

Francis Flyer



Spring 2009

David, Sandy,
Suzanne and JD
Francis

serving with
**Mission Aviation
Fellowship**
in the

**Democratic Republic of
Congo, Africa**



Mission Aviation Fellowship

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Praises!

- We returned to DRC after a great furlough full of great opportunities to share about our ministry. Thank you!
- Our team here was very helpful as we settled back in Kinshasa.
- For new team members: Brian and Esther Writebol
- For continued good health and safety
- For His provisions

Prayer Requests!

- For David, his check out in the Caravan
- For Sandy, as she teaches music at The American School of Kinshasa (TASOK) and works with the choir at the International Protestant Church of Kinshasa (IPCK)
- For Suzanne, with a lot of school work to catch up on from last semester
- For the transition of the WDRS team as the maintenance base moved from Vanga to Kinshasa and the freight/passenger office will move to the airport
- For the hostilities in East DRC to cease and relief for the suffering Congolese; for the missionaries and pastors serving there
- Corruption and inefficiency that costs our team time, money and frustration

HOME A'KIN

We have returned to Kinshasa, jumping right back into our life and ministry.

David is being "checked out" in the Cessna 208 Caravan. He has to have a minimum of 50 hours flying with an MAF instructor pilot before he can solo in the Caravan (which he is close to achieving). The Caravan is the main "work horse" of our fleet in WDRS. It is a 10-passenger turboprop aircraft capable of hauling a ton of cargo and uses jet fuel.

As a missionary pilot, he puts in a full day of flying in third-world conditions and heat. When he gets home there are always issues with water, electricity, fuel, computers, Congolese politics, people begging, home/car maintenance (with finding the right parts and tools always a challenge), and family life.

Sandy loves teaching music this year, but finds it challenging to find time for letter writing, cleaning, emailing, hospitality, or just maintaining a household in Congo. She is still active with music ministry at the church: directing the choir and the children's music and leading worship on a rotating basis.

Suzanne loves being back at school with her friends. In April, she will be acting in the play, The Mouse that Roared, and in May, she will be traveling to Nairobi, Kenya, for a swim meet. She has also been helping paint a mural in the elementary cafeteria. Pray as she finishes last semester's work online.

JD continues to play trumpet in the school band. He still loves electronics, especially computers and also enjoys making LEGO creations. And it's official: he is now taller than his mother! It's hard to believe that this is his last year in middle school.

Glad to be back to...



MAF: the Missing Link for Saving Lives!



“Maternal mortality rates in the Democratic Republic of Congo are among the highest in the world. The principal cause of death in women during childbirth is postpartum hemorrhage, a preventable occurrence. Our church-based health project has instituted a W.H.O. protocol to give a single

injection of a medicine known as ‘Oxytocin’ to women after delivery, a feat which is estimated to save over a thousand lives in Congo each year.

Last month due to problems with one of our global suppliers, we had a critical stock-out in 57 health districts (zones) in the DRC. We were able to obtain an emergency supply in Kinshasa, but had no way to get it to the hundreds of hospitals, maternities, and health centers we support in isolated and distant provinces in the country. The obstacles were formidable: hundreds of miles to traverse, washed out roads and bridges in the height of Congo’s rainy season, se-

curity concerns, etc....we had the means to prevent mothers from dying, but no way to get that into appropriate hands.

God answers prayer. MAF provided the missing link....not only to bring essential medicine to some of the most isolated parts of the world, but a message that God cares about both our spiritual and physical well-being and brings together peoples from all over the world to make that message as concrete as a life-saving injection...in the middle of the Congo.”

*Dr. Bill Clemmer
American Baptist missionary*

MOVING!

No, not us! We welcomed MAFers Brian and Esther Writebol with their daughter, Anna (2) to Kinshasa and Nate and Terra Birkemo with their daughter, Grace (2). The Birkemos moved from Vanga in West DRC.

Why? MAF decided to move our maintenance base to Kinshasa. Years ago our hangar was confiscated for soldiers and their families. What a mess when it was returned in 2005. This year, it was



refurbished, starting with the help of the short-term mission team from McKinney Memorial Bible Church. We will also be moving our freight office to the airport. Pray for all of these changes.

Life in the Congo sometimes means power outages but more often we have inconsistent voltage.

You know you have low voltage when...

...the fluorescent lights blink and blink, but never come on
...your oven never heats up past 250F
...the microwave won't even melt butter
...your clothes are dripping wet after the washer spin cycle
...your dryer keeps cutting off

You know you have unstable voltage when...

...the fans revs like a hot rod at a stoplight
...the voltage regulator never stops moving
...you cook pancakes by going from high to off to high again

You know you have high voltage when....

...sparks fly out of your sockets
...the voltage regulator starts smoking
...you have to fix or replace electronics weekly



Suzanne's Section: Thank Him

Life is hard. Times are hard. I know I am having an extremely difficult and stressful time lately. I was asking God to help me and asking for things that I felt like I needed at the time. Then I stopped myself. All the things I was asking for and talking about was about ME. I never stopped to thank Him. I

have so much right now, yet I wanted more. Isn't what I have enough? Hasn't He said He would always provide? So I stopped and thanked Him.

I thanked Him for a car that works (sometimes). I thanked Him for my pets. I thanked Him for my friends. I thanked Him for my family. I thanked Him for our house. I thanked Him for water. I thanked Him for all He has provided for me. I realized that no matter what is

going on in my life, there is always something that I can thank Him for.

Psalms 106:1 "Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever."

This is one of the many verses saying "Give thanks." So I challenge everybody, no matter what is going in the world or in your life, thank Him for everything.