



NATA's "FBOs: Above and Beyond" initiative highlights the extraordinary services provided by our Fixed Base Operator (FBO) members. The association's goal is to provide a well-rounded perspective on the FBO industry, directly from those with first-hand experience.

Pentastar Aviation Supports Its Community with Annual Commitment to Host Michigan's Operation Good Cheer & other Charity Events.



For more than a decade, Pentastar Aviation — one of the nation's leading FBOs, located in Waterford, Michigan — has hosted Operation Good Cheer, an annual event sponsored by Child and Family Services of Michigan.

In addition to hosting the hundreds of volunteers who meet at Pentastar over the two-day period to unload, sort and reload gifts, Pentastar employees also commit to fulfilling Christmas wish lists for 50 of the foster care children who are part of this program.

"We have been hosting this event for over a decade, and I am still moved when I see the hangar being filled from floor to ceiling with gifts," said Greg Schmidt, President & CEO, Pentastar Aviation. "The generosity of the thousands that volunteer their time, donate gifts and the use of their aircraft to make sure these children receive something for Christmas and know there are people who care is reason enough for us to host this event, and we look forward to it each year."

This entirely volunteer Christmas gift-giving program began in 1971 by individuals who wanted to make a difference in the lives of children who reside in foster care. Each year, hundreds of donors, including individuals, families, employer groups, schools and community service organizations, buy gifts from "Wish Lists" provided by children from 70 participating local social service agencies.

Today, over 6,400 children receive gifts to open on Christmas morning. Since the program inception, more than 90,000 participants have had their Christmas wishes come true because of Operation Good Cheer volunteer efforts.


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Gifts that arrive at Pentastar Aviation — over 20,000 in 2017 — are sorted and then loaded onto aircraft, trucks and other vehicles to be distributed to Michigan children in private, nonprofit social service agencies and foster care, residential treatment or group homes. The “reindeer” include the private planes of volunteer pilots for distribution throughout the state, helping explain the great value of staging the event at Pentastar Aviation.

“We thank Pentastar Aviation for their continuing, valuable support of this program. Their people are awesome in coordinating the event and in caring so much for others,” said Sherry Brackenwagen, Administrative Director for Child and Family Services of Michigan.

“Child and Family Services of Michigan is a great nonprofit partner of ours,” Schmidt added. “I am so proud of our team and their unwavering commitment to this program, and the many other foundations that Pentastar supports for charitable involvement and community outreach.”

For over 50 years, Pentastar Aviation, based at Oakland County International Airport (KTPK) in Waterford, Michigan, has been a leader in the world of business aviation, providing aircraft management, advisory services, aircraft maintenance, avionics services, interior services, award-winning FBO services, and private jet charter operated through Pentastar Aviation Charter, Inc.

In addition to Operation Good Cheer, Pentastar and its employees support the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the Sky Hope Network, the Wounded Warrior Project, the American Cancer Society, Gleaner’s Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan, the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

Read other stories and share your FBO experience(s) at www.nata.aero/aboveandbeyond.