



Newsletter of Jeff, Diane, Daniel & Alyssa ~ living and working in the Persian Gulf & Central Asia.

The Biggest/First in the World ~

We recently went to an outdoor cultural entertainment center here called Global Village, showcasing many cultures. Outside the Pakistan pavilion, we joined a bunch of other people playing together on The Biggest Drum In The World.

Global Village



So, in that vein, here are some of the grandiose developments going up all around us. The Tallest Building In The World is almost complete. The ten million square feet Mall of Arabia, The Biggest Mall In The World is underway. The Biggest Man-Made Waterfall In The World will be at the Wow Theme Park. The First Golf Course Designed By Tiger Woods will open with a 60,000 sq. ft. clubhouse, an 80-suite hotel, 300 villas, 20 mansions, and ... a mall. The Biggest Racing Complex In The World; and of course every racing complex needs a luxury hotel, 10 restaurants, a museum, a business park, and an 18-hole golf course. The Biggest Display Space In The World, the Dubai Exhibition City, will open in 2009. The First Zero Carbon City In The World is being constructed. Hydropols, The First Underwater Luxury Hotel In The World is being built. The First Fashion Island In The World (no kidding), Isla Moda, solely dedicated to ... fashion, of course. The Biggest Hotel In The World will have 6,500 rooms. The First Rotating Skyscraper In The World is under construction. The First Green Skyscraper In The World will produce more electricity than it uses. The Most Grueling Grand Prix Circuit Track In The World will open next year. The Biggest Aquarium In The World is coming soon. The Biggest Airport In The World will have six runways; the famously busy Heathrow Airport in London has only two runways. The First Air-Conditioned Bus Shelters In The World. The Biggest Artificial

Island In The World, the Palm, is shaped like, yep ... a palm tree. The Biggest Advertisement In The World is 215,278 sq. ft., and meant to be seen from airplanes. The First Indoor Black Ski Run In The World, at Sky Dubai, is already going; we've been skiing there. Don't forget The Only Seven Star Hotel In The World.

Of course, there will also be The World man-made islands project – 300 islands forming a map of the world. And Dubailand Theme Park, twice the size of Walt Disney World, with 45 mega-projects and 200 tourism/entertainment sub-projects. And the famous Queen Elizabeth 2 cruise ship will arrive permanently and become a luxury floating hotel and “retail and entertainment destination”. And the Atlantis water theme park, with 65,000 live marine creatures in an artificial habitat, a 1,536-room resort, and a dolphin encounter program. And Sunny Mountain Ski Dome. And a caviar farm. And Universal Studio's Dubai Theme Park. And a Dinosaur Theme Park. And a Marvel (Comics) Theme Park. As well as other man-made island projects, some of which we can see being created out our window.

We live in lala land and we work with subsistence-level nomads.

~~No~~ A Cloud in the Sky ~

Jeff relates: I was walking along a sidewalk the other day, when all of a sudden I wasn't in the sun any more. I stopped in my tracks. I knew I wasn't in the shade of a building. No, it couldn't be! I looked up and yes, a small cloud was blocking the sun!

You know you live in a desert when you by one stop to gawk at one fleeting cloud. It had been well over half a year since a cloud had come to the UAE. It was the harbinger of the “rainy” season, when some years it rains and other years there are only some cloudy days. This year it is raining in the rainy season. It has sprinkled or drizzled maybe three or four days in the last week or so. Today, however, it is Raining. All the traffic signals in Sharjah went out. Traffic is gridlocked. Streets have standing water, some passable only in four wheel drives. Some schools are cancelled. The gym at Daniel's school is flooded. Alyssa's first basketball game of the season, against the girls at Daniel's school, is called off. Alyssa's school dismissed at mid-day due to flooded rooms; they have called off school for the next two days.

Now, this isn't a big rain by global standards, mind you – two inches. But it's like snow in Atlanta. People here just can't deal with it. And the infrastructure isn't built to handle it.

In Iowa or Nebraska, we would call this a "snow day". Yesterday, all Dubai schools, including our kids' schools, were closed due to the visit by President Bush. (The Dubai economy reportedly lost over one hundred million dollars in economic activity yesterday, because all bridges and tunnels, and therefore the routes of most people to their work, were shut down while Bush was in town.) The day before that was a teacher in-service day. The two days before that were weekend days. The days before that was the Islamic new year, so no school. So, since Winter Break (what we know as Christmas break) finished, they had four days of school and now ten days off. Rough, huh?



typical desert scene in the UAE

Cyclone Yemyin ~

We are in the recovery phase of the flood relief. You can read more about our flood relief work at <http://brownnews.org/CycloneYemyin.html>.

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News from Jeff & Diane

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If you received this through the mail, but you have internet access and can save us time and postage by viewing BROWNEWS Online, send your e-mail address to Danny at: dannyk@inetnebr.com

If you would like information about our Prayer Community, contact Danny: dannyk@inetnebr.com

Come visit our redesigned website: www.BrowNews.org! We still have a few things left to put up on it, but it's looking great! Thanks Danny!

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