



FLIGHTS OF HOPE NEWS



Together we give.

November 29, 2022

GIVING TUESDAY Donate - Become a matching gift donor - Start your own AFW fundraiser - Help share our story

This November, we need your support. Help us raise awareness and funds to reach our goal: \$25,000 to fly 125 missions. Together we can help more patients access treatment.



Angel Flight WEST

angelflightwest.org/giving-tuesday



Photo by Command Pilot Thomas Close during a recent AFW mission.

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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.





EVELYN'S STORY

In early 2021, Lisa's daughter Evelyn was diagnosed with a rare heart condition that warranted a visit to Seattle Children's Hospital to see the heart failure team.

At first, Lisa didn't think they'd need frequent visits but after a couple of trips just a couple of months apart, she reached out to Angel Flight West. "What a relief that was!" Lisa says. "We have a difficult time with Evelyn on road trips, so driving that far is too daunting, as she gets very uncomfortable and needs frequent breaks to keep her from cramping up. We have been blessed by a handful of true Angels in helping us get to these appointments and home."

When Montana weather kept Angel Flight West's pilots grounded, our partner Alaska Airlines stepped up to ensure they got where they need to safely.

"The last year and a half," Lisa says, "I honestly do not know how we could have made these necessary long-distance trips happen. We have a long road ahead of us and Angel Flight has made this journey much less stressful so I am able to focus on the health and care of my daughter. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!"



MEET JERRY FROM HAWAII

Jerry battles with cancer in his tongue, throat, and mouth and travels – every two weeks – to Honolulu from his home in Kalaoa, Hawaii. This means an island-hopping, and potentially grueling, journey of 163 miles, each way.

"In states like Hawaii," Jerry's wife, Annie, says, "you can't just get in your car and drive to treatment nearby."

Reliant upon intense radiation treatments that have damaged his teeth, and fighting back against a cancer that reduces the width of this throat to the size of a pinhole, Jerry had racked up over \$10,000 in commercial airfare costs after only eighteen months of travel.

Finally, he felt as if he were at the end of his rope.

"I told Annie, 'I just can't do this anymore,'" Jerry remembers. "I've got to figure something else out. I can't keep putting money on this [credit] card and blowing it up."

Searching for a reliable travel resource that wouldn't break their bank account or pull both of them away from their family, Annie reached out to Angel Flight West and was immediately wowed by the commitment of its volunteer pilots and coordinators, including Julia and the rest of the Mission Operations Team.

Almost immediately, Jerry and Annie had access to as many flights as needed, at absolutely no cost.

"I wish we could have known about you all twenty-four flights ago," Annie says. "The team and pilots have been incredible. For the past 10 years, [commercial airline] travel had taken the wind out of Jerry's sails. But after that first flight [with Angel Flight West], he said, 'Wow, this is the way to go.'"

Since navigation of busy airports, especially in the age of COVID, isn't ideal for his weakened immune system, Jerry says he's especially grateful for the ease of travel that Angel Flight West offers. And, as someone who had always dreamed of getting a pilot's license, getting to know Angel Flight West volunteers – on the ground and in the air – offers Jerry a sense of safety while satisfying his curiosity.

"I can't say enough good things about all of your pilots, and all of the people in the organization," Jerry adds, "right down to the drivers. I get nervous in commercial airliners but being able to sit next to the pilot is great."

Of course, Annie is eager to spread their good fortune, as well – so she recently told a friend about all the support Angel Flight West offers at no charge.

"My neighbor's husband's health is failing," Annie says, "and we share our stories, as wives. Well, I told her we'd found Angel Flight West, this unbelievable organization that helped Jerry fly for care. I hope she makes the call."

GETAWAY FAMILY CAMP

We didn't stop flying to camp when August ended. AFW arranged 42 flights with volunteer pilots to help families get to the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation Getaway Family Camp at the beginning of September.

Viviana was one of the many passengers who was able to travel to camp to experience a weekend of support, fun, and family – all important parts of healing for burn survivors.

