

REAL ESTATE '08

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**Red Alert:
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the Pine
Beetle Battle?**

by KELLY BASTONE

**Reinventing
Parenthood?
Secrets of the
Mommy Club**

by SHARI CAUDRON

**Christo Almighty!
The Controversial
Artist Eyes the
Arkansas River**

by LAURA PRITCHETT

GO Year-round
TIME 35 to 40 minutes in the air



Résumé McAir Aviation, based at Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport in Broomfield, is the largest Cessna Pilot Center in the world, hosting a flight simulator, 18 planes, and 17 full-time instructors.

Cost \$99 for the Discovery Flight, about one-third less than the usual cost of a similar short outing with instruction.

Skills "If you can drive a car, you can fly," says McAir operations director Luke Collison. Both direction and altitude are controlled mostly by the Cessna's steering wheel-like yoke. The instructor has matching controls and can take over anytime things get hairy.

Expert Advice Sitting in the cockpit can be daunting, with so much to remember (and so much depending on getting it right), and that barrage of radio chatter in your ears doesn't help. "It is a bit overwhelming at first, but we teach in building blocks," says McAir instructor Bill Elliott. "Pretty soon you're doing five things at once and you don't even know you're doing it."

Details 303-466-8730, www.mcairaviation.com

Flying à la Carte

Learning to fly a plane is the oft-unchecked item on life lists, limited by the cost and the amount of time it takes to get a private pilot certificate. But with McAir Aviation's Discovery Flight program, complete rookies can take a small plane for a spin, for little more than the cost of a day at Vail. McAir's goal is self-serving—to bolster the declining ranks of private pilots by giving them a taste of flying a Cessna 172S Skyhawk—but who cares about their motivation if you get to fly a plane? On the day I flew with McAir, instructor Bill Elliott held firmly to the controls as we took off—probably because I had weaved down the taxiway like a drunk as I tried to get the hang of steering the plane with my feet. But shortly after we roared down the runway and banked north, Elliott suggested I take over. During the next 35 minutes, I steered the plane in a big loop about 1,500 feet above the north metro suburbs, with Elliott calmly offering pointers for adjusting the controls to keep us flying smoothly at 120 knots. A tailwind kicked up during our final leg back to the airport, and I had to fight to keep the plane level; Elliott took over again for the landing. But that's OK. Though I definitely hadn't earned my wings, I was soaring for the rest of the day.

—DOUGALD MACDONALD

MAY WE RECOMMEND

Serengeti Aviator Sunglasses



Ray-Ban invented aviator-style sunglasses back in 1937, but many pilots now swear by the Serengeti Aviator with Drivers Gradient lenses. The glasses' glare protection means you'll have good visibility of the instrument panel, whether you're driving or flying. *Three sizes, \$150-\$190.* www.serengeti-eyewear.com