



Angel Flyer



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"The shortest distance between home and hope"

Plans in High Gear for Forties Fête



Ed Boyer and Heidi Greer check out facilities at the Virginia Beach airport where the World War II-styled hangar party is set for Oct. 6. (David Hollingsworth and the *Virginian-Pilot*.)

With its World War II theme and a variety of attractions both swinging and solemn, the October 6 hangar celebration called Halos and Heroes is fast approaching. Tickets can be purchased until Tuesday, October 1 by phone or Internet. Heidi Greer, coordinator of the event, can be reached at 757-271-2289. The web address is www.AirCompassionforVeterans.org.

Tickets sell for \$25 each for active duty military and \$45 for civilians. None will be sold the day of the event.

The Virginia Beach "Warbirds" Airport in Pungo is the setting for the celebration, set to begin at 2 p.m. and end at 9 p.m.

As a fundraiser for Air Compassion for Veterans, table sponsorships are still available to honor members of the armed forces. The program offers free air transportation for veterans, troops and families affected by Operations Iraqi Freedom

and Enduring Freedom. To date, 26 tables have been sold.

More details have recently been confirmed, including parachute jumpers from Skydive Suffolk; an air show featuring vintage planes such as the Corsair and Mustang; music from the Tidewater Pipes and Drums and the Hampton Roads Metro Band; and dinner from 4:00-6:00 p.m., with a menu of barbecue, hamburgers, chicken, lemonade and iced tea. Beverages and kettle corn will be available all day.

An Honors Ceremony will follow the meal, highlighting the service of "Halos," the Mid-Atlantic Angel Flight pilots, and "Heroes," the U.S. veterans. Special guests will be seven Wounded Warriors from Walter Reed Army Medical Center flown in on wings of Angel Flight.

"She's an Army of One," to be performed live by Nashville recording artists, will make its national debut as part of the USO show marking Halos and Heroes' grand finale.

It will include an appearance by Colonel Mary Gomez, the U.S. Army Reserve officer who inspired songwriter Mark Carman to pen the lyrics of this powerful, compelling song dedicated to the nation's women in uniform.



Creative Fundraisers Attract Public Interest

Angel Flight friends and volunteers are always looking for innovative ways to benefit the organization.

Caitlin Case, daughter of volunteer pilot Jeff Case, wanted to recruit pilots for the Mid-Atlantic region and raise awareness of the charity in rural Pennsylvania.



Caitlin's Pilot Olympics met outreach goal. (Patriot-News and Michael Fernandez.)

For her Girl Scout Gold Award project, the 16-year-old high school senior staged a "Pilot Olympics" at the Altoona-Blair County Airport.

The competition, held on August 25, involved spot landing and a flour drop. Despite poor weather, Caitlin and her dad passed out a good amount of literature, interested two pilots in signing up with Angel Flight, and raised \$200 in donations.

Jeff says the event was a success in terms of increasing public awareness. "We didn't hit a huge pilot group, but we hit a very good cross section of service providers for the pilot community, and word will spread that way."

What makes Caitlin's project so special is the fact that she is a patient herself and suffers from a rare disease. She has had 60 surgeries to date and goes to Philadelphia every three months for additional procedures. Thus, she well understands the plight of



Toll Brothers VP and Angel Flight pilot Bill Bye displays big donation check. (Kristen Bye.)

patients who must travel long distances for treatment, and enthusiastically supports Angel Flight.

Angel Flight event coordinator Sanovia Baxter says it is unusual to find young people with such dedication and interest in charitable causes. "She's awesome," Baxter said.

Bill Bye is an Angel Flight pilot and vice president of the Michigan division of Toll Brothers Builders. He said Toll Brothers chose Angel Flight as the beneficiary of their annual golf outing held on June 20 at Northville Hills Golf Club. With each golfer contributing \$20, the total donation came to \$2,200.

"We greatly appreciate the hard work and thoughtfulness that go into organizing an event of this kind," said Angel Flight Executive Director Jim Smith. "It not only raises money to provide charitable flights for the needy but also lets the community know we are here to serve."

AFMA Mission Report (Aug. 2007)

Missions Coordinated..... **406**
Missions Completed..... **180**
Total Volunteer Pilots..... **1,565**

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