

Mission Aviation Fellowship

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Irwin Informer

BACK HOME IN SHELL

MOODY INTERNS

Shortly after arriving back in Shell, we were told that two students, along with an instructor would be visiting for six weeks from Moody Bible Institute's aviation program (Chad's alma mater). They needed a cheap place to stay and it just so happened that the "new" house we moved into has a "mother-in-law" quarters in the back, perfect for two of the guys. It's always great to share our culture here with others. They were a real blessing to have during an uncertain and sometimes stressful time here. It's fun to meet their instructor who is also an MAF pilot, currently on-loan to Moody.

Thanks guys! We couldn't have asked for better house-guests!!



our things for us. It was a little overwhelming to come back to so much work. Although some of our things were unpacked for us, we had a lot to do to make it our home. We are so thankful to our co-workers and a work team that moved all of our stuff for us.

Another difference is the change in staff, both for MAF and other missions working out of Shell. For both ourselves and our children, this has been a huge change. Saying goodbye is one thing, coming back to find those folks gone is another. That is one part of missionary life that we really don't care for. We will miss the families that we worked alongside for many years.

Finally, we have come back during one of the most delicate times in MAF's long history in Ecuador. (I'll touch on that later in the letter.) Each day we find ourselves wondering what God is doing here and what part He has for us to play in that plan. And while it's good to be dependent on God and looking to Him each day for His direction, the uncertainty of so many things on the program is causing a lot of stress for ourselves and our co-workers.

So, after two months, do we feel settled? Yes, we feel settled back into the routines of life here. No, we don't feel a complete peace about the future here and what it holds for us. That's normal life though, and we know that God holds that future!



(l-r) Bill Kilgore, Jeremy Toews, & Nate Cook

By the time you read this letter, we will have been back in Ecuador for two months. Things definitely have seemed different this time. For one, we arrived to a different house. As many of you remember, right before we left for furlough, our previous landlord told us she wanted to live in the house. So, we packed up and left our things in boxes, to be moved at the end of our contract. We were able to locate another house to live in and our co-workers moved

THE DAC TELE-NOVELA....

Then to top everything off, one of our Ecuadorian pilots decided to head for "greener pastures" back in the capital city. That left us with one Ecuadorian pilot to do all of our flying! Needless-to-say we had to cut back on a lot of the flights we had scheduled. Finally, we were able to convince DAC in a dramatic "to be continued" episode of the tele-novela, that we could not financially continue to operate here with just one pilot. DAC gave us a temporary permit that allowed the foreigners to fly again.

Our prayer now, is that DAC will allow us an exemption on our new permit, and once again allow foreigners to serve the Ecuadorian people. Stay tuned for the next exciting episode...



I think most of you know what DAC stands for by now. It's the Ecuadorian equivalent of the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) in the U.S. But, you might not be aware that a "tele-novela" is a Spanish soap opera. No, we don't watch them, but sometimes we feel like we're living in one!

Many of you know that as we returned to Ecuador, we did not have permission for the "foreigners" to fly. So, for the first six weeks, I didn't fly at all. We spent the whole time working through one episode of the tele-novela to the next. About the time we thought we had crossed a major hurdle in the process of receiving our new operating permit, another obstacle appeared.



Support Address:

Mission Aviation Fellowship
P.O. Box 47
Nampa, ID
83653

Email:
cirwin@maf.org

Phone:
419-605-0622

We're on the web!
www.maf.org/irwin

I think we've mentioned over the years that we fly under a different name here in Ecuador. Our Spanish name is Alas de Socorro, and it means Wings of Help.

What you might not know, or remember, is that we also have an Ecuadorian board called ADSE or Alas de Socorro de Ecuador. The board is made up of Christian brothers and sisters who have an interest in what we're doing and want to see it continue as an Ecuadorian run ministry. Right now ADSE is busier than ever for several reasons.

First of all, we are in the process of trying to nationalize the program.

That means we would like to eventually turn over the day-to-day running of the program to our Ecuadorian partners. This would allow the work to continue regardless of what DAC's answer is to foreign pilots. So ADSE is trying to plan for a future where they are in charge of the Ecuadorian program, with or without foreign pilots. I am a "member at large" on the board, as we try to figure out a transition plan that has the most chance for success. The operating permit we are working on right now is actually in the name of ADSE. This will mark the first time that ADSE will be recognized as an independent flight program by the Ecuadorian government.

A second reason that ADSE is so busy is the fact that one of our Ecuadorian pilots left us with almost no warning. We are accepting applications right now for new pilots, but this is a long process. Remember how long it took for me to get checked out on all of the airstrips here? Even if we hire another pilot, it will be six to eight months before he is regularly flying solo in the jungle. Assuming I'm allowed to keep flying; it will be my job to train the new pilot before he can fly operationally.

Please pray for ADSE during this potentially exciting, yet difficult time.

THE ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE...

After writing about so much uncertainty, it's sure nice to know that God is going to accomplish His plan for the people of the Ecuadorian jungle. With so many unknowns and obstacles, it would be easy to throw in the towel, without the knowledge that God will accomplish what He wants.

Every day our children teach us what faith is all about. Jesus hit the nail on the head, when he said our faith needed to be like that of a little child. As we prepared to return to

Ecuador, our children never once asked about the route we were going to take, or who would pick us up at the airport, or if we had enough money for food and all the other necessities along the way. They simply trusted that their earthly father and mother (she's the organized one) had all the details

worked out. Never did they worry that we might not make it to Ecuador. They didn't fret over all the planning and variables that come into play when moving from one country to another. They were excited about the process, but not worried about the results.

Our prayer is that as the changes continue to come at us, here in Ecuador, and around the MAF world, we would look at them for the exciting possibilities they represent. We desire to live lives that are true representations of complete trust in our Heavenly Father. Trust that is unwavering in the hard times and not surprised when we see God working in mighty and sometimes unexpected ways. Would we be more comfortable if MAF stayed in control of the program here and foreign pilots were the norm? Probably. Are we excited to see what God might do, as we trust in Him and not in ourselves as the future unfolds? YOU BET!!!!

Chad & Andi

If you would like to receive more frequent updates, please just drop us a line at cirwin@maf.org.

