



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

Birthday Season ~

Daniel turned 18 on September 7th. Alyssa's 16th birthday was four days later. Diane turned one year older on October 12th. In honor of their birthdays, there are photos of them much younger on the next page. Below are September-October 2009 photos of all of us. We caught Alyssa, just



getting home from school in her PE uniform, looking forward to her homework. (She's always like this.) She is on the front wall of our new home in Dubai. It's small, but we like it. Daniel (future Husker?) is also recently home from school, out of his uniform and studying in his bedroom already. Jeff & Diane are playing Settlers of Catan at some friends' apartment for Diane's birthday party. (If Jeff's head looks a lot larger than Diane's, it's only an optical illusion; Jeff is sitting about five feet closer to the camera than Diane is.)

Volleyball Season ~

September and October were also volleyball season for Daniel and Alyssa. Daniel started and played almost every minute for the varsity team as their right-side hitter. They finished with a win to take third place in the season-ending tournament in the next-door country of Oman. Alyssa intended to try out for the junior varsity team, but towards the end of the try-out/team meeting the coach told the players that the junior varsity end-of-season tournament is at our school, but "our tournament is in Oman". That is how Alyssa discovered she had made the varsity team. She improved considerably during the season, starting some sets by the end of the season.

We took a mini-vacation and drove to Oman to watch all their games, which was great fun. There were also two local tournaments each of the two previous weekends – one in Dubai and one in Abu Dhabi (capital of the United Arab Emirates). We went to the one in Abu Dhabi with a visiting "Angus" friend who is a partner in our work. (Born into a Muslim family, educated in a madrassa, a former Muslim cleric and mujahedeen fighter against the infidels in Afghanistan, he now follows Jesus and helps start churches among his "Angus" people.) On the drive to Abu Dhabi, Diane brought some food. Since Jeff had just eaten on the plane from Kabul a couple hours earlier, our friend (whom we'll call H) ate it all. Then during one of Daniel's games, Alyssa brought some KFC, which Jeff, still not hungry, didn't eat; so H ate it. An hour or so later, after the tournament, we went to Subway with the kids to get something to eat before hitting the road to Dubai. Jeff asked H if he wanted anything. H said no. Jeff knew what H had eaten and that H was on a diet. So, the four of us Browns got sandwiches, while H sat and talked with us as we ate. Only later did it come out that H was hungry. In many cultures in this part of the world, it is customary to refuse an offer the first two times it is made, and accept on the third offer. But Jeff only offered once. H salivated in silence at the sight of our Subway sandwiches. Another one of a million culture clashes, some large and some small, that we experience here. Diane was horrified to learn H had been hungry and we ate in front of him. However, one of the things Jeff is helping H with is learning western culture ways, to prepare H for the work he thinks God has in store for him, involving much more contact with westerners. So in the end, H told Jeff it was a good thing, and to keep showing him western ways.

Other News ~

Diane began teaching English at the Iranian Club this month, three days a week. She loves it. The students are all adults from Iran with some level of English already. She and Jeff went out to dinner last week with one of the female students and her husband. Some students said they will sign up for the next six-week session of classes if Diane is the teacher again. Diane also spent a day at the beach this week with some of the women in the class.



Among our new neighbors is a Saudi family a few doors down in our complex. The children are all 18 years and older. We first met when one of the daughters came to ask if a stray cat she was befriending were ours. Since then, we have exchanged food gifts and spent an evening in their home. They like to burn incense and serve dates.

And the promised photos – Daniel and Alyssa, cute as bugs; and yes, that's Diane, age 11.

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News from Jeff & Diane

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