

BEHIND THE HANGAR DOORS

Being an adult means being able to juggle all that comes with life: a career, a family, hobbies, and so much more. When you add in a hobby that is as time-consuming as aviation, the act of balancing is only that much more difficult. Many will tell you that the possibility of success simply boils down to perseverance, but the reality is a bit more tangled. This KPWT pilot's story is truly one of determination.

MEET MATTHEW GOODRICH

Matthew grew up knowing that aviation was in his blood. Many of his family members were pilots, so much so that Matthew never realized it wasn't normal for families to fly themselves on adventures. While most would see that as an exception, and an impressive one at that, in some ways, it proved to be a hindrance in Matthew's own journey.

One of the first times Matthew remembers an exceptional flight journey was when he was a teenager staying with his uncle. They flew from Tucson to San Diego on a trip to the Catalina Islands. As they approached the islands, Matthew recalls seeing cliffs on the approach to the runway. It was in that moment he realized how special this ability was. His uncle continued to teach him to fly in exchange for the work Matthew did for him. At the time, Matthew was just 15 years old, and it would take another 18 years for him to become licensed. Although it's clear he was fortunate in those lessons, the pen-to-paper side of flying was uncharted territory.

As kids, it's easy to become enamored with the excitement of things, just as it is to have your hobbies as your main focus. The challenge for Matthew was when it came time to commit the hours for professional training, bookwork, and more. While hard work isn't something Matthew shies from, it was a challenge to balance this added endeavor while establishing his career in cyber security and building a life with his beautiful wife, Shawna. He admits he was "naïve going in" but recognizes pilots are always students. While established now, Matthew says one of the most important things he wishes to impose upon his children is the idea of how lucky they are to have the freedom to experience life like few others.



Matthew & Shawna.

OVERCOMING BOUNDARIES

Beyond the time commitment, Matthew notes that the price of flying was the most stressful component for him. He began by joining plane shares and prioritizing his lessons with the stage

of life he was in. Having his two children was a gift, and certainly not one to be minimized. With that came decreased time for studies and increased perseverance. Flying was always in the back of Matthew's mind, waiting for its time to shine once again.



Matthew and his family.

Finally licensed, Matthew's attention turned to the variables that come with flying, especially with his family by his side. With a safety-first mentality, Matthew learned that icing is a quick killer, dedicated himself to listening to accident reports and learning from others' mistakes, and always choosing the safest option. While it may be disappointing to cancel family trips here and there, he finds that there is no better way to minimize risk than not to take it.

Unsurprisingly, with a father such as himself, his kids find almost as much joy in the air as he does. He recently flew his family to the happiest place on Earth, Disneyland, and is planning a three-week trip to Colorado, Missouri, and Alabama. He hopes to

make a future trip with his family to Florida or the Bahamas and to take a solo trip across the Atlantic Ocean.

Matthew believes that "without passion, persistence doesn't matter". Had he not been so intent on carrying his aviation legacy, the roadblocks that came with flying would have been the end. He does his part in encouraging others not only through teaching his children but through his welcoming stature to everyone. When there's an open seat on his plane, Matthew ensures that his family and friends all have an opportunity to join, in part as gratitude for their support. Finding joy through others is part of why he loves aviation, so much so that he would like to use his private pilot's license as a steppingstone to his real goal: becoming a CFI.

DIVING HEADFIRST

For Matthew, the biggest characteristic that sticks out to him about flying is the community. Entering the world, he didn't realize just how close and welcoming everyone would be to him. He finds that everyone is happy to talk to you and that you truly have "access to a huge amount of experience," a component that has proven invaluable. The cross-generational aspect is also a great benefit to him as he can connect with those at similar stages of life as him, as well as those who can offer advice and new experiences.

Lately, one of those new experiences has been formation flying. A highly coveted endeavor, Matthew says it has become the next component that he wants to master. In recounting his first trip to OshKosh just



Matthew and his plane at KPWT.

this season, he says that the leg of the journey while sitting passenger in a formation flight was the “most fun, but hardest forty-five minutes” of his flying experience. Having had the opportunity to pilot in a formation flight as well, he also feels he was more nervous being a passenger than flying it himself. In the future, he muses it may be of interest to become certified in multi-engine aircraft and seaplanes too, something that will surely aid him in becoming a CFI.



Matthew's Bonanza.

His biggest advice to those seeking a future in aviation is “tap into the community”. It seems that much of a person’s success in the field comes from those you know, particularly when it comes to garnering the experience and lessons of others. Having introduced his own children to the passion already, he feels one of the biggest gifts is that of the EAA. Those working with BACE (Bremerton Aviation Center for Education) also offer a unique way of learning the ropes through the mechanical side of flight. For Matthew, the Pacific Northwest and Bremerton National Airport offer a wide variety of resources for all pilots. He personally plans to continue his licensing through Avian Flight Center and documents his journey via social media. If you or

anyone you know is interested in seeing the local and real side of flight, we encourage you to check out his YouTube channel @wingsoverpnw.

Despite Matthew's personal experience with the start-and-stop nature of aviation, it is clear he is a man who loves what he does. He envisions buying a smaller plane when his kids leave for college, exploring the opportunity of having an additional plane for his kids to learn on, and going on various adventures with his wife. He feels “flying is really a family affair - whether it's your actual family members, or family you haven't met yet that hang out at your local airport, or family you see once a year at your favorite aviation event,” and that sentiment rings true with all he does. In the meantime, we hope you explore how you can best merge your own interests, in the interest of living a life you love.

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