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## **Go east, young woman**

### **Valparaiso pilot looking for favorable winds in air race**

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One high-flying Valparaiso woman will take off this morning on a nine-leg, 2,600-mile air race testing the piloting and navigation skills of female aviators.

Marie Janus, a senior at Purdue University, will co-pilot the school's entry in the 31st annual all-female Air Race Classic.

Janus and pilot Katie Sparrow, of Greeley, Colo., will leave from Oklahoma City on the first stretch of the three-day race that will take them to St. John, New Brunswick, Canada.

Stops along the way include McCook, Neb.; Denison, Iowa; Jefferson City, Mo.; Bowling Green, Ky.; Lewisburg, W. Va.; Elmira, N.Y.; Burlington, Vt., and Bangor, Maine. Each team is given a handicap based on its plane's average speed.

Janus and Sparrow will compete against 46 other teams, flying a 160-horsepower, single-engine Piper Warrior. Janus, 21, an aviation flight technology major, will be responsible for the bulk of the team's navigating.

In West Lafayette, the team's ground crew will monitor weather along the route and call in updates at each stop. Janus and Sparrow will then decide the best strategy for catching tail winds and avoiding stormy skies. Each team must be in St. John by Friday afternoon or face disqualification.

A 2004 graduate of Valparaiso High School, Janus began flying in her freshman year at Purdue. She served on the ground crew last year when the Purdue team finished third, and she is set to pilot next year's entry.

Hoping some day to become a professional pilot, Janus will complete an internship this fall with Alaska Airlines.

The Air Race Classic is the longest-running all-female airplane race in the world. It dates back to the Powder Puff Derby of the late 1920s -- the Women's Air Derby that gathered pilots such as Amelia Earhart, Bobbi Trout and Ruth Elder for an air race from Santa Monica, Calif., to Cleveland, Ohio.

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