

From: [savuto@maf.or.ke](mailto:savuto@maf.or.ke)

To: [savuto@maf.or.ke](mailto:savuto@maf.or.ke)

Sent: 9/25/2011 9:18:50 A.M. Central Daylight Time

Subj: Savuto: Last Team, Other Lasts and Trees (99)

25 September 2011

Dearest Friends and Family,

"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." [Martin Luther](#)

Our last team left yesterday morning. The team, 9 members from St. Stephen's UMC and 1 member from Christ UMC in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was led by Grant Claycomb. Like all our teams they were a gift. They painted, worked in the staff flats, built an AIDS Orphan's home and did a Bush Clinic. Three of them worked in the hospital some of the time with our physiotherapist, in the Operating Room and Surgical Ward and in our Out-Patient Department. Christmas happens with every team as they bring such valuable and useful medical supplies and as we unpack those supplies we can hardly contain our joy and thankfulness. This year each team was extra special and this last team was a terrific way to end our time with teams at MMH.



Last team from Albuquerque, NM



Team with the family for which the house was built

I was able to join the team doing their Bush Clinic and what an incredible, humbling experience that was. We went to the village of Kalimbine and to three schools in the Kangeta area to give out medication to de-worm the children. We de-wormed about 3050 children and saw 350 children, youth, adults and seniors in the free clinic. It was a great learning experience and reminder of the poverty which surrounds us in all directions and is so very close. Kalimbine is about 15 miles from Maua Methodist Hospital but in a much lower, drier and poorer area.



Two of my favorite clients we served



The School where the free clinic was held

When the hospital does Bush Clinics, we go out from the hospital and provide a free clinic to a very poor area. We often include de-worming children at the near-by schools. Information goes out to the area that the hospital will be there on a certain date and will see anyone that is sick and give medications and provide care as a free service to their community.

In the three schools we visited, many of the classrooms were made of mabati (corrugated metal) or wood with dirt floors. Generally there were 30 – 50 children per class room. The children were so precious as they took their dawa (1 tablet) and chewed it. If you are a teacher and feel like things are just too terrible at your school, look at the following pictures as I know they will give you great hope and thanksgiving for ALL you have!



A typical classroom with mabati room dividers



5 children to a long desk



Another classroom with wood dividers between classrooms



An opening to let in light as there are no windows

One of the classrooms had a discovery table. When I saw it I got very excited. On it were some of the following with signs in English giving the name of the item and the actual item: onion, garlic, tomato, lemon, orange, and banana.



Discovery table with signs and food items



2 tiny shelters for the elderly of the family

Reegan Kaberia took some of us for a walk down a long dusty road to see the area. There were some mashamba (farms) that were being dug getting ready for planting and the rainy season. There was lots of dry, light brown dirt and with the wind, so much dust. Three little buildings provided the shopping mall for the area. On our way back to the school and clinic we saw two very small structures and when I asked Reegan if people lived there he answered, "Those were for the old people to live in." I stood staring at the two little houses and thinking how blessed Bill and I will be to live with our daughter, Corrie, and her family in a lovely home in McKinney, TX. We are blessed beyond all imaginings!

One job that Bill has been busy doing, quietly, behind the scenes, though with permission, is planting trees. Since 1998 when we arrived in Maua, the number of trees that have been cut down - generally for fire wood as 95% of the people, including the hospital, cook over wood - has been very substantial.

Recently an article in "The Nation", Kenya's #1 newspaper, stated that each year about 600 trees are planted to reforest our area but the forest land that has been destroyed. Today Bill went and counted the number of trees that he has planted that have survived – 1280 trees.



Some of the trees planted at the School of Nursing



Trees, trees and more trees

All the trees he has planted are either indigenous, forest trees from this area, or trees recommended to reforest our area from other nations in Africa. They include the following trees: Meru Oak, Nandi Flame, Mweria, Muringa, Makoi, Acrocarpus, Markamia, Gravellea, Umbrella tree, Podocarpus, Camphor, Jacaranda, pine trees (we don't know the name) and one Mutete. He bought the trees from the forestry department and there are few places on the compound that you cannot see some of the trees growing. He started his tree planting in 2007 and has planted trees every year since then.



Trees planted down by the mortuary



Trees planted by our drainage area

We are experiencing many "lasts". This past Wednesday I attended my last Hospital Management Team meeting. A few weeks ago I led my last Hospital Quality Self-Assessment and gave the awards for the last time to the winning units. Bill chaired his last Information Technology meeting last week. Our last work team has come and gone and we attended our last AIDS Orphan's house dedication. Some lasts we are thankful for, some we already miss. Some lasts bring smiles and some bring tears. It is a struggle to stay in the "present" and enjoy every 'last', every minute, every opportunity we now have with thanksgiving and joy. We are so grateful to God, the General Board of Global Ministries and all our supporting churches for the past 10 years in Maua and the last 20+ years in mission work. There could not be a greater gift we could ever receive. The people we have served have taught us so much about God, His love and mercy, how very big, and good and amazing He is and His grace has been sufficient for every trial, every temptation, every dark night and deep hole. Though we do not have any idea what our future holds, we are confident and trust God that He has a plan and He will allow us to continue to work in His vineyard and in our own lives to bring glory to Him. Staying and living in the present, clinging to God every minute, enjoying the beauty of the world around us, and feeling deeply the pain and suffering of those who are sick, hungry, lonely, abused, unemployed and oppressed is our prayer for the following two months. There is great poverty, starvation, sickness and sorrow in and around Maua today. In the midst of that there is great trust, hope, faith, joy and obedience to God. May each of us choose blessings rather than curses for others and ourselves, choose life rather than death.

"And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forevermore. Amen"

Clinging tightly to God,

Jerri & Bill Savuto  
Maua Methodist Hospital  
P.O. Box 63 -- 60600  
Maua, Igembe South  
Kenya, East Africa  
0728451643

"If Jesus Christ died and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." C. T. Studd