

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
ASHEVILLE NEWS DEMOCRAT
Subscriber Services



Current: 76°
73° / 58°
Complete Forecast

shopLocal
And it's done.
Find the Best Sales at Stores Near You.

AREN'T CHOICES GREAT?



Search Belleville.com Archives for Go

Sign in to your Classified Account

- Jobs
- Cars
- Real Estate
- Rentals
- Shop Local
- All Classifieds
- Create an Ad
- Find an Ad

News > Local

Sunday, Jun 3, 2007

Local

Posted on Sat, Jun. 02, 2007

email print reprint or license
AIM del.icio.us Digg it

Find a Job

Keywords:

e.g., registered nurse

Location:

City, State or Zip

careerbuilder.com

'Brain's flight' takes wing

Pilot with cancer raises awareness

BY JENNIFER A. BOWEN
News-Democrat

As Brian "Brain" Kissinger's WWII-era restored plane lifted off the tarmac Friday morning, he tipped the wings to the crowd on the ground and headed toward the rising sun from the St. Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia.



Tim Vizer/BND

Brian Kissinger with his restored World War II Piper airplane.



Cancer victim takes off

The departure of "Brain's Flight" marks the beginning of a three-week trip around the U.S. to raise awareness, and money, for cancer and brain tumor research. Kissinger, of O'Fallon, landed in Indianapolis for lunch and headed out to Cincinnati, where he planned to spend Friday night with friends.

In 2003, Kissinger, 39, was an Air Force pilot stationed at Scott Air Base when he was diagnosed with a stage II oligodendroglioma brain tumor. The baseball-sized tumor was removed from his brain, and he spent 20 months enduring chemotherapy to send the tumor into remission. His dream to be in the cockpit and behind the controls again kept him fighting during the chemotherapy treatments.

"I know where I'm going, and I know where I came from, and I'll do my best to be safe," Kissinger said of the flight and his battle with cancer. "I think it's much like the journey to fight cancer. It's a hideous disease. Cancer in general, brain cancer in particular, a hideous disease."

Kissinger's family hugged him before he climbed into the tiny, cramped cockpit of the drab olive 1942 Piper L-4 Grasshopper. The plane was crammed full of Kissinger's luggage, and in the small cockpit, leg room was at a premium. His daughters, Belle, 12, Gabby, 15 and Alexa, 17, waved good-bye as he taxied down the ramp and held up handmade signs that read: "We love you."

The model of the plane he restored was used for artillery spotting and reconnaissance during WWII. Some of his planned stops include the Tri-State Warbirds Museum in Ohio, Kitty Hawk, N.C., and Florida. He hopes to raise \$100,000 initially for the National Brain Tumor Association, and eventually, add \$1 million to the group's coffers.

Priscilla Kissinger, Brian's wife, admitted she was a little bit worried about her husband's cross-country flight in a restored plane.

"But Brian is really good and really safe with his plane and himself," she said. "I trust his judgment. A lot of guys helped him rebuild that plane, guys who really know what they are doing, and it passed all the inspections."

For more information about Brain's Flight or to donate to cancer research, visit his web site at www.brainsflight.com.

Contact reporter Jennifer A. Bowen at jbowen@bnd.com or 239-2667.

Recent Comments

Best wishes for a successful trip from the controllers of the...
»Read More

CALL THE BEL-O MAN

SALES & SERVICE

Call Tiffany
235-6626
beloman.com

REPLAY

Watch today's hottest artists.

msn video Start watching >

Post Your Comment

Name:

Submit Your Comment

Ads by Google

Improve Kidney Function

Designed to Help Cleanse, Repair, & Maintain Your Body's Vital Waste!
www.instituteforvibrantliving.com

Cancer Treatments 2007

Advanced Immunotherapy for Cancer with Proven Long Term Remission
www.lssels.com

Prepare to be Shocked

You may be younger than you think. Take the RealAge test and find out.
www.RealAge.com



[News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Living](#) | [Shop Local](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars](#) | [Real Estate](#)
[About Belleville.com](#) | [About the Real Cities Network](#) | [About the McClatchy Company](#)
[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Copyright](#)