



DON HOERSTKAMP (LEFT) AND Joe Brownlee talk about the two airplanes donated by Brownlee to Wings of Hope.

TOM SHERLIN | THE DAILY TIMES

# Spread your wings

## Nonprofit agency gets high-flying donation

BY MELANIE TUCKER  
melt@thedailytimes.com

It's aboard a plane that you get the greatest feeling of the vastness of the world, something Joe Brownlee Jr. has experienced many times as a pilot.

This owner of Brownlee Construction in Knoxville has never been far from being able to take flight whenever he pleases. The two planes he has owned most recently, a Cessna 401 and a Piper Cherokee, have served business and recreation purposes. One trip might be necessary to check on construction projects in neighboring states; others have taken him where few have gone.

Take for instance, a 3,600-mile journey Brownlee took with his dad and a few others for a fishing adventure of a lifetime in a remote Alaskan village.

"At that time, you couldn't get there except by plane," Brownlee explained. "There were no roads. That was 30 years ago. There's still not much of a road."

He remembers they flew over plenty of fish on their way to their destination. Lakes and streams teeming with them. As for seeing other people, not so much.

"You can't believe how big a place it is and nobody's home," Brownlee said. "We would fly for an hour, 200 miles, and not see a sign that anybody was there or ever had been. Not a road, smoke, not anything."

At 72, he's got plenty of escapades he can share of his time as a pilot. His dad was one also, and one of his sons.

On Tuesday, this lover of flight handed over his two planes to a nonprofit called Wings of Hope, based in St. Louis. The humanitarian organization provides medical transports in the U.S. and also serves as missionaries in nine other countries. Wings of Hope pilot Don Hoerstkamp made the journey to TAC Air at Knoxville's McGhee Tyson Airport to take possession of the Piper and Cherokee.

Inspections and other Federal Aviation Administration regulations had to be followed to the "T" before the two long-serving airplanes made their way to St. Louis. Brownlee said he now owns no planes. At least for the moment.

### UP, UP AND AWAY

He got his pilot's license in 1968 and was flying at a young age, next to his father, who founded Brownlee Construction in 1947. "The year I was born," Brownlee Jr. pointed out.

When he decided it was time to let the planes go, Brownlee said he knew he wanted Wings of Hope to have them. He has read articles over the years about the projects Wings of Hope takes on to better the lives of others. He contacted them six months ago to get the transfer up in the air.

Hoerstkamp has racked up plenty of sky miles as well. Before he became a volun-



STEVE WILLIAMS WORKS ON one of the airplane engines on one of two planes donated to Wings of Hope by Joe Brownlee.

teer pilot with Wings of Hope, Hoerstkamp also flew professionally, getting his license in 1966. He said he owned a Piper dealership at one time, and also was a flight instructor. He said Wings of Hope has many just like himself — former professional pilots who still love soaring at 8,000 feet.

He said there have been a half-dozen or so planes donated to the nonprofit this year. They come in all shapes and sizes.

"We have had everything from jets to single-engine tail draggers," Hoerstkamp said. "As far as the planes that go into the mission field, the most popular is the

Cessna 206. It's a single-engine plane that's long enough to get a stretcher inside."

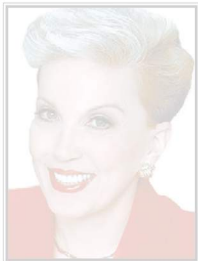
In some instances, planes that weren't operational have been donated. If it's the Cessna 206, Wings of Hope is very much interested.

"We have sent our road crew out to disassemble an airplane and truck it back," Hoerstkamp said. "We try to stay away from doing that unless it's a 206. We will still truck in an airplane like that."

The longest flight Hoerstkamp has done

## Romance with ex's sister causes rift

DEAR ABBY: I am a 57-year-old man who has been divorced for eight years. (My ex-wife was the one who filed.) I



DEAR ABBY

recently reconnected with my ex-wife's sister, "Edith," whom I hadn't seen in years. We began a friendship, which

has evolved into a serious relationship.

My ex is having issues with our romance and has been trying to turn friends, our grown children and our parents against us. We are both single and enjoy each other's company. Is there any reason why we should not pursue this relationship, because "we're upsetting my ex-wife's family"? — TWO LOVERS IN NEW YORK

DEAR TWO LOVERS: When your wife left you, she lost the right to dictate what you should do with your life — including whom you date or even marry next. She is acting like the proverbial dog in the manger, and I sincerely hope your friends and family don't let her get away with it.

DEAR ABBY: Ever since I can remember, I have felt like my mother hates me. Growing up, my two brothers got whatever they wanted while I had to beg for things I wanted. An example: My brothers were given a car for graduation; I got contact lenses. Neither one could do anything wrong in my mother's eyes, but whatever I did was wrong.

Now that I'm an adult, she still treats me this way, and it's making me depressed. I have medical issues that she refuses to believe I have. What can I do to make my mother like me? — DEPRESSED DAUGHTER IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR DEPRESSED: It would be interesting to know what kind of a relationship your mother had with her own mother, because it's possible that she's repeating a pattern she learned when she was a child.

I'm sorry you are hurting because of the way she has treated you, but it isn't possible to "make" somebody — even a parent — have feelings that just aren't there. What might help you is to discuss your dysfunctional relationship with your mother with a licensed mental health professional who can help you understand that if there is fault involved, it belongs solely with her and not you.

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend who calls 20 times a day. If one of my kids asks me something and I ask her to hang on while I respond, she hangs up on me. We have had a falling-out over this more than once.

I think it's rude of her to just hang up. I feel it would be different if she called only a few times a week for a few minutes, but that's not the case. Am I wrong to be upset? — HOLD ON JUST A MINUTE

DEAR HOLD ON: No, you are not wrong. Your children are trying to be cooperative and respectful. It is your friend who is being unreasonable.

DEAR ABBY is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



