



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Aviation Volunteers Honored for Public Benefit Flying

Washington, DC, October 5, 2015 – 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 2015 Public Benefit Flying Awards. These awards were created to honor volunteer pilots, other volunteers, and their organizations engaged in flying to help others, as well as those supporting such work.

This year's recipients are:

Distinguished Volunteer Pilot:

Over the past 15 years, **Stephen Danz** has flown 835 missions and over 2,000 hours as a volunteer pilot for Angel Flight West (AFW). He goes above and beyond what is expected of a charitable aviation volunteer by personally purchasing commercial airline tickets for patients on occasions when a pilot cannot be matched to make the flight and by flying children in need to a variety of specialty summer camps. Danz also serves as the Chairman of the AFW Board of Directors, and under his leadership, has grown volunteer membership by 44% and increased the number of flights flown and people served by 12%. Additionally, Danz mentors young pilots and enables them to build hours by flying right seat in his Cessna 340 during his AFW missions.

In 1994, **Jane Nicolai** began making volunteer flights for LightHawk, a non-profit organization whose mission is to accelerate conservation success through the powerful perspective of flight. Since then, she has flown over 100 missions, carrying scientists, members of the media, politicians, activists, researchers, and photographers over lands and waters at risk. Nicolai's flights often require maneuvering over rugged terrain to allow effective documentation of conditions as well as taking off or landing on short, narrow, and poorly maintained runways. She also helps to train new volunteer pilots to make safe decisions when operating in challenging environments. Nicolai served on the board of directors for LightHawk and was a volunteer pilot ambassador, in which she worked to

increase public awareness of public benefit flying and the importance of using general aviation airplanes to further conservation.

Distinguished Volunteer:

Four years ago, **Richard Cohen** began volunteering for Angel Flight East (AFE), looking for a way to give back to his community while combining his love of aviation and skill set. Today, Cohen has quickly risen to the challenge and become one of AFE's greatest volunteer assets. His dedication, know-how, and passion is instrumental in planning AFE's annual Wings N` Wheels event in which he is responsible for securing and staging the show cars and assisting with event mailings. Cohen also volunteers at AFE's annual Gala in a multitude of roles, including ensuring transportation to and from the event for honored guests. His willingness to give back, positive attitude, and incredible character are all vital to keeping AFE's mission alive within the local community and beyond.

Members of the 2015 Public Benefit Flying Selection Committee were NAA Board Members Andrew Broom (Honda Aircraft Company), Steve Champness (Aero Club of Atlanta), Bob Stangarone (Stangarone & Associates); Peter Bunce, President and CEO of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association; Rick Durden, Air Care Alliance Board Member; Lindy Kirkland, Executive Vice President of the Air Care Alliance; and Jonathan Gaffney, President and CEO of NAA who served as the Chairman of the Selection Committee.

The Public Benefit Flying Awards will be presented at NAA's Fall Awards Ceremony on December 3rd in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, please visit 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 world and national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit 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.

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