

Vine Grove teen becomes state's youngest pilot

By Amber Coulter
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Charlie Morris always knew he would fly an airplane some day.

His father and grandfather both did it, and the freshman at North Hardin High School often rode in a small plane with his father.

"It's in our blood," he said. "I knew I was going to, and my dad knew it."

Charlie, of Vine Grove, didn't know that his first solo flight in a Schweitzer 2-33 glider on Aug. 6 would make him the youngest pilot in the state.



Neal Cardin

Charlie Morris, 14, has soloed as a glider pilot. He plans to fly the 1946 Champ he is sitting on at the Vine Grove Airport during his first solo flight in a powered airplane.

He made the trip at Samuel's Field in Bardstown with the Louisville Soaring Club, where his glider was tied to a plane with an engine.

As the tow plane took off, the new pilot's glider followed through the air, climbing higher each moment to soar upon thermals for several minutes after the rope tethering the aircrafts together was released.

Charlie said he was confident flying on his own because he has been in commercial planes and has flown with his father since he was 6 years old.

He began studying and working with an instructor earlier this summer.

The experience wasn't scary to Charlie. He was only nervous sitting in the glider before takeoff, thinking he might mess something up.

Charlie felt better in the air because flying is fun for him.

"You won't experience anything like it," he said.

Charlie's mother, Julia Morris, was nervous, even though she sometimes takes photographs from the sky when she flies with her husband.

She's proud.

"He did it," she said. "He's young, he knows what he wants to do and he did it."

His father, Dennie Morris, said he's also proud of his son for setting his own goals and not having to be told often to study.

"She (Charlie's mother) was scared," he said. "I was fine. He's a third-generation pilot now."

Dennie Morris took his own first solo flight in a powered airplane in a 1946 Aeronoca Champion owned by his father, Randy Morris of Elizabethtown.

The plane is at the Vine Grove Airport waiting for Charlie to pilot it during his first solo flight in a powered plane.

He won't be old enough to take passengers in his glider or fly a powered plane until he's 16. He plans to take his father as his first passenger.

Charlie Morris, who is in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, plans to fly in his future career.

He wants to be in Reserve Officers' Training Corps as a student at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. He hopes his recent flight shows others they can accomplish their goals, even when they don't think they can.