okay, I will."

"And, it is time for you to study more Thai. I will be your teacher. Miss Charlotte, the former volunteer, could speak and write Thai very well and she could cook Thai food, too."

"Okay, I will."

"We shall start tomorrow right after your last class."

When I didn't answer, he just smiled at me and left the room.

July 7, 1967

I scored the reading test I gave my MS-1 students and was totally depressed. Who had been mimicking my voice all the time? The problem is these kids all have fantastic memories. They apparently parroted back whatever I said to them, but understood very little.

I became angry this afternoon when someone from the headmaster's office dropped by to tell me they were canceling classes for the rest of the day because the head of the Department of Education for the province might pay a visit so they were going to have the students spend the rest of the afternoon cleaning the campus grounds. Without thinking, I picked up a blackboard eraser and threw it across the room. My students sat in stunned silence.

I pointed to the door.

"Go," I told them. "No school this afternoon."

Bunya, my head student, slowly got to his feet.

"My teacher," he said, slowly. "We will stay with you."

"Thank you, but you have to go outside and help clean the school grounds."

"My teacher, will you come with us?"

"Yes," I nodded, unable to hide a smile. "I'll go with you."

We trooped out of the room together, class and teacher, united as one.

I've concluded some of my students cheated on their tests. Several of the papers have exactly the same answers right down to the same spelling mistakes. I know what I'm supposed to do. At the beginning of school, Prayun gave me a bamboo switch to hit them with if they misbehaved. I know he disciplines students that way even if they forget to wear their pith helmets. I'll have to discuss this with Wisut.

Student discipline takes place every morning right after the pledge of allegiance and singing the national anthem. Actually, Prayun never hit any of his students very hard for minor infractions, but I've seen the assistant headmaster whack a few students very hard right behind their knees because they'd been caught drinking alcohol.

Needle reading a Thai comic book with local students.

Photo: Burgess Needle



To Your Health

Christiana Lang, YinD 126

A story not to tell the grandkids.

When I started this piece, I wanted it to look like something that would make readers grin with a relating smile or grimace with the horror of what Peace Corps life can do to hygiene limits. Since the theme of this Sticky Rice issue is “Stories to Tell Your Grandchildren” I figured the health section should be devoted to the opposite of that. I wanted to create something like “Stories (you probably shouldn’t) Tell Your Grandchildren.”

Last week, I sent out an email asking a few volunteers to share some atrocious health related moments so far in their service. You know, things like: not having a trusty backup wad of toilet paper when the going got going, or the times where we saw the cook at our favorite restaurant sneeze right into the wok before plating up our order (and ate the food anyway). Or, of course there are the times we volunteers find ourselves not knowing which end of our bodies might need the toilet first. There’s an Urban Dictionary name for this Russian Roulette: vommerhea.

As responses came trickling in, I realized the theme of this piece needed to change. Volunteers were answering with stories about legitimate health concerns. These were not just stories about challenges with hygiene. These were stories about times we have cried, worried or shook our heads in frustration. Privacy concerns, local health clinic botches, questionable life choices and sheer unknowing what the heck is running through our bodies are just some of the things that have become commonplace.

Though our medical staff is arguably the best in the universe, living in a foreign country with unknown diseases and uncharted feelings presents an outpouring of stories like the one below.

So, without further adieu, I’d like to share a special piece written by one of our very own badass, smiley and musically obsessed volunteers. As 125 closes and 127 opens, this message on personal health and coping may be a story not to share with our grandchildren, but one we can share with each other.

This is about that time when we all spent the morning crying our eyes out as we said goodbye to our Suphan Buri host families while the reality of what was to come slowly set in as the day past.

Emotions were running high as I struggled to cope with the fact that it would be a long time before I saw not only the Thai family that I had grown to love but also with our imminent departure to our sites. I realized that soon I would be without my fellow volunteers. I decided soon after that the best way to deal with all of these sad realizations was to consume an inordinate amount of alcohol, as is tradition.

Day quickly turned to night

and with a healthy buzz going through my system thanks to a combination of cheap Thai beer and even cheaper Thai whiskey I decided to embark on a quest to satiate a hunger in my belly that had been growing unnoticed for some time now by that point. I was joined by three other volunteers and as we walked to the nearest noodle stand we started to engage in conversation about how we would all soon be completely on our own at our new sites.

This inevitably had a disastrous effect on my anxiety levels which, up until this point, had been quelled by the copious amounts of alcohol. It was then that I made the poor decision to take part in a few, seemingly in-

nocent, cigarettes that had been offered to me by another volunteer.

I should mention that while I was an occasional smoker back home I had done really well to avoid all tobacco products throughout the entirety of PST.

For a brief, glimmering moment in time all of my stress melted away as the combination of a gut-load of booze and the nicotine in my veins worked together to provide the sweetest moment of relief that I so sorely craved.

However this was quickly followed by a violent reaction by my body to reject all of the decisions that I had made that day up to this point. My head was swimming, every inch of my skin

began to sweat uncontrollably, and my vision became blotchy and unfocused.

It was at this point when I decided that I probably wasn't going to survive this meal and that it would serve me better to abandon that cause and escape back to the comfort of the air conditioned hotel room that was just steps away.

After mumbling a few incoherent strings of words to my fellow companions I mustered all the strength I had left and shot up from the table. Big mistake. Immediately I was forced to sit back down and redirect all that energy I was planning to use on walking to now resist the urge to vomit up my entire digestive system.

Thankfully this ludicrous display of buffoonery had not gone unnoticed by my fellow volunteers and after I had regained

my composure I was gently escorted back to the hotel where I somehow managed to get into a room (judging by the amount of bras and make-up strewn about I could only assume I wasn't in my own room, I hoped. At least otherwise my roommate had a lot of explaining to do).

After about an hour of remaining completely motionless it seemed as though I had regained the ability to form conscious thoughts and the first one I came up with was, "You god damn idiot."

In my experience any good story usually comes packaged with a very valuable lesson and my story here is no exception. When it comes to dealing with high levels of anxiety, stress, and negative emotions in general it's best to try alternative coping mechanisms before you jump right into substance abuse.

- YinD volunteer, 126

For suggestions on healthy coping mechanisms, please consult October 2014's To Your Health or e-mail Christiana at itsanaduh@yahoo.com.

Please note that the advice and information in these articles is not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you have a problem or need help please contact Thailand's Peace Corps Medical Office for any and all concerns. You can reach the Medical Officer, at 081-811-5855, the Back-Up Medical Officer at 081-925-1898. You can reach the Medical Office at 02-243-0140 ext 503 during office hours.

To Your Health is an ongoing health column, by Christiana Lang, 126. It addresses health needs of volunteers and reminds us how to stay at our best while serving in the Peace Corps. If you have any suggestions for future topics, please e-mail ideas to stickyrice.newsletter@gmail.com.

HELLO FROM THE PEER SUPPORT NETWORK!

What do we do? PSN members provide, with integrity and confidentiality, a supportive, non-judgmental, and safe environment that will endure and evolve to meet the diverse needs of every Volunteer.

How do we do it? All members participate in PSN training before commencing their support roles. Responsibilities include being available for support via phone or internet, biannual check-in calls with volunteers, weekly emails, presence at training events, and confidential site visits upon request and approval by PC staff.

Members are expected to be available for other Volunteers, willing to listen as needed and offer referrals to staff or the Medical unit.



Ashley Dezen, 126; YinD Phichit **Desired Superpower:** The ability to be in more than one place at once.



Brandon Julian, 125; YinD Phetchabun **Desired Superpower:** Finding lost things.



Kailei Kluck, 126; TCCS Chiang Mai; **Desired Superpower:** Teleportation.



Amanda Leibenhaut, 126; YinD Khon Kaen **Desired Superpower:** Teleportation



Jes Milberg-Haydu, 125; TCCS Nakhon Prathom **Desired Superpower:** Superhuman strength.



Tricia Odom, 125; YinD Buriram **Desired superpower:** The power to help and heal all those in need.



Katherine Sivert, 126; YinD Phattalung **Desired Superpower:** Communicate in every language.



Sasha-Noel Udom, 125; YinD Phetchabun **Desired Superpower:** Flight.

Technically Thailand

Linzee Prescott, TCCS 126

I want to introduce to you Socrative, a great application and Web site for quiz making and assessment.

I first came across this app in a teacher training when I was student teaching back in Arizona. This app is perfect for assessments and review. In my class, I like to use it for student pair practice, review, and reading comprehension practice. It's a great way to save and share quizzes with other schools and teachers.

Also a good way to engage those trainings at the S.A.O. where everyone is already on their phones and mobile devices. Why not use them to take a quiz to practice their English understanding? It could be a good place to start.

Also, my paw aw loves it as he can easily report on the quizzes the teacher shares on our schools "Share A Quiz" document we share on Dropbox.

Pros

- **Cloud Computing:** Cloud software allows you save quizzes online.
- **Offline:** You can print and save PDF versions of quizzes in case of connection issues.
- **Exit Question:** Start a quick question for students as they leave your class or activity; they can answer just a few quick questions and pass the device to the next participant.
- **Question Types:** You have a variety of options for

questions: multiple choice, true false, multiple answers, open answer.

- **Share:** Each quiz has a unique ID number that can be shared with anyone you send it too. There is also a directory on the Socrative Web site where many teachers upload their quizzes. At our school we have created a similar type of document and share it though Dropbox and Google Drive.

- **Creation Options:** You can easily reorder quiz questions and add pictures for those questions referencing a picture.

- **Quiz Taking Options:** You can make the test student paced or teacher paced.

- **In-Quiz Student Feedback:** An option for immediate feedback is available for students.

- **Random Order:** Set the question and/or answers to be randomized to enhance students' independent participation.

- **Unique Room Name:** Each teacher is given a unique room name that is editable.

- **Open until closed:** The quizzes stay open once the teacher starts a quiz it is open until they choose to finish the quiz. I regularly forget a quiz is open for weeks, and that's fine. If a student logs into your room, they will be prompted to start the current quiz that is open.

- **Template:** Option to download the Excel template to create quiz offline.

- **Language:** Questions

can be typed in English or Thai.

- **Live Results:** If the teacher's page is open on the computer or mobile device there are instant updates of students progress.

- **Finished Quiz:** Instantly view students' results, download now, email results, or view results later

Cons

- **Internet:** Both the computer and mobile options require an Internet connection.

- **Offline Template:** Not as clear as the online version and has its limits, only 6 answer choices, no photo attachment and difficult to create math equations.

- **File Size:** The more pictures and questions a quiz has can slow down the quiz.

- **Connection:** Depending on the Wi-Fi and connection at your school the app seems to require a slightly stronger connection than other apps. Because we plan to use this app regularly, we set up a router in our classroom only for the tablets in our class. We have been able to have a class of 25 all online at once so this issue isn't always present in my experience.

Have an app you or are unsure about? Send your suggestions to Linzee Prescott at lp267@nau.edu

In My Opinion

Carissa Sutter, Yind 126

Korat Thais are superior to Bangkok Thais

I know that not all volunteers get the opportunity to be exposed to Korat city Thais, but let me assure you, they are crazy awesome in a way that Bangkok Thais can only dream.

The top reason is, while all Thai people almost completely disregard traffic laws, Korat Thais consider traffic laws to be a challenge to their honor. These traffic laws are simply tests to see who has the most pride in themselves and the most willingness to test their place in the social hierarchy. After all, the police would only pull over someone who was breaking laws set by a superior.

For example, sidewalks are not only the main road used by motorbikes, they are also frequently used as a passing lane for tuk tuks and small cars. Even as a volunteer, in Korat you don't need to sit in traffic with all the trucks and large sedans. You can be a part of the community of vehicles that glides over traffic lines and in between cars. You can fly over curbs, between sidewalk restaurants and against one way traffic. You can risk your life in ways that the Peace Corps could never predict in their worst nightmares.

Another way that Korat Thais are better is their complete disinterest in English. They offer an apologetic face for not being able to speak English while si-

multaneously managing to speak Thai, Laos, Korat dialect, Isaan dialect (which I have been told is actually just Laos with some Thai in it) and sometimes even Khmer. They speak all of these languages and then say with a straight face that English is "too difficult." Don't get me started on the Chinese-Thai-Korat-Laos-Issan-Khmer speakers.

"They offer an apologetic face for not being able to speak English while simultaneously speaking 4 or 5 languages."

Meanwhile, in Bangkok the Thais are speaking English so well that they have attracted large communities of foreigners who are too busy or too lazy to learn to speak Thai. Those farangs don't have to speak Thai, they live in Bangkok!

Then there is the interesting comparison between the taxi systems. Bangkok is the largest city in Thailand, and so naturally there are a lot of taxi drivers available to drive around town. Korat city is the second largest city in Thailand, it has one of the most diverse bus transit opportunities, has tons of taxis which almost never give local rides. The Korat taxis are pretty much exclusively reserved for long dis-

tance travel, usually to Bangkok. If you want to go somewhere in Korat city, you are going to have to ride a tuk tuk or else risk being run over by one. It is no wonder Isaan Thais do so well at may thai: they have a lifetime of experience of knowing when to jump out of the way.

Finally, Bangkok Thais are almost never from Bangkok. Well, I am sure there are a few that were actually born there, but I would bet that there are more Korat Thais who were born in Korat province than there are Bangkok Thais born in Bangkok province. This is probably related to the superior education opportunities, job opportunities and exposure to international business that is available in Bangkok. However, there is something to be said for a large town that is populated by locals. Korat has a locally unified feel to it. I specify "locally unified" because Bangkok most definitely has a "Thailand unified" feeling.

It is as if Bangkok were the heart of the country, while Korat is the eyes. The eyes may not circulate a lot of blood through the body, but they do remind the body what it truly needs from its surroundings. Awareness is found through humble quantification of the things that truly matter, and that is something that Korat Thais can be proud of. Maybe next year, Bangkok.



Aries (Mar. 21-Apr. 19): You are doing a good job of keeping your anger under wraps, but you should consider expressing your unbridled rage in a muay thai gym, or perhaps at home with a machete. A coconut cutting machete, not a murderous rampage machete. Just do something physical to burn up all of that energy.



Taurus (Apr. 20-May 20): Okay Taurus, repeat after me: "I was wrong." Now, learn how to say it in Thai and admit it to that person. This is going to be one of those rare, special moments in your life where you have complete clarity about your actions. And you get to experience it in the Thai culture, where losing face is as devastating as losing a smart phone.



Gemini (May 21-Jun. 20): These next few months will be the best months of your life. It may not seem like it at first, but the stars are aligning for you. Things will fall perfectly into place and you won't have to worry about anything. Be happy, you are truly blessed.



Cancer (Jun. 21-Jul. 22): You need to talk to your family about what is going on with you. I mean, what is REALLY going on with you. It is important to reach out emotionally to your real family while you are in Thailand. Just saying hello is not enough to make a connection.



Leo (Jul. 23-Aug. 22): Yes, we all know, you are fabulous. You are a lion, and that can scare people sometimes. They need to know (think) you are a tamed animal, and won't devour them. Fly a kite or release a turtle into a river. Do something to show everyone that you can be a peaceful creature.



Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Okay, so you may have made a few big mistakes in your village. Maybe you showed the bottom of your feet to a poo-yai-ban, or once or twice you picked your teeth in front of a Thai person. In the past, you have handled your mistakes with enough grace to make up for it. In the coming months, pay more attention to yourself.



Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Well, your room is clean, now you need to buy something useless to put inside of it. Buy something that has no real purpose except to be looked at and enjoyed. This is not an exercise that will have a clear outcome, and that is the point. Everything you have done lately has been balanced out and measured and considered. It is time to do something based on a fleeting desire, not logic.



Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Well, you sure have charmed your way into another fortuitous situation! Just remember that fortunes can be won in a gamble, but lost in the blink of an eye.



Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The holidays are over and it is time to get back on track. Your dehydration is not from the climate and those back pains aren't in your muscles. Take a month or so to do a full body cleanse to release all of those toxins. Also, be careful what you say in front of a new friend this month. They are not as trustworthy as you might believe.



Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Happy birthday Capricorn! The coming months will be especially difficult for you as your project takes on new dimensions. Nothing ever turns out as expected in Thailand, but whatever you are planning will become unrecognizable to you. It is okay though, you will meet at least one of the three goals.



Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Everything is coming together but it will need to fall apart first. This is the nature of our service. Whatever you have been doing has been exactly what you need to do to make things work in the long run, so don't worry. Just wait it out and everything will move into place. Or it will move out of place and burn to the ground. Then you can start over.



Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): Pisces are more comfortable in the cool darkness than most. Even so, it is important to be around other people and have a good time. Come out of hiding and go south. You need to relax in the sunshine and meet new people. Maybe go to Phuket or Samui. You can't hide in your calm underwater ocean cave forever.

Horoscopes

Carissa Sutter, YinD 126