



CO-PILOTS...Angel Flight volunteer pilot, Sue Chase, of Cowell, with co-pilot Gemma Adams of Port Lincoln on her way home from Adelaide. EP Tribune, 15/11/09

Angels on EP

Cowell resident Susan Chase is calling on other local pilots to support Angel Flight as need for the service continues to grow on Eyre Peninsula.

Volunteer 'Angel' Susan Chase is currently transporting at least two EP families back and forth from Port Lincoln to Adelaide in an effort to make travel for medical treatment as affordable as possible.

"Having sick children in Adelaide when you live on Eyre Peninsula places an enormous strain on families, both financially and emotionally," Ms Chase said.

"Families have to live apart for a long time, traveling...is costly and their lives are disrupted dramatically. Angel Flight can make a

"Financially, it was important that I return to work and for my son to get to school and establish some routine. This was heartbreaking for all of us."

"I was nervous to know what was going on and wanted to be there to support my family. So we tried to get to Adelaide every fortnight but the expense involved to get us there was extreme and, although we received overwhelming support from our community and friends, we could not sustain it."

"Gemma always wanted girl doctors and nurses when she first got sick and most of her doctors were men - coincidentally most of her Angels were men also. So when she met Sue Chase she was

Trent Adams, father of Port Lincoln cancer patient Gemma, 6.

“It took a lot of talented people to get my daughter through the last year. Angels exist and we believe in them.”

big difference during that time.”

Angel Flight is a charity that coordinates non-emergency flights to help country people struggling with the combined problems of bad health, poor finances and daunting distance. All flights are free and may involve patients travelling to medical facilities anywhere in Australia.

One of the families Ms Chase has become close to, through Angel Flight, is that of Gemma Adams, 6, and her parents Trent and Belinda Adams.

When Gemma was diagnosed with cancer at age five, her family was physically divided by her need to be in Adelaide for treatment. While Gemma and mum Belinda stayed in the city, dad Trent and Gemma's twin brother Harrison returned home to try and establish some normality.

"Angel Flight has been truly amazing," Mr Adams said.

very happy if not amazed that girls flew planes too.

"She was ecstatic to be asked to be Sue's co-pilot and it was all I heard about when she arrived. Sue Chase even came to visit Gemma in hospital after one of her surgeries and has been in touch since her return home.

"It took a lot of talented people to get my daughter through the last year. Angel Flight is full of compassionate people who took the pressure off and helped get us through the worst year of our life.

We know that Gemma's ongoing treatment means that she will be travelling to Adelaide every month and its reassuring to know, if needed, Angel Flight will continue support us.

"Angels exist and we believe in them."

For more information about Angel Flight telephone 1300 726 567.