



RCA Missionary Update

from Justin and Ruth Majawa

Justin Majawa lost his dad when he was seven months old and grew up as an orphan. He worked hard on the farm growing vegetables, which he sold to go to school. In his 11th and 12th grades he was adopted by a pastor who mentored Justin and enabled him to go to college.

In 1996, while in college, Justin created Save Orphans Ministries. Moved deeply by the extreme suffering of so many orphans, Justin resolved to offer them help and hope. His message to the children is that God is the father of the fatherless. Today Save Orphans Ministries serves over 10,000 orphans in their communities through programs related to HIV/AIDS, food security, evangelism, and education support.

Malawi facts:

- Population: 11 million
- Size: 45,745 square miles (slightly smaller than Pennsylvania)
- Major religion: 67 percent Christian, 15 percent Muslim, 9 percent other



MINISTRIES

Community orphan care, education sponsorship, HIV/AIDS, food security, evangelism

LOCATION

Lilongwe, Malawi

PARTNER

Save Orphans Ministries

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Dear Friends,

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Greetings to you. It's almost the end of the year now and all the work teams and interns have returned to the U.S. Our last volunteer left on August 8. Ruth returned to the U.S. on August 17, and if the process for my Green Card goes well, I am planning to return to the States on October 1.

As we reflect on the summer, we are very appreciative to our volunteers for the work we accomplished together this summer. Justin and I love sitting with the communities and creating service and learning opportunities for U.S. teams and individuals to become involved in. Many times people ask us, "Is it worth it to spend such large amounts of money to come for two weeks?" We answer a resounding yes! The communities also answer in the same manner. There is just no substitution



for relationships—having the opportunity to work along side individuals you support and learn another culture. Take some time to talk with any team member who has volunteered overseas and they will tell you the same thing.

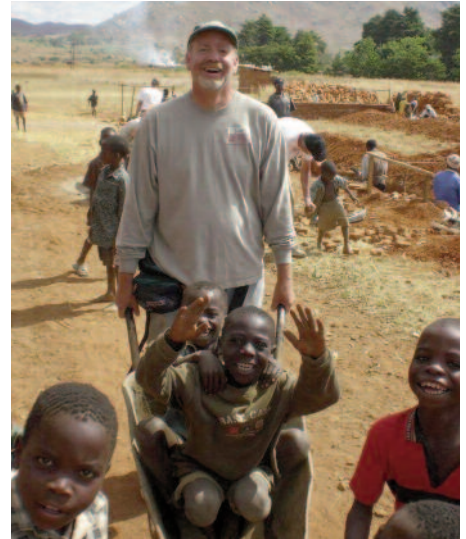
We've learned over our combined 20+ years of volunteer experience that no team or volunteer is alike. Each has a unique personality, work style and learning style. To understand the teams being placed, we spend time with them. This time together creates a mutual learning opportunity for everyone involved. We also spend time learning and understanding what the church sending the team would like the mission trip to accomplish. Can you believe we started planning with Adventure Life two years before they got on a plane?

Instead of giving you a day to day synopsis of what the team and community accomplished together, I've decided to summarize their accomplishments over 14 days:

- Each member of the team spent 3 days living with an upper class Malawian family.
- The work team survived the 7 hour ride on bad roads to the village of Songa.
- Team and community worked together to build a teacher's house. This will result in the local village secondary school being able to decrease their class size from 100 students to 80 students!
- Co-taught kindergarten classes at Songa's primary school.
- Ate meals together with SOM staff.
- Cooked American-style meals (chicken and dumplings, pancakes, jambalaya, etc.)
- Fed over 1,000 children breakfast and lunch for 3 days during Bible camp.
- Worked alongside 30 community volunteers and SOM workers to teach Bible stories to 1,200+ children, ages 4-16.
- Lived with a lower-class Malawian family in the village of Songa for three days. (They even slept on straw mats.)
- Sang Fa-Na-Na more times than they could remember, in addition to many other Malawian Christian choruses.
- Attended an all-day ceremony to dedicate a well they raised monies for 3 months prior to arriving. Chiefs and government officials attended the celebration. Some of the team members ended up on national TV news and in the daily paper.
- Began the Village Family Photo Project for families in the Songa Village. Over a period of 4 days, some of the group members spent time taking pictures of families. Each family paid the 80 cents for an 8x10 laminated photo of their family. For many families, this was the first time they've had a picture of themselves.



difficult decision to stay and arrive 2 days before the funeral took place. During the group's last night in Malawi, the van they were riding in broke down causing a 7 hour journey to become a 10 hour journey. Overall, when faced with difficulties they did a wonderful job of staying flexible and not getting upset about changes which had to be made along the way. They were a wonderful group and we are looking forward to next summer.



We have already begun planning for 2009 and 2010 groups, volunteers and interns. Currently, we are planning on having our 8-year partner, Meredith Drive Reformed Church, join us in early June. In July we will be hosting the CRC Youth to Youth Intern Program which involves 6 North American teenagers working with 6 Ugandan teenagers over a six week period. If you are interested in partnering with us through volunteering (work team, individuals, families or internships), please contact Jay Harsevoort, RCA volunteer coordinator, at jharsevoort@rca.org or Justin at justinsom@malawi.net.

We would be happy to work with the communities we serve and our supporters to create a unique opportunity.

Please continue to be in prayer for us, and we will be in prayer for you.

In His Will,
Justin and Ruth Majawa

To access extensive information about the Majawas, simply go to www.rca.org/majawa.

Although the group enjoyed their experience, it was not without its challenges. On the drive to the village, a tire on the mini-bus they were in blew out. A couple of the team members became ill as their bodies adjusted to the new food and environment. A team member's mother died 5 days before the group returned. With the prayers and support of the team and her family, she made the