

Flying for life in PNG MARSH'S JOURNEY

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NOW THAT TAKES FAITH!

Recently, Kaleb and I (Melanie) had the opportunity to journey in an MAF plane on our way home from Wewak. It was excellent for me to once again experience the work that MAF is doing in reaching into the many isolated villages dotted across this country. En-route to Mt Hagen an extra landing was planned to pick up other passengers. While the spiraling descent into the mountain valley village was not my stomach's idea of a good time (that is what Gravol is for), seeing the difference the plane makes made up for it. I know that for some of us to get into a small, single engine plane would take a lot of courage. Add to that the plane is taking off out of a rough grass strip located in the middle of the jungle. Now imagine that you have never even ridden in a car or rode on a bicycle, never mind understand the laws of aerodynamics and how a plane works! This little man on the right, which MAF took out of Malamaunda to receive treatment at the hospital in MT Hagen, was in just such a position. He waved good-bye to his family and clung to the back of the seat in front of him as we took to the sky.

Now that takes faith!

(Notice, he got all dressed up in his town cloths but I love it that you can still see sunlight peeking through the hole in his nose, where the stick used to be.)



Safety Matters

In Aviation safety is key. In April MAF flew 755 flights, which works out to 34 flights a day minus the weekends. Daily we fly into airstrips that are short and ranging from somewhat flat to very steep. Because we do this everyday it becomes normal and we as pilots run the risk of becoming complacent, which is not a good place to be.

When we returned back to PNG following furlough, MAF was short a pilot safety rep and so I put my hand up to fill the gap. Then following my accident with my bike when I was not able to fly I was able to jump in a little deeper and received some training to help me to understand my role as a Deputy Safety Manager. Part of this role requires me to put out a Safety letter for the pilots here every two months which will help to bring to light safety concerns and remind them to put safety first. Please pray for me as I continue to learn the ins and outs of this new position.

School Break in Wewak

During the boys' third term break from school Kaleb and I (Melanie) arranged to fly to Wewak to help out some friends with painting their house. Wewak is a MAF base on the coast of PNG and has a climate that is much hotter and humid than ours in the Highlands. As a result the houses usually suffer with mold growing much more quickly. We planned to be in Wewak for a week and see how much we could get done. In the end we were able to finish the walls and ceiling of a bedroom, the schoolroom, the toilet, hallway, and small entry. Not bad considering the prep that needed to be done and those surprise patch jobs that always seem to come up with any reno job.

Being on the coast also meant that the ocean is near by and Brad helped Kaleb take advantage any chance they got, usually with a quick cool down after a hard day of flying and painting. Kaleb was able to pick up a little bit of surf lingo and catch a few waves.

In my absence at home I had prepped Carter and he helped hold down the fort with cooking some meals and making sure the laundry didn't pile up. He will make someone a good hubby one day. Too bad Jay didn't take any pictures of him in action.



Prayer and Praise

~we are so very thankful after a long road to recovery that Jason's hand and arm are just about back to 100%

~the boys are just about finished school for another year finishing grades 10 and 8, we are very grateful for the school here they are able to attend and that they are thriving there

~please pray for us as a family as once again the pilot population here in Goroka will be thinning out over the summer break as one family is finishing their time serving here and a couple of other families are going to be on a furlough break

~please pray for Jason as he gets back into the Airvan (a single engine aircraft) after flying the Twin Otter for the last few years.

~please continue to pray for the pilot shortage here in PNG and that as we wait on the Lord's supply that we would be very attentive to how best to use the resources God has made available. It is difficult to know that we are not able to serve to the same capacity and meet all of the needs of the past.

~please pray for Melanie and a ministry opportunity that has come up at the local hospital assisting ladies during child birth. Pray for wisdom as she finds the right time to help out without it interrupting the family routines too much.



Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. Some seasons we need to work harder to grab hold of that truth than others. As we approach the year mark since returning from furlough, looking back it seems this has been one of those times. With the injury to Jay's arm taking longer to heal than first hoped and other changes and uncertainty with how we will best serve PNG into the future, it has been the kind of year that is a bit unsettling. However it is also in these times that we need to be more determined in seeking Him and that is a good thing.

Thank-you for supporting and praying with us in this!

Jason, Melanie, Kaleb & Carter

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