

22 January 2012

Dear Friends and Family,

"Love is missing someone whenever you're apart, but somehow feeling warm inside because you're close in heart." ~Kay Knudsen

We are presently in the Houston area. We have had such a positive time in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas Conference (Houston area). We believe this is the best transition we could possibly have for retirement. Speaking at least once daily about the people and places we love so much in Maua and Kenya allows us to slowly let go. I am still so emotional I cry speaking, thinking and writing. We are so grateful for our time there, for the wonderful people who have replaced us and are doing such a fantastic job and for the opportunity to be home, with family and so many friends. We will always have an invisible but very real bond that will connect to us to Maua Methodist Hospital, Maua and so many people we love, have worked with and for and who are a part of our lives no matter where we call home. That same bond connects us with hundreds of mission work team members and friends around the country and world. God's love binds all of us together.

We had a wonderful Christmas holiday with my sister, Jeannie, and brother-in-law, Larry, in the Jemez Mountains with Corrie, Brent, Lily and Ethan, and our niece and her family, Ronda, Bob and Kayci. There was snow and sunshine and absolute breath-taking beauty. I greatly missed my mother and realized how much she did to make Christmas extra special. She was such an important and integral part of Christmas it was hard to fit all the pieces together. The Good News was still proclaimed as we celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ and remembered mother during our most sacred times.

We spent time with Bill's brother, Mike, and his family, Mary, Shawn and Mikayla, in Oklahoma City. It is sheer joy to be with family! We then headed south and will be 'on the road again' for the next 5 months.

While spending time with Corrie, her kitchen trash can broke. That began a search to find a tall kitchen trash can with foot pedal, that was finger print resistant, and closed slowly. There are many trash cans out there these days - automatic opening trash cans that sense motion. (We saw one in the store and one of our hostesses had one which was fascinating!!) I looked on the internet and found a plethora - red, black, chartreuse, stainless steel, brushed stainless steel, retro, rectangle, round, butterfly lid, etc..... What was most amazing to me was many of those kitchen trash cans cost more than it would cost for a child to have one week of hospital care at Maua Methodist Hospital (\$180). A trash can for your garbage that costs more than saving the life of a critically ill child. Okay, so what's my point!? Well, if you have to buy or have recently bought a kitchen trash can, I would like you to send an equal amount to the Advance Special: Maua Methodist Hospital Service Fund #09613A. That way any time you throw away trash you can think of the child who you saved or helped to save and throwing away trash will take on new meaning!!

A few days ago I was reading the Houston Chronicle. One of the articles I read was a critical review of a new movie. I have not seen the movie so I am not advocating it but I want to share part of the review with you.

"Extremely Loud and Incredible Close" is a 9/11 story told from a unique point of view..... Rather, it's about the aftermath of trauma, what people have to live with and get over, and all things they can never get over. It deals with something important but *intrinsically boring*, people going through life in low-grade fever of grief, loss and sadness."

Suddenly I understood all those emails I got from some of you that said something like this, "I don't write you as my life is so boring, not like yours." Real life is never boring. I imagine most of the people that wrote me were involved in their church and community helping others including aging parents, dealing with sickness and death, hardships and sorrows along with time with grandchildren, celebrating birthdays, graduations, births and weddings. Life with its ups and downs and the aftermaths of tragedies, small and large. I believe God is most present in our very ordinary, intrinsically boring days when we wake up and choose to love our mate, family members, friends, co-workers and enemies, go to work and do the best job we can even when no one notices or seems to care unless we make a mistake, smile when we are tired, do the dishes for the 3,867,982,461 time and know they will be dirty again before I finish those piled in the sink. Surely none of us want to live a "Mission Impossible" life where no human being could possibly do those ridiculous stunts without killing ourselves and many others. I don't want to be like James Bond but Mother Teresa and caring for the least of these is intrinsically boring. What makes it exceptional is that what we do for the least of these we are doing for Jesus Christ also. No, most of us are not saving the world from nuclear destruction but living an ordinary life. A life with its ups and downs, joys and sorrows, health and sickness and most of all its everyday opportunities to choose love rather than hate, forgiveness rather than revenge, joy rather than anger, peace rather than violence. It's a chance to see God at work all around us and rejoice in His presence. It's an occasion to help those who "are going through life in low-grade fever of grief, loss and sadness". The critics may call our lives "intrinsically boring" but that is where the miraculous happens. With God nothing is impossible and one day what is important might even be seen as stimulating, motivating and breathtaking but until then have a joyful, intrinsically boring day and remember you are beloved.

We talked to Stanley Gitari this week and received his incredible newsletter. If you aren't on his mailing list write him at community@mckmauahospital.org and ask him to add you to his list. I'd going to add a paragraph from his email about the kitchen.

****The kitchen is being roofed this week, we are very grateful to all those who have donated kindly and generously towards the kitchen project in memory of Winfred Brock, we hope it will be complete in the next few months. Thanks Sr. Jerri and Bill for giving us this honor.**

*Hospital kitchen in progress, dedicated** **to the memory of Winifred Brock
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Thanks to all of you who donated to the kitchen. We are so excited to see the progress and so grateful that there will be a new kitchen for preparation of patient meals. God's goodness never fails!

May 2012 bring you ever closer to Jesus Christ. We hope our paths cross this year - it is wonderful to be seeing so many old friends and making many new friends. Thank you for your prayers. They remain your most important gift to us and help us daily as we travel and share.

In His grip,

Jerri and Bill Savuto

9408 Harrell Drive

McKinney, TX 75070

972-838-3920/972-335-7163

"For everything you have missed, you have gained something else, and for everything you gain, you lose something else." Ralph Waldo Emerson