

Why we Fly

If you're the type of person that judges new places by the lobby of the hotel you're staying at, flying is *not* for you.

But if you want to see America – the people, the places, the real America – there is a whole world waiting for you to discover it. A world just an hour or two from your front door that you have probably never seen, and probably didn't even know existed. It's the 'back door' to America. The towns, people and places that make up the backbone of this wonderful country, but aren't big enough to be serviced or spoiled by 747s. It is the undiscovered resorts, fishing holes, B&Bs, ranches, food and people that are the rich tapestry that is our heritage. But they aren't in the giant cities. And most people will never get a chance to experience it; but *you* have this chance.



General Aviation is the key that opens your eyes to this indescribable journey. Being a private pilot is not for everyone. While anyone of average intelligence and ability *can* become a pilot, it is a commitment to skills and character that separates you from others. But once you have flown yourself to a town, B&B, or vacation that others can't even hope to visit, you will realize what a special and elite group you have entered. And your family will see a part of the world that no book club or college course could offer. It's called "Life". You can't hug your kids or grandchildren over the internet.

Flying isn't cheap, but neither is boating or many other activities that 'common people' afford without batting an eye. Just *storing* a boat year round (marina and winter storage) costs about half as much or as much as a typical pilot spends on aircraft rental in a year, depending on the boat and how many hours the you fly - but it's in that ballpark. And the guy at the gas pumps driving an Escalade spent about 2x as much on their car as the typical 4-place used airplane in common use. So while your neighbors can go on thinking that you must be a financial genius to be a pilot, you can have these out-of-this-world experiences at a common-man's price.

And like bicycle clubs, ski clubs, or investment groups, it is the network of fellow pilots that thrust the simple pilot into the heart of the flying community. Like the difference between going to a movie by yourself instead of to a party with friends, it is the group trips, lunch outings and fly-ins that enhance your flying experience. Be it 'Sunday Morning Breakfast Clubs', local chapters of social flying clubs that organize ranch tours, fishing trips, wine-tasting or shopping trips, your entry into the aviation community is only complete when you make the extra effort to join other pilots (and often their families) in going places and doing things that only pilots typically get to experience. And there's also the intangible benefit of the on-going education and skill reinforcement that comes with being 'part of the team'.