

## Summer Camp Is Here and So Is AFW! by Cheri Cimmarrusti, Associate Executive Director

Camp season is in full swing! For many kids around the country, this means a time to gather with friends, some old, some new, and the chance to experience the lazy, hazy days of summer.

There are hundreds of unique summer camps around the country that give kids with various medical conditions a chance to have the same camp experience as other kids while in a safe setting that can accommodate their needs. Some of these needs are significant and require medical teams on staff to provide continued treatment to those with critical conditions. For others, it might mean nothing more than providing counselors who know American Sign Language. But, the bottom line is that they get to be kids, putting aside as much as possible the very thing that sends them to a specialty camp.

Angel Flight West has been an integral part of these camps in the West for decades. These families already face expenses far above the everyday cost of living, so many children attend these camps on scholarships. But there is always the challenge of getting these kids to camp, and that's where AFW comes in!

*Continued on page 3...*



**No. CA Command Pilot Neal Dillman** flew campers **Jose C. and Elias A.** 186 miles to Champ Camp, a specialty camp for children ages five to seventeen who are burn survivors.



**Riley S.** on a 2-leg journey from Sterling, CO to New Mexico and then to Phoenix, AZ for a new surgery for pectus excavatum—sunken chest condition. Riley and mom Tracie have flown 16 missions with AFW.

## Spotlight on an Angel Passenger Riley S.

Riley was born with pectus excavatum, also known as sunken chest, in which the chest grows abnormally producing a concave appearance. His physician told mom Tracie that a specialist should see Riley when he reached puberty. When Riley turned 11, he began to have pain as his sternum was pushing on his heart and lungs, common problems of this condition during the years of rapid bone growth.

The family lives in Crook, CO, a northeast town with a population as of 2014 of 130, and little medical care. Tracie found a doctor 45 miles

away in Denver who measured Riley incorrectly, which, along with their insurance denial of coverage because this condition was not well understood, led to a full year passing before Riley finally got help.

One evening at midnight during her relentless research to find help for her son, Tracie found the site “Pectus Joe” and she left her information on his website. Within five minutes he called her and gave her the information that she needed. He referred her to Dr. David Notrica at Phoenix Children’s Hospital in AZ who recommended a revamped surgical procedure and

*Continued on page 5...*

## ASK JOSH

by Josh Olson, Executive Director

*When once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned upward, for there you have been, and there you will always long to return. – Leonardo DaVinci*

I was born an aviation enthusiast. My Gramps soloed for two hours in a Steerman, was a flight instructor and flew about every Army Air Corps plane there was during WWII. My father also graduated at the top of his Air Force class and was an Air Traffic Controller in HI during Vietnam. I've grown up around airplanes, and always dreamed of being a fighter pilot until a recruiting visit from the Air Force Academy dissuaded me from wanting to chase that elusive and combat-heavy lifestyle. Nevertheless, I have always wanted to fly.

The desire to fly only increased when I started volunteering for AFW and met hundreds of remarkable volunteer pilots who quickly became new heroes for me. The more I got involved and later became employed at AFW, the more I enjoyed arranging, routing, and learning about general aviation and the process of flying. Yet, while working long hours on a non-profit salary with a young family, pursuing a higher education degree and other goals, I've never had the time nor the resources to get my pilot's license.

Thanks to the generosity of Charles Thompson at Santa Monica Flyers and our board of directors



Executive Director Josh Olson completing his solo flight on his way to realizing a long-held dream of getting his pilot's license. Congratulations, Josh!

supporting my ambition for a pilot's license, on June 19th I took a huge step towards realizing my dream of becoming a pilot, and following in the footsteps of my heroes by completing my first solo flight! I realize I'm preaching to the choir here, but it was an incredible feeling and one that I will never forget. It also happened to be my best landing yet! You can watch, listen, and grade all of my rookie mistakes by going to <http://tinyurl.com/hsdwpdj>.

Not only has my flight instruction been an incredibly rewarding and thrilling experience personally, it has also created an increased level of admiration and respect for the outstanding 1,400+ volunteer pilots that comprise AFW. You are all amazing and it's a humbling experience to serve alongside you both on the ground and in the air as we generously give our gift of flight to others in need.

## Angel Flight West Wishes to Thank Our Top Contributors

March 8, 2016 to June 24, 2016



Jeppesen Sanderson, Inc.  
Tempus Aircraft Sales & Service, LLC  
Windermere Real Estate  
National Business Aviation Association, Inc.

*During this hard time in our lives AFW was there for my family, and made the trip one my son will remember forever. I want to thank both pilots from the bottom of my heart. They truly are angels. – Passenger Sky M.*



Passenger and camper Marissa V. with NV Wing Command Pilot Kyleen Cane getting ready to fly Marissa from her home in Las Vegas, NV to Santa Monica, CA to Camp Kindle, a camp for kids or family members with life-threatening illnesses. This was Marissa's first time in a private plane and she completely enjoyed herself.

## Summer Camp Is Here ...continued from first page

Our pilots fly hundreds of kids each year to camps where cancer isn't the main topic of discussion, burn scars aren't noticed by strangers, dialysis isn't the only thing dominating the day, and where communicating via ASL doesn't draw stares from others.

In the nineteen years that I have been honored to work at AFW, we have flown thousands of camp missions. These missions represent hundreds of hours of staff time to coordinate, thousands upon thousands of hours of donated flying by our generous pilots, and tens of thousands of hours of fun! Since 1999 (the first year we have specific stats), AFW has flown over 10,000 camp flights servicing approximately 100 different camp experiences! That is about 5,000 times a child has gone to camp because somebody cared enough to give their time, talent and treasure to make it happen.

Every year, I have experienced first-hand the joy of kids attending camp. Going to several of these camps and spending the day or night has allowed me to see

how much fun they have swimming, crafting, putting on talent shows, and generally doing what kids like to do: have fun! Some of those kids are now adults and leading productive lives shaped in part by their camp experiences. Our pilots have experienced watching their passengers' excitement, and sometimes the trepidation of leaving home for the first time. For pilots who fly the return home, they witness the drama when friends who met just six days ago must now depart for opposite ends of a state and find that parting is such sweet sorrow! Tears and hugs are had by all with promises to continue building upon their new friendship at camp next year. Because of the heart and generosity of our wonderful pilots, AFW will be ready to do it all over again next year!

Ciao and blue skies!!

Learn how you can sponsor a camper by donating \$1 a mile to fly a child to camp. Go to <https://afids.angelflightwest.org/give>. Please indicate your donation is for camps under Tribute. Thank you!



**Passenger Theodore M. with WA Wing Command Pilot Doug Palin** flying from Portland, OR to Monroe, WA where Theodore will be attending Camp Corey for kids with life-threatening illnesses. Doug says, "Great time on my first mission! I could not have asked for a better day and a better passenger!"



**Passenger Anthony M. and No. CA Wing Command Pilot Dave Lombard** flying to camp for young burn survivors from Fresno, CA to Sacramento, CA. Dave says, "My passenger was a delight, laughed at all my jokes, and even flew the plane for me while I ate a bag of popcorn."

## Thank You to Our Outgoing Board Members

AFW wants to thank our outgoing Board members Tom Gallagher and Jim Bennington for their dedication, service and leadership. Their contribution has been invaluable in furthering our mission of reducing transportation barriers inhibiting access to medical care.

# Endeavor Awards Weekend: May 20 – 21, Denver Colorado

The 3rd Annual Endeavor Awards celebration took place this year in Denver, CO and was a smashing success on all fronts. Many exciting events were orchestrated around public benefit flying during this weekend, the first of which was the Friday night opening reception at the JW Marriott Cherry Creek followed by a screening of “Living In the Age of Airplanes” at the IMAX Theater, Denver Museum of Nature and Science. This documentary, narrated by Harrison Ford and filmed in 18 countries across all seven continents, renewed our appreciation for one of the most extraordinary and awe-inspiring aspects of the modern world—the airplane. We were thrilled to have its producer and director, Brian Terwilliger at the

event to speak about his inspiration for the movie, the process of making the movie, and to answer the many questions from the excited and interested audience.

The following evening, we celebrated the Endeavor Awards at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The Endeavor Awards Celebration was the brainchild of Mark Wolper, Hollywood producer and active AFW pilot. This year, our emcee was the multi-talented Amelia Earhart, local Denver TV personality and the woman who, with her copilot and in partnership with Denver’s Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum, recently completed a circumnavigation of the globe in a single-engine airplane.

In addition to the above events, the **Air Care Alliance Conference** took place on May 20-21 at the Cherry Creek JW Marriott. Over 60 public benefit flying enthusiasts networked to build teams and share best practices.

## Our Endeavor Awards Winners:



**Colonel Richard Iversen (ret)**  
representing  
**Veterans Airlift Command**



**Dianna Stanger**  
representing  
**Angel Flight South Central**



**Jim Platz**  
representing  
**Patient Airlift Services**

## Our Inspiration Awards Recipients:



**Dick Rutan**  
[www.dickrutan.com](http://www.dickrutan.com)

**Jeff Puckett**  
<http://tinyurl.com/hoz6lhc>



**Save the date! In 2017, the Endeavor Awards celebration is scheduled for Saturday, May 6 at the California Science Center.**

## Spotlight on an Angel ...continued from first page

exercise protocol developed by Dr. Nuss that has resulted in successfully correcting the condition by surgically inserting metal bars under the ribcage that allow the bones to form normally as the patient grows.

Yet, Phoenix, AZ might as well have been on the moon since the family could not afford flying and driving would impact their finances as time away from work. Working as a certified nurse's aide years before, Tracie remembered a family who needed healthcare a distance away and was referred to Angel Flight. She called and was referred to AFW. Riley had his surgery on May 22, 2015, and has flown 16 times from Sterling, CO to New Mexico and then to Phoenix, AZ on a two-leg mission with AFW. He needs annual check-ups and one more surgery to remove the metal bars when he stops growing.

This surgery and protocol are a miracle for kids with this condition. Three weeks after the surgery, Riley was playing football and no longer in pain. Tracie says that there wasn't a lot known about this condition before, but now there is a lot more information available. "I get a lot of calls now from parents desperate to know what they can do for their kids. I try to help as much as I can." She is very grateful for the help that AFW gives to her and her family. She says, "I'm always the one helping everyone else and so AFW really holds a soft spot in my heart. They just mean the world to us. It's like they are family."

To watch Riley's story on video, go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/gsl djh>

### New Partnership with Pilots Guide

AFW is pleased to be partnering with Optima Publications, publishers of the best-selling Pilots Guide, VFR airport information guide books. For a limited time, members of AFW can purchase any of the popular Pilots Guides from Optima and save 10% off the retail price. In addition, AFW will earn 20% of each purchase! Pilots Guides are now exclusively in digital format, with data plans available for the Apple iPad and iPhone, and a new pdf edition for any internet-connected computer or device.

To take advantage of this opportunity go to: <http://www.pilotsguide.com/afw/>. Be sure to enter the promo code "AFW2016" during checkout.

### AFW Calendar of Events

AUG	5-7	Oregon International Air Show
	20	Washington Wing Fly-In
SEP	14-18	Reno Air Races
	17	Oregon Wing Fly-in, Sun River
	23	<b>AFW Board Meeting, Santa Monica, CA</b>
OCT	28-30	OR Rural Health Conference Portland Doubletree
	20-22	Aviation Expo, Palm Springs, CA
	21	AFW Golf Fundraiser, Dana Point, CA

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

### AFW Welcomes New Wing Leaders

**New Hawai'i Wing Leader Thomas Hall** is president of Solar Specialty Group on Oahu. Thomas made his first flight at age 15 in a Cessna 185 on floats, and holds commercial, Certified Flight Instructor, and instrument ratings. Thomas is a member of the Rotary Club of Waikiki, International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians, and the esteemed charitable organization Lima Kokua.

**New Colorado Wing Leader Michael Samp** is retired from a 30-plus year career with Caterpillar. He earned his Private Pilot certificate at age 18, holds a Commercial Pilot certificate with instrument rating, has served as an AFW Mission Orientation Pilot and assisted with many outreach activities and pilot events. He's been flying charity flights since 2006 and has completed 60 missions for AFW, AFC, and LifeLine Pilots.

A heartfelt BIG thank you to **outgoing Colorado Wing Leader Mike Forney** for his dedicated leadership and service for many years!



## AFW Pilot Recognition

In the winter issue of our newsletter, we briefly described the new Pilot Recognition Program, which went into effect January 2016. For each designated level of missions flown (see below), pilots will receive AFW decals for their airplanes plus other tokens of our appreciation. Also, during National Volunteer Week in April, all members were sent a thank you letter from AFW, the annual report, and a heart-shaped member decal. Although it's not much, we want to recognize you for all that you do to further the mission of AFW.

Pilots will receive the following in appreciation of their incredible generosity:

- New Pilot Heart-shaped member decal
- 1<sup>st</sup> Mission Decal, AFW pin and AFW cap
- 5<sup>th</sup> Mission Decal and AFW pin
- 10<sup>th</sup> Mission Decal and AFW pin
- 25<sup>th</sup> Mission Decal and AFW mug
- 50<sup>th</sup> Mission Decal and AFW polo shirt
- 100<sup>th</sup> Mission Framed certificate, windbreaker, and thank you from Board Chair

To view all AFW Command Pilots who have flown missions in the last 90 days click on or go to:  
<http://tinyurl.com/mwsv2s7>

## Air to Air

✈ Our sincere condolences to AFW Command Pilot Casey Hood on the recent passing of his **beloved wife Sherry**.

✈ Our condolences also to the family of AFW **passenger Lee Cobb**.

✈ Our deepest sympathies also to the family of **passenger Danny Rice**.

✈ The aviation-focused company and great partner to AFW, **Scheyden**, offers a 50% discount to AFW members on their eyewear products. Use the promo code ANGEL on checkout at: <http://scheyden.com/>

✈ **glassybaby**, a private Seattle company of handmade glass votive candle holders, donates a percentage of profits to charities that help cancer patients. AFW is one of these fortunate charities. Go to website at <http://glassybaby.com/power-of-giving>

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

✈ **Amazon Shoppers!** We will receive a portion of your Amazon purchase if you click on: <https://www.amazon.com/?tag=afw-homepage-20>, which will take you to the Amazon page for AFW.

✈ **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. Click on: <http://tinyurl.com/lq27xg2>

✈ **Phillips 66®** has agreed to provide AFW pilots a \$1-per-gallon avgas rebate. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/ha2gxyv>

# From A Pilot

**by Tom Tormey,**  
**OR Wing Command Pilot**

AF - May 30 Glacier Park, MT to Seattle, WA.

Ok, this one was a bit selfish on my part, but hey, it was my birthday! It had all the best stuff: a cute baby with a fixable problem, a loving mother, and a new destination that promised to be spectacular.

Thomas is an adorable, cuddly, seven-month-old, who was born with stenosis (fused cranial bones) that need to be surgically separated to make room for normal brain growth. Thomas is the youngest of six, and his mother Mary is taking him to Children's Hospital in Seattle for surgery. Mary and family live in a small town in MT just south of the Canadian border and will be driving two hours to Glacier Point International airport to meet me. The local airport in their town wasn't an option as it is VFR-only and the weather wasn't cooperating.

My day started early as I left behind a house full of family and friends that had descended on us for the long weekend. Number two son Duncan from Kansas City, and number three son Devan from Portland, along with lots of their and our old friends. As I tip-toed out, the body count in bedrooms, on air mattresses and couches was around 12, not counting our four dogs, me and Molly.

The flight from Bend to Glacier Point was about two hours and took me over the vast empty spaces of eastern OR, the green ID panhandle, and the mountains of Western MT. As I descended through the clouds and a spatter of ice and rain to the Glacier Point airport, I was treated to a view of a gorgeous alpine valley surrounded by towering mountains.

The Glacier Jet Center is a high-end FBO that looks like a mountain lodge inside with super friendly folks and good coffee. I barely had time to sample



Mom Mary with **passenger seven-month-old Thomas** and **OR Wing Command Pilot Tom Tormey** on their way from MT to Seattle. Thomas was born with fused cranial bones and will have surgery to make room for normal brain growth. Tom says about photo, "Note that Thomas is about to choke me with my name tag lanyard!"

both when Mary, her husband, and Thomas showed up with their lunch. Thomas smiled at me right away and allowed me to cuddle him while Mary and her husband ate and we all chatted.

Fueled, fed, and photo'd, we loaded up and headed for Seattle with Thomas voicing his displeasure at being in his car seat until we were at cruise altitude and he could get to his mama. Two hours later, we flew past a snow-covered Mount Rainer and arrived at Boeing field under clear skies. The line guys at Clay Lacy brought out a cart for luggage, stroller and car seat, and before long Mary's ride showed up. It was hugs all around, good-byes, good luck, and back to Bend, Molly and the dogs for me. Another long day, but definitely worth it.



**Passenger Page L.**, her significant other **Doc**, and **UT Wing Command Pilot Louis Rossi** flying from Salt Lake City, UT to Boise, ID for a second opinion of a cancer diagnosis. Page has limited funds and no resources for travel.

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

**March 8, 2016 to June 24, 2016**



**In Memory Of**

Sherry Brink Hood  
Josh Merrill  
Peter & Kathleen Tomarken

**In Honor Of**

Michael Brill  
Fred Willoughby



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Five-year-old Luis Alberto P. traveling from San Diego to Santa Monica, CA for pediatric post-liver transplant treatment. So. CA Wing Command Pilot Thomas Close flew Luis and his "friends." The family is living solely on Luis's father's income as a gardener since his mother stopped work to care for him.



Passenger Cambria F. and No. CA Wing Command Pilot David Hopkins on a 2-leg mission from Palo Alto, CA to Bakersfield then home to San Diego, CA. The last leg was flown by So. CA Wing Command Pilot Jim Mallen. Cambria has cerebral palsy and needs a kidney transplant. The family has limited funds with one parent working.

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