

AfriCadds' World

Hello again from Equatorial Africa,

The rains have started and, believe it or not, it is cold here on the equator! Cher is even wearing fur. Wrapped around her neck is the very interesting addition to our family; a little baby monkey! Actually a Red Tailed Guenon. He is beautiful and fun and terrible trouble. We named him Shida, which means trouble or problem in Swahili, and he really lives up to his name. He is about 3 times the size he was when we got him 9 weeks ago. He lives free in the house with us and plays with the dogs, sleeping by our bed right next to their baskets. For all the trouble he is, it is a blessing that he sleeps through the night. He is like having a two year old who is faster than we are! Cher is a great mother to him.



Great Lakes Trips

It is exciting to see mission groups starting to move back into Congo in bigger ways. We have recently started flying in the Bukavu area to the south of Bunia, where we usually operate. We used to have quite a base there but because of the violence and most missions moving out, the aircraft were moved. But now there is growth again and we have been taking the Caravan down to move large quantities of roofing materials, drums of fuel, motorcycles and four wheelers and endless supplies for rebuilding hospitals and mission stations. It is great to be a part of, in spite of the very hard work. This area is right against Lake Kivu, one of the "Great Lakes" of Africa. Here there are also beautiful, snow capped mountains and Rain Forest and **active volcanoes** that make for a scenic wonderland that I get to see from the air each time we fly in the area. The one pictured above is Nyiragongo, located just outside Goma. When it last erupted (2002) lava flowed through town and covered over a quarter of the airstrip. Weather can also be a real problem in this part of Congo.

There have been quite a few plane crashes in the area in the past year. A few months ago one of the Russian Antinovs over-ran the

end of the Goma airport and plowed through part of town killing over 30 people. There was a missionary family on board who were graciously spared.



Leftovers from Antinov crash of the end of Goma airport.

Just after the crash I flew some MKs on their way to school at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya. They told me that they used to fly to and from school in the Antinovs in less than first class conditions. One student had even ridden on top of the cargo with neither tied or safety belted down!

My last trip over, I flew in a family and some other missionaries who were returning to the region after several years away. One man even pointed out where he had been born. It is great to see people coming back and we pray that they will be fruitful and effective for God's kingdom.

Difficult Load

I had an interesting day a couple of weeks ago when I had a body to transport from Kampala to Congo. The man had been an Anglican Priest for many years in Boga and Bunia and was much loved. But when everyone showed up to go (there were three people and one big, white metal coffin to go in a little Cessna 206!) it was clear that all were not going to fit! In fact, we had to do some mental gymnastics and real physical work to get the coffin in. Time was passing and a large group of well wishers in Congo

waited for our arrival for the service. With the help of our MAF team we took out all but the front seats, even taking out the front floorboards and moving the pilot seats up against the instrument panel, before we could get the front of the coffin far enough forward to clear the other end of it through the back cargo door. It finally went in and we were off, but with only 1 of the women. The others had to come on a later flight.

When we landed we were met by a greeting party with a large contingent of fellow pastors and demonstrative mourners as well as music and a police escort pickup with guards carrying AK-47s. Don't know what that was for, but it all looked very official.

When I first heard about how my day was planned I was not too enthralled. But as I got ready for the day and prayed about my attitude (after all, I wasn't in the box!) I stopped thinking of myself and asked the Lord to use me to bless these people with my little airplane. That changed everything from my side and I settled into the unusual day. We were able to be a blessing and I am glad I was there.

Thank you for the years and years...and years...of prayer and financial support that made it possible.

Jon



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