

Rogs' Road

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This issue:



BUTTONED UP
REST STOP
THE DR'S.
EYE SEE YOU
THE SHORT WAY HOME
OPEN WIDE
LET'S BE FRANK
SPEEDY DELIVERY
WELL DONE
COLLEGE KIDS

BUTTONED UP

You probably thought we were going to say something about the cold weather here in WNY. We could but we won't...just yet.

When we left The Gambia we left the ministry and the house we were renting in good shape for our furlough. It took us a while to get all our stuff over to the camp site and we did without one piece lost or broken. We thank God for the protection and all the help we received from Christian and our watchman in moving the heavy stuff. Our friend David helped in mothballing the motorcycles and yes, we did put moth balls all around to help keep the little mice and hopefully the mildew away while our belongings are in the building. We left the keys for the landlord and thanked him for the nice house we had to rent for the past seven years. It was not easy to leave a neighborhood we love but, we know He has more for us to do elsewhere.

The man who now is the owner of our dog is a very happy man. He called the next day and said thank you for my new best friend. It helped us both to see that the dog who gave us joy will give joy to someone else. We know the real joy giver could give him so much more. When we return maybe we could button up that aspect in his life too.

REST STOP

We thought we'd try to get use to all the road travel we will be doing in the USA by taking a little road trip before hand.

We stayed in a lovely place not far from the airport in Dakar for three days. It was nice to sit by the pool and read a book or take a nap. The only hard part was deciding on what to have for dinner. The actual road trip was set up by a Pastor who we minister with in Wellingara. He had two boys (one of them who works for the Gambia Port Authority) collect us bright and early at 5:30 am. In a borrowed truck we headed off in the early darkness and got on the first ferry. Guess it is who you know to get on the ferry when there is a line already. After a few check points and a flat tire we arrived at our rest stop nine hours later. After all that we did have a nice rest before heading to the US.

THE SHORT WAY HOME

The usual way to get from The Gambia for most of us is to take a flight to Brussels then on to Newark, NJ. This can take up to 36 hours with all the waiting and traveling. Someone suggested just fly out of Dakar! We check out all we had to do to get us there and even though the flight left at two am, it was a nice smooth eight hour ride. We really liked arriving nice and fresh and not worn out from long travel.

The flight was with South Africa Airways and they did a nice job of taking care of us. When taking off the pilot said they needed to check the automation of an unassisted take off so there would be a little more power used than usual. The landing in New York was a bit hard though, they then said it was an automated landing as well and they will adjust for a smoother landing next time. YIKES!!! Whatever the technology, it is nice to have a shorter way home.

OPEN WIDE

Most people hear that out of their dentist. We however had the arms of our family members open wide as they could to welcome us back to the USA! It was neat because we had originally scheduled to arrive in Buffalo, NY around 3:40 pm but, when we got into JFK so early Jet Blue got us on an earlier flight and we were the ones waiting for our family to show up. As we waited we got to freshen up and talk to a lot of interesting people. We rarely let a chance go by without us telling them about our work in Africa. They usually say how wonderful but, they could never do that or how can you live like that!? We just smile and tell them how much we love serving a Lord who has His arms open wide for us all the time. We do serve a loving God !!

SPEEDY DELIVERY

The niceties of being back in The USA is the delivery of just about anything right to your door step. At the house we are staying at (Dale/Vicki Zimmerman) they have wireless internet. Oh, how nice it is to have such a speedy delivery of emails and web sites. With this luxury we will do our best to keep you informed as speedy as we can.

THE DR.'S

Yes, there is a TV show with that title but, that's not what this article is about. Most of you know when furlough begins so does the Dr. appointments. Making them was a project in itself so we did not waste fuel going back and forth. First off to bat was Sandy with the regular check up. She faired pretty good considering all that she was going through. Next was Pauly Wally and he thought it would be easy in and easy out. He got read the riot act because his blood pressure was high. He retorted all the diet and exercising was supposed to have keep it at bay. The Dr. said that can help but, your family history shows there is need for some meds to lower it. We shall see after two months time.

When we got all our results back we compared the print outs. We matched up on most except Sandy could not figure out why her cholesterol was toward the high side. Her next Dr. appointment was with the OB/GYN. She questioned him on it and he replied food; diet; exercise. Her answer, "I don't eat red meat; I drink soy milk; and I'm within my weight range."

Maybe it has to do with the stress of what she's been through in the last few months. Her CA-125 showed that her level was now getting to a stage where an operation could take care of this uterine problem. A scheduled surgery was all set until she developed three blood clots behind her right knee. Oh, great!! Are we going to be able to fly?? Well we flew and the OB/GYN will not go ahead until she is checked out with a hematologist. As we tried to make that appointment asap the soonest was eight weeks away. No way man!! A call back to the OB/GYN and he got it scheduled on May 1st. Whew!! We really would like to have all this, including the surgery, done soon so we can get ready for all the road travel and speaking engagements.

Dr.'s ya gotta love 'em and we are glad they are here to help us so we can serve Him there.

LET'S BE FRANK

You just never know who you will meet. While Dale is kept in ICU (see next article) there is a man who, with very dark skin, wanders around the floor keeping himself busy doing this and that. Every time we were there visiting Dale so was this man doing his work. We would say "you here again?" or "don't you ever go home?". He introduced himself as Frank and right away we picked up on the out of normal US accent. We asked where he was from and found he is a Ghanaian working in the US to help his family back home. We then told him where we minister and became fast friends. Maybe we'll get to share some favorite foods together as well as what The Lord is doing in our lives. We are very frank about it!!

EYE SEE YOU

Praise God that Dale (Sandy's brother) can say I see you. We had just headed back to Sandy's parents home after our lovely Dr. visits when we received a call that Dale was being taken to a nearby hospital. We really didn't think too much of it because maybe it was a reaction to a major flu bug going around. We made it to the parent's house and got a call to come back, he is now going for a CAT scan. Not good! We knew there had to be more. When we arrived in Kenmore two hours later the Dr.'s had taken him to surgery and removed a section of his skull, placed that in his abdomen to relive the swelling that the bleed had cause in his brain. Once he was moved into ICU we got to see him. Yes, all wired up to about a bazillion monitors. As each day passed he had more of the tubes and wires removed. We praise God for the excellent medical staff and the prayers that were lifted on his behalf. Now when we see him he always has to check his vision by holding a hand over each eye and telling us how he sees us. Thank God for how He sees us too!

COLLEGE KIDS

The other day we visited our niece who attends a Bible college not far from where we are staying. We met with the Chaplin for about an hour explaining the work we do and he said he was familiar with CEF and all that we do. Our main reason for meeting him was to discuss the possibility of hosting a college team. We said how we could help facilitate those that might want to serve in a medical capacity by hooking them up with one of the other agencies that we are friends with. We then showed him a 5 min video of our work and he kept it to use as a promo tool for the new school season. After we had time to look around the campus, grab a cup of coffee and hangout with our niece's friends. One asked so many questions about missionary life it kinda blew us away having so great an interest. You can tell that God was working in this young man's heart. We answered as best we could and as we left we felt that there are college kids who are totally sold out for God. How cool is that?!?

WELL DONE

I, Paul, like my meat medium well, other people like theirs differently. We went to a banquet for a well project in Sierra Leone and yes, they served roast beef. That is not why we went. We thought that since we are close neighbors to this country we wanted to see what they were doing there with a well project. As it turned out they did more than just dig a better well, they are going to rebuild a hospital that was once a major center for treatment but left to ruin because of the war. What we saw and heard made sense to us because we know what it is like to try and get stuff done in a third world country. It takes a lot more patience and grace. I guess that's why we love doing the work we do because when it's all said and done and we are standing before God I want to hear Him say "well done."