



Update from Craig and Christa Hollander September 2021

Helping the village of Long Sule: What would you do if your village was facing a food and fuel shortage?

In our prayer letter last fall, we mentioned that MAF had been flying food into Long Sule (pronounced SU-lay) to help tie them over until the next rice harvest. Unlike many other villages MAF serves, the village of Long Sule is not accessible by any type of road or river. The men of Long Sule (heroes, in my book!) who slog through the jungle and over the mountains carrying the desperately needed food and fuel from other villages when the MAF airplanes are not available.

If anything, this year is even worse.

They are in a severe crisis for food and fuel. The only option besides air transportation is a grueling two-day hike across mountains and jungle to another village to buy and haul supplies on their back. Unfortunately, with COVID-19 restrictions and staffing shortages, Long Sule has been even less served by aircraft this year than any time in the last 20 years. Thankfully, two newer MAF pilots just reached the point in August where they could be trained to take off and land at Long Sule. We hope to start blessing the amazingly resilient people in this village with much greater regularity now!



Unloading the plane with supplies for Long Sule.



Transferring gasoline into smaller drums for hazmat transportation on our MAF plane to Long Sule.



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Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at kgilmore@rca.org to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.

Family and Sabbatical Plans Update

Craig, Sean, and Mercy were able to arrive in San Francisco and join Faith and me as planned on August 3. At the beginning of July, Indonesia restricted air travel to only people who had received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Thankfully that requirement was ultimately waived for foreigners who were returning to their passport country. In the final week before they left, it seemed unlikely that they could even get the PCR tests they needed to travel, but God opened the door!

Faith's TCK (Third Culture Kid) Reentry Seminar went well, and she thoroughly enjoyed her time. A total of 38 kids whose families have served in 20 different countries were at the seminar and are permanently transitioning back to the U.S. like Faith.

School started for Sean and Mercy on August 17. They are adjusting to the new school environment really well, for which I am very thankful. I have to admit that I was worried. Mercy tried out for a part in the school's Fall musical "Hello, Dolly!" and got a part in the ensemble chorus, which is scheduled to run at the end of October.

Craig and I started our sabbatical this month. We are in the Rest and Renew phase right now. We have been working with our sabbatical coach to craft a plan that will help guide our time over the next several months. The plan contains our goals/desires for the coming year and provides the framework for how/where we will get input from many people, books, seminars, retreats, and most importantly our personal time with God. The primary theme that we keep circling back to is "Simplify and Center" — more mentally and spiritually rather than just trying to live a less busy life.

We're all heading to MAF's headquarters in Nampa, Idaho, Sept 15-18 for a debriefing of our time in Tarakan the last two years. This will be beneficial for us and our leaders in learning from the last few years we spent overseas and also help shape our course for the future.

"It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31:8 (ESV). This verse is the theme for the school year at the kids' school. I thought it was very fitting for our family and have been encouraged by it many times. I hope it encourages you as well in whatever circumstances you may be facing right now.

We are so humbled and encouraged as we look back over the last 20+ years and see God's hand in building our ministry support and prayer team. Thank you for continually praying for and supporting us in this ministry.

Thank you!

*The Hollanders
Christa, Craig,
Faith, Sean,
and Mercy*

Praises

- Craig, Sean, and Mercy arrived safely back to the U.S. on August 3 as planned, in spite of very significant COVID restrictions!
- Sean and Mercy have had a good start to the school year in their new school.

Prayer Requests



- For our team in Tarakan who, besides being very short-staffed, are still dealing with the recent surge of the Delta variant and are still under major COVID restrictions. Pray for encouragement.
- For the school year in Tarakan: Teacher visa issues and COVID restrictions mean that MAF families must homeschool for at least the first few months of the school year.
- For Craig and I as we finalize our sabbatical plan so we can to get the most out of this focused time.
- For our continued adjustment to life temporarily in the U.S.: Faith as she continues to plan for her future, the kids in their new school, and discernment for our future ministry.