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PHOTOS BY JOSEPH RODRIGUEZ/News & Record

A DC-3 featuring colorful flowers painted by sick children from around the country is worked on in a TIMCO hangar at Piedmont Triad International Airport. The plane is a project of Portraits of Hope, a California nonprofit group.

## ON WINGS OF HOPE

More than 2,000 sick and disabled children paint panels for an airplane in a project to put their artwork in the public eye

BY MARGARET MOFFETT BANKS  
Staff Writer

**GREENSBORO** — Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the Partridge Family.

OK. That psychedelic DC-3 — the one with the green nose and the 14-foot flowers attached everywhere — didn't bring the '60s TV family to Piedmont Triad International Airport.

But thanks to two local companies, it soon will haul the dreams of children from across the country.

This week, workers from Motorsports Designs in High Point pasted the colorful decals on the prop plane, which is being stored in a hangar at TIMCO. The work began Wednesday and will end today.

TIMCO, which repairs and customizes airplanes, is donating the space.

Motorsports Designs creates the artwork that appears on many NASCAR race cars.

It's part of a project called Portraits of Hope, a California nonprofit that puts the artwork of sick and disabled children in the public



Chris Holland of Motorsports Designs in High Point attaches a panel under the DC-3's right wing.

eye.

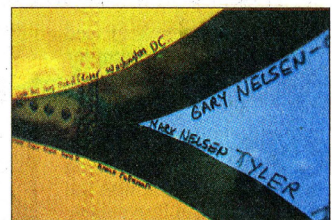
Ed Massey, a Los Angeles-based artist who founded the group, designed the decals. They feature flowers of many colors with bright yellow and orange centers.

More than 2,000 sick children from hospitals around the country, including Duke University Medical Center in Durham, painted the

panels.

And many of those children were desperately ill, Massey said — burn victims, kids recovering from surgery, children who held the brush with their mouths.

Parents told Massey that some of the children smiled for the first time in months while they were painting.



Each colorful panel on the plane bears the name of the child who painted it.

"This is one of the most amazing feats we've ever seen," Massey said.

"It makes us feel like a million dollars."

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The plane will take a test run from the airport Wednesday, then head to Kitty Hawk for the First Flight Centennial Celebration.

The plane will be on display at Kitty Hawk from Friday through Dec. 18.

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