



St.Sometimes

Merry Christmas from Kuwait !

Volume 64

December 2006

Special points of interest:

- Notes to friends around the world-**READ IT!**
- Why Kuwait for Christmas?
- A Jobfair in Bangkok, Thailand
- Philipp and Tini are engaged!

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It's That Time Again!

I would like to wish **ALL OF YOU** a Very Merry Christmas from Kuwait. The music is on, the heat is off, the sun is out, a party is planned for the 25th (kids and families too).

Luckily Jason and Jeff made sure I own copies of a LOT of holiday music. That is the most important for staying in the holiday spirit for me.

You would not believe how the locals are dressed here. They think it is cold. Hah. Just to give you an idea, toady the high is 18C/65F and the low is supposed to be 9C/48F. I have actually seen Arabs, Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis wearing winter jackets! However, if I want to see snow, I would have to travel to

Lebanon (nah, they're still killing people there) or Dubai (so I can go indoor skiing).

As for Kuwait, there is very little going on here. McDonald's plays Christmas music, some restaurants have decorations,

but you just don't feel the spirit. It is a strict Muslim community so you won't see much from our Christian holiday.

The Kuwaitis are the first ones to leave, as always. They cannot wait to leave their own country. That speaks a lot for what kind of country this is!

The good news, as a teacher,



Just a funny picture for Holiday Travelers

is two weeks vacation. We got out on the 20th of December and go back on the 6th of January. Not bad for a country that doesn't even celebrate Christmas. Kuwaitis just need an excuse not to work! Fine by me.

As long as I have the xmas music and time off work, my holiday spirit is up. It's just friends and family I miss.

Twelve Days of an Expat Christmas...errr...."Winter Holiday"

On the ___ day of Christmas the "Holiday" brought to me.....

1. December's paycheck totally tax free
2. Two carry-ons
3. Three currencies
4. Four hundred email

5. Five Thousand SPAM
6. Passport Photos
7. Seven trips to Fed Ex.
8. Nights in Hotels
9. Stamps for visas
10. Airport delays
11. Flight attendants

And now for the finale....

12. Twelve "when are you coming home again for Christmas?"



I have invited about 20 people over to my apartment for a showing of "National Lampoons: Christmas Vacation" using the LCD projector and my undecorated white wall.

Greg's Christmas Plans for 2006

Being a teacher is a great gig. Whenever a holiday comes around, an international teacher plans to travel. Here is the skinny on why I am stuck in Kuwait (Q8) this year.

Some abstract Q8 law was put into place to ensure workers come back on time. My school chooses to exercise this law, even though I asked back in August if I could be gone three extra days after break.

I was planning on going to one of two international teacher job fairs. Both fairs are held in Bangkok, Thailand. That way, I could go diving for Christmas and hit the fair the second week of January. That plan was scrapped. I would lose over \$2000 in fines and indemnity on top of paying for the job fair and the international flights. Scrap plan A.

Plan B was to stay in Q8, accept an offer from the School here, and put the



travel money towards a new, powerful computer. The school backed out of their verbal contract and offered a laughable amount to extend my contract. Scrap plan B.

Plan C is now in order. I will be staying in Q8 for the holiday. No holiday travel. School starts on January 6th. I will be in class to avoid the fines. However, from the 9th-15th of January I will be sick. Yes, complete

with doctor's note. You see, I have to see a specialist in Bangkok about a strange flu. It just so happens the second job fair is in Bangkok from the 10th to the 14th. (The school will fine me for days missed if I don't have a doctors note.) There are about 35 countries represented at the job fair. I have been organizing travel plans, documents, fees, and everything for this since October just in case there were problems.



Hope the M&M fanatic.

To My Parents

Dad, I thought about sending you a new noiseless dishwasher, but the courier will only send items 1m².

Mom, might I introduce you to Amal, translated into English as Hope. She loves M&M's like you. I asked if she would pose for this picture for you. Hope gave out M&M's one day "just because". This tenth grade student of mine is conta-

giously happy. She makes me think of how much I love my mom. She is going through a lot of problems like Rachel did. That's another reason I think of you mom. Hope is being raised by one parent.

Now both of you are worried about your second son. Not married, not happy in Q8. I know you want me there with all of my nieces

and nephews who are growing up without me. My friends kids are too. I am missing out on a lot there.

All I can say is this is the life I choose. You want me to be happy. I am happy. I am in love with my job. One day a woman will win my heart. You'll see. Have some faith. When I DO come home the kids will just have to meet me all over again.

JLKML & JETjCSE

So, my extended family. Did you know that your names come up more at school than any other English names. That's because I always talk about you. Every time I see the security entourage for the Sheik (30 black ford explorers) I think of my security brother **Jeff**. As far as my students know, **Lynn**, you are an Opera star. **Katrina**, you are the best example of a **READER** that I can give to my students. **Mariah**, you are the energy that my students need in the morning and the enthusiasm for the rest of the

day. **Lydia**, your smile warms up my class on the colder days. (all of your pictures are up in my class),

Jason, I teach chemistry and biology. Do you think your name comes up at all? Not only that, but my close friends are usually in the same IQ range as you. Why is that? **Erin**, you are the epitome of planning and ingenuity. I can always say "I know what you mean" when confronted with a parent of more than three children in school. Then I laugh inwardly when they complain about

having no time. They have NO idea. DO THEY? Tj, you are my greatest example of a techie, baseball playing heart-breaker. The girls in your class will be fighting over you soon. **Colin?** Like looking in the mirror. But better! I better talk to your teachers when I come home. Hah! **Samantha**, you too have the energy I would like to have. There must be a lot to explore at your new home! **Ella**, little Ella. I still pass around your picture the most. You have probably grown up so much by now.

Philipp, Tini, Uta, and Jakob

Fröhliche Weihnachten. Die Zeit geht immer noch schnell vorbei! Ich bleibe hier in Kuwait während den Weihnachtsferien, aber hoffentlich werde ich mich bald wieder in Deutschland finden.

Es gibt verschiedene Jobs in Deutschland für 2007-9. Brandenburg Internationale Schule und JFK in Berlin, Dusseldorf, Dresden, und auch Frankfurt. Vielleicht? Zwei oder drei davon werden bei

deisen Job Fair sein. Ich werde bescheidt sagen.

Was macht Euch für Weihnachten? Und Wo?

I cannot keep writing in German because my brain hurts and this issue is already overdue.

Jakob! Herzlichen Glückwunsch! I heard you got married in a quiet little wedding in Berlin! Congratulations!

I am proud to announce for my readers, on behalf of the "fourth" Lemoine brother, Philipp and Tini are engaged. They do not have a date set but I will let you know when Philipp lets me know. Maybe Kappy will send Philipp another ear of corn? Hah.

I will make my plane reservations as soon as I know the date of the wedding. No matter where I am in the world, I will be at that wedding!

Phillip and Tini Schwarz!

That will sound nice.

Congratulations brother black!

"Greg, you will be the first to know the date

of our wedding!"

-Philipp's

promise 12-25-06



Christmas is just not the same in the desert. Not only is this a Muslim state, without Christmas cheer, there is no snow. Do I miss it? YES. Last year was on the beach in Thailand. That was definitely cool. This holiday

season in Hell (Kuwait) puts things into perspective. From now on, at whatever cost, I will spend the holidays on a beach or in the snow. For all of you in snow country, I owe you a specially made snowball.

Count your blessings wherever you are. If you don't read Calvin and Hobbes, you should start. It makes me laugh every day. You can sign up for daily C&H cartoons at: <http://www.gocomics.com>



The Santa Flasher. This was probably "Randy" - an inside joke for all of my Honduras friends.

Forward thinking, solving a problem instead of postponing it, is a major problem in Kuwait. This is common when working overseas. I have seen countless instances of small problems that are solved temporarily with a plastic bag or something of that nature. It makes me laugh, cry, and think about what it takes to be culturally sensitive.



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Comments to Friends around the world...

First off, please don't be offended if I left you out. I will get you next time around!

Kappy and family - Spit on your dogs for me. Have more kids would you! **Mackey**s- build and plan a house for me. Then I will move back to the states. Oh, you have to pay for it too. I am teacher poor. **Kneelands**- I cannot wait to visit your quaint little cottage again. **Joey**-I cleaned that garage up North so you could spend Christmas up there sometimes. Did you spend it up there this year? **Silhas**- Let's drink some cheap beer and make that breakfast crap again. I'm still full! **Trina and Juma**-have fun living in the states together. Congratulations on Juma's entry visa and documents. **San Juan**'s-we have lost contact. Send out an email. I heard you have a bun in the oven? **Beautiful Dianne V**- where are you these days? Are you painting in Europe? We need to meet up for vacation sometime soon. **Puto- Ricardo!** Are you making bubbles somewhere without me? Thailand is calling your name buddy! **Gayle Lenz**-it's been way too long. Where are you? I hope you get this. I heard you are now hitched and happy! **Kurt and Lyndi**-how is life and where is life now? Last we talked you were still in Saudi teaching. Did you stay another year? **Mooney**-I tried to call you on Xmas. No good. The number was not working anymore. Du bist eine....(hah). **David Kritz**- I

still have a vivid picture of you with a bottle of Mad Dog 20/20 and an open wound. Be safe buddy. **Lori Davidson**- let's plan ahead and pick a mutual school to teach at in a few years. You might fall in love with me? **Cindy and Jason**-How was the first year of the little one? I am so happy for the three of you. A big ol' Texas "Yee Haw" to you from Kuwait. **Hirsch**-my bet is on you for the next friend to marry himself off. I will see you soon again in Bkok! This time I get to see your new apartment and you HAVE to drink a few with me. I will pay for the tuk-tuk. **Alex (Alejandro)**-How are the Holidays in Spain? Let's meet somewhere and feed some Open Water students to the sharks. **Shannon/Brynn & family**-how is the roof? We should have drank more beer while we were up there. **Tricia Buntten**-Keep your arms bent and knees straight. I skied in Lebanon two years ago and smiled about the trip way back when. Remember **Brian Klingberg**? I think he is practicing law in Wausau. Can you look him up for me? I need to find him. Thank you. **Carscaddens**-How is China? It has been a long time since we saw the baboon porn on Safari in Africa. Happy Holidays. **Charlene/Nasser**- Still have fond memories of smoking shisha on a farm on a Wisconsin farm. **Diamond Dave**-Where are you brother? When will you surprise me with a visit again like in Okla-

homa? **Dijana**-is your apartment still orange? You had dance central in Cairo!

Dj/Gail-I had turkey for the holidays and just HAD to think of you. How is living in Turkey? I enjoy your emails. Keep me on the list. **Vicky Cote**-If you marry me I promise to learn French! **Fluters**-You are my Egyptian parents and will always be! Be safe. I promise to drop in on you in Canada. We can smoke cigars and drink gin like old times. **Gail Rhodes**-how is the computer? A big ol' Houston "all y'all" from Kuwait. **Graydon**-are you out there in the world somewhere? Perhaps biking through China? **Greener, Guritz, Danl, Morgan, Gorklinsky**, and brothers-long time no see/hear. When is the next get together? I need to plan. Maybe we can meet at Gorklinsky's house and download some more Beastly Boys videos online. **Laura Lambert**-give Burt a kiss for me if you are still diving in Thailand. **Kopish-Rodney**, they have skating and more WeisSbier in Germany. Let's meet there. **Irene Landholt**-where are you beautiful? I need to see your smile. Perhaps I have to teach in Europe. **Laura**-how is Singapore? I want to teach there too. You deserve a great school to teach at. **Santiago-Feliz Navidad**- are you in Argentina or Grand Cayman? **Neal Schreiter**-when is the marriage?

All of you...keep in touch. Enjoy your holidays and be safe.