

February 13 and 14

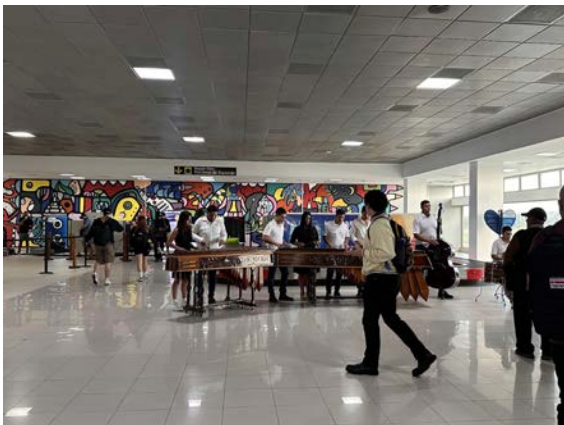
The biggest ice storm of the season proved to be a challenge getting to SewHope's campus! Chloe, Carol, Chetti and I met at the airport at 4:45 after our 1 ½ drive through the icy and snowy roads!

Who knew that deicing takes place after everyone is on the plane and you wait in a line and then once you make it to the front of the line, deicing takes about 30 minutes. Our 6:53 flight ended up departing at 9:10.

This meant our next flight would be impossible to catch. Carol worked diligently with her husband on the computer at home to figure out what to do. In the meantime, we were notified that they had booked us on the same flight the next day. This would mean we would miss the Ministry of Education meeting and the movie night.

Our flight arrived and we were instructed to go to a help desk. Carol was ready with lots of information and possibilities. The flight we hoped for was too close time-wise to book. The next option was an 8:54 pm flight that arrived at 12:03 am in Guatemala City on 2-14 but it was full and we could go on standby. Like magic, 4 seats opened up and we had tickets on the flight.

The flight from Guatemala City to Flores was the next hurdle. Emily said there was a flight at 6:00 am...now just getting it booked will be a trick. Emily had no luck online and enlisted Myra to help. We got our luggage and got through customs by 1:30 am and since the Avianca Air window opened at 4:00 we decided to stay at the airport. We noticed movement by 3:00 and Chetti and Carol went to see what we could do to get on the 6:00 am flight. We got on the flight! We were greeted by a group of musicians playing the marimba, Guatemala's national instrument. It was a new beginning to what had been crazy travel days! 29 hours of travel time!



Kenneeth (spelled correctly!!) was there waiting for us! I called Tim to tell him what our plan was and he let me know that my best friend had passed away at 4:30 that morning. I had rustled with making the trip or not and my friend told me to go when I last saw her on Monday. I felt good about going because she endorsed my trip. I had no idea that she would pass away so quickly. Now I would wait for the arrangements to be made and work on the best way to get back home. I would focus on getting as much finished while I was there and would count on Carol, Chole, and Chetti to help accomplish other things.

We got to the campus and it was time for the students to arrive!
Our translator Luckey was ready to get started.

It was Valentine's Day and of course, there was a celebration that would be grand! Cakes were arriving by tuk-tuk! Decorations were in place, special food was being made by the mothers, and the celebration would begin soon!





The reinstalled old stove and the new stove

Before leaving home I made certificates for many of the students who had been working very hard on Khan Academy and RAZ Kids last year. 37 students mastered over 100 skills at Khan Academy. One student mastered 282 skills last year!

Eleven students were reading 1-11 book levels above grade level!

Note, that some of the students are in Reinforcement and will receive their certificate in the afternoon so they are not pictured.





Students played games, enjoyed their special meal, and sang the two songs they had been practicing so I could record them to possibly use at LEAP.





The no sleep finally caught up to me and I had to take a nap.

Time to get ready for movie night! The popcorn was popped on our outdoor stove by the moms and we got smart and bought juice boxes this time so we didn't have plastic bags filled with drinks! I brought 320 heart-beaded necklaces that we passed out with the drinks and popcorn. The kids and adults loved them and continued to wear them! An estimated 350+ people were at the movie. We watched Coco and students wrote about it in class on Monday! They had some lengthy summaries!



The movie ended and I was able to get some family pictures. Everyone pitched in to clean up and it was time to call it a night!





Our amazing teachers just keep pouring into our students.

February 15

We were set to visit homes today. Carol, Chloe, Chetti, Luckey, Kenneeth, Seiner, and Dana all visited four homes.

Home 1

- 3 children, 1 baby, and 2 girls go to our school (from a previous marriage) One (3RD) girl 2nd-year student other is a 1st-year student
- Both parents work shifts together in the fields at the Pineapple/Papaya farm and work long hours making minimum wage 3000Q a month, said the farm is about 2 km past school; they have been there 4 years
- Grandparents take care of kids, during our meeting the grandmother needed time to think and left the group
- They are worried about the grandparents as they are older and have trouble hearing
- The public school is closer but the quality is not good and they do not think the students are treated well
- The parents ask the teachers to let them know about projects early so they can have supplies for their kids to have what they need
- The mom said her dream is for her kids to finish school and become professionals; she did not finish school
- Girls get to school by a bus driven by another student's grandfather, he picks up about 20 kids, and costs are 200Q per child or 300Q for 2 children
- They came to the movie on Friday night
- They would be interested in a stove...I think they could pay some

- They would be interested in a water filter; they buy water now because the water they could get is next to a dump
- They have no electricity and use candles, which cost about \$1.50 a day, possible candidates for solar light

Home 2

- Two 3rd-grade students, one boy and one girl, live in this house
- The siblings are not twins but are in the same grade; the boy was held back in public school because they said he couldn't do math, this took a hit to his self-esteem and when he registered at our school Seiner took this on as a challenge; this young man was one of the students who received an award for his accomplishment on the Khan Academy for 100 or more levels mastered in math...to say he was proud and beaming would be a HUGE understatement! It was thought he had a learning problem but guess what...he just needed our school!



- Dad works at Pineapple/Papaya Farm working long shifts
- Mom is a stay-at-home mom; mom's father died when she was young and her mom just died at 67 years old just 4 months ago
- Mom's brother is a developmentally delayed adult and now the mom and her sister who also lives in the house are raising their children and their developmentally delayed brother,
- I had prayer squares from my church; we gave them one and prayed for them
- Mom or aunt brings kids to school on a motorcycle
- The family brought chairs out for us to sit on
- Mom said they have had a hard life and want the children to have a better life and finishing school will help this happen; she was so thankful for our school and what it has done to help her children

- They were going to get a stove and then the illness of the 67-year-old was using a lot of the money and they never were able to get one
- This family would like a stove and water filter and I feel they are deserving of both and we should not charge them for either



Home 3

- Two students are in our school, one year two and one year one
- They live with the grandparents in a nice home with electricity, grandfather works out of town at a cattle ranch, he is a manager and comes home on weekends, he travels about 6-7 hours to get there
- When the girls are off school they go with their grandmother and grandfather to his work and get to ride little horses. Their eyes lit up when they talked about it.
- Dad works at the Pineapple/Papaya plant as a mechanic, he was in a motorcycle accident and had to have his foot amputated. He was without work for 8 months, He was in a wheelchair for a while but an organization helped him to get a prosthetic
- Grandmother was working on sewing uniforms for the girls
- Their hope for their girls is to finish school



Home 4

- There are three children in this home, 2 are students at our school
- This family just moved from another home that they rented, they have moved around a lot
- The dad washes dishes in The United States and sends money to them, they have built a tin home that is very close to the school
- She wants to add a floor, fencing, and a bathroom to the house
- It is hard for the kids to be away from their dad but she knows that the objective is clear, so they will continue to be strong
- She heard about the quality of our school from neighbors and her kids are now coming to our school
- Both the kids said they loved everything about the school, the boy wants to be a doctor and the girl wants to be a teacher
- The husband has called from the US to talk to Seiner to find out how his kids are doing in school



We went back to the campus and started working on the items to make the sponsors' gifts on Monday. Carol helped me to try to figure out how to get home since I now had the funeral arrangements for my friend. We got the American Airlines part solved and then we had to figure out the Avianca Air.

Bottom line...Myra, Dana, Carol, and I all tried to get the problem solved but the crew in Guatemala City had not done things correctly so we had to go to the airport to try to solve the mess.

We went to the grocery and then to the airport. They changed the reservation but instead of changing mine, they changed Chloe's reservation. Speed forward, they fixed it but then said that the other three reservations were messed up. Dr. Jake Snow's flight came in and Anne and him talked while they were solving the other reservation issues. Finally, they said it was fixed but talking to Chetti, they still had more to solve when they got to the airport on Thursday night. YIKES... no more Arivaca!!!

We went into Flores for a little bit so Dana could find some souvenirs.

Some people had dinner but it was 10:00 and I was ready for a shower and bed so we can be ready at 6 am for our trip to Tikal with Myra's husband in the morning!



Sunday, February 16

Emerson took Dana, Chetti, Carol, Chloe, and me on a tour of Tikal. We had fun with lots of walking, climbing up steps, and photo opportunities! For Star Wars fans, this is where a scene from Star Wars IV was filmed.



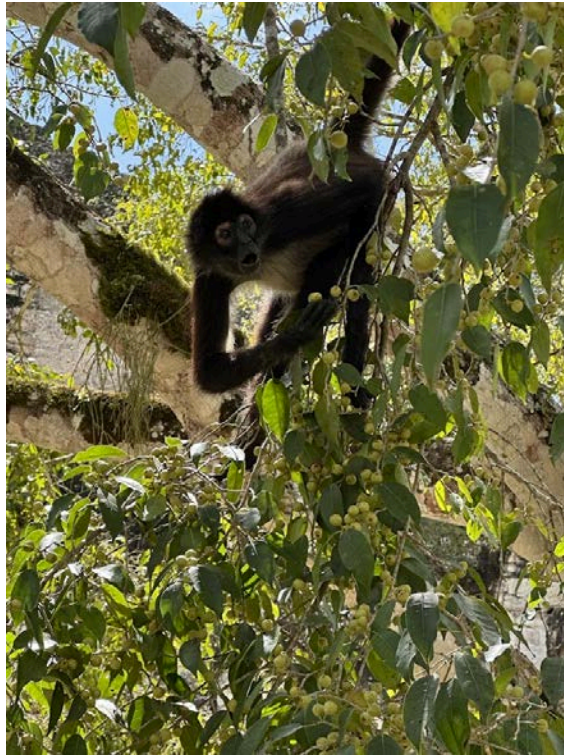
On the way home we stopped at a hotel/restaurant on a lake and enjoyed a meal.

We finished up preparations for a busy day on Monday at the school.



Back at the campus, Jake saw a little over 60 patients with all but 8 being students. Most kids were very healthy. A few minor issues and 2 rock and one bead removal from ears and he called it a day!

This monkey was showing off!



Manuel, our new teacher was there on Sunday decorating his room and Guillermo and Kenneth were sanding, painting, and rehangng doors at the school.



The outdoor kitchen underwent some repairs. See photos. Rotted wood was replaced.



Monday, February 17

Students arrived for school. One of the students Tim and I sponsor, who has been spending a lot of time in Seiner's office for fighting brought me a present!



Students started working on sun catchers for their sponsors. They also got to make one for themselves to take home.



They also received a Little Jesus with a card that let them know that everyone needs a little Jesus and they should keep this one with them. The card had an explanation and a bible verse on it. The students liked getting this gift.

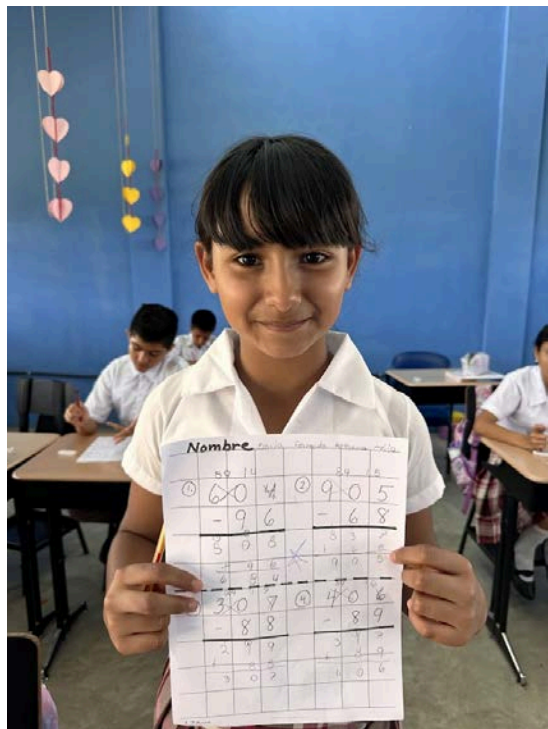




I brought a parachute for the students to play with. I taught them several different activities to do with it and it seemed to bring them such joy!

I taught the students some methods to do subtraction that make it a little easier! I used the translator in the morning and then in the afternoon the translator had to leave so I used the translating earbuds I bought! They were amazing! I wore one and one of the teachers wore one. I said what to do in English and it told her in Spanish with a little delay and then she told the students. The kids caught on quickly!

They learned the -1 -1 method and the box-it method for subtracting with zeros!





One of the advisors of Mercy College of Nursing felt led to do something else for us after I met her at a packing event this summer that was part of their week of service. She said she sewed and asked if there was anything they could do...I told her I would love school bags for all the students. I told her we would need 150...well guess what... we have 162 students! I went to pick them up before I left and she had made 165! WOW...what a blessing! The fabric was donated by Betty Rumpt Interiors. It was remnants from past projects! This makes the bags very sturdy because of the type of fabric. Here are pictures of the students picking out a bag!





Junior's grandfather and grandmother are the people who provide a bus service to many of our families who are a little farther away from our school. The grandfather is a former pastor.



Here are some of the kids in the reinforcement program. They are holding their fingers up to show how many years they have been in our program!



Dr. Jake saw 100 patients on Monday! A cockroach, an earwig, and some other things were found in the ears but overall things were good!
Seiner was a huge help in getting people signed in and charting.



Seiner and I went through the rest of the items that needed to be completed including all the things that Chloe, Chetti, and Carol would do to finish up the trip to-do list.



Tuesday, February 18

Kenneeth picked me up at 6 am to go to the airport. We used Google Translate and the speaker part to communicate on the way to the airport. He is an amazing asset to our team. He told me he was going to start taking English classes on Sunday! I was impressed! He has a wife and two children! He worked very long hours while we were there. Saturday was particularly long starting when we visited homes and getting us back after Flores after 10 pm. I will not go into the details of getting home. Short version, 3 terminal changes, 11 gate changes, delayed flights, a canceled flight, and an overnight in a hotel.

I left our campus Tuesday at 6 am, I missed the viewing of my friend but made it to the dinner after the viewing at 8:10 Wednesday evening. If it could go wrong it did.

Fortunately, I was able to be at her funeral. My friend knew the importance of our work in Guatemala and encouraged me to go on the trip after I saw her the Monday before I left on Thursday. She was such a blessing in my life.

Debbie is at peace and not in pain for that I am so thankful.



I am looking forward to going back and accomplishing more and I would love my next trip to be an uneventful travel experience!



The people waiting for Anne enjoyed the fans that I gave them!



Each trip I write a personalized note to each employee to thank them and give them a small gift. Here is Bianey with her card and gift.