

# ALEXANDER, MILLARD

**“My dream was to fly to Denver. A fantasy was to fly beyond, over the Rockies.”**

**MILLARD ALEXANDER** Distinguished Professor, University of Maryland

**HOMETOWN** Brookline, Massachusetts

**TSRC** Since 2003. Board Member, Organizer and Participant

**I KNEW I WANTED TO BE A SCIENTIST WHEN** Probably from a very early age, I don't remember exactly. My father was a scientist, so it was a natural career choice. I still remember waiting for the bus for high school the day when Sputnik was launched. That one event galvanized many young Americans to go into science. When I was a senior in high school, I discovered the beauty of organic chemistry, and went to college wanting to be an organic chemist. But I was turned toward theoretical chemistry by a young instructor at Harvard, with whom I was doing undergraduate research.

**HIS STORY** There is something special about the neighborly feel of Telluride, the rejuvenating

## AUTOMOBILE



A Fun Way to Travel, Unless of Course, You Have Your Own Plane

mountains looming over main street, the cool clean air, and the intense beauty that keeps scientists coming back despite our remote location and the high expense of getting here. Only one scientist in our 25-year history decided to fly himself to



Millard chatting it up with a friend on his cell

Telluride. Millard Alexander, whose wife encouraged him to get a pilot's license because he “needed a new challenge,” took to flying with the same doggedness that characterizes his work as a theoretical chemist. When he was invited to the 2008 TSRC “Spectroscopy and Dynamics on Multiple Potential Energy Surfaces” workshop, Millard saw his chance to fly over the mountains.

On a warm morning in late July, he set off solo on a journey from Maryland's Eastern shore in his French Socata Trinidad TB-20 that ended with a killed engine on the tarmac of Telluride's airport at 9078' above sea level. Millard may have avoided lost luggage and security checks, but he still got the thrill of a scary landing. And he says, he'll be back for more.

**FAVORITE HIKE** Bridal Veil Falls

**FAVORITE SKI RUN** Probably one of the front trails on lift 9: Plunge or Spiral Stairs

Telluride Science Research Center

