

FLIGHT LOG



WINTER/SPRING 2005

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 11 No. 1, 2

FOR THE FRIENDS OF ADVENTIST WORLD AVIATION

Showers of Blessings



(Top) Greg and Laura already training in the donated Grumman Tiger. (Center) The 1977 Grumman Tiger. (Bottom left) Partially donated 1961 Cessna 182. (Bottom right) Greg Thompson; John Thompson, former owner; Andy Klein.



MEMORIALS

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IN HONOR OF ALL OUR DONORS
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THE GREAT I AM, JESUS
LIONEL AND MELINDA LOESSBERG

*Thank You, for all your prayers and financial help. Please, keep us
uplifted as AWA moves forward to obey the Call of God.
There is little time left to be of service to our God!*

YOU MAY SEND CONTRIBUTIONS ELECTRONICALLY

AWA now accepts donations via credit card.
Call, E-mail or donate online.

Please include: name, address, phone number,
credit card number, expiration date, and designate
the amount and project.



Rest assured that your information will remain confidential.



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Mission Statement
Adventist World Aviation exists
to provide aviation and
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serving the physical, mental and
spiritual needs of
the forgotten peoples of the earth.

Adventist World Aviation
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sending agency. Funded by private
contributions, AWA enables
missionaries to reach the unreached
around the world.

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Missionaries in Training

by Bill & Laura LaBore

Imagine yourself called by God to a foreign land where you have no friends or family. Your assignment will be to establish aviation and radio communications based medical support systems. Your objective is to provide the infrastructure necessary for those who wish to improve the quality of life for the people who live there and open their eyes to the plan of salvation. You will need to manage your own fuel supply, as there are no local fuel stations. You will establish the radio communication network and train people how to use it. You have to raise interest and support for the project. Is this a role that any person with a private pilot's certification could just walk into and effectively accomplish?

Most of us would agree that the answer to the above question would be NO! However, the above scenario is what mission pilots are often asked to do. What takes an individual with no experience to a level where they can be used by God to accomplish this type of task? God's leading, absolute commitment and extensive training/preparation!

Preparation to be a pilot in the mission field takes years. This is why it is so essential for young people to catch a glimpse of the need for mission aviation early in life - so they can prepare themselves and then serve while still in their prime. Do you realize that today there are still an estimated 800 million people that live beyond geographic, political and linguistic barriers who are still considered unreached with the gospel message? Jesus wants to return to take us home but, "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repen-

tance." 2 Peter 3:9 NIV. Every Christian, in one form or another, must respond to the same call given to Isaiah "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" AWA is constantly on the lookout for individuals who will answer that call with "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8.

Perhaps God has already been at work in your heart and is leading you in the direction of missionary aviation service. If so, you might be interested in knowing the path of preparation required to work with AWA. The following are required minimums for those applying for most positions:

- *Commercial Pilot license with Instrument rating,

- *Five hundred hours of flight experience

- *Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) license

For Laura and me, it has been a long five years of preparation. To be honest, there were a number of times we wondered if we were going to make it. When Laura first met with AWA she possessed a Private Pilot license and had just over 100 hours of flight time. After learning of the great need for mission pilots, we mutually agreed that God was leading us in this direction.


In May 2002, Laura graduated from Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac, MI with her A & P license! We moved to California in October of 2002 and Laura continued to build flight hours in preparation for our launching this year. She passed her Instrument written exam last fall and is studying diligently to prepare for the Instrument oral and practical exams. She is also preparing for the Commercial exams. Laura realizes that training is a critical component of preparation for the jungles of Guyana.

There is another aspect of preparation increasingly unavailable in the United States: practical bush flying in a Christian mission



Laura, Missionary Pilot Training

context! The airstrips Laura will use in the jungle are grass, sand, dirt (or mud) strips with trees and other foliage at close proximity to the runway. It takes consistently precise manipulation of the aircraft to operate in these conditions. One of the challenges missionary aviation programs face is providing practical experience for pilots **BEFORE** they have to work in these environments.

The need for specialized training for today's complicated world is a large factor in AWA's exploration of establishing a facility at the Blackwell-Tonkawa airport in Oklahoma. Other Christian missionary agencies have expressed a need for effectively trained mission pilots. With God's direction, AWA is being called to stand in the gap. (*See Where is Blackwell* this issue.) By providing a place for practical mission aviation training, AWA hopes to meet organizational needs and, by providing more qualified personnel to the mission field, we are hoping to accelerate the work of spreading the gospel and hasten the Lord's coming. 



The Guyana plane landing on a mountain airstrip near Pacific Union College.

GUYANA PROJECT



Bill and Laura LaBore

LaBore Launching Expenses \$88,044

Completed - Thank You!

10% 30% 50% 70% 90%

\$450 Still Needed

LaBore Monthly Support \$3,625

Project AirPower Monthly Village Sponsorship*

\$13,556 Still Needed

*\$250 per month per village will provide air and communications services to Bible workers in one of the 56 unreached jungles villages in Guyana.

WHERE IS BLACKWELL?

by Don Starlin

"I am that disciple! I saw these events and have recorded them here. And we all know that my account of these things is accurate. John 21:24 LB

As I contemplate the events of the past 12 months I feel a bit like the apostle John. The following is an eyewitness account of the Master's work around us.

January 2004 "Don, I've been trying to get a hold of you for weeks. I wanted to tell you what God is impressing me to do!" Randy Beckermeyer exclaimed over the phone.

"Really," I countered, "what's going on?"

The veteran aircraft mechanic from the east side of the state continued, "God is impressing me to start a Fixed Based Operation (FBO) where we will perform aircraft maintenance, rebuilds, perhaps sales and charter work so aspiring missionary pilot/mechanics can get a taste of real world operations before they are sent overseas! Maybe we'll even maintain a fleet of airplanes for a flight school that would specialize in training missionary pilots. The experience will increase their confidence and keep them from getting side-tracked in industry!"

"Randy, you aren't going to believe this," I replied, "for the last two months I've had the growing conviction that God is about to call us to play a much bigger role in missionary aviation training than we've been involved in to date. I don't believe our respective impressions are coincidental. Let's pray that we will recognize the time and place God has planned to accomplish this."

Spring 2004 "Milt, with your experience in aviation, if you were going to start a missionary aviation training school from scratch, where would you do it?" I inquired of the

missionary pilot/mechanic—now FAA inspector for the Chicago Flight Standards District Office.

Mister Glovatsky responded as if he'd been thinking on the topic for some time. "I'd draw a big box that would include western Missouri and Arkansas, eastern Kansas and Oklahoma," he gestured at an imaginary map. "You'd be able to take advantage of the infrastructure and resources resulting from the aviation industry in the region. In Kansas and Oklahoma you'd have about a hundred flyable days per year more than in Berrien Springs. The winters aren't as severe thus reducing expenses and down time. You'd be centrally located for recruiting purposes. If you prepare and ship planes to the field, there is barge service to the major cities. High-altitude mountain flight training would be less than a day's flight west and the Ozarks have some nice little strips tucked away in the hills to the east."

Summer 2004 An unsolicited subscription to *General Aviation News* began appearing in my mailbox. Tim Holbrook, Adventist Frontier Missions church planter, thumbed through one. "Hey, did you see this classified ad? The Blackwell-Tonkawa Airport Authority is looking for someone to set up an FBO and manage the airport!"



"Where's Blackwell," I asked.

"Northern Oklahoma, on I-35, 60 miles south of Wichita."

October 2004 Greg Thompson and I met with Randy Beckermeyer, Ed Robinson and Nathan Tasker in Blackwell to spend a weekend in prayer and Bible study seeking God's will regarding the preparation of missionary aviators for the foreseeable future.

Sunday evening our group met with two Blackwell-Tonkawa Airport Authority trustees. We outlined the vision and discussed a rough plan of action.

"We're impressed by your plan. We'd like to see you pursue your dream at our airport," commented the chairman. "If you would be willing to open an FBO and make maintenance services and flight training available to the community, we are prepared to lease you the 80ft x 80ft hangar, the adjoining offices and the 3 bedroom 2 bathroom mobile home onsite at no cost. We'll pay the utilities (except telephone) on the shop and office building. You would manage the airport, cut the grass, perform minor maintenance



Blackwell offices and hangar



Training room



Inside the hangar

and also take commissions on fuel sold and hangar rent collected. When could you start?"

December 2004 For years we've prayed that, in His time and His way, God would provide AWA a place to call home. Now that He had presented the opportunity, AWA had no personnel to start the FBO, no tools, no airplanes to train in and no money to hire or buy them. I was faced with signing a contract AWA had no ability to perform. Though AWA's Board of Directors was in favor of moving forward, one presumptuous act could destroy the ministry in a matter of weeks. God had brought me to a crisis of belief. Would He do what He indicated He wanted to do?

Opening my Bible to Mark chapter ten, I was soon in complete empathy with blind Bartimaeus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked... "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Mark 10:51, 52 NIV

"Lord, I believe you have given me sight, but I still don't have clear direction or conviction." I prayed.

Continuing into chapter eleven, Jesus instructs His disciples to find a colt and bring it back to Him. "If anyone asks you, 'why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it...'" Mark 11:3

All of a sudden it struck me - that is exactly what happened in October. We told the Airport Authority that God had need of their airport, and they gave it to us!

I could see!

Eagerly I pursued the parallels. The disciples took the colt to Jesus. They put their coats on its back. Jesus got on. As he began to ride, others brought their coats and branches to spread on the road.

"OK Lord, your disciples are willing to place what little we have on the back of this project. I believe it is your will to move forward. I believe others will see what you are doing and they will bring what is in their hands to make this missionary aviation training center a reality." I prayed.

At Tuesday evening prayer time I shared this experience. To rule out presumption, we corporately listed evidence that it was God's will for us to move forward. We committed the decision to God in prayer.

Getting up from prayer I asked Andy, "have you called Herb Rorabeck to report what God has done with the tools donated to the Philippines project?"

"No, but I've been thinking of doing so," Andy responded.

"Call him now," I suggested.

Andy dialed. Herb answered and exclaimed, "I've been thinking about you. You need to come see me this week. I've set something aside for you."

The next morning Andy called to confirm that we were able to make the trip. "What are you bringing?" Herb enquired.

"An E-250 extended van," replied Andy.

"That's not big enough!" Herb advised.

"Unload the trencher, let's take the tandem axle trailer," I directed.

Ed Vance, Andy Klein and I set off for Herb Rorabeck's Tool Sales. Upon our arrival Herb pointed out items he had set aside. Then he invited us to look through his inventory and select anything we might need. While Ed and Andy identified useful tools I shared with Herb the opportunity in Blackwell and how he was the first person to throw his coat on the road. "I'm so happy to be a part of God's work," Herb kindly responded.

The next day, while reviewing a list of tools and equipment we had compiled months before in Blackwell, I was humbled to find that in a single day God had given us 75% of everything on the list!

The previous summer, an individual had

Edwin Vance, Andy Klein and Herb Rorabeck.



donated gym lockers, tables, rolling tool cabinets, shelving and a lot of other items we graciously accepted, but weren't sure how we were going to use. All of these items were loaded into a 30-foot truck and delivered to Blackwell by Ed and Andy several weeks later.

January 2005 Returning home from a missionary aviation conference the last week of January, the phone rang. It was a long-time friend of AWA. We had played phone tag for several months. I eagerly shared with him the developments in Oklahoma. As I concluded the story he asked me, "Don, do you have an instrument equipped airplane to train in and commute between Blackwell

(Continued on page 11)



Pathfinder plane in the hangar



Reception counter



Aerial view of the Blackwell-Tonkawa Airport

OH MY! Packing, Traveling, Packing, Traveling?

by Andy Klein

It's been some time since I returned from the Philippines. I would like to brief you on what has been happening. As always things are **never** dull or boring around here! Arriving back in August, I immediately headed for the Adventist Services and Industries convention to help with the booth there. Then it was off to help with the camporee at Oshkosh. Once home it was time to catch up with all the things that get left undone while away for three months.

In September my mom's house in New Mexico sold. So off I went to pack everything into a 26 foot truck and head north. I don't know about you but I really don't like moving; especially when it is **home**. Packing is such drudgery. Mom left halfway through for a mission trip to India planned long before the house sold, so I was on my own. God blessed me with a good friend who took a week away from work and family to help me load the truck and pack the last odds and ends. Without his help I couldn't have made the dead line. The sale was supposed to close the end of October, but didn't happen



Crating crew at the Berrien Springs Fil-Am Church.



The crew lifting the piano into the crate.



Crating an organ.

until the second week in November. I used nearly all the extra time packing the truck and cleaning up. I was one thankful fellow when I reached Michigan. God also provided friends and family to unload at this end of the journey.

Back at AWA it was time to order a shipping container for the Philippines and arrange for its delivery. It arrived on November the 16th. I've learned a lot about shipping containers, the price of steel, pressures caused by the war in Iraq and, more recently, the tsunami in Asia. Ah, well.

We started loading the container and winter hit. Sub-zero temperatures, wind and snow are not the best of conditions to be moving in. (The permanence of heaven is so wonderful to look forward to). When we finally had a thaw - we also had a leak! So one Friday when the temperature rose I got on top of the container to see just what kind of problem we had. After several hours with an electric wire brush I had 18 points of light in the top of the container.

Now what? Would the company stand behind the container now that we owned it? Being responsible for its purchase, it was with a little trepidation that I made the call Monday morning. Thankfully they were very accommodating, arranging for a welder to come out and patch the holes. A week later the holes were filled.

Loading is a bit challenging when you need to tie down all different shapes and sizes. Some ingenuity is required to keep things from shifting around.

As if this weren't enough packing and travelling, we also loaded a 30 foot truck with tools, supplies, parts, furniture and equip-

ment donated for the Blackwell, OK project and delivered it.

On March 23 I headed to Blackwell again with a van and trailer. Don, Charlie and Bill Davidson finished loading and securing the Philippines container and on March 28 it left Andrews University Airpark on the first leg of its journey to Manila.

A wise man said, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might," because in the grave you are no help to anyone.

From Blackwell I hope to put all my might into preparing for service in the Philippines. Lord willing, I'll meet the container in Manila. More packing and travelling! 🙌



The container to be shipped.



The container filled and ready to ship.



Andy and Don load donated equipment into the truck bound for Blackwell.

Alaska Mission Aviation Brings Gospel Musicians Together

by Jim Kincaid, Tok Junction, Alaska

Who'd have thought it? That a Community Gospel Music Concert would pack out the church! Approximately 73 people in a church seating 35! They came representing most of the churches of the community, and many who came have no church affiliation: both Alaska Natives and Anglos.

It all started as just an idea to involve the church with the community in which it lives.

Knowing that Tok is the home of several country music artisans of a Christian persuasion, I asked for their participation to make this community gospel sing-a-long come to pass. At practice a few hours before the concert a diverse group came together. In a few minutes of playing together we learned to complement each other for the glory of God.

Among the musicians were banjo player Pastor Terry Pflugrad, of Fairbanks; Jim Mericle of Tok, lead guitar; Heidi Shoemaker of Delta Junction on the viola; Jim Kincaid, AWA project manager on the bass; John Payne of Wasilla (also AWA volunteer pilot) on the electric guitar and other singers and musicians. One of the Sunday keeping guitar players, testified near the end of the concert that this was the first time that the barriers between churches were put away for the glory of God.

Tok was the first of eleven such music-and-preaching events this winter and spring. The list of sites reads like the *Alaska Magazine*, news section that is entitled "From

Ketchikan to Barrow, from Kotzebue to Haines". In alphabetical order it reads like this, Barrow, Bethel, Delta Junction, Dillingham, Gambell, Nome, North Pole, Savoonga, Selawik, Togiak, Tok.

One of the constants of this entire spring itinerary was the mode of transport. N8287Q, the AWA Cessna 206, was the capable vehicle that carried the musicians, their instruments, electronics, and survival gear for the crew of four and sometimes five people who visited each site. I can guarantee, that with-

out such aircraft this particular mission would not have happened.

Praise God for the donors who gave the time and money to place this aircraft in service! 🙏

ALASKA PROJECT				
10%	30%	50%	70%	90%
\$17,562 Still Needed				
AWA Alaska Aircraft N2019G \$45,000				



The Alaskan Gospel Music Team.

The plane that made it all possible, the N8287Q



FLIGHT LOG

Alaska Needs You!

We are SO excited! There are 31 people from North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois and Missouri signed up to go to three villages in Alaska this year. We will be visiting Togiak for the 4th year, Dillingham and Aleknagik for the first time.

We will need craft and gift supplies for a total of 250 children for five days. If you would like to help with supplies please call Fran Hansen, 417-742-4154.

Like a Jack Rabbit With Hiccups

by Clifton Brooks

It felt as if I was playing a part in the movie, *"The God's Must Be Crazy"*.

My helper took our '69 Volkswagen Beetle down to the local town (about 5 miles or so) to run some errands. On the way the clutch went out — *again*. That's the third time this year! And the second time in just over two months. The whole thing was rebuilt only four months ago — new cables, clutch plates, everything!

It was already dark, and had just finished raining when the message came. I borrowed a friend's car and went to help. Previous experience has taught me to always carry three tool sets in the Volks so am pretty well equipped to handle most anything minor (like a clutch...).

The car was stalled on the side of a busy road. I slid underneath to check the clutch cable attachment below the engine. It didn't take long to realize I was in a puddle of water. I was getting wet! The brand new (less than two month old) clutch cable was broken. We rigged up a long wire to the clutch arm on the transmission and ran it into the car through a rust hole in the body near the back seat. We tied the wire to the clutch pedal then pushed and pulled. We couldn't get the angle we needed to actuate the clutch. We would have to get the car home without it.

We couldn't use my friend's car to pull the Volkswagen home. The little old Nissan would burn-up before pulling the Bug up

the first hill. The situation was made slightly more challenging by the lack of an ignition key that my helper had somehow "misplaced" in the trauma of stalling the car on the busy road. We had no way to start the car by conventional means.

We maneuvered the car around (headed for home), then pulled and pushed it up to a large intersection where we could have more room to work. It was now pitch dark. My helper went to work swinging the flashlight at the oncoming traffic trying to avert an accident while I worked under the hood to hotwire the ignition so we could get spark to the coil.

We decided to roll-start the car in second gear. It would take us a while to get home, but at least we wouldn't have to push or pull it all the way up the mountain hills. Even though it's a Volkswagen, it doesn't roll easily in any gear. We had the disadvantage of facing a slight incline. Both of us started pushing for all we were worth,



but nothing. It just wouldn't fire. The sweat in my shirt mixed with the mud puddle water. I was thoroughly wet.

We determined that we needed to turn downhill even though it meant we would have to make a U-turn to head home. Without a clutch and lots of fast traffic, it was not a pleasant prospect. But we would have to worry about that later. We needed the starter to help us as there was just no way that we could push the car by ourselves with it in gear. Using the starter would require hotwiring the ignition coil *and* running two additional wires into the cabin (through an "extra" hole in the dash). I could touch the wires together when we wanted the starter on. I clipped a length of wire from another "non-essential" wire and used it for the starter contacts. By the time we were ready to try it, the car had earned a new name: *"The Antichrist"* (from the afore-mentioned movie).

We waited for traffic to subside a bit. We saw busses coming from each direction. After they passed it would be clear. I jumped inside the car and shifted to second gear. My helper started pushing. We had to hurry to catch the break in traffic. I held the improvised starter switch wires together. The starter began cranking. The car lurched forward. The busses were coming. They passed. We were clear. The en-



gine fired and with a stomp on the gas it was running (like a jack rabbit with hiccups, but it was running). Now I had to make the quick U-turn.

With the turn-around safely made, all that was left to do was drive home...and hit the two remaining stoplights green, because if I had to stop it would kill the engine; then we would have to start the whole process all over again.

My helper was following me in the other car. As we approached the intersections he flashed his headlights at the traffic and honked the horn, trying to clear the way for us to pass without having to stop. Fortunately, with a little timing and providence, the intersections were cleared without bent metal. It was pretty late at night when I finally drove into the yard and stood on the brakes. The car died a lurching death in front of the house. God had brought us home safely again.

An afternoon's work and a new clutch cable later the Volks was back in service.

Transportation—it's what we came here to help with. We want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Our role here is to provide a quicker, easier, safer method of delivering the Gospel. Why does it have to be so hard sometimes? Ground transport is essential. Wings are ideal for getting over the mountains and water, but without a reliable ground vehicle we can't get to the airplane or perform other necessary logistical support work.

I purchased the Volkswagen when we first came to the Philippines two-and-a-half years ago. It was all we could afford with the little money that we got from the sale of our van in the States. The Bug has been put to very hard use since then – carrying up to seven people with boxes and bags tied on top. It's a real workhorse (when it's running) and gets no easy treatment. And it's doing it all on 1200 cc's... The engine was completely overhauled. We replaced the clutch and brake systems numerous times and completely re-wired it. However, no matter what we do to it, it's still a '69 Volkswagen—small, rusty, tired and worn.

We genuinely need a reliable vehicle with more space - something we can get parts for easily - something that will withstand the abuses of mission life. After careful consideration of vehicles, we have set a goal of \$25,000 for a small cab-over flatbed truck that will help us logistically support the air operations and up to two-dozen frontier missionary teams. We are praying that God will supply this need. If God is speaking to you regarding this project, please mark your gifts for the **Philippines Project Vehicle Fund**.

To those of you who faithfully support our family – thank you! We literally can't do this work without you! 🙏



FLIGHT LOG

Around the World in 60 seconds

Alaska

Tent-making mission opportunities abound! AWA is seeking aviators with a heart for native ministry. Stable family teams comprised of at least one member qualified for flight & maintenance and another with medical or education certification. The aviator should be able to exercise the spiritual gift of helps in friendship evangelism. When not involved in aviation duties, there is opportunity for mentoring village youth in small engine and equipment repair. State salaries are often available for qualified medical and education professionals.

The strategy requires that the family become part of the community to identify needs and opportunities. Short-term mission teams could augment needs requiring outside expertise. Denominationally owned housing is available for use in several communities. If God has given you a burden and the skills to do this type of work, please contact AWA.

Airplane Needed

Roughly thirty native villages lie within a 60-mile radius of Dillingham. Roads are almost nonexistent. A pastor/pilot is currently stationed in Dillingham, but must depend upon others for transportation. If you or someone you know owns a Cessna 172 that is under-utilized, donating or lend-leasing it to AWA would place it where it will make a difference in people's lives now and for eternity.

Philippines

Project Manager Needed

With flight operations commencing, the need for a project manager is becoming more pronounced. If God has blessed you with the gift of management and you enjoy working cross-culturally in a job that really makes a difference, AWA needs you!

In addition to overseeing the day-to-day operations normally associated with management, duties would include interfacing with Customs, Immigration, Air Transport Office, Bureau of Internal Revenue, and Securities and Exchange Commission while processing paperwork for the corporation, personnel, and aviation operations. The manager would also be responsible for facilitating short-term missionary teams involved in various evangelistic outreach projects.

Hangar Needed

Basing at Manila International Airport meets short-term needs, but is impractical for sustained operations. AWA's resident engineer has approved a corrugated steel arch building concept. The structure would be designed to withstand typhoon winds and be both portable and expandable to meet the changing needs over the years. The building design incorporates shipping containers on the sides that function as walls and secure storage area.

If you have an interest in helping AWA-Philippines acquire such a building, please contact AWA. 🙏

God's Ways – Past Finding Out

by Marcio Costa

It was another hot sunny day in the little village in the interior. The afternoon temperature drove most people into the shade. A few chickens, horses, and cattle also seeking relief disturbed the quiet of the dusty streets. Amidst this scene a young woman walked the streets with a three-year-old son in her arms. The boy had been seriously ill. She had no sleep the night before. Morning found her still awake hoping for a miracle.

she needed. In her limited knowledge of God, she made a vow of faith; if her only remaining son survived that terrible epidemic, she would rename her son after the priest.

The boy's life was spared and he grew up running up and down the dusty streets of that little village. Little Isaac's name (originally named after his grandfather - a Jewish immigrant) was changed to Marcio Donizeti as vowed. Father Donizeti lived for a long time in the small town of Tambau in the State of Sao Paulo. Many "miracles" happening in

the region are still attributed to him. As I grew up, I learned about my name. In my early teen years I was reunited with my brother John. My father decided to gather all available resources and move to a larger city.

The predicaments of life in isolated villages are nothing for-

the weight limitations. Somebody came with more supplies to be hauled. My friend looked at me and hesitantly asked: "Would you mind staying in this village for now? We really need to take those supplies to another village and the airplane is already too heavy. I promise to pick you up tomorrow morning so we can resume our flights together. I said "yes" in a heartbeat. I was craving time in a little village.

Although our family has been planning and working towards launching as missionaries to Guyana, God has other plans we don't fully understand. Sometimes our immediate understanding is not part of the equation in God's plan.

I remember when we first arrived in Berrien Springs. Our friends in AWA were still mourning the loss of Jeff Tackenko. You might remember him. Jeff was a missionary pilot preparing to launch with his family to Guyana. After returning from a survey trip to the interior of Guyana he was diagnosed with the leukemia that took his life a few months later leaving a wife and two children. We had no doubt that God personally called Jeff to aviation ministry. How do we recon-



Marcio flying the Project Airpower plane during a training session near Pacific Union College.

Now she wandered aimlessly. A few people dared to ask: "Is little Mark okay?"

Exhausted and denying the reality she replied: "Yes, he is better!" Indeed he suffered no more, but little Mark was dead. The young woman wandered hoping to meet someone who could help her. Help never came.

Little Mark was the second son to die that year. About seven months earlier, her youngest son of 5 months also died. Now she faced a hard decision - what to do with the other two children. In desperation she gave away the oldest son, John to her in-laws and kept only one son who shortly became sick. It was during this distress that she heard about a missionary working in a village near by. An Italian priest of whom it was rumored performed many miracles. A miracle was what

eign to me. In fact, during my trips to the mission field I saw myself in the little kids running naked in the dusty paths. Though concerned with flying and the logistics involved, I understood what life was about in those places. These little villages always make me feel closer to "home". The smells and sounds fill my mind with memories.

While flying with a friend in Guyana there was a time when the airplane was barely within





Marcio and Laura standing with the Project Airpower plane prior to a training session.

cile these events? Why would God call him to missions when He knew leukemia was at the door?

We all struggle with questions for which there are no answers. For two years a member of our family has struggled with a disease making it inappropriate for us to go to the mission field. We have prayed about this matter and have tried to go off medication, but God has not granted us relief. After a long period of prayerful consideration we have painfully concluded that going to the jungles of Guyana is not possible at this time. We plan to participate in short-term mission trips, visit churches and encourage our brethren and sponsors to continue their support of missions. We plan to work with young people to motivate them for Christian service and missions.

I don't understand God's plan for our family, but I'm very sure He has a plan. Although we are very thankful for all the support and encouragement received in this very blessed country, we do NOT intend to remain here. We deeply appreciate the opportunity to study at Andrews University and the Theological Seminary where I have developed a passion for SDA church history. When our education is complete we plan to go to another country (maybe back to Brazil) where our skills can make the difference in the lives of many other little Marks and, by the grace of God, work more effectively for our church.

Surely, wherever God places us in the future we will remain attached to missionary

aviation ministry - either starting a project or promoting the growth of one already in place. In pursuit of our youth ministry work with AWA, I plan to be in Pennsylvania with the Pathfinder Airplane the first week of May for the Pathfinder Fair at Blue Mountain Academy.

There are two little crosses in a forgotten little town in the interior of Brazil to remind us that maybe, just maybe, you and I still have a work to do in the behalf of those who live in ignorance of God. Do you have that hope? Will you share?

Sincerely,
Marcio Donizeti Costa

(In memory of my two little brothers, Mark and Junior, who did not make it.)

Editor's Note: Donations marked for the Costa's will continue to fund Marcio's youth ministry activities with AWA. Those who wish to continue supporting missionaries to Guyana are encouraged to support the LaBore Family. 🙏

Where is Blackwell?

Continued from page 5

and Berrien Springs?"

"No. The two planes we have here are in preparation for use overseas," I answered.

"I put my Grumman Tiger up for sale last week. I can't justify keeping it. Jesus is coming soon, I want AWA to have it!"

"Do you want to put it on leaseback for training purposes?" I questioned.

"No, I'm signing it over to AWA. Come pick it up." He graciously responded.

The second coat was placed on the road!

February 2005 AWA signed a lease contract, registered for business in the state of Oklahoma and obtained insurance to cover operations.

March 2005 Greg Thompson and Andy Klein ferried a partially donated Cessna 182 from Collegedale, TN to Blackwell. The LaBores, Andy and Greg have taken up temporary residence in the mobile home at the Blackwell-Tonkawa Airport. Andy and Laura are working on Instrument and Commercial flight training as well as setting up shop, pumping gas and getting to know the community.

Jesus is riding the colt and we are all cheering! 🙌

Letter From the President

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today's developing nation environment.

As March passed so did the 10th anniversary of the founding of this humble ministry. Corporately and personally, we've been stretched to the limit. Building a base in the Philippines, re-launching the Guyana project, running youth mission trips to Alaska and starting a training center in Oklahoma this year takes us way beyond our limits and requires human, physical and financial capital AWA doesn't have.

Impossible? Humanly, yes. Terrified? Momentarily. Then I recall God's instructions to Joshua before entering Canaan. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9 NIV

Captain God has turned on the **Fasten Seatbelt** sign. We've obeyed. We are about to experience the ride of our lives!

Is He prompting you to join us? 🙏

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am both awed and terrified. Awed at what I've seen God do in the past few months; terrified because it appears He plans to take us well beyond our abilities - again.

Having recently returned from the Philippines I am thoroughly impressed at how much is being done with so little. Every penny invested in the Philippines is yielding handsome returns for the Kingdom. Please allow me to share a few responses: "AWA saved my brother-in-law's life, we are so thankful you are here," stated the Ministerial Secretary, North Philippine Union Mission.

"You don't know how many have come talking of building an airstrip in our municipality. Nothing has happened. This is an answer to prayer!" exclaimed the Mayor of Aborlan, Palawan.

"I must confess; I didn't believe that the plans we discussed years ago regarding radios and air support of our missionaries would ever become reality," remi-

nised the director of Philippine Frontier Missions.

"Thank you for helping with the evacuation of one of our student missionaries. You went above and beyond the call of duty," writes the Adventist Frontier Missions Asia Supervisor.

"I will donate the land, help with the construction of a runway and a church, and I'll cover the salaries of missionaries if we can find people willing to plant a church among my people," promised the Ambassador.

An Alangan tribesman on the banks of the Amnay River, Occidental Mindoro, with tears in his voice exclaimed, "We are not forgotten!"

Since the plane started flying last July, God has allowed AWA to open two community airstrips. AWA is the only organization in the country authorized to use those strips. The villagers are happy. The government is pleased. AFM missionaries are ecstatic to be on the receiving end of supplies dropped by flights made from one of the airstrips.

After five years of searching and praying, God showed us a piece of land that is to become a forward airbase in Sagpangan, Palawan. This site will allow the opening of mission work in at least six people groups in Palawan Province. Just six days after AWA-Philippines Board voted to move forward in faith to acquire the property, God impressed an unsolicited donor to cover the down payment!

On the home front, February 1, AWA signed an agreement to assume management of the Blackwell-Tonkawa Airport. As I write, Greg Thompson conducts flight-training exercises with Laura LaBore and Andy Klein in preparation for deployment to the field. God has directed AWA to go for broke in establishing a missionary training center in Blackwell, Oklahoma where planes and people will be prepared for service in

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Don Starlin
President



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