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Dr. Van's Corner

Matt Curtis and I had the opportunity to fly a mission a few weeks ago from Traverse City, MI to the Mayo Clinic. The patient, Lisa Johnson, is a young mother of two boys ages 7 and 10. Her father accompanied her. He was a good friend and neighbor of Lauren Hemming who also was our patient and who died of cancer earlier this year. Lisa also has cancer of the breast with metastasis to her bones and she needs treatment at the Mayo Clinic. Matt and I flew the mission in a Beech Baron that belongs to Dennis Finch, one of our members from Long Prairie. The family was very happy that we were able to fly them round trip.

When I asked Lisa what her problem is she told me about her cancer. It was very interesting that I had just talked to a relative of mine the previous week that also has her disease with bone metastasis. The significant thing however is that my relative has been dealing with this disease and its process for over 20 years. Some people with this disease can live with it for a long time and it really is not a death sentence, as many believe. My relative is living a fairly normal life and is happy to be alive. This story did give Lisa a lot of hope and I was very glad to be able to tell her about it. Her dad thanked me for relating the story. This is just one more example of how people helping people works in my opinion.

The flight was a typical summer flight with rain showers over Wisconsin on the way over to Michigan, but they seemed to part for us on the way back to the Mayo Clinic. There were very severe storms that evening just as we arrived back in St Cloud and just to the west of Little Falls where Matt lives. This is only to point out that Wings pilots are all very conscious of weather and safety.

From the Flight Director

In August, we were able to utilize several single engine aircraft due to distances of the trips, the weather and the load of passengers on our missions. This was good because we have a lot of single engine aircraft and we are then able to access a variety of pilots who want to fly. In about a year we will have flown a total of half a million miles and 1/4 a million patient miles. Most of our trips are 3 legs and our empty flying is at least 1/2 of the total miles. Most of our trips are a total of above 600 miles so it is a long day. We are in the fall temp change over and have had lots of rain in Sept. but we have been able to work around the rain. I always thought that now and in the spring is a nice time to fly because thunderstorms were down and no ice problems yet. I thank all of you who have put in these days for other people.

10-Year Anniversary Fund Raiser Celebration

Evening to include speaker Sergeant
Anthony Loween from the MN Army
National Guard.

To be held in the Green Mill Grand
Ballroom located in the Kelly Inn
Downtown St. Cloud

Friday, October 28, 2005
6:00 PM Social Hour

*Catered Dinner provided by the Green
Mill, Silent Auction, Raffles,*

*Music provided by the Laura Caviani
Quartet, Wine Tasting and
Games of Chance*

Event Tickets: \$65 single
Corporate Table \$600
Corporate Sponsorships Available

Call Donna to reserve your event
ticket now - 320-251-3666 or



From the Safety Director Dave Johnson

Haste Makes Waste

One of the things we always stress with new applicants is that they should not feel pressured to accept a mission, if it will create a time crunch for them. We want to avoid "get-home-itis", a malady known to have brought down many an aircraft.

There are other things that can create a feeling that we need to hurry: Approaching weather, heavy traffic, a passenger feeling a bit green around the gills; the list could get pretty long. The end results can be very similar, however -- something gets forgotten, or is done prematurely.

I know I have certainly done my share of forgetting things, from proper charts to enough film for a photo run to.... well, we won't get into that. Most of the time no one noticed and no harm was done. Sometimes it was annoying or embarrassing. Once it was really expensive. So far none of my hurry-ups have been deadly; a lot of other folks have not been as fortunate. You probably know - or knew - some of them.

Gear-up landings are often caused by such haste. I know a guy who made a gear-up takeoff as a result of hasty action. He raised the gear handle as soon as he lifted off, or at least thought he had lifted off. Actually he had been "whooped" into the air by a hump in an Italian runway. The gear dutifully raised and the not-flying-yet F-8 settled onto the runway at about 130 knots, producing quite a display of sparks and such. But Mssrs. Pratt & Whitney make strong engines, acceleration continued and the aircraft, now flatter on the belly and about 2" skinnier, lifted off about 1000 feet later. Disaster was averted (there was a hotel off the end of the runway).

Aircraft can save a lot of time because they are fast, and can go in straight lines. Be careful not to try to add to the time savings by getting rushed or cutting corners.

A letter our office received in August of this year.

Wednesday, 17 August

To the staff of Wings of Mercy:

Besides my interest in your mission, I enjoy hearing about the work by way of your news letters. The most recent issue mentioned a visit to the International Falls airport; allow me to respond to that.

From 1944 until 1966, the Falls was my residence, most of that time married to a man who truly loved planes and flying. I have never been a brave passenger! In those early days when the airport was an emerging business, my husband often drove us there just to absorb the atmosphere, I guess! At any rate, Francis Einerson and he became friends. As the years progressed, larger airplanes came and went, the airport had many pontoon planes coming and going from the lakes, and activity picked up considerably. The daily evening flight came in over our home and when it was late we noticed and worried.

Because I was not a brave flyer, my husband secretly managed with Francis's help to finagle me into a flight in a small plane which Francis piloted. The man is a consummate gentleman; he kept me so occupied with his gentle chatter that I actually enjoyed the flight! Still more comfortable in larger planes, I did lose some of my reluctance.

We had an older friend who had never flown at all. On her birthday, my husband set it up with Francis for her to have a trip with him. She agreed to going with my husband not knowing the destination, had her birthday present flight, and remarked about that birthday present for months afterwards!

It was good to hear about him again. By coincidence, a Duluth based TV show recently had a clip about the airport as well giving me a look at Francis at present. We've both managed to age! Good to have a glimpse of that gentle man. All of this is extraneous to you, but I wanted you to know how good it was to hear about him. And he is still involved with planes and helping others. That was no surprise.

Thanks for "listening." I am proud to be a tiny part of your fine work.

Winifred M. Hoppert



Mercy Missions Summary Report

Total of 622 Mercy Missions

Fly-In City Breakdown

Twin City missions	376
Rochester missions	176
Northern part of MN missions	58
Out state missions	12

Monthly Breakdown

Year	Total	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1995	28				3	1	2	4	2	7	6	1	2
1996	42	1	5	3	2	2	1	1	6	8	4	5	4
1997	50	2	2	5	5	9	4	4	4	1	4	4	6
1998	42	3	3	2	2	3	9	1	9	3	4	0	2
1999	60	4	3	6	4	7	8	7	3	7	4	3	4
2000	79	7	7	9	8	10	2	6	2	4	7	10	7
2001	61	1	5	3	5	7	2	6	6	7	7	7	5
2002	105	9	3	12	6	11	5	14	9	11	5	12	8
2003	69	11	8	8	7	0	3	4	9	5	3	6	5
2004	54	4	6	3	7	0	3	7	2	4	7	8	3
2005	32	2	2	4	3	7	3	5	6				
Totals	622	44	44	55	52	57	42	60	58	57	51	56	46

Total Beneficiary Mileage since beginning = 425,156.00

Total Beneficiary Mileage 2005 = 26,172.00

Children 345 mis- adults missions. tals do up to number sions earliest sions did compile tics.	Pilot Volunteer Hours													★ flown sions, for 343 All to- not add total of mis- because mis- not statis-
	Year	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	
★	2001	691						44	65	108	178	121	116	59
★	2002	1363	125	49	130	95	163	61	172	81	148	78	154	107
★	2003	916	164	108	99	99	0	48	63	127	60	38	65	45

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