

LIFT

SPRING/SUMMER 2020 | VOL. 6 | ISSUE 1

Dear Wings of Hope Family,

When the last edition of this newsletter arrived in your mailboxes in the fall, no one could have predicted what an unusual and unsettling start to 2020 we would be experiencing worldwide. Our way of living has been forever changed - even after the virus is under control and social distancing is a thing of the past.

As you read through the following pages, I invite you to experience the progress this organization has been able to make because of you. You will read about the inspiring day our pilot, Steve Williams, and Paraguay Field Director Cliff Schisler departed our hangar in a Cessna 182 destined for Paraguay. We recently welcomed some new faces to Wings of Hope and said goodbye to a dear friend.

You will also see pictures from our Hope Is Where the Heart Is Gala and read about the success of our spring aircraft raffle. We have plenty of rescheduled event information to share with you as well.

Amid so much uncertainty, one thing is sure. Wings of Hope is able to make progress toward our mission even during this pandemic because of you. You can count on us to continue doing our best for you and for our participants, to have fun along the way and - no matter the challenge - to never, never give up our efforts to save and change lives through the power of aviation.

I'll leave with a truly uplifting update of one of the young patients we fly. Gracin is a 12-year-old girl who was born with one leg shorter than the other. When we first started flying Gracin nearly three years ago, she was using a walker. We've flown Gracin from her home in Kansas to St. Louis Shriners for bone-lengthening surgeries and therapy more than 30 times. A couple of weeks ago, Gracin's mom sent us a wonderful video - it was Gracin running for the first time in three years. The look on Gracin's face was pure joy. It reminded me: this is why we do what we do.

We shared the video on our Facebook page in April. If you haven't seen it - I encourage you to take a look.

Be safe!



*Changing & Saving Lives
Through the Power of Aviation*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bret Heinrich'.

Bret Heinrich,
President & CEO

Event RECAP

HOPE IS WHERE THE HEART IS – ONE FOR THE BOOKS!



Our annual Hope Is Where the Heart Is Gala is our most highly anticipated event of the year. And our 2020 event, which took place February 8 at a packed Chase Park Plaza ballroom, lived up to the hype. With a record 475 guests and \$417,472 raised, the event was a success by all measures.

The level of energy, engagement and compassion in the room was tangible – and most felt when guests were treated to the unique opportunity to see how their support of Wings of Hope is making a difference in the lives of two individuals we serve.

Melissa was the first to share her story. Melissa's Wings of Hope journey began in her early twenties. She collapsed while playing sand volleyball, almost died of heart failure and, as a result, had to have her lower leg amputated. At the time, she was studying to become a physician assistant in Kentucky. The local hospital couldn't provide her the specialized care she needed. Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis was the best option, but traveling to St. Louis for multiple surgeries and doctors' appointments posed a significant financial burden to the young graduate student. That's where Wings of Hope was able to help. Wings of Hope transported Melissa to the medical care she needed to get her life back on track. Since that first Wings of Hope flight seven years ago, Melissa completed her degree, got married, adopted a puppy and is now working in her dream job as a physician assistant.

After a thrilling live auction, 6-year-old Isaac and his family took the stage.

Isaac was born with prune belly syndrome and clubfeet. Unfortunately, local doctors could not straighten Isaac's feet. Isaac loved t-ball, but he struggled to run the bases. His parents, Jill and Drew, were heartbroken. One day, Jill learned about Dr. Matthew Dobbs at St. Louis Children's Hospital who is known worldwide for his expertise in treating clubfoot. Dr. Dobbs watched Isaac walk via Skype and said he could help.

It was a miracle.

But St. Louis was a 12-hour drive, one way. Their first visit for surgery was a three-and-a-half-hour drive to the airport, then a commercial flight. It was expensive, took all day, and they worried about their two children at home.

Then miracle number two happened: Dr. Dobbs told them about Wings of Hope.

Wings of Hope has flown Isaac 10 times roundtrip, and his progress has been life changing. Isaac still loves t-ball – and, today, he runs the bases like a pro.

As Melissa and Isaac shared their Wings of Hope stories, our guests were visibly moved – none more so than Isaac's mom, Jill: "Isaac had such a wonderful time at the gala, he felt super special and enjoyed showing off a few of his dance moves! It was so great for him to have this experience – to come full circle to a night of dancing and celebration with the special organization who made all the doctor appointments, surgery and the many leg casts bearable for such a young little boy."

Many thanks to all of our guests, sponsors and volunteers for making our 2020 gala truly a night to remember!

IN THE *Spotlight*

THREE NEW DIRECTORS JOIN THE BOARD

The Wings of Hope Board of Directors elected three new members this spring.



Andy Kuchan retired from the Monsanto Company after 30 years in various finance and leadership roles. He is a member of the Town and Country Planning and Zoning Commission and consults in the agricultural industry. Andy earned a BS in Accounting from the University of Illinois and completed the Executive MBA program at the Kellogg School of Business at Northwestern. He grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, and lived with his family in Singapore – stoking his lifelong love of international travel and skiing. His focus, of late, has been running to stay in shape while also traveling, particularly internationally, with his wife, Kim. Their two kids, Jordan and Zach, are happy and gainfully employed in Chicago and Atlanta respectively.



Juan Carlos Lenz is the president of the board of the Colombian Civil Air Patrol, a private nonprofit organization established in the 1960s to provide free medical, humanitarian and emergency aid to remote communities living in conditions of extreme poverty, social or geographical exclusion, or victims of catastrophe. An electrical engineering and MBA graduate of the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Juan Carlos worked for multinational companies including Nortel Networks, Unisys and Ericsson. For the past 15 years, he has been leading his loyalty and technology company LoyalQuo. Juan Carlos is a father of two sons. He loves nature, flying, photography, fly fishing and exploring his beloved homeland Colombia.



Bryan Krueger has over 15 years' experience providing assurance, tax and consulting services to closely-held businesses and their owners. A graduate of Missouri State University with B.S. degrees in accounting and marketing, Bryan is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants. Active in the community, Bryan previously served on the boards of Disabled Athletes Sports Association and St. Dominic Savio. He is a former Big Brother with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri. Bryan enjoys spending time with his wife, Angie, and three children (Anna, Kate and Gus) and playing golf with friends.



WELCOME, TIM LONG!

On April 6, Tim Long joined Wings of Hope as our new director of operations. Tim will oversee our hangar throughput, turn-and-taxi, building maintenance, landscaping and grounds, vehicle maintenance, safety and purchasing teams. Tim comes to us with more than 35 years' experience in the aviation industry. His resume includes Airport Terminal Services, US Airways, Executive Beechcraft and Emerson Flight Operations. Tim is president of the Greater St. Louis Business Aviation Association Board of Directors and a member of the Missouri State Aviation Council. Welcome to the Wings of Hope family, Tim!

Goodbye to a Good Friend ...

The Wings of Hope family is saddened by the loss of our board member and dear friend A.C. "Butch" Giessman who passed away on March 29, 2020. A graduate of St. Louis University's Parks College, Butch had a lengthy and impressive aviation career – most notably as the founder of AVMATS. Butch was active in the Greater St. Louis Business Aviation Association, and was an early member and past president of the Professional Aviation Maintenance Association. Butch was a wonderful man and truly loved Wings of Hope; we will miss him greatly.



Field NOTES



WINGS OF HOPE PLANE SENT TO PARAGUAY ON NEW MISSION

Students worked on plane during 2019 Soar into STEM program

On Saturday, January 25, Wings of Hope volunteers, staff and supporters gathered around a Cessna 182 bound for Paraguay to deliver desperately needed medical and humanitarian aid to 20 indigenous communities in the rural northeast part of the country – serving about 4,000 people annually.

The plane and its mission have particular significance for 20 St. Louis-area students who worked on the aircraft as part of Wings of Hope's inaugural Soar into STEM program, which took place in the spring of 2019. By inviting students to work on aircraft in the Wings of Hope hangar, Soar into STEM is designed to pique students' interest in STEM and aviation careers – which is crucial in the midst of a severe shortage of pilots and aviation personnel. Boeing provided an \$80,000 grant to fund the 2019 pilot program and a \$125,000 to support program expansion to two sessions in 2020. Currently, these two sessions are scheduled for September and October. (Wings of Hope is accepting inquiries from interested school districts for the October session. Learn more at <https://wingsofhope.ngo/education-outreach/stem/>.)

After a blessing by former Wings of Hope board member and pilot Larry Lemke, pilots Steve Williams and Cliff Schisler shared a few thoughts before setting off on the flight that would take eight days, cover 5,764 statute miles, log 45-1/2 hours of total flight time, and require 13 stops between takeoff in St. Louis and landing in Asuncion, Paraguay.

Schisler, who is the Wings of Hope field director in Paraguay, offered words of gratitude: "If this plane could save one life, it is worth all of our investment. Because one life is worth more than anything money can buy. I give my heartfelt thanks to the volunteers and to the students who made this possible."

Wings of Hope pilot Steve Williams added, "I feel like I am the luckiest person in the world. To be able to take this trip is amazing. It is so important to give back in life. What really counts is to give back."



NEW PIPER NAVAJO EXPANDS MAT PROGRAM REACH

Wings of Hope is so pleased to welcome the newest member of its fleet: a 1975 Piper Navajo PA-31-310. President and CEO Bret Heinrich, seen here with Ron Vlach, the Navajo's former owner, says, "This is an important day for our team and our patients. This Navajo makes it possible for us to go beyond the 600-mile service area that has been our outer limit for many years. Our pilots will be able to fly further and faster – allowing us to say yes to patients farther away who need transportation to lifesaving care."

IN THE *Spotlight*



Wings of Hope pilot Gary Davis hands the keys to raffle plane winner Kelly Howell and his wife Cindy.

AGAINST ALL ODDS ... AIRPLANE RAFFLE WINNER FINALLY GETS HIS WINGS

After a lifetime of setbacks, Idaho Falls resident Kelly Howell finally got his plane – a 1965 Cessna 172. Howell was the lucky holder of the grand-prize-winning ticket in Wings of Hope's September airplane raffle.

Howell, who has been buying tickets in the Wings of Hope airplane raffle for several years, has been waiting for this plane for more than 40 years. In the summer of 1976, when he was a college student, he was working on getting his pilot's license at a flight school in Rexburg, Idaho.

"It was a Saturday. I was taking my last practice flight, and I had an appointment for my check ride the following Tuesday," Howell recalled. "That's the day, June 5, 1976, the Teton Dam broke. This 20-foot wall of water wiped out a whole bunch of Rexburg, including inundating the airport. So, obviously, I missed my check ride."

By the time the airport was up and running again, the requirements for earning a pilot's license had changed.

"There were quite a few requirements that I would have had to go back and do more hours," Howell said. "I was a poor, broke college student and just could not afford to go back and get those extra hours to finish."

The plane Howell had been planning on flying once he got his license also met its demise when it crashed during the summer of '76.

"So the plane that I was going to fly was no longer available," Howell said.

Then life happened.

"With marriage and family and kids, I guess I could never justify the cost of going back and finishing – but it's always been a dream," said Howell.

When Wings of Hope pilot Gary Davis delivered the plane to Howell at Blackfoot City Airport in February, Howell's dream finally came true. With a plane of his own, Howell plans to finish flight school – four decades after his original plans were derailed.

"My wife and I love to travel. We're road trippers but now we'll be air trippers," Howell said.

All 5,000 tickets to the September 2019 raffle sold out in a day – and generated \$330,000 to support Wings of Hope.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WINGS OF HOPE!

We are so grateful for the following funders who make it possible for us to continue changing and saving lives through the power of aviation.*

Emerson Charitable Trust
Berges Family Foundation
Greater St. Louis Business Aviation Association
Boeing Employees Community Fund
Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
Herbert and Adrian Woods Foundation
Charleys Kids Foundation
Archford Capital Strategies
Kuhn Foundation
Sidener Foundation
Cady Family Foundation

*Recognition of gifts made from 11/01/2019 through 5/01/2020.

GRAND PRIZE: 1974 Piper Warrior

The Grand Prize winner will receive this aircraft with a fresh annual inspection and a total new instrument avionics upgrade including GPS Navigator, ADS-B In-Out transponder, dual COMs, two-axis autopilot system and a glass panel with two new G5s. Only 2,700 hours total time and 380 hours since major overhaul. Exterior is mostly original, with an overall gently-used appearance and a refreshed Madrid Red trim. Matching red and tan interior. This is a great place airplane for student training and all around transportation. Please call us to schedule out the plane at the Wings of Hope hangar at Spokane Valley.

SOLD OUT!

1 ticket \$75 OR 3 tickets \$195

TICKETS GO ON SALE APRIL 1, 2020
6am Central Time – Only 5,000 available!

4 CHANCES TO WIN! Each ticket has a chance of winning one of 4 prizes: 1974 Piper Warrior, a Private Pilot License or Advanced Training Scholarship, a Bose A20 aviation headset, 11-inch 32 GB iPad with Wi-Fi and cellular plus a one-year subscription to ForeFlight Pro Plus.

www.wingsofhope.ngo/airplane-affle/

AIRPLANE RAFFLE SELLS OUT – AGAIN!

Our April 1 airplane raffle sold all 5,000 tickets in 11 hours – and raised more than \$300,000 to support Wings of Hope. The grand prize winning ticket will be drawn on May 26. "Our airplane raffles are always very popular, but we were a little anxious about how this one would fly given the uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic," said Wings of Hope Director of Development Amy Buehler. "We were overwhelmed with the phenomenal response – and so grateful for this important source of financial support." Our next airplane raffle launches September 14. Information about the plane and tickets coming soon at wingsofhope.ngo/airplane-affle/.

JOHN "MIKE" CORDELL MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT WINGS OF HOPE

John "Mike" Cordell was a beloved Shriner and regular visitor to Wings of Hope. When he passed away suddenly in November 2018, it was a big blow to the Wings of Hope family. We knew John as the big guy behind the wheel of the red Shriner van who would come to Wings of Hope to drive one of our frequent fliers, Elizabeth, to her appointments at Shriners Hospital. We still fly Elizabeth, and she still smiles when talking about "Uncle John." John also started the annual Christmas party for Shriners' patients. He was a generous soul who had a special spot in his heart for children. This inspired Bob Sudholt to honor his good friend's legacy by organizing the first ever John "Mike" Cordell Children's Charity Golf Classic.

"I wanted to do something to keep his memory going - to honor his legacy of helping children," said Bob.

John's widow, Carla, suggested the proceeds of the tournament go to Wings of Hope.

"John was such a generous and kind man," said Wing of Hope President and CEO Bret Heinrich. "It was an honor to know him - and we are honored and grateful to be the beneficiary of this first charity classic in his name."



JOHN "MIKE" CORDELL CHILDREN'S CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

September 20, 2020 | The Courses at Forest Park | Registration @ 9am

Shotgun start @ 10am | Golf, Silent Auction, Prizes, Food & Beverages | \$100 Per Player

jmccharities@gmail.com | Sponsorships Available

Calendar OF EVENTS

JULY 18

Young Ambassadors Plane Wash
Wings of Hope

SEPTEMBER 5, 12, 19, 26

Soar into STEM (1st session)
Youth aviation program

SEPTEMBER 14

Fall Airplane Raffle

SEPTEMBER 20

John "Mike" Cordell Children's
Charity Golf Classic
The Courses at Forest Park

SEPTEMBER 23

GSLBAA Golf Tournament
(benefitting Wings of Hope)
Old Hickory Country Club

SEPTEMBER 26

Taste of Hope
Wings of Hope

OCTOBER 3, 10, 17, 24

Soar into STEM (2nd session)
Youth aviation program

DECEMBER 11

Holiday Luncheon
Wings of Hope

SAVE THE DATES!

The Young Ambassadors of Wings of Hope have some exciting events to fill your late summer-early fall calendar.

FLY IN PLANE Wash

Always good clean fun - the annual Fly-in Plane Wash is **July 18** at Wings of Hope. Proceeds benefit Wings of Hope international programs. Coffee and donuts provided (of course!). Interested in joining our plane wash crew - or reserving a spot for your plane? Contact Tiffany Nelson at tiffany.nelson@wingsofhope.ngo or 636-778-5509.

TASTE of HOPE

Calling all restaurants (and foodies)! Taste of Hope is coming back to Wings of Hope on **Saturday, September 26**. We are excited to feature seriously delicious culinary delights from some of our town's best restaurants. Proceeds will benefit Wings of Hope international programs. Want to find out how your restaurant can get involved? Contact Tiffany Nelson at tiffany.nelson@wingsofhope.ngo or 636-778-5509.

Tickets for the Airplane Aviation Cinema Trivia Night are on sale at wingsofhope.ngo. Originally scheduled for March, this event has been postponed - but it will happen. Contact Tiffany Nelson at tiffany.nelson@wingsofhope.ngo or 636-778-5509 for more information. **Stay tuned for the new date!**



INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?

You can be a part of these types of fun events throughout the year, while supporting humanitarian aviation efforts around the globe when you join the Young Ambassadors! Contact YA@wingsofhope.ngo or visit wingsofhope.ngo/ya



Thank You

FOR HONORING THE PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT WITH A WINGS OF HOPE TRIBUTE GIFT ...

Honorarium and memorial gifts are a wonderful way to celebrate and honor the people who are special in our lives. Wings of Hope is the humble recipient of hundreds of these tribute gifts annually. Those individuals who have included us in their estate plans are recognized in our Legacy Society. If you are interested in finding out how you can include Wings of Hope in your legacy and estate planning, please email Amy Buehler at amy.buehler@wingsofhope.ngo or call 636-537-1302.

In Honor Of...

Karen Andrews

Jay Rickmeyer

Bob Burkhardt

Beth Anglemeyer

Beth Campbell

Angela Walleman

Howard Canada

Janet Egan

Robert C. & Bonnie Graham, III

Robert & Julianne Chambers

Elaine Greathouse

Rita Eiseman

Shirley Schermer

Bret Heinrich

Deborah Dearing

Don Kukla

Luke & Kathryn Kissam

Patricia M. Kukla

Larry Lemke

Bret Heinrich

Lynn D. Sapp

Gail Voss

Macak Family

Raymond & Mandi Voegelé

The Maryland Murrays

Colleen D. Murray

Gerald D Meyers

Nadine Cornett

Tom Miller

Claire Wallace

Catherine Mueller

Santhi Hejeebu

Tina Mueller

Jay Rickmeyer

Teresa Hickam

Joshua Sager

Andrew Sager

Daniel Matthew Sistrunk

Kim Benton

Will Urie

Scott Brent

Jack Weitz

Diane Pfeiffer

Marck Wroble

Guy Wroble

Chris Diedrich

Steve & Mary Domahidy

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Dick Saale

Lynn Schiller

Bernie Schmidt

John Schmidt

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Dave & Beverly Wrobel

Richard Burton

Rebecca Ell

Fred Caldwell

Craig & Cynthia Nash

Gene Dixon

Dick Bode

Susan Bond

Emma Burrell

Marjorie Dixon

Betty Garton

Jane Howren

David & Verill Johnson

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Larry & Kathryn Langdon

Kay C. Neal

Janet Nelson

Ken Pedersen

John Schmidt

David & Lori Scott

Angela Walleman

Mary Dixon

Kurt Bengtson

Albert Eder

Rosemary Eder

Dodie Frank

Barbara Kolkmeier

Arthur C. "Butch" Giessman

Aero Charter

Richard & Suzie Bennett

Claudia Brown

Lynn Domalewski

Wm. Craig Dubishar

Robert & Michelle Giessman

Bret Heinrich

Jennifer Mertens &

Jason Straub

Sam Piwowarczyk

John Schmidt

Raymond Van de Riet, Jr

Angela Walleman

Marvin Goldman

Shirley Schermer

Virgil Hampton

AVMATs Family

Yia Yia Hendershot

Dave & Beverly Wrobel

Larry Henderson

Jean Henderson

Helen Hetlage

Andrew & Susan Marting

Seima Hort & Sokkhen Chin

Bret Heinrich

Eleanor Johnson

Dave & Beverly Wrobel

Linda Wallace Jones

Richard & Linda Jones

John Gilbert Kamer

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Francis E. Morehouse

Jan Giessman

John Morris

AVMATs Family

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Harriet Arkin

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Kathryn Ann Cohen

George & Mary Lou Convy

Beth Crancer

Jonathan Dehner

Mary Elfrink

Richard & Mary Fisher

Julie Frank

Amy Garland

Lon Gilbert

Al & Judy Goldman

Bob & Maureen Greenberg

Barbara Hawtrey

Suzanne Hoffman

Daniel Horner

Robin Jonas

Susan Karn

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Mandy Rubenstein

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Audrey Shanfeld

Fred Sher

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Allison & Jason St. John

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Trudy Steiger

Raleigh "Andy" Trovillion

Daniel M. & Mary Meyer

Barbara Wald

Deborah Wald

John Walls III

Deborah Becker

Richard J Wegner

Jean Wolf

Joe Yaeger

Karen Walker

Zoe Zielonko

Fred Zielonko

In Memory Of...

Jerry Bowe

Kathie Grubb

Nadine Boyd

Mary Bayles

Deborah Becker

Theresa Burr

Howard Canada

Jacqueline Davidson



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*Changing
& Saving
Lives
Through the
Power of
Aviation*



4-Star Rating on Charity Navigator,
GuideStar Gold Rating, and
Twice nominated for the
Nobel Peace Prize



Looking for a new home for your plane? **AIRCRAFT DONATION**

When you donate your plane to Wings of Hope, you are - in a very significant way - supporting our mission of changing and saving lives through the power of aviation. Airplane donation also offers some excellent tax benefits.

Want to learn more?

Contact our Director of Development Amy Buehler at amy.buehler@wingsofhope.ngo or call 636-537-1302.

Thank You!

