



TRR photos by Gloria Smith
Rich Bartlett will take you flying in a four-seater from Sussex County Airport.

Flightseeing the

By GLORIA SMITH

Take it from the bald eagles—the region wouldn't be such a great place to roost if it didn't look pretty spectacular from on high. So why not get a birds-eye view? Flight-seeing could be one round trip experience or it could lead to a series of flying lessons with the goal of becoming a pilot.

Just last spring a 100-year-old woman celebrated her birthday by doing what comes unnaturally—taking flight. Why? Because "flying is poetry," she said.

If flying is poetry, then flying over the Upper Delaware is a Shakespearean sonnet—it doesn't get much more lyrical than this. Just one flight and you will struggle to convey your impressions in words. You could say that the hills are jewels in an elaborate setting rich with diamond crystal lakes and shimmering strands of silvery rivers.

Then again, you could simply tell people to call Rich Bartlett, who teaches flying at Sussex Airport in nearby New Jersey, and let him take it from there. He'd describe things with far less rhyme and a lot more reason.

Upper Delaware River region

A sportsman and an ex-business exec, Rich has a pilot's knack for presenting the lay of the land precisely as it is.

The trip to Sussex Airport is a memorable visual all its own. Traveling Route 97 downstream towards the Delaware Water Gap is about as close to being right on the river as most people like to get in the car. The road passes numerous pull-over-for-a-photo bridges including one engineered by John Roebling, who designed the Brooklyn Bridge. If the twists and turns of Hawk's Nest strip of road look familiar, it's probably because they are. You've seen them countless times in car commercials but maybe you didn't know those turns were right here in your own backyard. If you're okay about navigating those turns in an automobile, you'll be fine in a plane in straighter and more level flight. When you spy High Point, the obelisk that marks the spot where New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania come together, you're almost there. Just another beautiful ride over a mountain and you'll be in Sussex, a Norman Rockwell kind of town.

Sussex Airport sits near the heart of town and is easy to spot from the main road. Forget about no-standing zones or finding a long- or short-term parking lot. Just stop in the Airport Diner and ask for Rich. They'll point you to rows of planes standing wing to wing along the runway like so many would-be Rockettes. Rich usually has himself parked at a picnic table between his planes just in back of the "Learn to Fly" sign.

Single engine planes look small. Very small. But take heart. When it comes to flying low and slow enough to see the sights, a small, graceful Cessna beats a big Boeing hands down. With your headsets on, you'll be able to squelch the engine noise and speak easily to Rich or to your traveling companions. Even veteran business and pleasure commercial flight passengers will agree that there's no comparing the up-close-and-personal feeling of winging over the foothills of the Catskills in a private plane, dipping over the river or hugging the far reaches of the Shawangunk ridge. At this altitude, the landscape takes shape and you'll see it as you never have before. You can select where you want to go—a piece of property? Grandma's house? The Poconos? The Delaware Water Gap or river valley? Or you can simply sit back and let Rich show you the heights.

The Walkill River is one of only a handful in the world that flows south to north. And speaking of rivers, it's only a few minutes by air to that other river...the Hudson, a glorious sight dressed in its fall finery. Look out for West Point and take a gander at Wood-

bury Commons, the retail mecca that has more visitors in a weekend than most historical points of interest get in a year. It's hard not to feel superior as you look down on those lowly drivers stuck in a traffic jam wishing they could pull back on the steering wheel and join you in the air. And speaking of pulling back on the steering wheel, if you're in the co-pilot seat, Rich might just let you take the controls. From there even the sky won't limit you.

But is it scary, you may ask? Not nearly so frightening as missing an opportunity to see an eagle's eye view of the area right now, when fall is so dramatically in the air.

An hour of flight seeing will cost \$150. Whether Rick Bartlett takes you up in a high-winged Cessna, great for sight-seeing, or a low-winged Piper that can be a little warmer in winter, you'll be in a four-seater. You don't need an abacus to figure out that three passengers will be paying about \$50 each for an hour's worth of visual memories that will last a lifetime. Call Bartlett at 973/222-4488.

[A year ago, Gloria Smith took a flight over the region with Rich Bartlett and signed on for lessons. Now a student pilot, she recently journeyed via single engine plane to the Arctic Circle. And returned.]



Pictured in the Town of Bethel are the grounds of Woodstock and the Fall Harvest Festival.



Looking north above the Delaware, Frisbie Island dominates the river and the town of Equinunk, PA nestles in the hills.



Blue lakes and reservoirs interspersed with the hillside and mountains provide magnificent skylines.



Above High Point monument, you can see three states: New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.



Body, Mind & Spirit WELLNESS CENTER

Dr. Jamie M. Noeth • Diane E. Lorino, L.M.T.
Karen B. Weiss, Certified Personal Trainer

Your local center for Holistic Therapy & Health Enhancement
Holistic Chiropractic Care • Therapeutic Massage
Vitamins, Herbs & Remedies • Yoga & Fitness Studio
Whole Health Counseling

(845) 583-6151
12 Plank Road, P.O. Box 415 • Mongaup Valley, NY



in Apple Valley Village

Serving the Tri-state area since 1966

LUNCH & DINNER SERVED 7 DAYS

Route 6 (Exit 46 off I-84 West)

Milford, PA • 570-298-6151

Burgers, Steaks, Grilled Sandwiches, Specialty Salads, Fajitas,
Quesadillas, Steaks, Pastas and more!

Outside Dining

Full Service Pub with Specials and Weekly Entertainment

VISIT OUR SEVEN SPECIALTY SHOPS

1800s SCHOOL HOUSE • INFORMATION CENTER

KOI/DUCK PONDS

www.applevalleyrestaurant.com