Making a difference

By Wildhorse Resident Vicki Reed
Article sponsored by Pathfinder Church

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MIKE CALCAGNO
Wings of Hope

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Mike and Kay Calcagno have lived in the Wildhorse neighborhood (Greystone Terrace Drive) since 1997, having moved to Chesterfield from Austin, TX, in 1997. Kay volunteers with the Assistance League of St. Louis (ALSL) and their son, Josh, lives in Maryland Heights with his fiancé, Maria, with a wedding in Jamaica planned in May of this year.

Mike volunteers for Wings of Hope, Inc. and began his association with them in 2011. “I was encouraged to join the team by close friends who were on the Board of Directors for this not-for-profit aircraft charity. Wings of Hope is the only organization in the U.S. that provides free medical air transport service and owns its own aircraft specially outfitted to accommodate non-ambulatory patients, most of whom suffer from birth defects and may require up to 50 flights over a number of years to improve their quality of life. If you have seen the emotional TV ads for Shriner’s crippled children, that is what we do domestically.”
WOH also partners with offshore medical air transport entities in Belize, Nicaragua, Columbia, Paraguay, Zambia, Tanzania, India, Cambodia, and Ecuador; providing aircraft, parts and maintenance services for medevac and fly-in clinics. They have also launched a Soar into STEM program domestically to encourage students excited about STEM learning and future aircraft careers.

Mike leads a team of six volunteers procuring everything from simple screws to aircraft engines. Mike says, "I have also managed the annual dinner auctions for several years, performed CPR classes (because of a medical electronics background) and received recognition as 'Volunteer of the Year.' The procurement team grills barbeque lunches for all the volunteers and staff during the summer months as a 'thank you' for all their efforts."

Wings of Hope welcomes all contributors and volunteers who would like to be a part of its worldwide mission, whether it is a monetary donation or time/talent donation. They always post current needs on their website. If you have the time, they can usually match your skills with a current need or make a place for you. Contact them at 636.537.1302, visit them at 18370 Wings of Hope Blvd. (near Spirit Airport) or view their website at www.wingsofhope.ngo.

Great work, Mike!

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