

# AirWaves



Winter 2014

A Publication of West Michigan Air Care

www.AirCare.org



I-94 near Bridgman, Michigan. Air Care lands in many challenging areas. Landing zone (LZ) training is essential for our first responders. Email [dmjohnston@aircare.org](mailto:dmjohnston@aircare.org) to schedule your 2014 LZ class. (Photo courtesy of Mark Parren)

## Shorter Transport Times Decrease Risk to Patients

Transferring a patient is a risk.<sup>1</sup> How do you mitigate that risk? West Michigan Air Care provides safe, rapid transport with care at the highest level, so critical care begins when we arrive. When it comes to out-of-hospital time between critical care units, Air Care also cannot be beaten. Consider average air transport times to Kalamazoo from the following communities as compared to average ground transport times:

### Transport Times to Kalamazoo

Local Community	Air Transport Minutes <sup>2</sup>	Ground Transport Minutes <sup>3</sup>
Allegan	9	35
Battle Creek <sup>4</sup>	9	29
Charlotte	17	55
Coldwater	15	64
Eaton Rapids	19	67
Hillsdale	21	85
Jackson	23	64
Dowagiac	14	51
Marshall <sup>4</sup>	13	37
Paw Paw	8	24
Saint Joseph	19	55
South Haven	14	54
Sturgis	14	59
Three Rivers	11	34

Air Care continuously reevaluates how to make patient transports safer and faster. The availability of a helipad at a community hospital can greatly contribute to patient outcomes by shortening out-of-hospital times and rapidly providing departments with skilled assistance.

**Did You Know?**  
When a patient is being flown into Kalamazoo, Air Traffic Control clears a path for Air Care. We have priority over other air traffic due to "life guard" status.

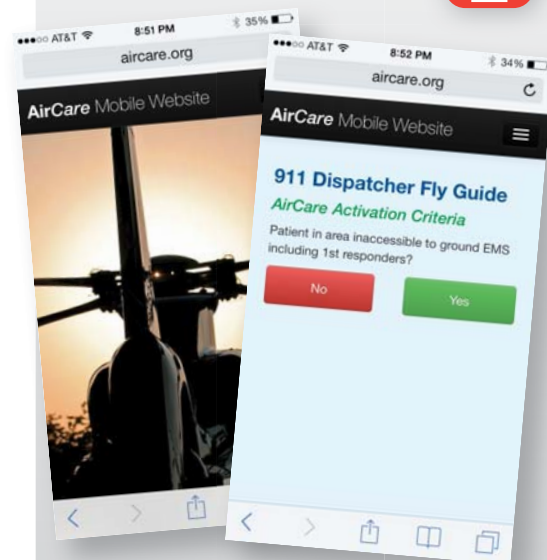
#### References:

1. <http://www.annalsofintensivecare.com/content/3/1/10>
2. Air Transport minutes based on true air speed of 172.5 mph (150 knots), most direct VFR route, with time added for take-off and landing.
3. Ground transport times taken from Google Maps.
4. No hospital helipad. Airport LZ with ground leg necessary. Times reflect transfers from nearest airport.

## Now Take Us Anywhere! Air Care's Mobile Website

Just go to [AirCare.org/mobile](http://AirCare.org/mobile) and bookmark our AC icon to your home screen.

- » Request a transport
- » Use the Fly Guides, step-by-step
- » Set up a landing zone
- » Much more!



# Rapid STEMI Transport

*On Sunday, September 29th (2013) my husband Jay Wiseman, a Fire Chief from West Bloomfield Township (out in Oakland County) experienced a STEMI while visiting in the Three Rivers area. I took him to Three Rivers Hospital and within two minutes of seeing the EKG, Air Care was contacted for transport. Jay was flown to Borgess Medical Center in Kalamazoo for an emergent cath, angioplasty and stent. The team there opened his 100% [blocked] left lateral circumflex artery in 69 minutes, and I commend your team that flew him to BMC! He made it through and is now a "rural record" for door-to-balloon! He is well and doing fine, going back to work next week. Again, please make sure that the team knows that they helped to save another one!*

*Debra M. Wiseman, RN BSN MSA  
Emergency Department Unit Supervisor  
Borgess Lee Memorial Hospital, Dowagiac*

Air Care transfers many ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) patients each year, and as Debra Wiseman observed, her husband's recent transport was very quick thanks to the rapid activation of Air Care by the staff of Three Rivers Emergency Department within two minutes of reading his ECG. Faster times to reperfusion (cath lab) mean less opportunity for adverse events like hypotension and lethal arrhythmias. Along the way two critical care flight nurses provide twice the skilled hands and many years of experience to control pain and rapidly react to keep the patient stable. This is a major advantage over sending any critical patient by ground with one paramedic.



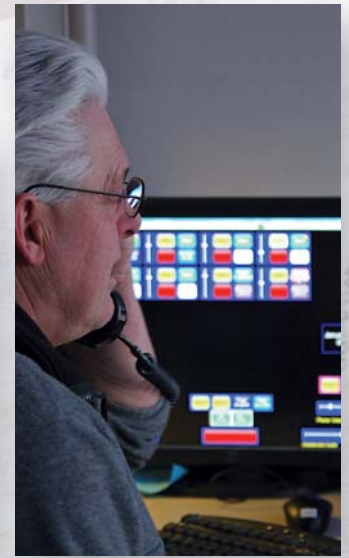
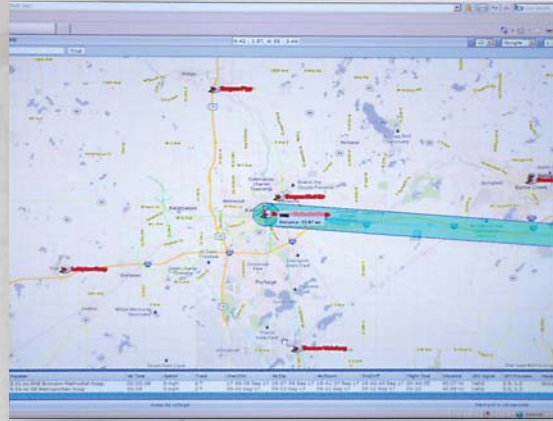
## Photo Submissions

We see you out there taking pictures of us as we land and take off. Have a great photo of us on your phone? Email it to [photo@aircare.org](mailto:photo@aircare.org). If we use it in print, you'll get a free hat and T-shirt. We're looking for great photos of our aircraft on the ground or in the air, but we're also looking for photos of mixed personnel working on scene, especially with our aircraft and your rigs in the background.

*AirWaves is going digital in 2014! If you would like to receive AirWaves electronically, sign up on our website. We'll continue sending hard copies by snail mail unless you direct us otherwise.*

# Behind the Scenes In Air Care's Communication Center

*You'll find over 100 years of experience in Air Care's Communication staff! Not only do they provide logistic and communication support on patient transports, they also provide MedCom<sup>1</sup> services for all of Kalamazoo County and manage EM Systems for Michigan's Fifth District.*



## You Talkin' to Me?

Our Communication Specialist team has experience totaling more than 100 years!



**Steve**  
30 years



**Terry**  
28 years



**Beth**  
23 years



**Mike**  
21 years

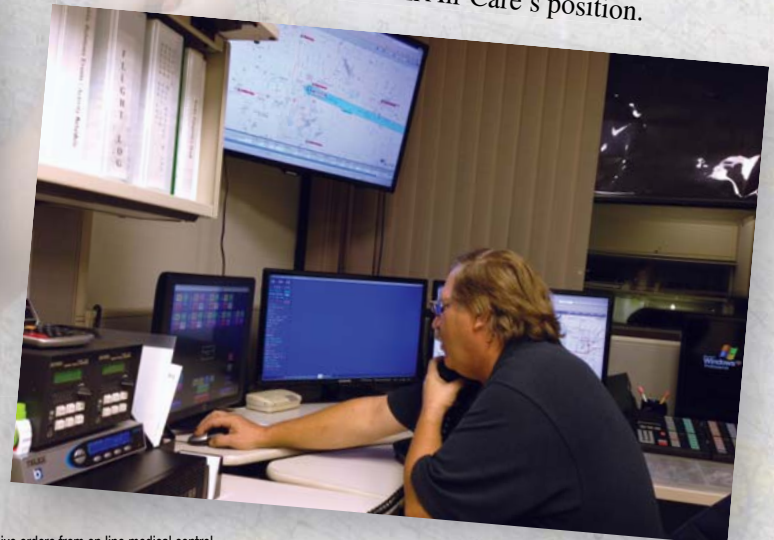


**Craig**  
9 years

Years ago, Air Care's Communications Specialists used time and distance reports to estimate our aircraft's position.



Today, our Communications Specialists use sophisticated software with GPS input to track Air Care's position.



1. "Medcom" is the medical radio and telephone system through which emergency medical service personnel consult with and receive orders from on line medical control.



## Inside:

The West Michigan Air Care  
Mobile Website – Take Us  
With You on Your Phone!



[AirCare.org/mobile](http://AirCare.org/mobile)

## WHOOSH Watch

### Danger: High Winds on Take-off and Landing

Dust, snow, gravel, debris, or just plain wind can be dangerous when Air Care is landing or departing. Close vehicle and ambulance doors, secure loose objects in truck beds and dumpsters, and avoid setting up landing zones (LZs) next to ongoing patient care. Medical First Responders near the LZ should wear their helmets and put their face shields down.

Find electronic copies of AirWaves at our website: [www.AirCare.org](http://www.AirCare.org)

Please email comments to AirWaves Editor and Flight Nurse Dawn Johnston at [dmjohnston@aircare.org](mailto:dmjohnston@aircare.org).



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West Michigan

PO Box 50406  
Kalamazoo, MI 49005-0406  
(269) 337-2505 Phone  
(269) 337-2506 Fax

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