



LifeLink

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At the Sahara's edge

N'DJAMENA, Chad – At the edge of the Sahara Desert, violent thunderstorms can divert pilots from their flight path.

Intense solar heat rising from nine million square kilometers of barren land produces strong up currents that affect weather patterns around the world, while triggering severe storms along the desert's southern border in Chad.

Kalvin Hildebrandt of Abbotsford, BC, faces these storms as he pilots a five-passenger C206 for Mission Aviation Fellowship.

His wife Dorilee has learned how to handle flight following for MAF, closely tracking the position of Calvin's plane via HF radio from the compound at N'Djaména — with a baby on her lap and her two other young daughters playing close by.



Flight following ... Dorilee Hildebrandt with Julia

MAF flights in Chad support remotely located Bible translators, the evangelistic outreach of Chadian pastors and essential

humanitarian work, including medical clinics and clean water projects.

Because of mission aviation, field workers save many days of travel along unsafe or flooded roads, and they can reach areas that have no roads.

“Southern Chad goes under water for about five months every year,” says Dave Davis, who works with TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission) in providing leadership training to the Chadian church.

“We regularly use MAF for speed and ease in reaching places that are remote or cut off for several months of the year.”

Among African nations, Chad has the largest number of language groups not yet reached with the Gospel. Its population of 7.5 million is about 50 percent Muslim, 30 percent Christian and 20 percent animist.

Bible translation work is underway in 17 languages, while 78 other Chadian languages have been identified as needing translations.

Christians celebrated the completion of the Kera language New Testament last year following years of dedicated work by Canadian translators with SIL (Wycliffe).

Chadian church officials credit Canadian missionaries in the 1920's with being the first to bring the Gospel to this nation.

Since that time, many southerners who previously practised animism have become strong Christians and effective leaders.

continued inside...



First MAF Flight ...

In this 1946 photo, pilot Betty Greene (1920-1997) looks out of the Waco biplane on the day of the first MAF flight. Her mission was to fly two passengers to the Wycliffe Bible Translators jungle training camp in Mexico.

This year, Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada is celebrating 30 years as part of the MAF family!

We're still young, compared with the MAFs launched in the UK, USA and Australia right after World War 2. But we Canadians make a big contribution to MAF today. Fifty Canadian families are among the 450 MAF families serving in more than 30 countries – as pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, flight instructors, school teachers and office staff.



Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada
264 Woodlawn Road West
Guelph, Ontario N1H 1B6

Website: www.mafc.org



MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada works with other MAF groups around the world to serve isolated communities in 30 nations. At present, ministry opportunities* are available for:

- Pilots (with Commercial IFR Licence)
- Pilot/Engineers
- Aircraft Maintenance Engineers
- Avionics Technicians
- Radio/Computer Technicians
- Base/Operations Managers
- School Teachers

*One year of Bible college or equivalent required in addition to technical qualifications.

Please contact:
Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada
264 Woodlawn Road West
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You can also apply online at
www.mafc.org/apply.htm

Or call us toll-free: 1-877-351-9344

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We exist to demonstrate God's love through aviation, communications, and logistics to meet spiritual and physical needs. Our vision is that all people have access to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the resources to meet their needs.

MAF Canada is a charter subscriber to the Canadian Council of Christian Charities' seal of financial accountability.

At the Sahara's Edge... Continued from front page.

Now these Chadians, backed by vibrant congregations, are reaching further north and east into Arabic areas with a vision of winning their whole nation for Jesus Christ.

Ten years ago, they started a nation-wide evangelism campaign known as Chad for Christ, involving most of the major denominations in prayer, fasting, and two weeks of active evangelism each December.

Through the years, MAF has provided flights for the organizers and their supplies, as well as air-to-ground radio support to help team leaders oversee the hundreds of church volunteers who get involved in visits to new villages.

MAF has also supplied generators to allow for multiple showings of the *JESUS* film. When the film was shown in Chadian Arabic recently, 5,000 people heard the Christian message for the first time in their lives.

As Chad for Christ volunteers enter each new village, they clean litter from public areas, then hold soccer games or horse races to attract the attention of young people and civic leaders.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of

the campaign is that a Chadian pastor or missionary will stay to live in the village for a year to minister to those who have made commitments to follow Jesus Christ.



On safari ... Calvin Hilderbrandt loads medical supplies at Koblagué, Chad

"Apart from prayer, the key is to train people, the right people," Rev. René Daidanso, associate general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals for Africa, said in the early years of Chad for Christ.

His thinking proved right. Hundreds of thousands of Chadians today are living for

Christ because of this outreach.

Support for ministries

MAF currently operates two C206s in Chad and employs 20 Chadian workers who serve as administrators, accountants, flight bookers, hangar assistants and guards.

"MAF Chad only has authorization to fly for mission and church. If someone else requests us specifically, we can apply for permission for an NGO (non-government organization) flight," explains Calvin.

"Our main service is to World Vision, TEAM, AIM, WEC, CSI, the Baptist Mid-Mission, SIL (Wycliffe)

and numerous arms of the Evangelical Church of Chad. It is very exciting and rewarding, flying so directly for so many ministries."

MAF also provides frequent flights for medical teams. Calvin regularly handles these special tournées known as "medical safaris," making stops at clinics in seven remote villages over three days.

Health problems in Chad are aggravated by insufficient food and clean water. With only three physicians available per 100,000 persons, Chad ranks near the bottom of nations in terms of health care provided to its people.

"Safaris begin Monday morning. MAF pays for the flight to and from the hospital in Bebelem to pick up the doctor, nurse and medical supplies," says Calvin.

Bible message

Before Calvin and the medical team arrive, the pastor of the clinic provides a Bible message for perhaps 40 people awaiting treatment as daytime temperatures creep above 44 degrees Celsius.

While the doctor attends to patients, Calvin sits down with clinic staff, goes through the list of medicines available, and counts out the required number of pills.

"I never thought I was going to be a pharmacist coming to Chad!" he muses.

"Once this job is done, I go and prepare the airplane and airstrip for departure to the next village. The airstrips on these safaris are often rough and soft. Typically, there are animals (usually goats) crossing during landing or takeoff."

Please pray for the ongoing work of MAF and other missions in Chad.

Chad has experienced political instability since 1965. Today, insecurity continues in the northeast at the Sudan border, while new border problems have arisen with the Central African Republic in the south.

Please pray for the safety of our pilots flying in challenging weather – and for faithful endurance for their families living in isolated conditions in an unfamiliar culture.

Above all, pray that many more Chadians will come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.



Medical dispensary ... at Ham, Chad, one of the stops on the MAF safari

"Who can speak our language with such brilliance?"

N'DJAMENA, Chad – When an evangelism team showed a Christian film in French/Arabic in a small Chadian village in late December, the local people at first seemed unenthusiastic.

Ready to bring the meeting to a close, the team leader asked a Christian man to pray. This man stood up and, in a loud voice, proceeded to praise and thank God. People were stunned at his words.

They wondered, "Who can speak our language with such brilliance?"

Many others quickly came out of their houses and gathered around as the level of enthusiasm grew.

As a result, the meeting's closing prayer turned out to be the opening of a new meeting that continued as if it had just begun.

The meeting went on late into the night, with many people committing their lives to Jesus Christ.



A more traditional safari ... Dromedaries along the road in Chad, Africa



MAF flights aid the starving in Angola

“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food ...”

James 2: 15 - 26

LUBANGO, Angola – MAF flights are supporting the relief agencies that have come to the aid of starvation-threatened Angolans trapped in interior villages by land mines and troop movements during the final stages of the civil war.

Angola's 27-year war ended last April, but peacetime soon revealed what Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) described as “one of the worst nutritional emergencies seen in Africa in a decade.”

MSF set up emergency feeding centres in several crisis areas, including Chipindo, and MAF began flying in supplies on a regular basis.

“We go into Chipindo about twice a week shuttling people, medicine, vaccines and various other cargo,” says Canadian pilot Tim Smith of Ottawa, who has been serving with MAF in Angola since 1997. He and his wife Sandra live at Lubango with their two young children.

The airstrip at Chipindo is short and technically demanding for pilots. Nearby are visible reminders of a recently fought battle: ground war trenches and the three burned-out army tanks on which children now play.

Chipindo was one of the towns from which UNITA rebels planned to attack the capital in 1999. Last year, troops moved 18,000 people into the town and left them with no access to food or farmland.

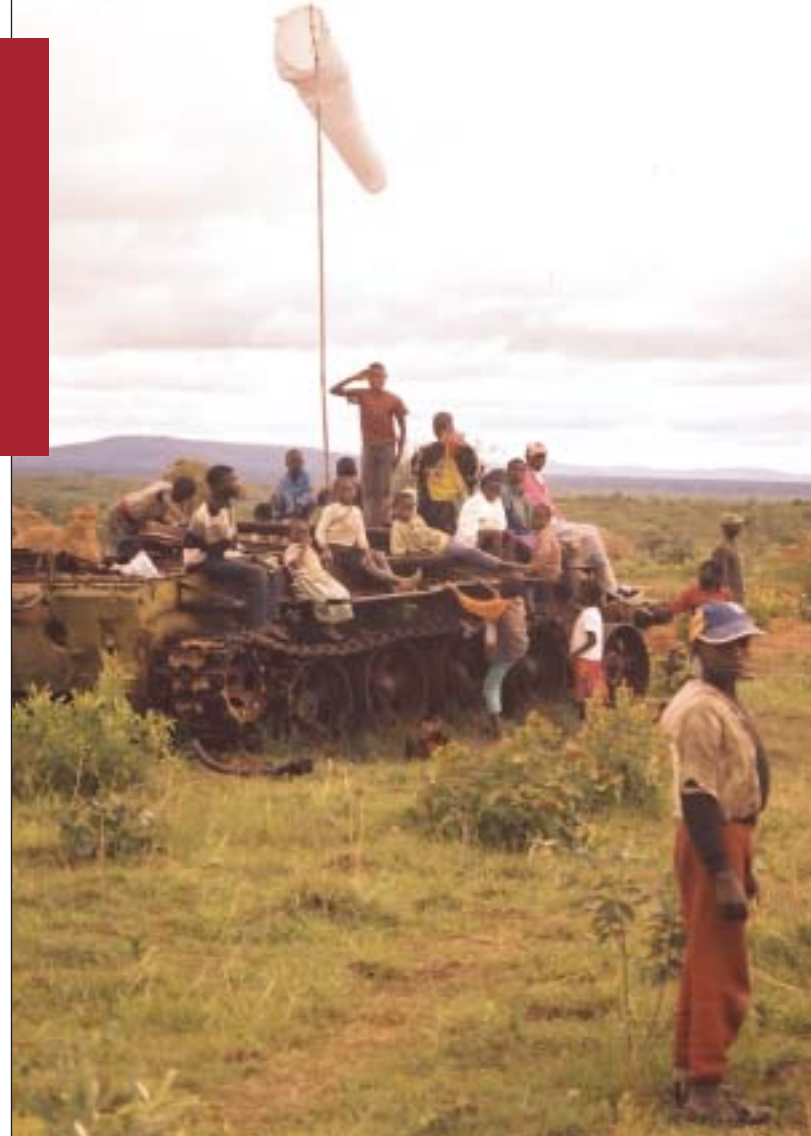
By the time aid workers arrived, thousands had starved to death, beginning with the youngest.

“We have seen hardly any little children under five,” reports Mercedes Tatai, an MSF health worker at Chipindo. “A whole hill has been covered with fresh graves since September.”



TIM SMITH PHOTO

Arm-in-arm ... Two boys walk together so that the boy with the amputation can also be mobile. Angola's long civil war is over, but 100,000 Angolans now face life as amputees -- and 800,000 children are orphans.



Chipindo ... Destroyed army tanks at Chipindo have become a play area for children.

Work in Angola continues to be difficult for all aid agencies. In November, seven MSF health care workers and patients, including a baby, were killed when their truck ran over an anti-tank mine.

“Many areas of Angola have been decimated and there are still millions of land mines keeping people from returning to their homes and fields,” says MAF Canada chief pilot Jeff Plett, who visited Chipindo in November.

The long war killed about two million Angolans and drove another four million from their home villages as they fearfully searched for places of refuge.

Two short-term MAF families from Kamloops, BC have joined the Smith family at Lubango: pilot Gary Goertzen, his wife Tammy and their three children, and aircraft maintenance engineer Tim Huebner and his wife Barbara.

Tim and Gary fly to various other destinations, in addition to Chipindo, where displaced people are located, including Caconda, Kalukembe and Vicungo.

Each site has multiple aid organizations working there at different times. In addition to MSF, these include AICF (Action internationale contre la faim), ZOA Refugee Care of the Netherlands, the World Food Program, Norwegian People's Aid and the Mines Advisory Group.

JEFF PLETT PHOTO

Blankets for Northern Bangladesh



Blanket delivery ... MAF's Turbo Beaver is loaded with blankets needed by the poor in Bangladesh during a record cold snap.

DHAKA, Bangladesh – Hazy conditions lifted enough to allow MAF to fly thousands of blankets into northern Bangladesh for distribution to the poor during extremely cold weather.

The unusual cold caused the deaths of about 700 Bangladeshis in December and January.

MAF was asked to help out with its de Havilland Turbo Beaver based in Dhaka. Blankets were delivered to Faith Bible Church, LAMB Hospital, Friendship Hospital Ship and Impact Floating Hospital.

Equipped with amphibious floats, the aged but rugged Canadian-made Beaver serves land, river and coastal areas. A 40-minute MAF flight saves more than 12 hours of travel by river transport.

MAF safety officer Larry Heintz, a Canadian based at the MAF operations centre in Ashford, UK, was in Dhaka last year to deliver needed parts for the aircraft engine and floats. While there, he also held a medivac course and reviewed staff training needs.

In Bangladesh, MAF charters for air ambulance and medical teams, as well as disaster preparedness, aerial surveys and relief operations. Government officials use MAF to assess the needs of remote areas.

Prone to cyclones, earthquakes and floods, Bangladesh has suffered through more than 170 large-scale disasters since 1970.

Lessons daily



Our guest columnist in this issue of *Life Link* is Calvin Hildebrandt, the Canadian pilot featured in our front page article on Chad, Africa.

Since March of 2001, Calvin has been serving with MAF in N'Djaména, the capital of Chad, where he lives with his wife Dorilee and their three young daughters. His flights increasingly are taking him farther beyond the capital into Arabic areas where people have not yet heard the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.



A street scene in Chad, Africa

One night last November I lay awake, unable to relax. I was staying at a Christian orphanage in an Arabic area of eastern Chad. The day had been full of many activities.

From the orphanage, I had flown several missionaries to a very remote village 800 km from N'Djaména where a new evangelistic work has been started among an unreached people group.

We had an exciting visit with the village leaders and the new missionary families placed into this difficult area.

Now, tired from the day but unable to sleep, I lay awake listening to the awful braying of donkeys across the wall.

Donkeys are useful in a poor country such as Chad, but that night they seemed anything but pleasant creatures.

In the midst of my frustration over the noise they were making while I was trying to sleep, God reminded me this was exactly the animal that Jesus Christ rode upon when He entered Jerusalem shortly before His crucifixion.

It wasn't because nothing else was available, but because He had chosen to come to us as a humble servant – and not to take on the desirable things of this earth.

Philippians 2:7, 8 says Jesus made himself nothing, and took on the form of a servant. He “humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Matthew 21:5 quotes the Old Testament prophecy: “Behold, your King comes to you, meek and sitting upon a donkey.”

I thank God that He chooses to teach us and that He wants us to know Him more, even at the most unexpected of times.

Now, every time I hear a donkey, I will remember the example of our humble King, who put up with the unpleasant things of this world to glorify His heavenly Father.

May we joyfully follow the King of Kings!

Together with you in His service,

Kalvin Hildebrandt, Pilot
Mission Aviation Fellowship
Chad, Africa

May We Introduce...

The Feunekes family

Hugo and Erica Feunekes and their children are preparing to leave Canada for Papua, Indonesia, where Hugo plans to serve as an avionics technician.

Hugo's contacts with MAF go back to his early school years in the Netherlands, when the Christian school he attended raised funds for MAF ministry in Indonesia.

He received his avionics diploma in the Netherlands, but when he could not find work there, he came to Canada at age 21 on a working holiday. A week later, he met Erica and decided to settle here.

After he and Erica were married, Hugo was hired by Pacific Avionics and Instruments Ltd at the Vancouver International Airport in Richmond, BC. He has been working as a bench repair and aircraft technician for more than four years, and in the meantime, has also earned his aircraft maintenance engineer's licence.

Erica was born into a Christian family in Fergus, ON. Early in life, she developed a desire to serve the Lord.

The family moved to British Columbia when she was 13 years old, and after high school, Erica enrolled in a professional office assistant program at Trend College in New Westminster, BC.

In the following 4-1/2 years of employment, Erica's duties took her from reception to cash flow management and network administration.

Hugo and Erica have three children, born in 1998, 2000 and 2001. Because three-year-old Christiaan has sensorineural hearing loss, and needs to be refitted with new ear molds and have his hearing tested on a regular basis as he grows, Hugo and Erica have elected to serve a short term first.

Christiaan's older sister Mikah enjoys learning sign language so that she can communicate better with her brother.

The Feunekes family was featured in a Dec. 17, 2002 newspaper article published in British Columbia.

Afterward, a letter to the editor expressed appreciation for the story and the family's commitment to serve (reprinted below, courtesy of *The Aldergrove Star*, part of the Metro Valley News Group).

Flying high with MAF

Editor, the News:
Thank you for running the Metro Valley News article featuring the Feunekes family heading to Indonesia ... It struck a chord in the heart of anyone who has flown with MAF.

Years ago we flew with their excellent pilots and equipment on a number of occasions in eastern and central Brazil ... The help they bring to isolated Bible translators and medical people can't be described adequately. Many will wish the Feunekes God's blessing and protection as they set out for an area of the world that is torn with problems.

Ted Laskowski
Abbotsford, BC

If you are not currently supporting MAF on a regular basis and are considering how you can get involved, please consider supporting Hugo and Erica Feunekes.

Your gifts, combined with those of other ministry partners, will be used to provide our missionaries with such needs as housing, children's education and medical care. Even a monthly gift of \$20 or \$25 can go a long way toward providing for these needs.

To begin your support of Hugo and Erica Feunekes, or any other missionary featured in this or any issue of Life Link, simply indicate your preference on the enclosed response card, and send it to us with your next monthly gift.

Notes...

Tensions in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela – MAF ministry has been affected by political tensions in Venezuela, where a general strike against President Hugo Chavez provoked street fighting, disrupted oil production and seriously devalued the currency.

Several church missions pulled out staff members, while travel warnings prevented new work teams from entering the country.

"Devaluation of the local currency is making it very difficult for organizations. The current crisis is also limiting the fuel we can get for our aircraft," says Dennis Fulton, chief operating officer for MAF-US, responsible for the work in Venezuela.

"Our staff is doing well, and we continue to monitor the security side of things."

At present, MAF has five families and three aircraft in the country. MAF has served Venezuela since 1958.

Training school in Botswana

GABORONE, Botswana – Canadian aircraft maintenance engineer Ken Baerg, seconded from MAF to Flying Mission, has been setting up a training school for aircraft mechanics in Botswana.

"It has been a very busy time, coming up with the regulations covering the school, how it fits into Flying Mission, what's expected of the students, how it's run, the syllabus, and the school procedure manual," he writes.

In December, the manual received the hoped-for approval from Botswana's department of civil aviation. Flying Mission previously sponsored students to do basic training in South Africa, but the current plan is to have all needed training take place in Botswana.

Evacuation from central Africa

YALOKE, Central African Republic – When rebel fighting broke out, missionaries fled the capital Bangui and drove more than 12 hours to Yaloke, where they stayed until they could be evacuated.

"All airstrips in the country were closed," write MAF missionaries Brad and Kristian Westom, based in Yaloke. "The local military made Brad put

rocks on the runway in Yaloke so no airplanes could land or take off."

They add: "After a frustrating week of going through different military channels, Brad was able to gain permission to pick up an elderly Baptist couple unable to leave their village because soldiers had blocked the roads."

He later received authorization to fly another family to Cameroon. This family's house had been totally looted in the fighting at Bangui.

Bibles for Mongolia

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia – MAF affiliate Blue Sky Aviation flew a Bible Society staff member from Undurkhaan to Ulaanbaatar and back for a meeting with an expert translator from Korea concerning Gospel translation work for Mongolia.

Among topics discussed was the best word to use for God. Some Mongolian Christians use the Buddhist term "burhan" for God even though it is already in use for the Mongolian national deity.

The same flight allowed a New Tribes Mission family to buy winter supplies in Ulaanbaatar.

Thanks from Uganda

KAMPALA, Uganda – From Kalongo Hospital, Dr. Egidio Tocalli sends this message: "Only thanks to MAF services can we survive, as you transport people, drugs, and milk and food for children. Thank you for bringing blood from Nakasero blood bank to save the lives of so many children and adults. Thank you, dear MAF, for the wonderful mission God entrusted to you, in time of peace and also especially in time of war!"

With heavy fighting in northern Uganda, and many women and children losing their lives, more aid agencies are flying into the area with MAF.

"Many recent flights have come as a response to the security situation in the north," says Godfrey Kitaganda, MAF operations manager at Kampala.

Some people fleeing the fighting have relocated to Lira, central Uganda, where MAF recently flew two Médecins Sans Frontières staff members involved in preparing medical aid for displaced people.

Gideon outreach

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar – Ten days of MAF flights in southern Madagascar enabled David Pankar of Gideons International to establish new groups, visit schools and prisons, and distribute Bibles.

David shared the Gospel with 400 prisoners in Tulear, where local churches will be following up his work.

Meanwhile, Canadian pilot/engineer Keith Ketchum traveled to Naples for repairs on the Viator, which will return to service in Madagascar.

Church growth in Sudan

TAMBURA, Sudan – Members of Revival Fire Ministries flew with MAF to Tambura in southern Sudan for an evangelistic campaign in the camp for displaced people at Mambia.

When they explained the Gospel, a large number responded and committed their lives to Jesus Christ. A local Dinka church of only 12 members is now 112 strong.

"The church leaders were beside themselves with joy," says team leader Roger West. Christian workers use MAF in the Sudan because roads are virtually impassable and insecurity persists.

Flights into DR Congo

KAMPALA, Uganda – MAF pilot Dave Jacobsson is continuing to fly into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but now from his new base in Uganda.

One flight took Dr Tony Ukety of Christian Blind Mission and his team to Dingila where he performed 35 eye operations, removing cataracts and treating cases of river blindness.

Dave has also flown for mission and aid groups providing for refugee camps around Oicha. Serious fighting has continued in eastern DRC, especially in Kivu and Ituri provinces, with little international attention despite the fact that many people there are suffering greatly.

New medical work in Somalia

DINSOR, Somalia – MAF has helped Médecins Sans Frontières start a new health centre in Dinsor, flying in four staff members and 700kg of medical supplies from Kenya. The new centre has the potential to care for as many as 100 patients a day.



Feunekes family ... Hugo and Erica, with Mikah, Christiaan and Aidan

To support the Feunekes family, or any other MAF missionary, simply send in the response card enclosed with your Life Link



30th Anniversary Gifts

Help us celebrate MAF Canada's 30th Anniversary with a special one-time gift of \$30 – or monthly gifts of \$30 each!

For the price of a cup of coffee a day, your 30th Anniversary gifts will help us purchase a new aircraft, enabling us to continue our ongoing relief flights in Angola, Africa.

MAF aircraft have logged more than 2.6 million miles in humanitarian flights in Angola in the past 10 years.

These miles have taken a toll on our aircraft.

If we are to continue delivering critical aid and relief to people in Angola, we will need to replace our C-GWOH (Wings of Hope) aircraft early in 2004.

This means we are looking to raise roughly \$1.4 million in one year.

When many give – each one giving what he or she is able to give – here's one way it can add up:

MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION	NUMBER OF PEOPLE GIVING	CONTRIBUTED IN ONE YEAR
\$30	2,000	\$720,000
\$60	1,000	\$720,000
		<hr/> Total \$1,440,000

To date, we have received almost \$77,000 for this new aircraft, including \$20,000 in monthly pledges through 2003.

Whatever monthly amount you can afford, please know that these tax-deductible gifts are needed to help us continue delivering the food and medical aid that Angola's victims of war so desperately need.



C-GWOH (Wings of Hope) ... at Kalukembe, Angola



You can donate online... It's easy to donate to Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada using our secure 128-bit encrypted donation form. Please come visit us at www.mafc.org/helpnow.htm!

Order your free Co-Pilot Coffee kit!

From coast to coast, supporters provide for the needs of MAF ministry through their prayers and finances.

One way to help is through an MAF Co-Pilot Coffee. It's a great way to promote the ministry of MAF to your family, closest friends, small church group, or service club.



Our free MAF Co-Pilot Coffee kit contains a simple step-by-step program, invitations, a party planner, an informative video, and much more. The entire meeting is designed to take no longer than one hour!

Imagine the difference a single hour can make in the lives of so many overseas.

To order your free kit, call us toll free at: 1.877.351.9344 or go online: www.mafc.org/coffee.htm.

You'll also receive a free stainless steel travel mug as our thanks for hosting an MAF Co-Pilot Coffee.