

# Irwin Informer

Chad, Andi, Josiah & Olivia Irwin, serving with MAF in Shell, Ecuador

## How's Your Neighbor?

It's always seemed to me that the reason the whole of the law could be summed up in two commands was because they were the two hardest for us humans to



accomplish. Loving God is one thing, but loving our neighbors? Wow that is hard sometimes!!! It's easy to get caught up in thinking about who my neighbor is or isn't, just like the Pharisees, instead of focusing on loving, even when it's hard. A couple of weeks ago, I had a flight that really brought that to mind.

It all started with taking a man back to his village after suffering a stroke. I brought him out a few weeks before, and he seemed to be in pretty bad shape. He comes from a very small village with a very small airstrip called Shiona. It's not a favorite for most of the pilots. The people don't tend to be overly friendly, and the airstrip is what we call "sporty." In preparation for the flight, I realized I had room for a couple who were visiting from the States. I called Rob and Tina and they jumped at the chance to ride along. As we flew over the jungle, I talked to Rob, who is a Southwest Airlines pilot, about the chal-

lenges we encounter every day. We also talked about the patient we were flying home that day. This man had a stroke and therefore could not walk, talk, or control many of his bodily functions. He lives in the middle of nowhere and what would his quality of life be once he got home?

When we arrived at the man's village, there weren't any men to help get him to his hut. So, Rob, Tina and I carried him from the runway. As we grunted and sweated along the trail, I began to feel just a touch of God's love for this

man. I couldn't do much for him that day. I couldn't even talk to him,



as he doesn't speak Spanish (he speaks a tribal language), but for just a moment I could LOVE him, as we carried him to his home. After laying the man in his bed, we asked his wife if we could pray for him. What do you think she said? Surprisingly, she said "no." That, my friends, is living in darkness.

How is your neighbor? They might not live in the Ecuadorian jungle, but I bet at least some of them are living in the same darkness. How can you show them **Love**?

## *New Pilot Candidate...*

Last month I had a great time flying with a new candidate for our program. David Mead is from Florida, but he grew up in Venezuela as a missionary kid. Later, while serving as a Marine guard at the embassy in Quito, he met and married his wife Maggie. Since Maggie is an Ecuadorian citizen, David can more easily become an Ecuadorian citizen, and more importantly to us, an "Ecuadorian" pilot. He will not be nagged by the same laws and rules applied to us "gringos."

David did a great job on his evaluation, and I enjoyed flying with him. They will be moving down to Shell this summer after completing more training at our headquarters in Idaho. Please lift up David and Maggie, as they prepare to move back to Ecuador, along with their 4 children. The great thing is that they don't have to go to language school and can begin working with us immedi-



ately. Please pray also that David's paperwork will go smoothly and he can get his Ecuadorian pilot's license right away. It can take up to two years to get your full citizenship in Ecuador, and we are praying that the aviation officials (DAC) will allow him to fly long before that.

We see David and Maggie as just one more way God is leading us and providing for this transition to an Ecuadorian run ministry.



## *Bloggedy Blog Blog*

Many of you are aware that we have been blogging. Others of you don't have the slightest idea what blogging even is. So...we thought we should fill you in on what we're up to.

A blog is like a diary and a website rolled into one. We use it as another way to communicate with friends, family, and supporters. Almost every week we share a little bit about what is going on in our lives. If you would like to check it out, you can find it online at: [www.irwininformer.blogspot.com](http://www.irwininformer.blogspot.com).

We love to get comments from folks about the pictures and stories we post. Be warned...a lot of the posts are just day to day things going on in our lives and not life changing ministry stories.

## *Merry Christmas!*

We are so grateful for all your prayers for Andi's Dad. Her parents were able to postpone their August trip (due to Ron's heart surgery) and use their tickets in December instead. It will be our first Christmas with family here! We're excited...but the kids are even more excited!

We pray that you will also have a blessed time with your families during the holiday season! Thanks so much for your love and support!

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