



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **After Medical Emergency, South Carolina Man to Resume Appalachian Trail Quest** *Summer hike will raise more money for Mercy Flight Southeast*

**Greenwood, SC (June 4, 2014)** –Bob Koch of Greenwood, SC is not one to let illness stop him from reaching his goal.

Last summer, while at midpoint on the Appalachian Trail, Koch was rushed to a Maryland hospital where he underwent emergency surgery to repair a perforated ulcer. He was alone, without transportation and irritated that his summer plans to complete his quest were waylaid by a visit to the hospital.

Koch, who has run four Boston marathons and retired in early 2013, is resuming his quest to complete the 2,180 mile trail in June. He is starting where he left off and is also resuming his pledge to raise money for Mercy Flight Southeast.

Koch decided to hike for the network of more than 650 volunteer pilots who fly patients to life-saving medical appointments after hearing about the organization from his friend Broadus “Bo” Bowman, a Mercy Flight Southeast pilot.

Like the other Mercy Flight Southeast pilots, Bowman donates his time, fuel and his airplane to fly patients and their families. While the pilots volunteer their time and aircraft, Mercy Flight Southeast relies on donations to pay for services that keep their passengers and pilots in the air.

“I’m looking forward to resuming the hike and will pick up near Hagerstown, Maryland,” said Koch who will likely begin on June 22nd. “I’ll hike at a more flexible pace and enjoy the adventure because my time frame isn’t as tight as last year when I tried to complete the entire trail.”

Koch is asking the public to make pledges for his hike on a per mile basis with proceeds going to Mercy Flight Southeast. For example, if he completes the entire hike as planned, a one cent per mile pledge will generate \$21.80. Despite him having to cut the hike short last year, more than \$4,100 in pledges was sent to the organization for the miles Koch completed (1,050 miles). He hopes those donors and more will commit to giving to Mercy Flight.

To make a donation, please email [archerbo2@gmail.com](mailto:archerbo2@gmail.com) and use the subject line “Bob Koch Trail.” For more information about Mercy Flight Southeast, call (888) 744-8263 or visit [www.MercyFlightSE.org](http://www.MercyFlightSE.org).

#### **About Mercy Flight Southeast**

Mercy Flight Southeast, Inc. is a non-profit volunteer pilot organization that provides free air transportation throughout Florida by private aircraft to distant medical facilities when commercial air service is not available, impractical or simply not affordable. Mercy Flight Southeast is a member of Air Charity Network, an association of charitable aviation organizations comprised of more than 7,500 pilots and who represent over 90% of all charitable non-emergency flights flown in the nation. Mercy Flight Southeast has won the seal of approval from Independent Charities of America recognizing Mercy Flight Southeast as a good steward of the funds it generates from the public.

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