

Wednesday November 21st

We were up again at 6:30, preparing for our departure to Bandipur. Kara and I were up and at breakfast by 7, Nafeeza coming late and needing to go and make a phone call. I went to Santosh's apartment and downloaded all of the photos that had been taken since we arrived for their club use.

As we loaded up the truck, several Rotarians arrived to say goodbye and presented me with a traditional Nepalese hat while Kara and Nafeeza got shawls. In addition we were given posters of the Himalayan range and a Nepal tourism pack by President Hari Garung.

We made on short stop on the way out of town, to the dentist's office to see his small clinic. He was very proud of the work and education he was involved in. He and I traded Rotary District pins. Just before we left, another Rotarian came and presented me with a box of Nepalese candies! Too much!

The ride to Bandipur is only about an hour. Part way up the mountain we stopped at an orange grove and picked fresh oranges, eating a number while there. They were also growing organic, shade grown coffee beneath the fruit.

When we arrived at Bandipur we immediately put our belongings in the rooms reserved for us. Sahadev showed for a few minutes before having to be back at school but would meet us again at 4 pm. The driver who had brought us had a daughter at a private Catholic school here and we went with him to visit her, along with his daughter that had ridden up with us. The school, Notre Dame, is very prestigious school and the children there live in boarding hostels throughout Bandipur.

After this we met up with Kashi Bhattarai, one of Sahadev's friends who had also met us in Katmandu. He took us around Bandipur and showed Kara and Nafeeza the major attractions. We also went to the Bandipur Resort and met up with one of my friends who work there, Surya Dhakal, whom I have known on each of my visits.

Kara and I ended up back at our rooms while Nafeeza was using the internet. Sahadev and Suroj Bhattarai met us there to discuss the schedule of the three full days we would be here. We agreed that with the time we have we will trek to two schools each of Thursday and Friday, delivering supplies and leave the rest for the Bandipur Multi-Development Committee to distribute as in the past. On Sunday we would trek to Dip Joti where a small school and Sahadev's parents live.

Sahadev had already purchased the materials for the first aid kits and the soccer balls would be here tomorrow. He, I, Kara and Suroj began to break out materials that would be delivered to the four schools. While we doing this Nafeeza showed up, looked in, didn't ask what we were doing, did we need help, but went in her room and began to use her hair electric straightener. Did I mention the phrase self-absorbed?

At six pm we were to meet Sahadev in the main bazaar and headed that way. The power had gone out just before this, one of the many scheduled power outages that are so frequent in Nepal (we also had them in India). We met at a small café and ran into one of the head school masters of a school we will visit on Friday and had a short conversation with him. We also ran into my friend Mr. Pradhan who runs a hostel for school children here. Each year I have visited with him, he has a daughter in Lexington, Ky. That is a nurse.

From there we went to dinner. Sahadev had brought the laptop for me to share and write the journals with in the time I am here. We came back to the room; the power was still off and stood outside taking in the incredible night sky of Nepal. Just as we began gazing a shooting star streaked across the sky that brought added delight to the moment.

Life is such a gift and wonder.

Peace to each of you.