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Malaysia Association of Southern California



Message From The President

Selamat Kawan Kawan,

Relationship!! What is in a relationship? Very important-lah! Relationships can be positive, happy and stress free or negative, troublesome and stressful. That means you live long or die young, suffering for no reason.

I am not an expert and I don't claim to be one. BUT, I am orang tua-lah and I have eaten more salt than most of you have eaten rice and cross more bridges than you have walk roads.

Betul-lah! You are not seeing ****. The above is a repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat performance. The reason is that I am continuing on the topic of relationship and the above paragraphs are good enough to continue to be an effective introduction.

Moreover, the second paragraph serves as a legal protection issue on professional liability.

This is the fourth article on relationship which is the **COMMUNICATION** part of a relationship.

Without communication, it is like two trains running on different tracks and heading down opposite directions. Communications is not just talking, shouting, dominating, bullying, controlling or just carrying, on oblivious of the other person. You cannot communicate if all you want is to make a point and win. No one wins if only one side wins. But, everyone wins if it is a win-win situation.

Effective communication is listening not only to words but also to **body language**; answer and state your position clearly. Body language is most important. Do not take silence to mean understanding, hearing or agreeing. People will communicate with you if you allow them too, if you show interest and you are willing to listen. Silence, is not communication as it takes two to tango. Silence can be a sign of being passive aggressive.

A passive aggressive person can be more lethal to a relationship than an aggressive person since one cannot tell when, where and who is dealing the lethal blow. No one person is right or wrong, it is only a matter of different points of view. Let's agree to disagree. Remember, there are several different and equally valid points of view which are dependent on time, environment, person, culture and background.

Trust in the Lord and pray for guidance and you shall overcome.

Stop to smell the roses, be positive and continue to work for better relationships.

Love & Peace

Mama Ean



Tehachapi Camping Stories

Camping at lovely Tehachapi is a highlight of MASC's summer events. Two of our young members share their experiences of this year's camping.

Camping Days at Tehachapi By Yun-Ju Chen

Hey MASC members! Did you go camping this year? I hope you did because if you didn't, you don't know what you missed out!

I feel like I want to cry right now because after my wonderful article last year, not many people went this year. Well anyway, our first stop after a long two and a half hour drive was of course Auntie Ean's mansion. I met this girl named Rachel who was 8 years old. I played with her hangman and she was great! We got ready to leave after 30 minutes. Normally, we would go directly to the campsite but today I got lucky. Next stop: The Whiting Center!

I love The Whiting Center! The table soccer and air hockey were so fun! The other games there were pool and carrom. Or at least that's what my mom thinks it's called. The reason why I don't like pool is because the only thing I know how to do in pool is how to put the balls in the triangle. And carom, I don't even know what that is! Well that didn't matter. What mattered was that the kids had lots of fun and the adults.. Maybe some rest will make them happy enough.

Of course the fun would have to end at some point. Now it's time to set up the tents. So we drove to the campsite and I was so happy! I can meet new people and I can have so much fun and , **SURPRISE!!** No it wasn't my birthday. Nothing was what I had expected! Only two tents? Plus my family's and my mom's friend's tent which made four tents? What happened to the six or seven tents like the previous year ?

"Deal with it!" I heard my conscience say. Oh well. At least the line for the restroom won't be slow. As usual, the adults would have to set-up the tents. Well it's no different this year.



Our young writer, front row, third from left, enjoys a group photo with her camping buddies. (Photo by Jeffrey).

I figured I should give my parents a helping hand. The tents took about 20 minutes to complete. I got bored helping so my mom said I should go take a bath before the water got too cold to use.

I felt very comfortable after my bath. "Picnic at the lake!" "Hurry up!" More fun? This camping trip is just getting better and better.

Now everyone's packing up food, all ready to go. I was ready to eat and I think others were too. We got to the lake and there were more people there than at the campground. It was like a potluck held outdoor. Some kids fed chips and other food to ducks. There was plenty of food to eat. Of course we would take a group picture after we were so stuffed. After the pictures, all the adults chatted and kids were off playing.

There was a park there so all the kids rushed to the park. I of course wouldn't be the "odd one out" so I joined the kids and played tag. We played for about 50 minutes and the fun ended. Or did it?

Now our surroundings were all dark and the atmosphere was freezing but no one was sleepy yet. And that was when I heard the horrible news: **There was no campfire tonight!!**

I was disappointed so I stayed in the tent. My mom and my brothers went outside for who-knows-what. I shouldn't know what others are doing, so I just sat on my sleeping bag doing nothing. Then, suddenly, I heard BUZZ.... BUZZZ... AH!!! A bug! I rushed outside and saw a small light from far away. I squinted my eyes and I saw fire! A campfire! I guess I should go check it out and not let myself down. I took the flashlight with me and walked over there. My camping was saved! Everyone was enjoying it. My mom, my brothers, three girls, Jeffrey, a man, and a woman were all there .

There was a big rock next to the campfire. The three girls, the man, and the woman sat on it telling “ghost stories”. They kept laughing so I couldn’t tell if it was a joke or something else. It was like that for one hour. Then Jeffrey said, “Why don’t we have any marshmallows?” He said he was going to go buy some marshmallows from the nearest store. “Which is like a hundred miles away from here,” I thought. Jeffrey took two of the girls named Colleen and Sharon with him.

The third girl, Li Ee, shared a lot of her experiences in Malaysia. She had really funny stories. She told us about her encounters with snails, ants and snakes, and how she made a fire when she was only six. C shared some of her stories too. Li Ee was scared of ghosts and believed in werewolves on a full moon night. Then later when C went to the restroom, she found a frog that was brown. No! It’s a toad! She let it free. We continued our ghost stories and what seemed like 10000 days later, Jeffrey and the two girls came back with the marshmallows and some chocolate too.

Yum!! I ate until I was so full. We shared ghost stories but ended up sharing jokes. We were having so much fun we forgot the time. C and Paul, went to sleep. Colleen and Sharon followed them. The rest of the gang stayed up to look for shooting stars. I found none. Li Ee, Jeffrey, my brothers and I sat on the big rock. Eventually, My brothers and I went to sleep with my mom.



Good morning everyone! The sun was shining brightly but not everyone was happy. Auntie Ean had planned to hike this morning and Rachel was waiting impatiently for the hiking to start. I think she was pretty happy when someone finally said, “Let’s go!”

I have to say that I didn’t quite enjoy this year’s hiking because Auntie Ean didn’t go with us. Last year, I actually learned something from her. She taught me about how a deer looks like in a headlight. Man, I have to stop having these flashbacks! Well anyway, we didn’t hike up a very steep trail and we didn’t see the ladybugs we saw last year.

I don’t have much to say about hiking so I’ll skip to the part when we went “cherry picking”. It looked more to me like “cherry looking” instead. We were sort of going around in circles finding the place to go cherry picking.

We gave up and instead we drove to the place I fell in love with. Yup. If you just guessed The Whiting Center, you just won... Same stuff, same games, no change. Adults were resting, kids were playing, you know the drill. After the Whiting Center, we went to check out the pool. My family wasn’t interested nor was my mom’s friend’s family nor was Jeffrey. We headed back to the campground.

Jeffrey and Li Ee and her aunt and uncle went on another hiking trip. I was exhausted so I didn’t go. Jeffrey ordered us to cook up a fire and a good meal when they came back.

We had one fire going on when they came back. We finished our lunch and cleaned up our tents. I guess the fun’s over now. The cars were stuffed with camping things. “See you next year,” I thought to the campsite. Everyone went inside their cars.

We were off to Auntie Ean’s house now to say goodbye to her. But when we got there, no one was home! “It’s time to go home now,” I thought.

Inside the car, my ears were filled with snores. Wow, my brothers sure were tired. I slept along with them and when I woke up, guess what I saw? My house. Home Sweet Home.

Wait, wait, wait. Just because I got home doesn’t mean it’s the end of the article. Ok? I have a very important message for you readers: PLEASE COME TO NEXT YEAR’S CAMPING!! I don’t want tears on my paper in my next article.



Enjoying the beauty of Tehachapi. (Photo by Lee.)

(Please turn page for another camping story...)

Tehachapi By Rachel

Terrific
Environmental
Happy
Adorable
Countryside
Homey
Alluring
Peaceful
Inviting



Dear Happy Campers,

I hope you had fun in Tehachapi because I did. I hope you enjoyed swimming, the jacuzzi and sauna, playing games in the Whiting Center, hiking, listening to the Blue Diamond Band, and eating at the potluck.

I know that you are still disappointed that we didn't get to go cherry plucking, but look on the bright side. You got to go to other fun places, right? I did. When we couldn't go cherry plucking, we went to the ostrich farm.

Yours truly,

Rachel Meach



Welcome New MASC Members

Helen Lai
Inja Choi
Celena Yew



Editorial Board

Sharifah Varnum
Pek Ean Chong



*(Please turn page for review
of a Malaysian novel...)*

A Novel of Malaysian Colors

This End of The Rainbow (Phoenix Press) is the first English novel by Adibah Amin, one of Malaysia's most respected writers and columnists. It was published in 2006.

Adibah's works have been published extensively including novels in Bahasa Malaysia and translations of works of Malaysian writers, and she has won several literary awards. Adibah is well-known for her "As I Was Passing" columns in the 1970s and 1980s. She wrote on "things Malaysian" which resonated well with her readers.

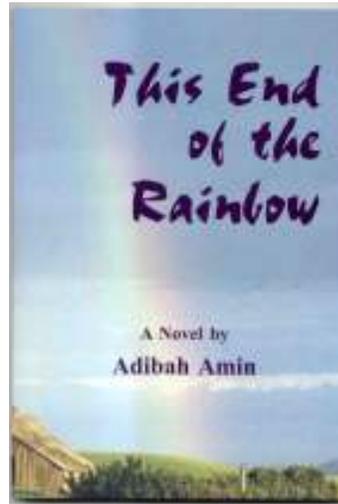
This End of the Rainbow is about the lives of a group of students at the University of Malaya in the early 1950s. At that time, the University was situated in Singapore. Adibah also graduated from the University in 1957.

Thus, the story takes place mostly in Singapore and Johor where the main character, Ayu, and her family lives.

In her preface, Adibah writes that: "The events and people in this novel have lived in my mind for years and now I finally find the courage to let them see the light of day." The novel is in a sense a "coming of age" book on two levels. The first is the story of the protagonist Ayu, and the second is the story of Malaya on the cusp of seeking and achieving independence.

Ayu is an intelligent and likeable young woman who faces of the excitement of starting her new life as a student at the university, with its vibrant intellectual and social environment. Through her, we meet many interesting characters, especially her close friends and her mother. In Ayu's mother, Husna, Adibah has created a finely-drawn character who is strongly committed to the independence movement and who must also face her own personal sadness and challenges.

Adibah also opens a window into the nostalgic, simpler life that existed in the 1950s when friends and neighbors visited each other's homes without appointments, and when a cinema ticket and the famous rojak at Rex cinema cost less than 50 cents!



Adibah writes with an easy style.

In the second half of the book, Ayu has to decide if she should abandon her studies to join a youth movement that wants a role in the shaping of the new nation. At the same time, the country faces critical challenges as various parties and communities grapple with their concerns and visions of nationhood.

Adibah handles these issues with frankness and sensitivity. In addition, the weaving of the quest for Merdeka and the political figures among the rakyat or ordinary folks makes history so much more "alive" that just reading about it in a history book. An example is the moving scene where Ayu and Husna went to the airport, and Ayu managed to get a look at Tunku Abdul Rahman and his delegation as they left for London to present the wishes of the Malayan people to the colonial government.

Adibah writes with an easy style, and one can tell that she has her heart in this writing. If there is any criticism to be made, I would have liked to know more deeply about a couple of characters in the book.

The message of the novel is best described in Adibah's own words in her preface: "...I pray that all of us in our own ways will work towards the "pot of gold" on the other end of the rainbow: our shared dream of lasting harmony." And one can also deduce from the book Adibah's philosophy that it is our similarities that bind us together, while our differences are there to be shared and celebrated.

In the words of her characters:

...said Ayu, "...Maybe the point is we accept our differences."
"Not just accept," Nimmi stressed. "We love those differences."
- Sharifah