



Angel Flight WEST

FLIGHTS OF HOPE NEWS



40 years of service
GIVING TUESDAY
 Help us raise \$40,000 this Giving Tuesday to support the gift of flight.
 November 28, 2023
 Angel Flight WEST

AN ANGEL FLIGHT REUNION AFTER 18 YEARS



Command Pilot Dave Lombard flew Sandy to care at Stanford Health this month. He first took Sandy under his wing back in 2005 when she was just eight years old. Our volunteers like Dave and supporters live you make it possible for us to see our passengers through their health journeys — no matter the years in-between.

With your support, we can meet our Giving Tuesday goal to arrange 200 life-changing, donated flights.



angelflightwest.org/giving-tuesday

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF HEALTH AND HOPE AND 100,000 MISSIONS FLOWN

GIVING TUESDAY

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CAR RIDES TO FRIENDSHIPS

Every day, Angel Flight West's volunteer pilots fly patients to major cities, often from rural areas, for medical appointments — and then back home again. Our Earth Angels play a critical role by driving passengers between local airports and treatment centers. Since 2021, Marlene has volunteered to drive dozens of people to Seattle, Wash. for specialized care, completing more than 123 ground missions to date.

After experiencing her own medical scare seven years ago, Marlene says she's thankful for her health and aims to pay it forward by helping people travel to their treatments. Her generosity has touched the life of Jennifer from Wenatchee, Wash. who has received 35 donated flights and 24 Earth Angel rides to access her ovarian cancer treatment at Lifespring Cancer Treatment Center.

When speaking of her AFW experience, Jennifer says, "Marlene isn't just a driver to me. She's a good friend. We've gotten to know each other really well through our trips. She's an incredible lady and I feel honored to know her and spend that time with her in the car."



BABY AUDREY'S ANGEL FLIGHTS

After being born with a rare liver disorder, baby Audrey needed a liver transplant at just eight-months-old. After discovering he was a perfect match, her father John donated part of his liver to save his daughter, a procedure that took place at Children's Hospital Colorado (CHC) more than 800 miles away from their home in Tucson, Ariz.

Since the life-saving surgery, the family has needed to travel back to Colorado numerous times for Audrey's post-transplant treatment. With medical and travel expenses adding up, a social worker suggested they turn to Angel Flight West for help.



Over the last 12 months, Audrey and her parents have been gifted 12 angel flights to travel between their home and Audrey's far-off appointments. And when John had to return to work as an elementary school vice principal in Tucson while Audrey and Karin stayed in Denver, our volunteer pilots flew John back and forth on several occasions to reunite him with his family.

When speaking of the flights they've been gifted, Audrey's mom Karin says, "We're still overwhelmed with the generosity of the pilots and grateful to Angel Flight West for getting us to Denver safely and comfortably."



STETSON'S VILLAGE OF PILOTS

As a middle child, eight-year-old Stetson has two siblings he loves fiercely — his 10-year-old brother Maverick and his six-year-old sister Wren. His contagious smile is captured in nearly all his photos, including those of him in hospital beds surrounded by medical equipment and beeping monitors.

Stetson was born neurofibromatosis, or NF1, a genetic mutation found in approximately one in every 3,000 people. Typically, NF1 causes tumors to grow under the skin and on nerves, often leading to health problems affecting other parts of the body.

Stetson's case has been anything but typical. Besides symptoms of hearing loss, seizures, café au lait spots, headaches, and fever spikes, he was diagnosed with an optic pathway glioma, a tumor that can lead to worsening vision and other complications. "No two people with NF1 are alike," says his mother Tatyana. "Stetson is no exception as his condition has so many complexities."

The family first heard about Angel Flight West three years ago when they were gearing up to travel from their home in Kalispell, Mont. to Children's Hospital Colorado to visit the facility's Neurofibromatosis Clinic so Stetson could start chemotherapy for his brain tumors. Since that trip, Tatyana says their family's been "blessed ever since with incredible pilots."

Those flights have also been unforgettable for Stetson. He keeps pictures of himself with AFW volunteers in a book, and he remembers and talks about each experience. "Even though he has memory loss, he can tell you about each plane and pilot," says Tatyana.

Most recently, the mother-and-son duo had to travel to Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City to seek second opinions from a neurooncologist and geneticist after a challenging summer for Stetson. He's experienced speech and mobility issues, along with seizure-like episodes, sometimes having to rely on a walker or cane to move around. Once again, AFW's volunteer pilots made the journey across state lines possible. "We wouldn't be able to go to these specialists without Angel Flight West," Tatyana says. "Those pilots are part of our village."

Not knowing what lies ahead for Stetson has been challenging for the family, but they're committed to finding answers and giving their son every opportunity to overcome his health trials and keep his shining smile. "The journey we're on isn't the best," she says. "But the journey on angel flight is absolutely amazing."

And Stetson knows at the end of a long day of tests and treatment, he can count on his pilots to bring him back to the rest of his family. "I'm happy to go home," he said before his latest angel flight, "and I'm happy they're taking us home."