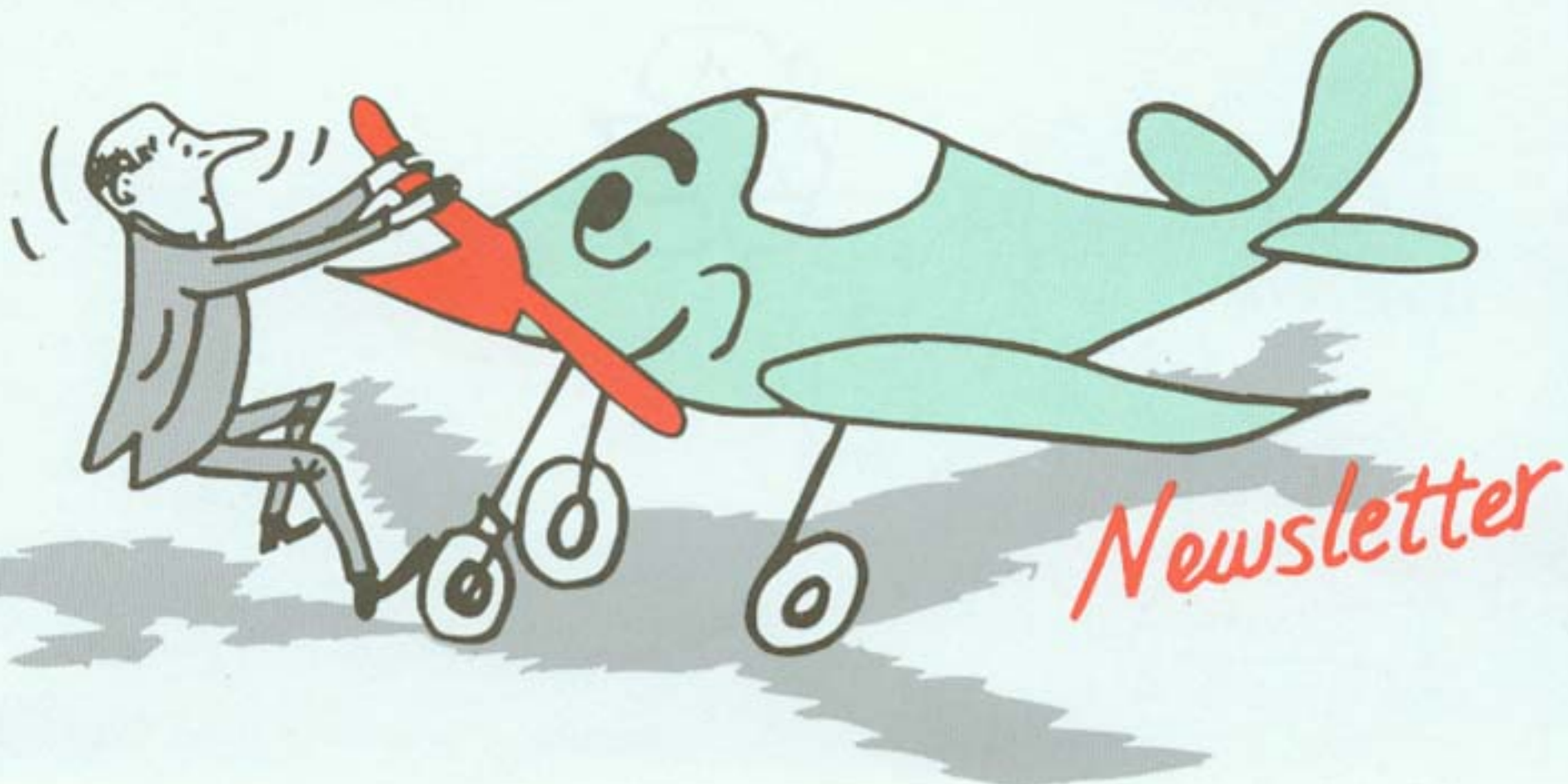


N.A.P.P.



VOLUME XXXVII

OCTOBER 1999

NO. 2



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I enjoyed being with a good number of the members at our Midwest Regional gathering in Omaha.

I had the pleasure of a visit from Tom Geelan, former president of our great organization, and Dave Hogan. They were flying a 172 Cessna, just taking a brief break and enjoying flying.

Again schools, religion classes, RCIA sessions, and more are up and running. Is your schedule touching a little on the hectic side? Any time you feel you need a break you are welcome to stop by. Just put PHG (Phillipsburg) in your GPS or Loran and fly the course.

I watched the documentary on the Public TV

channel on John Paul II, the Millennial Pope. Anyone else catch it? Didn't know exactly what to think of it..

Whether we like it or not its time again to prepare for winter flying. I do less of it in the winter because I use my plane less on shorter trips since it takes extra time to warm up the engine. I have the tendency to rush matters and get a guilty feeling for not giving more time to warm up.

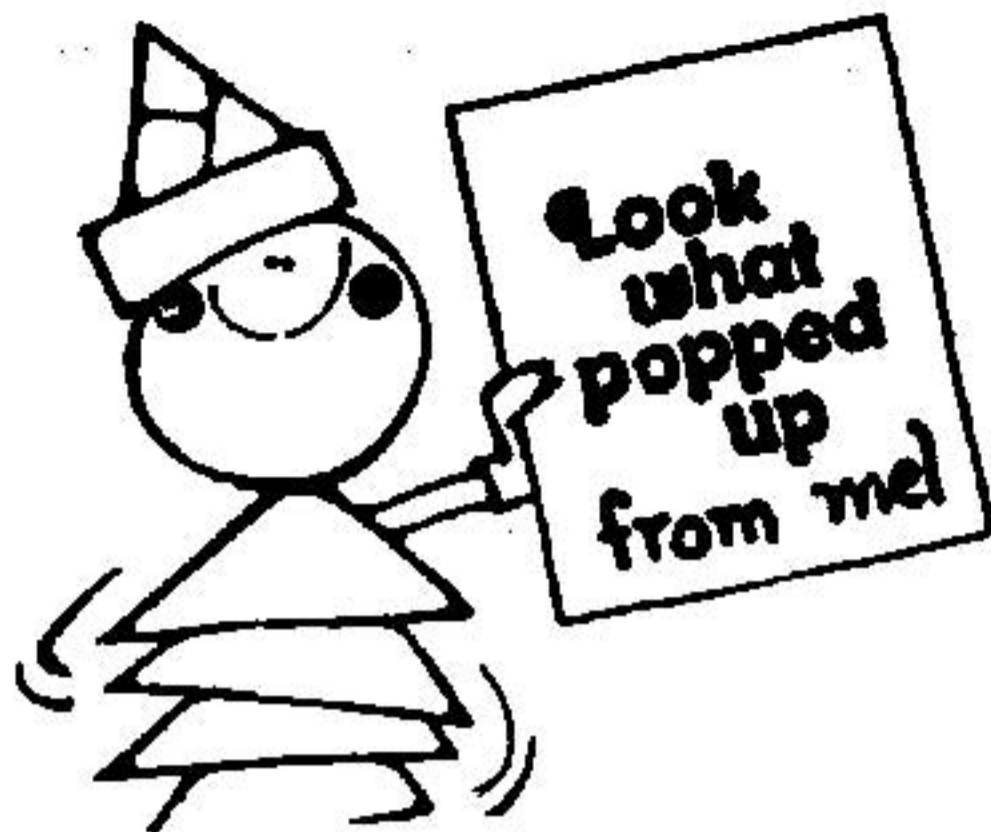
All of you have a good winter and a smooth entry into the new millennium! Looking forward to seeing you in Anchorage in July.

On a clear day, I heard a Piper pilot with a foreign accent going into Salina, Kansas: Kansas City Center: "Piper 345R, advise airport in sight." Piper 345R: "Pretty sure I have airport in sight." KC Center: "Understand you have airport in sight?" Piper 345R: "Airport in sight, pretty sure." A Cessna reports: "Cessna 123, checking in." KC Center: "Cessna 123, understand you have the airport in sight?" Cessna 123: "Pretty sure."

SAFE FLYING

ae

Al Werth



Many of you probably read the headlines in August informing us that Papua New Guinea's "flying bishop" died. It was the first news of the death of Archbishop Leo Arkfeld, SVD, a charter member with a very strong impact on NAPP at the time of our founding. In 1963 we gathered as a group of priest-pilots to primarily enjoy each others' company. We received a letter from then Bishop Leo stating "this is the kind of organization I've prayed for for years. Many in our world view the airplane as a rich man's toy. Here in New Guinea it is a necessary means of transportation. The farthest point of my diocese is 30 minutes away by plane. The same place is 30 days by boat, the only other means of transportation." The NAPP constitution was in the process of being written at that time and his letter was the motivating factor in including in our purposes such goals as promoting use of the airplane in Church work. Out of that came the idea of an annual contribution to some one using the plane in spreading the gospel. Leo has been a recipient several times in the past.

I'm including a letter sent by the diocese to all his friends. A memorial Mass in late August

was held in his hometown of Panama, IA.
Leo, may your rest in peace!

This issue has some of the notes that came with the annual dues. Of special interest is a copy of an AP article in Florida about Fr. Denis Kitenge.

If anyone wishes to make a personal contribution to Denis's work they will be happy to receive it at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 750 San Salvador Dr. Dunedin, FL 34698
Phone: 727-733-3606 Fax: 727-733-8305
Make checks payable to: OLL Plane Fund

Eighteen of us gathered at the Strategic Air Command Museum west of Omaha, NE on September 27. Four states were represented and everyone enjoyed this relatively new \$27,000,000.00 facility built to house some of the SAC aircraft. The new building assures safety from the obvious deterioration in the Midwest climate.

On Monday, May 8, 2000 Fr. Bob Gruss will host the Midwest regional gathering in Pella, IA. Pella is a community settled by the Dutch and each year hosts a Tulip Festival that attracts thousands. We'll get there a few days early to smell and view the tulips in peace. Put it on the calendar and come smell the flowers.

2000 membership cards are included in the envelopes who paid since the last mailing. Another envelope/reminder is included for the rest of you. If you can afford it send your \$20.00 to assist us in carrying out our goals. Thanks!

REMINDERS

May 8, 2000 - Midwest Regional
Pella, Iowa

July 12-13, 2000 - 37th Annual Meeting
Anchorage, Alaska

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:



REV. MEL HEMANN

127 Kaspand Place

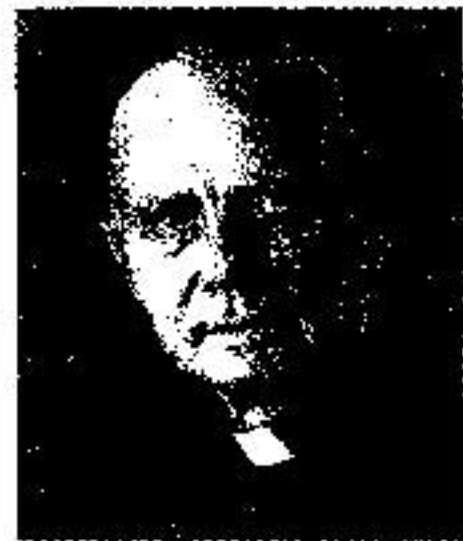
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-1683

319-266-3889

Email: DBQMHEMANN@Impresso.com

Catholic Diocese of Wewak

PO Box 107, WEWAK
PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Dear Friend of Archbishop Leo Arkefeld,

I have letters from you to Bishop Leo. I do not know if he has responded or not. You may know or do not know that Bishop Leo has died August 21 1999.

Since your letters are here I wish to inform you of his death.

He had a State funeral, the Provincial Government was very much involved. Ten thousand came to view his body and attend the Funeral Mass.

The Defense Force based in Wewak formed a guard of honor and gave a many gun salute at the cemetery.

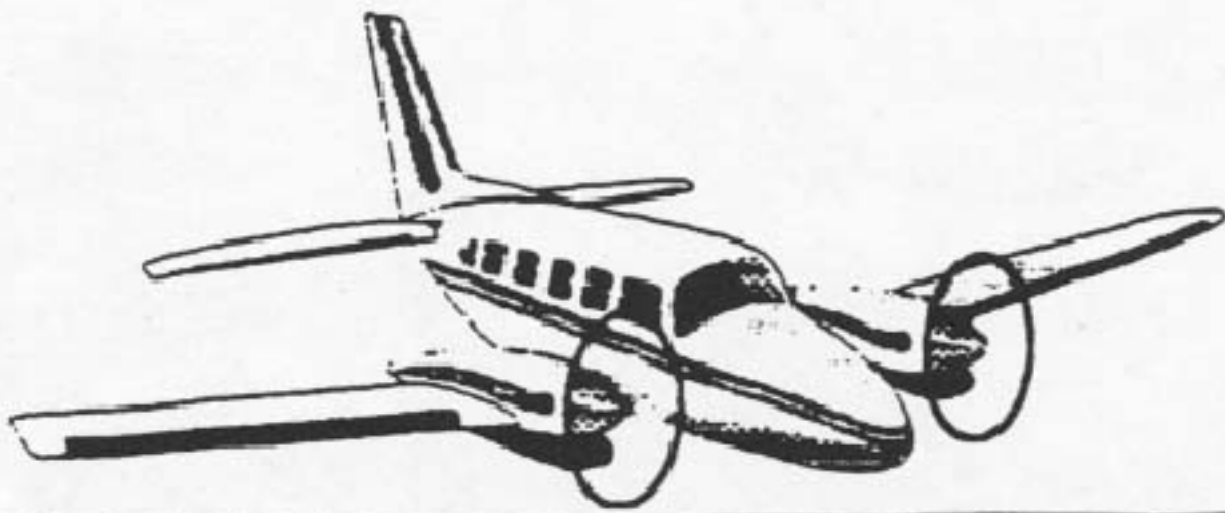
His sister-in-law and niece were here for his burial.

He is buried in our Diocese cemetery, centered between the graves of the missionary Sisters, Brothers and Priest with whom he worked for many years.

We thank you, his relatives and friends, for the many years you have supported him and the mission work in this Diocese.

May God bless you,

*Fr. Clemens Gawlik
Business manager.*



BRIEFS FROM HERE AND THERE

The following message was included with his NAPP annual dues:

Fr. Mel

I'm now stationed at Langley AFB, VA after 2 years overseas in Turkey. Great to be back in the USA! Pray for the people of Turkey and the Church persecuted there in the midst of a Muslim nation. Not much flying there - too expensive and maintenance is very questionable. Hope to start work soon on my MEI through the Langley Flying Club.

Fr. Edward C Moran

Charter member Frank Weidinger's wife included the following with his dues:

Greetings from Frank Weidinger. At 82 years he's getting along well, despite his Parkinson disease.

Our daughter Mary Pat finishes nurse's training in December, 99 and we're all kept in tow by our 3 1/2 granddaughter, Kylie.

Frank looks forward to getting your newsletter. If anyone is ever in the Portland, OR area, we're just across the river and would welcome visitors.

Happy flying!

Pat & Frank Weidinger

Fr. Denis Kitenge of, priest from the Congo/Africa, sent the following in response to the \$1,000.00 donation from NAPP:

Dear Friends,

It is a privilege for me to write to you today. And I'm doing it to express my gratitude for voting to give me the annual donation 99. It is

also a point of honour to receive the last annual donation of the century. I will never forget that. This money goes directly to the funds that will help me, if God willing, to get a Cessna for my missionary work in the Congo/Africa.

I'm praying that the Lord will fill each one of us with the zeal and the courage to use an airplane as a tool for the Gospel.

With so much love and gratitude I remain yours in Jesus Our Lord.

Fr. Denis Kitenge
Missionary Pilot



Editor's Note:

I flew to the Tampa/Clearwater airport over the Labor Day weekend to visit Denis. The above picture shows the two of us outside the National Aviation Academy in Clearwater, FL. Denis graduated from the A & P school in mid-September. Because of the current political condition in the Congo Denis is unable to return home. An FBO at a nearby field has offered Denis employment and "hands on" experience in his shop until he can return to the Congo.

Friends of Fr. Denis in the local area and the parish where he lives have begun a fund drive to purchase a plane for him. We got them in touch with Wings of Hope and together they are working toward that goal.

The staff at National Aviation Academy gave me a first class tour of their facility and were very proud to share their experiences with this special pupil who is such an inspiration to all of them.

**'THE FLYING NUN' IS MAKE-BELIEVE
THIS FLYING PRIEST IS REAL
By PAT LEISNER, Associated Press Writer
CLEARWATER, FLORIDA**

The Rev. Denis Kitenge, a philosophy teacher at a seminary, spoke no English. He had never been outside Africa. Then the bishop bought him an airplane ticket to the United States and told him to learn to fly. Learning to fly would allow the Catholic priest to bring faith, education, medicine and hope to virtually unreachable primitive villages deep in the Congo jungle.

Flying lessons, however, were only part of the challenge. He had to learn to read, write and speak English. He did both at the same time.

"It was frustrating to ask the control tower to repeat instructions over and over," said Kitenge, 35. "One, two, even three times maybe, but a fourth time and I figure they wonder who is the pilot." Now, 2 years later, Kitenge speaks English fluently. He has his pilot's license, his driver's license and is working on a mechanic's license to repair and maintain planes.

Friends he has made talk of his courage and faith. Kitenge arrived in a strange land with little money, knowing no one, unfamiliar with food and customs. With faith in God and sights on becoming a bush pilot, he endured a long, lonely uphill challenge. "I fly for Jesus," he said.

Back home the missionary need is great. Roads - where there are any - were made by hand. His diocese is composed of 24 parishes and is almost the size of Florida. From a jungle village to the city of Tshumbe for supplies is 1,240 miles - a month long journey up the Congo River on a raft.

In villages, homes are built of leaves and bark. A village is mainly an agricultural commune of about 40 impoverished families who share the work, the food and the care of each other. A chicken can be sold for clothes. Farming is by hand. Cooking is outdoors. There is no sugar, no bread or cereal. Beans and rice are staples. And milk is made by boiling water and adding a powder.

Kitenge knew he would come to the United States to become a pilot because it was considered the best place to learn. But he didn't know where to go. At the American Embassy in Zaire, he saw an advertisement in an aviation magazine for a school in Venice, Florida, between Fort Myers and Sarasota.

Venice rhymed with Denis. So Venice it was. Embassy workers tried unsuccessfully to delay his trip four months to learn the language.

Kitenge began flight school at Huffman Aviation in 1997. Bookkeeper Charlie Voss recalled the cleric's struggles there "It was much, much more of a challenge to him than anybody else because of the language," Voss said. "It was a great barrier for him overcome."

Kitenge began teaching himself English. He enrolled in adult education language classes. Then he met Carol Vuono at a gathering of the Literacy Volunteers of America, a Syracuse, N.Y.-based group.

She was a semiretired English teacher who came to the meeting to decide if she wanted to become a volunteer. They hit it off immediately. When Kitenge wasn't in the cockpit he was settled in at the library with Ms. Vuono who tutored him from a collection of aviation books.

"I know absolutely nothing about a plane," said Ms. Vuono, who worked with Kitenge for nearly eight months. "He is extremely bright, very quick and totally focused. He would get the concept, but he didn't have the English."

Her little bit of French helped them get over some hurdles. One day she tape recorded him and played it. "Oh? Is that Denis?" he asked. "I sound French, don't I? I want English. Tell me, do I do this right?"

"Then he would practice it, over and over, and by the next meeting he would know it," Ms. Vuono said. "We focused on aviation, conversation, then literature. By the time we finished, he was reading independently."

Kitenge went next to the National Aviation Academy in Clearwater, where he is learning to repair and maintain small planes.

Instructor Albert Brown said he's a good student, works hard and is a quick study. "He's eager and motivated and jumps into anything you give him," Brown said. "His priorities are his faith and learning to fly."

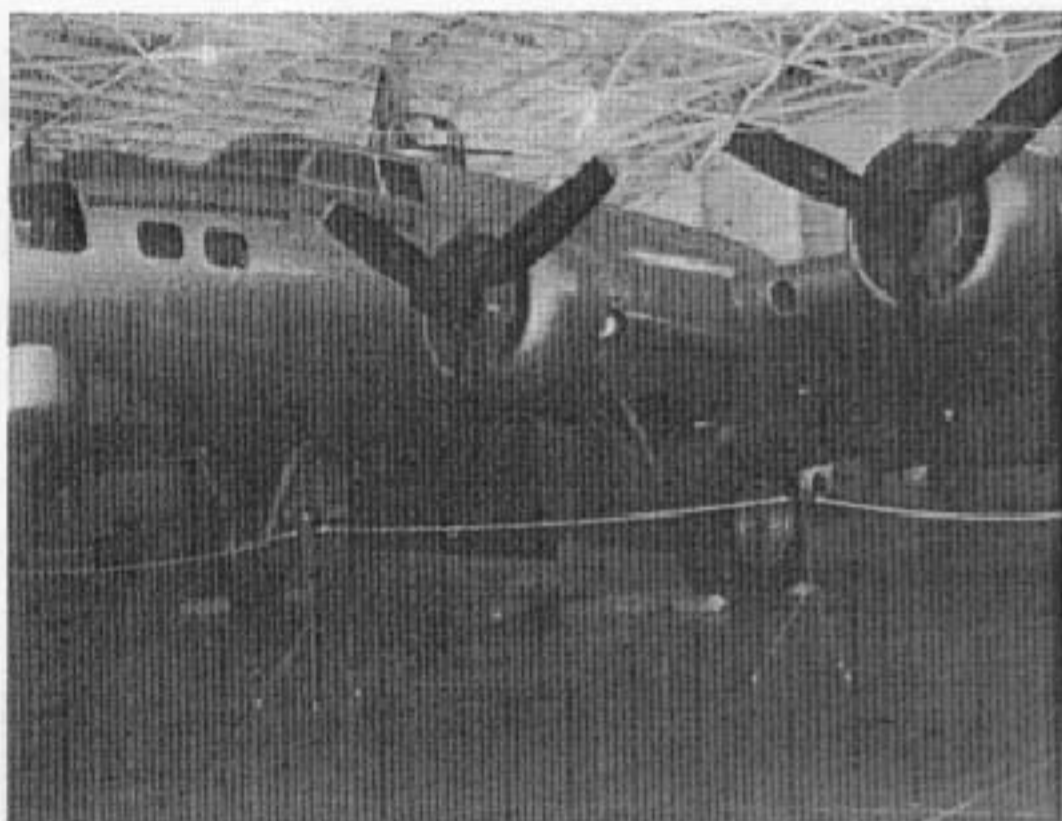
Classmate Wayne Sebring, who struck up a friendship with Kitenge, said he's inspired by the priest's selflessness. "There's a spirituality about him you can learn from and I'm not a Catholic," Sebring said.

Kitenge lives at Our Lady of Lourdes parish in nearby Dunedin where he celebrates Mass. Parishioners at churches both here and in Venice have treated him well. Someone gave him a car to replace a beat-up old mountain bike that someone else gave him. Kitenge, third in a family of 12 children, has a sister who lives in Belgium and has helped support his work. When Kitenge returns to the Congo he hopes to bring with him a single-engine Cessna, a four or six seater. He's still trying to figure out how to afford it.

"You see in him a man with a vision and a mission to airlift food, medicine and supplies and tend to the spiritual needs of people who otherwise might not be exposed to these things," Sebring said. "Just imagine if there was a little of Father Denis in all of us."

NAPP MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING

Monday, September 27, 1999



The B-17



Charlie Teufel telling us something
about the SR-71

Because of the guided tours at the Museum it was impossible to get a group picture.

The tour took 1.5 hours. After it was over we had lunch at the cafeteria. Members began scattering as there was no place to assemble. It was the shortest meeting ever!

Some had other commitments and left early.

