



THE SANDY TEACHER

Deanne Gochanour's Newsletter; Summer Season! ; June 2024

Ending the School Year

From January to June there were many events at Bingham Academy. Because I teach in the middle school and high school and coach sports at all levels, I get to attend most events. They included an international day, a middle school beach party, high school banquet, 8th grade dinner, an international sports tournament (with schools from X countries), awards ceremonies and more!

My favorite event from spring semester was the middle school beach party. I teach 8th grade Bible and homeroom, so it was expected I attend; but I didn't expect to have so much fun! To create a beach party, we rented a pool and placed it on our sports field. In the past, haybales were purchased, covered with large tarps, and filled with water to create a pool. This year the price of hay tripled. So, renting a blow-up pool was more affordable, and it turned out to be more fun too. We had about 60 out of 70 students attend. The students enjoyed a slip and slide and there were buckets of water and sponges in case they weren't wet enough from the pool. My precious 8th graders decided to gang up and throw me in the pool! I had no idea how strong they were. I was the first staff member thrown, but I really jumped at the end to save my ego. The students managed to throw every staff member in after that. For revenge, staff started throwing kids in too! It was a fun day filled with burgers, lots of water, and bright sun. It felt like a summer day in Wisconsin.

Another highlight from the spring was high school banquet which is very similar to American proms. The theme this year was murder mystery, so each staff chaperone changed their name and became a character for the night. I was the narrator and didn't have a large role, but I did get to announce that our principal was the murder victim for the mystery. Our high school banquet includes a fancy catered dinner and a dance party for the final hour.

8th grade dinner is similar to high school banquet. As the homeroom teacher, I am tasked with planning this event. Most years, the dinner takes place at a nice restaurant close to downtown Addis, but since it's a dinner for hyper 13-year-olds who want to play loud games and have a good time, it was ruled to have it on campus. Luckily, Bingham is both a school and residential campus. I planned this event in a backyard space, and it became a beautiful evening garden party! The planning was time consuming, but the evening was worth it. We had steak bites and chicken, a photo booth, fun awards for each student, table vs. table games, and closed out the night with s'mores, a fire pit, and a dance party. A fellow teacher brought the s'mores in a suitcase all the way from England for this event!

The end of the year also brings many awards ceremonies. As an athletic director and a coach, I presented many sports awards. I also run our house events and presented the winning house with the trophy at the end of year chapel. I sort students and their families into one of three houses and then plan various competitions for the houses throughout the school year.



Hannah also graduated! She's the oldest of the Federwitz kids that I lived with in Ghana.





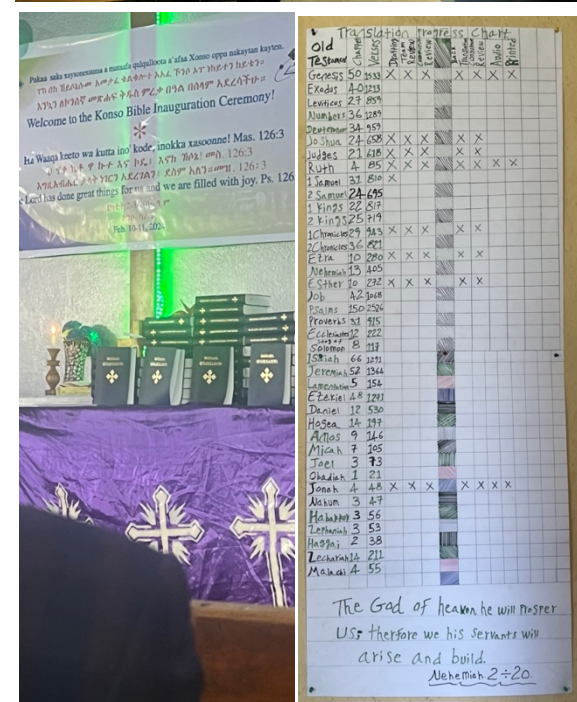
Konso Bible Dedication

A group of LBT office workers, a camera man, and a pastor from Hails Corner Church in Milwaukee came to Ethiopia to attend the Konso Bible Dedication back in February. The Konso language group is located in southern Ethiopia. LBT has several other translation projects in the southern region, so we flew there a few days before the dedication to visit some of the translation projects' offices.

Although it was nice to be outside of busy Addis, it was also nice to learn more about what LBT does in Ethiopia. I am often very busy at Bingham, so this was a great way to learn about the translation work happening in Ethiopia. We started by visiting the Southwest Synod Bible Translation Coordination Office where the coordinator, pictured here, showed us each of the 7 translation projects that are currently underway in the synod. He walked us through how many books or portions of the Bible are completed in each language. We visited 3 of the projects while we were in the area. All of them are in somewhat close proximity to each other, but their cultures and languages are quite unique!

Each day we visited a new language project and met the translation team. We started at the Zayse office. The road from Arba Minch to the 3 language projects is the same road but it's filled with goat, cattle, and human crossings and is quite the bumpy and swerving drive. Zayse is known for their banana production, so we received bananas at all the coffee ceremonies. The Zayse language has a completed New Testament, and they are making the final push to complete the Old Testament. The next day we visited Dhirayta, which is about 30 minutes past Zayse. Dhirayta also has a completed New Testament and is working to complete the Old Testament. They have a chart in their office detailing how many chapters and verses have been translated for each book. It also shows if the book has been drafted, team reviewed, community reviewed and so on.

The final place we visited was Konso. The community of Konso has a UNESCO World Heritage site because of their distinct building styles. During the church service on Sunday, the completed Konso Bible was dedicated and distributed. We ate lunch together with translators and others who assisted this project. While some people conducted interviews, I was able to visit a village and see their incredible structures.



Summer in Wisconsin

We ended the school year June 7th, and I'm back in Wisconsin and the Midwest for the summer. I return to Ethiopia in early August. Please let me know if you want to connect at some point during the summer!

"From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the LORD is to be praised"
Psalms 113:3



Contact Me

Deanne Gochanour
Deanne.Gochanour@LBT.org
Phone: 920.253.7594 (US)

Contact LBT

PO Box 789 Concordia, MO 64020-0789
Phone: 660-225-0810
LBT.org



Deanne's Details
(Request to join the Private Group)



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