

John McLaughlin bio

John McLaughlin is the Chief Meteorologist for KCCI Television in Des Moines. He specializes in the use of Doppler radar systems for detecting severe storms. John's expertise in Doppler radar and its applications in television broadcasting is widely recognized. He was one of the keynote speakers at the 1st World Conference On Broadcast Meteorology in Barcelona, Spain. John has been named Broadcaster of the Year by the 3000 member National Weather Association (NWA) and received the Outstanding Service by a Broadcast Meteorologist Award from the American Meteorological Society (AMS). He holds both the NWA and AMS seals of approval.



John learned to fly airplanes in Carroll, Iowa while he was a junior in high school. He literally grew up flying in the back seat of a Piper Cherokee, as his father and mother are both pilots. His first solo was May 20th of 1980 with a whopping total of ten hours of instruction in a Piper PA-38 Tomahawk. He went on to earn his private pilot certificate, instrument rating, commercial pilot certificate, certified flight instructor, instrument flight instructor, multi-engine ratings, and helicopter flight instructor. In early 2000, John started flying helicopters, taking his first lesson in Boone, Iowa. To date, John has logged more than 4700 hours of flight time. He has owned several airplanes, including a home built "Moni" motor glider, which he purchased in 1987. His next airplane was a 1963 Piper Cherokee 180 that he lovingly restored to flying condition. After that, John continued to pursue more complex aircraft, purchasing a Piper Cherokee Six, Piper Lance, Piper Seneca II, Piper Turbo Seneca and a Piper Tomahawk. His helicopters have included a Rotorway Exec 162F, Robinson R-22 Beta II, and the current Robinson R44 Raven. Being a high profile media personality has provided its share of perks along the way. John has flown an F-16 fighter jet with the USAF Thunderbirds, the EAA's B-17 WWII vintage bomber, and the Commemorative Air Force's B-25, B-29, C-47, AT-6, and T-28 aircraft.

John is passionate about sharing the joys of flying with others, and giving young people something positive to work towards in their lives. He has been an active force in the EAA's 'Young Eagles' program. One especially touching moment occurred when John received a letter from a lady in her 80s, who was about to celebrate another birthday, which happened to fall on Veteran's Day. She served our country as a nurse in World War II, and it had been a life-long dream of hers to take a flight in a helicopter. John made it happen, taking her on an aerial tour around Des Moines in his Robinson R22 helicopter. It was an emotional moment for all involved. "I'll do anything to support our veterans." John commented.

He holds a commercial helicopter certificate and flight instructor rating. John is SFAR 73 qualified in the R22 and R44. John specializes in instrument training for pilots, because he enjoys the precision and skill required for instrument flight. He loves providing flight training in helicopters for the same reasons. John is a member of AOPA, EAA, and ASC.

McLaughlin is also an avid outdoorsman and conservationist. When not flying or lecturing on Doppler radar, he can be found fishing the lakes of northern Minnesota or pheasant hunting with his black lab.

Call John today at (515) 240-8138 to schedule a lesson.