

November 24, 2008

Dear friends and family,

In my last email update, I asked for prayer that we would be able to do the final CCAA inspection of the Helio in Yaoundé. That request was denied and an inspection was scheduled to be completed in Bango last Wednesday. Due to this change, I drove to Yaoundé to help out with the new helicopter and bring all the spare parts and tools for the helicopter back to Bango by road. However on the way back to Bango by road, I received a call that the inspectors would not be coming as scheduled. A second follow-up inspection was scheduled, but then also cancelled and rescheduled for this morning. Last night the inspectors called me to say that they were stranded in a neighboring town so I picked them up around 9:30 p.m. and brought them to Bango. Early this morning I accompanied the helicopter to the Bango hospital for the dedication ceremony and then went back to the hangar and completed the inspection with the CCAA. **Praise the Lord the Helio has finally received CCAA permission to begin flying again. It's been a long road!**



*Dry season (3 weeks thus far....3 months to go)*

This struggle of the last couple weeks has also come with blessings too. Last week I was able to drive Mo Perrin, one of our senior missionaries who has worked in Cameroon over 41 years, to the Mbingo hospital to have her wrist examined. About 8 weeks ago she fell and it was put in a cast. However when it was removed, it was apparent that the wrist was a bit crooked and she had very limited use of her hand. Because I didn't have to get back to Bango for the CCAA inspection, I stayed with her in Mbingo a couple days while she saw two US doctors, a hand specialist and an orthopedic surgeon. They both recommended that she not receive further surgery because of her age, but instead work with the physical therapist that is at Mbingo. Although this news was initially very discouraging, we visited the physical therapist immediately and it was very encouraging to see her make significant progress in the two days I was there! **Mo hopes to return to Maroua by Christmas to continue her work with at least 4 on-going Bible translation project in that region. Praise the Lord for missionary doctors, nurses and physical therapists!**

In other big news, “the Raven has landed”. The Robinson R44 Raven II helicopter has not only been assembled and flown since my last update, but arrived in Banzo last Friday!



Assembly of R44. More pics at [www.petersonfamily.info/robert/gallery2](http://www.petersonfamily.info/robert/gallery2)

I was traveling down to Yaoundé during the assembly of the helicopter so I wasn't involved in the assembly. However I was on-board for the first flight. Although I am not a helicopter pilot, I went along to help the new helicopter pilot with radio communications and procedures here in Cameroon which are quite different from the U.S.



*Dan Miller (one of dad's fellow pilots in the Philippines) conducting first test flight in Cameroon*

The pilots did some initial training in Yaoundé and arrived in Banzo last Friday. Banzo is located at 7000'. This elevation and tropical environment significantly impacts the performance of the engine and blades. During this initial phase, evaluating the capacity and performance of the helicopter at this elevation will be an important first step. This is the first JAARS R44 to be operated overseas and Banzo is also JAARS's highest home-base. Afterwards we will be visiting the various translation teams and Baptist clinics in the area that the helicopter will be serving.



*Arriving Banzo! 7000' elevation*

Even though the issues with the Helio have been a struggle, the progress of the helicopter has been very encouraging and exciting. Please continue to pray for:

1. Safety and renewed confidence as I start flying again. Dry season can be difficult due to strong winds.
2. Safety and good productivity for the helicopter implementation team.
3. Good teamwork and communication as we make these transitions.

Thank you again for your faithful prayers and generosity.

In Him,  
Robert Peterson

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