

Flying for life in PNG MARSH'S JOURNEY

SEPT, 2014 ISSUE #27



THERE WAS AN EXCITED CROWD CHEERING THE FIRST TIME MAF TOUCHED DOWN IN AIBAI

After 14 years of perseverance and cooperation among the tribes living close to Aibai, the airstrip was opened for operation!

Jason was able to fly in to do a test landing on August 15th, doing a survey to check that the remote strip would be workable for the planes coming in. As part of that initial landing he first had to fly over for a visual inspection, and once on the ground had to determine whether the length, width, slope and surface were suitable and up to the standard that MAF maintains. Everything looked good. Even though there is a 12% slope, everything checked out.

Michael and Janice Berbin and their three boys first arrived in Aibai back in 1997 and after 17 years of service among the Solue people the opened airstrip will be a blessing in helping them to receive the supplies necessary while running a Christian school and a health clinic. Previous to having the plane as a resource their only other option for transportation was helicopter, which is much more expensive, or the roads which are treacherous to travel because of the lack of maintenance, hold ups, and unreliability of whether it would even be open or not due to landslides.

It is a privilege to serve people who have such dedication and to be able to assist them in their ministry.

DISASTER RELIEF

When it rains it pours! The people in the community of Wabo were certainly feeling the effects of that statement in July when they received so much rain that the river the community is built on overflowed its banks and washed the low lying portion of the village away. It is fortunate that while the airstrip was threatened, it is built up a bit



higher and was not badly damaged making it possible for the planes to still be able to get in, bringing relief supplies and also enabling the people to put up temporary shelters. Among the supplies taken in were water containers, giving the people a way of storing good drinking water as waterborne diseases such as typhoid are always a risk.

MEASLES!

There is currently a measles outbreak in PNG with hospitals in the major centers being inundated with people who are suffering from the disease. It is also sad to say there have been several deaths from this childhood disease that we are all vaccinated for and do not consider a threat. There is currently a big vaccination push around the country to try and get as many people the vaccine as possible and MAF has been carrying vaccines into remote communities so that they too will have some protection against the disease. Just a few weeks back, following our Sunday church service, some nurses were at the church giving vaccinations to anyone who was interested.

Definitely a new venue.



A SWEET OPPORTUNITY

It has been a good year for honey this year in PNG and we here in Goroka are blessed to have a connection with EBC (Evangelical Brotherhood Church), established by a Swiss mission, who have a gentleman here right now who is an excellent bee keeper! It has been a real treat to have access to very good quality honey at reasonable prices! And speaking of honey and bees, a while back MAF had a load of interesting cargo. Enough brand new bee boxes to fill the otter and enough bees to start a colony for each! They were headed to a village in the coastal mountains called Kabwoom. The people in that community were interested in beginning to cultivate bees so were very excited when all of the equipment that they needed to start their new project arrived!

Bad Weeds!

Look at what happens when you bring a couple of Canadian boys to the tropics! All the rain and sunshine must be good for them. I keep threatening to quit feeding them... except then I would have a mutiny on my hands! Don't think I can afford to do that anymore...although the one who controls the food source may have a lot of power?

It is definitely different being the shortest one in the house and the boys both quite enjoy looking down their noses at me, all in fun of course.

It is good to see them growing up. Kaleb is in Grade 11 this year and Carter is in Grade 9 and we are quickly running out of time with them at home!



I have been reflecting a lot on thanksgiving lately and having joy in all circumstances. Some things are much easier to find joy in and one of those things is remembering how blessed we are to have so many people praying, supporting, and encouraging us as we live and serve here in Papua New Guinea. We think of you all and home often, and while sometimes that brings on a little homesickness, it is also a huge encouragement knowing we are not here alone. It truly is great to be part of the family of God and we are experiencing that more and more as we get to know other people from different countries and cultures. There is one thing that brings unity, Christ! We want to thank you once again! We would also love to hear from you to know what is happening in your lives.

In Christ, *Jason, Melanie, Kaleb and Carter*

Jason, Melanie, Kaleb & Carter Marsh

Pilot Family

MAF Papua New Guinea Limited

T +675 532 2814 **M** +675 7059 3907

E marshreport@gmail.com or jmarsh@maf.org

PO Box 862, Goroka, EHP 441,
Papua New Guinea



Prayer and Praise

*We are pleased to report that there are two new pilots scheduled to arrive near the end of the year this year! Also we have made it through the summer and pilots are beginning to return following furloughs!

*Our annual staff conference will be held at the end of September, please pray for the logistics that are necessary for that event to happen, that it will be a quiet weekend and the planes will not be needed, and for a good time of connection and team building.

*Please pray about the measles outbreak, that all who need care will be able to receive it, that there will be enough vaccinations to go around as there was a shortage, and for the logistics of helping everyone to receive a vaccination that needs one.

*Please pray for continued health, as strength is the best way to fight off so many of the tropical ailments that are present here.

*The team here in PNG are very thankful for the funds that were made available to refurbish one of its aging Twin Otters. This overhaul, while giving the plane a facelift, will also help to keep future maintenance cost down.

