

Up, up and away!

The following was written by Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 382:

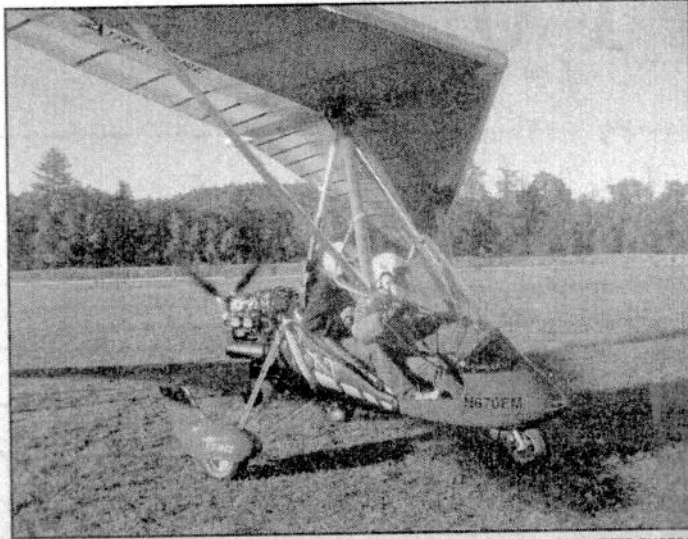
The engine roared as we took off towards the heavens until we were at about 1,000 feet in elevation when the pilot asked me if we wanted to fly! I nervously grabbed the 'steering wheel' and the pilot let go...

For Boy Scout Troop 382 in Westborough, the dream of flying recently became a reality. On Oct. 1 the troop camped at Crow Island Airport in Stow, for a weekend of learning about planes and aviation and a chance for a ride in a sport plane with the instructors at Air America (<http://flyairamerica.blogspot.com/>).

As in any scout activity, safety came first. The scouts learned the basics of flying and airplane safety, both to ensure that the flights would proceed without incident and also to help the scouts earn their Aviation merit badge. After a tour of the facility and an explanation of the various types and styles of aircraft, it was finally time for the highlight of the day.

First one of the instructors took a plane for a test run to make sure the atmospheric conditions were suitable, then it was the scouts' turn. The planes the scouts would fly in looked like a hang glider attached to a bobbed with a propeller in the back. Each scout was fitted with a helmet with a radio to insure communication with the pilot and the rest of the troop, then strapped in while the pilot turned the engine on. The pilot controlled the plane during its takeoff and ascent, but then allowed the scout to steer the plane in the air. After 10 minutes or so, the pilot took control again and landed the plane to allow the excited and breathless scout to once again set foot on solid ground.

The views from the plane were phenomenal — the mountains in New Hampshire, the tall



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Scouts from Troop 382 learning how to fly.



buildings of Boston, and green trees as far as the eye could see. For many of the scouts, the chance to actually control the plane and feel it respond to their touch was beyond their wildest dreams. Unfortunately the dream had to end so the next person could go on, although the memory of the day will last forever.

In November, Troop 382 will

host a pig roast at Camp Resolute, in Bolton, to which all who are interested in learning more about the troop are invited. You can find out more details about this at www.troop382westborough.org or by joining us for an informational meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 2 at the Evangelical Congregational Church in downtown Westborough from 7 to 8:30 p.m.