Dear Diane,

February is a month that we celebrate Valentine’s Day. Blue Mountain Academy wishes to express the true sentiments of love and appreciation for each of our alumni, friends, parents, students, and staff. Without the love and support of each one of you, the mission of BMA to provide a Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist education that leads our students into loves of service for God would go unfulfilled. So, it is without embarrassment this month that we say, “We love you!”

Appalachian Staff

Find Out More!

There is a lot more you can learn about Blue Mountain Academy by simply visiting our website at www.facebook.com/bluemountainacademy. Swing by and see what you’ve been missing!

Core Values at Blue Mountain Academy

Relationship with Christ. Seeking a relationship with Christ through prayer, Bible study, service and evangelism.

Mission Focus. Joining Jesus and His mission to reach our friends, community, and world.

Academic Excellence. Preparing students for success through an exceptional instructional program.

Family Atmosphere. Respecting and caring for each other in a safe, nurturing community.

Student Leadership. Empowering students to serve others through leadership.

Celebrating Asia

Recently Jiayu "Alex" Chen, an exchange student at BMA, has been sharing about his experience at Blue Mountain Academy. He has been interested in learning about the culture and traditions of the United States, and he has made many friends along the way.

On a Lighter Note

Students at BMA have been claiming confusion in regards to who is who. Closer examination of this confusion revealed that students couldn't tell the difference between Vice Principal Glen Wilson and Principal Dave Morgan.

To make matters worse, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Morgan have been claiming that it really isn't that difficult to tell the difference. As Mr. Wilson states, "I'm the good looking one!" We'll let you decide!

God is Good!

The night began with a detailed conversation in the principal's office with Dave Morgan, Aaron Weber, and Stephen Reese, followed by prayer asking for discernment, the right words, and that God's will would be done. Then...
Girls Dorm Teaches Leadership

This thought comes from girls dean Lauren Anderson:

Today’s banner photo is of the Girls Club officers leading a joint worship at Ellis Hall. The theme of the evening was based on the Greatest Love Story, John 3:16. Cheyenne Walker an 11th grade student blessed us with her testimony of God’s love for her. At Ellis Hall we give our ladies opportunities to be actively involved in our Worship programs. We accept and celebrate the diversity of our girls talents as they grow in their relationship with God.

Progress!

Ad Building Bathrooms to Get Facelift

http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/...xOEd7mf0Y1pjQfS0mHF2IS5GNm9rIvutroVv9e33Q7UpjvbDkUyqPGbIYA1LhcwE5O924Cre[2/18/2013 2:59:30 PM]
Last Fall we shared the need to update our sign along I-78. Thanks to a gift from a generous Alumnus that cared about the appearance of the sign and gave a gift to cover the cost, the new sign is up!

Thanks to a $40,000 gift to BMA, the bathrooms outside of the church are getting a facelift. Looking over the plans for the new bathrooms are project manager Heath Eckert, Glenn Sutton, and Stephen Reese. Demolition stage is set for February 17th with a bathroom completion date of April 24th. If you would like to contribute to the project with sweat equity or finances call us at 484-662-7000 and ask for Steve Reese.

Victoria Acosta Shares musical talent...

Freshman Victoria Acosta shares her secret talent with the student body of Blue Mountain Academy. Because the students were unaware of her talent, they were blown away and at the conclusion gave her a round of rousing applause.
"No work ever undertaken by man requires greater care and skill than the proper training and education of youth and children" (White, 1954/2002, CG, p. 39, ¶1)

**BMA...Building Character One Student At A Time!**

He sat in my office, head in his hands. This was not the first time, not the first such conversation, not the first sense of frustration either had felt about the topic at hand. This is where discipline becomes crucial in the life of young person. While they resist the supposed control being exerted on them, the day will come when they realize the importance of this moment.

Like the kite that strained against the hand that restrained it, many youth pull against the guidance being applied at times at BMA. However, we as a staff have seen those students that have resisted the hand of restraint. They have become like the kite that finally broke free, free to aimlessly float through the cloud filled skies...until they were found either tangled in the trees or telephone wires.

So, on this particular day, the hand of restraint would be applied, consequences carefully and lovingly measured out, with the hope that one day...he will soar! At Blue Mountain Academy, you are, called to soar!

~Dave Morgan

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**Washington Adventist University @ BMA**

Dr. W eymouth and Rebecca Spence led a workshop on understanding diversity. For many, diversity conjures up issues between race; however, Dr. Spence and his wife helped the BMA staff understand that there is so much to understanding "diversity" and that race is only one form of many types of diversity. The reality is that diversity is a wide variety of life variables and those that are open to understanding these variables will be effective practitioners of understanding and embracing diversity. Dr. and Mrs. Spence believe that when teachers are unbiased in their instruction and knowledgeable about themselves and their students, they can better respond to the needs of all their students.

The workshop was designed for those that interact with diverse groups of people. Dr. Spence shared that schools must take a proactive approach to acknowledging diversity. Dr. Spence also shared the perspective of clinical professor of teacher education at the University of Maryland Jean Snell in which she said, "There is a richness that comes from students working side by side with others who are not of the same cookie-cutter mold."

We are all part of the body of Christ! At Blue Mountain Academy, every student, regardless of their background, is valued as a member of this body. At BMA we celebrate diversity!

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**Robotics At BMA**

Robotics class is being offered this semester at BMA. Students are learning to program robots using various sensors to accomplish different projects. The class is being taught by Computer Science specialist Paulo Laguna. Paulo shares:

I was born in Brazil and grew up in different countries in Latin America, giving me the privilege of experiencing different cultures. I lived in California for more than 15 years where I had the opportunity to obtain my education, get married, and have two beautiful children. For the last five years, my family and I have resided in Pennsylvania.

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In November it was reported that Alumnus and missionary John Lello had lost his life in an accident while felling trees a boats ride away from his home on the island of Ama. His wife Pam shares her testimony in this touching recounting of that horrific day, and how she has been coming to grips with her loss. Read this touching testimony and leave a word of encouragement at: Pam Lello’s Testimony

From French Teacher Karyl Kramer:

Just before Christmas break the French I and II classes came together for a special celebration of the season. The students decorated the Home Ec room with prelit trees, mini Eiffel tower, and a festive table, then got to work preparing the food. We made a French favorite, Croque Monsieur, a type of sandwich made from French bread, gruyere cheese, a special sauce and, in our case, vegetarian wham. It was amazing! We could all understand why a “Mister Crunchy” is so popular in France. Then each student got to experience the fun of making their own crepe on an authentic crepe maker and filling it with their choice of strawberries, bananas, lemon, jam, chocolate sauce, and whipped cream. We had a wonderful time together with music from Celine Dion wafting through the room and the students each got copies of the recipes we made to try at home. Bon appetit!
"Oh Mom! Does Daddy have to go away again?" chorused the girls.

Pam Lello with her family.

It was November 21, 2012, and John was finishing packing the last few items into his daypack for a two-week trip to Ama. As I walked into the room that morning, he looked up at me and said, “Honey, somehow I don’t feel right about this trip. Something just doesn’t feel right about me going to Ama this time.” John had made many trips to Ama, and his comment struck me as strange.

The girls and I walked him down to the boat to see him off. He gave the girls their hugs and goodbyes, and then it was my turn. As I hugged John, I didn’t want to let him go. We watched him climb into the boat along with the hired chainsaw operator, his assistant, the clinic nurse and his assistant. We waved until the boat was out of sight. Then the girls and I slowly walked back up the hill to our home with an empty feeling that wouldn’t go away.

A few days later, John’s boatman came back for more chainsaw oil. “Hey girls,” I said, “let’s make cards and write letters to Daddy to show how much we love and miss him.”

“Yahoo!” they cried. Cutting, coloring and pasting began in earnest while I began writing a long letter to John. We sent the cards, letters and goodies with the boatman when he returned to Ama.

November 26 was a foggy night, and a heavy rain had begun to fall. While preparing to retire for the night, I began to hear faint sounds of wailing far down the river. This was not unusual, but somehow it seemed different that night. I looked out the window toward the village. The sounds of wailing increased as the mourners came closer. “Mom, are you coming? We are really tired,” my girls called.
I was putting them to bed when we suddenly heard a loud banging on our door. Who would be visiting us so late at night? I wondered. I whispered to the girls to turn off their flashlights. The banging continued. “Pam! It’s Colin!” Recognizing the distressed voice of our friend from church, I opened the door and peered out into the darkness. Then came the words I will never forget: “Pam, John is dead!”

“No!” I cried out. “John is not dead!”

“Yes,” repeated Colin, “Your John is dead.”

By this time, the girls had joined me, and we raced down the stairs into the pouring rain, not knowing where to go, what to do, or whom to turn to for support. Faintly through the fog, I saw some village men and yelled out to them, “Tokengo! Where is Tokengo?” The clinic nurse, Tokengo, was a good friend to John and a big brother to the girls.

Stumbling down the steep hill toward the river, we hurried through the darkness hoping the news about John was a mistake. Just before we arrived at the river, a group of women met us and redirected us back up to the clinic. By the time we reached the clinic, it seemed as if the entire village had surrounded us.

There was John—my best friend and my girls’ Daddy—lying lifeless on a stretcher. Tokengo was listening for signs of breathing and a heartbeat. He tried over and over again and finally ushered the girls and me outside. With tears streaming down his face, he said, “Pam, there’s nothing I can do. I am so sorry.”

I couldn’t hold in my fear and grief any longer, and I began to cry. Returning to the clinic with Tokengo and the girls, I just stared at John’s lifeless form and pleaded with God to perform a miracle like He did with Lazarus.

As the girls and I returned to our house, helplessness washed through me. I knew the next step was to contact the AFM home office and report John’s death. In the downpour, I hooked up our satellite phone and prayed that it would connect. A voice answered, “Hello, this is Lawrence Burn. How can I help you?”

“Lawrence, this is Pam in Papua New Guinea. There has been an accident, and John is dead.”

“What did you say?” asked Lawrence in disbelief.

I repeated my short message, and then I dissolved in tears. “Lawrence, what do I do now? Please help me!” I sobbed.

After the phone call, I returned to the clinic, still hoping I would wake up from this nightmare and find John assisting Tokengo with another patient. But it was not to be. John was still lying on the stretcher, pale and still.

As the girls and I returned to the house, we found a few men waiting to speak with us. Elder Mica, John’s boatman and a good friend began explaining what had happened in the woods that
afternoon at about 3 p.m. While John and several others were standing around waiting for the 
next tree to be cut down, a branch connected to a jungle vine 130 feet above them broke. 
Everyone heard the sound and began to dash out of the way. The branch struck John on the head, 
knocking him to the ground. He was killed instantly. He did not suffer—for that I am grateful. 
The closest medical services were eight hours away by motor canoe. Later, we learned that his 
skull had been cracked, his neck broken, and his right arm also broken in two places.

The rainclouds dispersed and the sun came up the next morning, but I had a hard time noticing it. 
My heart ached. Making my way outside, I tried again to connect with AFM by satellite phone. For 
the next three hours, I sat on the hill overlooking the valley and river, trying to sort out all 
that had happened in the last 10 hours. Overwhelmed again, I began to cry uncontrollably. I 
looked up in the sky full of beautiful, fluffy clouds and cried to the Lord. “Oh Lord! Please help 
me through this difficult time. I cannot do it on my own. Give me the strength and peace that I 
need!” Instantly, I felt such peace flowing through me that I knew God was with me and cared 
about our future.

Despite the peace in my heart, I still wondered, “Why, Lord?” Sitting on that hill in front of our 
mission home, I had time to reflect on the last nine months of our lives. We fully believed God 
had called us to Papua New Guinea to serve in His mission field. When we first arrived at May 
River Mission, it did not take long for the news to spread through the jungle that the prayed-for 
missionary family had finally arrived. People walked for days through the jungle to visit us and 
ask for help. John had great compassion for the people and helped them any way he could. He 
visited villages up and down the river, meeting church members and encouraging them. People 
asked for Bibles, songbooks and literacy books for their children, and we helped supply them. 
John began working on a student missionary program so we could reach more villages for Jesus. 
He heard about a school in the remote village of Imombi that had closed for lack of teachers. 
Compelled by his belief in education, he fixed up the classrooms and recruited teachers. The 
school opened this January.

As word spread, more villages began requesting John’s help. John traveled from village to 
village giving them hope, encouragement and most of all heartfelt love. By meeting the needs of 
the people, he showed them Jesus’ love.

The sound of an approaching helicopter brought my thoughts back to the present. It would soon 
transport the girls and me, along with John’s body, to Port Moresby. Walking away from our 
PNG home was very hard. I had begun to love these people and settle into our new lifestyle. 
Mourners wailed loudly as the whole village led us up to the helicopter. I can’t leave these 
people without giving them some type of encouragement and hope for the future, I thought. Just 
before climbing into the helicopter, I addressed the crowd. “Please do not give up! Keep looking 
to Jesus. Encourage each other, and I will do my best to find another missionary to carry on the 
work John began. We worship a good God who loves and cares for us. I love all of you. If I do 
not see you again on this earth, we will meet on that glorious resurrection morning with John 
when Jesus will take us all to heaven.”

As the helicopter lifted us higher and higher, I looked down on the sea of devastated, hopeless 
faces of the people of May River. The Missionary they had prayed for so long had been snatched
away. My heart went out to them. We had answered God’s call for their sakes. Our family had
worked so hard to live out Matthew 25:35 among them. We invited people to eat at our table,
provided them with clean water, gave strangers a place to stay, clothed those in need and visited
the sick and dying. Satan wasn’t happy with the work we were doing, and he did his best to stop
it. Oh God, I cried, why did this have to happen? Again, I felt the weight of emptiness and
loneliness crushing me. How I yearned for the assurance of God’s presence in my life.

“Look, Mommy!” cried Abby, “Look at the beautiful rainbow in the clouds!” Tokengo later told
me that the rainbow seemed to encircle our helicopter all the way to town. Again God showed
me that He was with us, that He loved us and cared about our future and the future of the people
in the Sepik region. He has wonderful things planned for the future because John laid down his
life for the people of Papua New Guinea.

John was a wonderful, spiritual man and was ready to fall asleep in Jesus. Before we left the
States, John said he wanted to be working in God’s mission field until He returns. With tears
streaming down my face once again, I realized that John did get his wish. The next thing he will
see is Jesus’ face.

On the plane back to the States, I had many more hours to cry, pray and think about the future of
our people and the surrounding villages. My heart continues to ache for the people of Papua New
Guinea, and I will continue to pray for someone to take John’s place. Who will continue to
nurture them and bring them closer to Jesus? I don’t know. Who will bring teachers in for the
children and start schools? I don’t know. Who will continue to open up airstrips so health
services can come in? I don’t know.

O Lord, my heart is so heavy right now with many questions and no answers. I continue to ask
You for strength each and every day, and also strength for the people we left behind. They are
still mourning the loss of their prayed-for missionary, and they are wondering what will happen
next. I wanted so badly to stay and continue John’s work, but I knew I couldn’t on my own.
Lord, You are such a loving, understanding and caring God. I know You love those people with
all Your heart. Keep me patient until you reveal the missionary who will take up our work.

God has called His people to spread the Gospel to the whole world, to give our all for His
service. We live in such comfort and ease that we don’t really notice the needs of others around
us. Are we willing to give up our expensive cars, homes, entertainment and fancy clothes for the
Lords’ work? Are we willing to step out of our comfort zones to reach the unreached for Jesus
Christ? He is coming soon, and we don’t have long to work.

I challenge each and every one of you to pray and step out in faith for your Lord. Ask Him what
His will is for you and where He would have you to go. Be willing to follow Him no matter what
it costs. There is no better place to be than where God wants you to be. —Pam Lello