

Home sweet home!

I have successfully made it back from Thailand. My first kayaking experience and personal quest to set foot on all seven continents of the world is now complete!

For those of you that may have missed my column two weeks ago, I had expressed a concern about kayaking. Well I can say with little reservation that kayaking will not be one of my sports of choice. However Thailand is a country that I will visit again!

Since my return there has been a reoccurring question that I have been asked, "What continent was my favorite?" Before I answer that, let's do a little geography review and define what a continent is. For those of you that may have forgotten or missed this day in school, a zillion years ago the Earth was one large land mass surrounded by water. Then like many things under a lot of stress it broke up. This break up ended with seven parts or continents as we call them today. We live on the North American continent however, Europe, Australia, South America, Africa, Antarctica and Asia make up the other six.

I traveled to Europe to attend a garbage conference in Germany (prior to becoming a Publisher I was a garbage man) and then on to visit France and London, England. Africa was all about climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Kenya and Tanzania. South America was on the way to Antarctica where I visited Argentina and Tierra del Fuego. On the trip to Antarctica I took a Russian ice breaker and explored the world of the penguins. Australia was touched upon while attending the Rotary International Conference as president of the Newark Rotary Club. Finally, I visited

Asia this past week to kayak in southern Thailand and visit the Thailand capital of Bangkok.

My trip to Thailand was shared with 10 of the best people I have ever known (I have to say that because they all said they were going to read my column on our web site www.ourtownnews.com to see what I said about them.)

The trip was flawlessly organized by the always upbeat Priscilla Macy. Her husband Peter was by far the strongest kayaker in the group. His only flaw was alluding that women don't always think logically. (I agreed but decided not to

share that because the men were severely outnumbered!)

The very well traveled Anne Hurley and Laurel Woods, two former high school classmates, took me under their wings and showed me the amazing city of Bangkok. (Not to mention keeping me well supplied with beverages during Happy Hour.) Kendra Howe allowed me to eat off her extremely well arranged

Shapiro, an avid mountain biker with bad knees, never missed a beat on any of the challenging activities we under took. I want to be just like her when I am her age. (Ok, she is only three years older than me but she goes like a 30-year-old). Heidi Bixby the designated photographer on the trip, should give up her day job to be a professional photographer. (I took my camera but my pictures looked like a kindergarten finger painting project compared to Heidi's action shots that were the quality of a Mona Lisa!) Finally Lauren Jefferis, a medical doctor from California, tried to kill me the last night in Bangkok. Under the guise that we were going to get a well deserved Thai foot massage, she convinced me to get in one of those motorized three wheel people carts that dodge in and out of heavy traffic at high rates of speed. (I needed a Valium not a foot massage after that wild ride which ended in a dark alley in a part of town neither of us knew very well and shouldn't have been!)

So back to the burning question: Which continent was my favorite?

Flying for over 24 hours, half way around the world, crossing 12 time zones, being attacked by a flying shrimp while kayaking (that did happen!) really isn't necessary to win my #1 vote because that continent is right here, the North American. If you don't believe me I challenge you to visit all 50 states and Canada. Trust me, there is no better place to live or visit than home sweet home!

P.S. Of the roughly 400 photos on my camera, I will be sharing a glimpse of Thailand in a pictorial essay that will appear in next week's edition of *Our Town Living*. (It's going to take the next 7 days just to download them all!)

PUBLISHER'S COLUMN



By Jim Young



fruit plate, I thought it was the serving dish and damn near got her fork stuck in my hand!

Maureen and Mike Bowmen were the model married couple. They definitely have political views that made for thought provoking and enjoyable conversations while cooling off in the water. (Probably why the conversation never got heated). Jane