

SEPTEMBER 2009

## NEW RATINGS

- Joe Alexander  
Private Pilot  
License July 6
- April Phillips  
Commercial Pilot  
License July 18

## TECHNICAL EVAL

- Brandon Penkoff  
has his technical  
evaluation in  
October with  
JAARS (Wycliffe  
Bible Translators  
aviation branch)

## Thank you MATA-thon supporters

Your donations and  
gifts covered taking  
MATA to Oshkosh  
AirVenture 2009.

**Casting all your  
cares on Him  
because he careth  
for you. 1 Peter 5:7**

## MATA GOES TO OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN!

You may remember our last letter mentioned that MATA students would fly to AirVenture Oshkosh, the world's largest fly-in, this year featuring mission aviation for the first time. Students Joe Alexander and Christine McDonald flew out in MATA's Cessna 172, and Harlan Lloyd made the return flight with Christine.



Christine, Gary, Harlan, and Joe

Christine logged 27.9 hours, Joe logged 15.6, and Harlan got 18.5, with many hours of simulated instrument experience flown "under the hood."



Students with Steve King, Stacie, and Gary



Joe flying "under the hood"

MATA staff members attending

were Chief of Maintenance Myron Davis, Chief Flight Instructor Gary Elliott, Administrative Assistant Stacie Elliott, and Ground Instructors Paul Siken and Steve King. Executive Director Gordon Bakke planned to attend, but was unable due to caring for his wife Elaine during her cancer treatment.

## FLY 4 LIFE TENT

"What is this 'Fly 4 Life' anyway, I see its presence everywhere?" That was a question Gary was asked by one of the 578,000 visitors at AirVenture, Oshkosh. The event featured humanitarian flying and mission aviation under the umbrella theme "Fly 4 Life."



Saint's Piper Family Cruiser replica

The Fly 4 Life mission aviation tent had large, colorful story-board displays and videos inside, with aircraft displayed outside. At one entrance was a story-board of the 5 missionaries (Nate Saint, Jim Elliot, et al) martyred in Ecuador in 1956 making contact with the Auca tribe, and a replica of Nate's

tattered Family Cruiser used as a prop in the movie "End of the Spear." At the other entrance was a display about Martin and Gracia Burnham's abduction in the Philippines in 2001 by Muslim radicals and

year-long captivity, with Burnham's Super Cub outside. Gary worked for about four hours each day at the Fly 4 Life tent, providing details to visitors unfamiliar with these real-life dramas. Gary and

Stacie were co-workers with the Burnhams while serving with New Tribes Mission in the Philippines. A highlight of the trip was hearing Gracia and Nate Saint's son Steve give testimony to how God is still redeeming people through the sacrifice of these two pilots on foreign mission fields.



Gary at the Burnham story-board

## IAMA TENT

In addition to the Fly 4 Life theme tent, 32 mission aviation agencies and training schools (including MATA) had displays in the IAMA tent.

All the MATA staff and students covered shifts at our display.



Christine at the MATA display

## Mission Aviation Training Academy

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### AVIATION SUMMER CAMP

MATA held its 3rd aviation summer camp for high schoolers August 9th through 14th, with 10 boys and 2 girls attending: 9 from Washington, 1 from Oregon, 1 from British Columbia, and 1 from Minnesota.

Gary Elliott provided flight instruction along with MATA alumnus Brandon Penkoff, who has been in Portland for his A&P aircraft mechanic training. (Brandon will be coming back in October to get some Cessna 185 time with

Gary before his technical evaluation with JAARS, Wycliffe Bible Translators aviation division.) Allen Koopman and Steve King provided ground instruction, and Stacie Elliott prepared the meals, sometimes with help from Jeff Reed (a camper's father).



Brandon (center) with two campers ready for their first flight

We used MATA's C-172 and MATA friend Scott Price's C-172-180hp every day, and campers flew a total of 44.9 hours, averaging 3.7 at the controls and 7.1 in the passenger seats observing. They also received 15 hours of ground instruction, visited the nearby Flying Heritage Collection, and flew radio-controlled models with a local club.

Through short devotionals at breakfast and evening sessions including mission videos and movies, campers were exposed to the need for

missionaries and missionary pilots, and challenged to be attentive to God's leading.



Campers doing pre-flight

Several campers indicated an interest in mission aviation, and perhaps we will see them back for training in the future!

### Director's Corner



What an exciting and busy summer! After my return from a short-term ministry in Alaska, as I discussed in our last newsletter, MATA went right into the Arlington Fly-in, then AirVenture Oshkosh as chronicled on the front page, and then summer camp summarized above. In addition, training continued and we had one student earn his Private Pilot License and one earned her Commercial Pilot License.

I would like to highlight Gary and Stacie Elliott, whose efforts the past three years have helped MATA's recovery from the loss of our founder, Pastor Mike Crowell, four years ago. Gary graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1974 and then served 20 years as an officer, mostly as a fighter pilot in the F-4 Phantom. During a tour of duty in the Philippines, he and Stacie were introduced to the world of foreign missionaries and mission aviation through contact with New Tribes Mission (NTM) folks serving there. They were also confronted by the spiritual darkness and hopelessness of people living in

animistic cultures. It was a life-changing experience for them, and immediately upon Gary's retirement, they were in training with NTM.

After two years of training, Gary and Stacie and their 5 children, ages 8 through 17, left for the Philippines to serve in NTM Aviation's flight ministry on Luzon. Stacie was so excited that God was taking them back to the same location where they had felt the call to mission aviation, and a familiar place with fond memories and established relationships. They served two terms, and Gary gained valuable experience operating from some of the most

challenging and difficult airstrips you can imagine.

Gary has strived to share lessons learned from his Air Force and mission field experience, as well as help MATA students in their spiritual growth through our Saturday night Bible study and informal mentoring. Stacie has kept MATA functioning in the front office with a myriad of administrative duties. We are thankful for their service!



Stacie and Gary with MATA's C-172