

## Pilot

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as any mother would be, I knew I should let him pursue something that he so obviously wants to do."

Peter Yurchision admitted that he did not go to his mother to ask first, though. He figured Dad might be able to help him break the ice with his mother, and get her to understand his interest in flying.

"When I first told (my mom), she wasn't thrilled," Peter said. "But she knew it was something I wanted to do."

Yurchision began taking flying lessons at the Wilkes-Barre International Airport, in a Piper Cherokee Warrior, which is a four-seat single engine plane, and from there his love for flying took off.

In order to obtain a private pilot's license, Yurchision had to fulfill several requirements:

1. Be at least 17 years of age.
2. Gain at least 40 hours of practice time in the air.
3. Pass a knowledge test.
4. Take a practical test.
5. Have at least three hours of night flying practice.
6. Complete 10 hours of solo flight.
7. Spend five hours in a solo cross country flight.

Yurchision said the time spent working on the knowledge and studying aspects of flying has been worth it once he got into the air and behind the controls of the plane.

"It is very peaceful in the air," said Yurchision. "You can see for miles, and it is just a breathtaking experience."

Maria Yurchision said she has tried to support her son throughout the entire experience, and said that she finally realized just how much he wanted to be a pilot when she saw him fly a plane for the first time alone.

"I was very nervous when he went up for the first time alone," said Maria Yurchision, who was



POST PHOTO/TIMOTHY J. RAUB

Peter Yurchision's room is decorated with flying memorabilia, including a full-size photo of an instrument panel and the t-shirt he wore on his solo flight.

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Peter Yurchision, 17  
Student pilot

able to watch her son from the flight tower. "But when he finally went into the air, it was an indescribable feeling to watch him.

Peter Yurchision has already made flights to Binghamton and Selinsgrove, and had to make a continuous flight from Avoca to Binghamton, to Selinsgrove and back to Avoca for his cross country flight.

"I have about 68 hours of

flight time," Peter said. "Over the summer I take lessons about four times a week, and during the school year, I go once on the weekend and two or three times a week after school."

That commitment of time and effort has won over his mother.

"That's when I realized that he really wanted to do this, and I knew if it was just a whim, it would have passed by now," she

said.

Flying lessons do not come cheaply, agreed mother and son, but earning his pilot's license and instrument reading rating are also earning the high school junior college credits in aviation.

If Peter Yurchision earns all possible ratings up to his commercial pilot's license, he could complete up to 22 college credits. And since he would like to make flying part of his future career choice, Yurchision is well ahead of the game in his college career, as well.

"I probably like the excitement of flying the most," Peter said. "It is definitely fun, and I'm glad I started taking lessons. It has been worth it."

## LifeSmarts

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whiz, said he was not nervous coming into the tournament, and was eager to see the other team's Dallas would be competing against.

"I don't think it is a matter of being nervous for the tournament," said Kastenbaum, before the tournament. "At the worst, we could be the ninth best team in the state. That's not too bad."

Opello and Swatko heard about the chance to make the team from Wega, one of their teachers.

"Erica and I have Mrs. Wega for class, and she told us about

taking the test online," said Opello. "I'm glad I took the test. I took the test because there was nothing else to do that day, and made the team."

Morgan is a member of the school's trivia club, which won the regional championship for Scholastic Bowl, a competition that tests students' academic knowledge, in September. That team will be in action again in May at the state finals.

"It's pretty nice to be in the state finals," said Morgan. "We have worked hard, and wanted to do well."



Smart in life. The Dallas High School team, from left, kneeling: Ricky Branco, Ryan Morgan and Ryan Kastenbaum. Standing: Kathy Wega, team advisor; Janelle Opello, Erica Swatko and Frank Galicki, principal.

## School project

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but it was later found that some areas were as much as eight to 16 inches thick. He also said steel beams, which are to be used for the roof of the natatorium, were delayed in coming to the school.

In June, renovations will begin on many of the classrooms, Griffiths said.

Gallo also said construction on the new gymnasium floor is now underway.

"(After the gymnasium, locker rooms and pool are finished) in mid May we expect to start renovations in the cafeteria, library, auditorium and science rooms," said Griffiths.

Q: Where do you find the most Back Mountain news each week? A: Only in The Dallas Post

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