

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Dennis Kellner



1. What type of work do you do? If retired, what was your line of work?

I am a Senior Software Engineer and Development Team Lead, developing financial applications and sites for a Fortune 500 (top 20) company. I've been in the software development field for over 15 years.

2. If married, what is your spouse's name? If you wish please share the names and ages of your children. Do you have pets? If so, what?

My daughter Lacey is a Shih Tsu.

3. How are you involved in aviation?

I have always been interested in aviation. I attended Parks College of St. Louis University as a Professional Aviation / Pilot major and earned my Private license back in 1988. I had also earned a Bachelor's degree in Business/Marketing and Computer Science from UW-Steven's Point and ended up pursuing opportunities in the tech field, somehow (sadly) getting away from flying for a few years. I returned to aviation later, earned my instrument rating and am currently working on my Commercial license. I'm also involved in the Civil Air Patrol as a pilot. I enjoy flying even more than ever, and take every opportunity to do so.

4. Why did you join EAA Chapter 651?

I wanted to get involved with other pilots and aviation enthusiasts and feel more a part of the aviation community. I enjoy sharing experiences and learning from others. Being interested in buying a plane, I know others in the EAA own and wanted to pick up some tips and hear about opportunities. I also thought it might be a good place to meet some flying buddies and maybe even a safety pilot or two. I am also curious about building aircraft and experimentals.

5. What are your aviation interests?

I love to fly. I am interested in flying personally, professionally / commercial, and in instructing. I am working on building some aviation apps for the iPhone / iPad. I am interested in nearly every aspect of aviation and aviation science.

6. Do you have aviation-related goals? If yes, please describe briefly.

Right now I am focused on earning my Commercial license. I plan to pursue multi-engine, CFI and ATP. I would also like to get seaplane rated (just something I always dreamed of doing) and would like to fly rotary wing someday as well.

I have been shopping and comparing planes for some time and plan to purchase my own. I'm hoping to find a Comanche 250 / 260 or similar, set up for IFR that may be looking for a good home.

7. Favorite airplane(s):

To fly : Cirrus SR-22 (love flying Cirrus), Piper Comanche, I also like several Mooney models.
To admire : Harrier, F-16, Corsair, DC-3, Ford Trimotor, DeHavilland Beaver, B-17... I really like the older planes – historically significant and/or antique. The new Cirrus jet is moving up on my list of favorites as well.

8. What are your greatest non-aviation interests?

Playing music (guitar mostly), audio engineering, boating and sailing, riding my motorcycle, auto restoration and traveling! I have many interests.

9. One thing most people don't know about me:

Is that there are many things people don't know about me. I have a whole list of these :) I'll give a few ...

I love being on the water. I have several sail, power and paddle boats, windsurf and surf. I pretty much grew up on the water and have never stopped pursuing those sports and skills. I am a scuba diver and was once a certified lifeguard.

I am somewhat of a shade-tree mechanic and fix all my own vehicles. I rebuilt my high school ride, a Jeep CJ-5 from the ground up and I still own it. Love driving it with the top off in summer.

I am a woodworker and pretty handy. I have built quite a few projects – everything from rough outdoor things to fine furniture. I am a clockmaker also – took several courses on this and repair and maintain mechanical clocks for people. I frequently find neglected antiques and bring these back to life. Sometimes I sell them. If you are on the phone with me at noon, and I'm at home, we may have to wait for the clock racket to subside before continuing the conversation.

10. One thing I want to do in the next 3 years:

Buy a plane (and do some long distance flights in it).

11. The person I most admire in aviation:

Directly, Charles Lindberg. Indirectly, Leonardo DaVinci... he was an aviation pioneer. It is nothing short of amazing to look at his designs of viable flying machines done so many years before modern aviation!

12. My favorite food and/or restaurant:

Fresh ocean fish – Ahi Tuna or Mahi Mahi steak. Restaurants : Duke's in Hawaii. I have some local favorites too : TitleTown Brewery, St. Brendan's and Victoria's.

13. My favorite place to be:

Hanalei, HI. Specifically, Hanalei Bay.

Feel free to add whatever else you wish, e.g. military background, volunteer affiliations, memorable activity, etc.

Memorable activity... I had a couple of opportunities to fly in a Stearman bi-plane with the "Red Baron Pizza Squadron." One of these, I was lucky enough to fly with their team flight instructor who learned I was a pilot. Thanks to him I logged a little flight time doing aerobatics myself and another hour in amazement while he showed me what else that little plane was capable of. Incredible. It was a great time!

Volunteer activities ... I am very active with the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol. I also volunteer from time to time at the N.E.W. Zoo and a few other organizations.

Many people ask me how I have "time for all that" – my answer is always the same. You make time for what you want to, and life is short. We only get one shot at this. How can anyone afford not to?