

### Flying Above The Glass Ceiling

*Women are flying now not to set records but for passion, adventure and, most importantly, to build a career.*

By Meghan Casserly, Forbes.com



...“Christine Shumway Mortine, 49, a conductor and concert soprano, has dreamed of flying since she was a little girl. A serendipitous move to Anchorage, Alaska--the float plane capital of the world--in her 20s gave her the inspiration to pursue her lifelong passion, albeit some 20 years later. "I made it my business to get to know every pilot I came across [in Alaska]," she says, "And to find out everything there was to know about flying before I even left the ground."

Back in her native Ohio, Shumway Mortine took her first flight in 2006. She's been booking flight hours and training, most recently to become a certified flight instructor. "The thing about aviation for me is it's the marriage of science, adventure and problem-solving," she says. "Being absolutely aware of the vulnerability that surrounds you when you're up in the air is what makes it so thrilling; you must know and take every precaution. It's easy to get complacent on the ground."

But thrill-seeking isn't the only reason Shumway Mortine loves to fly. It's also about taking care of people. She flies for Angel Flight, a nonprofit that connects patients in need of transport with pilots who can get them to doctors in different cities.

Shumway Mortine's wings come in handy for her family too. Her oldest daughter was interested in joining the Peace Corps in Africa, and having done volunteer work herself for Rwanda, Shumway Mortine knew just how dangerous it could get. "I told my daughter that one of the reasons I'm flying is in case she ever needed to be rescued," she says. "I was half-joking at the time, because I could never fly the small planes I fly across the ocean, but I saw the look in my kid's eyes. For my kids to know that not only *would* I rescue them, but that I *could*, is the most amazing feeling in the world."

For all the reasons women fly--as an occupation, as a self-confidence booster or to help others--these women pilots share a common passion for being up in the air. They acknowledge being in the minority, but don't see it as much of a hindrance. In fact, each admits that sometimes being the sole woman in the air can work to her advantage. Being the only female voice on the radio when calling into air traffic control has its perks, says Shumway Mortine. "I get a lot of 'Have a nice day, Ma'am!'"

For complete article:

<http://www.forbes.com/2010/06/03/women-pilots-aviation-airplanes-forbes-woman-leadership-pioneers.html>

Christine Shumway Mortine  
614.205.3129 [cbechris@gmail.com](mailto:cbechris@gmail.com)