



# Mission Report

## Aviation Maintenance Project

### *The Stevenson Family*



### *Night of the Bird Strike*

Driving at night can have its own set of challenges, and likewise, so can flying. It's fun to fly at night, and just like during the day, we have to stay vigilant. There are some things, though, that regardless of whether it's day or night are just simply out of your control. That's why we pray before each flight we take, and had it not been for a prayer before leaving for Wilson Industrial Airport this story may have ended much worse.

We had been traveling by car or plane (depending on the weather) for five days of the week, for two weeks, for an evangelistic series held at the Wilson church. We had a tandem flight this evening. Pastor Ric, Kyle, and I were flying at the lead in the Mooney (one of

our homeland missions planes), and Global Operations Manager, Ray Young and his wife, Julie, were flying in the Toku Hana right behind us. We had just taken off from the Johnston Regional Airport runway with Kyle in command of the controls. He and Ric were finishing their take-off checklist.

"Landing gear up, I've cleared all my obstacles. My take off checklist is complete," Kyle said as he and Ric began adjusting the throttle. Our heading was set and Kyle began a right hand turn to the east toward Wilson. In the midst of the turn, just as Kyle was dialing in the mixture - WHUMP!

Ric and Kyle looked at each other, then at the gauges.

"Was that the engine?" Ric pondered aloud. He and Kyle checked the RPM's, and oil pressure. All was well. "No," he continued, "I think we hit a bird."

Scanning out the windows, Kyle looked at the left wing and noticed something dark on the leading edge towards the wing tip.

"Yeah, we hit something. Look at the wing," Kyle urged.

Something black was stuck to the wing. Taking back the controls, Ric radioed that we would make an emergency landing back at Johnston Regional - we had struck a bird!

Once we landed, returned to the hangar, and got out, we saw the damage. It was far worse than we



thought. A gaping hole now sat in the leading edge of the wing with feathers and aftermath of the encounter, inside and out. The Mooney was not going to Wilson tonight! Ray and Julie were tired from events earlier in the day, and encouraged us to take the Toku Hana. It was getting late and we needed to be in Wilson. The Young's left for the evening and we set off in the Toku Hana. Kyle didn't fly though, as he'd had enough excitement for the night. I took over with Ric. No more strikes occurred that night, but what an experience it was!

Work is being done to repair the wing. As it turned out, once the bird remains were sent out for testing, we learned it was a male Jamaican Ruddy Duck which is an invasive species to North Carolina. What on earth he was doing out for an

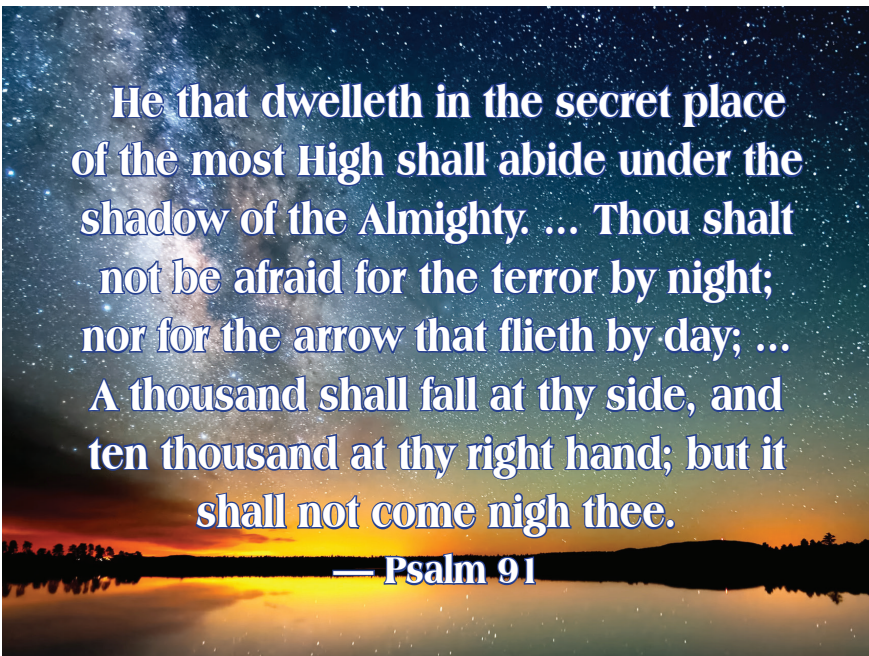
evening flight we don't know, but it was a blessing he hit the wing where he did and not the windshield or propeller - otherwise we may have been hurt.

Kyle's sheet metal talents will come in handy now as he works to restore the wing to being airworthy again. Your prayers keep us safe, and your donations help us keep flying and make possible the repairs and maintenance for the expected and unexpected needs, at home and afar.

Thank you for being a part of the Maintenance Project adventures with us. Our victory is yours! And in case you're wondering, four people were baptized from the meetings in Wilson. Praise the Lord!

*Blessings,*

*Kyle & Rebecca Stevenson*



Your AWA Mission Family stationed at AWA Headquarters in Smithfield, NC:  
Kyle, Rebecca, & Hadahsa Stevenson