

A Helping Hand for a Child in Need
Wings of Mercy East Michigan
www.wingseastmi.org

One of the most difficult challenges a parent can face is the diagnosis of a severely ill child. What can make this life altering situation worse is the helplessness of the unknown, will my child recover and where is the best medical treatment available. Many times, the specialized treatment is more than a few miles away leading to financial concerns as well as travel restrictions... Most parents will agree – they will do anything to keep their son and/or daughter healthy – no cost is too great.

In today's environment of miracle cures and out-of-sight medical costs, Wings of Mercy East Michigan, a non-profit charity, is assisting families with ill children by flying – *for free*– these young patients to medical facilities for treatment. Founded in 1996 by a group of pilots from the Midland-Saginaw-Bay City Michigan area, it is the sister organization to Wings of Mercy, Inc. which services the western half of Michigan and Wings of Mercy Minnesota, Illinois & Indiana. All five charities provide flights at no cost to financially needy persons who required specialized medical treatment at distant medical centers. Wings of Mercy East Michigan serves a radius of approximately 500 miles.

Based upon experience, upward of 80% of Wings of Mercy East Michigan clients would not be able to go for specialized treatment if this kind of service was not available. Volunteer pilots and aircraft owners/operators willing perform these services on their own time and are reimbursed for fuel only (about 1/3 of the actual cost of operating an aircraft), and some refuse any compensation.

Unlike some organizations, Wings of Mercy East Michigan requires *TWO* pilots on every flight – a *Pilot In Command / Second Pilot*. Their requirements are as follows - Pilots flying Missions are subject to FAR Part 91, and shall have a pilot certificate, current medical certificate, and most recent experience. Pilots in Command (PIC) shall have the ratings and endorsements for the flight and aircraft flown. Single engine piston aircraft are prohibited from flying at night or over larger bodies of water while carrying Recipients.

Wings of Mercy missions are flown by volunteer pilots. Owners and/or operators make their aircraft available to Wings of Mercy East on an as-available basis. Expenses related to Wings of Mercy East missions incurred by the aircraft owner and/or operator are tax-deductible.

The services of pilots and aircraft are provided at no cost to the recipient and solely as a public service intended to enhance the good and welfare of the community.

All Pilots must be approved by the Safety Officer or designee prior to being assigned to a Wings of Mercy East mission. Wings of Mercy East Michigan does not compete with commercial airlines, which our patient/clients cannot afford, or with air ambulance services, which are reserved for more critically ill persons. It is funded entirely by charitable contributions; since there is no paid staff - *all* donations fund operations. Overhead is confined to fuel reimbursements, when requested, and office expenses (phone/fax, postage, paper, etc.)!

To date of the writing of this article, the organization has flown over 760+ missions, covering over 527,691 miles or more than 21 times around the world. Wings of Mercy East presently serves over 70 Michigan communities and has over 78 volunteer pilots and over 50 volunteer aircraft.

If you know of a family in need, please call our Screening Volunteer at (866) 32-MERCY or (866) 326-3729!! Please visit our website for restrictions and guidelines –

www.wingseastmi.org. OR – to make a donation – *Wings of Mercy East Michigan* is an *ALL VOLUNTEER* IRS recognized 501 (c) (3) non profit organization charity, and is supported *entirely* by charitable donations. Any donations will be gratefully accepted!

If your company maintains an "Adopt A Charity" type of policy, please consider "adopting" *Wings of Mercy*! If you, your child's classroom or church would like to **SPONSOR A MISSION** – A contribution of \$500.00 or more is required. The Sponsor(s) will receive an engraved plaque, along with details of the sponsored mission. Recipient personal information, will however, remain confidential.

The organization is always recruiting active volunteers. Besides volunteer pilots and aircraft owners, the organization would love more individuals willing to assist with the upcoming Golf Classic Fund Raiser to be held in September, 2006. Other positions include but not limited to – Public Relations, Publicity, newsletter editor, fundraising, grant writers and patient screeners.

Wings of Mercy East Michigan is a. *Contributions are fully tax deductible.*

Contributions to *WINGS of MERCY EAST MICHIGAN, Inc.* may be mailed to:

Wings of Mercy East Michigan, Inc.

P.O. Box 2009

Bay City, MI 48707

Summary of Missions
(July 1996 to the Present)

- Missions flown to date: 771
- Missions Open: 5
- Total Miles Flown: 535,400+
- (Over 21 Times Around the World!)
(Equal to a trip to the MOON and 1/2 of the way back again!)
- Recipients Assisted: 170+
- Michigan Communities Served: 70+
- Volunteer Pilots & Copilots: 200+
- Volunteer Aircraft: 100+