



SUSAN PARSON

Editor's Runway

Citizens of the Sky

It wasn't all *that* long ago when I started flying (honest), but there have been many dramatic changes since I earned my first pilot certificate. Just a few years ago, student pilots could choose between the old trainer and the older one... because nobody was manufacturing new general aviation training aircraft. That all changed with the General Aviation Revitalization Act of 1994, which

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encouraged not only the design of new airframes, but also development of the advanced technologies we have highlighted in this issue. These days, when I see long-time pilots gape in amazement at the airliner-style glass panels that are now standard equipment in new general aviation aircraft, I like to point out that, "It's not your father's 172!"

Aviation Citizens

The airframes have changed a little. The avionics have changed a lot. What has not changed, though, is the attitude of gratitude and respect that should be part of the much-ballyhooed "right stuff" embedded in every pilot's DNA. Although we all sometimes take flying for granted, I hope that none of us ever flies an aircraft without at least some glimmer of gratitude for the privilege of flight.

The privilege of flight makes us all citizens of the sky, or as Arlynn McMahon, my friend and fellow flight instructor, likes to say, "aviation

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citizens." Although the term has not yet found broad use, that may change as flight instructors and their students get acquainted with the newly revised [Aviation Instructor's Handbook](#) (AIH), which this issue's Checklist column describes in more detail. I am happy to report that this latest edition of the AIH specifically introduces the concept of the aviation citizen, and notes that the aviation instructor bears responsibility for "molding an aviation citizen

[who] will be an asset to the rest of the aviation community." Among other things, a good aviation citizen will consistently:

- Make safety the number one priority
- Adhere to laws, regulations, and prudent operating practices
- Develop and exercise good judgment in making decisions
- Act with responsibility and courtesy
- Be accountable for his or her actions
- Be respectful of the privilege of flight

Aviation Community

Being a good citizen of our shared aviation community is a responsibility that we all share. As you emerge from the less-active winter-flying season, I hope you will do your part to be a credit to your fellow aviation citizens on every flight. Is your airplane legally airworthy and in a safe condition for flight? Are you qualified and current? (By the way, electronic logbooks—another technological improvement—are great for helping you keep track of key currency dates). Are you proficient in control of the aircraft and its technology, so you can be confident in a wide variety of situations?

If the answer to any of these questions is negative, do whatever it takes to get your "aviation passport" in order for a safe season in the sky.

Safe flights and happy landings.

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