



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, LLC SEPTEMBER, 2006

California Dreaming

Piet Barber

For my continued employment, I recently endured a two week, three leg business trip to California (Silicon Valley, then Los Angeles), followed by a week in Tokyo. Normally a week's worth of business travel eats up the weekends on both sides of the trip. I dare not leave for a long day at the airfield on the days before departure, or the days immediately after arrival, or my wife will have angry words for me. Since this was a two week trip, effectively three good flying weekends were stolen from my flying calendar. This is a completely intolerable situation!

Upon arrival in Los Angeles, my co-worker and I managed to get all of the assigned work out of the way in one day, and I was faced with an otherwise boring Saturday of watching 4 channels of hotel room TV, and raiding the overpriced mini-bar in Sunny Los Angeles. I flip through my Skyline directory, and find old pal Byron Lowry, a current resident of San Diego, and a former transient member of Skyline Soaring. Back around 2000 and 2001, Byron spent a lot of time in the DC area flying with Dave Weaver and Joe Parrish. Now that he's back in San Diego, and not travelling nearly as much, he got his private pilots license. Now, he spends a lot of time flying at Warner Springs, CA. Byron makes it back to the DC area on business travel once or twice a year (or more), and even made it to a Skyline Christmas party last year!

Significant Events:

Congratulations to Craig Bendorf who earned his Bronze Badge on August 27th.

15th Anniversary Gala Celebration (see page 5)

Byron and I traded e-mails and agreed to meet at the Warner Springs gliderport at 10:00. The Hertz Neverlost told me that it would take 2 hours and 30 minutes to get from my hotel next to Los Angeles International (LAX) to the airfield. A late departure, followed by a long, uphill drive, starting from sea level and ending at 3000' MSL and I arrived at the Warner Springs commercial operation. Along the way, I drove like a dumb tourist, gawking at the cool plants I've never seen before, the boulders, the rocks, the hills, the mountains, the roads winding around all of these—it was a layman biologist and geologist's dream come true!

Byron is a member of the glider club also located at this airfield. The club and operation have a sort of symbiotic arrangement—the club does not own or operate a towplane, so club members purchase aerotows from the commercial operation, and fly their club aircraft. It is a nice deal considering they have a tow-

Byron readies the Blanik for flight by washing off the dust from the canopy.



plane in operation seven days a week! The bad news is, if you want to get going NOW, you have to wait for the paying commercial rides in the 2-32s to go first. The location of this gliderport is in the desert, and by 11:00 the heat was already cooking what felt like nearly 100 degrees. Byron washed off the canopy of the Blanik L-23, and by around 12:00, we were in a pretty long line behind all the glass ships who were ready to do an adventurously long cross-country flight on what promised to be a nearly legendary day of soaring.

We towed to 6000' MSL. I was urged to stay on this long by Byron. They have a 1500' minimum release rule, and judging by the size of the bumps along the way, I would have released at least 4 times by that altitude. After release, we "scratched around" a bit in 400 fpm lift, then finally connected with the forecast 1200 fpm lift. We rode this thermal from about 6000' MSL to around 13,000 MSL in one thermal. I let Byron do the flying, and I got out the camera, and got the opportunity to snap some stunning photographs. The clouds peaked out at around 14,500, and the thermals were strong under all of the clouds. We spent most of the two hour flight between 9,000 and 13,000 feet MSL.

Warner Springs is not far from the Mount



Maybe the best photo I've ever taken! Looking southwest toward the Mexican Border (but you can't see it), the observatory in view at the bottom of the screen

The "Sky Sailing" office, including a sit-in glider simulator (seen). The temperatures are kept tolerable for the patrons waiting on the deck by a garden hose, punctured with pinholes, emitting a cooling and refreshing mist.





Palomar astronomical observatory, and we spent a great deal of time around the observatory, and attempted to get shots of the scenery including the telescope.

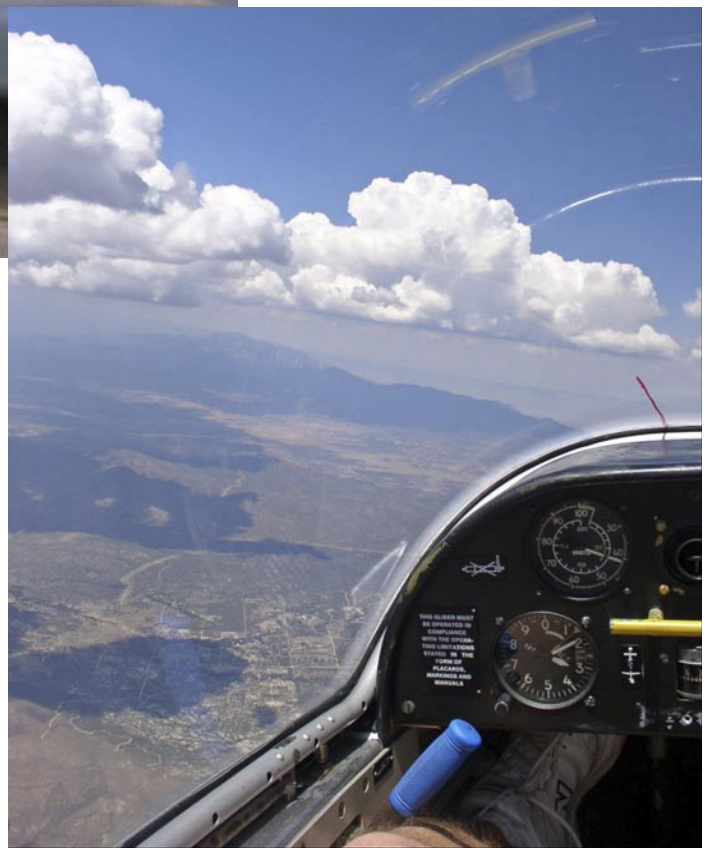
So it appears that the excellent days in Southern California are as great as everybody on the left coast brags about! Byron assures me, "believe me I have plenty of sled-rides in my logbook, too." But for a day like this, I only wish that I had somebody to trailer our LS-4 out to the field so I could fly the heck out of it. There were cloud streets that stretched as far as the eye could see, and under each one of them, promised as strong a thermal as the last.

All in all, it was an excellent flying day, but the uncomfortable seats in the Blanik, and waiting dinner guests back at Byron's house made us end the flight with full spoilers after two hours of a very memorable flight. Club members, if you ever get a chance to get out to the left coast, please don't hesitate to look up Sky Sailing in the SSA's "Where To Fly" directory on the SSA homepage <http://www.SSA.org/> July 24

In a two-glider gaggle climbing through 12,000', looking south, over my right shoulder.

Looking northeast toward the San Jacinto mountain peak, as seen from 13,200' MSL.

Piet Barber and Byron Lowery in the obligatory group photo. All photos courtesy of Piet Barber © 2006





Hazelrigg Update

George Hazelrigg, Jr.

July 24 was my mother's 89th birthday and, as always, I went to NJ to visit her. Geoffrey now lives near Doylestown, PA, about 70 miles away and his wife's birthday is the same as my mother's. So I took my mother to see her new great-grand daughter, Adelyne, and to

do a joint birthday celebration. We decided on an early Mexican dinner and went to a great restaurant nearby in two cars. But we were too early, as it was only 4:30 and the restaurant didn't open until 5. We decided to go back home to wait. Geoff led driving off. But soon it was apparent that they weren't going back home. In five minutes we wound up at the Philadelphia Soaring Council field (yes, five minutes from Geoff's home). The pictures show what it's like to own your own glider port. And I couldn't resist the one of Addy getting a piano lesson at age 4 months.





*Skyline Soaring Club's 15th
Anniversary
Gala Celebration!*

When:

Saturday, November 4, 2006; 6:30 - Midnight

*** Please save the Date ***

If you attended our 10th Anniversary party then you will remember how spectacular it was, and how everyone agreed that it truly marked our club's "coming of age." Your 15th Anniversary Gala Committee guarantees that this party is going to be even better!

Our Nationally known speaker for the evening will be Doug Jacobs as well as other VIPs and other surprises.

Where:

*The Heritage Hunt Golf & Country Club, Main Ballroom
6901 Arthur Hill Drive, Gainesville, VA 20155
(in Gainesville, Virginia - just off I-66 at the intersection of Route 29)*

Price:

*\$60.00 per person; Children under 12 years: \$15.00
Includes Dinner, Dancing and Fun!*

*** Black Tie Optional ***

*You will receive details and your invitation mid September.
Friends & Family are most welcome.*

SEE YOU THERE...



*Please RSVP & send in your checks by October 15, 2006 to Dan Noonan:
dan@arclt.com; 660 Gillums Ridge Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22903*

Reflections of "the Crew"

Susan Gogos honorary member of SSC

Technical advisor: h3

Several people have asked me what I do at the airport all day while my "better half" is way up, high in the "wild blue yonder" keeping the birds company?

Bela has been a soaring pilot for many years and we have visited several soaring sites. When we were living in N.Y. State we flew from Wurtsboro, N.Y. may be the least liked, even though we shared the sky with "Superman". Chris Reeve's plane was parked next to ours in the hangar. He usually flew out from the City in his power plane, got into his sailplane and off he went.

Our regularly visited sites were Julian, Pa., Sugarbush, Vt., and Minden, NV and I was "drafted"—or volunteered?—as his "crew". We have encountered only the friendliest people at each one—the staff of the airport and the visiting pilots and their entourage. There was always someone to have a little "chit-chat" with or some more serious "exchange of minds".

I was well equipped with reading materials, knitting, crossword puzzles. Most times I did not get to entertain myself with such "nonsense". There was always someone who needed a little assist with

rigging, taking the plane apart at the end of day, hooking up the plane to the tow-plane, wing running or fetching landed planes; sometimes they seemed to be "dropping" out of the sky one after the other in quick succession. They had to be moved out of the way of the other landing planes. There was the holding up the declaration of the "flight plan" for taking a picture of it for those who planned some special task for the day.

One day at Keystone Gliderport—with a special task for the day, a 300 km. gold distance—Harry Nutter, a jovial, easy going, always smiling fellow, was staying in his motor home on the airport. He was just strapped in his plane when we asked him "Harry, just in case you were to "land- out" where are the keys to your motor home?" With a sheepish smile on his face he reached into his pocket and handed them over to me. Then we launched him.

Late in the afternoon his call came in—yes, he "landed out". He gave directions to where he was located, about 70 miles from the airport and was waiting for the "rescuers". Jack Stewart, another pilot visiting from the Nutmeg Soaring Club in Connecticut, Bela and I hooked up Harry's empty trailer to his motor home and off we went. He gave good directions—"only" 70 miles from the airport. Still at one point we turned right instead of left, but we realized it quickly and soon found "sheepish" looking Harry leaning against his Pegasus. Right away we set up for "de-rigging"; it was getting to be sunset quickly. It went well, the four of us were rather experienced in this task, and we soon had the "bird" safely in the trailer. All left to dowas to get our "reward" (an "unwritten rule") a well deserved dinner on Harry; the rescued pilot always treated his

rescuers.

By the time we arrived back at the airport it was pitch dark and we were all eager to call it a day.

Another memorable event took place also at the Keystone Gliderport. Doris and Tom felt that they needed some time away from their daily routine. On Tuesday mornings they would launch those who wanted to fly that day and then they left. Of course, Bela was one of them, and was soon up in the air.

Not another soul was at the airport except me at one end and one other faithful "crew" at the other sitting in her small trailer. I was settling in for a few hours of reading, doing crossword puzzles, knitting. Suddenly she appeared breathlessly urging me to go with her to the public telephone at her end of the field. Sure enough, it was Bela reporting his "landing out" and giving me instructions



Photos provided by Bela Gogos

how to get there and take him "home". His "landing site" was in a village cemetery at Bellwood, about 25-miles away from the airport. I was faced with the task of hooking up the trailer to the car that I have never done on my own. Just as I was ready to give in to despair Jim Garrison arrived pulling his plane onto the airport having driven up from Virginia. As a good "trooper" he right away helped me to hook up the trailer and off we went to search for Bela. Knowing how tired Jim must have been, I specially appreciated his help and willingness.

We found Bela and H3 easily, surrounded by peaceful graves. Jim's first act on arriving was to walk around the plane and lift the wing tip of the plane and smooth out the grass where the plane cut a piece out. Bela was standing next to H-3 in the company of a jolly, strapping Polish fellow. He was the caretaker of the cemetery. He offered to let Bela call me from his office. He also offered his services, be it an ambulance, a cemetery plot or throw the plane on his broad shoulders and carry it back to the airfield in case I don't come to the rescue. Fortunately it did not come to that as I showed up. The four of us quickly set to take the plane apart and put it into the trailer. Then we gratefully parted from our kind caretaker.

We pulled out of the cemetery and headed back to the airport. On the way back Bela recalled the events that forced him to choose the cemetery as his landing site. The little village nearby, Tyron, is built into the side of the ridge and there was just not any possibility for landing. He also had to avoid a high voltage power line on the top of the ridge. Then he noticed, couple miles, away a road



leading to a cemetery. It was a perfect spot to put down H3. The landing was perfect and the plane stopped in front of the first graveside. This adventure of ours was the talk of the little village of Bellwood for weeks!

Also at Keystone, on a promising good day, Bela declared a 300-km goal distance from Julian to Rt. 865 at the ridge top, Pine Creek and back home. At Pine Creek on the way home he encountered a heavy thunderstorm. To save the flight and wait for the storm to pass he flew over to the ridge. Then the second wave of the storm gathered up, constant lightning, wind and pouring rain. At that time Bela had difficulty seeing and realized that he had to land. Found a nice spot in front of a farmhouse and safely landed. The owner of the farm was a smiling, friendly man, offered the use of his phone and Bela called me with directions. Then the two men settled down to a good discussion, and waited for me.

Luckily, at the airport Butch Thompson, another soaring pilot and a friend of ours volunteered to join me and pick up Bela. As we were driving we too encountered the thunderstorms which made me worried. Butch was looking at the directions. At a stop sign, he said, "turn right". I felt, we should have to go straight - but then he had the directions in his hands—and who would argue with a man? Little by little we realized that indeed we were not on the right road, and turned around. By then the storm intensified. But, eventually we got on the right road and easily found Bela and his plane in the front of the farmhouse. The farmer and one of his helpers kindly pitched in and thus we had H3 quickly in its cozy bed. We said our "good-byes and thank you" and started back to the gliderport and arrived after midnight soaking wet and shivering..

It was at this airport where we experienced something that we hoped we never had to. There was an accident that left deep feelings and lessons to be learned about airport activities and safety. I just prepared Bela for take-off, sitting on the line, waiting for the tow plane to return. When it did, we noticed that the rope was broken, the ring was missing. Immediately Tom came running and halted the flying for the day. At that moment we did not know why.

Mr. Kovacs, another Hungarian, visiting from Montreal, piloted the plane taking off right ahead of us and with whom we had a long discussion during his rigging. Due to this distraction by us he forgot to hook up the elevator and no positive control check has been done prior to his take-off. This is an important rule: never distract anybody assembling his plane, and always, always have a positive control check prior to take-off. We don't know if he had done this before take-off. We saw him take off and shortly making a right turn, then nothing. Apparently, his elevator on his Pik 20 wasn't hooked up and he crashed into a small house close to the gliderport. The owner bent down to pick up something from the ground and thus escaped "loosing his head". Tom came to the line told us that flying was suspended for that day. Explained what happened, Mr. Kovacs crashed and was taken to the hospital and was OK except a few broken bones.

Later he returned to Montreal where he resided. Unfortunately some months later a blood clot traveled up to his heart and he passed away.

We have fond memories of Keystone Gliderport, Doris and Tom and had interesting encounters with other pilots visiting from several different far away locations. There is one very important thing to remember: never plan to go there on the day of a Penn State game—there is no vacancy to be found on those weekends in a 50 mile radius around State College.

Sugarbush in Vermont was another of our favorite sites, which we visited yearly for two weeks. The trip was long but enjoyable – 620 miles in one day, pulling H3 behind us. The last leg of the trip was on Rt.100, which had sharp curves, sudden up-hills, and downhills. We were glad and relieved when we finally came to the turn-off to the Field. Each time we rented a condo about 2 miles from the Gliderport and always made some friends with the other occupants. It was a short trip to the field and after Bela took off for the day I spent my time socializing with whoever happened to be around. On one occasion just after I launched Bela I joined a friendly looking man on the sideline that seemed interested in



Susan and Bela Gogos: The H-3 Team portrait by Dick Otis

soaring. As we stood there we engaged in some friendly exchanges—I thought he looked rather familiar. I soon recognized him even without introductions—he was the Oscar winning actor Cliff Robertson, another flying enthusiast who wanted to get his glider certification. John Mahoney was his instructor and by the end of the week Cliff successfully passed his test. On Saturday, his last day, John Mahoney invited him and a group of us for a good, home cooked meal by his mother at his condo.

A horse show was held in the outskirts of the town every year while we were there. While Bela was flying I often sat there enjoying the beautiful animals and their accomplishments. I have always been a lover of horses and enjoyed watching them.

One year at Sugarbush we parked next to a pleasant family with two teenagers. The men helped each other rigging and de-rigging and we had cookouts with them. They were visiting from Canada. He was from East Germany and she was from South Africa.

One day by the time we arrived at the field, Peter already took off with his son in his modified HP—with two seats side-by-side. The workmanship was poor. Bela soon followed and we exchanged reports of their locations. Suddenly we became aware that something was wrong, one plane disappeared from the sky. I called up to Bela and asked if he could see Peter—no he couldn't and was going to land right away. By then, the office already called the rescue squad: a plane is down! John Murry landed right away at the tower and soon a group of men, including Bela, took off to find Peter. The terrain was rugged and difficult to make headway. But finally they came upon a dazed Peter. He said he was OK, "but please check on my son"—actually he was his stepson, his wife's son.

The rescue team put together two stretchers from dead limbs found on the ground and four T-shirts and carried the pilot and his stepson to the road where a truck was waiting for them.

The investigation found that the sailplane stalled, went into a

flat spin and flew into the mountain at high speed. The plane was a complete loss.

The son was apparently unconscious, dazed and had head injuries. Peter and his son were taken to the hospital in Montpelier, then transferred to the Burlington hospital. My visiting sister-in-law, Ingegerd, and I followed them there and stayed with them until they were checked out and settled in their beds.

The members of Sugarbush very generously assisted with money donations. Bela and I kept in touch with them for a number of years.

Towards the end of the day my "better half" landed—usually the last one to return. We would put the "bird" into its "box" and Saturday nights usually ended with a delicious barbecue—provided either by the hosts or by the visitors— and a lively discussion of the day's events and achievements.

Sitting on the ground, now and then, I was rewarded with a report from high "up there" of the situation: altitude, location and general conditions of H-3.

To sum it up: I never had a "dull" day crewing for my husband.

Final note from H3 : *At every airport H3 was flying Susan was the darling of the visiting pilots and airport personnel.—"Driver" of H3*



Photo: Dick Otis

Young Eagle

Dan Noonan celebrated his 16th birthday on July 15th by passing his FAA Oral and Practical exam to get his Private Pilot Glider license. Dan began flying with Skyline Soaring Club in 2004 while he was 13 and soloed at 14. Says Danny, "It was great to pass the test and get my license. Everybody at SSC have been so helpful, especially Instructor Fred (LaSor) who I first flew with and soloed me and our Chief Flight Instructor, Piet Barber who spent so much of his time helping me prepare."



Photos: Dan Noonan



Dan and SSC's Chief Flight Instructor Piet Barber after the test. The following week, after ground and flight instruction from Jim Kellett, Danny flew his dad's Open Cirrus.

OR Squad (Ops Rescue)

(right) Skyline President Joe Rees with Jim Dayton, from St. Mary's, who came to Skyline's rescue on August 12 when the Club's tow-plane was unexpectedly out of service.



Photos: Jim Kellett



(left) Joe Rees, Butch Thompson, from Mifflin, PA, and Chris Groshel with Butch's Husky. Fred Winter was instrumental in helping Butch save our day on August 13. The Club owes a big dose of gratitude to Jim and Butch and all the SSC members and friends like Rusty Lowery, who made these two Ops Days happen.

Milestone

It came and went without even me noticing it! I was expecting some sort of party or something. (Fred LaSor promised groupies after becoming a flight instructor, I'm still waiting for those, too).

On the 6th of August, 1986, some little scruffy-lookin 138-pound desperately-needing-a-haircut 14 year old took his first flight in a glider at Warrenton Soaring Center, VA. Heck, we even have a picture of the juvenile delinquent! —Piet Barber

The question is which one? Still stumped?
<http://tinyurl.com/q52j9>



The Safety Committee Meeting to discuss Ground Ops is moved to September 3rd, 2006 at the FBO.—**Richard Freytag**, Secretary, SSC Safety Committee

Making it ALL add up—I've explained this to several members individually, but with the recent receipts that have come in for payment from members who have bought items (gas for the tow car for example) I'd like to give a short explanation to the membership about how our bookkeeping takes care of these issues.

Basically, we have 2 groups of people, customers (our members who fly and use our equipment) and Vendors (people or companies that provide services or things for our use). Our bookkeeping cannot make a person who is a customer (a member who flies) also a vendor (a member who buys gas for the tow car, for example).

So, it is not possible to submit a receipt for anything a member provides for the club (Vendor) and have it put on account to fly on (Customer)

Any receipt submitted for payment needs to have a check cut and sent to the member.

While I can say that I am sorry for any inconvenience this may cause, there is nothing I can do about it.

If anyone has any questions about this please, contact me.

As a note to DO's (or people acting as DO's) please do not collect a receipt for gas and subtract it from flying fees.

Thanks,

—**Dan Noonan SSC Treasurer**

Jet, Glider Collide, All Survive— A Hawker XP800 corporate jet flying about 300 mph at 16,000 feet near Reno, Nev., on Monday afternoon collided with a Schleicher sailplane. The collision damaged the nose and landing gear of the jet, but the crew was able to make a safe belly landing at Carson City. The pilot suffered minor injuries, but the co-pilot and three passengers were fine. Meanwhile, glider pilot Hirao Akihiro, 58, bailed out over the Pine Nut Mountains, landed safely, and hiked about three miles until rescuers found him about 6:45 p.m. Other than some cuts and bruises, he was unhurt. The wreckage of the glider has not been found. On Tuesday, a local pilot said jets approaching Reno shouldn't be directed over the mountain range, which is a popular site for gliders. About 10 to 12 gliders per day are likely to be found at those altitudes, Fred LaSor, manager of a soaring facility, told the Reno Gazette-Journal. The Hawker's instrument panel was damaged in the collision, and Carson City Sheriff Kenneth Furlong told the Gazette-Journal that the inside of the jet looked like someone had detonated a hand grenade. Furlong praised the crew, pilot Annette Saunders, 38, and co-pilot Mitchell Merchant, 35, for landing the jet safely. The jet was leased from NetJets.—**AVwebFlash 12.35b**

Fred LaSor has posted some comments on RAS relative to the

unsettling Minden Mid-Air.

http://groups.google.com/group/rec.aviation.soaring/browse_frm/thread/a5ac5926d66306ac/ac3a3aa5701b4ae7#ac3a3aa5701b4ae7

Also see: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jzawodn/228637332/in/photostream/>

This weekend, the tow car met with an encounter of the third kind, which may prove fatal. The fuel tank was "struck" on the bottom, and there is a small hole in it. Here are the choices:

1. I think the leak could be fixed with epoxy if someone wants to take on the job. It's fairly obvious and accessible.

2. Someone could donate a car to replace our present tow car.

If we elect to keep our beloved tow car, it needs some additional work. It needs a new front tire, and I think it needs new brakes pads on the front (someone needs to check—but it's probably the brake squealers that are making the squeaking sound).

If someone wants to donate a car, the qualifications are:

a) it needs to be big enough to tow everything through the mud (previous smaller tow cars couldn't)

b) it needs a tow hitch to tow our ops trailer

c) it needs to be able to stand up to incredibly rough treatment

d) it needs 4 doors to be able to throw in dollies, etc.

e) it needs to be easy to maintain

f) it needs to be automatic

g) it should have 4-5 years life left in it

h) it needs to start easily, as it is started many times during the day

The main advantages of our present car are that it is dirt cheap and easy to fix (e.g., starter motor \$26, water pump \$16, vs. hundreds for modern cars—replacement time was an hour vs. days for modern cars). And it has a huge trunk full of stuff, and big accessible seats. It also has a big old cast iron block that has stood up to running grossly overheated without coolant, and storage over the winter without antifreeze. I won't go into the list of disadvantages....

—**George Hazelrigg**

Wave Camp—Larry Stahl, the FBO at Grant County Airport, Petersburg WV has announced three wave camp dates for the coming months. Mark your calendars.

October 14 to October 22 November 25 to December 3 February 24 to March 4.

Oxygen is available. There will be limited hangar space, so call ahead of time to reserve space. The cost of hangar space depends on the size of the glider.

Tie down space is available at no charge.

If you have any questions, either email me or call Larry at 304-257-4435 —**Bill Vickland**

"Pluto has lost its status as a planet.

But it says it will run as an independent."—**David Letterman**



SKYLINES

September 2006

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