



Woburn
'car' company
flying high

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The engine takes unleaded gasoline, the kind that's pumped at any service station.

The price? \$194,000, or about the same price as a Bentley or Ferrari. And anyone behind the wheel would obviously need both driver's and pilot's licenses.

Some have called the design a cross between a Volkswagen Beetle and the Mini Cooper. The two-seat vehicle is designed to take off and land at airports and drive on any road. The transition from airplane to car takes the pilot less than 30 seconds.

Terrafugia — Latin for escape from land — is made up of a team of engineers who have been working to advance personal aircraft since 2006. The company was founded by five pilots who are graduates of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Frank Berardino, president of GRA Inc., a Pennsylvania-based aviation consulting firm, said he has not heard of Dietrich's invention, but called it a great technical feat.

"There's always been a dream for a vehicle like this," he said.

BY THOMAS GRILLO

It wasn't exactly a Wright Brothers moment, but for Carl Dietrich it must have been just as sweet.

The 32-year-old CEO of Terrafugia Inc., the Woburn-based creator of a "roadable aircraft," watched as his flying car safely took flight and landed at an upstate New York air strip recently.

"This breakthrough changes the world of personal mobility," said Dietrich in a statement. "It's what aviation enthusiasts have been striving for since 1918."

Media members were not present to witness the test flight, the culmination of six months of testing. But Dietrich will show a video of the flight and display the Transition aircraft today at the Museum of Science.

Terrafugia claims the vehicle can fly up to 400 miles on a single tank of gas at a cruising speed of 115 mph, and can also drive highway speeds on the road. The vehicle has front-wheel drive, a propeller and, with the wings folded up, fits into a standard household garage.



The Transition took flight last month at an airport in Plattsburgh, N.Y.



Terrafugia CEO Carl Dietrich gasses up the "roadable aircraft" at a Hess station.



Spreading its wings

Terrafugia Inc. today announces the first flight of its Transition Roadable Aircraft, a flying car that can shift quickly from airport to highway and even be parked at home in a standard garage.

1 Stretching its wings

With wings in folded position, Transition drives to the airport. It is capable of highway speeds.



3D images by Benjamin Schweighart

Source: www.terrafugia.com

2 After arrival, turn off engine, punch in your security PIN and extend the wings automatically.



3 With wings fully extended, pilot may now exit the vehicle for a preflight check. Transition is ready for takeoff.



STAFF PHOTOS BY MATTHEW WEST