



Aviation News

[Welcome center plan for West Michigan Regional Airport begins to take shape](#)

[New Ford Airport \[Grand Rapids\] logo revealed ahead of multi-million dollar projects](#)

[Large solar energy farm proposed for Ann Arbor airport](#)

[Control system and 'black box' for Boeing's new 777X will be made in West Michigan](#)

[Flawed concrete found on Detroit Metro Airport runway](#)

[Michigan's IFL Group to acquire first converted CRJ-200 freighter](#)

[Volunteer pilot group gives patients a lift](#)

[5th parallel runway not in the works at \[Detroit\] Metro](#)

Logbook

Dec 1

George Schraft and
Frank Clark
KMGK - KMSN
Cessna 310

Dec 3

George Schraft and
Frank Clark
KMGK - KMSN
Cessna 310

Dec 7

Mike Miller and
Jason Blair
KGRR - KRST
Baron

Dec 11

Robert Vandenberg and
Daniel Neville

Let's Help More People Than Ever In 2015!

It seems that I am always asking people...

"So how did you hear about us?"

It is an important question for evaluating the effectiveness of our different channels of communication. However, my favorite answer is still...

"A friend of mine is a pilot for Wings of Mercy and he/she told me that you might be able to help us."

I love that answer because it means that our pilots not only believe in our mission but they also have confidence that we can help people they know.

Word of mouth is still the most effective form of outreach. As pilots for Wings of Mercy, you know firsthand the difference we can make. When you hear of someone in your community who is at risk of being denied the medical care they need because they can't afford to travel, make that first contact. Remember, you may be their only link to our organization.

Are you ready to be the first point of contact for a potential wings recipient? Don't worry; we have made it very easy for you.

First, refer people to our website. Our application and other required documents are available on the patient information page along with an overview of the service we provide.

Second, encourage them to call the office. We really do like talking with people who call us! A quick phone interview can expedite the recipient screening process and enable us to assist those who don't have access to a computer. We still use snail mail and land lines when necessary (perhaps a dog sled for our friends in Houghton), whatever it takes to communicate with the people who need us.

We want to help more people than ever in 2015. Some of them could be your friends and neighbors. Start a conversation about Wings of Mercy!

Happy to be at your service

--Grace Spelde

KRST - KMKG
Chancellor

Dec 17

Ryan Veenstra and
Ray Chester
KGRR - KRST
Socata

Dec 18

Ryan Veenstra and
Ray Chester
KRST - KGRR
Socata

Dec 21

Gary Sage and
Paul Segard
KGRR - KRDU
Golden Eagle

Dec 21

John Workman and
Bill Klungle
KTVC - KDAN
Chancellor

Dec 22

Gary Sage and
Dan Neville
KRDU - KGRR
Golden Eagle

Dec 29

Christopher Harper and
Jason Blair
KCMS - KARB
Twin Comanche

Dec 30

Jerry Schmidt and
Bruce Evans
KARB - KCMS
Cherokee 6

Wings of Mercy flight needs
change regularly. Click
here to login and view the

**Current WOM
Flight Needs**

Wings of Mercy is a 501 (C)(3)
non-profit organization funded
solely by individual and corporate
contributions.

If you are able to help out,
click below to donate.



A Patient Story

Wings Pilots Gary Sage and
Dan Neville sent in this
picture from a recent trip.



Our recipient Sara, got great
news from her doctors at the
Brain Tumor Center at Duke
University.

She is still in remission and
will not have to go back for a year. Kudos to Gary, and his
two SIC's Paul Segard, and Dan Neville, for getting Sara to
Raleigh Durham and then back to Grand Rapids in time for a
very Merry Christmas!!!

Pilot Tips

**Discussing the
Area Forecast**
by Jason Blair



Remember those vague
Area Forecasts (FAs) that
you try to interpret and
figure out what portions of
what areas the un-decoded
text is talking about as you
think about alternate minimums, cloud ceilings over an area
bigger than a TAF site covers, or as you try to plan a cross-
country flight through a region? Well, many people only use
them periodically, but they can actually be very useful.

Specifically, while the actual forecast is very useful, a little
paid attention to part of the forecast is the "Aviation
Forecast Discussion. (AFD - no, not the green books with
airport information, the weather product).

The Area Forecasts (FAs) cover big areas that are broken
down into regions including San Francisco, Salt Lake City,
Chicago, Boston, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, and the Gulf of
Mexico. But the Aviation Forecast Discussions further break
down these regions into areas such as Milwaukee, Amarillo,
or Sacramento for much more detailed, and focused,
information about a section of the greater region.

This is personally where I start many of my morning
briefings for flying in a local area. Each of these sections of
the map include forecasts written in plain language (mostly)
by a local National Weather Service employee who is on site
in that region. It will include discussion of cloud heights and
ceilings within that specific section of the area forecast and
includes good local knowledge and interpretation.

These AFDs will talk about expectations that the local
weather forecaster has of what the weather will do within
the time period of the forecast (typically a 24-hour period)
and many times offer interpretations based on local
knowledge and experience. I have many times seen notes
that say something like, "the models say such and such will

happen, but since I have lived here for 40 years and watched our weather I know the model will be wrong and it will probably actually do something completely different." Really, they do write stuff like that.

The AFDs are effectively the discussion of how an FA was developed and what information was available to the forecasters to create the overall FA, just on a section by section process that offers much more granular weather information that can take into account local weather phenomena.

These local AFDs can be great insight into what weather is really going to be doing in a local area and are a good resource to add to your bag of weather resources. Before you make your next flight, get into the weeds a little further and see what details the local weather forecasters might be able to provide you that you might have previously overlooked or not even knew were available as a resource

For more information about Aviation Forecast Discussion data, visit this link (<http://aviationweather.gov/fcstdisc>) on the Aviation Weather Center web site.

Wings of Mercy is a volunteer organization that provides free air transportation for people with limited financial means who need treatment at distant medical facilities. Patients are carried on private aircraft by volunteer pilots.

www.WingsofMercy.org

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