

Fairfield pair earning pilots' wings . . .

Father and son take solo flights

The daring duo of father and son aviator wannabees Joe and Brady Reavis of Fairfield took their first solo flights last weekend and have the ripped shirts to prove it.

Reavis and his son Brady, 16, started flying lessons last year when wife and mom Theresa told the younger Reavis that flying lessons could be taken at the Corsicana Municipal Airport. Brady thought the idea sounded good, and Dad said he would also like to learn to fly. "My dad said it could be a father-son thing," Brady notes.

The pair started their classes, eventually racking up enough hours with an instructor to make them eligible for their first solo flights.

Requirement is 12 hours with an instructor, Brady had 16 1/2 and Reavis had 31 1/2. Reavis says he has more hours because he flew while Brady worked last summer. Brady says his dad needs the extra hours.

Last weekend, the duo went flying, with instructor, and when they landed, the instructor told them it was time. Although they weren't sure when they



FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR Mark Jones of Corsicana, right, cuts off the tail of Brady Reavis' shirt, a rite of passage marking Reavis' first solo flight.

would solo, Brady says the instructor had warned them to start wearing cheap shirts.

Tradition says that after the first solo flight, the pilot has his shirttail torn, and the ripped piece is labeled with the pilot's name and the date of the

first solo flight. It is tacked to a wall at the airport.

Origin of the tradition is unknown, although one website said it's from the old days of open tandem cockpits, where the instructor sat in the rear seat and the student sat in the front seat. To get the student's attention, the instructor would lean forward and tug on the student's shirttail. Solo flight equals no instructor,



WITH A FEW FINAL words of wisdom from flight instructor Mark Jones of Corsicana, Joe Reavis, right, prepares for takeoff on his first solo flight.

hence, no need for shirttail tugging.

The first solo flight is done within viewing of the instructor, who is on the ground. The student must make three take-offs and landings, one after the other.

Two more "supervised solos" must be accomplished in order to fly without an instructor.

Brady says he was a little nervous about his first solo

flights, "But after I took off and got off the ground, I wasn't," he said. "I was flying in a circle and singing 'Cotton Eyed Joe'."

The pair say their flights went well. "I'm still alive," Brady reasons. "A good landing is one you walk away from," Reavis says. "A great landing is one you taxi away from."

Brady says his landings were "all perfect", as compared to his dad's, which were "ugly", Brady laughs. Reavis says his were good, he just hit a small snag on

one his landings and jumped a bit.

A total of 40 flying hours must be recorded, including a night flight and a cross country flight, before a private pilot's license is possible, a medical must be passed, and a ground school and Federal Aviation Administration test completed. Then a check ride is taken with a FAA certified teacher.

Students can study for the written test on the internet. Subjects include navigation, weather and safety. The test is taken at the FAA site in Dallas. Before the check ride, the FAA instructor can also drill students orally about all aspects of aviation.

A student can be 16 years of age to solo, but must be 17 to earn a license. Reavis qualified, well, a long time ago. Brady will be 17 in June.

As far as his first destination as a licensed private pilot, Brady says, "I'm guessing nowhere. My mom won't even let me drive anywhere out of town."

"He's sure not going anywhere by himself," Mrs. Reavis points out. She hasn't accompanied either of the flyboys yet, but says she will go up before too long.

The pair of soon-to-be aviators agree that, with or without copilots, flying opens up a whole new world. "It's awesome," they say.

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Teague VFD hosts country music show

Teague Volunteer Fire Department hosts the Plummer Family Country Music Show next month at Teague high school auditorium.

A staple in Branson, Missouri for 18 years, the Plummer family presents a

show including country and gospel music coupled with comedy.

The Plummers are members of the Ozark Hall of Fame, and received the first Show Biz Award in 1984 at the Ozark Music Awards.

Tickets prices for the show, set Monday, Feb. 15, at 7 p.m., are \$10 for adults in advance, and \$12 at the door, and \$5 for children age 12 years and younger. Pre-school aged children are admitted free.

Tickets can be purchased at The Fairfield Recorder, The Mexia Daily News, The Teague Chronicle, and from any Teague firemen. For information, call 254-739-3335.



Dressed as a clubwoman from the 1940s or 1950s, Mrs. Lee Judson (Kathryn) Davis read "Moments from the Past" at this month's meeting of the GFWC Fairfield History Club. The "moments" included minutes from History Club meetings from 1928 through 1936. The club is highlighting the past this year as it celebrates its 85th year.

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Fairfield History Club's 85th Anniversary Engraved Brick Sale

In celebration of the 85th Anniversary of The Fairfield History Club, custom engraved commemorative bricks will again be made available, for a limited time only, to those wishing to honor special friends and family in a lasting way. Not since 1999 have bricks been added. Newly installed commemorative bricks will be unveiled in 2010 at our 85th Anniversary Gala.

This lasting tribute will serve as a constant reminder of the regard you share for those who mean so very much. Won't you join us in our continuing preservation effort?

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*Includes two lines with a maximum of 14 characters per line (spaces count as characters) or three lines with a maximum of 12 characters per line.

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For more information or to verify an existing listing, contact Sandra McLeod at 903-389-3873 or sandra.mcleod@mac.com

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