



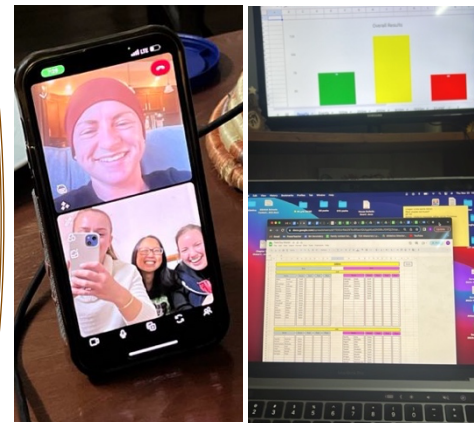
THE SANDY TEACHER

Deanne Gochanour's Newsletter; Happy Holidays! ; January 2023

Thanksgiving

This year the week of thanksgiving was also the week of Bingham's Annual Field Day event, so celebrating became a bit complicated. Because of my role in the athletics department, I had to plan aspects of Field Day, and I knew I would be very busy during the week.

I decided to celebrate Thanksgiving with a few families the Sunday before the actual holiday. Since I don't get to spend a lot of time with those families outside of school, I was able to enjoy fellowship with them without the pressure of work responsibilities. On Thanksgiving Day, some teachers that live at Bingham decided to have a small get together. We are known as "The Singles." Most of us that are single missionaries don't have families to celebrate holidays with here in Addis. The Singles plus an empty nester couple, used a large, open apartment as the venue for our Thanksgiving dinner. Our individual, small apartments weren't spacious enough to accommodate our group and this allowed us the space to gather and feast! I'm always amazed at how much food there ends up being at a meal for only 7 people. In some ways, it felt like the last supper and a calm before the storm with Field Day happening the next morning. We projected the Macy's Day Parade until the Packers game started. Although we gave American football lessons last year, some seemed to forget the rules of the game and needed a refresher course. It turns out that shouting at the screen during game time doesn't help people to learn. During the parade we got to video chat with a Bingham teacher that is currently on leave in the States receiving treatment for bone cancer. She is very missed, but she messaged us on Field Day that she is officially cancer free! Happy Thanksgiving indeed!



Christmas

While teaching at Bingham I am lucky enough to have at least two weeks of Christmas vacation, so travelling is a common choice for teachers here. I was glad to be able to fly to the States to spend Christmas with my family for the first time in two years. Although my family had a very unexpected funeral and it wasn't as cheerful of a Christmas as normal, I'm very glad God allowed me to come back to the States to be there. It was wonderful to see friends, extended family, and church members I grew up learning from that I don't get to connect with anymore.

I brought back 4 bags from the U.S. this time. Two of them were personal things like brats, shoes, some candy, etc. The other two were full of 100 Bingham t-shirts, 12 basketballs, two phones for staff, and someone's teaching license! It was a lot of work packing those bags, but my nephews had fun standing on the 12 basketballs to deflate them.



I'm very glad I could come home to surprise my nephew and celebrate his 7th Birthday! 3 of my nephews also enjoyed stepping on the basketballs to deflate them.





Field Day

Field Day is a highly competitive preK-12 track meet that every student at Bingham participates in. Every employee and family are assigned a house, and the 3 houses compete throughout the year in other, non-athletic competitions. One of my responsibilities within the athletics department is to assign people to the houses of Taylor, Carey, or Scott. It's a complicated process that includes a few spreadsheets of information with total number of students in each house, birthdates, and grades of students so houses can be as evenly distributed as possible. Each house has a color, representing the Ethiopian flag, and everyone gets a house shirt. Because I organize/create house events, I no longer get to compete in these events. I used to be in Taylor (the red one). Both athletic directors have shirts with all 3 houses on them to show we represent all of them.

This year, we started Field Week with a staff retreat. It was the first time in history that every staff member met off campus! The next few days of school had dress up days, house meetings, and spirit competitions. Our elementary students competed in dodgeball, and our high schoolers had Minute To Win It gameshow style challenges spread over two days.

Although I facilitated those events, my role was heavily computer based this year. Our program which contains every student, their age group, their house, and their chosen events crashed a week before Field Day. Thankfully our brilliant math teacher created an excel file with all the necessary formulas to calculate points based on how the students performed. I spent countless hours entering students into their events in the excel sheets. I had to print each of the events with the list of students participating in that specific event to give to the start line. It was a lot of formatting and comparing spreadsheets, but somehow it all came together!

By the time Field Day actually rolled around, I didn't have any specific tasks to do, so I spent that time recording last-minute student entries for field events, delivering coffee to our hard-working staff, and filling in wherever there was a need. Field Day is such a fun event to build relationships with students and their families.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.”

Psalms 32:8

A Whole Lot of Sports

From October to Christmas there were so many sporting events! Part of my Assistant Athletic Director job is taking students to events on our bus, making sure they and our spectators follow our Christian guidelines, and helping to run events. A unique part of sports here is helping students/spectators get into school's campuses by talking to security guards. This is just to keep everyone safe, but it usually entails me running around schools proving the people belong to Bingham.



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