

# ST.SOMETIMES

*The Life and Times of Greg Lemoine, International Educator science 2001.*

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## **My Second Year in Saudi** **My 17th Year Teaching**

*Everyone asks me if I feel safe.  
Everyone asks me if I am staying  
here. Everyone thinks I'm crazy.  
Answers: yes, yes, maybe.*





## **4 More Women Met Us At the Couch Store. That's 7 Opinions Total!**

Only Betsy, Maria, and Kari were planned for my interior design shopping day. We stopped at the mall across from IKEA and they found some lamps while I was ordering photo enlargements. Of course, they found a few items they liked too. When we arrived at the Couch store, four or five more women offered design help!

# ***Shopping is Easy if You Take Along Three Designers ...***

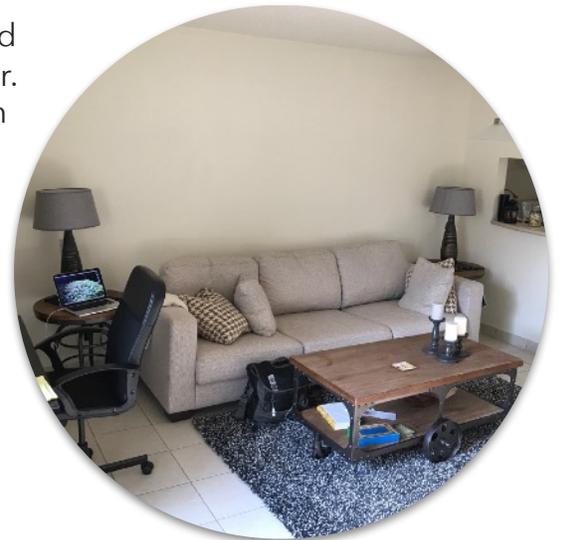
**THIS IS MY FIRST APARTMENT SINCE 2001 THAT HAS NOT BEEN FURNISHED. MIXED FEELINGS APPLY. SO I RECRUITED SOME HELP.**

My company provided a small, temporary, furnished apartment for the first year. It was worse than most university apartments I have seen. My number came up on the wait list late last June and I moved in immediately. Besides an inflatable bed, what you see above is all I have bought as of this month.

Lady luck is on my side. Since I don't have my mom's flair for interior design nor the interest in learning, I offered up a sweet deal to no less than three colleagues. We all went shopping for seven hours. I paid for the driver, let the ladies shop, and I paid. It was a win win for all of us. The decoration 2017-2018 started with the living room.

I'll have to continue with the bed and a bit more. Maria had a great idea: choose some of my favorite photos and blow them up to framing size. I bought a half dozen frames and put the photos in them. They still aren't on the walls. Still a home-to-do list.

The bed will come later. The bathroom is also done. Walls will be decked out soon. Consider the whole project a look into the future.



# ***The students are back. I have an amazing class of 19 cherubs - but 3 are out until September.***

I am certainly crazy to live in Saudi, but I really love it. Not so much living in Saudi as living on this "island" - a mini America in the desert.

This is just the beginning of my second year, but the view is long term. I'll stick it out past the five year goal that most Aramcons have.

The school is academically strong. It makes me proud to be a teacher just to say I am a member of this school. Every teacher brings their "A Game" on regular days. They inspire me to do my absolute best and spend a little extra time in the class if I don't finish.

This is the first school that matches my allegiance with an appropriate paycheck. I feel like the time I put into the job - career - is matched and compensated for, without having to fight for every penny. Rumors are flying. Some of the naysayers predict the bubble is going to burst and teachers will lose big time. I don't listen to rumors. Instead, I'll just keep working at top speed. This is definitely the top school in the world!

Students run to school. Students actually ask me for homework. We are not really a "homework" school. I don't give out the old fashioned grades. Rather, we have intensive parent conferences and comments. We comment on rubrics rather than mark a percentage. The focus is on a student's growth and progression through the grade levels. Yes, it sounds too good to be true! It's real.

"What about the parents?" you say. My parents are actively involved in their students' lives - for the majority. I love having parents come in for conferences. If they don't, we just arrange for a different time. We live such a small "island" life that I run into parents at restaurants or grocery store, biking, running, or at the hospital. For better or worse, you always run into students' families.

It would be financial suicide NOT to stay for five years and a day. There is a huge - very huge - bonus after five years and a day of employment. No, I'm not going to divulge how much exactly. You wouldn't believe me anyway.

**COME ON  
MR. L, YOU  
DIDN'T SAY  
CHICKEN  
YET!**

“ ”



## ***FIRE DRILL PLANNED?***

**Sometimes it is so muggy and hot that the fire alarms are tripped if kids leave the doors open too long. Instead of a "mock" fire drill, the alarms went off early and the buildings were emptied.**

**We were outside in the heat for about 30 minutes. That is 30 minutes longer than any of us should be outside when it is 120 degrees outside.**

**Safety First!**

**We succeeded with a fast exit, an organized drill, and everyone accounted for.**