

# Nancy Walters

Yes, it is a monumental birthday. I have hit another one of those "O's". I'm going to miss the February meeting because we are taking the families up north skiing to Shanty Creek to celebrate. It has been a few years, so I will be spending time on the bunny hill with the grandkids to get in shape for the bigger hills.

The question often comes up, "How did you get into flying...Was your husband a pilot?". The answer.....it was challenge from my 8 year old son (now 34). One night at the dinner table, I announced that I thought I should take a class, since everyone in the family was going to school but me. Of course, I worked full time, and helped teach a scuba class two nights a week, but there was time to take a class! My 8 year old son asked if I was going to take a class in cake decorating, cooking, sewing or macramé. That was the challenge. I was stereotyped. I immediately crossed off all "those" classes in the adult education brochure and came up with "Ground School". The following evening at dinner I announced I was taking "Ground School", to the amazement of husband Ron. (We had been married less than a year.) We signed up together, but little did I know what to anticipate since I had never been in a small plane. My first flight in a Cessna 152 was on our 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary, and I almost missed the dinner party, because I got home later than expected, still flying high.. I was hooked! That was in 1978. Ron & I took our checkride the same day on July 6, 1979 and received our wings. We both have an instrument rating and both received our Seaplane rating in Anchorage, Alaska in 1992.

You might say I love flying. Everyone should have a passion and mine is airplanes. We now have three. We started building a Glasair in 1986, which took 9-1/2 years before it flew, only to be destroyed by a hand-propped Cessna when it was only 3 weeks old. We started again 6 months later and completed N99WR in December 2002. After flying it for two years, we decided it was time for paint, so it is presently in Arizona, and we will pick it up to fly it home the end of February. We have had our 1967 V-35 Bonanza since 1988, and it has taken us all over the continental U.S., Alaska, and Canada. My latest acquisition in 2003 was a 1949 Piper Clipper (taildragger). A fun airplane to see the countryside...if you have time. Last summer we flew to the Soo for the Short Wing Piper Convention and in August took 5891H to Oshkosh to camp for a week.

Over the years, I have been privileged to fly many different aircraft, including Cessnas, Pipers, Grummans, T34's, AT6's, B17 (Aluminum Overcast), Ford Tri-Motor, numerous experimentals, and the 65hp Luscombe, that I got my taildragger endorsement in..

I have been a member of the 99s since 1980 and belong to EAA, AOPA, ABS, WIA, MAA, SWPC, and am President of the Michigan Aviation Education Foundation. Both Ron & I have each flown over 200 Young Eagles and we enjoy taking kids for their first flight. We've participated in the Michigan SMALL Rally and Michigan Air Tours since 1980 and have done many Mercy Med Flights.

When I retired from EDS in 1998, I officially decided that I would become an "airport bum". I'm working very hard at it and try to spend as much time at Pontiac Airport as possible. . Come see me!

We were gifted on New Year's Day with our 11<sup>th</sup> grandchild, Rachel Marie, who will soon be ready to join the other grandchildren to experience "Grandma's love for airplanes". Doesn't everyone keep a car seat in their hangar?

