

From: Bill Ardill [bill.ardill@sim.org]
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To: Bill Ardill
Subject: [ardill-news] 90

This weekend was a great celebration of my father's 90th birthday. Family and friends gathered from the four corners of the country to honor him and congratulate him on this milestone. As he said, "I have never been 90 before so I am not sure what to say!" On Saturday we met at the beautiful beach house home of Jeremiah Miller and Erin and their sons Spencer and Keagan. Erin's mother Nancy joined the party as well as Jeremiah's parents Sharon and John Miller. My brother Jim and his wife Shari also came with their kids Emily and Luke and Luke's new bride Laura. Brother John from Texas also came with his wife Cindy and their two kids Jenny and Scott and Scott's wife, Amanda and gorgeous new baby daughter Annive. My whole tribe was also in attendance except Marie so there was s a big crowd and lots of laughs and stories.

It was a privilege to honor my father and reminisce about his life looking at the lovely photos books that Erin "refurbished" and the creative scrapbook of cards and tributes from Dad's friends all over the world that Cindy put together. What wonderful memories as we saw Mom and Dad from their days in Ireland to Chicago then to Nigeria and back to the northeastern United States and then to California - 90 years of history. Wow! We then enjoyed getting into the surf and David amazed us by learning to surf in 2 hours and was soon standing up on the surfboard catching the waves. We call him "surfer dude" now.

Sunday was Father's Day and my father's real birthday so most of the gang went out for lunch after church at one of Dad's favorite restaurants. We then showed the out-of-town family Mom and Dad's new place in Escondido. Since we will not get to Texas before we leave for Nigeria this will also be the last time we will see John and his family for 2 years.

We did not invite the family over to our house because it is a mess with our packing boxes for Nigeria and packing into the attic the things we won't be taking to Jos. Dorothy has been busy shopping for clothes, shoes, birthday and Christmas presents for two years for everyone, spices, chocolate chips, toiletries, school supplies and books and on and on - 2 years' supply of "life stuff". We are making good progress but it is a messy process.

Marie has called a few times since she has been at Camp Tapawingo in the beautiful Adirondack mountains in upstate New York. She has been helping get the camps set up for the summer onslaught of girls and helping with the training of new counselors. We are looking forward to seeing her, if only briefly, in a few weeks when we join her at Camp for the Woods.

Heather and Anna got through their final exams after much anguish and are delighted to be liberated from the bondage of homework! They have been driving us all over the place as they practice for the driving license road test next week. Dorothy is taking Anna to Los Angeles tomorrow for a few days to visit the Fashion Institute there. Anna is interested in fashion design so this is part of our preview of colleges in preparation for the college applications in their senior year.

On Friday I will be taking David to a boys camp called Deerfoot which is a neighboring camp of Camp of the Woods. He will be away two weeks and we are praying it is a fun time for him as well as an opportunity to grow spiritually. David also just got his braces off and we are pleased with the results. He had a tooth growing in the wrong place and needed a major readjustment of several teeth to get his upper teeth aligned. He has also done very well in the after school trampoline club. He is excited we are having his 10th birthday party there July 26 - one of the few times we are celebrating his birthday on his actual birthday!

I am enjoying my work at the VA and am beginning to turn over some of my responsibilities to others. In addition to the clinical surgery load I have also been the Director for the 3rd year medical students rotating through surgery and been involved in the Simulation Center for Medical Education. I am so grateful for the wonderful opportunity I have had to work at the VA in San Diego this furlough and will leave with many good memories of kind and helpful staff and colleagues.

Well, that's all for this week. As our family scatters over the next few weeks and then reassembles for our trip to Jos, we would appreciate your prayers for our safety in travel, for patience as we pack, for renters for our house for the next two years, for emotional strength as we say our goodbyes to family and friends and as we prepare for the challenges ahead in Nigeria. Thanks for being a part of our team this year.

In Christ,
Bill Ardill