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THE PROSPERITY ISSUE

Welcome the Lunar Horse Year with Reunion Feast Fest And Activities Galore





Fumika (right) with instructor Dewi Sarka

Biosphere Stewards: The Next Generation

In July 2013, Biosphere Foundation held their 2nd International Stewardship Program at the Scientific Education and Research Center in Bali Barat National Park. Ten teenage students from Indonesia, Singapore, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Hawaii and California joined 8 local Balinese students for the 10-day programme. **Fumika Azuma**, a student in Singapore, shares her experience.

This summer, I was privileged to attend the 2nd Biosphere Stewardship Program (BSP). The program is designed to teach us about the earth's different ecological biomes, including those made by man such as the agriculture and city biomes, as well as introduce us to Bali's culture and religion. We were able to participate in the work of 'Friends Of Menjangan' – a collaborative association made up of Biosphere Foundation, Sustainable Management Group and Bali Barat National Park, dedicated to the protection of the National Forest including Menjangan Island and its beautiful coral reef.



Recycling plastic packets

Snorkelling there was magnificent and the diversity of species of fish and coral was magical. On Menjangan Island, we did a beach cleanup and after collecting many bags of trash, we analysed and categorised them with a visiting team from 5 Gyres (a US non-profit organisation). Most of the trash were plastic bags.

We learned that a lot of the current damage to Menjangan's coral reefs are caused by the

anchors of local boats that ferry visitors. One of 'Friends of Menjangan's' reef protection programmes is to create handmade mooring buoys from recycled materials. We helped to make the buoys by filling old plastic bottles with styrofoam collected from the beach. We not only reduce the waste but also protect the reef.

Nono Suparno, the coordinator of 'Friends of Menjangan', manages a project that recycles plastic wrappers from snacks, creating beautiful bags and wallets. We were able to experience making these things with his team, and although it was difficult in the beginning, we improved through practise.

During the program, we visited a man-made biome which was a farm owned by Mr Kadek. The Biosphere Foundation actually works with local farmers to promote organic farming. The students collected data on the effectiveness

of different types of organic homemade pesticides. Visiting this small village farm and seeing how it is run, was a really new experience for me!

Every moment on this trip was memorable in so many different ways. I would say that my best experience was at the final gathering on the beach. We sat in a circle on the sand and said a few sentences of appreciation to everyone. Some of us got emotional and started crying. The calmness of that gathering and the magnificent stars above us was the most beautiful thing I ever saw.

These are just a few of the myriad activities in the BSP. I had a life changing experience being able to learn and interact with what I love during the trip. I am planning to share my experience with my school community and recommend this program to my peers so that they will be able to have the same life changing experience as me. I am also planning to continue the work in the environment club that my friend



Sutama teaches the students how to make mooring buoys from recycled plastic bottles

and I set up in my school. This amazing program helped me realise the importance of preserving the beauty of nature for the next generation. It taught me various ways to take care of our planet.



Collecting research data on the farm

Fumika's program was generously sponsored by Raffles Marina member, Yves de Leeneer. For more information about Biosphere Foundation, please see www.biospherefoundation.org. If you would like to help sponsor a high school student to attend next year's Biosphere Stewardship Program, or would like to receive application information, please contact Cynthia Lazaroff at cl@pcrf.org