



Pilot plans third fundraising flight to conquer ALS By Dan Namowitz



CarolAnn Garratt, the Ocala, Fla., pilot and author [who has twice flown around the world](#) in a personal campaign to eradicate Lou Gehrig's disease, has opened a new chapter in her quest for the cure.

Garratt, who flew around the world in 2003 and set a world record for her seven-day, 160-hour effort in 2008, plans to round the earth again in 2011—but not at the hectic pace of her last trip. This year's mission to raise research funds and awareness of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) will include multiple country visits and numerous presentations before pilot groups. And she'll have different co-pilots at different stages of the yearlong journey.

A 2008 photo of CarolAnn Garratt (right) and copilot Carol Foy in Hawaii. Photo courtesy of ALS World Flight.

"Their excitement is starting to rub off on me," she said in an interview.

Garratt doesn't sugar-coat her assessment of progress in the battle to conquer ALS—understandable when you consider that Garratt's own mother died in 2002 of the motor neuron disease that tends to strike people between age 40 and 70, and causes brain and spinal cord degeneration leading to muscle atrophy and death within a few years.

"At the opening of my presentations I always say that it has been seventy years since Lou Gehrig retired from baseball, and we are no further ahead now than we were then," she said.

Making the disease even more tragic is that typical ALS patients die young, leaving behind young families. "They never see them graduate, never see them marry. It's just really tough on the whole family," she said.

Garratt was heartened last year when the [ALS Therapy Development Institute](#) discussed research addressing "immune system response not previously known to be associated with the progression of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis," as described in an [ALS-TDI news release](#). It said that the logical next step was clinical trials for the drug used in the research.

"So that's great news," Garratt said, expressing the hope that it was a step toward developing a treatment.

Assessing her own efforts with equal candor, Garratt says that fundraising hasn't been her strong suit despite two books, "Upon Silver Wings: Global Adventure in a Small Plane," and "Upon Silver Wings II: World-Record Adventure," from which all proceeds go to the cause, and hundreds of presentations generating a combined \$328,600. And she remains undeterred.

Tough economic times haven't made it any easier to change conditions under which she says ALS research remains funded at levels she describes as 'peanuts compared to everybody else.'

On April 18 Garratt was watching the weather along the eastern seaboard, where winter seemed reluctant to relinquish its grip except when powerful spring storms ripped across the landscape, spawning tornadoes by the hundred and wreaking havoc in the mid-Atlantic region. That weather was headed in the same direction as Garratt, who planned to fly her Mooney, twice proven on earth-rounding flights, to Boston by April 23, and then, after two days on the ground, head for Newfoundland. Weather permitting she hoped to land in Azores the following day.

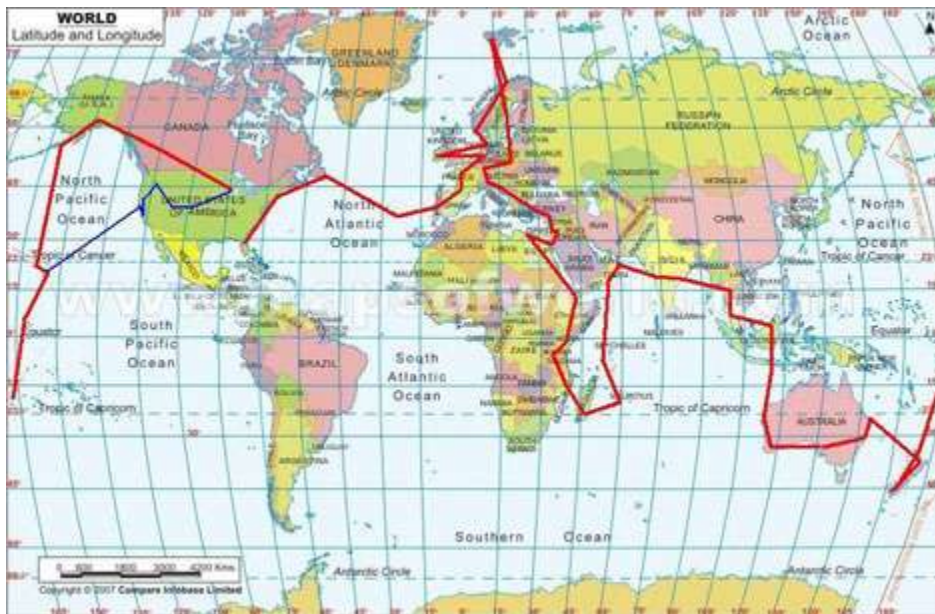
Stops in Portugal and France would follow. Garratt said she plans to spend the whole summer in Europe, giving presentations about her record flight before aero clubs in Germany, England, France, Austria, and Switzerland. In contrast with Europe's aero clubs, her appearances in the United States are typically before Experimental Aircraft Association chapters, she explained. Her planned route and the [story of the previous flights are online](#). The new plan is quite a change of pace from the record dash of 2008 that "took 18 months of my life to plan, and then it was over in a week."

Carol Foy, Garratt's co-pilot in 2008, was not going along this year. Requests from other pilots have flooded in to Garratt, who despite a preference for flying alone, agreed to share the cockpit with different pilots at various times in the journey. She admits that the excitement of those pilots has been contagious. Some of them are people considering round-the-world flights of their own, but don't feel ready yet. "They kind of want to try a leg" in the company of an experienced long-distance flier fist, Garratt said.

On resuming the quest, Garratt explains that once ALS touches your life, you just have to do what you can to help beat the disease. She hopes that she can infuse aviators around the world with that same sense of urgency.

"I'm passionate about what I do about finding a cure for ALS," she said. "And, I love flying, obviously."

Planned Route



The overall route has been developed for this almost 18 month-long trip. The exact dates will remain somewhat flexible. A spreadsheet with the major stops, flight legs and flight times is shown at the bottom of this page. The overview is as follows:

Departure from home in Florida will take place close to mid-April with the planned crossing from St. John's to the Azores either the last week of April or the first week of May. Several stops are being discussed along the east coast for presentations and send-off events. These will be finalized over the coming months.



The Portuguese islands of The Azores are 1300 nautical miles southeast of St. John's, which is on the east coast of Newfoundland, or 800 nautical miles west of Portugal. These are beautiful islands and a normal stopping point for sailors crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

From the Azores I'll head to Portugal, France, Germany, England and spend the summer traveling around Europe. I'll be making presentations about my 2008 world-record flight and meeting ALS groups.

As it starts to cool off in Europe, in the fall, around October, I'll head south to Slovenia, Bosnia, Turkey and I'd like to fly into and visit Israel and Jordan. I've already started making contacts there to help me with entry and visiting those countries.

I should be heading to Africa by late November and go through Egypt, Djibouti and Kenya. My sister-in-law and nephew will be joining me in Kenya as that's where my brother used to work at Mt. Kenya Safari Club giving site-seeing flights around Mt. Kenya in an open-cockpit Waco biplane.

In January 2012 I'll be continuing south to Mozambique then across the channel to Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion. I'll head north to the Seychelles, where I stopped for a week on my 2003 flight, then continue to Oman where I left a 55 gallon drum of fuel during my 2008 flight. After thanking the people that helped me in Oman, I'll head to India then Thailand, again to meet and thank the supporters that helped me during my maintenance stop in Chiang Mai during my 2008 flight.



As I head south I'd like to visit Brunei and Bali before heading to western and southern Australia, which I missed on my 2003 flight. After that I'll head to New Zealand taking more time to visit the South Island on this trip. Then I'll head northeast and visit some South Pacific Islands on my way to Samoa, Kiribati and Hawaii.

I'm looking at two possible flights from Hawaii to the mainland, one through Alaska and the other straight back to California. To be determined.

This will be an eastbound flight around the world. No additional tanking is needed until the Pacific Ocean. Most of the legs are less than 8 hours and CarolAnn's Mooney (with Monroy long range tanks in the wings) has 12 hours endurance before adding ferry tanks.

The summer of 2011 will be spent in Europe, hopefully visiting northern Norway during the summer solstice. Presentations about the 2008 world-record flight will be given in a number of countries and meetings will be held with ALS groups.

In the fall, CarolAnn will head to the Middle East and then down the east coast of Africa to Mozambique and across to Madagascar. During the winter she'll fly around the Indian Ocean visiting a number of countries and arrive in western Australia. The spring will be spent in New Zealand and heading across the South Pacific Islands to Hawaii.

Finally, CarolAnn will cross either to Alaska or California and make her way to Oshkosh for the EAA AirVenture annual gathering.

	City, Country	Identifier	Distance	Estimated Time	Date
					2011
	St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada	CYYT			end April
	Horta, Azores, Portugal	LPHR	1163	8.0	end April
	Santa Maria, Azores, Portugal	LPAZ	192	1.5	
	Cascais, Portugal	LPCS	756	5.0	early May
	Tarbes, France	LFDT	505	3.5	
	Nimes, France	LFTW	192	1.8	
	Joigny, France	LFGK	258	2.3	
	Switzerland	LSZS		2.5	
	Austria	LOAV		2.0	
	Head south in October				
schools *	Slovinia	LJMB		1.0	October
		LJLJ			
*	Bosnia				

	Istanbul, Turkey	LTBA			2011 October
	Tel Aviv, Israel	LLBG	356	2.5	
*	Aman, Jordan	OJAM	57	0.4	
	Alexandria, Egypt	HEAX			
	Luxor, Egypt	HELX			
	Djibouti	HDAM	1017	7.0	
	Wilson, Kenya	HKNW	863	6.4	2011 December
	Tanzania				2012 January
	Mozambique				
*	Madagascar				
	Mauritius	FIMP	573	4.1	
	Reunion	FMEE	125	1.0	
	Sechelles	FSIA	973	6.5	
*	Salalah, Oman	OOSA	1306	9.1	Feb
	Muscat, Oman	OOMS	458	3.3	
	India				Feb
*	Thailand	VTBD	1193	8.0	late Feb
		VTBP			
	Brunei	WBSB	987	6.7	
*	Bali, Indonesia	WADD	822	5.5	
	Australia: YPLM, YPEA, YPAD, YSAK, YBNA, YSNF				mid March
*	New Zealand: NZKT, NZWR, NZAR, NZCH, NZWF				April
	S. Pacific Islands NTF, NFTL, NFTV				May
	Samoa	NSFA		6.7	
	Christmas Island, Kiribati	PLCH		9.1	
	Kona, Hawaii	PHKO		7.6	
	Lihue, Hawaii	PHLI			
	Cold Bay, Alaska	PACD		13.5	June
	Canada				
	Mainland US				July
	Hilo, Hawaii to California			17.0	May