

August 2, 2008

Dear friends and family,

August 16<sup>th</sup> was officially my two-year anniversary in Cameroon. I am so thankful to the Lord for the blessing of these last two years. In many ways my transition here has been relatively easy and I've been able to share many joys and successes with you. Unfortunately, although I was eager to write you about various aspects of my new life here in Banso, the last couple days have been a bit difficult and I need to share the difficult times with you as well. Friday evening, while returning at Banso from a nearby clinic with 4 doctors and nurses from the Banso hospital, I slid partway off the runway on landing and hit the tail of the Helio on a fence post. **Praise the Lord that no one was hurt and only the left stabilator was damaged.**



As I have mentioned in several previous emails, it is rainy season now. It starts raining about noon every day and often goes until 8 or 9 p.m. each night. I think we average at least 1" per day during this season. Just like cars tend to fishtail on ice, airplanes tend to slide on slippery runways, and long wet grass is very slippery. Although the weather reports throughout the afternoon had been good, my landing approach was de-stabilized by rapidly arriving rain and clouds, and once I touched down I started sliding towards the edge of the runway. I turned the airplane back towards the center of the runway, but it continued to slide sideways off the runway. I thank the Lord that he jarred my memory to apply full power to help pull the airplane back onto the runway so that only the stabilator hit the fence. It could have been much worse. This airstrip is one of the more difficult ones due to its "committed nature" – once you are close to the runway, you must land since the airplane does not have enough power to outclimb the surrounding terrain or steeply upsloped runway.



*Landing Banso after dropping off the Carmans in Yaoundé to leave on furlough*

Now what? First, I am busying writing several reports – one for our aviation department, one for the local civil aviation authority and one for the US FAA since this is a US registered aircraft. As part of this report, on Saturday another pilot and I reviewed the tire markings on the runway and damage to the aircraft. Next, we need to organize the visit of inspectors from the local aviation authority and then we can begin repairing the aircraft. **Please pray for us as we examine the aircraft, order parts and repair the Helio.**

So what am I learning? On the aviation side, I've learned the hard way just how quickly the weather can deteriorate here in Banso and how slippery a wet grass runway can be. Positively, I am reminded that even though I am "all alone" up here in Banso right now, I am not alone. The Lord is certainly here and the rest of the aviation team in Yaoundé is walking this road with me and will be organizing much of the repair so that I can focus on completing all the necessary paperwork. I am very thankful for the way they have come alongside me. **Please pray for me as I debrief with a number of people and deal personally with all the normal "what-if" and "if-only" thoughts as I prepare to "get back on the horse".**





*Landing at Kouhouat Health Center (see [www.petersonfamily.info/robert/gallery2](http://www.petersonfamily.info/robert/gallery2) for more)*

Although this email has already gotten long, I also need to mention that my parents left the US on August 16<sup>th</sup> to return to the Philippines to help with the Asian Training Institute as ESL teachers. This school is a part of Wycliffe and trains future translators and linguists to be Bible translators. Since English is so universal in the mission community, these students also study English as part of their training. **Please pray for their transition to the Philippines and for effective teaching.**

My brother and family are now settled in Alaska and Todd is busy flying C17s these days. He travels quite a bit and unfortunately spent birthday (August 16) in Japan due to mechanical issues with the airplane. They are doing well but are very busy. **Please pray for them as they adjust to Alaska and host one of Damaris' cousins for several months.**

Since my last update, I have uploaded some more pictures to my website. Thank you again for your faithful prayers and generosity. I am doing well, but I need the Lord's strength and encouragement. May the Lord bless you.

In Him,  
Robert Peterson

*Website:* [www.petersonfamily.info/robert](http://www.petersonfamily.info/robert)

*Personal Address:*

SIL, B.P. 1299, Yaoundé, CAMEROON

*Wycliffe Address (for financial gifts):*

Wycliffe, PO Box 628200, Orlando FL 32862-8200 (attach note: For Robert Peterson)