



1st Quarter • 2015

# FLIGHTS OF HOPE News

## FROM A PASSENGER *by AFW Passenger Randy F.*



Sharlene F. with husband and **passenger Randy F.** on a mission from Honolulu, HI to L.A., CA where Randy is receiving a bone marrow transplant for acute myeloid leukemia. Randy's flight was generously donated by Alaska Airlines, one of AFW's top contributors.

"I was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in June 2014. I started chemotherapy the day after I was diagnosed. My oncologist let me know that I needed a bone marrow transplant and that they do not do these transplants in Hawaii. I needed to go to a facility on the mainland.

"Fortunately for me, my brother was a match and we chose City of Hope in California for the procedure. The bone marrow transplant took place November 2014. I was in the hospital for one month and then two more months close by so City of Hope could monitor my progress. After approximately 100 days post-transplant I was released to return back home to Honolulu in February 2015.

"I found out about Angel Flight West from my insurance plan case manager. I was asking her about the out-of-pocket airfare expenses I was going to have to pay to fly from Honolulu to L.A., and if it was covered under my insurance plan. She indicated it was not, but that there were several nonprofits that donated flights for cancer patients.

*Continued on page 5...*

Join us for an out of this world event



CELEBRATING PUBLIC BENEFIT AVIATION

ENDEAVOR  AWARDS®

May 30, 2015

Beneath the Space Shuttle Endeavor

Angel Flight West Presents  
2015 Endeavor Awards Ceremony & Gala  
Honoring Volunteer Pilots

Buy Tickets Now

Details & Tickets at: [www.endeavorawards.org](http://www.endeavorawards.org)



## ASK JOSH

by Josh Olson, Executive Director

*What's the deal with the Angel Flight Call Sign and why did the FAA change it?*

For anyone not aware, Angel Flight West has a unique three-letter call sign (NGF) designated by the FAA for handling, priority, and marketing. Many pilots using this call sign have experienced some level of priority and other pilots have joined AFW after hearing the call sign used by controllers. As of January 1st this year, the FAA changed the way in which we are to use the NGF (Angel Flight) Call Sign in response to concerns about unauthorized aircraft trying to access US Airspace using designated three-letter call signs like ours.

Each volunteer pilot is now assigned with a unique four-digit number to file with NGF for Angel Flight missions. Pilot numbers will currently show up on your Mission Assignment

Form and in the future will be found in your pilot record. You can send an email to [coordination@angelflightwest.org](mailto:coordination@angelflightwest.org) to receive your number, or just wait until your next mission assignment and it will be on the form. Please note using NGF + your tail number is no longer accepted by the FAA. We strongly encourage everyone flying an AFW mission to file using the Angel Flight Call Sign. While it is not required, it is helpful for the coordination team to track locations of flight, helps us recruit more pilots, and offers some preferential treatment for your flying.

For further information and instructions, please view the following documents on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/o8m5crk>. Should you have any questions about this issue or anything else, please give us a call at 310-390-2958 or email us at [info@angelflightwest.org](mailto:info@angelflightwest.org). Thank you and happy flying!



**Passenger Joyce B. and NV Wing Command Pilot Dale Brown** on the 1st leg of a 2-leg mission from Roseburg OR to Fallon, NV. **So. CA Wing Command Pilot Mark Wollper** flew the 2nd leg to Santa Monica, CA. Joyce has limited resources and is undergoing treatment for breast cancer and reconstruction surgery.



**Passenger two-year-old Amiyah B. with mom Lisa** flying from Palo Alto to Stockton, CA with **No. CA Wing Command Pilot Ken Newberry** for follow-up treatments of a liver transplant. The family doesn't own a vehicle, and relatives can't always help. They have no other way to get to follow-up treatments, and can't use public transportation due to Amiyah's compromised immune system.

## FIRST FLIGHT

by Mark Stanfield, OR Wing Command Pilot

"This was our first AFW mission. My wife Leslie, an oncology nurse, and I, an oncology pharmacist, picked up Yan at the Walla Walla, WA airport. Yan has colorectal cancer. It was very touching to hear her story and learn about her family during the flight. She was telling us that she and her husband used to have savings in the bank, but after six surgeries in Washington State, and twice monthly treatments in Portland for a last-ditch-effort clinical trial drug, they are now left in debt. This made my heart hurt. She couldn't believe that I was doing this out of my own pocket and thanked me constantly during the flight.

"Yan is from China and tomorrow is the Chinese New Year. We congratulated her and she helped us figure out what animal we all are according to the year we were born. It was such a great mission to be a part of sharing some laughs and a few tears, and I could tell that the guys in ATC were paying extra attention to us as well.

"After Yan got in the Earth Angel car and left, my wife said, "I miss her already" and she began to cry. I could only think that in life, this is the good stuff—sharing our best intentions and actions. Thank you for this great opportunity. *Note:* Leslie, year of the Horse; Mark, year of the tiger; and Hops, year of the rabbit."



L to R: AFW passenger Yan, Mark's wife Leslie, OR Wing Command Pilot Mark Stanfield and the Stanfield's dog Hops on the Stanfield's first AFW mission. The first leg of this 2-leg mission from MT to Portland, OR. was flown by MT Wing Command Pilot Richard Rogers to Walla Walla, WA. Mark flew the 2nd leg to OR. Yan has been battling stage IV colon cancer over three years. She hasn't worked since her diagnosis. Her lost wages, medical bills and traveling expenses make her financial situation very difficult.

To view all AFW Command Pilots who have flown missions this year to date click on or go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/mwsv2s7>

### New Montana Wing Leader

AFW welcomes new MT Wing Leader Bill Bayne. Bill is based in Western MT, while former Wing Leader Gerry Wilkins will be staying on as Eastern MT area leader. Bill has been a pilot for 14 years and joined AFW in 2013. Volunteers are needed to help with hospital outreach and pilot recruitment.

Please contact Bill at [billbayne@me.com](mailto:billbayne@me.com).

### Angel Flight West Wishes to Thank Our Top Contributors

(December 8, 2014 – March 9, 2015)

*Alaska Airlines*

Tempus Aircraft Sales & Service, LLC

Tom and Mary Kay Gallagher Foundation

Morris Foundation

Connecticut Street Foundation



A selfie with **passenger Paul W.** and **So. CA Wing Command Pilot Nasser Pirshafiey** who flew Paul from Novato, CA to Santa Monica, CA. Paul has stage 4 prostate cancer and says, "I live on social security of just over \$700/month, food stamps, friends and loans. Treatment is not available locally and the treatment I am getting here seems to be failing again." [See "Letter from a Passenger" right box.]



Nine-year-old Mason celebrating with one of many foods he couldn't have—*chocolate milk*—after finally receiving a kidney transplant. Mason was diagnosed with renal failure in September 2012 and has been flying two to three times a week from his home in Parker, AZ to Children's Hospital in Phoenix, AZ for dialysis since March 2013. His AFW missions helped to cut down on a four hour cab ride each way.

Thank you to all those pilots who have flown for Mason in missions totaling 179 since January 2014!

## Letter from a Passenger

*To Nasser, Lois, Joanne, David and all of you at Angel Flight West,*

*Thank you again for making my mission to give 22 vials of blood for tests and to get poked six times with needles that added or infused me with 20+ chemicals to my system, a very memorably pleasant experience.*

*Your project and high degree of cheer is a testament that the human experiment does work at times and in places.*

*Thank you Nasser for choosing to land on the SMO runway and not the nearby golf course. Both landings were a blast.*

*So perfect.*

*Thank you for the seamless and efficient and patient ( I do move slowly these days) transfer to my delightful Earth Angels who dealt with traffic and unfamiliar territory so efficiently while entertaining me with conversation.*

*I am pleased that all the seats were so comfortable and that I could leave my shoes on, carry clean drinking water and did not have to wonder if my toothbrush would be deemed a weapon by TSA.*

*Thank you dear Angels, Paul W.*

"Mason received his new kidney Saturday, March 7th, and has been doing great. The kidney is working like it should be! Only pain is when he moves, coughs, has hiccups or laughs, so he said he can only laugh by saying "ha-ha-ha!"  
– Anita F., grandmother of passenger Mason

## FROM A PASSENGER...*continued from first page*

"She sent me a multipage list of several different organizations to contact and mentioned that AFW was probably my best bet. When I first read how AFW works with pilots and plane owners donating their time and aircraft to patients needing transport, I did not think it applied to Hawaii since no small planes would make the journey! I went ahead and completed the "Request A Flight" on the [angelflightwest.org](http://angelflightwest.org) website just in case, and received an email back with a phone number to call requesting more information. I called and provided the requested information but didn't hear anything further.

"On my next appointment with my oncologist, I asked his office manager, Gemma, about it and she indicated that AFW would want something from the doctor to indicate medical necessity and that she would take care of it.

"A few days later, my wife was contacted by AFW saying we were approved for travel and that they

would book a flight for us. We just had to let them know where and when! It was a Godsend! They booked a flight for both me and my wife to LA on Alaska Air. They told my wife when we were done with the bone marrow transplant and the doctor released us to go home, to call them for the return trip!

"Four months later we called and they booked our return flight again on Alaska Air—no problem! The whole experience was nothing but great!

"What did this flight mean for me?

"Having AFW cover our airfare to and from California from Honolulu was a huge help. Since both my wife and I had to leave work during this whole procedure we had no income, and with the added medical expenses growing that we were incurring, funds were extremely tight. Not having to worry about how we were going to pay for airfare was an enormous relief!"



## OUR THANKS TO ALASKA AIRLINES

Alaska Airlines is partnered with Angel Flight West and is one of our top contributors, providing hundreds of tickets each year to help passengers in Alaska get to necessary medical treatment. In addition, if a passenger within the Lower 48 cannot meet the criteria of flying in a non-pressurized general aviation aircraft, or weather conditions cancel a smaller aircraft flight, Alaska Airlines will offer assistance by providing tickets to their destination. In 2014, Alaska Airlines donated approximately 1,000 roundtrip tickets. We would not be able to help passengers like Randy without the generous support of Alaska Airlines. Angel Flight West has been named one of Alaska Airlines charities to receive donated mileage from mileage plan customers.

To donate miles to Angel Flight West, please click on <http://tinyurl.com/993tk7s>

Fourteen-year-old **passenger Riley S.** and mom Tracie flying from Phoenix, AZ to Farmington, NM to Phoenix Children's Hospital by **CO Wing Command Pilot Nikolay Slabakov.** Riley is going for a pectus excavatum consultation. This is a condition in which a person's breastbone is sunken into his or her chest. Severe cases can eventually interfere with the function of the heart and lungs. The family has used all of their insurance. Both parents work, but multiple trips for Riley's medical care have exhausted their resources.



Friends and family are honored and remembered through donations made to AFW in their names.

December 8, 2014 – March 9, 2015

***In Honor Of***

Norm Brod & Peggy Andrews  
 Carl Campbell  
 Stephen Danz  
 Roger & Akiko Dunham  
 The Gaertners  
 Ira Gottfried  
 Doyle LaCount  
 Dana Oxley  
 Lucas Vincent

***In Memory Of***

Sue Blevins  
 Mike Culver  
 George Goultas  
 Brad Hagie  
 Dan Manning  
 Kenneth Nemeroff  
 Christine Ryman  
 Peter & Kathleen Tomarken  
 Dan Steitz



**So. CA Wing Command Pilot Louie Al-Faraje** flying blood donations to the San Diego Blood Bank. AFW transports **blood donations** for various blood banks throughout our western region.

"I am so grateful to all of you for this gift to me. I am cancer free. My recovery has challenges, but I am **CANCER FREE**. Now it's my chance, once I have fully recovered from the effects of surgery and radiation, to give back."

– AFW Passenger Sarah M.

**Upcoming**

**Events 2015**



- 04/18 SoCA Wing Pancake Breakfast
- 05/16 ID Wing Fly-in
- 05/16 AOPA Fly-In, Salinas, CA
- 05/30 Endeavor Awards Gala
- 05/30 NoCal Wing Fly-in
- 08/01 NV Wing Fly-In
- 08/08 OR Wing Fly-in
- 09/26 AOPA Fly-In, CO Springs, CO

Contact Wings for more information or click on: <http://tinyurl.com/pxv6cxc>



**FROM A VOLUNTEER**

*by Sue Jagers, Oregon Earth Angel Coordinator*

*Earth Angels provide volunteer drivers to get our passengers to and from their medical appointments and/or lodging. Sue Jagers currently heads a Lions' Club based program in the OR Wing.*

"I started the Oregon Lions Earth Angel program for AFW in 2009.

The partnership program came about due to a request from

the AFW OR Wing Leader to the Lions for some assistance with ground transportation.

"The Lions District Governor approached me to set up a ground transportation network around the greater Portland, OR area. It soon became apparent that a state-wide network was needed due to the rural and urban nature of the state.

"I grew up in a community service oriented family. I learned to give at an early age when my family opened its home to a neighboring family whose house had burned. I follow the Lions motto "We Serve," in all my daily activities.

"The partnership with AFW has allowed me to help a portion of the population that often gets left out of services. I receive a phone call when a client needs ground transportation, and then I contact one of our volunteers. I have recruited a number of Lions around the state to become drivers for Earth Angels. This makes it possible for individuals to get to their specialized medical care facilities which is usually, for us, in and around Portland."

## IN THE HANGAR

### New additions to the AFW staff



Sammi Heffron joins AFW as our newest Mission Operations Coordinator. She graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 2014 with a degree in International Studies and Sociology. Sammi has been with the organization since February, and is no stranger to nonprofits. She volunteered in middle school for Heal the Bay, in high school for Circle of Friends, a program that pairs students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers through inclusive meaningful interaction, and in college spent a month-and-a-half in Bangladesh visiting urban and rural locations studying global poverty. When asked why she applied to AFW, she says, "I believe that you should have a connection to the work you are doing. Being adopted from Brazil because my birth mother was single and already raising four children in a poor village, I knew that some people aren't as fortunate as we are. Through my volunteer work and life experiences, I have learned that I love to help others. I wanted to work in a smaller environment where people were passionate about their jobs and it seems like I've found the perfect place." At a very early age, Sammi seems to have understood the importance of the work of nonprofits.

Katie Courson started working at AFW as Mission Operations Intern in January and will transition into Mission Coordinator from May to August to help with our many summer camp missions. She comes to AFW through Loyola Marymount College where she is a junior studying sociology. Her goal is to become a firefighter some day. Katie says her internship with AFW is giving her more experience working with people in general, but she also "enjoys helping people" who are experiencing health challenges since she experienced her own father's passing from pancreatic cancer.



Sarah Quigley, a Marketing and Communications senior at California Lutheran University, is AFW's Communications Intern. Starting in February after finding AFW through a career services website at her school, Sarah is helping with public relations of the organization through May; recording pilots' and passengers' experiences with AFW for use in social media and the press. What motivated Sarah to intern at AFW is her interest in a possible career in nonprofit PR, or working with either sports or music companies' sponsorship of nonprofits.

Welcome aboard Sammi, Katie and Sarah!

## Air to Air

✈ You can donate miles to AFW via Alaska Airlines at : <http://tinyurl.com/993tk7s>

✈ Help get the word out about AFW! Click on: <http://tinyurl.com/kn2eu2r> to write a review about AFW on *Great NonProfits*, a website that allows people to find, review, and share information about great nonprofits.

✈ **AFW Store!** In conjunction with Land's End, AFW is offering a variety of men's and women's clothing and other merchandise for purchase. To use this service click on: <http://tinyurl.com/lq27xg2>

✈ **Amazon Shoppers!** AFW will receive a portion of your purchase if you click on: [www.angelflightwest.org](http://www.angelflightwest.org), which will take you to the Amazon page for AFW.



Angel Flight West  
3161 Donald Douglas Loop South  
Santa Monica, CA 90405

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### Quick Links

#### Donate

Our Website  
Our Blog  
FAQs  
Wings  
Join AFW

Follow Us • Share Us  
Forward to a Friend



#### Contact Us

Direct  
(310) 390-2958  
Voice Mail  
(310) 398-6123  
Toll Free  
(888) 4-AN-ANGEL  
Website  
[www.angelflightwest.org](http://www.angelflightwest.org)



**Passenger Ramon F. and UT Command Pilot Albert Lehmann** flying from Grand Junction, CO to Salt Lake City, UT for Ramon's pre-op appointments and work-ups for a liver transplant. Ramon's family does not have the finances to cover this unexpected transplant procedure.



**Passenger Colleen F. with No. CA Command Pilot Peter Eisele** flying from Sacramento, CA to Paso Robles, CA for Colleen's appointment with a specialist for primary immune deficiency disease. Colleen lives on a limited income. Medicare and Tricare help with medical expenses.

The mission of Angel Flight West is to arrange free air transportation in response to health care and other compelling human needs.