



Wings of Hope

Where There are Wings—There is Hope

LIFT

Volume 2* Summer 2015

A Message from our President

My recent travel to visit bases we serve included: Belize, Ecuador and Nicaragua. I was able to meet some of the people we serve and help with our medical air relief and community development. The three countries have distinct needs and share a common hope for a better future for their families.

In Belize, our pilot Dave Brown and his wife Pat, serve the people of Belize with Dave flying medical air ambulance missions for BERT (Belizean Emergency Response Team) and Pat serving as a psychologist/counselor at the Dorothy Menzies Child Care Center. When I flew with Dave, it was clear that he needed improved radios to fly safely in the Belizean airspace as well as when he takes patients to Mexico for more specialized care. A new avionics stack was prepared and shipped to Belize.

In Ecuador, we support the needs of tribal villages in the Western Amazon. I visited two villages to meet the people we serve and to learn about their lives and how we can help them. They continue to need medical support, sustainable food, water and help with community services. We continue our sustainable food programs to remote villages and are preparing an ambulance and a fire truck for delivery to a rural village on the edge of the jungle.

In Nicaragua, I worked to help set up the base for our new pilot, T.J. Stewart, at Puerto Cabezas Airport. We also visited three remote villages, evacuated two women needing emergency care and flew throughout the area in Northeast Nicaragua (Miskito Coast). We will be doing more medical air relief as well as medical/dental clinics and solar lighting projects in the future.

It was wonderful to meet some of the people we serve and see how we can help improve their lives. My plan is to continue my field visits in the next few months. My next trip will be to visit Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. We will also be evaluating new opportunities to serve in several new locations around the world.

Where There are Wings—There is Hope!

Don Hamblen
President



Field Notes : Nicaragua

Solar lights increase income, improve health in Nicaragua

StraightUp Solar lights Miskito villages in Nicaragua



What would you do with a few extra hours in your day? In the first week of March two Wings of Hope volunteers gave Nicaraguan families the chance to find out by giving the gift of light, through solar electrification. The volunteers were part of an innovative new partnership with local solar company StraightUp Solar to electrify villages in remote eastern Nicaragua. They raised \$4,500 and sent two employees, Josh Hill and Matt Reuscher, to three villages in Eastern Nicaragua, impacting about 150 people.

The most meaningful interactions of the trip were with the families themselves. “Just seeing the gratitude and appreciation from the families when we finished the solar install and we could flip the switch and see the lights turn on was amazing,” said Hill. “That was by far the best part, knowing that we were bringing something to them that they couldn’t afford on their own and would be a significant change for them.”

Solar panels provide several extra hours of work, play or study time for these families, without the indoor air pollution and burns common from using kerosene lamps. They are also key for medical emergencies – for instance, being able to see can mean life and death during a difficult middle-of-the night birth. For more information on how you can support solar electrification in Nicaragua, contact Laura Helling at 636-537-1302 or laurahelling@wings-of-hope.biz.



Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program



On February 14, 2015, Wings of Hope held its 13th annual “A Night for Miracles Dinner & Auction, with 100% of the proceeds from the event going directly to funding our MAT Program. The MAT program helps people like Justin and Melissa who were our honored guests for the evening.

Justin was born without both arms and a leg. Wings of Hope flies him on a regular basis from his hometown in Wichita, KS to St. Louis where he is undergoing long term treatment at Shiners hospital. They have elongated the bones in both arms and his leg. He has recently been fitted with a prosthetic leg. He is a veteran flier with Wings of

Hope having flown over 75 times since he was born.

Melissa had to have her right leg amputated due to complications following heart failure while playing volleyball with friends. She heard about Wings of Hope through a family friend and has flown over a dozen times with us. She has a ‘never give up’ attitude and is making a full recovery.



Thank you to everyone who supported the event and came out to support our MAT Program that evening!

Calendar of Events 2015

June 16 - FOT Meeting
June 19 - Ladies Luncheon
July 4 - VP Parade
July 17 - Airport Appreciation BBQ
July 17 - Full Board Meeting
October 3 - Fall Donor Party
December 18 - Holiday Luncheon



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Last year, Wings of Hope's Medical Relief and Air Transport Program received grants from Sam's Club #6252 and Walmart #2600 in Chesterfield MO, just 2 miles from our headquarters, earning the title "Champions For Kids." Within weeks of gaining their commitment, 5 more St. Louis based Walmart locations made impactful donations. To date an additional 13 Sam's Clubs have joined as Champions For Kids and the program continues to grow stronger.

Thank you, Walmart & Sam's Club!!!

Volunteer Spotlight

For the Love of Adventure...

Del & Annie Reiff in Tanzania (PIC)

In an organization full of extraordinary volunteers, Del & Annie Reiff stand out. By summer they are Iowa farmers, but when their harvest of corn and soybeans come in each fall, they take off around the world for humanitarian missions – including Guatemala, Belize, Panama, Guyana, Ecuador, Congo, and now Tanzania.



Both Annie and Del are commercial pilots and trained mechanics, so this winter they took on the important work of completing the annual safety inspection of two Wings of Hope planes in Tanzania.

They were amazed by the organization Wings of Hope field director Pat Patten has built there. "Of all the places we've been, involved with all of these different organizations, his commitment to doing it is probably right at the top for me. He really does put everything into it, his whole life. The services he provides are fantastic," says Del. At his Olkokola compound, they run a daily clinic where 60 people line up each morning, and hold mobile clinics in remote villages that his pilots and medical team regularly visit. In addition, he runs a school offering vocational training for disabled Tanzanians, helping them secure meaningful work in their communities.

Del & Annie worked dawn to dusk every day and were able to complete the inspections in seven days, a considerable feat they attributed to good record-keeping and great support on the ground. It was an exhausting trip, but one they found very rewarding. So why do they keep pushing themselves? Del says, "We both do it for the adventure ourselves and we enjoy other cultures. We enjoy living the lifestyle of that culture, and getting to realize there's a huge world out there. And every place has a different style of living - there's a lot we can learn." Annie agrees, "It's great to actually live in another culture for a long enough time to know it as more than just a tourist."

Del reflected on the impact of Wings of Hope around the world: "We've had people born in the airplane, and we've had people die in the airplane. People in the back country, when someone gets ill, they have no options. They may be only 50 miles from medical help, but they can't get there. It saves lives."

Thank you for your years of service, Del & Annie!

WINGS OF HOPE®

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Don Hamblen

On Friday, May 29th we held our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon and over 300 volunteers attended! We dedicated our new flag pole and our new donated Seneca III that will service patients for many years to come! At the end of the program the numbers were drawn for the 2015 "Save-A-Kids-Life" Aircraft Raffle. It was great to see everyone! Thanks for ALL you do!!!!!!



Four Star Charity Rated, Gold Charity Rating and
twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize

Email us at info@wings-of-hope.biz to receive this
newsletter electronically. Thank you!