



## WELCOME HOME, CHARLIE!

Excitement was in the air on Monday, February 23, 2026. PUC board members, friends of aviation, and community members made their way to Angwin Airport to welcome home Charlie, the longest-serving mission aircraft in Seventh-day Adventist history.

After receiving an airworthiness certificate and completing some test flights, pilot Andrew Hosford and lead mechanic Kyle Kennedy flew the aircraft from its temporary home in Michigan to Oklahoma Academy, where they spent the weekend encouraging the students and staff and giving a few rides. On Sunday morning,

they were up early to fly west, landing in Porterville, California, for the night. Monday morning, Andrew flew the last leg to PUC, spending a few moments circling Napa Christian School while the entire student body waved from the sports oval. Arriving in Angwin, he circled low over the campus, then completed two low passes over the airport. Finally, Charlie touched down at its new home for the first time.

From the highlands of Papua New Guinea to the deserts of Australia to the islands of Vanuatu – and now to our “college on the mountain,” Charlie continues to inspire pilots to serve others.

Want to own a little piece of Charlie’s history? For a donation of \$1,000 or more, we will send you a limited-edition plane tag made from Charlie’s original metal skins—while supplies last. This special piece of sheet metal has flown over steamy jungles and barren deserts, bringing hope and healing to those in desperate need. Donate today by scanning the QR code below or by mailing a check to:

**Pacific Union College**  
Attn: Advancement—  
Charlie Fund  
1 Angwin Avenue  
Angwin, CA 94508



## A NEW FACE AT PUC: ANDREW HOSFORD



PUC is pleased to welcome Andrew Hosford, our new Assistant to the Flight Center Director. Having served as a mission pilot in the Philippines,

Andrew brings bush/humanitarian-pilot experience to our team. More recently, he has worked as a flight instructor at

Andrews University, and his mechanical and avionics skills have been very beneficial for completing the refurbishment of Charlie.

At PUC, Andrew wears several hats. He is currently serving as our Director of Maintenance. His creative skills are being put to use in the classroom, on the flight line, and in the design of our new Adventist Aviation Heritage Museum.

“From my experience flying in various humanitarian contexts around the world, I saw a strong need for a training program for missionary aviators to be adequately prepared for service,” Andrew explains.

“When I was asked to consider joining the PUC aviation team, I knew God was opening the doors for me to help train pilots for lives of service and be the answer to that need.” Welcome to PUC, Andrew! ✂

## 2026 AIR EXPO AND CHARLIE RE-DEDICATION

PUC's Alumni Homecoming Weekend will have a special aviation flavor this year. Please save the date for April 17-19, 2026. In addition to the usual homecoming festivities, the Aviation Program will host special events.

### Sabbath, April 18, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Join us in our newly-refurbished Aviation Center (the old Laundry building) for an afternoon focused on Charlie. Come and hear firsthand stories from our special guests of how God used Charlie in Papua New Guinea over the years.



### Sunday, April 19, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Enjoy a pancake breakfast, go for an airplane ride, watch the flour-bombing contest, and more. A special highlight will be a re-dedication service for Charlie at 12:30 p.m. Bring the family and come for the day! ✂

**APRIL 19, 2026**

**9 AM - 3 PM**

**PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE**

**AIR EXPO**

**ANGWIN-PARRETT FIELD (203)**

**1 AIRPORT WAY, ANGWIN, CA 94508**

**PANCAKE BREAKFAST: 9-11 AM**

**AIRPLANE RIDES: 9-11:30 AM & 1-3 PM**

**FLOUR BOMBING CONTEST: 11:30 AM-12:30 PM**

**AIRCRAFT DEDICATION: 12:30-1 PM**

**ANGWIN DART** Disaster Airlift Response Team

**Pacific Union College**

*\*Events will go on as planned, weather permitting for flights\**

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: GARY MARSH

From an early age, Gary Marsh wanted to be a missionary. When he came to PUC in the fall of 1963, he enrolled as a religion major because, in those days, missionaries needed to be pastors, teachers, nurses, or doctors. The requirement to take three years of Greek soon pushed him to change his major to history, but it was his time at Angwin Airport that really set the stage for his life. In 1964, he earned his private pilot's license.

Gary completed his instrument rating, commercial certificate, and multi-engine rating in Santa Rosa. Later, he also completed Airframe & Powerplant training. In the process, he made a huge binder containing all his A&P projects.

He wasn't sure why he kept them all, but he did anyway. He was later glad he did!

In 1969, he received notice that he was being drafted into the US armed forces. Just before he was to report for duty, a 3 a.m. phone call changed his course. Would he rather go to Vietnam as a soldier or to Africa as a missionary? The choice was clear, and soon, Gary and his new bride, Marla, were on their way to Tanzania.

Gary began by teaching Bible classes at the Adventist secondary school. But it wasn't long before he purchased a Piper Super Cub from the National Park Service in Tanzania. His parents helped him raise \$6,000 for the purchase. And soon he was doing what he'd always dreamed of doing—serving as a missionary pilot.

One day, Gary, Marla, and their son Richi were returning from a camp meeting when they landed, as planned, at a large airport, where they needed to check in with immigration. They landed and taxied the Super Cub to the parking area, but something was strange. They looked out to the side of the plane and noticed a long line of soldiers—all with sub-machine guns aimed in their direction! What was going on?

Gary taxied to a stop, and they got out.



The sergeant met them and began to question them. After a while, Gary had an idea. "Do you know the Regional Police Officer?" he asked the sergeant. The sergeant went to get the police officer, while Gary and Marla prayed. Finally, the Regional Police Officer arrived. He spoke with the sergeant, then he came to talk with Gary. Apparently, the army had decided to take control of the airport and close it. They had received orders to shoot down any plane that tried to land there. They had aimed their guns at the Super Cub—but not one soldier could get his gun to fire! With the Regional Police Officer watching, the soldiers opened their guns, and many bullets spilled out onto the ground. The

Regional Police Officer shook his head in amazement. He couldn't understand it. Gary and Marla breathed a prayer, thanking God for sparing their lives.

After serving in Tanzania, Gary worked in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Zaire (now Congo). One day, Gary parked his Cessna 185 in front of a friend's building in Nairobi, Kenya. He left the plane in the care of his friend, who promised to chock it and tie it down while Gary hurried into town. While he was away, a terrible windstorm hit the airport.

When Gary returned, he was shocked to find that the walls of one hangar had

blown out and the roof had caved in, trapping some antique aircraft. Three Super Cubs had pulled their chains and weights out of the ground and been blown 100 feet away. A Cessna 172 was blown on top of a 310... and the list went on. Fearing the worst, Gary hurried to where he had parked his Cessna 185. There it was, just sitting there—no chocks or tie-downs—and the parking brake wasn't even set! It was impossible. But his friend summed it up: "Your God must have been sitting on your airplane. Everything was moving, and your plane didn't even wiggle!"

In 1977, Gary and Marla returned from Africa to a new mission field: Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Gary initially began working in the maintenance shop, but soon he had a new project: starting an A&P school to train future mission pilot/mechanics. That project binder he had used in his own A&P training a decade earlier suddenly came in very handy. "God knew in advance that I needed that," he explains. Gary continued teaching in Andrews University's A&P program until his retirement in 2010, ensuring that generations of young people had the skills to maintain aircraft to a high standard.

What has been the key to his work? "Adaptability," says Gary. His decades-long career has spanned several countries and various roles. Yet the one constant has been serving as a missionary. "The most important thing is to be willing to follow God's plan," he concludes. ✕

## PQ SOAR - JUNE 28-JULY 3, 2026

Do you know a high school student who wants to learn to fly? Invite them to join us for PacificQuest, June 28- July 3, 2026. The PQ Soar program offers high school students a taste of flying. Students will spend a week taking flight lessons in our aircraft and simulators, learning about aircraft maintenance, visiting a control tower, and more! For more information and enrollment, please visit [puc.edu/pacificquest](http://puc.edu/pacificquest) ✕



# REMEMBER WHEN?

**20 years ago:**  
Then-US president  
George W. Bush  
landed at Angwin  
Airport in 2006.



United States Secret Service sniper.



**WE WANT TO  
HEAR FROM YOU!**

- What did you love most about your time at PUC?
- What are you up to now?
- Email us: [flightcenter@puc.edu](mailto:flightcenter@puc.edu) or scan the QR code.



## AVIATION NEWSLETTER



**AVIATION**  
Pacific Union College  
One Angwin Avenue  
Angwin, CA 94508  
[puc.edu](http://puc.edu)

