

Spring 2001

March Update Letter - Mission Aviation Training Academy

Dear Friends,

Just a quick note to let you know about some exciting news! **Sunday, March 25th at 6pm** we will be having a **POTLUCK DINNER** (bring a dish/dessert/salad to pass), with Gordon and Darla Hilmo sharing their experiences as a missionary pilot family. They have served the last nine years with New Tribes Missions in Paraguay, and we look forward to hearing what they have to say to us!

Equipment updates - MATA has just acquired a third aircraft, a *beautiful* 1959 Cessna 175... It is VFR only for now, but the plan is that we will gradually update the panel to make it the IFR trainer. In the interim, it will be a welcome addition to the fleet, allowing a less-expensive four-place option for cross-country flights. And, with it's 175hp engine, it will be a great aircraft for our mountain flying portion of the commercial training. Lots more "oomph" than the C150!

ALSO - We now have an ATC610 Flight Training Device (Simulator)... for those of you who are working towards instrument ratings with MATA, this will be available for an additional 10 *free* hours towards the rating, beyond the 10 we now give on the PCATD. The normal rate will be \$35.00 an hour (including instructor) for the sim, just like the PCATD. The Big Difference is that this will be useable for recurrency training, IPC's, and up to 50 hours loggable towards the commercial rating! So, we have another low-cost option for our students in terms of building time and instrument proficiency! (Use of the ATC610 is pending a visit from the FAA to formally approve the machine, on Thursday of this week). Our goal is to "go on the road" with the sim, to do recurrency training with folks from various mission organizations... pray for us in this endeavor!

Student News:

For those who did not hear, Tim Dauber recently received his instrument rating - Congratulations Tim!

Asher Montgomery is making progress on his J-3 cub project, as well as getting close to the wedding!

Jeremy Crowell recently received his commercial, and is about ready for his instrument rating!

Josh Harrington is closing in on the hours for the commercial... keep at it, Josh!

Jo Medema is getting close to the private license... keep that TriPacer flying, Jo!

Thane Weythman (working on instrument/commercial) DID get his car back...minus the David Clark headset and his flight bag... so the Hyundai is still on the road!

Mike Lee (one of our MATA mechanics) is getting close to the commercial... go for it!

Pray for Tom Robertson, as he prepares for that CFI checkride... lots of work for a family man, businessman, and full-time A&P student!

Eric Stiemert is close to the CFII checkride... pray for his continued progress!

Tim Kinney continues to work towards the Instrument rating and looking forward to missions work!

Russ Olsen, with Jamaican Outreach, is back working on his instrument rating, just having gone through a ground school with several others, to include Ian Gerrish and Roger Sonnesyn.

Brandon Penkoff is at Trinity Northwestern, and is planning a trip to the Philippines, short term. Pray for Him!

Sandra Ries has started a Private License program; she is a lawyer who desires to see how God can use her, perhaps in isolated areas such as Alaska, to use her skills to help others!

**PRAY FOR EACH OF OUR STUDENTS, as well as several new contacts
and potential students for this summer!**

Pray also for a potential short-term mission to Alaska for about 6 weeks in August-September...

And, for our finances... we just received the bill for the insurance on the two aircraft (this is not including the new one...), \$7,800.00 for 12 months... pray that the Lord would provide for this major need!

WHY MISSION AVIATION?

To lots of people, aviation is a hobby. If you go out to our own Arlington airport, you will find many such "hobbyists" on any beautiful sunny day. They just plain enjoy flying... and who wouldn't? We live in such a wonderful country, one of the few in the world where anyone who can afford it can take off and fly anywhere they want, on a whim. I'm often approached by those who want to fly, just to fly... and I send them over to local flight schools, because that is not what MATA is about. Don't get me wrong! I love to teach flying also, and aside from my MATA instructing have found joy (and a bit of extra income) in teaching folks in their aircraft as a freelance instructor. But MATA aircraft are set apart, for use by those with a spiritual and humanitarian mission. They are not pleasure aircraft (though they are a pleasure to fly!), but working aircraft that have been set apart to help spread the Gospel. We help with Civil Air Patrol flying and now are getting involved with Angel Flights as our community service and humanitarian involvement, but the heart of MATA flying is missions. THE mission of getting the word out to the world concerning it's savior, Jesus, is what MATA is all about.

I thoroughly enjoy seeing the variety of missionaries that God sends through our way. Note that I did not say "future missionaries" or "missionary students", but missionaries. Each of them, God has been at work at in a specific way, and even in their training, they are called to be missionaries. May God richly bless each of them in their calling!

So, why are we doing what we are doing? Because there are still many areas of our world which are dependent upon missionary aviators to bring the message. Because there is a need for pilots, willing to sacrifice lucrative jobs in commercial aviation, to work for limited pay in missions. Because aircraft, even in more developed areas, can "make time" for ministry, instead of travel. To put it simply, because there is a need for this ministry of helps.

To any serious student of the Scripture, it is apparent that we are in a race with the clock. The next great event on God's calendar is the return of Christ. We need to be about our Father's business, in speeding the Gospel into all the land. MATA is a vehicle not only for training and equipping of God's people for ministry, but of service. With the addition of our new simulator, it is our intent to go where God's people are at work, to work alongside of them and help them facilitate their ministries. Ben Springer and I are putting together an instrument proficiency syllabus to use with the various mission agencies, and are preparing to go where we might be called!

Recently, as we were sharing at a home school convention and a missions fest at a local church, we prepared a short statement entitled, "How Can I Become a Missionary?". There was no new earth-shattering secrets in that flyer, just a simple three step program. PRAY is step number 1 - Matthew 9:37-38 calls us to pray concerning laborers for His harvest (and we might add that we must be ready to be an answer to prayer in that!). Secondly, TRAIN - there are no shortcuts here! There are plenty of ill-equipped and improperly prepared folks who go into a mission field and fail. Usually, this is due to a lack of patience, and of an attitude that tries to shortcut the preparation. Look in the Scripture, and without fail, you see that God uses a distinct time of preparation... as awful as the slavery of Egypt was, how much worse it would have been to have had an ill-prepared Moses lead them, instead of one who had spent 40 years of preparation in the presence of God! Finally, we must GO - Matthew 28:19-20 is pretty clear on that point. It might not be far, just across the street, perhaps... but we must GO!

As we fellowship together and work in MATA, my prayer is that we would see workers in the field. Many workers, each doing what God has called them to do, where He has called them to work. Where is He calling you?

In Him,



Pastor Michael Crowell
MATA Executive Director