

I will now start preparing for my home leave to Germany (March-May 2008). First appointments are made, and I am pretty sure that the 2.5 months will be much too short to see all those I would like to see.

Our last letter's Kiswahili riddle was all about the word "kulala". It means nothing but "sleep". The next one will be easy: What could the word "basi" mean (pronounce "bussy")? Think about an english word when you take away the "i" at the end; any ideas?

Life in Africa can be very beautiful, but usually there are less places to spend your leisure time as in the western world. So we painted badminton lines to the floor in our hangar, got a net, and now we have sports once a week!

Promised by many friends, put into action by two so far: a visit in Tanzania! You wouldn't believe what you're missing if you DON'T come! Meaning: Karibu sana!

I had already made bad experiences: If you want to send something (except a letter), please send as traceable parcel, with AWB number. Otherwise it may become unintended development aid...

Now, I wish you a great beginning of 2008! May it be a year of peace, not only on the outside, but inwards as well, in your heart! That's what the Prince of Peace came to our earth for.

See you! All the best, Yours,



(Aero)-gero

*Latest news:
I have got a German Sheperd!*

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Newsletter (Paper):

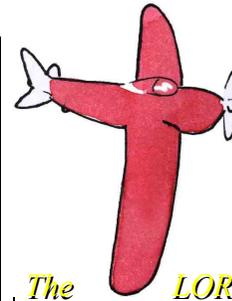
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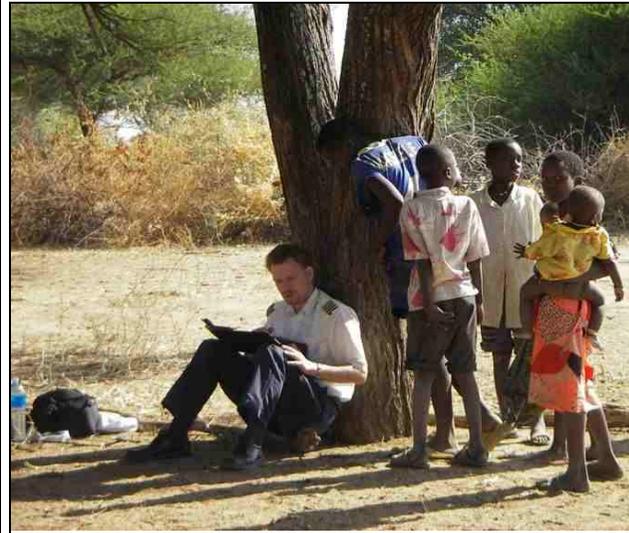
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*The LORD is my sheperd, I shall not be in want ...
HE guides me in paths of righteousness for HIS name's sake ... fr. Psalm 23*

What is the difference...



Mahaka: Children wonder about the hieroglyphs on my loadsheet

...between God and a water pump? Our preacher asked this in sunday service. A water pump is very common to people in Tanzania, so everybody was longing to hear the answer.

Some pumps cannot suck water if they run dry. So they have to be fed with a bit of water to give back a lot more. We feed the pump out of selfish ambition.

God on the contrary gives freely, and we don't need to "feed" HIM with good works, being nice, contributing

money, reading the Bibel etc. That does not work with God. It takes nothing but pure gratitude towards HIM for wanting to bless us with life to the fullest and accepting us as we are.

Think back to the movie "The Passion of the Christ": One of the fellows being crucified next to Jesus recieves eternal life during the last minutes of his life, although having been wicked throughout his lifetime, and now with nothing to "feed" anymore. He had made it. God will not wait for us to be a little bit good before HE is good to us. That is the true good news. HE acted first, and HE accomplished every necessary thing.

In Dodoma we are approaching the end of the 7 months dry season. Thanks to the rich rains in beinning of 2007, many standposts still run water, but all natur is already yearning for rain. Some trees, though, started to feature

fresh green, like a prophecy on the hopefully sufficient downpour between November and April.

This brings new challenges to our flying: runways become soft and slippery, the grass is growing like crazy, low clouds can cancel flights or force us to stop over. We are getting prepared for that by courses and flying practice.

The months flew by, and originally this letter should have been ditched into your mailbox by October...

In **July** and **August**, flights have been coming in heaves, so I could spend time on my safety officer job. After trying to build a suggestion box (from old plane scrap) I was asked to build a cash box for the MAF-Guesthouse, where drinks etc. may be paid. This "casket" is now set up in our guest house kitchen, entitiled "I am a recycled airplane".



New staff members came to join our MAF-family, others left. It is always a challenge to adjust to each other. I guess, the coming-and-going is just a never ending part of such a mission job.

In **September** I moved to Arusha for one month, to staff the new MAF sub base. Arusha is not the capital of Tanzania, but it seems to be, especially concerning tourism. 150 companies court for visitors with deep pockets, the (little) airport is the busiest in the whole country, and the crime rate is accordingly high. I was living safely on the Norwegian Lutheran Mission compound, which holds, in addition to their book shop, a MAF pilots house as well. Communications with Dodoma weren't always easy, but not due to technical problems. I realised that cultural difficulties do not only arise while working with tanzanian people...

Feeling rather like a vagabond there, I was glad to start the 500-km return trip to Dodoma in **October** with my Pikipiki. Another splendid experience: I usually fly that distance in 1.5 hrs by plane, now it took me a full 13 hours in two days. On one hand that showed me the importance of our flight service, on the other hand it gave me an amazing insight into the beauty of a land I use to look down at from far above: gravel, sand, rubble and few blacktop roads in merry alteration. sceneries of green trees changing into wastelands, changing again into hills grown over with banana trees. People everywhere waved friendly, interested, some of them even helped me to patch my front tire in which I found 3 holes.

Back again in Dodoma, I flew some health safaris, part of which we combine with bible studies in the bush villages: one Team would care for those waiting while the doctors treat, weigh, vaccinate and counsel children and adults.

Some maths: each month on our safaris, about 2000 (!) children are being

looked at, vaccinated if necessary, and many pregnant women and sick people are being checked. Considering how no one of the villagers could afford such a flying clinic, I am glad to be able to help providing these people with a doctor in various regions even if only once a month.

In **December** I was setting up candles, just like you. I though, needed to stop them from melting without burning, at an easy 100°F these days.

Sadly, I couldn't have my German-Christmas-Fruit-Cake orgies as earlier in my Lufthansa days - there was none available here.

Just in time for christmas then, I forced my education project again:

You still may remember the apprenticeship I mentioned in my last newsletter, which I paid for one guy by selling his wooden model aircraft.

Although I don't yet know how to get more aircraft, I saw the need of supporting more young people. Now I pay already two guys in that village Mpapa, and beyond that, I found some sponsors for two bible students in Dodoma who are trying hard but cannot get the whole school fees by themselves. Thus I encouraged my friends again to do

*Dear Children,
in your country it could sometimes take several hours until it is night.*

In Tanzania this takes only minutes: shortly before the sun sets, it is getting dark, ½ hour later it's pitch black all over. If you are not at home in time you should have a lamp with you, as only a few places have street lights.

Now a question for guessing again:

Most of the houses in the villages do not have a water tub. The people have to walk partly very long to reach a well, and then they have to carry the heavy water buckets on their heads all the way home. What do you think, how long or how far have some people to walk?

Just write your answers to Gero, you'll find all his contact details at the end of this letter.

Have fun, Yours Flying Tiger



something good for these and more guys, so they can at one stage care for their own future. If you have some ideas for me, just let me know. In all these projects, it is great to see those guys realizing they get a chance, and the changes which this encouragement does in them.

