As a 7-year-old in my hometown of Dwight, a small, central Illinois farm town, “charitable acts” meant washing cars to raise money for baseball uniforms, holding bake sales and, in junior high school, selling merchandise from a blue suitcase through a company called Tom Watt. But I didn’t really understand what being charitable or being philanthropic meant—not until that Christmas Eve when my mom asked me to climb in the back seat of our car so we could drive through the streets of Dwight after dark to quietly deliver garbage bags of clothes and cardboard boxes of food to those less fortunate. We didn’t discuss what we were doing, and we didn’t need to. The smallest acts of kindness can leave an impression that lasts a lifetime. That was my mom, and she taught me my very first lesson in extending a helping hand.

Since then, I have been blessed to serve alongside countless incredible people—all seeking to make our world a better place. I am now humbled and incredibly grateful for the opportunity to provide servant leadership as president and CEO of Wings of Hope.

Our mission is simple, yet profound. We are an aviation nonprofit delivering humanitarian programs around the globe to lift people in need toward self-sufficiency. Our work extends to 26 states and across 11 countries outside of the U.S. From Cincinnati to Kenya, we use our airplanes, our expertise and our love of humanity to change and save lives, and we have done so for 55 years.

As we look ahead to the next half-century of the Wings of Hope story, we are reminded of the words of one of our founders, Joe Fabick: “In the years ahead, Wings of Hope will continue to provide services exactly as they always have: free of charge as an inter-faith organization serving the cause of international brotherhood.”

In honoring the legacy of our founders, my vision is to build new partnerships, engage new generations of volunteers, and collaborate with our current donors and new investors to promote self-sufficiency and sustainability wherever it is needed throughout the world.

This is no small task. The need is seemingly endless, and there will be daunting obstacles. But my spirit is lifted by the incredible dedication of our volunteers and staff and all those who believe in the power of hope and the calling to love. Join us in the movement.
Pilot, TJ Stewart, by plane he will be flying in Belize

PLANE SWAP:
Piper Heads to Belize, 206 Comes Home

On July 30, we flew our newly refurbished and painted Piper Cherokee 6 to Belize where our pilot, TJ Stewart, will use it to fly medical missions for longtime partner, Belize Emergency Response Team (BERT). Volunteer pilots Don Hoerstkamp, Rick Oloteo and Ed Schertz delivered the Piper, but they did not return empty handed. The Piper is replacing our Cessna N206KY, which has a long history with Wings of Hope, with tours of duty in Guatemala, Guyana, the U.S., Tanzania and Belize. The 206 is returning home to St. Louis where it will be put back in service as a Medical Relief & Air Transport plane.

Medical Relief & Air Transport (MAT) Program:
Stephanie’s Difficult Path to Walking

Sometimes, the only path to healing for a child with severe medical needs is one we’d all wish to avoid. Stephanie was born with caudal regression syndrome, a rare genetic birth defect that impairs the development of the lower half of the body. Stephanie’s legs did not develop normally, and her feet were tucked underneath her hips. It’s seems counterintuitive, but this little girl’s only hope of walking was to amputate both her feet. Although amputation is not an option any parent wants for their child, in this case, it was the only path to walking for Stephanie. This brave three-year-old completed her first two flights with Wings of Hope to Shriners Hospital in St. Louis in July. We will continue to fly her to Shriners for ongoing treatment — and, ultimately, her fitting with prosthetics — as she and her family navigate her journey to walking. That will be a happy day, indeed!

Become a Wings of Hope Member!

Your membership provides a steady source of income we can count on to support our programs here in the U.S. and around the globe - and we are excited to launch some new membership levels. We still offer our $29 annual membership for individuals, but we also have memberships for families, businesses - and our new gift membership program, which is especially timely as the holidays approach. We invite you to visit our website to check out the benefits of each membership level and find the option that works for you. Have questions? Send a note to Nikki Eutsler, our membership coordinator, at nikole.eutsler@wingsofhope.ngo Thank you!

Taste of Hope

Global fare and fun are coming to Wings of Hope! Join the Young Ambassadors of Wings of Hope on Saturday, October 14, from 3:30-6:30 p.m. for this family-friendly event. Enjoy tasting portions of Caribbean, Chinese, Cambodian, Italian and American favorites from local restaurants, and beer from Urban Chestnut. We’ll have crafts and face-painting for the kids, a DJ spinning tunes - and it’s all happening in the coolest venue in town: the Wings of Hope hangar! Tickets are $30 each, two for $50, and $10 for children ages 6-12. Proceeds support Wings of Hope’s international programs providing health care, education, microcredit, and sustainable food to people around the world. Tickets on sale now at www.wingsofhope.ngo/events/taste-of-hope/
FABICK CELEBRATES 100 WITH SIX $100,000 GIFTS!

When we were asked to be one of six charitable partners to attend – and one of three to present – at Fabick Cat’s 100th Anniversary Celebration on July 29, we were honored and proud to be part of the festivities. After all, Fabick Cat and the Fabick family have been generously supporting Wings of Hope since Joe Fabick joined three others in founding Wings of Hope in the early 1960s. But we had no idea that after our Director of Development Laura Helling presented about the history our organizations share that we would be one of six charities presented with a $100,000 check. “I was completely stunned,” Laura says. “The Fabick family has always supported Wings of Hope – and their generosity, to Wings of Hope and to the many charities they support, is a solid testament to the Fabick family’s commitment to making sure their communities remain strong. Wings of Hope is absolutely thrilled with this donation, and we are excited about the real impact it will make in the lives of the people we serve.”

AGAINST ALL ODDS: MINNESOTA WOMAN WINS SPRING AIRPLANE RAFFLE

The odds of Nyla Schroeder winning our spring airplane raffle were slim. First, her ticket had to be selected from the 4,000 sold. Second, she was participating in a raffle in which upwards of 95% of ticket buyers are men. But Nyla beat the odds, and on July 17, we delivered her new Piper Archer II to Crystal Airport, just outside of Minneapolis. Nyla, 38, is not a pilot, but she has already started working toward her pilot’s license.

“I took my first lesson right after we won the plane,” she says. “I think it would be great to contribute back to Wings of Hope or some other organization as a pilot, someday, years down the road.”

The raffle, which raised about $170,000 for our MAT Program, sold out in less than six hours.

“We have been completely overwhelmed by the interest these raffles have generated and are truly grateful for the generous support of people like Nyla,” says Wings of Hope’s Director of Development Laura Helling.

GATEWAY GIVES BACK

For the second consecutive year, we were so grateful to be selected as a #GatewayGivesBack partner by Gateway Buick GMC. During June, a portion of every car the dealership sold was donated to our MAT Program. At the end of the month, Gateway’s Director of Marketing, Kelley Haenny, presented us with a check for $3,950. Not only that, Gateway signed on as a sponsor for the Young Ambassadors’ Taste of Hope event (see “Taste of Hope”). Thank you, Gateway Buick GMC!

LEADING THE WAY

Our donors are so generous to us, so we try to support them whenever we can. In June, we became aware of a special award to recognize a woman blazing a trail in the traditionally male-dominated automotive industry. Gateway Buick GMC’s Director of Marketing, Kelley Haenny – with her innovative digital marketing campaigns and efforts to mentor and support women at the dealership – seemed the perfect candidate. So we nominated her, and we were thrilled that she was recognized with the 2017 Breakthrough Leader of the Year Award at the Women in Automotive Conference in Orlando, Fl. Congratulations, Kelley!
Dra. SHERRILL KAZAN
Chairperson
President, World Council of Peoples for the United Nations

ROY CLARK
Entertainer and Humanitarian

JOHN DANFORTH
Former U.S. Senator and Humanitarian

ELIZABETH DOLE
Former U.S. Senator, Former President of the American Red Cross/ Humanitarian

CARL EDWARDS
NASCAR driver

HARRISON FORD
Actor, Pilot

BARRINGTON IRVING
Pilot, STEM Educator

GEN. COLIN L. POWELL
Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Former Secretary of State

HIS EMINENCE JUSTIN CARDINAL RIGALI
Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia

KURT RUSSELL
Actor, Pilot

LT. GEN. TOM STAFFORD
Former Astronaut

PATTY WAGSTAFF
Aerobatic National Champion Pilot

BRIG. GEN. CHUCK YEAGER
Test Pilot, Author

1 ticket
$50
or
3 tickets
$125

GRAND PRIZE:
1977 Cessna 150M

This is a great little plane! It’s affordable, easy to fly – even for beginners – and it’s a flight instructor’s dream! Total airtime 3400 hours. Delivered with a fresh annual! White fuselage with red and blue accent stripes, with burgundy cloth interior. Continental O-200A engine, SMOH 220, TBO 1800, HP-100. New Garmin GNC 255. NAV/COMM, Stratus ESG transponder ADSB, Stratus 2i ADSB In receiver.

SECOND PRIZE: a PPL or Advanced Training Scholarship.

Tickets go on sale SEPT. 18, 2017 at 6am Central Time Raffle ends Dec. 18, 2017 or when the 4,000th ticket is sold – whichever comes first!

For tickets, visit www.wingsofhope.ngo/airplane-raffle/