

June 24, 2010

It has been a very long time since I have written and there have been a number of reasons for the delay. I have had some flare ups with my MS that have caused me to have very little energy. Zanzibar was without electricity from December 10 until March 09 and it was an incredible struggle to accomplish anything during that time. Our NGO work has also suffered as we have run out of money and the guys have had to try to find some work to feed themselves and their families. But now the power is back on, I am working very hard to pace myself and get enough rest and we are still moving forward with the Kendwa water project.

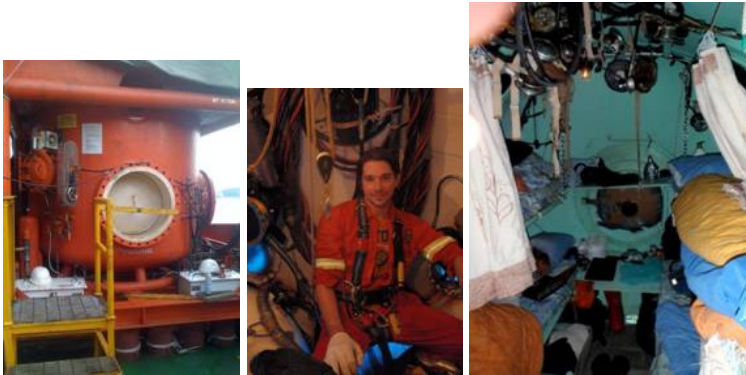
But I still have lots of news to tell you about since I last wrote and I'm going to start with news of my two boys:

Introducing Molly Eden Sutton



The most important event that occurred was the birth of my first grandchild, Molly Eden Sutton on January 22, 2010. Keith is my eldest son and Alanna is his wife and the proud mother of Molly. Alanna is an amazing woman and as you can see – Molly is beautiful and healthy. This little girl is so loved and happy and I am honored to be her grandmother. I am called Bibi Molly here in Zanzibar – the grandmother of Molly. Keith and Alanna live in San Francisco - Keith is a psychologist while Alanna works in her family business as a land developer. I am not able to visit them at this time but thank goodness for Skype – Keith skypes me often with his webcam so that I can watch him feed Molly and see her smile and be a happy baby. I'm looking forward to the day when I can hold her.

JD Sutton diving in the Gulf of Malaysia



My youngest son, JD lives in Chiang Mai Thailand and is a deep sea diver working on oil pipelines. He took some wonderful photos in Chiang Mai during the recent unrest and is very grateful that the situation there has calmed down. He is also an avid dirt biker – he rides up in the mountains towards Burma. The views are gorgeous and he thoroughly enjoys himself but it seems that the dirt biking is more dangerous than the diving. He has had stitches in one arm and thought he broke his wrist and everyday is a new adventure. He is now in the Gulf of Malaysia where he has been living inside the orange bell for approximately 25 to 30 days. Can you imagine living in that small structure? You can see on the right that there are 6 very cramped beds. They go down 70 meters to work and the work is quite dangerous but JD loves it!!! He has to stay in the bell even when it is up on the ship between dives because it's a pressurized chamber. What is amazing is that he has internet access and can skype me and others while he's in the chamber. Both he and Keith are on Facebook and I find it a great way to keep tabs on my boys and also to be able to use their wonderful photos.

Bumrungrad, Bangkok shopping and Mt Kilimanjaro



Here is my annual photo of the lobby at Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok. This was my third year at that wonderful hospital and I was able to see all of my favorite doctors. I love the efficiency of the hospital – everything is housed in four buildings that are connected and each doctor has a computer with all of my data entered so I don't have to carry around my files and reports. I had my MRIS done and am grateful that there were no new lesions but I have had some progression on my left side and that is unsettling. I do not like having MS and I do not like having limitations but I do have it - so I have to do the best I can to work with it. The center photo is one of the Bangkok shopping malls – life revolves around the malls and you can literally find anything that you want in them. On the right is my annual photo of Mount Kilimanjaro on my flight home. It always feels so good to pass by it and know that soon I will be arriving back home in Zanzibar where my heart belongs.

Participate Now! delivers water during the power outage



For those of you who donated specifically to help during the blackout I want to tell you that many people benefited from your generous donations. While I was in Bangkok the NGO took approximately \$800.00 out of the bank account and delivered water to an area of Zanzibar that wasn't receiving any at all. The power outage that lasted from December 2009 to March 2010 was horrific. People ran generators day and night if they had the money to do so to keep their businesses operating. The government did the best it could to deliver water to all of the areas of Zanzibar but many places received very little water on a sporadic basis. The guys interviewed a lot of people and chose an area that was lacking in clean water – many of the people were getting water from a contaminated pond nearby. They met with the sheha (mayor) of the village and with the Ministry of Water people and paid to have trucks of water brought in once a week for four weeks. This certainly was not sustainable but at least it was something – we all felt so incredibly helpless during this time. As you can see they had a Participate Now! sign made to put on the trucks and Kadir in the center is training people how to purify water in plastic bottles using sunlight. I was told that they worked very well together as a team and that is wonderful news.

Sauti za Busara carries on despite the lack of electricity



Sauti za Busara which is the best musical festival in East Africa continued on during the blackout and was even more wonderful than the previous year. At one point the generator had problems which was so typical of how we had been living for a few months by that time. People scrambled to repair it and the festival went on with lots of great music that was enjoyed by all. I have chosen these three photos because they are friends of mine. Kasia Bielak is an amazing cello player – she practiced every day with a group from the DCMA (Dhow Country Music Academies) and the sound was heavenly. On the right is Bi Kidude who is our most famous taarab singer – she is said to be in her 90's but you would never know it by her energy. Tamalyn Harris is a belly dancer who travels all over the globe dancing, giving lessons and bringing women together to learn from each other and enjoy themselves. If you are interested in learning more about our Sauti za Busara festival please check out their website: <http://www.busaramusic.org>.

Maulidi ya Homu and Alaskan visitors



And of course there was Maulidi ya Homu – even during the blackout. We took a group of professors connected with the University of Alaska to see Maulidi ya Homu perform. Even with no electricity people are incredibly creative and can cope in ways that will often surprise others. January is one of the hottest months in Zanzibar and so it was difficult to get much of anything accomplished due to the lethargy and the frustration. But Maulidi ya Homu borrowed a generator and were able to perform for us and as usual they were breathtaking. Haji in the center is the leader of the group and he has introduced some new choreography that is quite wonderful. After Maulidi ya Homu performed Suleiman facilitated questions and answers between the groups. The professors asked who was the youngest in the group - he is sitting in the center with Haji. Then one of the Maulidi ya Homu guys asked who was the youngest of the Americans! One of the Americans is an artist and he did a few renderings during the performance and all of the performers crowded around him afterwards to admire the wonderful drawings of them.

The continuing saga of the Kendwa Water Project



The saga with the Kendwa water project continues. The villagers were pursuing some local charitable organizations but to no avail. I have had a hard time getting donations but I am not alone – every person I have talked with who depends on fund raising has been having a difficult time. Participate Now! has \$3,000.00 left in their bank account and all of that is going towards the bore hole. The villagers have also raised approximately that amount of money towards the project which is magnificent. We have been working on this project since October 2008 and it looks like we are finally going to accomplish something. Suleiman and some of the others have been getting estimates from various drilling companies and they are comfortable with the one that they have chosen. Suleiman and Kaesser have worked closely with the Ministry of Water to obtain the necessary permits for the village to dig a bore hole. Sadly though, we do not have enough money for the piping, pump and taps that are needed once the bore hole is completed. But the villagers have decided to have faith in Allah that the money will come when it is needed and I agree with them. The entire project was budgeted at approximately \$12,000.00. We have a 5,000 liter water tank that was donated and we are now ready to have the bore hole dug – it will cost around \$6,000.00 which is more than we budgeted. It has been a challenge because the terrain is very

thick coral rock so that a special machine is necessary to drill the well. We found out yesterday that the drilling company's machine has broken and we now have to wait for them to get parts to repair it before we can move forward. Living in Africa is definitely a lesson in patience!! I will keep you updated with photos as to our progress with it.

Wow – it feels good to finally write this email. I apologize as I have not been able to update our website recently but I will get to that very soon.

Participate Now is dedicated to continue working for the welfare of the people of Zanzibar. We are learning every day and have found that it is important to raise the money before we begin the project. We have also found out that it is very expensive to manage a project – it might be easier and less stressful if we find situations where we can distribute goods directly with the donations raised rather than spend money on our travel and management fees. We are all learning and want to do the best that we can.

“Being rich is having enough to share with others”

Please send a check to the CT address below. Or visit our website [Participate Now!](#) to make a donation through PayPal.

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Kathryn

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