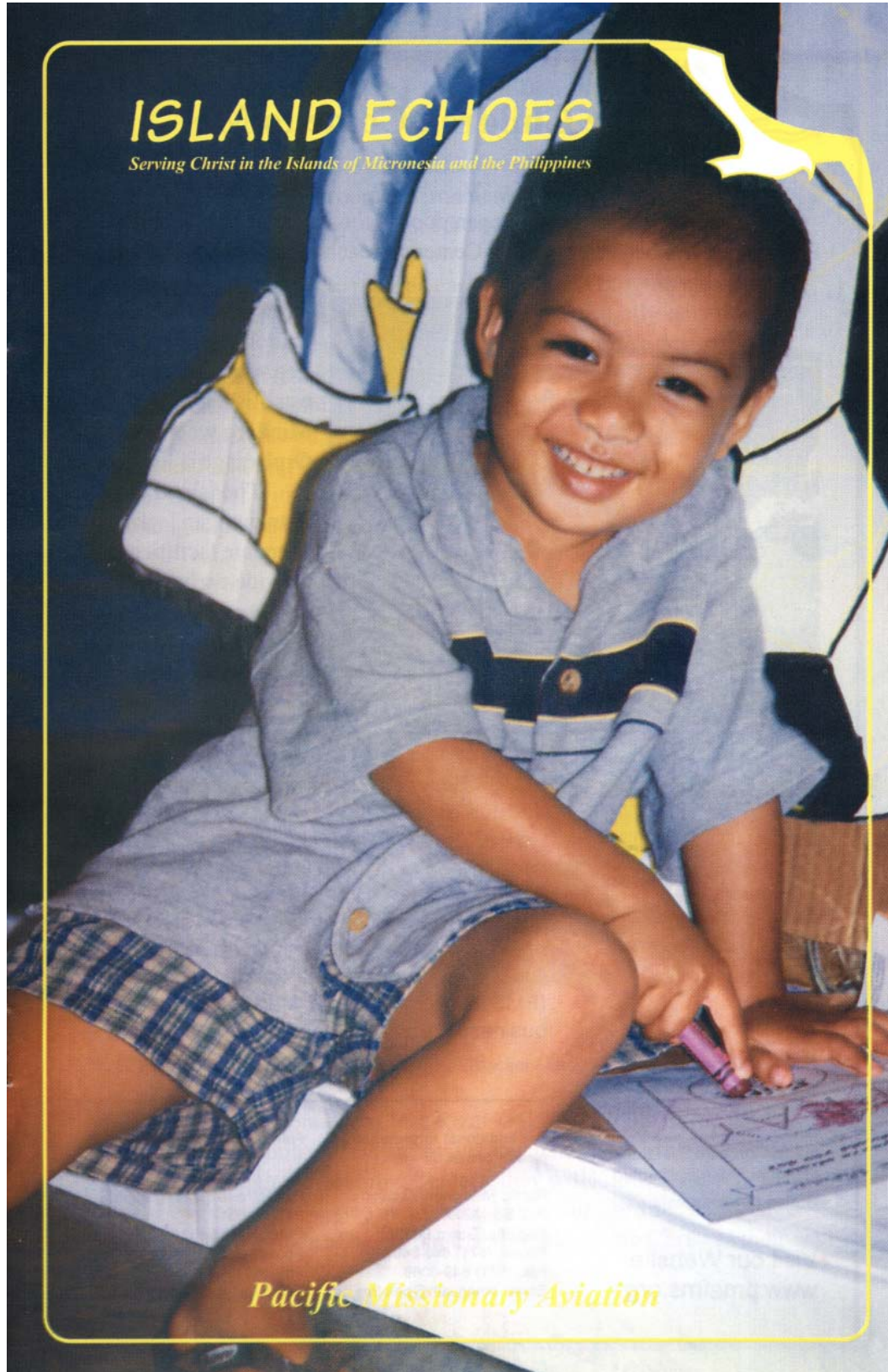


ISLAND ECHOES

Serving Christ in the Islands of Micronesia and the Philippines



Pacific Missionary Aviation

Let the Children Come to Me

By Melinda Espinosa

We praise God for another open door in the island of Patnanungan, Philippines. We began a Learning Center outreach to pre-school children 2- 5 years of age, a



Ground breaking for the new PMF Learning Center, Patnanungan

ministry of FMS PMF church. Our first Learning Center was established in Naujan, Mindoro where our Orphanage is located.

The island of Patnanungan lacks adequate facilities to provide early childhood and pre-school training and the Learning Center

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On the cover:

Children are a gift from God. We count it the greatest privilege to reach children and bring them to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Alex Skilling attended VBS in Pohnpei).

PMA is incorporated as a non-profit Christian mission organization by the Government of Guam, Territory of the United States. All donations are tax-deductible under section 501 c (3). PMA is governed by a Board of Trustees. The business office is located in Guam and a field office in Pohnpei. PMA is incorporated in the Philippines under Flying Medical Samaritans (FMS) with its office in Manila. Please direct business correspondence of FMS to Guam.

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Visit our Website:
www.pmafms.org

For additional information, please contact:

Pacific Missionary Aviation
P.O. Box 3209
Hagåtña, Guam 96932
Phone: (671) 646-6464
Fax: (671) 649-6066
Email: pmaguam@pmafms.org

Field address on Pohnpei is:

Pacific Missionary Aviation
P.O. Box 517
Pohnpei, FM 96941
Phone: (691) 320-2496
Fax: (691) 320-2592
Email: pmapohnpei@mail.fm

provides a basic educational foundation every child should have prior to going into a formal classroom environment. The Learning Center supports the existing school system and the parents of the island happily welcome its opening.

Our commitment is to provide early childhood programs that are spiritually enriching, academically challenging, culturally sensitive, socially responsive, and developmentally appropriate. We desire that the children will come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, grow in His knowledge and love, take responsibility for their own learning and become good citizens: productive and serving others.

Groundbreaking for the Learning Center facility was done the first week of October with PMA's president, Norbert Kalau and the Mayor of Patnanungan present. School began in August, starting out with 15 students. Teachers: Mercy and Elsie praise God for the children's growth and open hearts to receive the word of God. Principal Virgie praises God for six students who are now attending Sunday school and two mothers of Learning Center children now faithfully attend cell group Bible studies.

Indeed God is opening doors and drawing people to Himself. We thank God for the German Embassy in Manila, Philippines who graciously provided funds to construct a building for the Learning Center. We are trusting God for funds to complete this project. Will you pray with us?



Teacher Mercy with "her" children.

The Philippines national hero Jose Rizal said, "The youth of the land are the hope of the country". It is our prayer that as we reach the children in the islands through the Learning Centers, they will know, understand and put their trust on the Blessed and Living Hope, our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus they will indeed be the hope of the nation with Christ as their strong foundation. ■

A Loving God Chased This Stubborn Guy

By Burnis Dannis

I'm from the Micronesian island of Chuuk and I was raised in a Christian home learning about God, but I didn't know Jesus as my Lord and Savior. When I went off to college in the U.S., I rejected the teachings of the Bible from my home. And after I married and had a family of my own, I felt the freedom to do everything my way. My favorite hobby became drinking alcohol.

In 1986 I moved my family to Pohnpei. I knew I no longer had to listen to my parents talk to me about Jesus or church. However, my wife and children attended the PMF (Pacific Mission Fellowship) church and asked the missionaries to join them in prayer for me.

Yet I began drinking more and more. Everyday after work I drank. I was hooked, and I couldn't stop. Drinking affected my job performance, my family relationships, and even my driving. My wife and I began to drift apart; we were on the verge of divorce. Many times my four children begged me to stop drinking. They could see that it was



Burnis Dannis preparing a sermon.

destroying all of us, but I was too stubborn to listen! But what I didn't know was that my wife, my family, and my mother continued praying for me, night and day.

Finally, in 1996, I left my family and moved to a hotel drinking night and day. I hated my life. I hated myself. My two sons came to the hotel and begged me to come home. (On a small island it's hard to hide!) Finally after three days, I did come home, and promised them, on my own power and strength, that I would stop drinking. But I was scared about that promise because I had tried it once before and had failed. Still God continued to chase me.

Later that year I went on a business trip to Hawaii and spent a long weekend there. That Sunday my roommate persuaded me to go to church with him. "Why not," I thought, "I haven't been to church for five years." When we arrived at the church, there were forms for prayer requests. I picked up one and filled it out. God was softening my heart. I asked God to help me restore my family, to help me become a better husband and father, and most of all, be a good example for my children. But I forgot to put my request in the prayer box. Instead I put inside my breast pocket.

Then the preacher started preaching. Guess what? He was preaching on restoration of family relationships! Families that had been broken by alco-



Burnis with wife Gloria and grandson.

hol or other things that were not pleasing to God. It was as though the preacher was preaching directly to me. Again and again the words from the Bible hit me right in my heart. I was so sorry for my sins, and felt so dirty before God. I was suddenly crying and couldn't stop. The Word of God pierced my soul.

Humbly I came before God, acknowledging the mess I had made of my life. I knew I had sinned BIG TIME against my God. I surrendered that day, laying my broken life before God and asking Him to put the pieces back together and to give me a new life. He was true to His promise, as He always is.

That was seven years ago. Today, nothing delights me more than drinking up the Word of God. The teaching of the Word at Pacific Mission Fellowship, the Bible studies, and men's discipleship classes with Nob Kalau have been used by God to transform me into a man whose life's desire is to please God. An educator by profession, I have immersed myself in the study of the Scriptures. It is truly what I love to do. Being involved in PMF has nurtured me

into a servant leader, first to my family, and then to my church.

This August, as Pastor Edmund Kalau retired, the church appointed me to be a serving elder. As we do not have a full-time pastor yet, I share the responsibilities of the pulpit with Nob. The challenges of directing a church are something I don't accept lightly. But I know that God chooses to use humble men that love Him with a whole heart. So daily I simply say, "yes" to God. "I'm your man--100%--use me."

I used to think that I would never be healed from my alcohol problem. I thought I would die as an alcoholic, but I was wrong. Our God is so gracious and merciful. There are many men in



Burnis with fellow elders Epel and Nob.

Micronesia who are where I used to be. I have a special burden to help them so that they too can find the new life that God has planned for each of them. God's love, His grace and His mercy are waiting. ■

All In A Day's Work

By Peter Reichert

Tuesday, January 6. Today's plan is to make 2 flights to Ulithi and Fais to pick up 18 passengers who spent Christmas and New Year on the small atolls with their families. These trips would be the last of the holiday rush, after which the demand for flights usually returns to their normal level. Now "normal" may not be to others, what it is to us. To us the term means that the entire situation we are involved in and everything that affects our lives is in a "constant state of motion and change". Patience, flexibility, and improvisation are a top requirement. Anyway, at the end of this day we were looking to go back to "normal".

A phone call at 9:30 am changes all that. A request for a medical evacuation to Palau propels us into a hectic frenzy of preparation. The first thing is to cancel the regular flights to Ulithi and Fais. A 14-year-old boy has fallen out of a moving vehicle and sustained severe head injuries. The Yap Hospital staff has determined that blood has pooled under

the skull, applying pressure to the brain, a life threatening situation. The Palau Hospital is the nearest facility that would be able to deal with such a case.

Since this is a flight out of the FSM into The Republic of Palau, it is considered an international flight requiring a number of



Peter with miraculously healed David.

formalities to be completed. Emails, Faxes and phone calls pass between the two islands. General declarations, manifests, passports, flight planning, landing permits and weather reports are all part of the process.

By 11:00 our patient, David, is on the stretcher in the aircraft along with his attending physician, Dr. Furlong, and two uncles.

Because of his head trauma, David is restless and delirious. Numerous family members and friends are gathered around the airplane in the hangar to see him off. Tears are shed and last good-byes are said... would this be the last time they would see him? Because they don't have passports, his parents are unable to accompany him to Palau.

We depart Yap at 11:15. Satellite Imagery shows a rapidly developing storm cell southwest of Yap en route to Palau. Embedded thunderstorms, 300 foot cloud ceilings and torrential rains await us. Forty knot winds create an angry and foam streaked ocean 300 feet below us. While Dr. Furlong calms the patient, I am praying that the Lord would calm the storm. Improving conditions allow us to cover the 290 mile distance in less than an hour and land in sunshine in Palau, where the ambulance awaits us.

Our Palau Station Manager, Bambit Balayo, has already made arrangements with Customs and Immigration for us, so while Dr. Furlong accompanies David to the hospital, we take care of the entry formalities and wait for the doctor to return.

The return flight takes 30 minutes longer due to head winds

with the same extreme weather. Thankfully, we fly into clear skies 50 miles out of Yap where we land at 5pm.

After changing airplanes, I am back in the air again at 5:20 and on the way to Fais, an island 170 miles to the east. Nine passengers needed to be picked up, one of them having to catch an early morning Continental flight to Manila and on to Europe.

So ends an eventful day. David was operated on, a young life was saved, and that is worth experiencing a day we had not expected. Thank you Lord for allowing us to serve. Will tomorrow be "normal"? ■

"Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever."

Psalm 118:1

Rejoice with us as we celebrate this year, God's goodness and faithfulness for 30 years!

To God be the glory!

All Things Work Together For Good

By Melinda Espinosa

It has been seven months now since Erika Vengalyte left Guam. We miss her. I miss her. Her presence is especially missed during weekends and holidays – that was when she stayed with me at the PMA Haus. During the week she stayed with Woody and Cindi Johnson, who were gracious and loving hosts to her. She was involved in Kids Klub every Saturday – ministering to the children, assisting in crafts, and taking charge of the games. The children loved her. She was also involved in Sunday worship services and was always available when she was needed.

Her year in Guam was very fruitful. Her favorite verse – Romans 8:28, allowed her to see God’s wonderful plan for her life and trust Him every step of the way. She shared with me how it was timely that she visited Germany when Pastor Edmund Kalau was there, and that was when it all started. Pastor Kalau asked her if she would like to come to Guam to study and she said yes, not knowing when this would become a reality. A year later her dream materialized. Learning English was one of her goals. And she learned to speak it fluently. But God had a higher plan for her life. On her way to Guam, she met the Lord Jesus Christ, introduced to her by Sylvia Kalau. She readily accepted the Lord Jesus and wondered why she was not introduced to Him before. “How can people not accept Jesus as Lord and Savior? He is everything to me.”

When she arrived, it was raining – I told her it was “liquid sunshine”. She was so very happy to be in Guam – she did not mind the rain and went out and danced in the rain, thanking God for answering her prayers!

In the year she was with us, I saw her grow in her Christian life – and I also saw the transformation the Lord wrought in her. It was like seeing a



Erika with some of the Kids Klub children.

flower blossom right before my very eyes. I thank God for the opportunity of knowing her and impacting her life for eternity.

She is now back in her home in Lithuania. God is not finished with her yet, and she is pressing on. Praise God, she has found a church family where she can grow and become accountable. She has been able to share the Gospel with her family and her sister has made a decision for the Lord. Her prayer? That her whole family will come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and that one day she may serve Him in the mission field. Let us pray with her that what God has begun in her life will overflow in the lives of her family and friends. ■

His Heavenly Father, His Earthly Father, and a Reunion

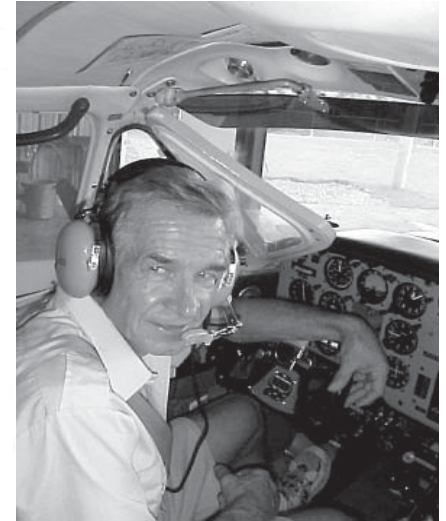
By Sylvia Kalau

“Dedicated”—that’s just what you’d call Peter Reichert. Serving faithfully as a missionary pilot in Micronesia for the last 27 years, he and his family have missed many stateside family reunions.

Peter was raised by Godly German parents, who had given their blessing to God’s call on their son’s life to serve the Lord. They knew this meant they wouldn’t see Peter or his family except every 3 to 5 years when they would return to the U.S. for furlough.

When Peter’s father became ill with cancer over the summer, Peter kept in touch by phone and e-mail. As the cancer quickly spread throughout his father’s body, Peter knew that his dad wouldn’t have long to live. Due to mission responsibilities, Peter couldn’t leave Yap to fly back to Oregon. His father and mother understood. His extended family understood. Understanding God’s call continued to be a part of their family commitment to missions.

Standing in front of the PMA aviation hangar one morning, Peter gazed up at the Yap sky, and he wondered, “What direction would Oregon be where my father lies dying?” He entered the cockpit of one of the aircraft and programmed the coordinates of the Josephine County Airport, Grants Pass, Oregon into the GPS (Global Positional System) to determine the distance and bearing to his parents’ distance home. While



Peter in the cockpit.

doing so, a thought came to Peter’s mind, “Wouldn’t it be something if Dad would go to heaven passing over the Yap sky to say goodbye to me?” Days passed and the GPS reminded Peter of the location. His thoughts were often with his beloved father.

After waiting one morning until 6:00 a.m. for an update via phone call from family, Peter decided to go to the hangar and get ready for the day’s flight. No call came but he knew from the conversation the day before with his mother that his dad’s time was short. Stepping out on the porch and gazing up at the dark pre-dawn sky a bright, streaking light—like a comet or a shooting star—grabbed Peter’s attention. He glanced at his watch; it was 6:05 a.m. And yes, it happened to be in the same direction

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Next time you have to wait a few extra moments at the doctor's office, think of Lito.

By Mary Cleope

Lito is a 24-year-old man from the remote island of Patnanungan. Last July, he had severe stomach pains and was medivaced to Manila for an emergency room visit. He was diagnosed with a UTI (urinary tract infection) and sent home. Since medicine is a scarce commodity, Lito decided to use his 10-day supply of antibiotics over a 6-month period.

Two days ago, his mom called the pastor again. You see, after the medivac



Lito carried on a bench.

last year, Lito started hanging around Pastor John at the Pacific Mission Fellowship church in Patnanungan. He became very active in the youth ministry and was baptized as a new believer!

But now he had REALLY strong pain and was unable to relieve himself for a few days. The small, local clinic looked at him and said, "Get to Manila." They didn't know what was

wrong, but they were concerned with Lito's liver, heart, and kidneys. They were not equipped to do diagnostic testing.

Pastor John called the FMS office and a medivac was scheduled for sunrise the next day. Since there are no lights on the grass runway in Polillio, only day flights are allowed. First, Lito's mom needed to rent a boat to get him to Jomalig Island, where the runway is located. After reserving a boat, she later found out it was given to a fellow islander who had been stabbed during the night. So early in the morning, Lito, his mother, Pastor Dolauta, and wife Liza, and Virgie (Pastor John's wife) crossed the sea on a smaller boat.

Unfortunately, 30 minutes into the trip, the boat's engine stopped. They were stranded. The group prayed and waited. Virtually out of nowhere, a fisherman emerged, heading straight for them. He graciously gave them a ride back to the original island.

Once again they scouted for a boat. Found one and were soon on their way. They made it to Jomalig 2 hours late. (Side note: Since it was low tide, Pastor Dolauta got out of the boat, grabbed the anchor, walked in thigh deep water, and dragged the boat close to the shore so Lito wouldn't have to walk far in the water.)

By this time Lito was looking very pale and weak. Malcolm and Bong (our FMS co-pilot) met them at the shore and realized the need for a stretcher. They



Lito carried to the aircraft.

improvised with a bench from a nearby house, and carried Lito through the rugged, narrow path to the airstrip. The airplane was equipped with a stretcher, so they strapped Lito in, and flew off to Manila.... accompanied by Lito's mom and Virgie.

The flight was smooth. I saw them land at the FMS hangar one hour later. It was a bedraggled bunch. Lito was very quiet; he looked dazed. The sun was scorching hot on the pavement near the hangar. The office staff swiftly gathered food and snacks for the group, and sent them on their way to the Philippine



Pilot Malcolm Cleope strapping Lito in.

General Hospital. Roselyn, our nurse, accompanied them in the taxi. Another one hour ride through the traffic of Metro Manila. Thank God he arrived on time to receive the much needed treatment.

It turned out to be a 5 hour journey for Lito.... by sea, by bench, by air, and by taxi. So the next time you have to wait a few extra moments at the doctor's office, think of Lito. ■

Continued from page 9

of Grants Pass' GPS positioning and was right over the distant horizon. A pragmatist, Peter put the morning's light show to the back of his mind and continued with his work, but the thought crossed his mind that his dad might have gone home.

Forty minutes later the phone rang. His mom said, "Dad passed away peacefully, without pain, this noon."

"Mom, could you tell me the exact time that he died?" Peter asked. "Why yes," came the reply, "it was 12:05pm." Amazed, Peter thought, "Would the God of this universe care so much for me and my feelings?" Peter was well aware that Yap is exactly 18 hours ahead of the US West Coast, because of the International Dateline. Thus, 6:05am Yap time equals 12:05pm Oregon time. Perhaps it was a coincidence, but our God is alive and working. He hears and knows our deepest longings and wishes--even a wish to say goodbye to a most special father. And there is one reunion that Peter won't miss one day: the reunion in Heaven with his beloved father, Helmut. ■