

World flying record set in Springfield

Female flyers lift off from Lyncrest Airport

The sky was clear and the air was calm as a total of 210 female passengers took flight at the Lyncrest Airport Sept 10 to set a world record.

The Springfield Flying Club with Women in Aviation and the 99s Women Pilots Organization hosted Women Airborne in which they broke the world record of women of all ages flying in small aircraft at the same airport on the same day.

With ages ranging from two to 84 years old, for many women this was the first time that they had ever flown in a small aircraft.

Marion Clemens, well known writer and resident in the RM of Springfield, was appreciated as being the most senior lady to take flight.

Mothers, daughters and granddaughters gathered to participate in this once in a lifetime occasion.



Bev Racicot and her daughters Danica and Dominique flew with their grandmother Jean Botchar.

Angela Temple and her mother, Diane Unger, wore matching red leather hats to add a bit of fashion flare to their special flight. It was both Temple and Unger's first time flying in such a tiny aircraft.

Jill Oakes, past president of the Springfield Flying Club and accomplished pilot, explained the record was initially set in 2010 at Colville Airport in Ontario with 106 women flyers.

Air Canada Captain Bert Elam brought the idea forward to the Springfield Flying Club and a terrific team of volunteers formed to make this event a success for 2011.

Manitoba, as the hub of the aviation and aeronautical industry in Canada, is now the record holder for the most female friendly airport in Canada.

According to Oakes, extra planes, female pilots and fuel were donated from Harv's Air, Air Canada, West Jet, Perimeter, Fast Air and First Air, Winnipeg Aviation and Canadian Propeller, as well as from enthusiastic aviators who flew in from as far as Steinbach, St. Andrews, Brandon, Regina and Beulah, Sask. to help set the record.

Sylvia Jewar of Miniota entertained the crowd while they waited in the Lyncrest Flight Centre by playing tunes on her Bellini accordion, such as You are My Sunshine. Debbie Naylor also played her guitar and fiddle.

Springfield Reeve Jim McCarthy attended the event just as the record was broken with 210 women air borne.

It was soon discovered that one woman had taken the bus to the intersection of Fermor and Lagimodiere intersection, found a ride to the Murdock and Navin Road turnoff and subsequently walked in from the highway in order to go flying for the first time.

Many ladies were shown how easy it was to control the plane and actually had a chance to fly it themselves. Women climbed out of the planes with cheers, hugs and ear-to-ear smiles.