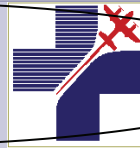




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MMA Insider



Quarterly
newsletter of
Mercy
Medical
Airlift

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US Airways Renews Barter Program

US Airways recently awarded \$50,000 to Mercy Medical Airlift to be used for purchase of airline tickets for patients and family members traveling to distant medical facilities for treatment. This is the eighth consecutive year of the charitable partnership.

US Airways Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, C.A. Howlett, agrees the partnership will help save lives and improve the quality of life for many Americans.

“We are pleased to renew our partnership with Mercy Medical Airlift. US Airways believes deeply in the value of corporate

What Partnership Means To A West Virginia Family...

Dear US Airways and MMA:

I would like to thank everyone who has helped get our son to Denver, CO. JJ was diagnosed with RRP (Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis) when he was a little over a year old. He will be turning four in April.

In the past three years he has had to have nearly 30 surgeries. We were first taking him to a doctor in Charlottesville, VA. He was getting treated there but he was just not getting better.

(See ‘Partnership,’ p. 2)

giving to nonprofit organizations.

“Through our barter program we can help ensure that no patient in need, young or old, will be left behind.” *(See ‘Barter,’ p. 2)*



Mercy Medical and US Airways are helping JJ pursue path to remission.

Serving Our Veterans/Families



Ed Boyer

As we reported in the last issue, Nov. 20, 2006 was a new day for MMA—the launch of Air Compassion for Veterans (ACV). The program has been newly funded in a major way by two foundations, enabling us to pay for commercial transportation (airline or air ambulance) for troops, veterans or their families affected by Iraq or Afghan deployment.

The MMA program picks up costs where DoD or DVA federal funds cannot be used according to bureaucratic regulations. The foundations involved want MMA to regulate by the heart and common sense, so we have a single-page application form. Since Nov. 20, ACV has flown 46 missions, with the value of flights being nearly \$96,000. When it’s the right thing to do, we act.

Ed Boyer is the CEO and President of Mercy Medical Airlift.

Barter (from p. 1)

Drawing from the flight fund, MMA has purchased an average of 125 tickets per year, according to Gene Smelser, program director.

“Without that money coming in over the years, there are hundreds of families that would not have medical treatment that they need,” he said.

Additional information on US Airways can be found at www.usairways.com.

Partnership (from p. 1)

My husband has done lots of research on this rare disease. All the other parents and people who knew about this pointed to Dr. Pashley.



JJ's sisters wrap him in giggles

We called and got an appointment with the doctor. The nurse told us about Mercy Medical. So we contacted you all to see if it was possible to get our son to Denver. Not only did our son get to fly but you also made it possible for my husband and me to go as well.

Thanks to Mercy Medical we have been to Colorado five times...JJ is on his way to remission.

God bless you,
Jason, Amanda and J.J.
Newhall, WV

Mission Report

Fiscal Year To Date

(July 2006--April 2007)

- Missions Coordinated.....7,864
- Missions Completed..... 7,539
- Child Missions.....2,017

Mom Says, ‘You Saved Our Lives’

Medical expenses for patients and families can quickly drain financial resources, and when the best care isn't close to home, transportation costs become prohibitive.

Such was the case with Kathleen and Dana, a mother and daughter from Nebraska whose debilitating injuries following a motor vehicle accident in 1993 left them seeking relief.

Kathleen says she consulted 19 doctors in an unsuccessful attempt to get a proper diagnosis for Dana, who was two at the time of the accident and whose symptoms steadily worsened.

“She had trouble breathing and swallowing. Her vision was impaired and she had bladder problems and massive headaches.”

Then one day, Melanie, Dana's twin sister, saw a program on the Learning Channel that featured the Chiari Institute in New York.

“She saw the same symptoms as Dana had,” Kathleen said.

An Internet search led Kathleen to the world's leading specialists in Chiari surgery.

Unfortunately, at that time she didn't know about Mercy Medical Airlift and had to fund Dana's travel to North Shore University Hospital for surgery on Jan. 16 to treat Chiari malformation I (CMI) and other related disorders.

CMI is “a condition in which excess brain tissue pushes against the cerebellum and spinal cord at the base of the skull, disturbing the flow of cerebrospinal fluid,” according to the Institute's website, www.ChiariInstitute.com.



Neurosurgeons Dr. Paolo Bolgnese (l) and Dr. Thomas Milhorat (r) celebrate a record number of successful surgeries, with Dana's being the 2000th. Her mom, Kathleen, took an MMA flight.

“Dana, who is 14, was the 2,000th patient to be treated at Chiari,” Kathleen said. “All she could say was, ‘Thank you for giving me my life back.’”

Kathleen found help at the Chiari Institute, as well, undergoing surgery for tethered spinal cord syndrome on Jan. 26. A previous surgery for CMI in 2001 at a Midwest hospital had still left Kathleen with headaches and trouble breathing and swallowing, along with other painful symptoms.

Like her daughter, Kathleen also suffers from Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, a genetic connective tissue disorder.

By this time she had learned about Mercy Medical Airlift. She and her sister Jane, who had taken a month off from work to help out, were able to take a charitable flight back home to Nebraska.

Kathleen, a former surgical nurse, says she and Dana have to go back to the Chiari Institute in July and will call upon MMA again for assistance. “You guys saved our lives,” she said.

MMA's mission is to ensure that no needy patient is denied access to distant specialized medical evaluation, diagnosis or treatment for lack of a means of long-distance medical air transportation; further, to ensure the provision of urgent transportation in situations of compelling human need and homeland security emergencies.



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For information on **making a donation** or to **learn more about MMA**, please visit our website: www.mercymedical.org. Phone: (757) 318-9174 Fax: (757) 271-0360