

Press Release

Location: Skyhaven Airport
Rochester Hill Road, Rochester NH
When: May 27th, 2012
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Attachment: Photographs by Bambi Miller

There is a new pilot in the sky today. Barbara Dove got her license.

She stepped out of the two seated, Cessna 150 on May 27th at 3 PM a full fledge pilot. James V. Loranger, the FAA Designated Pilot Examiner had first put her through an oral ground test of her knowledge and then a flight test of her piloting skill. She had taken and passed an extensive written exam and her flight physical earlier. She had spent the whole week preparing for the test and her hard work had prevailed. I had seen her out with and without an instructor perfecting her landings and heard her on the radio communicating her location in the pattern. Other times she was sitting at the table poring over the local sectional (map) and working the math of a flight plan or reading the regulations. She came in from a flight one day with a big smile on her face, she had been practicing an engine out procedure and greased her landing onto the runway so she had hardly know she had touched down.

Barbara as a child had always dreamed of flying so as a 13 year old she joined the civil Air Patrol. She then joined the military but was told that since she wore glasses she could not become a pilot. Life then kept her busy with children and family and she didn't think about flying for many years. She raised her family and became a motorcycle instructor. One day while instructing she saw someone flying an ultralight trike overhead and was reminded of her childhood dreams of flight. Her parents gave her money for her birthday, to take a flight in a small aircraft. She walked into Skyhaven airport and talked to Kelby Ferwerda, Owner of Rochester Aviation at Skyhaven Airport to arrange for a flight and he suggested maybe she wanted to learn to fly instead of just take a flight. So she took the introductory flight package and decided that she wanted to learn to fly, not just have a ride in a plane.

She went and gathered her resources and made her plans to make it happen. She had taken a few lessons but was very nervous and needed to loosen up. Kelby took her up on a flight around the clouds one day when the clouds looked like snow cones and then she began to relax and enjoy the privileges of being up were few get to go and see. She talked of seeing a rainbow on the clouds and the world from a small plane in the air and the feeling of the lift from the wind over her wings. She had realized her dreams and still couldn't believe it.

Barbara played a special song for me from her iPhone "Fire Birds Child" by SJ Tucker which has the words "I am the firebirds Daughter...if you are brave enough to burn you'll be brave enough to fly." Learning to fly was not easy and she had to overcome her fears, but the rewards were great and the enjoyment of her new found privileges are only beginning as she plans to be a flight instructor someday. She confided that she recognizes the special light in the eyes of fellow aviators as they talk about their experiences in the air and each time they take off or land.

I asked her who her first passengers will be and she smiled and said " my grand kids, Tara and Braeden." They are age 8 and 6. That is unless their mother doesn't get too jealous!