

November 2015 Newsletter from Ken & Melli Johnson

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"Give thanks no matter what happens." —St. Paul

A dear friend encouraged me over the phone recently to find something special to thank God for every day. To take a moment of WOW reflection and thanksgiving, simply because something happens every single day that stands out as extraordinary—a gift from *"He Who is Most Creative at Surprises."* So I've been doing that.

But what if God's daily dose of wonderful is an extraordinary event of a different sort? I'm reflecting on a year ago, Veteran's Day, November 11th, when my Dad met the Lord in Heaven. What a "WOW" moment for him! But what an "Oh, No!" moment for me and all my family. Yet I am giving thanks that Daddy was such a blessing every day of all my life.

Now the kids and I are counting the days until the end of November when Ken brings Cindy, James, and Danny from Africa to Florida to join the upcoming Christmas hoopla here. Our family has adjusted to school buses, homework, braces, backyard soccer, and frequent phone calls across the ocean juggling a 7-hour time difference. We eagerly anticipate stored-up hugs, Ken's outrageous puns, and big-family laughter in jam-packed days. Thank God for family—even the extra laundry, dishes to wash and boisterous noise, which will compound the trains whooshing by hooting and howling throughout the night-- something we don't hear in Burundi.

Speaking of Burundi, life continues there, kind of holding its breath. Thank you for praying for the missionaries who keep things going, *"not just somehow, but victoriously!"* The Rainbow Centre is open for daycare children, but many Twizere foster moms have moved out of the city, taking the children up into the hill country where things are quieter, safer, and food is more accessible. Thank you for praying for Ken. We've got him scheduled for a physical when he arrives.

As for me, what do I do? Same as you. Live, pray hard, love the children, and be thankful.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Ken and Melli, and Kids



Daddy and me taking a stroll in '92.

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Angel, Andy and Christopher celebrating a "Pirates and Princess" day at school to promote reading.



Angel looked at Sarah's new painting and said, "I want to be a "drawlister" like Sarah."