

# WFC Flyer



Alan Verbridge's Champ at Whitfords, November 2019 (Chris Houston)

## Important Dates:

### Annual Meeting and Elections

February 13, 2020  
7:00 pm, Clubhouse

### Board Meeting

March 5, 2020  
7:00 pm, Clubhouse

### General Meeting

March 12, 2020  
7:00 pm, Clubhouse

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## Williamson Flying Club Newsletter

February 2020

### From the President's Desk by Mike Malec



The Williamson Flying Club will hold the Club's 2020 Annual Meeting on Thursday, February 13 at 7:00 pm in the Williamson-Sodus Airport clubhouse.

At this key event, our Treasurer will present the Club's end of the year financial report along with a budget summary for 2020. It is important that members attend this meeting to see and understand the Club's financial obligations. Board members will be happy to answer questions during the meeting; however, members may discuss more in-depth concerns after the meeting or at another time.

During this meeting, we will hold elections for Club officers. The positions that are open for the 2020 term are President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one Director (3-year term). In the January 2020 Club General Membership meeting, the membership nominated the following candidates:

**President:** Randy Christian  
Charles Mangos

**Vice-President:** Bradley Roehrig  
Lely Jean-Louis

**Secretary:** Robert Clark

**Treasurer:** Robert Herloski

**Director:** Gary Caldwell

We would like to thank the 2020 Nomination Committee: Eric Mehserle (chair), Gary Caldwell, and Bonnie-Jean Rohner for their work assembling the nominees. Plurality votes cast from the member-

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Williamson Flying Club

Williamson-Sodus Airport (KSDC)  
5502 State Route 104  
Williamson, NY 14589

Find us on the web at:  
[www.williamsonflyingclub.com](http://www.williamsonflyingclub.com)

## Board of Directors

President: Mike Malec  
Vice President: Ian Fair  
Treasurer: Bob Herloski  
Secretary: Steve Murray

Contact: [bod@williamsonflyingclub.com](mailto:bod@williamsonflyingclub.com)

Director, 2017: Brad Roehrig  
Director, 2018: Dick Swingly  
Director, 2019: Paula Sippel

**Medical Advisor:** Dr. Pam Tarkington

## From the President's Desk by Mike Malec

*The Annual Meeting is an important Club event; we encourage all members to attend.*

(Continued from page 1)

ship during the Annual Meeting will elect an officer for each respective position. All votes will be cast by written ballot. If a motion for an alternative voting method is proposed, a ballot will be necessary to approve the motion.

The order of election for the positions are President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director. A person who is not elected to a position for which they have been nominated may be re-nominated for any of the subsequent positions.

The Annual Meeting is an important

Club event; we encourage all members to attend.

Let's go flying!

### Correction 2020 Rate Changes

The aircraft rate change for N9855W was stated incorrectly in the January 2020 newsletter. The new rate should be \$79/hr. I apologize for any inconvenience.



## Syracuse Safety Stand Down, 29 February 2020

On February 29, 2020 starting at 8:30 am, a day of safety seminars will be held at the Syracuse Airport (Main Terminal, 1st floor conference room).

Presentations will include:

- David St. George, "Loss of Control the Startle Response"
- Sandy Gregiore (SYR ATC specialist), "ADS-B, Ever-Changing UAS Operations, and SYR Taxiway Re-configuration"
- Rob Belisario (DPE), "Pet Peeves During Flight Tests and FAR 91.213 Can I Fly with Inop Equipment?"
- Gene Benson (CFI), "Human Factors Relating to Mental Inertia".
- Norm Isler (AOPA Northeast Ambassador), "Operations at Non-Towered Airports"
- Jeff Kleinwaks (FAASTeam Rep), "Weather Sources".

There will also be give-aways. Coffee and lunch will be served compliments of sponsors SAFE, Syracuse Flying Club, and EAA 486. Seminars will qualify for FAA WINGS credit.

For more information or to register, follow this link to [FAASafety.gov](https://www.faa.gov/safety/programs_initiatives/stand_down).

### Aviation Quote

"There isn't a flight goes by when I don't stare out of the window and thank my stars for what I'm seeing and feeling."

— Richard Branson

### Welcome To Our Newest Members!

The WFC extends a warm welcome to our newest members from January 2020!

- Joseph DiDonato
- Alex Zapesochry

## Member Spotlight: Rachel and Michael Cruz by Chris Houston



**Members:** Rachel and Michael Cruz

### Rachel Cruz

**Ratings:** PP-SEL  
**Flight Hours:** 135  
**Joined WFC:** 2019

### Michael Cruz

**Ratings:** ATP, CFII, Com-MEL, Ground Instructor  
**Flight Hours:** 3600  
**Joined WFC:** 2019

In many relationships, the love of aviation is rarely equal between partners. Sometimes, the most pilots hope for is a spouse that tolerates their addiction to altitude. Maybe that's what makes aviator couples like John and Martha King so interesting, the fact that both were equally and irrevocably bitten by the flying bug. But for a more local example of flying spouses, look no further than the Williamson Flying Club's own Rachel and Michael Cruz. He's an ATP rated commercial pilot flying the line with Jet Blue, she's a private pilot currently working on her

instrument rating.

Because Michael is a professional pilot, Rachel explained that people often jump to the conclusion that she was inspired to take up flying by her husband. But the reality is actually far more interesting.

The pair grew up in Syracuse and have known each other since age four. Individually, they confess to having been enamored with airplanes and aviation for as long as each can remember. Michael describes going to the Syracuse airport with his father to watch airplanes as a kid. In Kindergarten, he made a book describing his aspiration to fly for the Air Force that was complete with illustrations of stick figures doing Air Force kinds of things. Rachel brings her own childhood love of aircraft to the relationship. As teenagers working together at Wegmans, their conversations revolved around airplanes.

Thus, both came to aviation entirely on their own. In fact, Rachel is quick to point out that she soloed a couple of days before she and Michael started dating officially.

When they graduated from high school, Michael and Rachel were faced with choosing their paths. Though he did not go to the Air Force, Michael enrolled at Embry Riddle in Prescott, AZ in 2011. Rachel was torn between aviation and healthcare. She chose healthcare as a career and pursued aviation recreationally (this was probably easier than becoming a professional pilot with a rec-

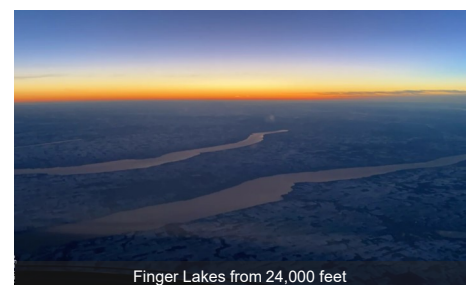
reational interest in healthcare).

At Embry Riddle, Michael participated in a training program with Hyannis, MA-based Cape Air and gained right seat experience in their Cessna 402s. He graduated in 2015 and instructed for a year, indicating that instrument instruction was the sweet spot for him. He moved on to Skywest in 2016, flying CRJ 200, 700, and 900s in support of Delta while based in Minneapolis. He advanced to Captain and was later based out of Detroit. Since September 2019, Michael has been flying for Jet Blue and based out of JFK, commuting to work via KROC. Of course, changing airlines meant going back to the bottom of the seniority list and a shift back to the right seat, but he is enthusiastic about his prospects at the larger airline and, judging by Jet Blue's aggressive hiring plan, should

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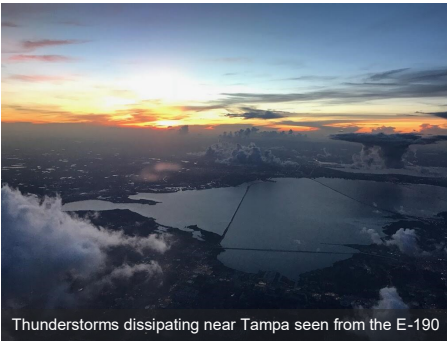
The view from Michael's office in the E-190



Finger Lakes from 24,000 feet



## Member Spotlight: Rachel and Michael Cruz by Chris Houston



Thunderstorms dissipating near Tampa seen from the E-190



Davis Monthan boneyard seen during Rachel's flight to Tucson in a Cherokee

*(Continued from page 3)*

move up quickly. He currently flies Embraer E-190s, 100 passenger aircraft with advanced avionics — even the right seater gets a heads up display (HUD).

The move to Jet Blue occurred just

two weeks after he and Rachel were married, so last fall was definitely a big deal for him: a new wife, a new employer, and a new aircraft to fly nearly all at once.

Rachel is degreed as a Medical Laboratory Scientist and works in various local hospital labs doing blood work, genetic screening, and other laboratory testing.

While Rachel was training for her private pilot certificate in Syracuse, her progress stalled. Michael encouraged her to complete her training in Arizona with one of his college friends. Thus, she found herself at Falcon Field in Mesa, AZ, one of many busy class Delta airports underlying the Phoenix Bravo. During her first lesson there, the aircraft she was flying lost power in the pattern. Back on the ground, she learned that the issue had been squawked the day before by another pilot, but that no work was done to rectify the problem. Needless to say, it was an inauspicious start to flight training in the Southwest. Nevertheless, she successfully completed her private pilot certificate there.

Rachel contrasts flying in Arizona with Upstate New York by noting that the airspace is congested with significant flight training mixed in with military and commercial aviation. She describes ATC as “aggressive”. Despite the challenges, she fondly recalls a dual cross country flight with her instructor to Tucson. Inbound, they received rare permission to do a low pass over the 14,000 foot long runway at Davis Monthan Air Force Base.

Rachel's instructor executed this at 10 feet AGL, prompting ATC to describe it as “the longest, slowest, low approach” they had ever seen. Then they were allowed to circle the famous aircraft boneyard there. In Tucson, they took a Mercedes E-Class courtesy car to lunch for excellent Mexican food. Evidently, it pays to have an instructor who knows people at the FBO; an air crew arriving around the same time received a much less glamorous van as their crew car.

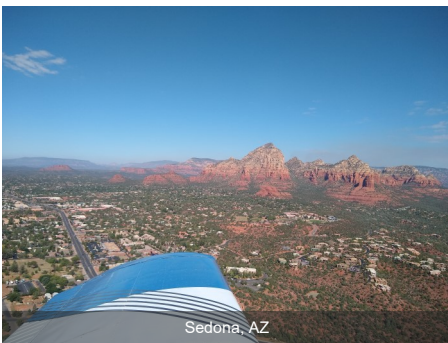
From Michael's perspective, learning to fly in Prescott provided lots of clear, sunny days, but also included the challenges of flying from a desert airport with a field elevation of 5,000 feet. He describes hot days with 10,000 foot density altitudes, frequent wind gusts, and high mountainous terrain nearby. He remembers an instructional flight he conducted during monsoon season (August-September), when he and his student rushed back to Prescott and landed immediately before multiple thunderstorms rolled over the field with a viciousness that we do not often see in New York. A group of flight instructors were waiting to tie down Michael's Cessna as soon as he shut the engine down. This was fortunate. The storm was so violent that it destroyed sixteen of the flight school's Cessnas. In some cases, the forces on control surfaces were sufficient to break gust locks within the parked aircraft. A Super Decathlon chained-down in an open hangar was picked up by the wind, snapping

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## Spotlight: Rachel and Michael Cruz by Chris Houston



Sedona Airport in Sedona, AZ



Sedona, AZ

(Continued from page 4)

the chains. In monsoon season, the weather turns quickly.

Michael and Rachel flew a Cherokee into one of my bucket list airports, Sedona (KSEZ). As expected, they described the scenery as beautiful. The restaurant on the field was so fancy that they felt underdressed. *Pardon me, do you have any Grey Poupon?*

Once back in New York, Rachel sought out a flying club that would allow her to begin instrument training and provide aircraft for her and Michael to rent. Many of the clubs that she investigated were too expensive or presented difficulties in scheduling aircraft. Then she found the Williamson Flying Club. After an introductory flight with Mike Bjerga, Rachel was sold and the couple joined in early 2019.

While low cost flying was the first thing she noticed about the WFC, it was not her primary reason for joining. She cites Mike Bjerga and the quality of our club maintenance as her reasons for being a member of the WFC. She enjoys flying with Mike and appreciates how he gets on top of bad habits before they become deeply rooted. After her experience with deferred maintenance on the trainers at Falcon Field, she feels safe in the WFC aircraft.

Sure, there was that day in 2019 that Rachel, Michael, and member Ian Youngs had alternator trouble in N1185X on a flight to Lake Placid. On return to KSDC, they discovered that the root cause was oil seeping onto the alternator through a crack developing in the case. 85X was immediately pulled off the line and fitted with a new powerplant. A week later, while flying N9855W, Michael experienced elevated carbon monoxide from a leak in the exhaust manifold. If Rachel's comfort with the safety of our aircraft seems at odds with these incidents, it is important to contrast them with her experiences in Arizona. Specifically, she is impressed that these mechanical faults were taken seriously, immediately investigated, and corrected.

As for Michael, when I asked him about flying the club aircraft, he simply smiled and said, "Round dials are fun!" He explained that he trained in glass cockpits from the beginning and that the traditional panel encourages pilots to

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### Contribute to the Newsletter!

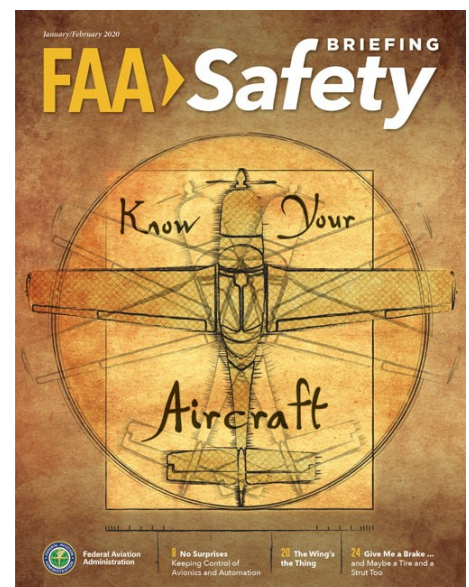
Do you have anything that you want to share with the WFC membership?

- Destinations?
- Favorite flying photos?
- Trip reports?
- Great experiences?
- Opinions?

Submit your photos and stories, to the newsletter by emailing:

[Newsletter@williamsonflyingclub.com](mailto:Newsletter@williamsonflyingclub.com)

### Recommended Reading



The Jan/Feb 2020 issue of [FAA Safety Briefing](#) focuses on knowing your aircraft.



## My SES Adventure by Don Henry



I hope everyone's New Year is headed in the right direction. I know mine is. With the temperatures settling into the lower 30's on this January day, I am very happy to be headed to Florida for a few days to shake off the cold and to garner my Single Engine Seaplane rating (SES).

Some of you may be asking, why am I headed to Florida instead of just waiting for the summer weather here in upstate NY? Well, that's because about an hour's drive north of Orlando is the self-proclaimed Seaplane capital of America, Tavares Florida. The entire town seems to be teeming with float planes. It is also the home of [Jones Brothers' Air and Seaplane Adventures](#) who have in their fleet a [Progressive Aerodyne SeaRey aircraft](#). The very type of aircraft I hope to own with our very own club

member Jamie Oliver (see Member Spotlight in the [September 2019 issue of the WFC Flyer](#)) in the not too distant future.

Interestingly, the very company that builds the SeaRey, Progressive Aerodyne, is also based out of Tavares Florida. With nearly 30 years of history and over 700 sold worldwide, the SeaRey is the world's most popular light sport amphibious aircraft. The factory offers an SLSA factory-built SeaRey Elite well equipped at \$184,000. While this is a steep price tag, the equivalent performer, the Icon A5 will set you back \$389,000. Stepping away from certified aircraft, one could purchase a SeaRey LSX Kit for \$59,000 (less engine) and have one flying in around 800 - 1,000 hours of build time.

I arrived at Jones Brothers' training

facility as my winged training steed, the amphibious SeaRey, arrived with instructor Lee Mason. Lee is a Progressive Aerodyne factory certified instructor and handled the SeaRey quite professionally. I watched in amazement as the winged vehicle transitioned from air to water, then taxied from water to land in a matter of a few short minutes. This versatility is astounding to me and it is one of the many reasons why I chose this make and model aircraft for my future adventures.

While Lee and I enjoyed a cup of coffee at a local breakfast spot, we covered the usual ground school introductions to aircraft performance and what will be expected of me during my practical training. Lee expected no less than complete adherence to the "SeaRey" way of doing things and assured me that if I did not stay disciplined in ensuring that the gear are where they are supposed to be for water landings, I will be upside down in this aircraft in no time. An unsettling note to end ground school on, but I imagine it's meant to send a clear message of caution before we even start the aircraft's engine.

Lee had me fire up the 100HP turbocharged Rotax engine for our taxi off of the ramp. The very reliable engine started easily and we were on our way. With no differential braking, all steering is accomplished via thrust over the rudder and steerable tailwheel. Braking is applied simultaneously to both wheels via handbrake and it is ef-

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## My SES Adventure by Don Henry

*(Continued from page 6)*

fective, although a bit spongy when the brake discs are wet. We glided our way down into the water... WOW! What a sensation!! Before I knew it, we were floating. With this type of hull design, we were actually sitting below the water level. I could trail my hand into the cool water of Lake Dora like passing my hand through the cool breeze out of the car window on a hot day. Incredible!

Slow taxi is done at idle power. Without going too far into the higher math of things as it relates to winds and engine turning tendencies with the pusher prop, there are things one needs to be mindful of. For example, there is no rubber of the tires keeping you pointed in the direction you have chosen. Once in the water, you are at the mercy of the wind and it will weathervane you into situations you might not prefer quickly. I was already in new aviation territory after only being in this boat/plane for a few short minutes. Many years of flying professionally helped accomplish my seaplane training adventure, but it did not cover everything.

After getting away from the ramp, Lee did what any good instructor does for a student on his first flight, he had me take off. The throttle is applied briskly to keep the water out of the prop and in what seemed like nanoseconds, we broke away from the water and were airborne in about 400 feet.

Control input and response is that of a trainer aircraft and power-off

stalls are benign. With the stick all the way back, the plane floats down with no break in any direction. Power-on stalls are almost impossible. The nose is up 25-30 degrees and I could not get it to stall, we were still climbing!

Water landings were next on the agenda and, as we practiced during ground training, I ran through my G.I.F.F.T. checklist which is used on every takeoff and landing. This acronym is emblazoned in my frontal cortex. G.I.F.F.T.: Gear, Instruments, Flaps, Fuel Pump, Trim. With EVERY SINGLE landing and takeoff, this checklist is accomplished assuring the gear is where it's supposed to be for landing on the water or the runway. And it is all spoken verbally:

"We are going to be making a water landing, therefore the gear needs to be up. The gear handle is in the up position (Down for runway landing) with two blue lights (Two Green for a runway landing.)." Physically looking left and right, I continue..., "Left landing gear is up, Right landing gear is up (Or down for runway landing.) because this is going to be a water landing."

Whew!! Yes, with every landing this is spoken, no matter the type of landing it is. There is a very good reason for this. At one point, insurance companies would not underwrite these aircraft because of too many gear down water landings. To rectify this, the community created a training program and insurance companies started to underwrite the aircraft again. It is a very thorough program that can be



completed in around 16 hours and includes tailwheel training if needed.

The sight picture for landing on the water was a bit unsettling at first. Your butt is below the waterline when slow taxiing. While the landings obviously have you sitting a bit higher than at slow taxi, the difference in the draft of the hull in the water when one is on the step vs slow taxi is about 7 inches. The entire draft of the hull is only 10 inches. What does all this mean? You are essentially touching down

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## My SES Adventure by Don Henry

*(Continued from page 7)*

on your buttocks when landing this aircraft. While I had beginners luck with my first touchdown to a very smooth water landing “greaser”, subsequent landings had me flaring slightly high. While no one wants to prang landings due to the rapidly rising terrain, or water, in this case, it pays to wait out your landing flare a bit more than you would in a typical Piper or Cessna trainer.

After getting my landings straightened out, Lee instructed me to increase the power on the Rotax to do some high-speed taxiing practice. At 3,800 RPM, the plane stays on the step to become a jet ski with wings. Carving S turns down the lake around 35 MPH, I became concerned about wingtip sponsons digging into the water. However, Lee demonstrates that, with cross control input, the wings stay level. My concerns were quickly allayed. After a bit, Lee had me apply full power and we were up and at it as an airplane again in 2 seconds, leaving the jet skiing behind. Incredible!

The next two days were full of water landings that included confined space, rough water, and glassy water landings. (For brevity, one will have to Google [glassy water landings](#) to understand the specific complexities of this type of landing. I think you will find it very interesting reading.) All of these landings presented their own challenges and I find that another aviation skill set was welcome learning as I cut my teeth in the world of water flying. Runway landings are mostly done in the 3 point attitude. While

I could peg a cub to the turf with main wheel landings all day long, it took a few times around the patch to garner the expertise to do it in the SeaRey.

After about 20+ water landings and 10 or so runway landings in two days, I came to learn that one cannot simply jump in this aircraft and expect to land it without training. Training is most assuredly required. The aircraft, while simple in design, presents new complexities that any disciplined aviator would appreciate. After a couple of very busy days, I was ready for my Single Engine Seaplane check ride.

Rob Galloway, the owner of Jones Brothers' Air and Seaplane Adventures, was my check airman. Rob carried himself very professionally and was very thorough in asking me about the SeaRey's systems / performance numbers as well as

the specifics of flying any aircraft on the water. Right of way rules when on the water, pattern altitudes, and how to tell which way to land when there is no windsock were all part of the oral. I quickly found that my capacity to recall new aviation trivia as questions were being asked was right at the forefront of my brain. Point being, my training was good and Rob was not going to just hand me this rating. He wants safe pilots graduating from his school.

With the oral complete, Rob and I strapped in and taxied off the ramp. We were up flying as soon as we got far enough from the shoreline. Right down to business, Rob had me demonstrate everything I learned. At one point, Rob had me step taxiing the aircraft and said he was pleasantly surprised that I did not fall off the

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## Member Spotlight: Rachel and Michael Cruz by Chris Houston

(Continued from page 5)

look outside more — exactly what they should be doing on nice VFR days. Additionally, he enjoys flying general aviation because it lacks the paperwork and bureaucracy characteristic of his professional flying.

Welcome to the club Rachel and Michael! They may not be as famous a flying couple as John and Martha, but give them time. They have many years of flying together ahead of them!

## My SES Adventure by Don Henry

(Continued from page 8)

step as we turned downwind. Nice job! One must remember to add power in order to keep the aircraft on the step when going downwind due to the loss of headwind lift. As I continued the big step taxi circle on the water, we were headed back into the wind and Rob had me take off again.

Once Rob was satisfied with my performance, he directed me back towards the marina. I was half disappointed as I pointed the SeaRey back towards the marina. I was not ready for my check ride to be over. Who says that about a check ride? I've never said that about a check ride in the past, but I've never done a seaplane rating in the past, either. But, like all good things...

Rob congratulated me on passing my ride and, with the engine all quiet, I could not help but smile as I recalled the past three days and my new found ability to fly planes off of the water.

## Images by Chris Houston

With winter finally in full swing, thanks to all of our volunteers who plow our airport (example at right)!

## Upcoming WFC and Local Events

Wednesdays Beginning Feb 12	Instrument Rating Ground School w/ Mike Bjerga at the Williamson Flying Club, 6:00 to 8:00 pm in 10 sessions. RSVP via the WFC <a href="#">Event Calendar</a> . See flyer below for more information.
Saturday Feb 15	Fly-in breakfast, <a href="#">Empire State Aerosciences Museum</a> at the Schenectady County Airport (KSCN), 8:30 am to 10:30 am. At 10:00 am, WWII researcher Donna Esposito will speak on "STAG -1: The US Navy's Secret Drone Project in WWII"
Saturday Feb 15	Sean Ogden talks about Air Force flying. East Hill Flying Club, 62 Brown Rd, Ithaca, NY, 3:30—5:00 pm. More details: <a href="#">link</a> .
Saturday Feb 29	Syracuse Safety Stand Down. See the article on page 2 of this newsletter for more information.

## INSTRUMENT RATING GROUND SCHOOL \$150

**Wednesday's  
6pm-8pm  
Beginning  
February 12th  
10 Sessions**



**Supplies: (Access to)**  
Instrument Flying Handbook  
Instrument Procedures Handbook  
FAR/AIM  
Digital Terminal Procedure Supplemental  
Instrument Approach Procedures (NY)  
IFR Low Enroute Charts L31/L32, L29/L30  
(Digital Copies OK)  
E6-B  
3=Ring Binder

## RSVP OR QUESTIONS:



(585)721-4635



[learntofly@williamsonflyingclub.com](mailto:learntofly@williamsonflyingclub.com)



[www.williamsonflyingclub.com](http://www.williamsonflyingclub.com)



5502 State Route 104,  
Williamson, NY 14589



Snowbank at the Williamson Sodus Airport, January 20, 2020 (Chris Houston)