



FLIGHTS OF HOPE

Quarterly newsletter for Angel Flight West's members and friends



A Reflection on Fifteen Years

Cheri Cimmarrusti, Associate Executive Director

Recently my fifteenth anniversary with Angel Flight West silently crept by. It was in the middle of the AFIDS 2.0 launch. I had been reminiscing about my beginnings personally with

AFW and about the organization itself. When I first started with AFW fifteen years ago, mission information was kept on two white boards on the wall in our office. Markers and erasers entered and deleted information about pending and flown missions. Volunteers called AFW command pilots on their home phones from an alphabetized notebook of names.

What a long way we have come from then to an interactive web-browsing database that

is heading towards being the leading edge technology for volunteer pilot organizations across the country. Just last week, four other nonprofit flight organizations joined us here for training on AFIDS 2.0! (See Alan's "Flight Plan" article on page 2)

What a long way I have come as well. From my twelve-hour per week assistant position, to "Mission Coordinator" position, and finally to Associate Executive Director, it has been quite the ride. About a year after I started, I moved into the Mission Coordinator's role when the previous Mission Coordinator, Susan Connor, left to pursue other interests. Little did I realize how this move would play out in my life to come.

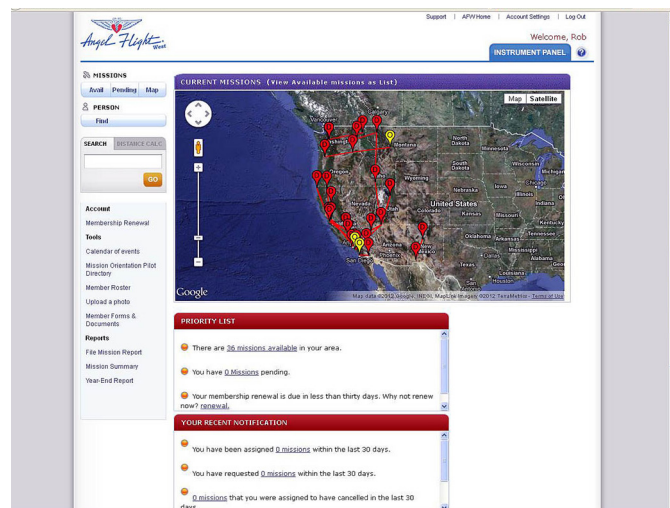
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AFW Welcomes the Updated and Improved Angel Flight Information Database System 2.0 (AFIDS 2.0)

Twelve years ago mission coordination was labor intensive and relatively inefficient. At the time, we were arranging hundreds, not thousands of missions. Thanks to WA pilot/member and ex-Microsoft programmer Steve Brandli, AFW entered the technological age. Steve wrote AFIDS 1.0, which allowed mission coordination to go online. Steve received help from Cheri Cimmarrusti, AFW's current Associate Executive Director; Stephan Fopeano, AFW's current webmaster; and many others.

But over the years, both technology and AFW had advanced. What had been state of the art became slow, cumbersome, and lacked new, needed features. In September 2008, AFW's

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Above: The new look and home page of the Angel Flight Information Database System 2.0 (AFIDS 2.0)



Flight Plan - *Angel Flights Around the World* ***Alan M. Dias, Executive Director***

On occasion, you may be asked, "Are there other Angel Flights?" The answer is yes.

There are organizations with Angel Flight in their names across the country and around the world. In fact, Angel Flight West worked with Angel Flight Australia when they started, and has more recently communicated with Angel Flight New Zealand. All have the same mission—to provide free air transportation in response to non-emergency medical and other compelling human needs. Angel Flight West has a particularly close working relationship with Angel Flight Central (AFC) headquartered in Kansas City, KS, and with Angel Flight South Central (AFSC), headquartered in Addison, TX.

On a regular basis, AFW coordinates missions between our organization's Command Pilots and several flying for AFC and/or AFSC. As an example, AFW and AFSC actually share the state of New Mexico. It just makes sense. More flights going south into Texas are flown by AFSC pilots, while flights going East, West and North are more conveniently flown by AFW. The two organizations have worked out protocols for shared missions, and both organizations list all missions and both coordinate arrangements.

On a similar note, during the week of October 29th, 2012, AFW hosted four sister organizations in Santa Monica, CA—Angel Flight East (AFE), Angel Flight Oklahoma (AFO), Angel Flight Central and Angel Flight South Central (Note: Angel Flight Northeast (AFNE) was also planning on attending, but Hurricane Sandy interfered. They have since rescheduled.) for the purpose of learning our updated AFIDS 2.0.

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HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS!

**Give a double gift this year—
one for them, and one for AFW**

Amazon Shoppers!

Each time you shop at Amazon, AFW can receive a contribution. In order for AFW to receive a portion of your purchase, you must go to or click on <http://www.amazon.com/?tag=afw-homepage-20>.

Ebay Shoppers!

You can also donate 10% of your ebay auction to AFW. <http://pages.ebay.com/givingworks/sell.html>

**Angel Flight West Thanks Our
Major Contributors**



**The Elaine W. and Kevin P. Kauffman
Family Foundation**

and

Tom and Mary Kay Gallagher Foundation



Passenger Nyla S, flown by pilot Larry Daniels, No. CA Wing, from her home in Crescent City, CA to Oakland so that she could finally access a urology specialist at UCSF to determine the need for bladder surgery. Nyla is struggling financially and cannot afford to pay for the cost of travel or lodging.

AFW Welcomes the Updated and Improved AFIDS 2.0

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Board of Directors authorized staff to pursue the development of AFIDS 2.0. A Task Force reached out to all user groups for input and AFIDS 2.0 began to take shape. On Oct. 15, 2012, AFIDS 2.0 was launched. Due to space constraints we cannot name all those who have contributed to AFIDS 2.0, but we owe much gratitude to all those who helped us reach this milestone.

However, we're by no means finished. One of our objectives in moving to a new technology platform is to make improvements and enhancements easier and less expensive to implement. It's a work in progress, and we welcome your suggestions for a future AFIDS 2.1 that will take AFW into its fourth decade.



Passenger's mother Maria, passenger Salvador, and pilot Don Jackson, So. CA Wing, flying from Santa Barbara to Santa Monica for Salvador's treatment at UCLA Dental Center. Salvador has been flying with AFW since 2001!

Flight Plan...continued from page 2

Angel Flight West is making AFIDS 2.0 available to all volunteer pilot organizations—free. AFIDS 2.0 is an open source program. That is, it is a type of computer software that is very often developed in a public, collaborative manner, and permits users to study, change, improve and at times also distribute the software that is otherwise and normally reserved for copyright holders.

Although AFW financed and developed the program, it was always our intent to make it available to others. Each group that accepts the program signs an agreement that stipulates any change/addition that they make will be available to any other user. Through this arrangement, all groups will benefit from each other's improvements. Additionally, the entire user community can fund further enhancements, making it a much more affordable process for everyone.

Through AFIDS 2.0 it is hoped that all Angel Flights, as well as all volunteer pilot organizations, will continue to evolve a closer, mutually supportive working relationship.

Blue Skies and Tailwinds,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alan M. Dias'.

Alan M. Dias
Executive Director



Passenger Catherine B. was No. CA Wing pilot Robert Strawn's 200th mission for AFW! He flew her, her six-month-old baby brother, and their mother Amber from Redding, CA to Lucile Packard Children's Hospital in Palo Alto, CA. One-and-a-half-year-old Catherine has kidney disease. Because of AFW pilots like Robert, she is able to receive the treatment needed to keep her alive.



Pilot Carl Lindros, No. CA Wing, and passenger Trina C. with her two children, Karina and Brandon on their way from Apple Valley, CA to Concord, CA. Trina is going to see an oncologist and then will return to treatment for stage four breast cancer. She is like many who cannot afford to travel due to medical expenses, and is unable to work because of an illness. Carl says of his mission, "This was truly a 'feel good' mission. Mrs. C. is doing well and AFW is playing a key role in her recovery."




L to R: Passenger's mom, passenger Alisa F. and AFW pilot Kyle Scott, CO Wing. Alisa is Angel Flight Central's (AFC) passenger who lives in Colby, KS and flies to cancer treatment in Denver, CO for brain tumor. Fortunately, AFC is able to share this, and other missions, with AFW so that patients like Alisa can access their lifesaving treatment. Alisa needs one year of weekly chemo treatments for a brain tumor.

"Bravo to you and your team, Alan! It's an honor to fly for such a professional and caring organization."

-Best regards, David Hopkins, No. CA Wing Command Pilot

Air to Air Communication

- AFW wishes to express its deepest condolences to the family of passenger Ashley W.
- AFW has hit the 2000 mark for friends/likes on Facebook. Thanks to Joanne Brattain for all of her hard work, and to Erin Gardner for her part in keeping things going from the office as well!
- You can donate Miles to AFW via Alaska Airlines at <http://tinyurl.com/993tk7s>
- Learn about the AFW Foundation on our website and find out how you can help support the AFW mission with Planned Giving.
- If you would prefer to continue to receive the newsletter by snail mail and haven't done so, please send an e-mail to newsletter@angelflightwest.org or call us at (310) 390-2958.
- You can find us on Facebook.  <http://on.fb.me/N1r92o> You can also find us on Twitter.  <http://bit.ly/PpNNkM>
- And we are also on YouTube.  <http://tinyurl.com/c3vwf48>



L to R: Daughter, son and mom Darlene H. with pilot Brian Andersen, UT Wing, who flew the family from Cedar City, UT to Salt Lake City. Their father and husband is awaiting an urgent transplant due to liver failure. This low income family of four continues to acquire high medical expenses. Darlene states, “We got a liver last night! My husband was out of surgery at 1:30 am. Because AFW got us back on Sunday, I felt able to take this time to situate the children and leave Cedar in an organized, calm, planned way, which was better for the kids. I am so full of gratitude to AFW. I’m headed from Cedar City to Salt Lake City, UT this morning with AFW and will spend a couple days with my sweet husband. It would be financially impossible for us if it were not for your organization. Thank you, and God bless everyone in AFW.”

A Reflection on Fifteen Years *...continued from page 1* **Cheri Cimmarrusti, Associate Executive Director**

As a stay-at-home mom for twenty-plus years, the thought of a career had never really entered my mind. Yet, there I was ready to tackle this amazing job. This happened to be the time when years of outreach and technology for AFW had finally culminated in our mission counts rising. It never fails to warm my heart to see the number of people we have been able to help continue to increase since I began. My first year, we flew 900 missions. Last year, we flew over 4,000. More missions mean more people are being helped.

I remember every patient that has flown an AFW mission. I’ve seen miraculously successful treatments of patients, like Mariah S. and Taylor T. And, I’ve also seen grief and despair of those who lost their battles, like Lamar D. and Jaime O. Through it all, however, I continue to witness the generosity and spirit of volunteer pilots, wing leadership members, and staff. I continue to witness the courage, grit, and determination of our passengers. All of these individuals pulling together to engender the same thing—hope! Giving Hope Wings has become an often-used tagline for us with very good reason. Every time one of our pilots turns the key in their airplane they are giving wings to someone’s hope.

There is hardly a better reason out there to fly an airplane! Thank you all for the continued love and support! May there be many more years to come.

Ciao,

Cheri Cimmarrusti
 Associate Executive Director

Write a Review for AFW

Great NonProfits is an online site that allows people to find, review, and share information about great nonprofits. AFW is constantly striving to get the word out about who we are and what we do. This website offers an easy way—one that takes only minutes—for those who have experienced the organization to help spread our mission. Click on the site below, read what others have said, and add your own review. To date, we only have 16 reviews and they are mostly older posts. We’d greatly appreciate it! Go to:
<http://greatnonprofits.org/organizations/view/angel-flight-west-inc>

A Big Thank You to Angel Flight West's 2012 Annual Golf Tournament Sponsors!

Angel Flight West would like to gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the following sponsors of the AFW 2012 18th Annual Golf Tournament held on October 8th at Oak Creek Golf Club in Irvine. A great time was had by all!

ADP	Gadbois, Richard	Newport Auto Center
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L to R: Daughter Margo, pilot Thomas J. Tessier, No. CA Wing, and Anna who is seeing a specialist for Menieres disease. Tom says, "I picked up Anna and her daughter at Oakland International Airport and flew them home to Arcata, CA. They were coming home from Burbank after a medical visit for Anna's ear problem. The prognosis was good news! The condition can be cured."



Alan H flying home to Hermiston, OR, from Reno where he participated in a multiday Military Sports Camp. The City of Reno and the Nevada Military Support Alliance hosted 15 disabled veterans and injured service members and their spouses water skiing, sailing, kayaking and other sports as well as attending the Reno Air Races. This program is about camaraderie and promoting healthy, active lifestyles. There is no cost to military service men or women. Pilot Frank Weissig, OR Wing, and his wife/mission assistant, Shari flew the mission.



In the Hangar Janet Cathcart

Janet Cathcart, AFW's new Director of Development, joined AFW at the Annual Meeting in May. "It was total immersion in all things AFW," she remembers, "but I was inspired." She had returned to Santa Monica, CA after living ten years in Massachusetts. "It's so great to be back. I'm feeling 'autumn deprived,' but I love being back home," she said.

After graduating from UCLA with an MBA, Janet worked with a variety of non-profits. Most

recently she directed fund raising and marketing for a historic site, and managed an initiative for financial aid at Phillips Academy Andover. She believes that "whether at small or large entities, success means bringing together resources and people to achieve improved and measureable results. AFW's success is measured in the number of people whose lives are improved or saved. We are setting goals and implementing a plan for the funding required to match flights and passengers needing assistance to reach the care they need."

Oregon Wing's Monster Dash *Rosemary Pelissier, OR Wing Leader*

The first annual Monster Dash event in Bend was a great success raising over \$1700 for AFW! Approximately 250 people participated in the event, many of whom showed their spirit by dressing in Halloween Costumes with a 5K Monster Dash for the adults (see photo below) and a Little Monster Kids Mile Dash. In addition, Air Link brought one of their helicopters to the event which was a big hit with the kids.

A highlight of the event was the talk by Teresa Morgan who was a frequent Oregon AFW passenger and is now six years cancer free! Her talk brought many in the audience to tears while she passionately illustrated the impact we make in the lives of those we serve.

I would like to thank all of the organizers of this event, especially Shannah Werner and John Hayes, for their generosity and for raising awareness of Angel Flight West.



Above: Halloween-clad participants at the starting line of OR Wing's first annual Monster Dash that raised \$1700 for AFW. Right photo: left to right are AFW OR Wing pilot volunteers Rob Breitbarth and Joe Pelissier who manned an AFW information booth at the event to raise awareness of the organization.





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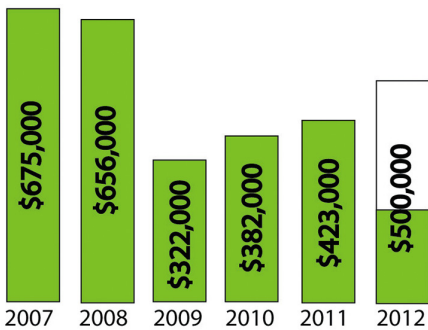
The mission of Angel Flight West is to arrange free air transportation in response to health care and other compelling human needs.

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Questions? info@angelflightwest.org
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Hope Takes Flight 2012 Angel Flight West Annual Fund

The Annual Fund provides individual donors with the opportunity to support the annual operations that match someone in need with a volunteer pilot so that Angel Flights can take off.

More than 10,000 times a year the phone rings at Angel Flight West to request a flight that will improve or save a life. Mission Operations is like running an airline. Our small team of dedicated staff and state-of-the-art technology enable us to get the job done.



Annual funding from individual donors declined during the economic crisis, while requests for humanitarian flights grew. Cost cutting has impacted Mission Operations, and your support is needed to allow Angel Flight West to thrive and meet the requests for access to health care and other humanitarian needs.

As of 8/31/12 annual funds from individuals reached \$208,327. Our 2012 goal is \$500,000. Your support allows Angel Flight West to thrive and answer the call of hope.

All 2012 individual donors will be recognized for their cumulative donations with a lapel pin sent in early 2013.

Captain's Club \$10,000 & over Gold	First Officer \$5000 - \$9999 Silver	Navigator \$2500 - \$4999 Copper	Flight Crew \$1000 - \$2499 Bronze	Ground Crew Up to \$999 Nickel
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Please help us reach our 2012 Annual Fund goal and allow more flights of hope to take off. Click [HERE](#) and make your contribution.