

SPOTLIGHT ON AN ANGEL *by Cheri Cimmarrusti, Associate Executive Director*

I wrote in the June 2014 newsletter about how, in my long tenure at AFW, I often meet passengers who I look forward to seeing at the Santa Monica office while they wait for their flight. One of these is AFW's frequent flyer, Roberta V.. In that article I said that Roberta had been flying with us from Oakland, CA to Santa Monica for eight years and a total of a 168 missions. She flew her last mission with AFW on August 18, 2015, bringing the total number to 188 missions flying for nine years!

One of the unavoidable hard parts of working for AFW is the loss of any one of our

passengers. But we are happy to report that Roberta is doing well and no longer needs AFW because the medication she was receiving at Sarcoma Oncology Center in Santa Monica as part of a clinical trial is now on the market and available where she lives.

Roberta has giant cell sarcoma, a non-malignant bone tumor. In her case, the tumor is in the sacrum, a bone at the base of the spine. While the tumor itself is not malignant, its growth can cause considerable pain and is known to metastasize to lung cancer. She was diagnosed in January of 2005, and at the time was

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Passenger Roberta V. with So.CA Wing Command Pilot Christopher Bennett on her last mission with AFW. Roberta has flown with AFW for nine years to and from Oakland, CA to Santa Monica where she was participating in a clinical trial at Sarcoma Oncology Center for a giant cell tumor in her bone. Her medication is now available near her home.

AFW END-OF-YEAR HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



Photo courtesy of Alicia Garcia De Angela at EC Hispanic Media

AFW hosted a wonderful holiday party to thank its staff and volunteers for the work they accomplished in 2015. On hand were **passenger three-year-old Elsy P.** and her mom. AFW has flown 35 flights for Elsy from Santa Maria, CA to Santa Monica. Elsy has been flying for treatment of end-stage renal failure and received a transplant last year at UCLA. Mission Coordinator Ivan Martinez translated for mom who told those attending, "We are so thankful for everything you've done for us. I really don't know what we would have done without you."



Pictured top left Elsy receiving a Christmas gift from AFW. Her mom also received gift cards donated by many of the party's guests to help make this holiday special for the whole family. Bottom photo **So.CA Wing Command Pilot Carl Hopkins with wife/mission assistant Susan** flying Elsy and mom home after the party.

Our volunteers are the fuel that keeps AFW going. We thank each and every one of you for the gift of flight you help to make happen! **The staff at AFW wish you and yours a happy and healthy New Year!**



ASK JOSH

by Josh Olson, Executive Director

New Orientation Process

We have some good news for those of you who have not yet completed your Command Pilot or Earth Angel orientation.

We've streamlined the orientation process to make it simpler and easier to finish. As of January 30, 2016, the orientations will be online, available for you to complete at your convenience, without having to coordinate with a Mission Orientation Pilot. The online course is self-paced and available anytime, on demand.

As you know, we require that new members finish an orientation before volunteering as a driver or pilot. In addition to providing you with the information you need to successfully perform a mission, the orientation is an important way for Angel Flight West to maintain the highest standards for safety and the passenger experience.

Mission Orientation Pilots will continue to be a resource to help you get started, as you complete the course, or anytime after, if you have a question about the Angel Flight West process. Feel free to contact an MOP with any questions or feedback.

When you're ready to get started, please download the Getting Started guide at <http://tinyurl.com/zddmo38> and follow the instructions for logging in and launching the appropriate course. When you've finished the course, the staff will be notified and will change your volunteer status. At that point, you'll be ready to fly or drive your first mission!

Pilots will also need to complete the AOPA Safety Foundation Course, "Public Benefit Flying: Balancing Safety and Compassion" (www.airsafetyinstitute.org/volunteerpilots) as a part of the orientation. You are encouraged to get started on this course as soon as possible.

We recognize that, with everyone's busy schedule, it was often difficult to coordinate with an MOP to complete an orientation. We want everyone who becomes a member of Angel Flight West to experience the satisfaction and joy our active pilots and drivers know well. If the process of getting oriented has been holding you back from getting to your first flight, please get started on the online orientation as soon as possible. It would make a great New Year's resolution!

If you have any questions about getting started, please feel free to contact the office at memberinfo@angelflightwest.org or call (310) 390-2958.



Passenger thirteen-year-old **Carla W.** with mom Jennifer flying on a 2-leg mission with **WA Command Pilot Stanley Dammel** from Renton, WA to Spokane, and 2nd leg with **MT Wing Command Pilot Tony Pfaff** to Great Falls, MT. The family's single income makes it difficult to afford the frequent traveling expenses for Carla's post heart transplant appointments.



Mom Benancia, passenger **Daniel G.** with **So. CA Wing Command Pilot Leon Leonardo** flying from Bakersfield, CA to Santa Monica, CA. Daniel is being treated for leukemia at UCLA Medical Center. Both parents work in the fields in the Central Valley and have very limited income to assist with Daniel's expenses.

THANK YOU TO MOKULELE AIRLINES, OUR NEW PARTNER IN HAWAII

We are proud to announce our new relationship with Mokulele Airlines in Hawai'i. Mokulele is offering a significant number of tickets per year to assist AFW in the transportation of passengers going island to island for medical treatment. It is exciting and rewarding to know that when we can't use one of our own very generous private pilots to fly a mission, we can count on Mokulele to fill the gap. This photo is a great example of Mokulele Airlines stepping in to fly five campers home from a summer camp for families living with cancer when we couldn't find a return pilot. Mokulele not only provided the flights home for them, but also provided a van to pick them up from the camp and take them to the airport—one that was further away than the one they had flown in to! Thank you, Mokulele Airlines!



The Hosler Family and camp counselor Sarah H. mugging for the camera next to the **Mokulele Airlines** van! Mokulele stepped in to fly them home after AFW could not secure a pilot for their return trip from summer camp for families living with cancer.

Air to Air

- ✈ Welcome to our new Mission Coordinator Isabel Sotomayor (see *In the Hangar* page 7).
- ✈ Correction: Last issue we stated that member Genieveve Lavin was a student pilot, but she is a licensed pilot. We apologize and congratulate her!
- ✈ Our thoughts and prayers are with Christian L. and his family as he waits for a heart transplant.
- ✈ Thanks to Richard and Sandi Hoover from the NM Wing for their many years of service. Richard is retiring from flying, so they will be hanging up their AFW Wings!
- ✈ The wonderful aviation focused company Scheyden has been a great partner to AFW for years! They continue to offer a 50% discount to AFW members on their line of eyewear products. Use the promo code ANGEL on checkout at: <http://scheyden.com/>
- ✈ AFW and *Pilot Guide* are talking partnership. Look for an email this year for discounts to pilots!
- ✈ You can donate miles to AFW via Alaska Airlines at: <http://tinyurl.com/993tk7s>
- ✈ **Amazon Shoppers!** Please keep AFW in mind when you shop on Amazon as we will receive a portion of your purchase if you click on: www.angelflightwest.org, 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. To use this service click on: <http://tinyurl.com/lq27xg2>

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living in Ventura. Roberta received radiation treatment and was seen by doctors at UCLA. Near the end of 2006 she decided to move to Oakland to be near more of her children. The doctor there referred her to Dr. Chua in Santa Monica for a clinical trial and they referred her to AFW. This solved her dilemma of getting to treatment once a month. The clinical trial she participated in was provided through a charitable program by Amgen. The drug, Xgeva, is normally used to treat severe osteoporosis. At this point, they do not know enough about the drug to determine if and when she can ever stop taking it.

As of now, Roberta says, "the tumor has not metastasized and the pain is much less." One of the most important aspects for Roberta was the confidence she had that she would get to this vital

treatment every month for nine years thanks to AFW. And at every visit through these years she "would give the AFW phone number to anyone and everyone that I could."

Now that she no longer "visits" AFW, Roberta says, "I miss not visiting with my friends and everyone in the office, and I'm still in contact with one of my Earth Angels." She cherishes the friendships she has made with all of the pilots and Earth Angels who transported her. Finally, Roberta feels blessed to have had the emotional support and genuine care and concern that she felt from all: "The flights were always incredible. The whole experience was amazing! I can honestly say that AFW saved my life—really." And I can say, from my heart, that I will miss her.

2016 UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN	30	CO Wing Outreach Coordination Meeting
FEB	20-21	Northwest Aviation Trade Show Sleep Country ShowPlex, WA http://www.washington-aviation.org
MAY	21	Endeavor Awards Denver, CO
Contact Wings for local information or click on: http://tinyurl.com/pxv6cxc		

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

September 18, 2015 – December 11, 2015

In Honor Of

Richard Conti
Barbara Ausherman
Stan Dammel
Sandy Frederiksen
Graf & Pinneli
Jon Hayward
Frankie and Dick Loeb
Dave Lombard
Warren Wood

In Memory Of

Marilyn Burke
Betty M. East
Joy Hansen
Margaret Lystad
Ned McDonough
Kelsey Miesner
Bob Philpott
Darlene Sackett
Sandra Kay
Schroeder, M.D.
Peter & Kathleen
Tomarken

Angel Flight West Wishes to Thank Our Top Contributors

(September 18, 2015 – December 11, 2015)

Alaska Airlines

**The Dorrance Family Foundation
Jeff and Linda Hendricks Family Foundation
Connecticut Street Foundation
Stephen & Marjorie Danz**

AFW on the Radio

Go online to the radio station 100.3 The Sound <https://soundcloud.com/5900-wilshire> and hear a fantastic interview about AFW with Executive Director Josh Olson and Advancement Director Mauria McPoland explaining what we do. A great vehicle to spread the word about AFW. Tell friends and those in need of our services! You can also listen on our blog!

UTAH WING SANTA FLIGHT 2015

On December 9 at 8:00 am, 24 volunteer planes of the UT Wing departed on their annual Santa Flight. Their destination was Manti, UT. Thirteen Eagle Scouts and one Girl Scout had collected and then helped to deliver 6,000 pounds of toys, school supplies, books, backpacks, warm clothing and \$5,000 cash to the 400+ children at Manti Elementary School.

Since the first Santa Flight in 2000, the members of the UT Wing have worked with their local communities to gather needed supplies and toys and deliver them to Title One schools in rural communities throughout Utah. AFW UT Wing Leader Steve Bollinger, AFW Outreach Coordinator Phil Titus, AFW volunteer Joanne Brattain and the Scout Leaders have worked on this project since September. According to Steve, the partnership between AFW and the Scouts has been critical in the success of this project.



Photos by Fox 13 reporter Zach Whitney



ARIZONA WING HELPS MARINES DELIVER TOYS FOR TOTS



Far L Photo: AZ Wing Command Pilot Todd Underwood and R Photo: AZ Wing Command Pilot John Sanderson with US Marines. Every year AZ Wing flies Marines into No. AZ for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Christmas event. The Marines are volunteers and are the focal points of these events. Countless toys are collected and distributed to children in need each year.

AFW Donations: Year-End Tax Information



When you donate to AFW an acknowledgement letter for your tax purposes is mailed to you. If you cannot locate your copy, please contact our office: info@angelflightwest.org. Please note, letters for contributions for the last few weeks of last year are being processed; the cost of a raffle ticket is not deductible as a charitable contribution.

You can also print your hours of flight time by logging on to AFIDS, then on the lower left click on *Year End Reports*. This will bring you to a page that you can enter beginning and end dates for your total flight hours for that period and a brief

description of AFW that you can also take to your tax preparer.

For in-kind donations of flights, AFW is designated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service. In-kind contributions including the cost of AFW missions are tax deductible. Includable costs would be plane rental charges, fuel, oil, tie down fees, ground transportation charges, meals and lodging. You should consult your tax professional if necessary. The FAA has also ruled that claiming tax deductions is not considered compensation.



2015 PILOT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

At the end of every year Angel Flight West tallys the number of missions flown by pilots in each Wing and awards those in first, second and third place. The following are the winners of 2015. Note that some Wings have 2nd and 3rd place ties. Every pilot who flies even one mission is helping to reduce one barrier to healthcare for those who may otherwise not be able to receive it.

ARIZONA

- 1st Dennis Phelan
- 2nd Michael Kraft
- 3rd John Sanderson
- 3rd Steve Knott
- 3rd Sean Andrews

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

- 1st Christopher Bennett
- 2nd Robert Leitch
- 3rd Robert Tucknott

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

- 1st Stephen Danz
- 2nd W. John Spencer
- 3rd Jim Mallen

COLORADO

- 1st Brandon Christensen
- 2nd Phillip Rosnik
- 3rd Bobby Conley

HAWAII

- 1st Robert Hill
- 2nd Greg Landers
- 3rd David Wilson
- 3rd Claudio Friederich

IDAHO

- 1st Rick Holloway
- 2nd Steve Laflin
- 3rd Ryan DeLuca
- 3rd Nathan Smith

MONTANA

- 1st Reginald Goodwin
- 2nd William Bayne
- 3rd Richard Rodgers

NEVADA

- 1st Michael Evans
- 2nd Eliot Alper
- 3rd Tom Porta

NEW MEXICO

(These pilots fly for both AFSouth Central and AFW.)

- 1st Sean Andrews
- 2nd Merry Schroeder
- 2nd Russell Dazen
- 2nd Jason Swartz

OREGON

- 1st Timothy Braly
- 2nd Tom Tormey
- 3rd Jan Johansen

UTAH

- 1st Bill McVay
- 2nd Jon Palsson
- 3rd Lynn Purcell
- 3rd Thomas Sanborn

WASHINGTON

- 1st Robert Schaper
- 2nd Anonymous
- 3rd Hunter Handsfield

WYOMING

- 1st John Larsen

AFW will be implementing a new Pilot Recognition Program in 2016. The Mission Achievement Awards will honor pilots for reaching milestones of missions flown and the Pilot of the Year will continue to be celebrated. Look for a blog post/email soon to learn more about program enhancements.

To view all AFW Command Pilots who have flown missions in the last 90 days click on or go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/mwsv2s7>

IN THE HANGAR Isabel Sotomayor, Mission Operations Coordinator



AFW welcomes one of our newest office staff members, Isabel Sotomayor. She is one of four Mission Operations Coordinators responsible for coordinating flights between pilots and passengers.

Isabel started with AFW in late September having recently returned from four years studying at The American University of Paris. She had hopes of beginning her career working in a hospital, but found the opportunities available to her were not ones that would allow her to make a meaningful and lasting impact on individuals in need.

Isabel found AFW on the website *Idealist*, which advertises job openings exclusively for nonprofits. Isabel wanted to utilize the degree in psychology that she earned, and when she found AFW, it “seemed a perfect fit for me. I can be part of saving lives, which is what I want to do ultimately as a doctor. It feels really good to be part of helping these patients who are extremely sick. I think what AFW is doing is amazing and inspiring. These pilots are some of the most generous people I know, and everyone involved cares deeply about people in need. I really wanted to be part of a group who shared that interest, and these are the kind of people that I want to be around.” Welcome aboard, Isabel!

AFW Board Chair and Command Pilot Steve Danz Honored



In November 2015, board chair and pilot extraordinaire **Steve Danz** was honored as **Outstanding Volunteer** by the **Association of Fundraising Professionals** at the **National Philanthropy Day 30th Anniversary Celebration**. The event took place at Paramount Studios and was double the kudos, since AFW was also presented with the **Nonprofit Achievement Award for Greater Los Angeles**. The following month Steve accepted another award as a **Distinguished Volunteer Pilot for the Public Benefit Flying Awards from the National Aeronautic Association (NAA)**. Since joining AFW nearly 17 years ago, Steve is our most frequent flyer, logging over 880 missions to date!

◀ **AFW Board Chair and Command Pilot Steve Danz** with campers flying to Camp Pacifica for deaf and hearing impaired children and families. Three of the four children pictured are siblings.

AFW Crowdfunding Campaign

For the second year, AFW partnered with Indiegogo in December for an incredible crowdfunding campaign that culminated with donations totaling \$45,712 on **Giving Tuesday**, December 1. (Although the total on our campaign page reads \$45,712—a kind donor contributed the last \$5,000, not realizing our campaign ended.) But, **WE MADE IT—we reached our \$50,000 goal!** Some of the fun and fabulous perks this year included flight lessons, private flights over Santa Monica, Tahoe, Hawai'i, and Grand Canyon, Alaska Airline tickets, aviator teddy bears, luxurious experiences to Mammoth Lakes, Maui and Lake Tahoe, as well as unforgettable Hollywood packages to pitch your “story” to an award-winning producer, and to spend a day on set with a famous director. The 2015 campaign increased the number of donors by 30% to 260. Thank you to everyone who made our crowdfunding campaign a huge success!

Ascent to 8000!

“Ascent to 8000” is a 5-year plan to double our services by the end of 2020. We are investing in technology, resources and staff to **help the 95% of qualified patients who need free air transportation but aren't currently using our services**. In our last newsletter, we thanked Bill and Pamela Ayer for their incredibly generous donation of \$300,000 to kick off the capacity growth campaign. And a big thanks to our board of directors and many generous donors for helping us raise an additional \$220,000 in matching pledges and/or gifts. Please contact us to help us soar to new heights as we begin the “Ascent to 8000!”



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Website
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Alaska Airlines flew passenger **Macy H.** from MT to OR for her treatment of glaucoma. Macy's family lives on one income and can't afford all the costs associated with her medical treatment.



Eleven-year-old passenger **Sapphire V.**, mom **Rosa** and No. CA Wing Command Pilot **Mark Donnelly** flying from Fresno, CA to Palo Alto, CA for Sapphire's treatment and surgery for pancreatitis. Rosa is a single parent, raising six children with no reliable vehicle.

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