

In our little **Kiswahili-Quiz** I'll take you to our aircraft fuel station in Dodoma. They always want to know where I come from and where I'm going to fly to. When I don't fly on that day anymore I only say "kulala". What do you think does this mean?

In Africa **time** is of relative importance. The **good thing** is that people are more relaxed about unforeseen circumstances: On Friday I was supposed to start flying at 8:00 o'clock in order to collect a team in Mahaka but the engineers had to change a cable so I could not take off before 9:45. Thus the team simply waited in Mahaka (without knowing what was the cause). The next day I was in time but the team was 1,5 hours late because the only ambulance was needed as a hearse in the first place before they could take it for their shuttle service. So I enjoyed Makaha in the meantime ...

The **bad thing** about this relaxation: it does not make things easier for us pilots. As we have a strict last landing time every day, sometimes people do not understand why the tour comes 'suddenly' to an end. In the worst case we have to leave the last patients without treatment, otherwise the whole team and me would have to stay for the night in the bush.

Apart from that I'm waiting that you keep your promise to visit me here. Since Eivind left, my motorbike is waiting for a drive because I have no one to go with, and alone is boring. What about a safari with you? That would be fun!

Till then,
see you, Yours **Aerogero**



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Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth ... But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven ... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Matthew 6, 19-21 (read on until Verse 34!)

This is the very first newsletter ...



... in your hands which is **really** coming out of the bush:

Welcome on the runway in Chidudu where I brought the medical team for the Mother-Child-Health-Clinic.

When landing in Chidudu I could not touch down at the first 300 m for one very reason: The grass at the runway edge was so high that my left wing did not have enough space. So I had to ask again the village leader to get machetes, hatchets and people to clear the site so that I can use the whole runway for the takeoff later today.

I was sure I had to spend all day giving orders (otherwise the result might not be the one you would prefer), but one hour later everything was done. Thus I have now time for writing.

But first some **"pious words"** to begin with:

One time I got aware how many bags & else I have: one large backpack for hiking, a smaller one for daytrips, a tankrucksack for my motorbike, a bicycle bag, one for the pilot, some for shopping; then a private wallet, a second one for my pilot's duties, and so on.

Women in Tanzania have got a "Kanga", sort of wraparound skirt they use for everything: as skirt, for carrying children, to cushion head transports, as a curtain in our clinic huts, as cape, as bag or even as a purse while knotting the money into a corner of the cloth (where it is also secure from thieves).

And that's by far not all what they are using it for!

Sometimes I ask myself how much we really need; maybe we have forgotten what the upper bible verse says? Less can be more, and might help us to concentrate on what is really important in our life.

In **April** after the Mbeya Health Safari I flew together with my colleague Eivind to Kigoma, where he led the MAF sub base for the next two months. We enjoyed the life in this outstation and swam in Lake Tangajika which luckily is free of schistosomiasis (billharzia).

On the other hand I saw many people being destitute there although this area is much greener than Dodoma. This was even for me unusual and quite appalling.

In **May** to my own surprise I was in Germany for some days! I had to attend a training in England, and afterwards I could extend my flight to Hamburg for little money. Of course I could not miss this chance! Just before I had the information that there would be this training in England I had thought about how nice it were to see my family and friends face to face and then it became true! This was a perfect gift and I enjoyed every minute. At the same time, though, I felt pulled back to Tanzania because that's is my place and a task to fulfill! However – I was grateful for everyone I could see.

Besides: I'm planning to stay in Germany for two months next year, presumably between March and May. So, why don't you come by?

In **June** so many things happened they could have filled half a year easily. At first I did my MAF check flight which was due, later I had to fight with clouds



being suddenly in my way which were hidden in the haze; I spent a weekend in one National Park and another long weekend far from Dodoma, landed on the 178th airport of my career and spent a night in my favourite missionary's house in Kapenta:

A fascinating person, doing a great job: He is not just preaching but wants to help people with their daily problems. Therefore he sets up plantations where he tries out different fruits, breeds pigs, chicken and so on

for one reason: he wants to help the natives be not depended on a few plants. He set up a press for palm oil and wells for the villages and visits the many fishermen villages around Lake Rukwa by boat. I'd really like to go with him on one of these boat trips one day.

Now even the **July** is over, and most days are sort of unpredictable. As we pilots always have to be ready for a sudden change or flight request, it is so-

metimes not so easy to plan private appointments; it could be one week no flying, but it could also be that on Saturday evening (after I returned from guitar exercising in church) I get a phone call that instead of playing music in church I have to pick up a sick person somewhere next morning.

On the MAF compound I've got two new neighbours: Eivind opened a new sub base for MAF in Arusha; so Thomas, an Irish aircraft engineer, moved into his house.

A MAF family from Switzerland changed houses and lives next to us now.

For me as safety officer there is lots of work to do especially because the job was more or less vacant before I started.



Dear children,

On this picture you can see a game children scratched into Gero's runway. You certainly know the game? Moreover they build small cars from all sort of materials they can find (wood, wire...) and drive them.

Sometimes they are allowed to be on the roof rack of a driving car. This is of course too dangerous in your country, but you see, it's not boring here. And now your new task: Do you know when the sun goes down in your country?

In summer and winter?

And do you know how long dawn takes?

Guess the times in Tanzania!

Does by the way somebody see Gero's plane on the picture?

Lots of love from your Flying Tiger

Therefore I'm actually glad about some weeks with less flying so I can do all this office work.

MAF works mainly on donation basis which offers a huge advantage: even if we fly only two hours in two (still quite filled) days (e.g. on health safaris) we don't need to fear losing our existence.

A commercial flying company could never offer such a service as MAF does.

Since I was in Germany I started **a new project**:

Shortly before I left Tanzania a boy from the village Mpapa came to me and asked me if I could help him to finance his apprenticeship.

So I had the idea to take the wooden planes he just had sold to me and offered them to my friends in Germany for a much higher price in order to finance his apprenticeship. And it worked out better than I believed!

But now the boy has to carve a lot because those four planes he gave me could not satisfy the demand ...