



# Giving Wings to Those in Need

## Aviation News

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## Logbook

### Dec. 5

Terry Boer  
and Robert Vandenberg  
KMKG - KRST  
Cessna 414

### Dec. 8

John Olson  
and Peter Tobin  
KBIV - KRST  
Cessna 421

### Dec. 10

Nick Jilek  
and Gary Miller  
KGRR - KRST  
Merlin IIIB

## From the Board...

January 8, 2014

### Resolve to Make a Difference in 2014

A New Year brings new possibilities and opportunities for pilots to use their unique skills and abilities to serve others. Many of us make New Year's resolutions to do things for ourselves, this year let's challenge ourselves to make resolutions to help others through Wings of Mercy!

Maybe you are like me and have not been able to fly as many missions for WOM as you would like. Part of that for me is my busy schedule. I personally would do better putting some flights on the calendar and planning for them in advance. With that in mind, please consider the following questions:

- How many flights would you like to do this year?
- What is your busy time of the year and when are you more available for volunteering?
- Are there months you would like to be on call for open flights?
- If you have a deiced aircraft, would you be willing to serve as a back-up for the winter months? Winter weather changes very quickly and pilots might be less reluctant to volunteer if they know there is a back-up plan.
- Would you be willing to be on call for a transplant flight?
- Do you know other pilots who would enjoy volunteering for Wings of Mercy?

We appreciate every effort you have made to fulfill our mission of Giving Wings to Those in Need, and ask that you continue to support this organization in a way that is meaningful to you. If you haven't done your first flight yet, do one! If you have been flying with us for a while, share your stories with other pilots. We need to help each other remember why we do this and why we love Wings of Mercy!

Let's make 2014 the best year yet for Wings of Mercy!

Fred Honore II  
Director of Operations/Secretary

## A Patient Story...

### Ready to Set a Date

Wings of Mercy patient, William Dobberstein is starting 2014 feeling better than he has in years. In fact, he and fiancée, Joanie are ready to set a date. Last summer, Wings of Mercy pilots made it possible for William to travel to the University of Wisconsin in Madison several times before



**Dec. 13**

John Workman  
and Dan Neville  
KMSN - KMKG  
Cessna 414

finally receiving a kidney and pancreas transplant. It has been a long and difficult journey back to health for William, but with Joanie cheering him on, he has remained optimistic through it all.

**Dec. 13**

John Workman  
and Dan Neville  
KRST - KMKG  
Cessna 414

Life on the transplant list definitely has its' ups and downs. Every time the phone rings, the patient wonders if it's "The Call". When the call does come, timing is everything. At Wings of Mercy, we serve an average of 3 transplant patients a year. We become very close with these patients and their families and give them as much support as we can. The calls for these flights can come day or night. Many come in the middle of the night. Even though these requests can come at odd times, a Wings of Mercy pilot has always been available to take care of our transplant patients.

**Dec. 15**

Rick Terzo  
and John Olson  
KRST - KGRR  
Cessna 340

Both William and Joanie say they are "Forever indebted to the pilots." Their story is the perfect example of how free flights really can change lives.

**Dec. 16**

Kevin Dingman  
and Michael King  
KMKG - KRST  
Beechcraft Duke

**Pilot Tips...**

**Passenger Loading and Safety Considerations**

*by Jason Blair*

For most of us, getting in and out of our planes is second nature, as is walking around the plane, on an airport ramp, or in hangars. But the passengers we carry when conducting Wings of Mercy flights may have much less experience or be completely new to flying in General Aviation aircraft. While Wings of Mercy patients are required to be able to enter and exit an airplane with limited assistance, there are some things as pilots we can do to make this process easier for them, and easier on our aircraft, while also making sure safety is maintained.

**Events**

**Event Listings**

**Muskegon CareAffaire  
June 07, 2014**

**Holland CareAffaire  
August 23, 2014**

**Traverse City CareAffaire  
September 6, 2014**

**Ramps and Hangars**

Airport ramps and hangars can be hazardous places and we want to make sure passengers don't "touch the wrong stuff". When you first meet your passengers, brief them about where they can walk, wait, or sit. This will keep them from bumping their heads on wings, sitting on breakable items, or encountering other potentially dangerous situations.

When discussing ramp area safety, be sure to help passengers understand that they should never approach an aircraft that has running engines. Seeing propellers running can sometimes be difficult for uninitiated passengers and even more difficult if it is a jet engine. One option may be to have one of the pilots complete final preparations for the aircraft and the second pilot serve as an escort to the plane for departure.

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.



Running airplanes aren't the only danger on an airport ramp, especially in the winter. Most airport ramps use no type of salt or sand to combat ice (due to their corrosiveness to aircraft) and they can be extremely slippery. Each Wings of Mercy patient is required to have a traveling companion to offer a guiding arm to and from the aircraft which should limit potential slip and fall dangers. At some airports, carpets may be available to place at the aircraft door. The most common slip and fall point is exiting the aircraft when stepping down; something that waiting for the FBO to provide a simple carpet can mitigate.

In general, reducing the distance your passengers will have to travel to an aircraft reduces the potential for danger. On slippery or dry ramps, if it is possible to park closely to the door of the FBO or to bring a vehicle close to the aircraft, especially for patients who may have mobility concerns, risk can be diminished.

**Aircraft Entry**

Each aircraft has differences relating to specific seating and door entry configuration, but a few general tips can help.

Again, this starts with briefing.

Prior to having the passengers actually enter the aircraft, explain the door mechanism and how they will gain access. If stepping up on the wing is required for entry, explain where the passenger can step (potentially using aircraft steps or stepping on the wing) and where they can hold on while they are doing so. Most aircraft have hand holds and it should be strongly encouraged that passengers use them.

If the aircraft has multiple doors (one that the passengers can use and a different one that the pilots use) one of the pilots should secure the closing of the door. If the aircraft has a large enough cabin that passengers can be seated and then allow a pilot to close the door behind, this is again advised. In some aircraft, the passengers may be required to close the door. If this is necessary, be sure to brief the passengers fully and verify that they can physically operate the door successfully prior to trusting this action. In all cases, passengers must be fully briefed in case of need for emergency exit.

### **Aircraft Seating**

Passenger seating is also something that should be fully briefed.

Make sure your passengers know how to move seats forward or backward, up or down, or turn them if possible or to safely seat the passengers. This should all be done prior to any departure and passengers should be discouraged from changing seating positions during flights.

Seat belts are required by FARs for takeoff and landing and it is strongly encouraged that passengers leave them on for the duration of flights. Be sure to brief passengers on how to put on and takeoff seat belts, how the buckles work, and how to appropriately adjust them for fit. In the event that a pilot will be providing flight services to larger patients (something you may be able to guess at and discuss with Wings of Mercy staff when you get patient weight and balance information) a seat belt extension may be helpful. If you think this might be necessary, call the staff ahead to help make accommodations.

### **Baggage**

Most passengers do carry some baggage as they travel. This is typically best loaded by one of the pilots. Be sure to ask passengers if any of their baggage needs to stay close to them for the duration of the flight. It also isn't a bad idea to ask passengers if any of their baggage has items that cannot be allowed to freeze (especially pertinent if use of nose, tail, or wing locker baggage compartments will be used).

These are just a few things to consider when helping passengers on Wings of Mercy flights gain access to the aircraft on which they will be riding and how to safely secure themselves in the aircraft. A little time prior to the flight briefing passengers can limit potential injury or danger that they might encounter as pilots provide them the transportation that is vital to their medical care.

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](http://www.WingsofMercy.org)

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