

It is really exciting when a family takes the time to update LifeLine Pilots and the volunteer pilots that have helped them along their journey. In December 2006, volunteer pilot, Bob Conrad, flew Natalie home after she had surgery to correct her bone condition. Transporting Natalie was a challenge due to her inability to transfer in and out of the plane independently. In January 2010, Natalie's mother, Roslyn, emailed pictures to Bob to share with him their delight in Natalie's progress. Roslyn was also happy to share with LifeLine Pilots' friends their families experience with the organization. Thank you to Roslyn for sharing the experience and pictures. Bob's willingness to facilitate this challenging mission demonstrates what a generous volunteer he has been for LifeLine Pilots. Bob has flown over 98 missions for LifeLine Pilots since joining in 2001. His devotion to our passengers is truly amazing and appreciated.

**Volunteer Pilot, Bob Conrad and Natalie**



While it's been over three years ago, I will never forget the call I received from Lifeline Pilots telling me they had a pilot. With that call, what a huge load was lifted from my shoulders! The memory of that call still brings tears to my eyes today.

We had begun the search for a doctor a year before. My daughter Natalie has a bone condition which resulted in her legs being severely knock-kneed, to the point that she had severe pain when she walked. Without correction, she would lose the ability to walk. We ultimately decided upon a surgeon in Wilmington, Delaware - 650 miles from our home in Ohio. The treatment was not simple - it would involve a ten hour surgery followed by two weeks in Delaware, and then months of painful treatment in which we would adjust the frames on her legs multiple times a day to gradually straighten her bones. I was overwhelmed . . . not sure how we would ever get through it.



**Loading up to go to home**

At times like this, and especially when it involves your child, it is easy to feel as though you are carrying the weight of the world. When someone steps forward to take a piece of that responsibility . . . well, there aren't words to describe it. I had worried and worried about how we would get Natalie home. She had frames around both legs and twelve pins protruding through each leg; she was not able to bend her legs and any movement or jarring caused severe pain for her. A commercial plane was not an option and driving ten hours in a car was impossible. I didn't know what to do.

I must admit that I don't remember a lot of the details for coordinating our flight home. I just know that it was a smooth process . . . I vaguely recall a van taking us to the airport where we met our pilot, Bob. Bob came prepared with blankets, and he jumped in to help my son and I lift Natalie in the plane. And I remember landing in Ohio, a smooth landing after a smooth flight. To be home . . . what can I say?

Four months later the frames came off Natalie's legs - and her legs were now straight. For the first time in years, she could touch her ankles together. Within two months she was walking. Today, Natalie has the most beautiful, straight legs.

For all of you with Lifeline Pilots please know that what you do is not taken for granted and it is not forgotten. What you do is more than delivering people to their destination; it is about lifting a huge weight when life is at its toughest. Malibu Bob, we will never forget you. Thank you.

Roslyn and Natalie



**Natalie ~ post surgery**