

The Necessities of Life...

Description

Well, we are down to 30 days left in our mission. It is hard to believe. As we wrap up certain aspects of our work and try to organize the rest, we are finding some time to go on outings and make better observations during our regular walks. Knowing we are leaving this all behind has caused me to evaluate my experiences over the last 17 months.

First, it has gone by quickly. Oh sure there are times that moved slowly along like waiting for our visas, waiting to be reassigned, waiting to leave India and waiting for the bureaucratic wheels to turn. Waiting provides a good opportunity to evaluate, regroup and accomplish things that you haven't found time for in the fast pace of life. And as Dr. Seuss says, "Somehow you'll escape all that waiting and staying. You'll find the bright places where Boom Bands are playing."

default watermark



We found a Boom Band in Kathmandu! This procession down a main street is typical. These are Hindu worshippers. More often we see wedding parades.

While walking up to Nagarkot on an outing we came across what at first looked like a crack in the pavement but was in fact a procession of caterpillars creeping along end to end. As a follower one should always be sure of the direction the leader is taking you. The fork in the procession came about after the leader and those close behind were smashed by a vehicle. A new leader was born and the caterpillar train continued on.

default watermark



The walk was 8 kilometers round trip and was more about getting out and exercising than for the views and talk to some people and saw some pretty rhododendrons blooming. In the same area, saw some cute puppies, some flowers and pretty birds.



default watermark



Posing with the Nepal flag in the background

As with most tourist areas Nagarkot has various temples to visit. Here is a Buddhist Stupa that was looking very festive with all the brightly colored prayer flags.

default watermark



Secondly, the experiences we've had will impact us for the rest of our lives. Yesterday as we were walking our usual Saturday route a guy went by on a bike (motorcycle) with plastic bags of freshly prepped chickens hanging from hooks on his bike. This is a common sight, but I always chuckle

default watermark

default watermark

because the feet are usually poking out and it just looks funny.



We pass at least eight different butcher shops on this route with varying degrees of hygienic procedures. One shop has cages of chickens, ducks and pheasants outside the shop entry along with a goat or two tied to a post. Very fresh options. Another shop is always chopping goat meat on a tree stump that is on a tarp on the sidewalk. People are usually hanging around and some help to divide the meat into little piles that are put into plastic bags and sold to different families. There are a couple of shops that have a hose at the front of their store and they sit at the edge of the sidewalk removing the guts and clean their chickens as well as the intestines of the goats. Others have clean metal or marble work surfaces and a sink for washing the carcasses and seem pretty clean. It's all very fascinating to me. Oh, and there are usually dogs waiting patiently for scraps.

default watermark



default watermark



This is one of the nicest shops and the butcher is always very friendly.

As I made these observations on Saturday I realized how removed we are from the day to day necessities of life. I buy my frozen, boneless, skinless chicken breasts and call it good. In the US we have prepackaged salads, ready to cook vegetables and whole meals that cook up in a few minutes. Here you buy some vegetables at one shop and others at a different one. They come with roots and dirt and bugs. Food preparation takes more time that's for sure.

This level of detachment from basic needs extends beyond food. It took me a while to figure out that people brushing their teeth at the curb were not people watching but it was of necessity because they don't have indoor plumbing. I've seen this just down the street from our apartment and we live in a pretty nice area. Some days they have a system of pumps and hoses bringing water into their homes. At least the water in Nepal is relatively good, just not always convenient. We feel blessed to have helped to make water convenient for many villages here.

I am more aware and appreciate all the hard work of the people who make my life easier. I also appreciate the chicken both for the eggs and the meat. I am grateful for the indoor plumbing and the washing machine we have in our apartment, especially when I see the back neighbor washing all her laundry by hand.

I don't know if I will seem different to anyone else, but I truly hope that these experiences have helped me to become a better person.

Date Created

25 Feb 2024

Author

taunyaneff