THE PROFESSIONAL FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR

MENTOR

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 6

BACK IN THE AIR

Returning to teaching after a decade

- CFIs: Commodity or Trusted Partner?
- Mastering Decision-Making
- Danger: Hazardous Attitudes

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MENTOR

www.nafinet.org

Mentor is a how-to magazine dedicated to improving the teaching skills of aviation instructors of all disciplines.

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position **Report**

Karen Kalishek,
NAFI Board Chair

Asking Questions

During the ground portion of pilot exams, it is quickly apparent when an applicant is relying upon rote memorization. For example, a pilot may cite the number of magnetos but is unable to explain why rpm drops during a mag check. When given the scenario of engine roughness during cruise flight, that pilot is also not likely to consider the possibility of a magneto problem.

The laws of learning apply as much in the aircraft as during ground training. I've seen pilots turn the ignition key and state, "Left-both, right-both, okay," and then be unable to answer how much the rpm dropped or how much is allowable. They had learned turning the key as rote memorization of what to do, but not why or how to properly complete the magneto check. One of the airports where I've given numerous exams has an initial pattern turn at 500 feet AGL, and another has an initial heading change at low altitude, both for noise abatement. When I ask candidates why they turned at 500 feet or changed heading, there have regularly been responses such as, "That's what my instructor said to do," or "That's what we always do." When I then inquire whether that departure method applies to all airports, those same pilots respond, "Yes." This lack of traffic pattern knowledge is both disheartening and concerning.

In a recent exam, the candidate struggled with communications and was unable to successfully complete a task due to unfamiliarity with the aircraft equipment. During the debrief, his instructor interjected comments such as, "I had told him what to say," and "I showed him that," as proof that those items had been covered during training. I've heard these same comments previously, but they seem to only follow unsuccessful exams. Telling and showing are early steps in the teaching process but do not assure that the recipient has gained skill. While hands-on practice is vital to effective flight training, there is another useful practice that can help determine if a pilot is prepared to assume the role of PIC.

Asking questions allows you to verify that the person you are training understands the topic. Responses can be enlightening for both parties and lead to in-depth learning that sticks. DPEs are encouraged to ask questions using terms such as "describe" or "explain," and this method can be applied effectively to instruction.

Using a scenario-based example, you could draw an aircraft on a sectional (paper or electronic), indicating the plane's altitude and location, and then ask the pilot to describe the steps taken from that point to land at a designated nearby airport. A realistic scenario can be provided such as an en route diversion due to passenger illness. Use a timer and ask the pilot to continuously draw a line for route of flight. This exercise can simulate the continuous aircraft flight path and the division of attention needed for flight activities while approaching an airport. Provide a weather report for the airport and draw a windsock on the sectional after the pilot has determined the frequency and simulates dialing it in and/or indicates plans to overfly the airport.

Do not provide prompts. Listening and observing will indicate whether the pilot has appropriate procedures in place for communications, runway determination, descent, before-landing checklists,

Asking questions allows you to verify that the person you are training understands the topic. Responses can be enlightening for both parties and lead to in-depth learning that sticks.

traffic pattern entry, etc. Changes such as modifying the wind, starting altitude, distance, and simulating other aircraft in the pattern or arriving via radio calls can all be used to challenge the pilot and perceive how they apply aeronautical decision-making. This ground-based exercise can be correlated by using a similar approach during flight. Set up a diversion scenario, and then observe.

Another valuable assessment is to simulate an equipment malfunction or abnormality and then watch how the pilot deals with it. In our desire to maximize learning, as instructors we tend to demonstrate troubleshooting or explain what to do in real time during the flight. Telling and showing might be recalled by the pilot when needed, but it might not. Allowing the pilot to experience the situation as if they were with a nonpilot passenger — not with an instructor fixing or teaching — can effectively promote a PIC mentality. It can help create a lasting impression that things *can* go wrong and the resolution will be up to them. Uncertainty or discomfort can motivate a desire for systems knowledge well beyond rote memorization. Realistic scenarios demonstrate a purpose for understanding and application.

Observing, evaluating, and questioning applies to NAFI as well. We are deep in the process of reviewing and updating your organization's strategic plan. NAFI's growth continues to be strong in both membership and outreach. New opportunities abound as our industry presence builds and we are approached with requests for NAFI representation, partnerships, and involvement. As we continue to flourish together, I assure you that NAFI's core vision and mission are firmly in place. We will not be distracted from providing you with education, advocacy, and mentorship to create *"Safer pilots through excellence in flight instruction."*

Allowing the pilot to experience the situation as if they were with a nonpilot passenger — not with an instructor fixing or teaching — can effectively promote a PIC mentality.

YOUR FEEDBACK

AIRMAIL PAR AVION

Client Versus Student

I would like to offer a short excerpt regarding the two terms for your consideration as leaders in our organization. It is just one old-timer's thoughts, but both as pilots and physicians, we are all lifetime continuing students in reality.

The word "client" used in reference to students and their families came into vogue during the 1990s. The broad rationale was that since students and their families are paying for education either directly or indirectly through taxes, or both, they are customers; consequently, educators and administrators should be viewed as providers. In this framework, education becomes a simple market equation. It replicates a business model in which customer or "client" satisfaction is key. Those in favor of this consumerist model argue that it is exactly the way education requiring any form of payment or tuition ought to be — a person is presumably purchasing knowledge, skills, and ultimately degrees or other accreditations from providers, i.e., educators and the institutions with which they are affiliated; therefore, the success of this transaction can be determined by evaluating the satisfaction of the purchaser, i.e., client or customer.

The education-as-business construct, and the language that has followed, is negated by the wisdom of millennia of educators who preceded it. One such educator was John Dewey, who wrote in his book *Experience and Education* (1938):

"There is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process, just as there is no defect in traditional education greater than its failure to secure the active cooperation of the pupil in construction of the purposes involved in his studying."

The word "client" does not convey the humanity, effort, and growth that define students — the very centerpieces of Dewey's conception of progressive education. Unlike a "client," a "student" is responsible for earning his or her education. This truth applies not only in the classroom, but also when students and college applicants seek guidance and tutelage from private counselors, advisers, tutors, and educational consultants. These professionals facilitate learning by helping students hone the skills, ideas, and strategies needed to produce effective college applications and improved academic performance. They do not provide a "client" with a good or quantifiable service.

Strictly personally, I see it much more simply — an example, perhaps?

Client: For proper compensation, I successfully presented before the horse sufficient water and demonstrated associated how-to materials (more like a checkride?).

Student: For proper compensation, I presented the water, made sure the horse was able to drink properly and not too much, didn't get sick, could actually use the how-to materials, was able to get home safely, and made sure later it could find its own water in the future (teaching and mentoring?).

Very truly,
Robert C. Thompson
MD, ATP, CFI (retired), Flying Physicians Association past president

Eds. Note: Following is feedback from NAFI board members.

When I was a resident in internal medicine training 40 years ago, our hospital administrator encouraged all of us to think of and call our patients "clients." In the doctor-patient relationship, this conveys the wrong message. It suggests a business relationship rather than a clinically responsible commitment of the physician to the welfare of the patient.

Now that I am a flight instructor, I would reject the notion of calling our students/learners "clients" for the same reasons. They are not simply fiscal resources but, rather, those to whom we are charged with great care. While I am not a great fan of the FAA term "learner" rather than "student" (because "student" implies much more responsibility on the part of the instructor), either term implies much greater duty and commitment than the word "client."

Dr. Victor Vogel
NAFI board member

Victor is spot on. My two cents is that the word "client" implies transactional leadership and relationships … thus may introduce limits to learning and teaching.

Likewise, the "student/teacher/instructor" relationship seems to offer more and deeper connections that foster and promote a better learning environment.

Tom Dorl
NAFI board member

There is a personal aspect to the appeal of any particular term, and it is unlikely that any would be universally applauded. A pilot's business, medicine, education, or other background colors their perspective. For example, some pilots receiving or giving instruction embrace the moniker "student" or "learner" while others dislike it. In practice I have found a conversation to

YOUR FEEDBACK

identify the pilot's preferred term useful. Expectations, responsibilities, and the teamwork involved for a successful outcome are all part of the discussion. Mutual understanding is the goal, and whatever term that supports that individual is fine.

Karen Kalishek
NAFI board chair

I have always preferred "student." But, the proponents of ALT, adult learning theory, felt that learner was better suited. On the other hand, the FAA still has not caught up to their own initiative. You can still get a student pilot certificate.

Paul Preidecker
NAFI president

A person who is learning to drive gets a learner's permit. A couple of reasonable terms that could apply are trainee and apprentice. No matter what the person learning is called, someone will find fault or think the title of the person receiving some form of instruction or participating in a learning environment should be called something else. I think we are getting too carried away with finding proper nouns to describe the receiver of educational information. Maybe we should just ask the person who is the recipient of our knowledge what they want to be referred to as.

Gregory Feith
NAFI board member

I'll submit that how we conduct ourselves around and with the client, student, learner, learning pilot, whatever your preferred pronoun is carries greater importance than what we call them.

Aaron Dabney
NAFI board member

Certified Versus Certificated

I grew up in the aviation world where the word "certified" was well known and well used, for many, many years I might add. I now note in NAFI communications and publications your use of the word certificated.

Can you explain how and why NAFI along with the entire aviation community decided to embrace and substitute the alternative word "certificated?"

From NAFI's perspective, why is it a descriptor that better defines a CFI? Should we now be referring to CFIs as "certificated flight instructors?"

Thank for your thoughts.

James M. (Jim) Conn
Alexandria, Minnesota

Eds. Reply: Thank you for writing in with your question. The CFIs I asked gave differing answers. I reached out to King Schools to see if they would like to chime in on the topic. Hopefully, this clears the matter up a bit. I appreciate you asking. It will help NAFI members get some clarity on the topic.

Eds. Note: Response from King Schools CEO Barry Knuttila.

You have noted an inconsistency in the common understanding of the words behind the acronym "CFI." In particular, what the "C" stands for — certified or certificated. Unfortunately, you will not find a clear definition of that acronym from the FAA, since CFI is not an official FAA term. It is a word of art in the aviation community. To the FAA, we are simply flight instructors by the fact that they have issued us a flight instructor certificate. This becomes the true source of confusion.

Here is the argument for making that "C" stand for certificated: The FAA issues a flight instructor certificate based on evidence of having completed all the requirements to be issued that certificate. They do not "certify" that evidence. As a result, the FAA refers to certificated instructors (also certificated pilots, etc.).

A good example is in the *Aviation Instructor's Handbook*. Within that book you will find many references to "certificated pilots." Here is an excerpt:

Additional Training and Endorsements

Flight instructors may provide training and endorsements for certificated pilots. AC 61-98, Currency Requirements and Guidance for the Flight Review and Instrument Proficiency Check, contains relevant information for certificated pilots and flight instructors for flight review required by 14 CFR part 61, section 61.56 or meeting recent flight experience requirements of section 61.57.

You are right that years ago "certified" was used almost exclusively in the aviation community. However, more recently, many in the aviation industry have been working toward aligning the acronym with the way that the FAA refers to all entities that they issue certificates to (flight instructors, pilots, mechanics, aviation schools, etc.), and that is by the term "certificated."

Barry Knuttila
CEO, King Schools

Eds. Note: Mr. Conn's reply:

Beth, I can't tell you how much I appreciate the energy that you put into finding a response for me. As you might imagine, I'm kind of bugged by the lack of clarity emanating from the FAA on this point. But again, I really appreciate your effort to clarify.

James M. (Jim) Conn

Sim Perspective

I am interested to know if there is a place for me to contribute to *Mentor*. I have a unique perspective from the importance of flight simulation in initial training as the first aircraft I learned how to fly was an MD-88 at the Delta Airlines Training Center.

If I can contribute, please let me know, as I myself love reading every new edition of *Mentor*.

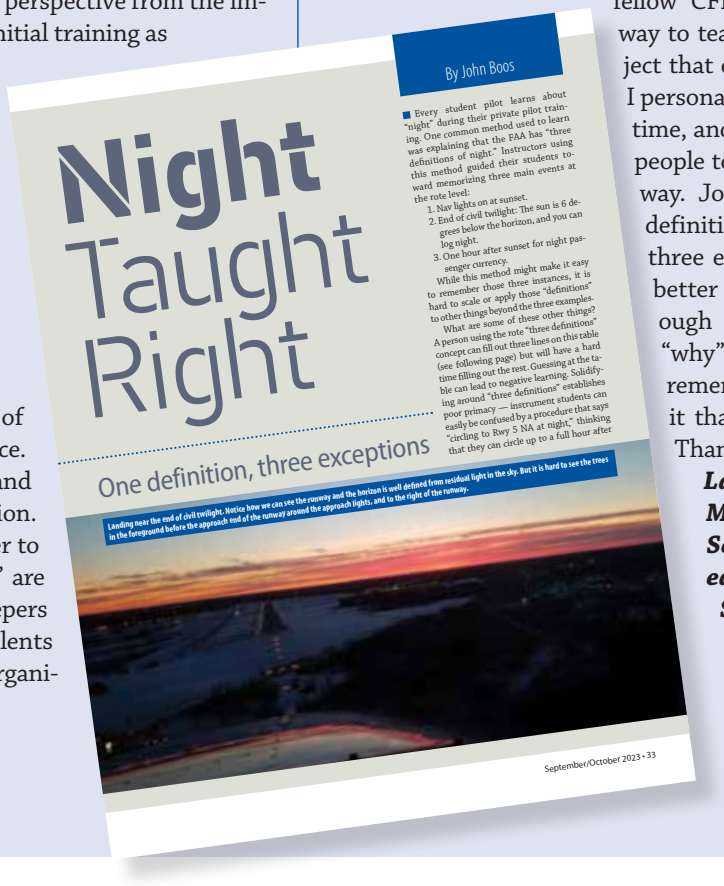
Benjamin Funderburg
Maryland

Keeper Articles

Beth,

The September/October issue of *Mentor* magazine is a masterpiece. You have brought freshness and editorial insight to the publication. The articles "Teaching the Teacher to Teach" and "Night Taught Right" are beautifully done and will be keepers for all CFIs. Thank you for your talents and expertise. NAFI is a better organization because of your work.

Blue skies,
Dr. Victor Vogel
NAFI board member


Night Taught Right

By John Boos

One definition, three exceptions

Every student pilot learns about "night" during their private pilot training. One common method used to learn was explaining that the FAA has "three definitions of night." Instructors using this method guided their students toward memorizing three main events at the role level:

1. Nav lights on at sunset.
2. End of civil twilight: The sun is 6 degrees below the horizon, and you can log night.
3. One hour after sunset for night passenger currency.

While this method might make it easy to remember those three instances, it is hard to scale or apply those "definitions" to other things beyond the three examples. What are some of these other things? A person using the rote "three definitions" concept can fill out three lines on this table (see following page) but will have a hard time filling out the rest. Guessing at the table can lead to negative learning. Solidifying around "three definitions" establishes poor primacy — instrument students can easily be confused by a procedure that says "circling to Rwy 5 NA at night," thinking that they can circle up to a full hour after

Landing near the end of civil twilight. Notice how we can see the runway and the horizon is well defined from residual light in the sky. But it is hard to see the trees in the foreground before the approach end of the runway around the approach lights, and to the right of the runway.

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Better Approach

I really like it when one of our fellow CFIs gives us a better way to teach a traditional subject that everyone must learn. I personally have a lot of night time, and have taught a lot of people to fly at night, the old way. John's concept of one definition of "night," with three exceptions, is a much better approach. The thorough explanation of the "why" part makes learners remember. I'll be teaching it that way from now on. Thanks, John.

Larry Bothe
Master and Gold Seal FAA Certificated Flight Instructor
Seymour, Indiana

Most Excellent

Beth Stanton, NAFI Director of Publications and Editor

Quality flight instruction happens in multiple ways. Hours and years in the right seat are a big part of it. Yet even newbie instructors can excel out of the gate through a combination of professional dedication, perennial improvement, and seeking mentors.

Recently, a fatal accident involving a young instructor and student was in the news. The CFI was documenting on Snapchat the lesson, which included abusive and demeaning language, when they flew into a thunderstorm in the dark. My heart broke reading the needless waste of this tragedy. Reflecting on this accident during the October NAFI Rotorcraft Special Interest Group, Ned Parks spoke about the importance of an organization's culture. Culture has a critical impact on the behavior of individuals affiliated with an organization. Questionable behavior may be ignored, tolerated, red-flagged, or rejected, depending on the organization's culture and values.

This issue of *Mentor* includes inspiring accounts of seasoned instructors who share their hard-earned wisdom, developed over a lifetime of experience. They positively ooze professionalism, and their passion for excellence leaps off the page. These individuals, and others like them, are industry treasures. They continue to teach, decade after decade, passing down tribal knowledge to the next generation of pilots.

These new pilots do not need to be "young" by the way. I came late to this aviation rodeo, waking up one morning 12 years ago with the idea it would be cool to fly. Reading John Boos' bio while preparing the last issue of *Mentor*, I was astonished to notice he started flying just 10 years ago as a second career. He has been instructing for only eight years and in this time has become a chief flight instructor, two-time NAFI Master Flight Instructor, DPE, Gold Seal CFI, CFII, and MEI.

Initially marveling at what an overachiever this guy is, I realized NAFI is an organization chock-full of "overachievers." Or rather, people dedicated to perpetuating aviation in the most excellent way they know how.

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK
bstanton@nafinet.org

Mentor Columnists Race at Reno

NAFI congratulates Jen and Josh Watson for their epic racing at the final Reno National Championship Air Races. The Right Seat columnists tore up the sky at the races held September 13-17 at Reno-Stead Airport, the end of an almost 60-year tradition of closed-course pylon air racing.

The husband-and-wife duo flew in the Formula One class. There are just five rules for Formula One race planes: Continental O-200 engine, minimum empty weight of 500 pounds, 66-square-foot wing area, fixed-pitch propeller, and fixed landing gear. Formula One racers must use stock compression, cam profile, and carburetor. Builders get creative squeezing out every drop of speed within the set parameters. Formula One are the only planes designed specifically for racing and the only class to go more than 1 mph per cubic inch. Their 200 cubic inches can produce speeds that can top 250 mph.

This was Jen's rookie year, and she flew Race 21, *Black Jack*, in the Formula One Silver Class to an eighth-place finish, clocking a speed of 180.117 mph.

2023 was Josh's second year around the pylons, and he clinched the championship Formula One Gold Class title. He flew Race 31, *Fraed Naught*, to a first-place finish at a blistering 235.645 mph.

Congratulations to the dynamic Watson duo. NAFI is lucky to have such multitalented and passionate aviators in our midst.

NAFI NEWS

Sharon Tackabury Elevated to NAFI Association Administration Manager

Sharon Tackabury, previously NAFI's administrative coordinator, has been elevated to association administration manager.

Since Tackabury joined NAFI in August 2019, she has been an integral part of its success. She initially worked part time supporting NAFI members via phone and email, processing mail and memberships, and fulfilling the Master Flight Instructor program. NAFI began to utilize Tackabury's accounting skill set when she took on NAFI's accounts payable/receivable and payroll duties. Her involvement in the SUN 'n FUN and EAA AirVenture Oshkosh planning committees led to full-time status in January 2022.

Tackabury has helped improve many internal NAFI processes. As membership grows, NAFI's infrastructure must also grow to support and serve our members.

"I work closely with everyone involved in the NAFI family — from our members to staff, contractors, and board members," Tackabury said. "I love working for NAFI — it's a place that interests me and inspires me to learn and help others."

NAFI has complete confidence in Tackabury and looks forward to her continued contributions.

NAFI Represented on MOSAIC Task Force

NAFI is being represented on the IFR/IMC subcommittee of the ASTM F37 MOSAIC Task Force by Samantha Bowyer, a NAFI member who is an associate professor of aeronautical science at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. The ASTM F37 MOSAIC Task Force has been charged with a significant revision of how light-sport aircraft (LSA) is defined by presenting a new LSA standards framework.

Its goal currently appears to expand access to aviation through reducing costs through an LSA approach, while maintaining or improving safety standards. The subcommittee in which Bowyer is serving is working toward allowing an LSA pilot to file instrument flight plans and fly into instrument meteorological conditions. Discussions are still in the early phases and strategy is still being discussed, but momentum continues to move forward. "All involved are passionate and energized to make some great changes that benefit general aviation, not only in the United States but also globally," Bowyer said.

NAFI-KING SCHOOLS SCHOLARSHIP 2024

The **2024 scholarship** deadline is **January 4th, 2024.**

NAFI Member Opportunity

The scholarship includes **$5,000** for training and access to every King Schools course (including FIRCs) for life. The value is more than **$20,000**.

Scan below to apply online.

MASTER CFIs

ABOUT THE NAFI MASTER INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM

The NAFI Master Flight Instructor Accreditation is earned by aviation educators based upon a system of advanced professional standards and peer review. The accreditation identifies and publicly recognizes those teachers of flight who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to excellence, professional growth, and service to the aviation community. The NAFI Master Instructor accreditation is for two years and may be used to renew an FAA flight instructor certificate. Applicants must have been a CFI for two years and have given 1,000 hours of flight instruction. In addition, candidates must meet and document activity in four NAFI Master Instructor categories (Instructor, Educator, Service to the Aviation Community, and Professional Activity).

Members of the National Association of Flight Instructors work as independent instructors, at flight schools, universities, FBOs, corporate flight departments, and in the military. Since 1967, NAFI and its members, who teach in 30 countries, are dedicated to increasing and maintaining the professionalism of flight instruction. NAFI members influence active pilots daily: students working to become pilots, current pilots training to advance their skills with new ratings or certificates, and pilots who seek to improve their skills with recurrent training. NAFI also serves as an advocate with industry and government as a voice for flight instruction. NAFI helps shape the current and future direction of flight training. For more information about NAFI or the NAFI Master Instructor program, call *866-806-6156* or visit *www.nafinet.org.*


Douglas Auclair

DOUGLAS AUCLAIR

Earns Fourth NAFI Master Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Douglas Auclair has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is Auclair's fourth NAFI Master Accreditation.

Auclair lives in Rhode Island and owns and operates Air Ventures Flying School, which he started in 2010. Auclair holds a Bachelor of Science degree in aviation and is currently pursuing a master's degree in space operations.

Auclair started flight training in 2005 and has been a flight instructor since 2008. He is qualified to fly and teach in a range of airplanes from Piper Cubs to Citation jets and has dedicated his professional career to the development and improvement of the flight training industry.

Auclair and his school have received awards from AOPA, including the 2022 Eastern region Best Flight School, and 2023 Eastern region Best Flight Instructor. When he is not flying or teaching, Auclair enjoys spending time flying his Stinson 108 and exploring the world with his family.

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK
bstanton@nafinet.org


Fred Gibbs

FRED GIBBS
Earns Second NAFI Master Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Fred Gibbs has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is Gibbs' second NAFI Master Accreditation.

Gibbs is the retired CEO of his aviation consulting firm, The ABC Group, founded in January 2000. The company specializes in air traffic issues with the FAA and many of the aviation industry's major air traffic players, including Boeing Air Traffic Management, Raytheon, DynCorp, DME, Washington Consulting Group, and Lockheed Martin.

He currently runs Wiseman Aviation flight school in Flagstaff, Arizona, and is its only flight instructor providing more than 1,000 hours of ground and flight training per year. He is a former second vice president of the Arizona Pilots Association, was director of its safety and education programs through 2018, and is currently director emeritus of safety and education programs. He also served as a safety officer for the Civil Air Patrol squadron in Flagstaff, as well as a flight check pilot and certified search and rescue mission pilot.

Gibbs has been a pilot since 1973, holding ATP, multiengine, commercial SMEL, CFII, and remote (drone) pilot certificates. He has been an instructor pilot since 1976 with more than 16,000 hours of instruction time given with a total of slightly more than 19,000 hours total. He has also flown 2,500 hours in his own Bellanca Super Viking.

Gibbs has been a safety counselor/FAAST team lead representative since 1973 and was an FAA designated pilot examiner. He was the 2003 Safety Counselor of the Year for the state of Arizona.

As a finale to his flying career, in 2023 he will receive the FAA's Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award for 50 years of safe flight. He has also been immortalized on the National Air and Space Museum's Wall of Honor at the Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum at Dulles Airport in Chantilly, Virginia.

MATTHEW MCDANIEL
Earns 11th NAFI Master Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Matthew McDaniel has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is McDaniel's 11th NAFI Master Accreditation.

McDaniel has been an active CFI for more than 32 years and has specialized in Cirrus and other technically advanced aircraft instruction for the past 22 years. He is a Platinum Cirrus Standardized Instructor Pilot. He also enjoys teaching in antique taildraggers, such as the Globe/Temco Swift. He has


Matthew McDaniel

MASTER CFIs

flown more than 125 aircraft types and holds eight turbine aircraft type ratings.

As a freelance aviation author, McDaniel has had nearly 150 articles published in about a dozen aviation magazines and online. He currently flies as a Boeing 737 series captain for a major U.S. airline. As the founder and owner of Progressive Aviation Services LLC, he operates out of his home area of Milwaukee, where he lives with his wife and two children.

LEX CROSETT

Earns NAFI Master Ground Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Lex Crosett has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Ground Instructor. Crosett has previously been accredited as a Master Flight Instructor.

Crosett has been flight instructing since the age of 18 and enjoys working with pilots at every learning stage. Crosett is an FAA Gold Seal flight instructor, and he holds airline transport pilot and flight instructor certificates in both airplanes and helicopters.

In addition to flight instructing to pay for his college education, Crosett flew for air ambulance, freight, and charter organizations, as well as for a commuter airline in New England. Crosett is a FAASTeam volunteer representative and is active as an Angel Flight and Patient Airlift Services command pilot.

Crosett is a Cirrus Standardized Instructor Pilot and teaches in Cirrus SR aircraft at Mike Goulian Aviation, a Cirrus Platinum Training Center in Massachusetts.

Lex Crosett

Robert Mitchell

ROBERT MITCHELL

Earns Second NAFI Master Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member Robert Mitchell has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is Mitchell's second NAFI Master Accreditation.

Mitchell has dedicated most of his adult life to military and civilian flight instruction. He has been an active FAA certificated flight instructor for 34 consecutive years and has flown more than 8,000 flight hours, including 500 combat flight hours. He currently works for CAE, a Canadian manufacturer of simulation technologies and training services to airlines as an advanced instructor pilot, specializing in upset prevention and recovery training in support of the U.S. Army Fixed-Wing Flight Training program in Dothan, Alabama. He owns and operates Strikehawk Aviation, a full-time flight training school in Enterprise, Alabama. Mitchell volunteers much of his time to organizations such as the EAA Young Eagles program and the Troy University Air Force ROTC You Can Fly Scholarship program.

Mitchell recently retired after serving 30 years in the United States Army. As a career aeromedical evacuation officer, he

served in numerous command and staff positions, including two combat tours. In 2004-2005, he served as a medevac battalion commander in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He retired in 2014 with the rank of colonel. He is a graduate of the University of Toledo, where he was a starting wide receiver for the Rocket football team. He holds master's degrees from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and the U.S. Army War College. He is a member of the Distinguished Alumni and Athletic Hall of Fame at his high school, as well as a member of the DUSTOFF Association Hall of Fame.

JAMES "STEVE" RUTLAND

Earns 11th NAFI Master Instructor Accreditation

The National Association of Flight Instructors is proud to announce that NAFI member James "Steve" Rutland has earned accreditation as a NAFI Master Flight Instructor. This is Rutland's 11th NAFI Master Accreditation.

Rutland is a professional pilot and flight instructor with 50 years of aviation experience, beginning in 1973 at Murray, Kentucky. He completed his first FAA flight instructor certificate in 1978 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Rutland attended the U.S. Army flight school in 1975 and is a Master Army Aviator. He is also a U.S. Coast Guard aviator, having served as a search and rescue pilot stationed in Los Angeles, California. Rutland has 38 years of experience as a government civilian flight instructor for the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence in Fort Novosel, Alabama.

Rutland holds three airline transport pilot ratings (ASEL, AMEL, and helicopter), five FAA flight instructor ratings (CFI-ASEL, AMEL, helicopter, CFII airplane, and helicopter), and two type ratings. At Fort Novosel, Rutland completed 10 different military instructor pilot courses. He has flown 27 different aircraft, with 21,000 accident-free flight hours. Rutland has almost 20,000 hours in the cockpit training flight students — 17,250 in flight and 2,200 in full-motion simulators. He has almost 40 years in the classroom teaching ground school and has served as a mentor to countless military and civilian flight instructors.

Rutland has trained officers from the five branches of the United States armed forces. He has trained military flight students of every rank from warrant officer candidate to Master warrant officer five, and from second lieutenant to colonel. Flight instruction programs taught include primary, instrument, combat skills, aero scout, night vision goggles, advanced aircraft, and instructor pilot qualification in five different military aircraft. He has served as a UH-60 standardization instructor pilot and instrument flight examiner.


James "Steve" Rutland

Working part-time under 14 CFR Part 141 and 61 flight schools, he has trained airplane single and multiengine land student pilots for private, commercial, instrument, airline transport pilot, and CFI, CFII, and MEI certificates.

Over his career, Rutland has earned awards including the Embry-Riddle Alumni Achievement Award, three-time FAA Regional Flight Instructor of the Year, Department of the Army Civilian of the Year Award, Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award for 28 years of service, Order of St. Michael Award for significant service to Army aviation, and the Sikorsky Helicopter Rescue Award.

The Right Seat

Your questions answered by industry experts

By Jen Watson, Dana McIlwain, Josh Watson

Question

My student failed their checkride, and they are upset about the impact this may have on future hiring with the airlines. How can I reassure them and help them move forward? I feel like they are blaming me, somewhat unfairly.

Answer

Jen: Ah, the blame game — the it's-not-me-it's-you conversation. Whatever you want to call it, this dance is as old as time. *How could I possibly be to blame when you're the instructor who should have prepared me better? Why didn't you tell me I wasn't ready?* As you growl with frustration because your student was the one pushing to take their checkride, remember that few people are capable of publicly accepting responsibility even if they know deep down, they are at least partially to blame.

The reasons for checkride failure are endless — tough examiner, area of weakness, situations they've never encountered, stress, lack of sleep, etc. My own student failures are most commonly due to one of two reasons: nerves causing a complete brain malfunction or an area I failed to accurately assess their readiness of. Both of these main causes should be recognized, and steps taken to prepare them for the checkride environment (stage checks are great ways to do this), but we can't win them all. Failure is a valuable lesson, too. The ability to learn from it and move on is key. How well your student can do this is yet another teachable moment for you in your instructor/therapist role.

When I was on an airline hiring board, one of my favorite questions to ask an interviewee was if they had ever failed a checkride, and if so, why they failed. Seeing as most people have failed at least one, the *why* part was the dirt I was interested in. Did they blame the DPE for being too tough? Was it all their CFIs fault for not preparing them properly? Did they take any responsibility? My follow-up question was, *What did you learn from your failure(s)?* This was the crux of what I was after. When working in a crew environment, it is vital to be able to listen to and learn from more experienced pilots and grow from mistakes so they don't continue to happen. Blaming others and not learning from our deficiencies is not the way to become a leader people enjoy working with.

It was a rare applicant who admitted that while the DPE did ask challenging questions, they realized they were weak on that subject. Who said they went back and studied more, did more ground/flight with their instructor, and came back prepared. That they learned to overcome the failure by admitting they were rushing to take the checkride and thought they could get by even though they felt a little bit unprepared. And the next time they didn't rush because they really wanted to know their stuff. I wish this was the normal response, but sadly, I usually heard the blame-everyone-else answer. A few even got upset and angry when talking to me about it. Danger, Will Robinson, that is not going to endear you to your interviewer. Abort, abort!

Instructors can do better. We need to be the voice of reason by preparing our students as best as possible for success and failure. My advice for avoiding and later coaching your student through a failure is the following:

1. Make sure you truly feel your student is prepared. When you sign that endorsement, you are vouching for them as a competent (private, instrument-rated, commercial, etc.) pilot. Don't take that lightly, and do not be pressured into signing them off if they are marginal. It's not likely they will seek more training and improve *after* the checkride if they are resisting training *before* it.
2. Encourage your student to tell you if they feel they are weak on certain tasks. You are a team working toward the mutual goal of them getting their pilot certificate/rating, which means they should feel comfortable confiding in you when they don't know something. Don't wait until the examiner finds out they

barely have rote-level knowledge of weather theory. DPEs are well-practiced magicians at sussing out weakness.

3. Have your student do stage checks and/or fly with a few tough instructors. This will allow both of you to see how they handle the stress of being assessed by someone else and then work to overcome it.
4. Make sure your student understands that even the most prepared applicant can have a bad day. If they wake up exhausted, stressed, or otherwise not feeling on top of their game, they should reschedule. If they encounter these symptoms after the checkride begins, teach them how to discontinue rather than go fly if their IMSAFE isn't safe. It's hard to be grilled for hours and then fly perfectly even on a day where we slept well, ate well, and weren't stressed out. Flying despite these detriments demonstrates poor decision-making and lack of self-evaluation.
5. If all above measures fail and they bust their checkride anyway, coach them about the right attitude in dealing with it. The airlines won't usually blink about a couple of failures if the applicant accepts their part in it and grows because of it. Being willing to accept responsibility, willing to learn, and willing to move on from a mistake are keys to continued development. We don't learn much from the easy flights, other than to enjoy them. And enjoy them, we do.

When I was on an airline hiring board, one of my favorite questions to ask an interviewee was if they had ever failed a checkride, and if so, why they failed.

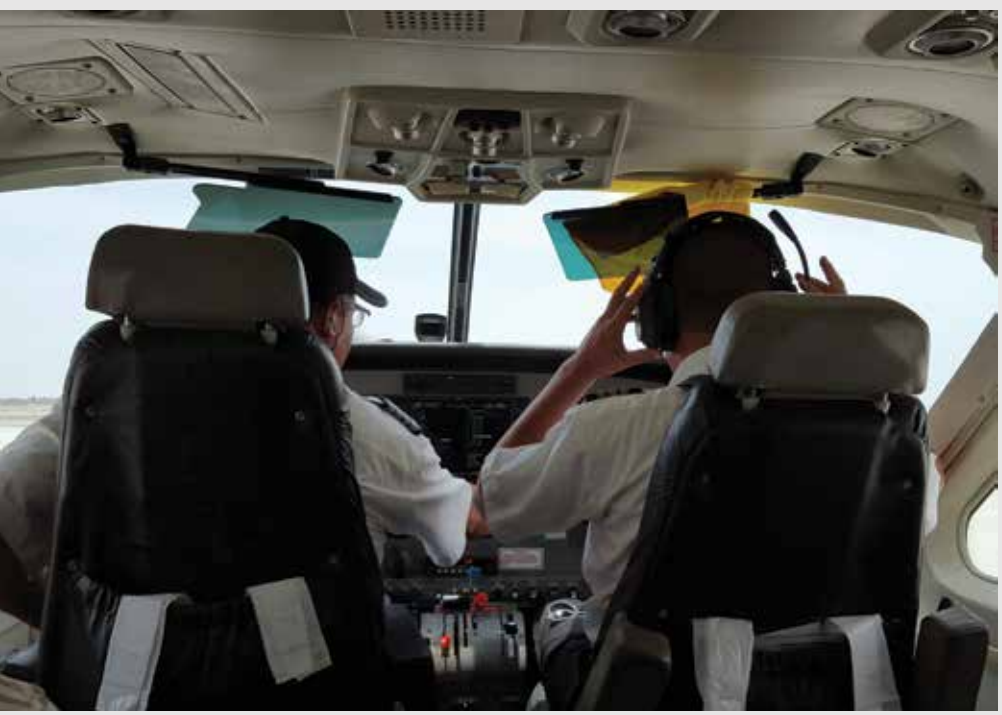
Question

When I have a discrepancy with an airplane, what should I say to maintenance?

Answer

Josh: When an instructor is with a student during preflight, in the run-up area, or flying and a discrepancy comes up, information gathered can really help maintenance get your aircraft corrected quickly. Some squawk descriptions that we as maintainers get are of little use. I recently had one report that simply said, "Right mag in-op." There was a problem with the mag, and a little more detail about what the pilot was experiencing would have greatly aided maintenance in correcting the problem. A better description would have been, "During run-up when the ignition key was turned to the right position, we experienced a 250 rpm drop and the engine was running rough." With a clear explanation of the issue and the conditions in which it occurred, maintenance can quickly diagnose and repair the issue.

Both of the above squawk descriptions direct attention to a fault in the ignition system. The second one allows the mechanic to skip the ground run and go straight to troubleshooting. The best information we get from pilots is the details for the condition and what the pilot was doing at the time. This helps us narrow our focus quickly. Try to avoid diagnosing the issue for maintenance because often critical pieces of information get omitted that way. I also recommend following up with maintenance after the squawk is cleared to find out what it was and how it was fixed. This will help to develop your knowledge base about problems and fixes that you can use to make decisions in the future. My wife has developed her maintenance knowledge base to the point that I can usually pinpoint the cause of a squawk and its remedy before I even open up the airplane.



Have a question?
Email rightseat@nafinet.org

Jen and Josh Watson are co-owners of a flight school in San Jose, California. Jen Watson holds certificates for ATP AMEL, CPL ASEL and ASES, CFI, CFII, MEI, and AGI. She is an FAA Gold Seal flight instructor and two-time NAFI Master Flight Instructor. Josh Watson is an A&P mechanic with inspection authorization. He earned his instrument rating and is pursuing a commercial pilot certificate with the eventual goal of becoming a CFI. Dana McIlwain earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in flight training and worked as an academic director for a Part 141 school. She has been a flight instructor since 2015.

CFIs: Commodity or Trusted Partner?

Connecting with prospective clients

By George Charles Allen

When I meet with prospective clients to discuss the pathway to earn a private pilot certificate, I am immediately asked: How much will it cost? How long will it take? How many hours do I need?

This is precisely where many would lose control of the conversation. Attention is drawn to dollars, metrics, inputs, and requirements. The school and its instructors have become another commodity to be price shopped.

While these are important questions that do need to be answered, the average flight training representative is likely not yet skilled in the art of customer service or relationship-building and would be inclined to respond directly to the prospective client's questions as though they are sharing a recipe for making the world's most amazing chocolate cake.

In conversation with prospective clients, many flight training providers point back to their website or provide the information in a transactional manner. As pilots and instructors, we have memorized answers for these questions, but the response sounds routine, dull, and unin-

spiring. "It will take you about 60 to 70 hours, which is the national average, about $14,000 to $18,000, and will take a year if you commit to training one to two times per week," etc. The conversation ends. All the ingredients are on the table. But a deeper dimension is missing.

When building your aviation website, you've likely looked around to see how your peers handle this line of questioning. On some flight training sites, you may find a vaguely familiar, often confusing, or misleading tangle of rules with some direct copy and paste regulations, hours, and requirements, leaving the prospective client to decipher the meaning.

Learning to fly is, of course, not an inexpensive endeavor. It takes a serious commitment of both time and money. What that time and money buys you, however, is ultimately priceless. And almost never spoken about.

The Silent Question

Prospective clients want to connect with someone from your organization on a human level — to explore their growing passion and see if your school is the best place for them to personally invest. They want to know that you will care about their well-being and make an equal investment in their success. That is why a prospective client is really calling or visiting. Not merely to talk about hours, requirements, and cost — presumably, they already did their research.

When we speak with prospective clients, it is imperative we look at aviation with fresh eyes. Flight schools and instructors are often perceived as gatekeepers. Instead, we should portray ourselves as welcoming ambassadors to general aviation. While it is easy to be caught in the wake turbulence of jargon, acronyms, and regulatory frameworks, we ought to remember what it is like to observe aviation from the outside: with pure excitement, wonder, and awe.

Instead of having the rote, well-worn conversation, we should get to know the client by asking a lot of good and genuine questions. Instead of listing facts and regulations, construct a narrative of adventure, one that leads the client to discover that becoming an aviator is a joyfully challenging path to self-enrichment, and ultimately why your school is where they should invest their best effort and hard-earned dollars. This is how we can ensure a seamless transition from a prospective client on the fence to a lifetime aviator.

Learning to fly is the pursuit of mastery of an art and science. A transformation and elevation of the self. It teaches patience, persistence, and self-reliance. The important balance between independence and teamwork. We endeavor to make good — and constantly better — decisions through continued learning, practice, and experience. We study the daring aviation and aerospace pioneers who risked their lives, and the polymathic science they discovered that makes it possible for our dreams to literally take flight.

Flying allows us to rise above the trivialities of daily life and immerse ourselves in a vibrant community that provides meaningful and lasting gifts to our development as human beings.

When we first became aviators, we began to see the world from an entirely new perspective. And now, we have the opportunity to encourage others to join us in this journey.

Become a Trusted Partner

Next time a prospective client calls or visits, be sure to pause before reflexively answering how much money and time it will take to earn a pilot certificate.

Flight training is about people. People seeking to transform themselves, gain new abilities, and explore the world in novel ways. We must learn who our clients are, what motivates them to pioneer the skies, and how we can help them achieve their goals.

Take the time and opportunity to have a genuine conversation. Ask questions. Build a trusted connection based upon the value you can provide as a partner in their journey. Explore with them the benefits one can derive from the knowledge, self-enlightenment, and freedom that flight unlocks within us. Share in the joy and excitement that aviation can bring into their lives.

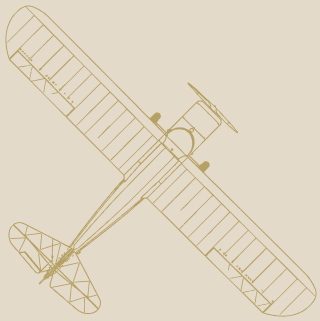
What clients are really seeking is to develop a genuine and unique relationship with a trusted partner on their journey into the skies. If you integrate this into the culture of aviation education, your offering will stand out as unique and not just another commodity to be price-shopped. We all have airplanes, instructors, and a facility after all. By developing genuine relationships with clients, your school's reputation will grow organically as you attract, by leaps and bounds, loyal and excited aviators-in-training who value a high-quality experience of discovery, adventure, and self-transformation that will last a lifetime.

***George Charles Allen**, CFII, MSc, and FRAeS, is an experienced aviator, consultant, and educator. He is a NAFI board member and Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.*

Back in the Air

Returning to teaching after a decade

By Joe Clark



Looking across the ramp, I saw Bob Meder. I could not remember the last time we had talked; it had been a time ago. Bob was not the only person I had failed to communicate with in a long time; there were others, too many people to be honest. I had been, if you will, out of the loop. Over years preceding my conversation with Bob, I was going through what most would describe as the most horrific time of my life. My wife was terminally ill, and as a consequence of the IMSAFE checklist (illness, medication, stress, alcohol, fatigue, and emotion), I grounded myself. During those days, I was unfit to fly — and knew it. Standing on the ramp at SUN 'n FUN, Bob asked me how I was doing and put a bug in my ear. He said I should write about the experience, that others could learn from it.

Ardis, my wife, was a girl I had a crush on in the 10th grade, and even though she ignored me way back then, we accidentally connected in 1998 when I was complaining about my phone service to BellSouth. She was the supervisor pulling duty that weekend. We married two years later. Then she became very ill, and during this time my first priority was taking care of her, and then teaching at school, and also keeping our business alive. I would wake up in the morning and start doing what I needed to do just to survive that one day. I was working 14 to 18 hours a day doing what I had to do, and I did it every day. I felt as though I was in the Navy again, between ports of call. Days passed, turning into weeks, and the months went by, turning into years. I did not realize so much time had passed.

Then in September 2017, my wife passed.

A couple of my friends and colleagues from work told me later they were afraid I would also die. My honest response was, "What? Me? I'm fine." I genuinely believed it. Some of my friends urged me to step back and analyze how I was doing. When I did, I was surprised, and maybe a little in shock. They were right, and I did not realize I was so precariously close to the end myself. It is a common trait among caregivers. When tasked with taking care of someone you love, you are going to do whatever you have to, no matter the cost. What is that term we aviators use — situational awareness?

I paid attention to my minister who told me to avoid making important decisions for a year following her death. It was good advice. During this time, I was thinking about what I was going to do going forward. I knew I wanted to get back into flying, and I wondered where I stood in the scheme of being not only a rusty pilot, but also a rusty CFI.

Teaching at my university kept me up on the theoretical, but I wondered about the practical. I didn't have long to wonder about it because my friend Mike Holoman contacted me and said, "It's time."

"Time? Time for what?" I asked.

"Time to get back in the saddle," he said. "Let's go fly."

I was shocked when I realized it had been more than 10 years since the last time I put hand to yoke and feet to pedals. Mike graciously offered me the left seat to his pristine Cessna 172. I told him I didn't know the terms of his insurance policy and that I had more time in the right seat of 172s than in the left. So that is how we flew, him in his left seat and me at my old instructor's station. And he made no bones about it; he said I would be aviating, navigating, and running the radios.

I thought we would only fly around the local airport for 30 minutes or so, but after a while, Mike turned to his friend in the back seat and asked if he had any time constraints and then asked me the same question. When we both replied no, Mike suggested we fly up to the Flagler County Airport for dinner.

Here is the amazing part about this little tale — I reached up to the radio and automatically dialed in the approach control frequency from a memory of more than 10 years ago. I started talking, took the squawk code and entered it, and was amazed that it seemed just as natural as it did a decade ago.

On that first flight, I was able to make a decent landing at dusk, and three more in the dark at the home drome when we returned. I was satisfied with my first performance following such a long break from flying, but still knew I had work to do to truly get back in the saddle. As a flight instructor, I was critical of all the mistakes on the flight. As we all know, critique is the job of a flight instructor.

So, now I knew it was definitely time to get back into the game.

I had mentioned to David Hipschman, NAFI's previous director of publications and editor, that I wanted to get a Champ to begin and run a tailwheel endorsement

business. Indeed, those thoughts turned into an article published in the Summer 2020 issue of *Mentor*. David prompted me into writing the rest of the story. I have now reached a point where I can create the rest of that story, along with the one Bob Meder wanted me to write, both as part of this important article about being a rusty pilot as well as a rusty CFI.

The First Part — Grounding Myself

More than likely, you have read accident reports and come away thinking, "That guy should have never been flying." None of us wants to give up flying for whatever reason. Which is to say, those of us who are passionately in love with the art of flying will do anything to *keep* flying. However, the thought process should change from *doing anything* to keep flying to *doing everything* to stay alive. Flying when you should not be flying is a quick way to never fly again. The important aspect of this paragraph is recognizing the need to do what you have to. If you are not ready or right to fly, don't fly.

There are any number of reasons from the IMSAFE checklist to serve as good reason not to fly, just pick one. Here is the rub, however — a pilot has to be absolutely honest with their medical fitness to fly. Sometimes that is a hard thing to do, and as I previously mentioned, when my friends said they were worried about me dying, I did not recognize it. As a pilot, you might be a little bit too close to make that objective decision as to whether you should, or should not, fly. I think most of us have a pretty good idea and can be honest with ourselves.

> I reached up to the radio and automatically dialed in the approach control frequency from a memory of more than 10 years ago. I started talking, took the squawk code and entered it, and was amazed that it seemed just as natural as it did a decade ago.

Sometimes making the decision not to fly can be hard, hence the need for honesty. If it is a situation where you might not be able to fly for a couple of days, the decision is easier. On the other hand, if it is something serious such as what I faced, it could be really difficult. When it comes to what is making you question your fitness to fly, some aspects of the IMSAFE checklist are easy to apply. If you're sick, you're going to get well soon. If you are on a medication for that sickness or something else, you will typically reach the end of the prescription and be ready to fly again. Alcohol is also a no-brainer unless you've got a serious drinking problem. The other three — stress, fatigue, and emotion — are more serious.

Stress and emotion combined can outright fatigue a person. If the fatigue is short term, it is not such a problem. Long term or chronic fatigue, however, is possibly a dangerous situation. It could be a condition so critical as to be fatal. As I experienced, it may take outside observation to analyze the criticality; the fatigue and stress may actually keep you from executing a correct self-analysis.

Something else I can tell you about the

experience is that once you have passed through that valley and have healed, when you look back you will be amazed by what you went through and how good it feels when you are over the problem. You are now capable of making new plans.

So, on with the start of a new business, innovative ideas, and great fun!

The Second Part — Finding *Rocinante*

Back in the summer of 2020 when I told David Hipschman about wanting to get back into teaching in tailwheel airplanes, tailwheel airplanes were not easy to come by on the rental market. I knew I would have to find my own. The perfect airplane for the job was the Aeronca 7AC Champ. Twenty years ago, Champs were plentiful and cheap. Not so much today.

The Aeronca Champ first flew at the end of April in 1944, and more than 7,000 of the 7AC model were produced by the end of 1948. The line continued by different manufacturers producing more than 10,000 variants before production ended. Over time, one of the problems with tailwheel airplanes was that the number of airplanes had dwindled as a result of accidents. After an accident, some serviceable aircraft gained weight with repairs, and with the technological advances of the past couple of decades, a few airplanes got heftier with added equipment. This was one of the problems I faced in searching for an airplane.

The gross weight of a standard 7AC is 1,220 pounds, with a typical empty weight of about 740 pounds when it came off the line. This allows a useful load of 480 pounds. Take out the fuel load of 78 pounds, and this leaves 402 pounds for pilot and passenger. Back in the day, this was satisfactory. Today, however, we tend to be at least 200 pounds each, if not a little more.

I spent about a year looking at different airplanes. I wasn't looking for a pristine example, but I wanted to find one that looked good and was a safe working airplane. The main problem I discovered with most of the airplanes I evaluated was that they were overweight. Many of the airplanes I looked at during that year were more than 800 pounds empty, some well over that number.

After looking all over the country, I found *Rocinante* right in my backyard. Why the name *Rocinante*? *Rocinante* was the name of the knight's horse in Miguel de Cervantes' novel Don Quixote. And like the knight, I may be out and on my way to joust with windmills.

What makes the Champ the perfect airplane for this mission? Tandem seating, stick and rudder, good working airspeeds, and honesty.

The Third Part — Actually Knocking Off the Rust

Like Rip Van Winkle who slept for two decades and woke to a completely changed and new world, I felt like I awakened after being asleep for only one decade — to a new and slightly different industry. The Practical Test Standards — gone and replaced by something called the Airman Certification Standards, which the FAA put in place in June 2018. Something called IACRA replaced the old paper 8710-1 Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application.

While those changes were eye-opening, nothing compared to the way we now navigate!

Paper charts — gone! Now we can carry every chart from across the entire United States in our iPhone or iPad. Of course, from teaching at my college, I knew the students were using ForeFlight

and loving it. However, being from the old school, I preferred the old-fashioned paper chart used with a No. 2 pencil, plotter, and whiz wheel.

Until I started using ForeFlight …

Wow! Now I get it … I realize it will be hard to make my current private student navigate the old way because he is all about iPads and technology. It might be tough teaching him paper and pencil only because the new ways are easier. The challenge is teaching him the fundamentals so that in the event of power loss, the military restricting GPS signals, or whatever, he will have the skills to confidently find his way to safe harbor. Some things, I discovered, never change. There is no better constant than a line on a chart and a magnetic compass.

Thinking back to the old days when I was a hard-working flight instructor, I remembered all the time I spent teaching fundamental flight training, math, and how things worked in finding one's way from one place on the planet to another. I remembered all the time I spent doing touch-and-goes, slow flight, and stall practice. I thought back to all the flights in which I witnessed students take awe in this magical process we call flying.

I thought about all the responsibilities of the job and how important it is — truly. It is the most important job in aviation, the most rewarding, and the least renumerated. I thought back to the time I was strictly a flight instructor and the skills, tricks, tips, and knowledge I put together to do the job. Did I still have those things in me?

As I again became proficient at flying airplanes, I was constantly analyzing and thinking about what I was doing and how and what I would pass on to students. I wondered if I would remember it all. I pondered about staying ahead of students. And like that first flight, I was pleasantly surprised when I started working with "real" students again to discover I still retained the quick reflexes required to keep students (the airplane and myself) safe.

I also discovered the industry had changed. Quite a lot.

I started looking at how flight schools and independent instructors at various FBOs around the country were teaching the new pilots of this generation how to fly. It seemed as though there was now more emphasis on technology rather than stick and rudder skills. Young flight instructors were teaching their students to depend and rely on ADS-B rather than looking outside for traffic. That was kind of alarming because there are many airplanes, ultralights, homebuilts, and other aircraft that are not required to have ADS-B or radios, and the only way to see and avoid these aircraft is by looking out the front of the airplane. I was amused by an NTSB report of three people in a Cessna 172 taxiing out for a lesson. The student was head-down on his iPad, the instructor was fiddling with the radios, and the observer in the back seat was the only one who saw impending disaster. He yelled, "*Stop*!" But it was too late; their 172 ate the back of another airplane at the hold short line.

While the young instructors of today could teach more of the "old stuff," I am amazed at the depth of their knowledge using different GPS units and other software on their iPads and phones. They truly were born with this technology, and they know it like no other generation. Their teaching technique may be a little different from past decades, but they really know their stuff and have been instrumental in answering all my questions about iPhones, iPads, and new GPS procedures. (Dang, I might be a closet millennial!)

As I am getting back my sea legs, I become more aware of everything a student pilot must learn, and all that a competent flight instructor must pass along. Like the first flight following Ardis' passing, I am pleased with all the skills and knowledge I retained from the life of long ago. I am also ecstatic about how quickly I am adding to and reinforcing that pot of knowledge.

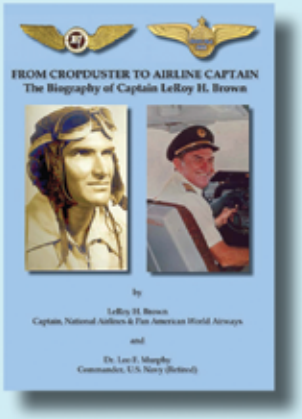
I also have a feeling, no, I absolutely know, Ardis is looking over my shoulder and is pleased to see me getting back into the sky.

Joe Clark is a journalism graduate of the University of Florida and a frequent contributor to NAFI's Mentor *and other aviation magazines. He flew as an attack pilot in the U.S. Navy in addition to serving as faculty at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He now focuses on tailwheel training in his Aeronca Champ,* Rocinante*, and is rebuilding his Cessna 170B. Clark's experience includes dual given in aircraft from Cubs to Aztecs, as well as Part 135 flying. He is the 2016 recipient of NAFI's Greg J. Laslo Excellence in Writing Award.*

Great Aviation Books
...at special prices for NAFI members

Lost in Heaven: The Story of 1st Lt. James R. Polkinghorne Jr.

These are the stories of the famed Tuskegee Airmen and 1st Lieutenant James R. Polkinghorne Jr., one of their own who did not come home. It is a well-documented account with many illustrations of the time.



After starting a career of cropdusting, more than 35,000 flight hours later, Captain LeRoy Brown stepped out of the cockpit of a Pan American World Airways DC-10 to end a commercial aviation career that spanned nearly five decades.

From Cropduster to Airline Captain

In *Shadow Flight*, Harrison Jones has spun an aviation tale of kidnapping, drug running, and intrigue. In the telling of the tale, he covers almost every aspect of aviation from flight instructing to charter to the airlines. It is really a gripping tale all aviators can learn from.

Shadow Flight

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The Art of Teaching

What a lifetime CFI wants you to know

By Steve Rutland

In February 2023 at age 71, I returned to flight instructing at Fort Novosel, Alabama. I previously retired from that position in 2019 having been employed there as a flight instructor for 37 years. As I picked up my flight gear, I reflected back to when I was issued my first flight jacket, almost 50 years before. I dreamed of the day that I could sew on my wings.

My year at flight school was not any easy one. There were many difficult days, and many times wondering if I would ever complete the course. Flight students were graded each day with paper grade slips. They came in many colors: white, yellow, green, blue, and the dreaded pink slip for unsatisfactory performance. My instructors had no compunction about putting color into my life. My grade folder looked like a neon rainbow. After failing one checkride, I graduated last in my class, but I did graduate. The general officer who gave me my wings must have understood. He advised me that the wings I wore were the same as anyone else. It was up to me to make a difference. Since that time, I have worn many different sets of wings, some sliver and some gold. For more than 30 years, wings with a star and wreath. No one else in my class, that I know of, is still flying today.

After flying on active duty for eight years in both the Army and Coast Guard, I started as an instrument flight instructor in the UH-1 working for a government contractor at Fort Novosel in 1982. In 1984, I was employed at the Department of the Army Civilians. I trained students in the UH-1, the OH-58, and the UH-60 Black Hawk. In 2012, I retired from U.S. Civil Service and went to work again for the government contractor teaching primary flight training in the TH-67. After completing the UH-72 instructor pilot course this year, I now train students in that aircraft. I completed my first FAA flight instructor certificate in 1978. I have trained civil flight students for all the ratings in both airplane single- and multi-engine land. That includes private through airline transport pilot, flight instructor, and instrument flight instructor.

After working a lifetime as a flight instructor, what have I

learned that can be passed on to others? The three key words of being a flight instructor are **knowledge**, **proficiency**, and **professionalism**. It goes without saying that instructors must continuously study to keep up with the constant changes of aviation. If anyone rests too long on their laurels, they will soon lose the knowledge they need to teach. Being and staying proficient is a definite challenge for instructors who do not fly on a regular basis, and when changing to other aircraft. Proficiency requires time in the specific aircraft type. If the instructor is not proficient, acceptable flying skill cannot be demonstrated to the student. Professionalism is a single word with a wide range of meaning and application.

> After failing one checkride, I graduated last in my class, but I did graduate. The general officer who gave me my wings must have understood. He advised me that the wings I wore were the same as anyone else. It was up to me to make a difference.

Effective communication, people skills, and management skills are often addressed as being necessary to be an effective instructor. The instructor must learn how to clearly express what they want to say. Being able to convey easy-to-understand teaching points and ideas is critical in maintaining a pleasant learning environment. Then the instructor must effectively listen to determine if and how well their point was received. The ability to listen allows the instructor to realize and understand the student's concerns and issues. Students need to feel that it is not the intent of the instructor to disregard their questions and their viewpoints.

Management skills involve organization, time management, and development of interesting and practical lessons that facilitate learning. Well-organized lesson plans reduce distractions, enhance time available for training, and prioritize essential training objectives. The cockpit is a terrible classroom; it has more than enough distractions.

One of the most important teaching talents is the sensitivity skill. No instructor can pour knowledge into the student's head like pouring water from a pitcher into a glass. The instructor can, at least to a degree, get inside of the student's head. All students are different; they respond differently to different teaching techniques. Only a few are naturals. Only a few will be able to duplicate the flying skills demonstrated by the instructor on the first or second attempt. Most will require many repetitions. Patience is a virtue. On the flight line where I have worked for so long, there is a cliché called down in the trenches. What it means is the day-to-day process of trying every possible trick the instructor can think of to enable the student to meet the training standards in the limited time available. These are the tricks of the trade — the magic that turns on the light. It is the skill to relate to the personality of the individual student, to comprehend what makes them tick, and then to use that knowledge to enhance learning. It is not something the instructor will learn overnight. It takes time to learn to read people, to anticipate their actions, to pick up on their attitudes and feelings.

The flight instructor in most cases is not a trained psychologist. They do observe and evaluate human behavior. Human behavior doesn't change very much. The carrot is much more effective than the stick. The stick may be necessary — use prudence and consider the harm it may cause. Praise does stimulate remembering. Praise and encouragement are often necessary to enhance student confidence for solo and other flight tasks that may cause anxiety and fear. Inspiring student confidence is a major responsibility. Making sure the student is well trained will definitely boost their self-image. Self-confidence allows the student to make better decisions, and to develop the self-reliance needed to safely manage difficult situations. On every training flight find ways to make the student feel more in charge. Let them know that you trust their ability and their judgement. If the student senses that the instructor has confidence in them, they will have confidence in themselves.

All learning is a change in behavior as a result of experience. The instructor's job is to develop and tailor the precise training experiences that will result in the desired behavior changes. That is the art of teaching. If I could put it into a bottle, I would be able to afford the airplane of my dreams.

There are many good reasons to be a flight instructor. The instructor must remember that it is all about the student and not about themself. Whatever goals the instructor may have, the student's goals and aspirations must come first. When the student is in the learning plateau and little or no progress is being made, the instructor may feel just as frustrated as the student does. If you teach long enough, you will certainly see those times when you are chopping as hard as you can, and no chips are flying (down in the trenches). Don't give up. Both the instructor and the student will often struggle together to achieve success. The student learns to fly, and the instructor has the satisfaction of knowing that because of them, the student is a safe and competent pilot. These are worthy accomplishments for both.

Steve Rutland *has been flying for 50 years. He is a triple-rated ATP with five FAA flight instructor ratings in airplanes and helicopters. He has almost 20,000 hours in the cockpit training flight students. Rutland is a 11-time NAFI Master Flight Instructor.*

Mastering Decision-Making

Tips for teaching good judgment

By Greg Wilson

One of the most important skills new pilots need to master is good decision-making, but how do we teach that? I think we can all agree that teaching new pilots to consistently make good decisions is a challenging task. While this skill varies based on our personalities and many other factors, safe and proficient pilots must make good decisions. In fact, the risk management section of each task in the Airman Certification Standards is an evaluation of decision-making, an indication of the importance of decision-making in all phases of flight.

One of the ways we can teach decision-making is to study the poor decisions of those who went before us by looking at accident and incident reports. While the probable cause statement is important, what we really want to know is this: How did this happen? Why would an experienced and qualified pilot make a series of decisions that culminated in this accident? That is always the question that nags me and one that I ask students. While we may not be able to fully answer these questions, we can surely look at all the relevant human factors and glean some insights.

Before we take a look at one particular accident, let me say that I always approach these questions of why or how with a degree of respect and humility. Often, we are

looking at the decisions of a fellow pilot who has paid the ultimate price. It is always sad to consider the human loss, but we owe it to the profession and the next generation of pilots to be inquisitive and learn from these mistakes. In no way do I suggest the pilot in this accident wasn't qualified or question his motives or skill. In fact, both men who died in this accident lived about 20 minutes from me, so this fact adds to the humanity we don't always consider in accident reports.

The accident in question occurred on December 10, 2021, about 13 miles southeast of Stuart Powell Field (KDVK). The airport is just south of Danville, Kentucky, and the accident area is near the small community of Crab Orchard. Looking around that area, it is mostly flat with gently rolling terrain that is typical of Central Kentucky. This accident resonated with me, and it's an eye-opener for our students, because Crab Orchard is the name of one of our practice areas and is about 15 miles southwest of our airport. Our students have flown right over the accident site many times during their training. This is an important point to note, because students learn little from an accident or incident if it doesn't resonate with them. This particular accident occurred right in our backyard and involved a private pilot flying a general aviation airplane, so they can definitely connect with it.

The accident pilot had a private certificate with no instrument rating, and the accident aircraft was a Beech V35 that was owned by the pilot. One passenger was also in the airplane, and they had flown from Florida that morning with stops in Florida and Georgia for fuel. The accident occurred at 4:51 p.m. local time, and the ceiling at KDVK was 500 feet overcast. ADS-B data indicated the airplane was flying at 300-400 feet AGL just prior to the accident. Although the terrain in the area is largely small rolling hills, there are a number of towers in that area in the 300- to 400-foot range. Just prior to the accident, ADS-B data indicated the pilot climbed to about 500 feet as he approached rising terrain. This was followed by a rapid descent and impact with the ground at an angle of approximately 75 degrees nose down.

This information was gleaned from the NTSB's preliminary report (ERA-22FA085). I will not speculate on the probable cause, but we can observe this was a classic loss of control in flight accident followed by impact with terrain. *Eds. Note: The final report is now available on the NTSB website.*

If we stop at this point with the accident summary, we miss out on an opportunity to learn some valuable lessons. To do this, we need to consider the human element, and to some degree, all pilots should be human factors experts. We should have the ability to understand the factors that affect our performance and decision-making. We should constantly evaluate factors such as cognitive biases, stress, fatigue, distractions, personality style, and experience level, as all play a role in how we process information and make decisions. Understanding ourselves and teaching our students to constantly reflect and self-evaluate are important skills to master as we teach decision-making. Putting on our human factors hat, we return to the central question of how this accident occurred and why the pilot made the decisions that preceded this accident. I have found the use of the PAVE checklist (Pilot, Aircraft, enVironment, External Pressures) to be an excellent way to consider these factors, and I use it quite a lot to analyze accident reports with students.

The first factor is the pilot, who had 965 hours' total time, 24 in the last 90 days, and was flying his own airplane. No information was provided regarding status of his flight review, but we can assume this pilot was proficient and capable of flying his airplane based on the data we have. While a private pilot may only legally fly in visual conditions, it is evident this pilot was unable to main-

One of the ways we can teach decision-making is to study the poor decisions of those who went before us by looking at accident and incident reports.

PILOT

Experience/Recency

Takeoffs/landings _____ in the last _____ days

Hours in make/model _____ in the last _____ days

Instrument approaches (simulated or actual) _____ in the last _____ days

Instrument flight hours (simulated or actual) _____ in the last _____ days

Terrain and airspace ..... familiar

Physical Condition

Sleep _____ in the last 24 hours

Food and water ..... in the last _____ hours

Alcohol ..... None in the last _____ hours

Drugs or medication ..... None in the last _____ hours

Stressful events ..... None in the last _____ days

Illnesses ..... None in the last _____ days

► _____

AIRCRAFT

Fuel Reserves (Cross-Country)

VFR Day _____ hours

Night _____ hours

IFR Day _____ hours

Night _____ hours

Experience in Type

Takeoffs/landings _____ in the last
in aircraft type _____ days

Aircraft Performance

Establish that you have additional performance available over that required. Consider the following:

- Gross weight
- Load distribution
- Density altitude
- Performance charts

Aircraft Equipment

Avionics ..... familiar with equipment (including autopilot and GPS systems)

COM/NAV ..... equipment appropriate to flight

Charts ..... current

Clothing ..... suitable for preflight and flight

Survival gear ..... appropriate for flight/terrain

► _____

ENVIRONMENT

Airport Conditions

Crosswind _____ % of max POH

Runway length _____ % more than POH

Weather

Reports and forecasts ..... not more than _____ hours old

Icing conditions ..... within aircraft/pilot capabilities

Weather For VFR

Ceiling Day _____ feet

Night _____ feet

Visibility Day _____ miles

Night _____ miles

Weather For IFR

Precision Approaches

Ceiling _____ feet above min.

Visibility _____ mile(s) above min.

Non-Precision Approaches

Ceiling _____ feet above min.

Visibility _____ mile(s) above min.

Missed Approaches

No more than _____ before diverting

Takeoff Minimums

Ceiling _____ feet

Visibility _____ mile(s)

► _____

EXTERNAL PRESSURES

Trip Planning

Allowance for delays _____ minutes

Diversion or Cancellation Alternate Plans

Notification of person(s) you are meeting

Passengers briefed on diversion or cancellation plans and alternatives

Modification or cancellation of car rental, restaurant, or hotel reservations

Arrangement of alternative transportation (airline, car, etc.)

Personal Equipment

Credit card and telephone numbers available for alternate plans

Appropriate clothing or personal needs (eye wear, medication..) in the event of an unexpected stay

► _____

Importance of Trip

The more important the trip, the more tendency there is to compromise your personal minimums, and the more important it becomes to have alternate plans.

tain VFR weather minimums. Since the accident occurred close to his home airport, we can assume the pilot was familiar with the area and was within range of weather information at KDVK. Additionally, the weather conditions would have required flying at progressively lower altitudes as he approached the Danville area. It is unknown whether the pilot received updated weather information before departing Georgia. What is known is that the pilot decided to continue flying into deteriorating weather conditions and ultimately flew as low as 300 feet to avoid the clouds.

The second factor is the airplane, a Beech Bonanza. The only information provided was that the landowner heard the engine running prior to ground impact, and all structural components were accounted for at the accident site.

The third factor is the environment, most notably the weather conditions and terrain around the accident site. As noted, the ceiling was 500 feet overcast at KDVK, so we can reasonably assume it was similar to this at the accident site. On December 10, sunset was at 5:21 p.m., so the accident occurred approximately 30 minutes before sunset in overcast conditions. The time of day and weather conditions most certainly contributed to this accident and would have likely created some urgency to land before sunset.

The final factor is external pressure. If you recall the devastating tornadoes that occurred in Kentucky in late 2021, they hit Central and Western Kentucky the night of this accident, December 10. It is possible that the pilot was aware of the approaching weather and wanted to get his airplane tucked in the hangar before bad weather approached, and this would have added some pressure. Ironically, a tornado did hit KDVK and damaged several airplanes and hangars that night. The route from Okeechobee to Danville would have been approximately four hours and 45 minutes of flight time, but the first two legs were much shorter. The final leg from Baxley, Georgia, would have been at least two hours and 30 minutes, and this would have been an even longer leg as the pilot slowed down and decreased altitude in deteriorating weather conditions. It is impossible to know exactly how much fuel was in the airplane, but it is reasonable to assume that fuel state would have been an added pressure or consideration for the pilot as the flight time approached three hours on this final leg. Additionally, flying all day on a long trip, the last of three legs, and approaching darkness were all factors that increased the stress level and likely added pressure to get home.

If we stop at just examining the facts, all we really learn is to not fly below 500 feet in poor weather conditions. Without firsthand knowledge, we can't speculate on what the pilot might have been thinking or his decision-making skills. It is interesting to note that accidents like this typically involve experienced pilots rather than low-hour/inexperienced pilots. Many studies have addressed the VMC into IMC phenomenon, and experienced pilots will often continue with the flight plan when weather conditions clearly suggest a change in plans. This may be explained in a couple of ways: plan continuation error and normalizing poor decision-making.

As the name implies, plan continuation error occurs when a pilot continues with the original plan even though conditions or circumstances clearly warrant a change or diversion. Looking at the accident in question, we can all agree that the pilot should have turned around at some point or otherwise made a decision to alter the original plan. This kind of error is almost exclusively the domain of experienced pilots. There are a number of cognitive biases that may be connect-

ed with this mindset, such as framing effect, illusion of control, or confirmation bias. All of these can impact the way we perceive and process information, and, ultimately, our decisions. Falling in love with our plans or the absence of a backup plan, these can be extremely hazardous attitudes, and we should always allow some flexibility in our plans. As the saying goes, if you absolutely have to be somewhere, fly commercial or drive, but don't put yourself in this position with a small airplane.

Closely related to plan continuation error is the deviant mindset an experienced pilot may develop over time. This is an extremely hazardous attitude we should all consider. Suppose a pilot has cheated the weather or snuck through a thunderstorm enough times to believe this is a good decision because nothing bad happened. If we connect the quality of our decision to the outcome, we can eventually normalize poor decision-making. Let me phrase this a different way; flying near or in a thunderstorm is always a poor decision, regardless of outcome. While airline pilots have regulatory and procedural guidance to restrain their decision-making, no such guidance exists for the general aviation pilot. In the absence of a structured, procedural environment, how does a new pilot develop their decision-making skills? They go out and fly. Positive outcome is equated to a good decision, and over time, their own personal limitations change. We normally equate experience with proficiency, but that is not always the case. In the absence of procedural oversight to restrain behavior, it is quite easy to develop extremely bad habits over time. In this way, we can normalize poor decision-making, and then the very experience we are counting on to make us better pilots may fail us at some point.

We've covered a lot of ground here, but how is it that we go about helping new pilots become good decision-makers? This is certainly a question we can toss around and debate, but here are a few considerations to start the conversation:

• Let your students make decisions during their training, early and often. Flight instruction too often becomes endless drills of directing your students to perform maneuvers and comply with our instructions. I think this is likely because asking open-ended questions and allowing students to be involved in flight-related decisions is time-consuming. But we must consider the preflight and post-flight time we spend with our students to be as equally important as time in the airplane if we want to make them better decision-makers. In fact, it is arguable that we get the most benefit from this time because the student is less distracted and potentially more reflective, particularly after the flight.

> Understanding ourselves and teaching our students to constantly reflect and self-evaluate are important skills to master as we teach decision-making.

• Use relatable accident reports and case studies during ground training sessions. These can be powerful tools to teach decision-making skills if we allow students to be actively involved in the analysis. Many studies have confirmed that self-reflection is a critical aspect of making case studies useful. Just reviewing the facts of an accident is less meaningful if there isn't personal connection/reflection. Ask questions like, "What would you have done" or "Why do you think the pilot chose to do this?"

• Teach and reinforce respect for regulatory guidance. The reason why general aviation is extremely safe is because of the FAA's regulatory authority as it relates to certification of aircraft and people. So many of these regulations are written in blood, as we say, but they are only useful if we respect them and understand that they apply to pilots of all experience levels.

• Teach your students to understand that experience is a neutral quality. This is really important because we always equate experience with proficiency. In the correct environment, experience makes a safe and proficient pilot, but experience gained in the absence of restraint can lead to the development of bad habits. A pilot with 1,000 flight hours may be technically proficient, but may also have developed some extremely bad habits that may impact safety in the long term.

• Since weather so often plays a role in aviation accidents, there must be some understanding that when you begin adjusting your flight path to avoid weather, particularly when it's a decrease in altitude, you have made a critical decision. When this occurs, it means the weather is different than forecasted, and you are now deviating from the original plan. Your students need to understand that they are now experiencing a link in the accident chain, and the best course of action may be to turn around.

• New pilots should understand that the flight review once every 24 months is primarily an evaluation tool and can't possibly substitute for a lifelong interest in learning. When we reach a certain threshold in hours/experience and think we have it figured out, that is a bad place to be. My first solo flight was in a U.S. Navy T-34 in 1989, but I would never think I can't learn new things and discover new ways to be a safer and more proficient pilot. That is the mindset we must all adopt and ensure is passed along to the next generation.

While I understand it is challenging to teach someone how to make quality decisions, I think these practical tips may be useful if we are deliberate in our instruction. In the end, a healthy respect for the restraint provided by the FAA's regulatory environment and an understanding of our own fallibility may be the best starting point we can provide new students.

Greg Wilson *is a retired Marine Corps aviator and assistant professor in the aviation program at Eastern Kentucky University. Greg holds an ATP certificate in multiengine airplanes and helicopters, as well as flight instructor certificates in both. In addition to classroom duties, he assists with training and mentoring new CFIs in the aviation program.*

DANGER: HAZARDOUS ATTITUDES

Students, pilots, and CFIs are susceptible

By Boots

One of the things we are taught as CFIs to look for in our students is what the FAA calls hazardous attitudes. That shouldn't require much of a definition. What actions are we supposed to take when we identify those in our student? Well, obviously we should start by explaining the dangers of it and defining it for them — from both ours and the FAA's prospective — which may differ from their own. We then try to correct that attitude by pointing out the specific things that make it hazardous. Many are listed in various pilot and CFI training manuals and online courses. An example of a hazardous attitude is: "Rules are only made by the FAA attorneys and don't need to be followed." So are: "I don't have to follow the local airport rules because everyone knows me," and "It can't happen to me because I'm a better pilot or smarter than they are." There are many others as well, of course. Arrogance seems to be the constant thread, though.

Most students will pay attention to and try to correct at least some of those

hazardous attitudes when discussed with their CFI. What about the ones who do not? If the CFI is working for a Part 141 flight school, the path is obvious. The CFI goes to their chief flight instructor to explain the situation and find out what the boss says to do next. Usually, the chief will want to fly with that student to see how they feel about the situation. If you are a CFI working on your own, it's actually more complicated. What are you supposed to do? Personally, I just stop flying with or providing instruction to them. I try to be as diplomatic as possible and beg off, but if pushed, I will simply tell them that I feel their attitude toward aviation is dangerous and I don't want to fly with them any further. I realize that is not an option for many CFIs who need every flight hour they can get. We don't always get easy choices as a CFI. As for calling the FAA, I don't see the point of that unless it is a situation as dire as the 9/11 terrorists training as students. Even then, it accomplished nothing useful. The FAA has far more serious problems to deal with than a student pilot with a hazardous attitude, until after they have done something seriously wrong or illegal.

To take this same issue a little further, what about a certificated pilot in whom we see that same hazardous attitude about aviation? The one who obviously knows how to fly but swaggers around the local airport, brags about doing whatever they want regardless of the FAA or local airport rules, and confronts anyone who tries to guide them toward becoming a bit more safety conscious. The in-your-face pilot who uses whatever traffic pattern they feel like at nontowered airports, doesn't bother with radio calls, and then doesn't want to hear any complaints. Most of us who have been CFIs for a number of years can predict that they are going to get injured or killed in an airplane, but we hope they don't take anyone else with them when it happens. We've seen it enough times to be able to predict it. I don't have an answer to my own question, but I still want to put it out there. Obviously, we refuse to fly with them if they request flight reviews from us, but beyond that, there is little that we can do.

FUEL EMERGENCY ON DEPARTURE

The plane was a Cessna 172 based at a small private grass airport in Knoxville, Tennessee. The circumstances that occurred September 9, 2020, were pretty outrageous in my opinion.

The airplane was flown the evening of the day previous by another CFI and student. Normally, the club planes are refueled at a nearby public use airport because avgas is not sold at the private airport. Club planes were required to be brought back with more than half tanks of fuel remaining. The previous evening, the other CFI had landed to refuel, but they were already closed. He had enough fuel to get back to home base, which is only about five minutes away. As a precaution, he put a note in the plane apologizing for bringing it back so low on fuel and explaining why it happened.

Even though the club does not have an STC to use mogas in the club planes, because they are used for rental, they do have mogas for sale on the field. That STC does cover those planes, if they were not being used for rental. Further, several hangars with club members' private planes also have various quantities of avgas stored. Multiple amounts of safe fuels were available, even if the mogas would not have been legal. The CFI said that he had personally stuck the tanks, and there was about an inch of fuel on each side, which he felt was adequate. Note that the sticks used for these planes were generic, not calibrated to the individual aircraft.

He took off with a student aboard. However, instead of immediately flying to the nearby airport to fully refuel, he flew to the North Knoxville area, which is away from both airports, and started a lesson. The rest is well documented. He ran out of fuel after about 20 minutes of flight, landed safely on the highway, and after obtaining some fuel, the police allowed him to take off from the highway.

As far as I can determine, the only punishment he received was a 709 ride with the FAA and the club banned him from flying club-owned aircraft for six months. He is still offering flight instruction using those same club planes.

49 USC 44**709**

(a) The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration may reinspect at any time a civil aircraft, aircraft engine, propeller, appliance, design organization, production certificate holder, air navigation facility, or air agency, **or reexamine an airman** holding a certificate issued under section 44703 of this title.

I think the FAA could improve the situation at least a little by taking action when there are obvious and public violations of the FARs as well as basic aviation safety. For example, when a CFI takes off with a primary student on a training mission, knows that the plane has little fuel on board before taking off, runs out of fuel 20 minutes later, and lands on a highway, what action would we expect? *(Eds. Note: See sidebar on previous page for the full story.)* Because it was so public and reported in the media, the FAA did get involved. What action did it take? The FAA required the CFI to take a 709 ride, which is a basic reexamination of their pilot ability. No one ever questioned this CFI's ability to fly an airplane. The fact that he successfully landed dead-stick on a highway proved that point. But to my way of thinking, what did it show about his ability as a flight instructor? I have no idea why the FAA did not revoke his flight instructor certificate after such a blatant stunt with a primary student. What had that student just been taught? Maybe some sort of politics were involved in retaining his CFI. Beats me.

However, when these types of hazardous attitudes are exhibited by experienced pilots and CFIs and we see them directly, the question again is: What are we supposed to do? It seems that ignoring them unless it's our own student is the only answer. Not a good situation in my opinion.

***Boots** is my full name. It's not a nickname. I was born and grew up in Hollywood, California, which usually is enough of an explanation. I obtained my private pilot certificate in about 1968, my instrument, commercial, and multiengine about three years later, and my CFI, CFII, and multiengine CFI around 20 years ago. I also obtained my A&P certificate with an IA about 25 years ago. Most of my flying was based at the Van Nuys Airport (KVNY), and I owned a Cardinal RG for about 10 years. I've flown in many parts of the world, including Central America, Africa, and Europe but never actually flew or wrenched for a living. I was on the Rare Bear racing team when we were winning at Reno. I am still active as a flight instructor and live in Knoxville, Tennessee.*

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Joe Sobczak with General Chuck Yeager

On Your Wing

Meet a NAFI member

By Patrick Howell

Flight instructors come in all shapes and sizes. In NAFI, we are fortunate to have an incredible variety of experience, from the brand-new CFI to the multi-thousand-hour veteran. We have full-time professional flight instructors, part-time instructors, and airline, corporate, and military pilots who continue to teach the art and science of flying. That breadth and depth of experience is a wonderful resource for all of us. In this issue's column, we meet **Joe Sobczak**, a former Air Force test pilot who continues to give back to general aviation.

Patrick: You've had an expansive career as a test pilot. What was your favorite aircraft to fly?

Joe: That question comes up a lot. The stock answer is, "The one I'm flying now." I don't really have a favorite, per se, but there are a few notables. First, the most enjoyable flying I've done, despite flying Mach 2 fighters and 400-ton airliners, has been in general aviation. When I was in college, my uncle Henry, a World War II fighter pilot, noted that while any kind of flying career is a great choice, when someone is paying you to fly, you have to do what they are paying you for. As a GA pilot/owner, I can fly pretty much whenever and wherever I want. But if I had to pick one airplane to fly one more time, it would be the F-4 Phantom II. It wasn't the fastest, prettiest, or best performer, but it was an airplane that really endeared itself to the pilot who was able to master it. Other memorable airplanes I flew were the F-105 (flap speed 400 knots!), the Goodyear blimp, and the F-104 Starfighter.

Patrick: You flew as Chuck Yeager's instructor pilot in the F-4 Phantom. What was that like?

Joe: I got to know Gen. Yeager when we worked together over many years at the annual Edwards Air Force Base Air Show. I was the last F-4 instructor pilot on the base when the F-4 was retired at Edwards to be replaced with the F-16, so I was assigned as "seeing-eye captain" for his (and my) last flight in the Phantom. Though he was quite proficient in the F-4, Gen. Yeager needed to fly with an IP since he did not maintain the necessary currencies to fly as PIC. It was a truly memorable flight for me, and to fly with such an icon of the aviation world was a real privilege. I was essentially a passenger on that flight, and Gen. Yeager showed me some of the obscure places under the MOA [military operations area] where he liked to go camping and fishing. Just before Yeager's last flight in the Phantom, I also flew the same F-4 with Col. Chuck DeBellevue, who as a back-seater in the F-4 was the first U.S. Air Force ace of the Vietnam War.

Patrick: What's something from your test pilot career that you've carried over into your civilian flying?

Joe: The biggest carryover is my approach to risk management. Although risk management is now common in all of aviation, it was pioneered in the flight test community where we used risk management techniques extensively in both the planning and conduct of every test mission.

Patrick: What's the biggest take-away from your flying career that you'd pass to a new student?

Joe: Learn the basics well. Just today, I had a conversation with my daughter, now an airline pilot flying the ERJ-175. Her captains have consistently complimented her on her flying skills, relative to her peers, which she attributes to my insistence, as her CFI, that she master the basics. Much to her chagrin, I used a lot of those suction cup instrument covers when she was a student. As airplanes and airspace have become increasingly complex, stick-and-rudder skills have received less emphasis. If I were screening pilots for a flying job, I would definitely take note if you have a background in tail-draggers, glider towing, crop dusting, or aerobatics. Finally, there is no doubt in my mind that you will never learn more about flying than you will as a CFI.

Patrick Howell *is a CFI/CFII/MEI, CSIP, and NAFI Associate Master Flight Instructor. He is a former B-52H Stratofortress instructor navigator. Howell teaches with Revv Aviation at KCBF in Council Bluffs, Iowa. When he's not teaching, he's remembering how to use his feet again in a 1947 Aeronca Champ. Howell is glad he's finally found a use for that English degree he got in college.*

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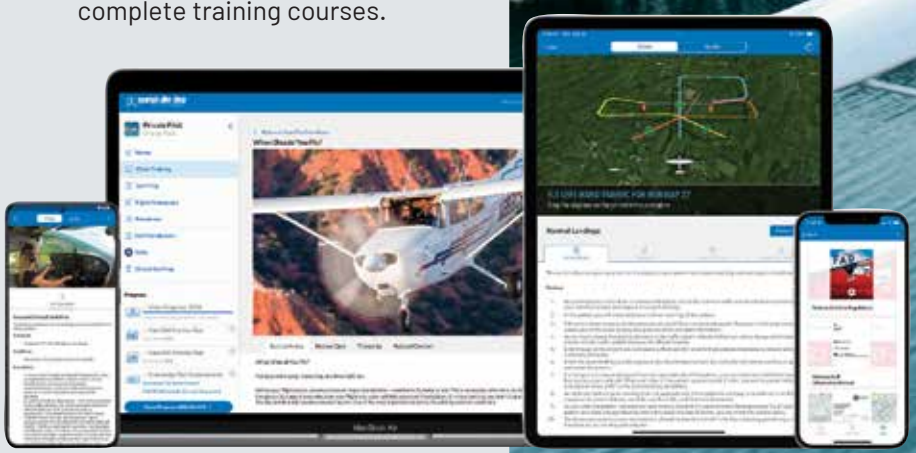

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