

Writebol's Writings



Brian and Esther Writebol—MAF missionaries in Kinshasa, DRC

March 2009

We're in Africa!!!! Hello from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. We've finally arrived after much anticipation and preparation. We have been warmly welcomed by our fellow MAF teammates and are excited to join them in the ministry work.

The month of January was a whirlwind of finishing our shipment, getting legal paperwork pulled together, and saying final goodbyes. We saw God's hand at work in many ways during our preparations. To name a few: we were able to pack our shipment in a heated home that was not being rented out at the time (It's too cold in January to work in a storage unit in Minnesota). Our church had garage space where we could build tool box crates and put our containers on pallets for shipping. The local ACE hardware store donated the pallets that we needed for the shipment. Some friends helped by watching Anna while we worked, while others offered help in moving the containers to the church. Another family let us use their skid loader to load the pallets onto the truck, saving us the cost of renting a forklift. Some dear friends graciously opened their home to us for the month of January and others took us to Minneapolis where we flew out. What an encouragement to see the body of Christ working together! All these things along with others, reconfirmed the Lord's leading to Congo.

Our trip to DRC went amazingly smooth. Anna did well with the flights as well as the waiting in the airports. All of our connections were on time, and when we arrived, we were happy to find that all of our baggage arrived with us.

When we stepped off the plane at Kinshasa's international airport we were met with a blast of warm air and lots of humidity. The lines for immigration were long and slow, but because we had Anna, the officials let us pass to the front of the line to be processed. (There are benefits to being parents of young kids). After that, we collected our baggage, which in the States is a fairly orderly process. However, here it was a mass of people all crowded around the belt with lots of pushing and chaos. Thankfully it didn't take too long. The trip home was a rapid drive trying to avoid other cars, busses, and pedestrians that seemed to come out of nowhere.

Thank you all for your continued prayers as we settle into our new home.



Our shipment packed and ready to leave from Worthington, MN



Our new house in Kinshasa; we live on the top floor, and another MAF family lives below us

How You can Pray

- Praise the Lord that we are finally in Congo, starting the work that we've so long prepared for.
- Pray for our continued transition into a new home, culture, language and way of living life.
- Pray that we will develop good friendships with our fellow MAF teammates.
- Continued good health! We are especially thankful for this when we live in an area without good hospitals!

Car Project

Many of you have asked about our need for funds for a vehicle here. MAF will soon be presenting a special (tax deductible) project to fund a car for our use. In a few weeks, we will be sending out more information regarding how to give to this account. Thank you for your interest in this project!

***“Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”
James 1:17 (NASB)***

Life In Kinshasa

- Traffic: As one might expect, life in Kinshasa is a bit different than in the US. To beat traffic across town to the airport, Brian leaves between 6:00 and 6:30 am. Any later and the 8 mile trip would take up to an hour and a half.
- Errands: A couple days after we arrived we were taken downtown (5 miles from our place) to see what sort of stores there were and get a few groceries, as well as register at the US Embassy. Because of it being the middle of a week-day, combined with construction on various major roads, we were 3 hours in the car one way!
- Currency: Stores take both the Congo Franc and US Dollars. We have been told that the general rule is, if you are going to pay more than \$30 dollars, you need to pay in US dollars. Otherwise, anything less would be done in Congolese Francs. The largest bill here is a 500 denomination which is only \$.70 cents American, so you often end up walking around with wads of money, that really amount to nothing!
- Shopping has its challenges as well. We have been shocked at the prices here! For instance, we have had to pay up to \$7 for one can of tuna. After searching 3 weeks for baking cocoa and finally finding it, we saw it would cost \$10 for 250 grams! OUCH! We also quickly learned that, although veggies at the store look beautiful, the best way to buy them is to look for a stand along the road, as prices at the store for fresh produce are outrageous. The first time we went shopping at one of the stores, Esther bought 2 bell peppers and 3 tomatoes, and later got home and discovered she paid \$17 for those items alone!

All but \$250 monthly!

Many of you have contributed to our monthly and outgoing ministry support, and we are overwhelmed and blessed by your generosity! When we were still in language school, you helped us meet the full departure target for monthly support! But the target was increased due to inflation, and now the actual amount we need to sustain us in DRC is \$250 more monthly.



Making granola with Mommy

If you have waited until our departure to commit to regular financial support, or if you are now able to increase your giving, we would be delighted to have you partner with us. Just send in the back of our prayer card, or contact MAF at the address and phone number below. They will be happy to help you get started in increased or regular giving.

Anna's Journal

I'm finally in the place called Africa that I have been told about for so long! It is MUCH warmer here than it was in Canada and Minnesota! I think living here is fun!

I have really started wowing mommy and daddy with my talking lately. I spend my days playing around the house; I especially like to play on our back porch! I also make sure to spend time each day helping mommy do a lot of cooking and making messes for her to clean— I am an expert mess maker, I am told! I also have a new friend named Grace, who lives right downstairs from me, and she is only 5 months older than I am! We have a lot of fun playing together!

It seems like every night I get to watch lightening flash in the sky, and as I go to sleep I listen to the storms roll in and out and to the sound of rain on our roof top. Guess what? The thunder doesn't even scare me!

Pony Express

We have received several emails asking us how letters should be sent to us in Africa. The best way for us to receive mail is to have you send it to MAF headquarters (the address is at the bottom of this letter), and they will see to it that it gets mailed to us in their bimonthly mailings. However, they can only send us letters and cards. Please do not send packages to us. There is not a reliable postal system to mail them directly, so we would most likely not receive them. Thank you.

Serving with you,

Brian, Esther
& Anna

USA Support Address:
Mission Aviation Fellowship
P.O. Box 47
Nampa, ID 83653
www.maf.org

Canadian Support Address:
MAF Canada
P.O. Box 368
Guelph, Ontario N1H 6K5