



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT
353 PROCTOR STREET
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

Local Flight School Hatches New Pilot

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Lock Haven, PA, 7 September 2020 – Brad Barton, a retired corrections officer from Philipsburg PA, who started flight instruction just two and a half months ago, celebrated Labor Day by becoming the newest solo pilot at AvSport of Lock Haven, the sport aviation school on the Piper Memorial Airport. Today's first solo flight has turned Barton, 56, into what his flight instructor, AvSport founder Prof. H. Paul Shuch, calls an "airplane driver," fully competent to safely manipulate the controls as the sole occupant of a Light Sport aircraft. Following a brief respite, during which he will prepare to sit for his FAA Knowledge Test, Brad will return to the flight school for advanced training, ultimately leading to his earning a Sport Pilot certificate, and with it the right to be called a "pilot."

"Brad was actually ready to solo a couple of weeks ago," says Shuch, "which might have set something of a record for our flight school. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate, and he wisely decided not to challenge excessive winds. But, he continued to practice with me twice a week, so he wouldn't lose his edge. When this morning dawned clear, cool, and calm, I think we both knew that today was his day."

"I love it," states Barton. "It's never too late. I'll be 57 next week, and I've been fortunate to join a very small club. You'll never know where you stand in the world if you don't step outside your comfort zone."

The Sport Pilot license, in which AvSport specializes, is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license. Sport Pilots fly solely for pleasure, in fair weather, during daylight hours, in simple, low-performance Light Sport aircraft. Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world's first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft allow pilots to recapture the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety. Anyone interested in learning more about sport flying is invited to browse the school's extensive website at <http://AvSport.org>, where a wealth of free training materials awaits.

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTO: <http://www.avsport.org/photos/solo/brad.jpg>

CAPTION: Following his first solo flight, Brad Barton proudly displays his shirt-tail, which was cut off and signed by his flight instructor, AvSport founder Prof. H. Paul Shuch. This rite of passage dates back to the golden age of aviation, when first-time pilots often had to patch holes in their fabric-covered airplanes with pieces of their own garments.