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**To:** "Jerri & Bill Savuto" <[savuto@maf.or.ke](mailto:savuto@maf.or.ke)>

**Subject:** Savuto - For His Birthday Let's Make a Difference

27 December 2009

Dearest Friends and Family,

Somehow not only for Christmas  
But all the long year through,  
The joy that you give to others  
Is the joy that comes back to you.  
And the more you spend in blessing  
The poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart's possessing returns to make you glad.  
*John Greenleaf Whittier*

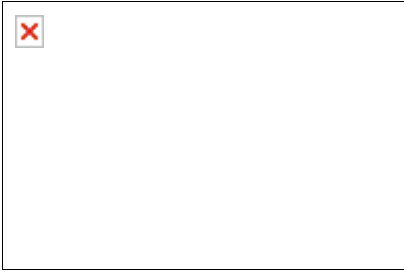
The days since Thanksgiving have flown by with such speed I am a bit dizzy. We have had a great time visiting our supporting churches in New Mexico. We have traveled 12,500+ miles (since arriving in the US) and this past Sunday visited our 73<sup>rd</sup> church. Everyone has been so kind and caring, so generous and loving and we are thankful beyond words.

We had such a wonderful family time at my nephew, Nikolas', wedding. The wedding was so creative and beautiful, we will long remember it. The father of the groom, my brother Larry, was the photographer. The great uncle of the groom, Larry Heacock, was the preacher who married the couple and our son-in-law, Brent, sang. The decorations were all created by the bride's family and were incredible. It was a great family affair!

The Tuesday after Thanksgiving my mom, sister and I were shopping when mom tripped over a box of Christmas boxes in the aisle. We took her to the Emergency Room as she was complaining of pain in her wrist, chest, and shoulder. In the ER the doctors were concerned about her complaints of crushing pain in her chest and pain in her left shoulder. She thus spent about 16 hours in the hospital for cardiac enzymes to be done. A heart attack was ruled out. She also had numerous x-rays, c-scan, and ECG. They found a cracked and floating bone in her right wrist and she was put in a brace and given an appointment with an orthopedist 16 days later. Though her wrist hurt she complained (though little as my mom does not complain) of pain in her right side where she had severe bruising, her right shoulder and particularly the outer portion of her right hand. She missed going with us to three of our churches, St. John's UMC in Santa Fe, St. John's UMC in Albuquerque and FUMC in Grants. The Sunday after her fall she began traveling with us to numerous churches in Albuquerque and then to Ruidoso, Roswell, Gallup and White Rock, NM. We were to speak at FUMC in Cloudcroft, NM on Wednesday 9 December but the day

before they had incredible winds that knocked out the town's transformer plus 28 inches of snow. Needless to say, they canceled our presentation.

On Thursday, 17 December mom went for her appointment with the orthopedist in Santa Fe and they x-rayed her right hand again and found she had broken her 5<sup>th</sup> metacarpal bone and she was put in a festive red cast from her fingers to her elbow which greatly restricts her ability to care for herself. She is very independent at 91 and has always helped others rather than being helped, so this is difficult time but like always she is amazing in her ability to adjust and deal with the situations of her life.



The family at Nikolas and Karen Brock's wedding



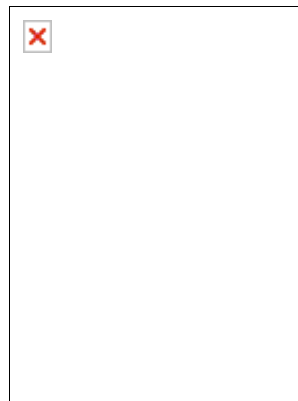
Mom with her red cast in front of the Christmas tree

We are presently at my sister's home in the Jemez Mountains. Bill and I have both been here for one week today. Last Tuesday Corrie, Brent, Lily and Ethan arrived so Bill drove me into Los Alamos where I spent the day playing with Lily and Ethan. We built a snowman, played chase, and played Crazy Eights, War and Go Fish. It snowed most of the day and we already had 6 – 8 inches of snow. While I played with Lily and Ethan, Bill went skiing with our son-in-law, Brent and our great niece, Kayci and great nephew, Derek.

Thursday and Friday most of the family came to Larry and Jeannie's home to celebrate Christmas eve and Christmas day. On Christmas day the younger ones went sledding at a near-by hilly area. Yesterday Lily and Ethan went skiing for the first time with their mom and dad and cousins, Kayci and Derek. Bill and I were there in the afternoon to help a bit and take pictures. What a joy it was to watch everyone skiing or snow-boarding and oh my goodness how beautiful – the white slopes, snow laden huge pine trees, and family having such fun.



(Rt. – Lt.) Ethan and his mom, Kayci, Derek and Lily skiing



Lily and Ethan Christmas Eve

It is always a wondrous gift to be with family on Christmas eve and Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ together. Our family had a wonderful candle light service with songs and scripture, a message from Larry and a song from Brent. I was given the opportunity to read aloud a new book I was given by Rev. Kim Kinsey, "14 Cows for America". It is the true story of a Maasai village and their incredible gift of 14 cows to the USA after 9/11. In 2000 Kenya had a drought that killed hundreds of Maasai cattle. As you may know, cattle are the Maasai's wealth, their lives. Kimeli, a young Maasai who is studying in the USA to become a doctor, comes home to his village with the sad news about what has happened in the United States of America. "Buildings so tall they can touch the sky? Fires so hot they can melt iron? Smoke and dust so thick they can block out the sun? ..... More than three thousand souls are lost." The Maasai "are fierce when provoked, but easily moved to kindness when they hear of suffering or injustice." First Kimeli asked the elders if he could give the gift of his one cow. The answer was "Yes" and "When he offered his cow for blessing, others offered up their own precious cows." As Kimeli shares, "We were helping to heal a people far away."

"These sacred healing cows can never be slaughtered. They remain in our care in Kenya, under the guidance of the revered elder Mzee Ole-Yiampoi. The original fourteen have calved and the herd now

numbers over thirty-five. They continue to be a symbol of hope from the Maasai to their brothers and sisters in America. The Maasai wish is that every time Americans hear this simple story of fourteen cows, they will find a measure of comfort and peace.”

The last two lines of the book read, “The elders chant a blessing in Maa as the Maasai people of Kenya present fourteen cows for America. **Because there is no nation so powerful it cannot be wounded, nor a people so small they cannot offer mighty comfort.**”

The book exemplifies the spirit of Christmas so well. People who have very little but always enough to give others comfort, love and stand beside them in sorrow, grief and loss.

Somehow in this world today things seem so overwhelming, the troubles so huge we cannot begin to help or even see a way to make the slightest difference. However, our Christmas gift, Jesus Christ, and His love for us and our love for others can make a difference every day. Your bit of love plus my bit of love plus their bit of love is far more powerful than we can ever imagine. Nothing is impossible, nothing is too hard or too much for God. DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED, WORRIED, UPSET OR AFRAID. Have hope: LOVE your family, your friends and neighbors, your enemies and together we can make a difference and in making the difference for one another we will create a new world for ourselves. We can all make a difference for no one is “so small they cannot offer mighty comfort.”

May you and I with the power and love of Jesus Christ make a difference in 2010 that will bring a mighty comfort to a needy world.

Together we can make a difference,

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“The elders chant a blessing in Maa as the Maasai people of Kenya present fourteen cows for America. Because there is no nation so powerful it cannot be wounded, nor a people so small they cannot offer mighty comfort.” Carmen Agra Deedy, "14 Cows for America"