

# THE HOLD SHORT

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09 DEC - 15 DEC

## TOYS FOR TOTS

Great Basin Aviation staff and instructors recently joined forces to spread some holiday cheer through a spirited toy drive for Toys for Tots! Our team collected a bounty of toys for kids in our community. From miniature aviators to charming dolls, our donation box is bursting with joyous surprises that will bring smiles to the faces of children in need.

Toys for Tots is a fantastic organization, and we encourage everyone to consider donating if you spot a Marine with the iconic donation box. Every contribution helps create a magical holiday season for children who deserve nothing but happiness.

Let's continue to share the spirit of giving and make this holiday season truly special for all!



## REMINDERS FOR THE UPCOMING WEEK

- With the Holidays approaching, there will no more student pilot Monday Night Study Groups for the rest of 2023. Class will start up again on Monday, January 8th.



## COURT SALZMAN – SOLO

Did you all survive the seismic event this morning? Oh, wait, that wasn't an earthquake—it was just Court Salzman belting out the victory cry after soloing at KSPZ, runway 24 in N37JA! If you know Court, quiet and mild are not words in her vocabulary. Court, one of our commuting pilots from the Lake, managed to squeeze in lessons leading up to her unforgettable solo flight between attending our "world-famous" Monday night study group and, holding down not one, but two jobs. And, who can forget her pooch, Chewie. Busy is an understatement for this lady. Because, you know, who needs sleep when you're conquering the skies? Kudos to Court for keeping the office entertained. Your 3-D printed wonders are the talk of the town—or at least the talk of our very exclusive GBA circle. Let's not forget Court's stellar CFI, Grant Muzzio, who deserves a round of applause for not pulling his hair out during this wild ride. Congratulations, Court! We're all so excited for your newfound solo status. Just do not break anything 🤔

Hold onto your seatbelts because the sky just got a little friendlier—Alex Florez just soloed! Our perpetually positive Alex hopped into N328ME at KSPZ, runway 24, and danced through the clouds like no one was watching (except, well, his CFI, the other pilots in the pattern, and us here in the office watching him on Flight Radar). Now, we all know Alex loves flying, except when the temperatures rival the fiery pits of Mordor. Luckily, today's winter weather spared him the discomfort, and the sky was as cool as the other side of the pillow. The air was calm, the sky was frosty, and Alex's flying skills were smoother than a freshly waxed C172. Alex has been acing his training, all while gracefully dodging Hailey's "motivational" ground school messages (get your ground school done Alex!!) All kidding aside, awesome job Alex!! Huge congratulations as well to his CFI, Shane Smith, for keeping up with this flying sensation.



## ALEX FLOREZ – SOLO



Gather 'round because we've got news as epic as a face-melting guitar solo: Seth Walker, our former heavy metal legend turned drywall and painting extraordinaire, and proud father of four rockstars, has officially earned his private pilot wings! Seth, the man with the golden hammer (and maybe a bit of hair left), proved that he can shred the skies as fiercely as he shreds those power chords. It's almost like Mother Nature herself cranked up the volume for his checkride – the conditions were so perfect, even the clouds wanted to mosh. Despite commuting from the metal paradise of South Lake Tahoe, managing work, family, not eating his vegetables, and the chaos of adulthood, Seth managed to trade his air guitars for real wings. A round of applause for Seth's wingman CFIs, Grant Muzzio and Nik Joshi, who made sure Seth's wings were tuned and ready to rock – because let's face it, flying is the new headbanging. Congratulations, Seth! You've officially graduated from air guitar hero to sky conqueror.

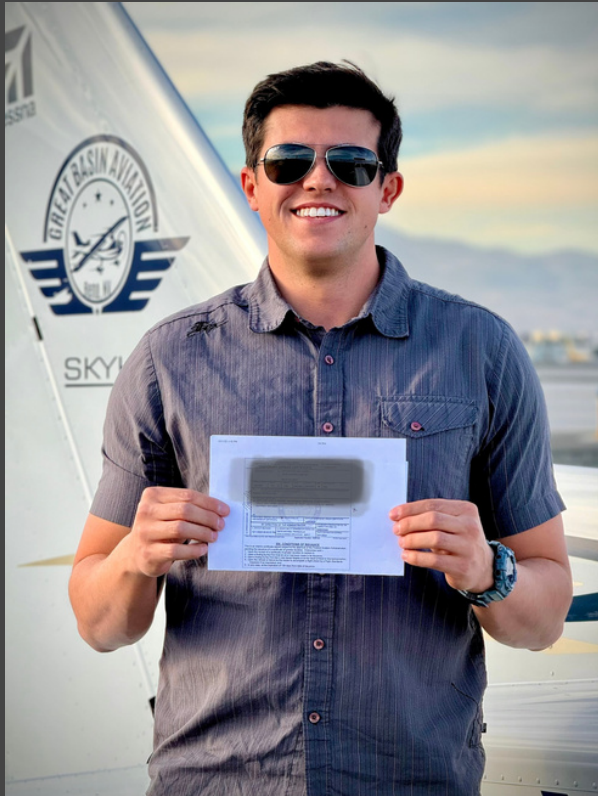


## SETH WALKER – PRIVATE

Whoa, whoa, whoa... have you heard the news? Pilot sensation and ski bum, Melissa Drapala, successfully greased her way to the victory of solo flight here at KRNO and landed on not one, but two runways! As if the added challenge of solo wasn't enough, Melissa handled the situation with a cool and calm domineer and flaunted her stuff to everyone within the Class C as she landed on runways 17L and 17R! Melissa is quite the involved aviatrix, if you don't see her up in the air flying to her hearts content, then she's probably rooting for her brother in the east (who's also undergoing flight training!), burning the late-night oil at the Monday night study groups, or babysitting kids for one of her pilot friends... did anyone else notice that all of those had something to do with aviation in some way or another? It's really no wonder that Melissa has become quite the incredible aviatrix, and with solo out of the way, she'll be soaring the skies as a private pilot in no time! The biggest of kudos to Melissa and her partner in crime, Danny Britson, for making dreams a reality! Now, go fly Melissa!



## MELISSA DRAPALA – SOLO

**NATHAN MORIN – CFII**

We are absolutely delighted to share some awesome news with all of you: our own Nathan Morin, a cherished member of the GBA family, has achieved a significant milestone by becoming Northern Nevada's newest CFII! Nathan's journey with us has been nothing short of inspiring. For the past 8 months, he has poured his heart and soul into teaching, and today, he takes a step further in his commitment to shaping the future of aviation.

Balancing the demands of full-time flight instruction, college pursuits, memorable hunting trips, Costco pizza trips, and the diligent studying required for his CFII – Nathan's dedication is nothing short of remarkable. It has been incredible to witness Nathan's growth from the early days of inquiring about a discovery flight to becoming a solo pilot, earning his private pilot's certificates, mastering the intricacies as a line tech, conquering advanced ratings, and now, proudly donning the CFII title. Each step of this journey is a testament to his unwavering passion and relentless pursuit of excellence. Great job as well to Nathan's mentor and guide, CFI/CFII Richard Brong, whose support and wisdom have played an invaluable role in shaping Nathan's success. Nathan, your achievement resonates deeply within our GBA community. We are genuinely proud of you and eagerly anticipate the positive impact your expertise will have on aspiring aviators. Here's to reaching new heights and inspiring others to follow their dreams.