



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stephanie Berry  
703-416-4888 Ext 104  
awards-events@naa.aero

---

### Aviation Volunteers Honored for Public Benefit Flying

**Washington, D.C., October 18, 2018** – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA), in partnership with the Air Care Alliance (ACA), a nationwide league of humanitarian flying organizations, is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2018 Public Benefit Flying Awards. These awards were created to honor volunteer pilots, other volunteers, and organizations engaged in flying to help others, as well as those supporting such work.

This year's recipients are:

#### **Distinguished Volunteer Pilot:**

Earning her first of many pilot certificates in 1975, **Merry Schroeder** is one of LightHawk's longest serving volunteers, donating 387 flights since 1987 in some of the most challenging conditions faced by conservation volunteer pilots. She also donated 215 flights with Angel Flight from 2003 to 2017. Merry remains an active LightHawk volunteer pilot, and has also served as a board member, donor, and community representative.

#### **Distinguished Volunteer:**

As members of the Civil Air Patrol's National Radar Analysis Team, **Lt Col John Henderson** and **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Argon Helm** developed and oversaw two new software programs - "The Sandbox", which allows emergency managers to view a live radar feed for search and rescue efforts and "ICARUS," which uses computer algorithms to predict when aircraft have crashed. Their efforts have tremendously improved the speed and accuracy of national, state, and local authorities to locate missing aircraft. Lt Col Henderson has also worked on 315 missing aircraft missions resulting in 198 finds and 20 saves.

#### **Outstanding Achievement in Advancement of Public Benefit Flying:**

**Joe Howley** turned his passion and business success into a vehicle for raising awareness for charitable aviation. With his support and connections, Patient Airlift Services (PALS) has engaged pilots to fly, garnered financial support, and established relationships with

partnering organizations, all in the name of furthering the benefits of Public Benefit Flying.

Members of the 2018 Public Benefit Flying Selection Committee were Stephen Danz, 2015 Distinguished Volunteer Pilot; Linda Daschle, President of LHD & Associates, Inc; Rick Durden, Air Care Alliance; and Jane Nicolai, 2015 Distinguished Volunteer Pilot.

The Public Benefit Flying Awards will be presented at NAA's Fall Awards Dinner on November 27, 2018 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, please visit [www.naa.aero](http://www.naa.aero).

*The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. NAA is the caretaker of some of the most important aviation awards in the world, and certifies all national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit [www.naa.aero](http://www.naa.aero).*

*The Air Care Alliance is a nonprofit public service organization supporting the work of dozens of volunteer-based charitable organizations whose members fly to help others. ACA is devoted to fostering, enhancing, and promoting public benefit flying in the United States and other countries. For information, visit [www.aircarealliance.org](http://www.aircarealliance.org).*

#####