

März 2006 aus Antananarivo / Madagascar

# heli news 8

*Dear Friends and Supporters!*

As soon as we finished loading the container and all of our personal belongings were on their way to Madagascar, it was time to say Good Bye, this time to our friends and family in Germany. January 8<sup>th</sup> we had a great service and open house at church for all our friends to say good bye. A friend of us picked us up and drove us to Paris, on January 19<sup>th</sup>. This journey ended in Tana, our new home on January 20<sup>th</sup>, shortly before midnight.

We arrived 4 days later than our container in the harbor. It was necessary for us to be there, to push people doing the paper work sooner. After 2 days we were waiting for the customer, which should visit the container and allow us to import our things. Contrary to all promises they didn't call us so that we found out by accident, that he opened the container without us being there. Kind of unhappy we told in the office that we wouldn't wait for him to come back the next morning, as we were waiting for the call all day long. This would have meant one more day of waiting, as he couldn't finish all papers without talking to us. First they assured having no clue, where he could be and that he has for sure no mobile. After us being a little bit stubborn he showed up one hour later, 6pm! After he asked a few questions concerning the car he wanted to leave without opening the container again. As we wanted so hard to look inside, we told him that we really needed some better shoes regarding the weather. Seeing our sport shoes and feeling still 100° F @ 6pm, he agreed. We found out, that everything was still like we loaded it 8 weeks ago; nothing major seemed broken or stolen! We were happy and the customer too when we saw us changing our shoes before he even left! The next morning we packed all boxes in two other vehicles and drove back home. It took us almost 10 hours each way with an average speed of 25 miles per hour, trying to avoid going through the bad holes. Our Isuzu which we brought from Germany started immediately and had not even an empty tire. Finally we could unpack our boxes. Some had been packed since August 2004, before we left Germany to go to America! Imagine the surprises we had, discovering all of our clothes and belongings again! We consider it a real great miracle from God! Thanks to everybody who prayed with us for weeks to see this wonderful miracle happen!

Many curious eyes wanted to see what was in the container. Here our



Gerd during his first day of flights into the bush; a village called Maralambo



**Gerd:**  
Within the 1<sup>st</sup> week of our arrival I gained my Malagasy flight license. I had to pass some test, but that wasn't something new after the years of training!



The new HM office; next to it the hangar with the Heli



**Tanja:**  
I started to get familiar with the work which I should do for Helimission. And I like it, especially, because I have some work & responsibility again!

Twin boys: 5 days old, about 3.3 pounds. Here in Mada people are convinced that one is from God, the other one from the devil. So "Praise the Lord" they were only abandoned, not killed. I want to help & see them grow stronger and bigger.

I flew already about 40 hours. Still together with Markus, the other German Helimission pilot in Mada. He introduces me to all the places we fly to and flies with me as a safety pilot. My very first mission flights were to Marolambo where they run a bush hospital. After that we spend 3 weeks in the bush. In March we have mainly flights which start and end in Tana, so that I am home very evening. During our flights in the 1<sup>st</sup> week we were called for an emergency: a cow took a young man with its horns. He had open injuries at the throat and the belly, where the intestines came out; they just put it back in and sew him together. It happened 4 days ago. Unfortunately they didn't clean it nor worked sterile so that he was severely sick when we arrived. We gave him a lift to the closest hospital which was 1 hour flying! We pray that he will recover after the surgery he had. So far I heard from the doctor who did the surgery, that the man is fine. The doctor said, the man had not survived another 5 hours! Perhaps now the village is welcoming us and our help we bring along; help for body, soul and spirit. So far they rejected every attempt.

In the bush it is really hot, there are not many foods available and also other things which we consider standard. Being out there for a week is exhausting and challenging your body. But when you see, that you can rescue a live, physically and even better for eternity, many inconveniences are forgotten quickly.

Thanks for enabling us to do so by praying and supporting us. The reward and blessing will flow back to you!

The mission next door to us at the airport has a complete equipment of an ambulance car, which we are allowed to use. Therefore, if we fly a Medevac Tanja & I can help well, as we have the possibility to get there by helicopter, we have the knowledge and now also the necessary equipment. Praise God, it is an advantage for the people in the bush! And it shows me again that God knows everything, nothing in my life was unimportant! Even if I considered it a detour!

### Where do we live now?

In Ambohinambo, close to Talatamaty. (It took us 1 week to remember these names!) From the main road of the little village Talatamaty, which is close to Tana, the capital city, we drive about 1 mile to our house. Mostly cobbled or dirt road, mainly just wide enough so that 2 cars can pass each other; if possible at all! Our house is one of the last 5 houses before the rice field starts. Many people are living in the small road, having many shops. To get to know them a little bit we started to buy fruits from them every once in a while. We try to make friends with our African neighbors.

### Who is around us here?

We have another German and a Canadian Couple which whom we work here. And also 3 Madagascan workers. Twice a week we have Madame Josephine coming to our house, cleaning, sealing the wooden floors with a special wax killing flees and other little animals which don't pay rent☺. She knows how to cook for Missionaries, and we take advantage of it! It is good to have a helper in the house, as everything takes so much longer; after returning from getting groceries work starts: fruits and vegetables need to be disinfected, as too many people touched it already. Flour need to be sifted before putting it into the freezer.... Ants and Cockroaches are always available and hungry!

**WE ARE THANKFUL THAT GOD SENDS US HERE. WE LIKE IT AND FEEL SETTLED ALREADY. WE ARE EXCITED TO GET TO KNOW ALL THE NEW THINGS, LESSONS AND WORKS WE CAN DO HERE FOR GOD, SERVING THE MALAGASY PEOPLE. AND WE ARE GLAD TO HAVE YOU AS PRAYER PARTNERS, WHO ARE COVERING OUR BACK AND SUPPORTING US. WITHOUT YOU WE COULDN'T HELP FULLFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION.**

*We send you are greetings and blessing with grateful hearts, from the beautiful island Madagascar*

***Your missionaries, Gerd & Tanja***

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My German midwifery licenses have been to the health department for 4 weeks. There is a clinic called SALPHA about 3 miles from our house, which allows me to voluntarily work at their hospital a couple hours a week! It is a hospital with African standard, so I am excited to get to know it. They have about 50 other establishments on this island. Sometimes they use our heli to go there. They already asked me if I could go out to the bush or teach the nurses; teach prenatal classes and so on. So first I want to get familiar with the hospital near by and then we can see...

Being here I realized quickly, that it is required to speak Malagasy. Even in the capital city only perhaps 50% speak French and some of them poorly. To be able to communicate with people around us and of course in the hospital there is no other way than speaking Malagasy. Please pray for me, that I will pick it up soon! It is not easy!

After I unpacked most of our boxes our house turned to be a home. We enjoy having a place called home, after all these years of moving and traveling a lot.

I get more and more involved in the work of the orphanage where those twins are. At the moment one girl from there is in hospital. I try to help getting the medicine, but it is not available in the entire country. Every sick person needs somebody who buys the medicine and brings it to the hospital. Sometimes this takes just too long...