



## “D’Plane, D’Plane”

By Erissa Yong-Wilson  
a private pilot.

So, if you’re reading this, it means you’re following my column, which is a good thing. And an even better thing is that we are alive and enjoying these never ending days of Summer here in the West Coast. It’s been a sad week for me though. My favourite

TV naturalist, Steve Irwin, D’ Crocodile Hunter is dead... doing what he loved...CRIKEY! It got me to thinking about life and death and the meaning of life ( call me philosophical). I know we tend to avoid talking about such matters in relation to flying, but death is a fact of life ... kind of an oxymoron. Nevertheless, we should aim to arrive late at the Pearly Gate, always!! Talking about life and death I suppose would be a good place for me to establish a point of entry for my approach to this article this week (that’s sort of a flying metaphor). Pilots like to talk of “fix”, “entry” and “approach” coz it gives them a buzz and a high when ever they talk “LANDINGS. In Aviation we have a saying: “Taking off is optional, but landing is Mandatory”!! Landing is crucial, but so are all phases of a flight. A good pilot knows that.

Indeed most aviation mishaps occur on landings. Hangar talks involve a lot of “landings” talk... and with that some braggadocio!! Some pilots like to think they make the best, softest “touchdowns”!! kinda like the fishing stories you hear!! The big one always got away!! (Joking aside, arrogance and ignorance have no place in flying).

To stay alive in our sport requires that we stay current with our knowledge, and are constantly vigilant about our limitations and the limitations of our equipment and aircraft. We need to fly within our abilities and practice situational awareness at all times. Over-confidence kills, while recognizing your skills thrills!! Especially if you like doing “upper air works”, as in aerobatics. In our discipline, we can truly say that “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing”. And “knowledge is power”.

Last week, I said I would let you know this week the reasons why I am “so altruistic” as to have you knock on my flight school door to ask me for a “free flight” if and when you cannot afford to pay me with our colorful “CHIA-PEE” (that is Chinese for Canadian money)!! .. No, not “Chia-pet” but you can use that as a marker to remember “Chia-Pee” (off topic there, eh ?) ... So, here are the reasons.....(as to why I’m altruistic)... I believe that if you have a passion, you must share it. I also believe that if you have something that you *can* afford to share with others, then you need to share that. The old cliché that says, “You can’t take it with you” is a truism. I also believe that we are not here for a long time... so, I believe that in the short time we are here on this wonderful planet, we need to do what we love as much as we love it and to **share** that. ...and like the song says, “Have a good time...”! It brings on good *Karma* too. I love to fly and I fly to get more experience everyday so I can keep myself safer. The more I fly, the more skills I acquire. Don’t get me wrong. Flying is NOT a dangerous sport. It is safer than a lot of other sports and activities. BUT it requires commitment, dedication to learn, flight




training and skills honed by practicing your skills with good instructors (hence the number of great flight schools around Pitt Meadows airport). Aviation insurance statistics have shown that the more “time” a pilot has in his logbook, the safer he/she is behind the controls.... And so, in deductive reasoning... it means the more I fly myself and you around, the safer I get and the longer I get to stay alive. Heck, my Philosophy Professor at SFU might defy my reasoning, but, it works for me, and like my aircraft mechanic used to say, if it works, don’t change it!!

You see, my Cessna 172 model has three passenger seats. It does not cost me more if I fly myself solo or add on another passenger or two. In flying you I might also get to peak your interest in flying yourself, and hopefully you will say you want to learn to fly as well... AHA!!.....at which point I say, “Hey, GREAT!! Why don’t you give COBALT AVIATION a jingle and talk to that handsome CFI, ( that would be Chief Flight Instructor, in the aviation lingo) Jamie Ursulak, and say Erissa sent you !! (hmmm, that’s real smooth and subtle, eh)?? LOL.

Check out our [www.cobaltaviation.com](http://www.cobaltaviation.com) site to feel the thrill of *our passion*. We have a great Photo gallery. My invitation is open. Call me to fly as a friend, *gratis*. In the past week, I have flown 7 friends who have never been in a small aircraft... to the San Juan Islands, to Victoria, to circle Golden Ears Mtn. and to the Downtown core. The joy I get from their thrill is what the MC Commercial calls: *priceless !!* ( Call me altruistic? Uh uh )!!

Oh, oh, (Call me mono-syllabic instead!!)... I’m running out of space again.....And I haven’t even touched on the subject of how you can “GO FLYING” for “almost free” 4 other ways. Oh well, I’ll try to tell you in the next issue of this *awesome rag!!* Until then, this is *Erissa* saying Adios again. And keep your self, your love, and your dreams alive!! Blue sky and safe flying to all pilots and soon to be pilots.



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