

[Wednesday, January 25]

Buenos Dias!

It's hard to believe that we only have two more work days before we head home. It's been a great two weeks...lots of hard work and lots and lots of laughing. We have a very diverse group of folks aging from Laura Lee at 22 yrs. old to Ed...somewhere in his early 70s...all ages in between and we all get along well. We have lived in close, close proximity to each other...eating, sleeping, fellowshiping in one small space.

We have completed the roof of the two SS classrooms...had to wait a bit today for the concrete floors to dry more. Hopefully, we can move ahead with full steam for the next two days to complete what we can before heading home.

I've had fun helping in the kitchen...rode the bus today with Cinthia (pastor's wife) to fill our 3 large water bottles. For those of you who haven't been on a building team, drinking safe water is #1! We don't worry too much about what we eat, but we are careful of the drinking water.

It's always interesting riding the buses, especially in the area where we are...absolutely no tourist here. One...like me... sticks out for sure! We took a cab home because it's too hard to lug the filled bottles onto the bus. Cinthia is only 32 yrs. old...she could be my child.

Alex, the pastor, had to leave for part of the week for schooling with the bishop. Alex is not only the pastor at our church, but he is the district super as well. He will be back on Friday and we plan to celebrate on Friday night with a cookout. There's a grill at the church and Buddy plans to cook burgers and Joye and I plan to make the trimmings. Bananas are plentiful, but the folks around here have never eaten banana pudding...made it last week and they loved it. I'll make that again on Friday.

It's been so nice...we've had about six teen boys helping us every day. It is their school break and they have spent alot of time with us (it doesn't hurt that the pastor has a very pretty 15 yr. old daughter, too!). LL and Jimmy bought 6 soccer balls the other day and they plan to give them to the guys on Friday night. None of the boys have soccer balls and of course, love playing.

One last Buddy report...he's doing great! I'd say he is almost 100%...his strength has come back and he is his usual stubborn self when we tell him to take it easy. As usual, he's kept his sense of humor and tells one highway patrol story after another. And then there's Joye...just a real joy!

We'll see you soon! Thanks for your prayers and loving support!

Joyfully, Kash

[Sunday, January 21]

We walked around this really big mall for about 2 hours this evening...got some fast food...I got McDonald's french fries and an ice cream cone for supper...yum. I bought the three ladies in the kitchen a bracelet and hair clasp (very inexpensive). They have been so kind and soooooo much fun. We spend alot of time together each day...one about my age...one about 35 and the other about 25. They cook for us breakfast and dinner each day. There English is about as good as my Spanish...but we laugh alot trying to figure out what each is saying.

As I was saying on the phone...today was in the 90s, but nice in the shade. Our rooms are very hot during the day, but very cold at night. I had to buy a cheap sleeping bag at Walmart and I am wearing Jimmy's sweat pants each night along with my sweatshirt over my pjs and socks.

I am very, very sore from the zip line...all I can say is...I am a team player and I wasn't going to sit it out, BUT....been there...done that! You know me and heights!!

Church this a.m. was great! So much singing and dancing and I was right in the middle of it. Don't know the words in Spanish to the songs, but I can clap and move my feet with the best of them. Our team sang three songs in English to the congregation and it went well. Richard, on our team, preached the sermon.

After church, we fed almost 70 children hot dogs, etc....a gift from Kaye... to be used in CR for something special. We did crafts and danced there as well...it was fun. Gotta love those Latins and their dancing!

We got a little delayed in our block laying...our church foreman got a burn in his eye on Friday from welding...put us behind a bit. He is better and was at church this a.m. Back to work in the a.m. and hopefully we can really get more done on our job.

We are enjoying lots of pineapple, watermelon, and other fruits... the best of all are the tomatoes.

I'll close for now. Take care!

(from Kash)

[Wednesday, January 18]

Buddy and Joye are fine. Joye is always the heart of the team...talking with the locals and doing her part with meals, laundry and project work. She is Buddy's sidekick in translating with the local workers.

Buddy would not want me to tell the truth about him, but he is doing his best to take it easy. He did climb up on the roof this a.m. but don't tell all of our nurse friends (Debra and Norma!) He really is trying to take it easier than usual, but is doing his share for sure...a bit of lifting, but not too much. He is the last person to get up in the a.m. except for JIMMY! Laura Lee said this a.m. that the Woodmont group was always the last to get up.

Laura Lee is a joy! I am enjoying my time with her. She is tough and always...always works hard. She and Jimmy are having fun together.

It is school break here and the kids go back in February. We have lots of teens around to help work, eat with us and kick the soccer ball around. Nice kids!

Had a small problem with the ceiling we are doing...it started sagging in the middle from the weight of the cement. Four of our team workers were on the roof working. Jimmy and LL were two of them...Buddy asked for a quick descent and they all came down quickly...LL practically jumped off of the roof when she heard it was sagging. We secured supports in the room below and after the cement dries, it will be fine.

Temps are warm during the day...nothing like last year. It's cool at night and I'm wearing socks and a sweat shirt to bed, along with two blankets.

That's it from here. Hope all are well at home.

Love you lots, Kash

[Tuesday, January 17]

There are 11 of us on this team, 5 from Woodmont and 2 that we have traveled with before, and the others have been on other teams but not with us. There is only one who has not been on a

building team before. We never know how each group will bond but they always do. The women, right now are painting a concrete garden -- well the tables and chairs and walls of a garden where the fear time we were here was a garbage dump. It is beautiful with flower beds and lounge area now.

The men are doing men things: electricity, welding, metal work for the roof. We are all eating well and too much. You will see...

Buddy is really trying to behave but I have evidence here that should be at least shared with Debra... He still tires easily but is better day by day. Yes one of the pictures is him on a roof top.

Love you all lots
(from Joye)

Hi!!

An early email today. We finished up a bit early and I wanted to share a bit about our work here.

The one room that we are working on has block walls, a cemented floor and an open ceiling to the sky. Our local church foreman has been busy welding the beams, which were painted by our folks, across the top of the room. He also welded down tin sections to serve as a ceiling for the room below. When this is completed, which should be soon, we will begin making wooden sections on the tin to pour a floor for the upstairs room and hopefully begin block work on that upstairs room.

Meanwhile, down below, we have done some painting on the garden area...and I use the word...garden loosely. Jimmy and several of the women have been taking on a beautification effort for the garden...painting the cement benches, wall, etc. and weeding... just this afternoon...the welder offered us the extra beam to make a large cross for the garden. It is awesome...painted black. Behind the wall of the garden is the poo river....a waste stream from everyone's homes...umm!

I am pretty much fixing the lunch meal each day...with my able bodied assistant Joye. There is a market just next door and a produce stand just across the street...fresh pineapple, mangoes, oranges, etc. each meal. It's really funny....back at home, I probably wouldn't walk into a place that looks like this produce market...but here, it's easy! The man is getting used to us (NO tourist near here) and I think he appreciates our business...lots of fruit each day.

The local ladies in the kitchen are great...Emma, Laura and Princilla...also the pastor's wife, Cinthia. The parsonage family has a 16 yr. old boy, 13 yr. old girl and a 10 yr. old girl. Also, just today, the pastor's brother and his wife and child arrived from Boston, Mass. The wife is from Boston. It's a full house.

I'll write again soon! Take care.
(from Kash)

[Monday, January 16]

Subject: we're here!

We made it here just fine....around 4:30 central time. The church is in the outskirts of San Jose in a very urban area. It's a very different setting than the last two years in Esparza. The church is a complete compound and I am on the pastor's computer. He very much encourages us to make ourselves at home and use the computers (2) in his office, which is the entrance to the parsonage.

Joye, LL and I are in a room together. The other two ladies are in the other room and the guys are in the fellowship area right outside of our rooms.

Our work site is right in the middle of our space...we are hoping to put ceilings on the ground level of more Sunday School classrooms and hopefully while we are here begin block work on the second floor.

The parsonage family is very kind and wonderful thus far.

Jimmy is good. I am fine. Buddy is tired, but soooooo glad to be here.

I'll close for now. Hope all is well up your way. I love my Kindle....read it most of the way to CR.

Joye and I are headed to the market in the a.m. with Cinthia (the pastor's wife). We will be fixing lunch each day.

I'll write more later. Take care and have a good week!

Love you lots, Kash