

My Dear Sweet Ladies,

I have been sent out to the YARD (yes, we now have a yard), to load a few pictures I took, and work on this. I probably wasn't fit to be in the house anyway. And it's fortunate for me that I'm the only one that enjoys the heat out here, because I get to be alone for a little while :-).

As I mentioned last time, we needed to move to Fujairah. A smaller town, across the country (about 3 ½ hours...by vehicle). The colleges here wanted Mark, so here we are. We're all moved, unless you count what I still haven't unpacked and put away. But I've been, well, we all have been, working hard at it and ...that's why I'm not fit to be in the house. While your day is not even half done, mine is very much at the end. Only \*I\* came to my personal end about 2 hours ago. Mark was real nice about it. He went out and found me a little gecko, crawling on the house. Yah, those kinds of things have always cheered me up, so I got a couple of pictures and tried to hold it (but it moved faster than I think I've \*ever\* moved), and I've been a little easier to live with ever since.

Oh, and he also set up a website with all the back issues of this gulf news in case anyone needs to go back to figure out what on earth I'm talking about. Here is the link:  
[www.mjohnsonfamily.com/gulfnews/](http://www.mjohnsonfamily.com/gulfnews/)

I thought of a few things we'll miss from Abu Dhabi:

- I could pretty much find whatever I needed in that city, by car or taxi, or walking (even though the island sits at a diagonal to mecca, which meant every mosque was built diagonal to the street)

- Friends of ours, Gordon and Janet, have next door neighbors with a holy cow in their back yard (the neighbors are hindu).

-Life 10 floors above sea level tends to reduce the amount of everyday bugs. Not completely..., but some. It also reduces greatly, the amount of dust and sand brought into the house – by a lot.

-Believe it or not, there were many more choices of groceries that I recognized and knew what to do with, than there are here. Though I think I can master it eventually. But I sort of miss that I had figured the one city's food supply out fairly much.

-There is not a McDonald's here, \*or\* a Subway (sorry Robyn).

-The call to prayer is not synchronized here like it is in Abu Dhabi, so you get a bunch of different prayers, happening at slightly differing times. Just something I noticed....

-the driving is just not quite as nutty here (with a few "which side of the road" exceptions)

- And I will really miss the ocean view out the windows.

But enough about that.

"...I will not pine  
for days  
gone by

I'll look ahead  
with wonderment  
delighting in  
the next thing sent."

Life is an adventure for the senses, especially when you haven't the faintest idea what you're eating. Still at the top of the food chain (so far so good anyway). I think the only things higher are the biting ants. And while cockroaches have a longevity to beat all, I still say they are just a little bit stupider than I. And that's my overall philosophy for survival in general – to stay (intellectually) at least a week ahead of my students, and 2 weeks ahead of any applicable animals.

Despite cajoling by local Sushi aficionados, I remain unregenerate in regards to eating it. It smells more like bait to me, and despite my rebellious health food tendency – seafood leaves are harder to chew than even I prefer. It isn't the chopsticks that give me trouble. Eating with 2 straight sticks is actually quite high on my "to be challenged by" list. I think it's just the emetic memory of my first trial

Mark noticed the enclosed picture of Kirby (our dog) in the local newspaper here, and is a bit concerned that Dwights are being a bit too permissive with our canine family member. We realize he is just a dog, but it does give us pause, since we also left Jon in the nearby vicinity...

Speaking of which – congratulations to Dwight and Darla and children on their new twin boys!

~.~.~.~.

The "Zone" report is short this month. This is probably a function of us not being here long enough to see if there is anything that strikes me as illogical (besides my own crabbiness) :

\*We actually have a dishwasher in this house. It is in a little room off the kitchen –all by itself. Way off the kitchen :-D

\*The 4 Doors to the outside all lock (well so do the inside doors but one story at a time), each with a different key.

~.~.~.~.

There is a garden here in our yard! And even better yet – it appears to need me :-)

The magnolia tree perfumes the front yard. It's beautiful (though the dust needs to be hosed off daily). The Bougainvillea climbs over the wall to grace the dirt road out front. The basil bushes ( 3 feet tall!) are recognizable by their smell before you get very close. I'll figure out what the rest of it is over time I think. I do believe though, that I can tell which are weeds (the ones that I don't want there).

We have so far, met some families who work at the college. Some are from India, some from the U.K., a couple from Afghanistan, some from South Africa, some from Poland, a woman originally from Russia that I hope to be able to spend some time with. Our neighborhood is all local UAE people. The houses all have walls around them. I am hoping this is not also...metaphorical. We are praying for ways to get to know a few. As everything here – it requires much time, and much coffee. A bit of the local language helps as well. Something we continue to work on, but must now find a new teacher.

Ramadan is now officially over. I will celebrate by having my coffee outside, and drinking water in the car. Today began our initiation into neighborhood living during Arab holidays. The first day of Eid al fitr is today, and neighborhood children go around house to house ringing doorbells. If you can actually get to the door in time, they will be there waiting for, well money. I'm afraid I foisted my western ideas on them a bit when I said "la wahida. cookies" (no money, cookies). Most of them seemed amused and appreciative, though not all. I'm trying to learn.

Our friend, Amos is here and will be spending the next 4 weeks with us. We're all very excited. Ok, he's Ben's friend :- ) (and former roommate), but when one comes to our home, they are assimilated to be a friend of us all. We're very thankful – real home is very far.

Much love and fond affection,  
~Pam.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee,  
when my heart is overwhelmed:  
lead me to the rock that is higher than I." ~Psalm 62:1







EPA