



Jana Leigh McWhorter fell in love with flying and her husband at the Flying Circus Aerodrome. When she's not in the air, she's on stage with another love, country music.



## Jana Leigh McWhorter

### Running Off to Join the Circus

Most people don't see a wing walker and think, gee, I'd like to do that. But then, most people aren't Jana.

After watching the performers in the Flying Circus Aerodrome outside of Bealeton, Va., Jana approached a pilot who introduced himself as Jim, and she asked, "Are you all by chance looking for another wing walker?"

Ironically, they were. After hours and hours of training and conditioning on the ground, Jana found herself atop a 450-hp Stearman. Here's what she remembers from her first wing walk: "As weak as I thought I was, I stood up on the seat and managed to muster up the last of my strength to pull myself up out of the cockpit. Every attempt I made to place my foot in the handhold was a struggle. Finally, I succeeded, and after I was in position, I placed my back securely against the stanchion. I fastened the waist belt and gave the signal that I was ready for my next feat... the loop. We began to descend like a roller coaster on its way down a sharp decline, increasing in speed to about 150-plus miles per hour. There was a strong pull as I felt the G forces take control of my body. A few seconds later, I felt weightless as centrifugal force worked its magic.

I watched in amazement as an upside-down world appeared before my eyes.

In the midst of my fear, I actually began to laugh as I experienced the beauty of it all. Then all too soon, the strong pull of the G forces were felt once again as we came out of the loop. The plane leveled off, and with wonder and amazement, I was able to take in the moment. I could see for miles, and it was the most beautiful sight I'd ever seen."

Jana Leigh became an official member of the Flying Circus that day, and at the end of the season, that pilot she had met on her first visit to the aerodrome asked her to marry him. Now, you can see Jim and Jana Leigh McWhorter appearing regularly at the Flying Circus Aerodrome. And Jana is the one on top.

See more of Jana Leigh and hear the song she wrote and performed about wing walking at [janaleighmusic.com](http://janaleighmusic.com).