

DISPATCHES

A PUBLICATION OF THE LIFEFLIGHT FOUNDATION
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Patient Turns Community Volunteer

Seven-year-old Amanda Gardner managed to make it through her spelling test before she told her teacher that she was sick and wanted to go home. She hadn't been feeling well for a few days, but the doctors thought it was just a virus that would clear up soon. At home, her mom noted that Amanda's fever was still high and she couldn't walk on one foot. Later, when Amanda started acting very lethargic and uncommunicative, her mom knew she had to get help immediately. She called 9-1-1 and an ambulance took Amanda to Penobscot Bay Medical Center where emergency physicians realized she was extremely sick. They quickly called for LifeFlight of Maine to transfer her to Maine Medical Center.

Less than an hour later, as the helicopter took off for the trip to Portland, Amanda's

distressed parents headed down Route 1, praying their daughter would be OK. When they arrived at Maine Medical Center more than 90 minutes later, the pediatric specialists had already diagnosed Amanda with bacterial meningitis, an infection of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Amanda's infection was so serious it was creating an enormous amount of pressure on her brain and surgeons had placed a stent in her skull to drain some of the fluid and relieve the pressure.

Amanda remained in the hospital for two weeks, receiving antibiotics to fight the infection. By the time she returned home, she was almost fully recovered and ready to go back to school.

Amanda doesn't remember much of her ordeal. "I remember coming home from school very sick and the next thing I knew I was waking up in the hospital with a big white bandage on my head." This isn't surprising considering her young age.

But after you meet Amanda and discover what she's been doing for the past 4 years,

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INSIDE



Community volunteer

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you have to wonder if her brush with death made a lasting impression on her. Since she turned 11, Amanda has been working tire-

lessly as a volunteer, racking up an astonishing 300 hours of community service time.

She has worked at her local soup kitchen, animal shelter and nursing home. She has mentored kids in the Teens for Tots program at her local YMCA and been very involved with her church youth group. Perhaps her favorite volunteer activity is working at an equestrian center with kids with special needs.

It would be difficult to count the number of lives she's already touched in her local community. Hopefully, she'll continue to share her time and energy with her friends and neighbors for many years to come. 🐾



LifeFlight patient Amanda Gardner (left) has spent the last 4 years logging hundreds of volunteer hours. Her favorite volunteer job is at an equestrian program for kids with special needs.

Profile | Josh Dickson, FP-C, CCEMT-P, WEMT-P

Josh grew up in Oregon where family ties to the EMS community run deep. His father was the first paramedic in the state, and his family owned the ambulance and fixed wing service in his hometown of Astoria. His mother was an emergency nurse, his uncle the ambulance fleet mechanic and his aunt a dispatcher. Josh's own EMS career seemed inevitable.

He was raised at the ambulance station and remembers feeling proud of his father and how other people looked up to him. This left a strong impression and when it came time to choose a career, it's no surprise he decided to pursue a degree in paramedicine. After earning his license, Josh spent time



working with rescue teams on Mt. Hood in Oregon and as a ski patroller on Mt. Shasta in California. He eventually became a flight paramedic, working for services in Mt. Shasta, Phoenix and Tucson. He moved to Maine and began working for LifeFlight in March 2007.

Not surprisingly, Josh spends his time off pursuing adventure-based activities like rock climbing, ice climbing, snowboarding, mountaineering and flying his own Cessna 150. When the weather keeps him inside, you might find him brewing his own beer. 🍺

Every 8th grader at Rockland District Middle School has to complete a community service project before heading off to high school. When Amanda Gardner began pondering her project, she immediately thought of LifeFlight. The helicopter crew holds a special place in her family's heart since transporting her to Maine Medical Center after a serious case of meningitis when she was just seven years old. For her project, Amanda decided to interview LifeFlight crew member Josh Dickson to find out more about the life of a flight paramedic. Here is what she learned:

My Interview with LifeFlight

by Amanda Gardner, Rockland District Middle School 8th Grade

Q) What do you do on the helicopter?

A) I am a paramedic

Q) How many people do you work with on this base?

A) I work with 24 people

Q) How many calls did you get last year?

A) About 660 calls

Q) What is the worst thing you have dealt with?

A) Victims of child abuse

Q) Why do you want to work at LifeFlight?

A) I love the challenges it brings me and that I can treat the sickest people in the world and see most of them live and get better.

Q) How long after the call do you leave the building?

A) The max is 12 min but we often leave in 8 min.

Q) How long have you been working on the base?

A) 2 ½ years.

Q) How many different bases are there in Maine?

A) There are two bases, in Bangor and Lewiston

Q) What weather can you not fly in?

A) Thunderstorms, icing, freezing rain, fog. But we can fly in snow, rain, sun and clouds.

Q) Have you ever had to turn someone down?

A) Unfortunately all the time, because we don't take chances with our pilots or our staff.

Q) What is the hardest place you have had to land?

A) On an island and a mountain.

Q) What is the most common thing you deal with?

A) Of course really sick people with infections or heart attacks. Also victims of car, snowmobile and moose accidents.

Q) How much fuel do you use?

A) One gallon of jet A fuel every minute.

Q) How many helicopters do you have?

A) We only have one on this base in Bangor, but we have great mechanics who work hard to make sure it doesn't break down very often.

Q) What is the most dangous thing when you do this?

A) Flying conditions can be bad, but mostly if patients wake up and panic, things can go bad.

Q) What is the longest call you have been out on?

A) Fort Kent to Boston. Which is 360 miles and takes about 2 hours and 20 minutes.

Some extra information Josh told me was they fly up to 170 mph, Pen Bay had the first helipad, but almost all Maine hospitals have helipads now, and the farthest LifeFlight of Maine goes is to Boston and Canada. They have troubles getting over the border in Canada so they ask the ambulance to bring them to the border and LifeFlight will pick them up there.



Profile | Heather Carpenter, RN, BSN, CCRN, EMT-I



Heather knew that she wanted to become a nurse from the time she worked as a candystriper at Central Maine Medical Center

(CMMC) back in 1982. She had a love for the well being of others at a young age. She attended University of Southern Maine

in Portland and graduated with her BSN in 1995. She also earned her associates degree in Business Management in 1991. She has worked at CMMC since 1997, working in the ER and ICU, and she joined LifeFlight in 1999.

Heather lives in Auburn with her husband, Mark and their two children, Jayden and Noah. When she is not working, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, playing volleyball, golfing, skiing and other outdoor activities. 🏡

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Mobile Hands-On Training Available by Request

The Human Patient Simulator program, owned by Maine EMS and operated by LifeFlight of Maine, is available to bring advanced medical training directly to rural communities in Maine. This mobile training lab features life-size mannequins capable of breathing, talking and reacting to healthcare provider interventions.

The program provides a unique, hands-on experience, fully customized to meet the medical education needs of any hospital, EMS service or educational institution.

The state-of-the-art HPS mannequins (adult, pediatric, infant) simulate a lifelike patient who will improve or deteriorate based on treatment by the practitioner. Programs offer CEUs for nurses and respiratory therapists, CEHs for paramedics, and Category 1 CMEs for physicians and mid-levels.

Education and scenarios are constructed to meet practitioners needs and can include:

- Didactic/Practical education
- Integration into certification classes like ATLS, PALS, TNCC and PHTLS
- Customized scenarios
- EMS-specific topics
- Physician-specific topics

Call The LifeFlight Foundation at **207-785-2288** to schedule sessions



Early Activation of LifeFlight

Kalem Malcolm, CCEMT-P

When one of Maine's LifeFlight helicopters is requested for a scene call or interfacility flight, a specific process is activated.

The safety of the crew and patient is always the highest priority. Medcomm (LifeFlight's communications center) notifies the crew and provides them with basic information like the type of flight, location, and patient weight (if available). The pilot then checks the weather along the flight route while the medical crew proceeds to the ready room and prepares the blood, chilled LR, and medication needed for each flight.

The pilot accepts or declines the request based solely on weather and safety requirements. If the flight is accepted the crew proceeds to the aircraft and prepares for departure. If the flight is declined due to inclement weather, Medcomm will offer a ground transport with the LifeFlight crew if a ground team is available.

This activation process, from activation to lift-off, usually takes 8 to 12 minutes. This wait, in addition to flight time, can seem like hours to the requesting agencies that are awaiting LifeFlight's arrival. To help LifeFlight reduce that time, physicians and EMS agencies can put the aircraft on standby.

When someone makes a request to put the helicopter on standby, Medcomm activates the crew by radio and notifies them they are on "standby" for a flight in the requesting location. The pilot will check the weather, medical crews will prepare the medical equipment, and then proceed to the aircraft. If the requesting location is within 25 nautical miles of the helicopter base, the crew



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To help LifeFlight reduce activation time, physicians and EMS agencies can put the aircraft on standby.

waits in the aircraft for further direction from Medcomm on whether to launch or stand down. If the requesting location is more than 25 nautical miles away, the aircraft will launch and reposition to the closest airport or helipad to wait for further direction.

Placing LifeFlight on standby does not dedicate an aircraft for that patient. If a second "activation" request is called to Medcomm while an aircraft is on standby, that aircraft will divert to that request. The second aircraft, if available, would then be placed on standby for the initial request. If a helicopter has lifted while on standby to reposition and is not needed for the patient transport, this flight time is used for pilot and medical crew training. There is no cost from this flight billed to any facility, agency or patient.

Please feel free to contact LifeFlight at 207-785-2288 to learn more. 



LIFEFLIGHT OF MAINE

GOLF SCRAMBLE

Friday, August 21 at 9am
Palmyra Golf Course | 147 Lang Hill Road

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\$320 per 4-person team

includes 18 holes of golf, 2 cart rentals, cook out, prizes and free use of the driving range

Registration Deadline: August 14th

Full field expected! Register online today at www.lifeflightmaine.org!

8am Registration

9am Shotgun Start

2pm Cook Out and Music

*begins at the recreation hall
Free catered dinner includes grilled chicken, hamburgers and hot dogs, pasta and potato salads, and beverages*

4pm Awards Presentation



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Register online at www.lifeflightmaine.org
For more information (207) 785-2288

DIRECTIONS:

From I-95 north or south:
Take exit 157 onto Rt 100/11 toward
US Rt 2. Turn left onto US Rt 2 West.
Follow Rt 2 for 3.7 miles. Turn right
onto Lang Hill Road. Palmyra Golf
Course is 1/2 mile on the right.



Keep LifeFlight in the Sky

We depend on your donations

LifeFlight of Maine depends on donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and government for our capital needs and advanced medical equipment. Your tax deductible gift will help make sure that LifeFlight is always there when it is needed most.

There are many ways you can give:

- Cash / Credit Card
- Securities / Stocks
- Real Estate
- Gifts in honor of birthdays, anniversaries
- In memoriam gifts

Contributions can be made online at www.lifeflightmaine.org or by mail to The LifeFlight Foundation, PO Box 1007, Union ME 04862.

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Leave a gift in your will

For many of us LifeFlight has played a significant role in our life or that of a family member or neighbor. As an illustration of your gratitude to the well-trained and dedicated staff, consider making a donation through your will or estate plan. By leaving a legacy gift, you will be helping to make sure the service continues for future generations.

More information is available at www.lifeflightmaine.org or by calling **207-785-2288**.



LIFELIGHT FOUNDATION

DISPATCHES is a publication of The LifeFlight Foundation, which provides fundraising and public relations support to LifeFlight of Maine, the state's only medical helicopter service.

The LifeFlight Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service Tax Code. It is governed by an elected board of trustees who represent medical, business, legal and educational fields throughout the state.

LifeFlight also aids the development, training and funding of Maine's major air medical needs, such as trauma training statewide, construction of hospital helipads, and installation of weather reporting, navigational and communications systems across the state.

The Foundation's office is located in the Town of Union in the Thompson Community Center at the corner of Routes 17 and 131.

LIFELIGHT OF MAINE

LifeFlight of Maine is a nonprofit statewide critical care medical helicopter service jointly owned by Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems and Central Maine Healthcare Corporation. LifeFlight's two helicopters, based in Bangor and Lewiston, cover the entire state and offshore islands. LifeFlight complements and supports the work of local EMS and hospital personnel in caring for the critically ill or injured. Each base is staffed by a highly qualified team of pilots, mechanics, flight nurses and paramedics. More than 9,000 patients have been safely transported since LifeFlight's founding in 1998.

LifeFlight is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems.

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www.lifeflightmaine.org