

# DISPATCHES

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## Caring for the youngest Mainers

LifeFlight cares for people of all ages, including Maine's youngest children. To do this effectively, LifeFlight needs not only highly trained medical crews, but also specialized medical equipment.



Little Alexander Westover (*pictured in the inset photo with Flight Nurse Joe Dragon*) was only a few days old when he suffered from acute respiratory distress. His mother rushed him to Waldo County General Hospital where the emergency staff immediately called for LifeFlight to transport him to Eastern Maine Medical Center's pediatric intensive care unit. When the flight crew arrived, they placed Alexander in an isolette, a sophisticated machine that provides a warm, stable environment for very sick newborns.

Thankfully, LifeFlight's crew had the training and equipment necessary to care for Alexander. To ensure that will always be the case, the LifeFlight Foundation is raising money to purchase an isolette for the helicopter based in Lewiston, as well as other specialized medical equipment. For more information on how you can help, visit [www.lifeflightmaine.org](http://www.lifeflightmaine.org).

## Profile | Brent M. Watson, RN, CEN, EMT-I

Mattawamkeag native Brent Watson, RN, CEN, EMT-I, has been a flight nurse for LifeFlight of Maine since November 2007. After graduating from high school, Brent headed to Eastern Maine Community College where he got a degree in Medical Laboratory Tech.

He worked as a lab tech at Penobscot Valley Hospital, Sebecook Valley Hospital and Eastern Maine Medical Center while earning a nursing degree from EMCC. He worked in the emergency department and the coronary care unit at EMMC as a nurse before being hired by LifeFlight.

At LifeFlight, Brent serves on the safety



photo by Kevin Burkholder

committee and as a member of the contingent to the Aviation Safety Network, an international group of organizations that focuses on

improving safety and risk management in the aviation industry.

Outside of work, Brent works as a ski patroller at Hermon Mountain, and is also a Registered Maine Guide. His other interests include hunting, fishing and camping, especially with his two young sons. 

## Leave a Legacy

*Make sure LifeFlight will be there when it is needed most.*

LifeFlight has a profound impact on people's lives. They often want to show their appreciation by giving back. Through planned giving, people sometimes find that they can make a more significant donation – allowing them to support an organization they care deeply about.

### Bequests -- Cash, Personal Property

The simplest and most common way to support LifeFlight is through a gift of cash, either directly or through a bequest in your will. Bequests are simple statements that have a lasting impact.

### Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds

Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other publicly traded securities can be easily donated to LifeFlight either directly or through a bequest.

### Real Estate

Giving land, buildings or other personal assets

can help assure that LifeFlight will always be available in the future.

### Life Income Gifts

Many donors find that a "retained life income gift," such as a charitable remainder trust or a charitable gift annuity, is the most appropriate way to support the work of LifeFlight.

### Retirement Accounts

Naming The LifeFlight Foundation as the beneficiary of a portion of your retirement accounts can help you to make a significant future contribution, and maintain your current financial security.

### Life Insurance

You can name LifeFlight as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy, and/or you can transfer ownership of the policy to the LifeFlight Foundation during your lifetime.

For more information, or to receive a booklet on planned giving, call The LifeFlight Foundation at **207-230-7092**.



## Lacey teaches Helicopter Mike to sign

When you first meet Lacey Thomsen, her smile is the first thing that captures your attention. Then you quickly notice her hands. Her slender, nimble fingers are constantly in motion, expressing her thoughts in a very different (and often more beautiful) way than the rest of us. One of her favorite signs: she places her thumb briefly between her ring and pinky fingers to symbolize “M” before her hands quickly form a modified “time out” sign, with her left hand resting on the fore finger of her right hand. Then she makes a quick twisting motion to show a helicopter.

This original sign that Lacey created herself stands for “Helicopter Mike,” otherwise known as LifeFlight Paramedic Mike Choate. To Lacey, Mike is the person who took care of her one night in February when she was in excruciating pain and had to be rushed to Boston Children’s Hospital.

Lacey was born with Goldenhar Syndrome, a congenital defect characterized by facial deformities, typically affecting one half of a person’s face. She has had a shunt in her brain since she was 2 days old. In the past when there was a problem with the shunt, Lacey experienced seizures. But this time, Lacey just held her head and said she had a very bad headache; something she would not have done a few short years ago.

Lacey, with help from her long-time ed tech Lynda Nailor, has worked for many years to be able to communicate, so it was meaningful that she could tell her mom how she felt and what was wrong.



**LifeFlight patient Lacey Thomsen (center), with her ed tech Lynda Nailor and flight paramedic Mike Choate, expresses her excitement as she waits for the helicopter to land at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston.**

With quick hands, Lacey tells her story:

“I had a bad headache in the night time. It was very, very late and I was sick. I had an IV in the helicopter. It was very loud and I kept asking for my blanket to be over my head. My headache was bad and I kept asking Mike for more medicine. Mom flew in the front of the helicopter. The other flight nurse told mom to be careful not to fall off the roof (at Boston Children’s).”

The specialists at Boston Children’s were able to fix the problem with Lacey’s shunt, and today her life is back to normal. She’s in a bowling league and also spends a lot of time reading. She loves yard sales, where she finds lots of books and movies, and is looking forward to a very special trip to Disney World in the fall. 🚁



## Walmart continues generous partnership

In 2008, LifeFlight began a partnership with Maine's Walmart stores through the corporation's Community Giving Program. This program allows a committee of associates at each store to grant funds to local non-profit organizations.

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Nineteen Walmart stores in the state have made at least one donation to LifeFlight, and some have made even more.

Some of the grant funding went into LifeFlight's aircraft replacement fund, while more than \$20,000 was used to help purchase night vision goggles for both of LifeFlight's helicopters, greatly enhancing the safety and reliability of night time flights.

Irma McGuinness, Personnel Manager and Community Involvement Coordinator at



Auburn Walmart, helped to spearhead the fundraising effort. "LifeFlight saves lives. It's as simple as that. I'm proud to be part of a store that supports such a deserving organization."

This partnership exemplifies how community members can support LifeFlight through corporate giving programs. 

## Profile | David White, CCEMT-P



Dave was born and raised in Carthage. He entered the EMS field by accident, as he enrolled in his first EMT class because

his friends were signed up, but it proved to be the beginning of a long and fulfilling career.

Dave earned his paramedicine degree from what was then Kennebec Valley Vocational Technical Institute (now known as Kennebec Valley Community College) and joined United Ambulance Service in

Lewiston. Seventeen years later, Dave has moved through the ranks to become the operations manager at United, while also working for LifeFlight.

After working on LifeFlight's CAMTS accreditation project, which has accredited both ground and air critical care transport, David took on the challenge of gaining national accreditation for United, which has become the first nationally accredited ground ambulance in the state.

When he's not delivering emergency medical care, either by air or by ground, Dave, who resides in Dixfield, spends most of his time hanging out with his kids. 



**LIFEFLIGHT OF MAINE**

# GOLF SCRAMBLE

**Saturday, June 26 at 9am**

**Natanis Golf Course | Vassalboro**

Come on out and play golf with **Governor John Baldacci** and Olympic Gold Medalist **Seth Wescott!**

Join us for a day of friendly competition, delicious food and great prizes, all while supporting a great cause.

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**\$400 per 4-person team**

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

**Registration Deadline: June 18th**

*Full field expected! Register online today at [www.lifeflightmaine.org](http://www.lifeflightmaine.org)*

**8am Registration**

**9am Shotgun Start**

**2pm Buffet Reception**

*Free buffet lunch includes deli fixings, pasta salads, fruit, chips, and beverages*

**You can also support LifeFlight's mission by becoming a sponsor.**

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact The LifeFlight Foundation at **230-7092** or [rljohnson@lifeflightmaine.org](mailto:rljohnson@lifeflightmaine.org)



Natanis Golf Course is located at 35 Webber Pond Road in Vassalboro, about 5 miles north of Augusta

For detailed driving directions, visit the golf course's website at: [www.natanisgc.com/find\\_us.htm](http://www.natanisgc.com/find_us.htm)



*Sponsored in part by*

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Register online at [www.lifeflightmaine.org](http://www.lifeflightmaine.org)  
For more information (207) 230-7092



## LifeFlight's HPS experts provide guidance for new program in South Dakota

6 For many years, human patient simulators have provided healthcare workers with invaluable preparation for true life and death situations. This point was demonstrated to Sandra Durick, Director of the Department of Rural Health and Halley Lee, Coordinator of the Healthcare Workforce Center. Durick and Lee, representing the South Dakota Department of Health, were part of a group charged with exploring and evaluating simulator options for a new statewide program.

After researching different simulators and programs, representatives from the South Dakota initiative decided to investigate the HPS program operated by LifeFlight of Maine. A 2008 visit was arranged to view the program, including attendance at a simulation session at Unity EMS. During this visit, Durick and Lee were able to see first hand the level of excitement and benefit associated with this type of training. They were impressed by the program's structure including the depth of knowledge of the operators and facilitators from LifeFlight.

After the visit to Maine, they returned to South Dakota and joined forces with the

Department of Public Safety and state EMT association. A grant was obtained to fund the program with the goal to provide statewide education to emergency medical personnel and hospital workers.

In March 2010, Rick and Steve made a trip to South Dakota to provide historical overview of the development of Maine's HPS program. They also reviewed and offered comments on the South Dakota plan. The three day event was attended by about 25 people ranging from paramedics to registered nurses.

In addition to funding and marketing, the group discussed the process of developing scenarios with an emphasis on best practice points. Facilitating the presentation, the actual patient encounter, along with post scenario teaching points were also explained. Rick covered the process of computer program operations and how to replicate different disease states. The group then participated in multiple scenarios with teaching points. The final day concluded with an extensive question and answer session.

The South Dakota group found the sessions very helpful in furthering development of their program.

"The opportunity to go through an actual simulation with experienced presenters gave us a better understanding of how to proceed," explained Lee. "After spending time with Rick and Steve, the value of having knowledgeable and well-trained operators and facilitators became obvious. We certainly hope to continue our relationship with LifeFlight of Maine in order to share information and ideas."



# Camden National Bank funds EMS training

Camden National Bank helped to fund three training sessions for local emergency medical providers in Greenville, Ellsworth and Machias. More than 55 people attended the first two sessions, with the third session scheduled for later this summer.

The goal of the training series was three fold: improve the critical care provided by rural emergency medical teams; improve the care of ill or injured children by providing advanced pediatric training; and serve as a model for working in partnership with like-minded organizations.

Well-trained first responders, EMTs and early care providers at community hospitals are essential to positive outcomes. The grant from Camden National was used to bring advanced critical care education to underserved areas of Maine.

In 2005, LifeFlight of Maine partnered with the Maine Department of Public Safety, Maine Health Access Foundation and Maine

Emergency Medical Services to secure a state-of-the-art Human Patient Simulator (HPS). This is a mobile medical laboratory incorporating the very best in medical simulation. It includes sophisticated computerized manikins which can be programmed to simulate a particular injury or trauma. The manikins are extremely life-like and respond to treatment just as a real person would.

Tom Judge, executive director of LifeFlight, emphasizes the importance of this unique training opportunity.

“Despite advances in emergency medicine, trauma continues to be a major health issue in rural Maine. The leading cause of death and disability among those under the age of 40 in Maine is trauma, including nearly 80% of deaths among children and young adults. Improving the quality of care in rural areas is essential if we are to overcome the odds against survival for critically ill and injured patients.” 



photos by Josh Bright

## Sign up now for advanced medical training

The Human Patient Simulator program is available to bring advanced medical training directly to rural communities in Maine. This program provides a hands-on experience, fully customized to meet the medical education needs of any hospital, EMS service or educational institution.

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 **207-230-7092** to schedule sessions

## 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 Camden at 13 Main Street, 2nd floor.

## 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 10,000 patients have been safely transported since LifeFlight's founding in 1998.

**LifeFlight was fully re-accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems in 2009.**

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Dispatches is published by The LifeFlight Foundation for friends, supporters and members of the state's Emergency Medical Services community. Comments and suggestions may be directed to the Foundation at Phone: 207-230-7092 Email: [info@lifeflightmaine.org](mailto:info@lifeflightmaine.org)

**[www.lifeflightmaine.org](http://www.lifeflightmaine.org)**