



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terminally Ill Patient to Fly on the Wings of Local Angels.

On Saturday, April 10th, hospice patient Dorothy Sumner was privately flown from her home in San Gabriel, California to her daughter's residence in Eugene, Oregon, thanks to the combined efforts of Companion Hospice, Palliative Care Medical Group, the Southern California Hospice Foundation and Angel Flight West. Dorothy's decision to move closer to her daughter was spurred by her declining health, and it is her dying wish to spend the final moments of her life in the care and company of her family.

According to Companion Hospice social worker, Veronica Martinez, Dorothy's illness was unexpected. "Dotti," as she likes to be called, was previously a caregiver for a close friend diagnosed with cancer, whom she cared for until the time of her friend's death. Soon thereafter, Dottie was diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), a terminal illness that makes it difficult to breathe. Although Dotti was surrounded by many caring and loving friends in LA County, she could not live by herself any longer. Her personal care giving experience had left no doubt in her mind that she needed to be in the presence of her own family who could care for her during her final days.

Dotti's request for assistance came to the Southern California Hospice Foundation, a non-profit organization that delivers resources to caregivers, families and patients who are confronting the final stages of life, because Dotti lacked the financial means necessary to purchase a one-way plane ticket. The minute the request was received, Michelle Wulfestieg, Executive Director, went to work in order to make Dotti's wish come true.

Michelle worked with Nicholas Jauregui, MD, Medical Director of Palliative Care Medical Group, to submit an application to Angel Flight West, an organization whose mission is to arrange free air transportation in response to health care and other compelling human needs. Then, just like a miracle, Angel Flight West accepted the application and found three different volunteer pilots who coordinated their efforts to fly Dotti to Oregon.

Through the Southern California Hospice Foundation Angels on Wheels program, a program designed to assist in the transportation needs of those persons living at home under hospice care, Dotti left her home on Saturday morning at 8:30 am and headed to the Burbank airport where she caught a 10 am flight on a private Beechcraft 58, flown by pilot Stuart Bloom, MD. From there, she landed in Oakland where she transferred to another private plane flown by Marc Boegner, landing Medford, OR. She then completed the last leg of her journey, piloted by Geoffrey McCarthy, MD where she arrived at her final destination. The non-profit organizations, working together, accompanied Dotti on every part of her trip, delivering her safely to her family in Oregon.



About the Southern California Hospice Foundation:

The Southern California Hospice Foundation was established in 2002 with a grand vision: open a Hospice House in Southern California that serves as a live-in facility for end-of-life care. While working toward our vision, we fulfill our mission by delivering a breadth of resources to caregivers, families and patients who are confronting the final stages of life. We will accomplish this through a commitment to advocacy, education and a mutual respect for all faiths.

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About Angel Flight West

Angel Flight West is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization that arranges free, non-emergency air travel for children and adults with serious medical conditions and other compelling needs. Our network of 1,900 pilots throughout the 13 western states donate their aircraft, piloting skills, and all flying costs to help families in need, enabling them to receive vital treatment that might otherwise be inaccessible because of financial, medical, or geographic limitations.

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