

Ms. Miller had a busy summer, packed from beginning to end first with responsibility then with fun.

Ms. Miller started the summer on the first no-school Monday on a hospital visit with her mother, who was having total knee replacement surgery that Thursday. The surgery was going to require Ms. Miller to provide her mother with a great amount of care, and this visit let caregivers know what they would need to do. Knee replacement surgery is very dramatic, as it involves the new joint being sawed off of the two leg bones and a mechanical knee joint being glued and screwed to these bones in its place. Mrs. Miller said, "I didn't know who was more frightened those three days after the hospital visit and before the surgery, me or my mother!" Ms. Miller was not only going to have to take care of her mother but also her 89-year-old father, replacing her mother who usually did all the many things he needed help with. She slept at their house and cared for them around the clock for six weeks. Boy, was she ready for a vacation come August, and, boy, did she get one!

Ms. Miller flew with a friend to Germany and there began an 18-day trip to Austria and then Greece. They rented a car and drove to Austria. Even the drive was an adventure. Ms. Miller's friend was born in Germany and living in the United States missed driving a stick-shift, so she rented a car with a manual transmission and proceeded to scare Ms. Miller half to death by driving as fast as she could up and down the narrow mountain roads in the Alps. Another clash of cultures they had was that Ms.

Miller wanted to go on the Sound of Music tour. Ms. Miller's friend thought this was a silly thing to do, going to see all the beautiful locations in which the film was shot, like the mountain pasture where Maria spins around at the beginning of the film and the ruined church where the Von Trapp family avoided capture by the Nazi's at the end of the film. Here Ms. Miller took control, as she hadn't been able to in the car, and insisted they go, saying her friend just didn't understand how cool the tour was because she was German, it was an American thing! So they went on that tour, and Ms. Miller says she will always remember the beauty of all she saw.

They flew to Greece, so no more crazy driving, but way too much walking once she got there. They walked miles and miles each day seeing all the famous sights. Ms. Miller was proud of herself for being so athletic! She knew she would have the beautiful Aegean with its brilliant blue, clear, water to swimming at the end of each long day. So this vacation was both stimulating and relaxing, a perfect way to wind down after the hard work of caring for her parents.

Ms. Miller was definitely ready to start the new school year, with pride in her heart for doing a good job taking care of her family and with wonderful memories from her vacation to give her the energy she needs to take on her job of teaching Spanish here at West!