

Into the Wind

Local man takes paragliding to a new level

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"Into The Wind" is where Pearland resident Chris Page likes to spend as much time as possible these days as he wraps up production on his documentary of the same name. Page is making a documentary about the sport of powered paragliding.

The sport started in Europe in the 1980s and spread from there to the United States where it is gaining popularity. The pilot is fitted into a harness with a motorized fan on the back that is attached to a parachute wing. This allows the glider to take off from flat surfaces and requires a smaller amount of space.

Page comes from a background in aviation. Both of his grandfathers were private pilots, he grew up around planes and had many opportunities to fly with both of them. He also served in the Air Force, although not as a pilot. Page was interested in flying, but



Submitted photo
Pearland resident Chris Page, also known as Gadget Man, is pictured above enjoying the sport of paragliding.

traditional venues weren't what he was looking for.

"I never had the money or time to commit to lessons. I found out about powered paragliding when

I was searching on the internet for ultralites," said Page.

Powered paragliding is a form of ultralite aviation, but there is no license required. Page recommends finding a certified instructor and receiving proper training.

"As with any form of flight, you have to use common sense," said Page.

Compared to other forms of private aviation, powered paragliding is affordable and accessible. Page has been involved with the sport for the last two years and he says there are currently about 5,000 powered paragliding pilots in the United



Submitted photo
Page enjoys paragliding with his pilot friend Dale Catching from Seabrook, pictured above.

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States, with about 50 in the Houston area.

"People like it because it's comparatively cheap and easy to learn. You can invest three solid days of training and be in the air. It's great," Page said.

According to Page, a new motor and harness set like the one he has costs about \$8,000 and it can be kept in the garage and transported in the back of a pickup truck, unlike other ultralite aircraft.

Currently a computer technician who contracts for British Petroleum, Page has been a photographer who says he always wanted to do movies. It was natural, then, that he took cameras up in the air and decided to make a documentary about the sport. He wanted it to appeal to a broader audience than just flight enthusiasts, so he took a reality based approach.

"We had an action/adven-

ture documentary, and I decided to focus on travel and reality to widen the audience," said Page.

"Into the Wind" is the name of the production company as well as the title for the film that has been in production since December 2004. The story follows two people through their experiences as they enter the world of powered paragliding for the first time. The film also records travels and paragliding

experiences in Mexico, Big Bend National Park, and the US National Powered Paragliding Convention in Florida.

"It was great meeting people from all over the country, seeing the new equipment, there were about 160 pilots there. I got to talk to a 14-year old pilot at the convention," said Page of his experience.

Page said the goal is to wrap production on the film in July so he can have a

rough cut ready in November.

He has been invited to participate in the Santa Barbara Film Festival in February of next year and hopes to debut his film there where he will meet potential distributors and be able to promote the film.

Trailers and clips of the film are available on his web page, www.into-the-wind.com