



November 2021

## A Newsletter for Members

Westerly Airport Association

PO Box 2053, Westerly, RI 02891

[www.westerlyairportfriends.org](http://www.westerlyairportfriends.org)

Dear Members,

Reflecting on the past 19 months, it has been a most challenging time for all in the United States, as well as around the world as COVID – 19 and the Variant are still lingering...still following the present protocol is important.



Time is certainly flying by, as we are now in the month of November. Soon it will be Thanksgiving, a time when we gather with family and friends to give thanks for our blessings, and look forward to healthy, happy days.

There are two feature articles in this November Newsletter written by two long time pilots that are so important and will be inspiring, I know upon reading both articles, tears flowed from my eyes. Helping those in need is so gratifying. You will be amazed at the charitable endeavors of both pilots.

My hope is that pilots and non-pilots reading this letter will be inspired to volunteer in some capacity for these charitable entities or one of their choice.

The November meeting of the WAA will be held in-person in the Conference Room at Westerly Airport on Saturday, November 20th, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. Please make every effort to attend, as we have much on the agenda to discuss. It is that time of year when nominations for Officers are held for the New Year ahead. There is strength in our Association in all of you, our members, who rise to every occasion necessary. I thank you all. It truly has been a profound honor and privilege to be your President.

Masks must be worn to enter Westerly Airport.

Enjoy this Newsletter!

Thanksgiving Blessings and Blue Skies,

*Carol*

## 2021 WAA Humphrey J. Amedeo, Jr. Aviation Scholarship Foundation News

The Westerly Airport Association awarded \$9,000 in academic scholarships from the association's Humphrey J. Amedeo, Jr. Aviation Scholarship Foundation in June to five graduating students and four students already attending college, all of whom are planning to pursue a career in some aspect of aviation or aerospace. All of the students have outstanding academic records and have demonstrated service to their schools and local communities.

Awards were presented to Cian Mansfield, an East Lyme High School graduate who is attending Purdue University; Andrew Poirier, a Chariho High School graduate who is attending Kent State University; Maimunah Qureshi, a student in her third year at Bridgewater State University; and Andrew Simone, a Narragansett High School graduate, who is attending the University of Maryland. Adam Lurgio, also a Narragansett High School graduate, who is now attending Lynn University, was unable to attend the ceremony. Additional repeat scholarships were awarded by mail to Nicholas Orabona, a student at Purdue University; Nicholas Bibeau, a student at Embry-Riddle University; Andrew Estus, a student at Bridgewater State University; and Matthew Burian, a student at the University of Miami.

A reception held in the Conference Room at the Westerly Airport, provided the opportunity for the Scholarship Committee to meet the students, their families and for all to hear about the students' common passion for careers in Aviation and Aero-Space fields.

Article by: Dotty Stumpf, Co-Chairman of the Scholarship Committee



Congratulations to Scholarship Winners!

Students are pictured, from left, Andrew Poirier, Maimunah Qureshi, Andrew Simone and Cian Mansfield.

Photo by Sandy Niles, Founder of the Westerly Airport Association

## at the airport

by Kevin Allen, General Manager at Dooney Aviation



The Rhode Island Airport Corporation is taking steps to resolve the tree issue near the Airport. In reference to the lawsuit that a few people have concerning the cutting of the trees on their property, there will soon be a decision as to how much money the plaintiffs will settle for. More than likely, what the amount of settlement that the Rhode Island Airport Corporation is willing to pay, will be Appealed. And so on it goes... We can only hope that the issue will be resolved soon. SAFETY for pilots landing and taking off is absolutely paramount !!!!



### Westerly Airport Association Officers and Board

President: Carol L. Amedeo  
Vice President: Bernard Stumpf  
Secretary: Derek Ferris  
Treasurer: Dianne Morrone

Chairman of the Board of Directors: Jim Gueltzow  
Directors: Carol L. Amedeo, Steven Christina, Derek Ferris, Carl LaFleur, Dianne Morrone, Sandy Niles, Suzanne Scully, Bernard Stumpf, Linda Theadore, Virginia Wallace

# WAA Member News

**WELCOME**  
**TO THE WESTERLY AIRPORT**  
**ASSOCIATION CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**

**Pleasant Acres Florist and Greenhouses:**  
**Mary, Mitchel, Kurt, Lisa, Palmalee, Erika,**  
**Paula, Tony and Staff**



A periodic newsletter for members of the Westerly Airport Association. It is compiled by Carol Amedeo, and edited/created by Sandy Niles.

We encourage members to send news and photos to: [sandy@snilesdesigns.com](mailto:sandy@snilesdesigns.com)

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## A Letter from Angel Flight Northeast

Angel Flight Staff and Pilots assist thousands of patients each year. They make an amazing, meaningful impact in the lives of their patients they fly and families, many who face so much uncertainty by providing them a ray of light during the darkest of times. While each patient has their own unique medical situation, they require Angel Flights assistance always free of charge to access specialized care in the safest and most efficient way so they can focus on what is most important-getting well.

Every donation makes a meaningful impact in the lives of patients they fly. Your supportiveness is enormously appreciated.

Angel Flight sends the Westerly Airport Association huge thanks for being part of their wonderful and most unique organization.

Larry Camerlin, President



**To All Members:  
Warmest Wishes for a very  
Happy Thanksgiving!**



**With Gratitude and Appreciation:**

**A huge thank you goes to long time member, Derek Ferris for many, many years of service as our past Treasurer and current Secretary. We thank you for your devotion and dedication to the Westerly Airport Association.**





# Why Do We Fly For Charities?

by Pierre Wicker

A thank you note from an Angel Flight patient sums up why we fly for charities: "Fighting this illness has put a burden on my finances and family. Without your help I would not have been able to see this doctor who will help me to continue fighting my disease. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you, Angel Flight and Angel Flight pilots, for helping me in my attempt to become healthy again. You are evidence of the good and the community that I believe exists in the world".

After I received my instrument rating my trusted instructor and now very close friend, C. Levandoski, asked me if I would be interested in volunteering for Angel Flight. Initially I was not sure what to expect. After my first flight I was hooked up and started signing up for many more, completing close to 330 missions over 14 years.

Combining my love of aviation with helping patients suffering from life-threatening or life-long diseases was a wonderful and rewarding experience. Some patients do not say much. Others freely share moving stories of a life that was turned upside down, full of grief when told of the diagnosis, of suffering and coping with multiple medical appointments or debilitating treatments, but also stories full of hope and optimism. One young patient asked me to show her how to fly an airplane and peppered me with questions about flight controls and instruments. She then concluded that "one day I would get better and be an airline pilot."

Angel Flight patients typically receive care from major hospitals or have multiple appointments at medical facilities that are far away or difficult to drive to. By flying over the North East traffic jams or the LI sound and Atlantic Ocean, we save patients long car drives and boat trips, or the need to find a place to stay overnight. All of us, when going through difficult times, rely on our family and social networks. We, Angel Flight pilots, contribute to the social support of these patients. We give them the ability of going to their appointment and returning to the love of their family and comfort of their home within a few hours at the most, instead of a full day.

I was trained as a physician and took care of patients for nearly 20 years of my professional life. I knew the impact diseases could have on their life, yet I have to admit I had the most intimate conversations with patients on how they cope with their condition during those flights. Angel Flight patients teach us lessons about the resilience of the human spirit and body. They really are an inspiration. I often told my friends I was among the lucky guys and had absolutely no right to complain.

Angel Flight makes us better pilots. Instrument currency-and proficiency are hard to maintain. So instead of burning gas in the pattern and maneuvering area, or shooting approaches at nearby airports in good weather, why not combine maintaining our flying skills with a good cause? Flying patients to and from needed medical care gives us a heightened sense of responsibility. We strive to prepare and conduct our missions with the highest standards to make sound go-no go decisions, as safety always comes first, and then ensure our passengers have an on-time and smooth ride. We go to small fields in the middle of nowhere as well as busy international airports mingling with the "big irons" in all kinds of weather. We learn to speak in a very professional way when communicating with ATC (it does help!). We become skilled at handling challenges weather, ATC, or rare equipment failures (I had my share) throw at us. Controllers also tend to be very helpful, from the Groton tower controller negotiating an earlier ECDT (expected clearance delivery time) to the Erie controller making sure a wheelchair was available at the FBO for my patient. When I offered to "keep my speed up" to help a Potomac Approach controller thread me in between jets, he replied I did not have to adjust my speed because I was an Angel Flight.

Becoming a very proficient pilot thanks to Angel Flight gave me the confidence to go to high traffic airports (the pinnacle was JFK, when I was #22 in sequence for takeoff), fly across the continental US and internationally, including a memorable trip across the Atlantic Ocean. If you appreciate the beauty of the world surrounding us, angel flights give multiple opportunities to enjoy the surreal view of a full moon shining over a sea of stratus clouds on a cold winter night or spectacular sunsets above an overcast. Even my passengers, many of them having never flown in small aircrafts, felt compelled to comment on the beauty of this stunning scenery.

When we talk to fellow Angel Flight pilots, all of them tell the same story. It is a very rewarding experience from a human and aeronautical perspectives. As one of them put it "Passengers are always so appreciative of my efforts. What they don't understand is that I love to fly and taking them to their destination is fun for me. The real sacrifice would be if I had to stay on the ground."

*Pierre Wicker is an instrument-rated private pilot who was based at KWST and KGON. He accumulated close to 2500 hours in 43 years. He quit piloting in 2017 due to medical reasons and misses all aspects of flying, including Angel Flights.*

# Public Benefit Flying

by George McMillin



Over the past 15 years, I have had the fortune and privilege of volunteering my time and aircraft for three remarkable Public Benefit Flying organizations. Angel Flight Northeast and Patient Airlift Services (PALS) provide medical transportation services to people in need of such while Pilots N Paws helps animal shelters facilitate the transport of rescue animals that may otherwise be euthanized. This is all done at no cost to the patient or shelter.

I have always been fascinated with the concept of flight. From the days of watching my father build and fly radio-controlled model aircraft, to building my own balsa wood models and later launching Estes Rockets in a nearby field, my enthusiasm for the sky continued to grow. As with many of us as children, my eyes went skyward whenever I heard an aircraft passing by. However, as time went on, other interests began to take priority. Work and career relegated any thoughts of becoming a pilot to a distant corner of my mind. Then, as with many people, the birth of our daughter brought along a career change which, even with the added responsibilities of fatherhood, gave me much more free time than I had since childhood. So, when my wife suggested I fulfill that childhood fascination and take flight lessons, I jumped at the opportunity. I found flying to be even more enjoyable than I thought it could be. Before long, I had my commercial pilot certificate, an instrument rating, and, eventually, an airplane! The convenience of air travel to visit friends and family was wonderful and I found flying to be the best anti-stress exercise imaginable. I was looking for any excuse I could find to put some time in the air! Then, through some of the many aviation organizations I joined, I heard about the opportunity to help charitable organizations by utilizing my airplane and pilot skills. What a win-win situation!

Starting with Angel Flight Northeast, I began to take flying missions transporting patients to and from their medical appointments. Several years later, I joined PALS to expand the number of flights I could choose from. For many patients, commercial airline travel is not entirely feasible due to their physical condition or even residence location. While a short flight from Hyannis to Nantucket may seem inconsequential to some, to an older cancer patient going for a 30-minute treatment session, it sure beats an all-day journey on the ferry! Some patients live in areas that are not close to commercial airports, but a General Aviation airfield may be nearby. In many cases, we help transport family members as well. The support they can give their loved ones can indeed make a difference in the patient's clinical outcome. When you get to see the overall positive attitude toward life that prevails in the majority of these patients and caregivers despite their challenges, it helps you appreciate everything you have in your own life even more. It puts life back into a proper perspective and it gives you hope for humanity.

Flying for these charitable organizations has also opened many opportunities I would likely not have had otherwise. Flying a single engine airplane into a busy major airport like Boston Logan is not something that every pilot gets to do. PALS helps with The Wounded Warrior Program for veterans. Through this program, I have been privileged of meeting several outstanding and inspirational men and women who have given more than most of us could ever imagine. Flying these heroes to a bit of rest and relaxation at The Travis Mills Foundation has been an honor. Major League Baseball even has a program to treat veterans to a game. As pilot, I have gotten to tag along and enjoy a game from a luxury suite! In some instances, I have been fortunate to fly the same patient on multiple occasions. For example, I had the privilege of flying a customer of the pharmacy where I worked. As an organ transplant recipient, he had to go the transplant facility routinely for a checkup. The facility was 500 miles away, so driving was not a good option for a 3 hour appointment. Through Angel Flight, I could fly him to the appointment one day, visit family in the area that evening, and fly him home the next day after his appointment. As with some of the other patients I have flown, his determination and attitude were inspirational. He became not only a customer and patient, but also a good friend. In another instant, with a condo in the Charleston S.C. area, I was contacted by PALS about a young girl who needed repeated trips from Charleston to a Philadelphia hospital for treatment of a debilitating hereditary disease. Being able to help her wonderful parents make these trips bearable for all and seeing her pervasive sunny disposition has been a pure joy. Her mom's Facebook pictures of the little girl's valiant efforts and terrific smile brighten even the cloudiest of my days.

Within the last 5 years, I have also had the pleasure of flying animal rescues for Pilots N Paws. As previously mentioned, my wife and I travel to the Charleston area often, and we learned of the tremendous need to transport animals from shelters to potential Fur Ever homes. We have flown both dogs and cats, met some wonderful people and animals, and even adopted two lab mixes for ourselves. As an animal lover, it is a joy to see a dog or cat have the opportunity for a new life, especially when the alternative may not have been so optimistic. Again, getting to know many of the good people behind the organization's success has been a great pleasure.

Flying is a passion for me. Being able to combine that passion with the opportunity to be of service is truly rewarding. It gives me, as a pilot, reason to fly, not only on patient missions, but to stay proficient by flying frequently and continuing to expand my aeronautical knowledge and abilities. The people I meet are often a true inspiration and source of renewal for my faith in mankind. What could be more rewarding than that?

For more information on these Public Benefit Flying organizations, see;  
Angel Flight Northeast [www.angelflightne.org](http://www.angelflightne.org)  
Patient Airlift Services <https://palservices.org>  
Pilots N Paws [www.pilotsnpaws.org](http://www.pilotsnpaws.org)