
From: Jerri and Bill Savuto [mailto:savuto@maf.or.ke]
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2009 8:46 PM
To: Jerri & Bill Savuto
Subject: Savuto: Leaving Home to Come Home

8 September 2009

Dear Friends and Family,

“Where we love is home, home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts.” Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

I am so thankful that home is not a place, a structure, or an address but people, both family and friends, who we love and who love us. People we can laugh and cry with as we journey down the paths we have chosen. People who love and pray for us daily and who we reconnect to as though we saw them daily even when we have been apart for years. People with whom we make memories: happy and sad, wondrous and woeful but always the memories that keep us moving in the right direction, away from ourselves toward God.

We certainly have more than one home, more than one place where love sustains us, encourages us, and gives us the strength to face all that comes each day. We are blessed to have many homes here and there! We miss our home in Maua and those people with whom we share our lives. At the same time, we are very thankful to be in McKinney, Texas with our daughter and family, Corrie, Brent, Lily and Ethan, to talk daily to my mom in Santa Fe, NM and to have so many opportunities to visit new and old friends in our supporting churches. We have had such a wonderful time since arriving home.

Our first Sunday morning, about 40 hours after arriving, we spent with our home church, Plymouth Park UMC in Irving, TX. Monday through the next Saturday was vacation time spent with our daughter and family as the next Monday, Lily, our 6 year old grand daughter, started first grade. The next week we had medical examinations of some type daily. Generally we are extremely healthy. Bill had a keratoacanthoma on his right wrist. Keratoacanthoma can be a benign tumor or a type of cancer that looks much like an erupting volcano. Last week it was cut off to send for a biopsy. Last week Bill was called and told that it was cancer and he would need to have MOH surgery this month. We are so thankful to be in a place that can provide the care needed. We feel overwhelmed at God's goodness and care of us.

Leaving Maua was challenging and difficult. Things are very hard right now in Maua and Kenya due to the continued drought, shortage of food and little water in the Mboone River. It was announced that electricity would be rationed and Maua would not have electricity on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We never have it on Mondays due to maintenance work so that means that the hospital will have to run their generator 3 days a week. We have been through this before and the electricity bill stays the same or increases during this time and we must pay for the petrol for the generator and keep it maintained. With that additional financial burden and an increased number of patients unable to pay their hospital bill, Maua Methodist Hospital is struggling. In August the hospital had to pay the staff about 8 days late. They are having difficulty paying for the drugs we need and thus when a drug order is made it cannot be sent until a check is mailed and received.

The number of children that are being admitted to our pediatric ward with malnutrition, starvation and protein starvation continues to increase. Like Ayub, a 4 year old who was admitted with severe PEM (Protein Malnutrition). This causes severe swelling of the arms, legs and abdomen. Ayub is so swollen he cannot turn himself or sit up. He was eating when we left but the swelling was still great causing large, weeping sores on his legs. He was too weak to cry and made a quiet grunting sound.



Ayub's swollen feet and legs.

Thus to come home to the land of "plenty" is almost shocking. If one grocery store could be "beamed" to Maua it could make a huge difference because every grocery store has so much food, so much variety, so many decisions and choices and just so much! It seems impossible that people could be starving in Kenya while so many people are dieting in the USA. More than enough is not better than enough and I believe there is enough for all to eat if only the ones who have more than enough were willing to have enough!

Please continue to pray for Maua and the surrounding area. They need a good rainy season (which we pray will start around Oct. 15th.) They need food – the entire nation needs food with the 6 million people at risk of starvation or starving right now. Our area is not as badly affected as some but there are so many hungry and starving in and around Maua.

I turned over my work at the hospital to the members of my Hospital Quality Improvement Team (HQIT). The day before we left I had a HQIT meeting and at the end of the meeting one of the members shared that everyone felt comfortable with their part of my work and that all of them were going to "make me proud". Each member added something and when I left I felt completely at peace and so grateful to them for their commitment to the quality program at Maua Methodist Hospital and their support of me. I am confident that those doing the different parts of my job will do a **great** job.

Please forgive my delay in writing and sending this email. Family time is so precious and we have missed so many things we are trying to catch up. We are able to receive email at our Kenya email address: savuto@maf.or.ke

We have already been to Oklahoma and will be doing the northern part of the Texas Conference next week. The end of this month we go to the Houston area. We are doing North Texas and Central Texas supporting churches as we stay with our daughter in McKinney, TX. If you are interested in our schedule, it is posted on our web-site and you can reach it **by going to** http://docs.google.com/View?id=ddpf4jx2_168ptjc39g7 **or by going to the Savuto home page** <http://sites.google.com/site/specialorg/savuto> **and clicking on "here** <http://docs.google.com/View?id=ddpf4jx2_168ptjc39g7> **in the first paragraph.**

We are so thankful for your love, support and caring.

In His grip,

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