



FLIGHTS OF HOPE NEWS

A Grateful Family

Continued from page 3

Wyatt's parents have used Angel Flight West only a few times. Christine says, "We can afford to drive ourselves, but that's not the point. Driving five hours with my husband and I both having to take time off work has become a burden. And having a 13-year-old at home alone also takes time away from our family. Flying with AFW has been a blessing and the pilots are just amazing. Dennis Bracken, who flew Wyatt, told me that he does it because it's his passion to fly and that he wants to use his service for people who need it. I know the truth of this because it shows." Christine asks anyone who listens to donate to AFW because she has experienced the toll it takes to care for a seriously ill and very loved child.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUNDRAISER

We'll climb above, together

While these are undeniably turbulent times, no one navigates turbulence better than a pilot. We understand the need that hospital and medical workers are facing right now. Although we have temporarily suspended volunteer-flown missions for patients, we have pivoted our services to provide emergency assistance to:

- Transport healthcare workers and other first responders to high-need areas.
- Expand necessary blood, cargo, and goods transport (face masks, hand sanitizer, ventilators, and other essential PPE and supplies).
- Provide assistance to patients needing ground transportation to their required appointments.

Details can be found at: <https://bit.ly/AFWEmergencyAssistanceFund/>

YOU can help us get these supplies where they need to be, help the frontline workers get to the areas with the highest need, and help ensure our healthcare personnel have the critical protective equipment they need to keep them protected as they continue saving lives. **We welcome your support of these efforts with a donation towards this emergency assistance fund.**

We ask for continued thoughts and prayers for our patients, healthcare partners working this crisis, and all those affected. We'll climb above COVID together.

Thank You to Our Sponsors



STEVE & MARGIE DANZ

Leslie & Robert Zemeckis
Southwest Airlines
The Smidt Foundation
NBAA
Mark & Mari Donnelly
Marks Family Foundation

Rich Conti
Ben Marcus
Matt Brown
Windermere Real Estate
Textron Aviation
McDermott + Bull



Our pilots partnered with Colorado Hospital Association to fly much needed supplies to medical facilities in remote regions of CO. Special thanks to pilots pictured, Lynn McCollough, Bill Knorr, and Phil Rosnik, for making this possible!



INSIDE

- Helping to Relieve Pain for a Terminal Teen **Page 2-3**
- A Grateful Family **Page 3**
- Support AFW's Emergency Assistance Fund **Back page**



Angel Flight West delivers health and hope using donated flights to serve those with healthcare or other compelling human needs.

Angel Flight West links volunteer pilots and commercial airlines with people whose non-emergency health needs require air transportation to access care.

Angel Flight West Volunteers During Coronavirus

On the morning of March 30, 2020, Denver Command Pilot Phil Rosnik took off from Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport with 85 pounds of hand sanitizer in his Cessna Turbo 182 for delivery to Wray Community District Hospital. Colorado Hospital Association (CHA), like all others across America, is struggling to get urgently needed supplies to rural hospitals.

"Forty-three percent of Colorado's hospitals are rural," says CHA Vice President Julie Lonborg, "which can present challenges when trying to restock vital supplies quickly. Colorado Hospital Association is incredibly grateful to AFW and its volunteer pilots for making their service available."

Wray's CEO John Hart said, "Wray Community District Hospital is grateful for AFW today. Cases of hand sanitizers were delivered this morning and distributed to the hospital, clinic, and nursing home. Thanks to Phil Rosnik with a heartfelt elbow bump for making the delivery. This is great coordination with many entities from the front range to the eastern plains!"

Phil adds, "Every day I get to fly is a good day, but a day when I get to fly an AFW mission is a great day. Having a meaningful way to help out in a crisis, or to help bring a patient to needed treatment, is a special privilege for a life-long general aviation pilot!"

3161 Donald Douglas Loop South
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Phone: 310-390-2958
Web: www.AngelFlightWest.org

ANGEL FLIGHT WEST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Josh Olson

We hope this note finds you and your families healthy and safe. The COVID-19 crisis is challenging for everyone and we're here to



help climb above it together. Thank you for your encouragement and support during these unprecedented and uncertain times. It has been inspiring.

AFW qualifies as an "essential service" under current government mandates and we're working with our healthcare partners to best serve them as we navigate this rapidly changing crisis.

Although the AFW Board of Directors has voted to temporarily suspend volunteer-flown patient flights, we will work closely with our patients on rescheduling, assisting with alternate transportation, and other support. We continue to arrange flights transporting supplies, blood, tissue, and equipment to areas in need, and for healthcare relief workers with our commercial partners. While planning for the future, we stay nimble to help in any way we can.

Although this is a time to isolate, it's also a time to celebrate. We are so grateful to our generous volunteers and donors who, even through difficult times, will have helped us fly our 85,000th flight this month. You make these flights possible. We're filled with gratitude for your generosity and belief in our mission. From our hearts to yours, thank you.

Helping to Relieve Pain for a Terminal Teen

Thanks to your support, Angel Flight West gives passengers relief when traveling by car is physically painful.



With your help, AFW is able to lessen the pain of travel for Mya who suffers from brittle bone disease and car travel is painful.

Mya is a very busy sixteen-and-a-half-year-old teenager who attends public school and volunteers for a myriad of children's programs. She won student of the year, and yet she told her mom Carly, "I just want to be a normal kid." Mya was born with brittle bone disease, a condition that causes continuous fractures mostly in her femurs and hips, producing ongoing pain. She's had surgeries to alleviate the pain, but her disease is terminal and she is on palliative care.

When she was younger, Carly would drive 50-60 trips by car from Missoula to Spokane, hoping the medical staff could find a way to help her daughter. She didn't seem to find any answers there. She drove from Missoula to Salt Lake City where the medical team there was also unsure of how to help her. These car trips were hard on Mya's body. In addition, the driving and medical care were draining Carly's family financially. Finally, she was able to get help at Seattle Children's Hospital and at Bellevue in pain management, but the drive wasn't working.

After some research, Carly found AFW. She says, "Angel Flight has given me a chance to live with my daughter again. I still worry, but it's really made it so much easier." AFW pilot Michael Burks flies Mya frequently, and Carly says that " he is

(continued next page)



Helping to Relieve Pain continued...

amazing...he treats us like family," and told her that he will be there to help in any way he can.

Meanwhile as Mya has grown, she developed thoracic outlet syndrome, and scoliosis, and her spine is now pushing into her brain stem. In addition, she now has sleep apnea and 50% lung function. Despite the endless pain and worsening physical complications, her mom says, "Mya never complains, talks about her terminal illness, or shows any weakness. She's very smart and kind and just pushes through everything. When we're in the plane," Carly continues, "it gives me a chance to breathe, not cry all the time, and relax for a little while because Mya is not in pain. It seems like so little, but it's really so big." Carly adds, "Many who know Mya say that she is the definition of courage and compassion." Both Mya and Carly are an example for us all.

A Grateful Family

For Wyatt's first four years he was always on the go. At five, when he started complaining of headaches, mom Christine thought maybe it was just dehydration. After one debilitating headache, Christine took him to the doctor at Children's Hospital in Bakersfield on May 2, 2019. The diagnoses were a DIPG brain tumor, chiari malformation and hydrocephalus, the last requiring a shunt and the first: terminal. The doctors referred the family to a hospital in San Francisco where they were told there were very few options other than chemotherapy and radiation. So, hours and miles of driving to doctors began.



Christine learned of a doctor in Michigan who was researching a trial drug for this type of brain tumor and Wyatt was accepted. AFW flew father and son. The doctor performed new tests that showed a different type of brain tumor, more rare than previously diagnosed; however, just as fatal with nine to 18 months life expectancy. Wyatt is in his 10th month. As the year has progressed, Wyatt's body is failing. Parts of his limbs are locking so it is difficult for him to sit, a problem especially if he has to drive five hours again to San Francisco where he'll be treated if he is let out of the trial. He is also losing speech, which is becoming "frustrating for him and for us," Christine says.

(continued on back page)