



Masthead photo by Dick Otis

## Distractions

George Hazelrigg, Jr.

**W**e train for distractions. What do you do when someone distracts you while doing your preflight? First, kill him. Then start over. What about your passenger talking to you while you are in the pattern? Shut her up politely and continue with your full attention on the approach. Distractions don't seem to be a big item of concern. They are easily overcome and dealt with. Well, not really. I'm here to share a distraction experience, and maybe you can learn something from it. It's a distraction that caught me, and what's more, I set myself up for it.

On Saturday, the something of October, it was a beautiful soaring day, and I planned to spend it in my LS way above Front Royal. But when I arrived at the field, there were two FAST persons waiting to go up, and we needed another instructor. So I agreed to do the rides. Note already that there is some time pressure. I carefully and thoroughly briefed them for their ride in the Grob, including use of the controls and what we would do during their first flight. We pushed the Grob up to the staging area, and I put my student in the front seat. I made sure she was properly strapped in and that she knew what not to touch and how to close the canopy. There weren't enough hale bodies around for me to get in, so I helped

push the Grob out onto the runway. Always aware of our need to minimize time on the runway, I jumped in, belted myself and ran quickly though the checklist. I always do my checklists and, if any of you have flown with me, you know that I do it aloud carefully checking each item. Controls free and clear, ballast—it was in, straps—we are strapped, instruments—radio set and checked with the Pawnee, trim set, rope hooked up, canopy closed (I always push up on the canopy after latching it just to be sure it is closed—did I do that, or did I miss it in my haste to get off the runway?). Brakes locked and we launch. As we accelerate up to rotation speed, I suddenly hear a strange sound. My canopy is not latched. Wow! I just checked it! Fly the glider. Eyes on the towplane, I reach up with my left hand and reset the latch. Canopy is now latched. All over in 4-5 seconds, no problems, and we are on our way. Well, I handled that distraction just fine. So, what's this event got to do with learning about distractions. Stay tuned.

Dick Otis



I'm rather AR about events such as this. I won't just let it go. I analyze how it happened and why, and I resolve to take actions to prevent such an event in the future. I will not allow myself to feel rushed again. It's bad for my health. I resolve to double check each item on the checklist. Okay, now I'm safe again. I climb into my LS-1f and fly for over 3 hours off a 1,200 foot tow. I'm back in the groove.

Now it's Sunday and I'm back to the field, and there's another couple out for FAST rides, and I'm asked to



Dick Otis

help. So, I take the couple out to the glider, the ASK-21 this time, and give them a very thorough and totally unrushed briefing—even though the DO is trying to rush me as there is a high demand for the gliders. I'm not going to be rushed again. Finally, we push the K to the staging area and I put my first ride in and make sure he is properly seated, pedals adjusted, belts on, and he is thoroughly briefed on the canopy. We get the person-power needed to push us both out to the runway, and I get in. I carefully strap in and I carefully go through the checklist, thoroughly checking each item. No more bad stuff. Boy, that canopy is really on my mind! Never again! An unlatched Grob canopy is a distraction. An unlatched rear K canopy is a disaster. I drop the canopy and latch it. I strain to see that the pins are in position. I instruct my ride to drop his canopy and latch it. Done. I check to be sure his latch pins are in position. These canopies are down and latched. I am sure. This canopy thing is really on my mind.

Okay, we're ready for launch. Rudder waggle, and off we go. Rotation speed, rotate, lift-off and, SCREEEECH!!!! The K lets out this blood curdling screech at 60-80 db right into my left ear. What is my first thought? The canopy is coming off! The noise is so compelling that my eyes shift automatically to the canopy. With my left hand I reach up and grab the canopy hinge. I push and pull on it. No change in the noise. (Notice, I did not grab the release with my left hand as perhaps I should have. I have a FAST ride here, and I want it to be a good ride.) Seconds go by, maybe two, maybe three. Surely not four. The noise is hideous. I am mesmerized. No, wait. I'm flying a glider. I look back forward to see that I am about 20 feet above the towplane, which is still on the ground. I push forward, stop the climb and recover. In about 5 more seconds, I

decide that the problem is the wing tape, and that it poses no safety threat. But the distraction sure did.

I tried to fly with the noise, but I couldn't hear my passenger, the vario or the radio. The noise was just too loud. After about ten minutes of struggling in broken thermals unable to hear the vario, I told my passenger that we were going back to land. Then I found just how much I rely on noise cues in the pattern. My speed control wasn't very good. We went for the grass as there was a launch readying on

the runway. A hard but safe touchdown. Time to reflect.

Why did I recover in 3-4 seconds? Was it my distraction training, or just dumb luck. I'll never know. I have endured an engine failure over the mountains in California, a nav system failure on an instrument approach, and a kid throwing up on me while I was trying to land while I was being cut off by a plane flying an angled straight-in approach and totally oblivious to his traffic. I had the right of way. These distractions never dissuaded me from flying the machine first. But a screaming noise in my left ear surely did. And it surely posed a threat to my safety, that of my passenger and the tow pilot.

So what are the lessons? First, we can train all we want for distractions, but the one that's going to get you is not the one you train for. Second, you may think you are fully trained in distractions, but just forget it. You aren't. Third, the people who flew the glider before me experienced some noise but didn't report it. It turned out that the problem was a hairline crack in the wing tape that acted like a reed making the whole wing into a giant organ pipe screeching in my ear. The crack was so fine that I didn't see it the first time I looked. But it was about 18 inches long. I retaped the wing and the noise went away. Had the previous pilot told me about the noise, I would have retaped the wing before I went up. Lesson: we all need to report all problems with the glider before it is flown again. And finally, if you really fear for your life, pull the release. Otherwise, just forget the distraction, whatever it is. Gliders are rather robust. They don't just fall apart. If you carefully follow your checklist, most distractions are rather minor. Neglecting them is most often the best approach. But I'm here to tell you, it ain't always easy.

Photo of Alicia Fyfe by Dave Lavery





## Skyline Holiday Party



**Who:** Skyline Soaring Club members and guest

**When:** Saturday, December 8, 2007 - 7:00pm -??

**Where:** The Canary Cottage, home of Bill Wark & Lynne Garvey Wark  
7153 Main St., Clifton, Virginia 20124 (703) 322-1811

*Come join us for this festive get-together & opportunity to visit with other Skyline Soaring Club members & their spouse or friend/significant other.*

*Heavy hors d'oeuvres & soft drinks will be provided.*

*Feel free to bring a favorite dish & BYOB, if you'd like.*

**Directions:** I-66 to the Fairfax County Parkway (Rt. 7100 - head to Springfield, NOT to Reston...) to 1st exit, Rt. 29, Lee Highway.

*Right on Lee Highway South to*

*Left onto Clifton Rd. for 5 miles into the heart of the Historic Town of Clifton, Virginia.*

*(please note cell phones do not work as you approach Clifton)*

*Please park on the street or at the Post Office parking lot (on Chapel Rd.—1 block away).*

*For additional information, feel free to visit our Bed & Breakfast web site,*

**<http://www.canarycottage.com>**

***Please RSVP by December 3, 2007 via email, [lghassoc@erols.com](mailto:lghassoc@erols.com)***

***Or call (703) 322-1811.***

*We look forward to seeing everyone!*

***Lynne & Bill***

## Board of Directors Summary

*Craig Bendorf, Club Secretary*

Summary of the discussion and decisions from SSC Board of Directors meeting, 20 October 2007, and during the month of October.

### 1. Tow Car

- We would like to remind the club members to put the tail dollies in the trunk of the car and not the back seat. This will help keep the car cleaner and protect the cloth seats. Additionally all drivers must remember that the car is not to leave the airport property due to insurance requirements.

### 2. Weekend Duty

- Club members are reminded that once their name comes out on the schedule they are responsible for finding a replacement or organizing a trade. In all cases the Duty Officer (DO) for that day needs to be informed of any trades in a timely manner.

### 3. Tow Plane Committee

- The Tow plane committee provided the Board with a very objective look at the pros, cons and options for the Club to look into procuring a second tow plane. The Board requested additional information and analysis and plans on presenting the committee results and recommendations to the club members at the Annual Membership meeting in January.

### 4. Volunteers

- The life and blood that keeps a club going is its volunteers. Everyone is required to perform a minimum amount of duty to support the club, but a lot of additional effort is needed to keep our club running smoothly and professionally. With that note, we put out a call for volunteers to fill some key positions.

1. **Skyline Editor** - Phil Jordan has done a fantastic job of ensur-

ing that our monthly newsletter has been a class act and provided great stories, information and enjoyment to our members and many others across the country. However, it is now time for him to pass the baton to someone else and we need a volunteer to step forward. Because of the effort required the Skyline Editor is not required to perform any other additional duties.

2. **Board of Directors Members** - Every year at the annual membership meeting we elect two new members to the Board of Directors. Once again we are asking for nominations to serve in this critical position that directly influences the daily operations and future of our club. Please submit any nominations to the Club Secretary or the Board by the end of December.

3. **Sprite Miester** - This position requires someone who can watch over the health and well being of the Sprite.

### 5. Upcoming events

- 8 Dec 2007, SSC Holiday Party.** Bill and Lynne Wark have graciously volunteered to again host the annual SSC Holiday party at their beautiful home. (See page 2 of this Skyline.)

- 19 January 2008, (tentative) Annual SSC Membership meeting.** The meeting will start at 10:00 AM at a location that is to be determined.

- 23 February 2008, Annual Safety Meeting.** This is a mandatory meeting for all members and will start at 10:00 at the Front Royal Airport.

- 23 February 2008 (Tentative), Start 2008 normal flight operations**

The next Board meeting will be held on 13 Nov 2007. Any members who have issues for the Board to discuss please send them to the SSC Directors email address [directors@skylinesoaring.org](mailto:directors@skylinesoaring.org)

## Mentoring Program

*Bob Sallada*

It has been "consensed" by our CFI cadre to try a mentoring program for certain members joining Skyline. This scheme is aimed at new members who, in one sense or another, can be considered "students" (although, in fact, that really applies to every one of us!). While there are a few growing pains cropping up, the goal is to have every new student matched up with an active club CFI within a matter of days after application submittal. This will be done through Steve Rockwood, our membership guy, and myself (the CFI "point man"). I have a pretty good survey of how many mentoree's each instructor can take on. Obviously, professional and family obligations are among the factors that play a role in that determination.

**So - you ask - what duties, responsibilities and accountabilities does this designation entail??**

In the largest sense, it's overriding purpose is to make the "new student" feel at home, learn about the club's history and the members who comprise it (and strongly encourage the new member to provide a biography of their own), have someone to

ask questions of, and who will provide consistency of information and early training. Beyond that, it includes tracking student progress and flying as much as possible with the incoming student for as many of the ab initio flights as possible, without inhibiting progress by non-availability. When that is flat impossible, at least to track progress carefully by means of our website mechanisms and stay in touch, if only by phone. The mentor is the person who picks up on the student having not appeared at the airport for an extended period and asks "what's up" ? He does his best to remember how he felt as a beginning student and a new member of Skyline. He uses homework assignments to reinforce – before and after – flight experiences. The ideal situation is that the first instructor the joining student meets and talks/flied with becomes his mentor. However, practicalities make that problematic, as the sophisticates say.

A very similar, but broader, "sponsor" concept has been provided to the Board of Directors for their consideration. In a nutshell, this would entail matching up joining members having past sailplane experience sufficient to not be considered a "newbie", with well established Skyline members, probably not CFI's. Again, the primary purpose here would be a feeling of welcome, learning the ropes of how Skyline operationally does things, and soliciting ideas borne of their experiences with other organizations.

## Being raised on a ridge-top...

*Biography by Chris Groshel*

**...in northeastern Pennsylvania** above a small GA airport called Forty-Fort just about guaranteed that I'd end up in aviation. I couldn't miss the planes in the pattern, when, on downwind were just even with the elevation of our house, and turned onto base leg right in front of our place. Also, in the early 60's TWA Constellations and Allegheny Convairs in climb power passed over our house after departing Avoca (AVP) headed to exotic places like Pittsburgh, Detroit and other points west. I had the annoying habit of dropping what I was doing and running outside to gaze at the big ones as they passed over

I started flying Cherokees in 1972 at age 16 but Hurricane Agnes put a hold on things after putting our airport under 24' (feet, not inches) of muddy slimy water. At that time I had my first experience turning wrenches on aircraft when I helped several owners disassemble their water damaged aircraft. After graduation from high school my flying continued when I would take my paycheck from my full-time job in a textile mill and walk to the airport after work, and turn the check over to the FBO—fly for a while, and then walk home. To work, to the airport and then home was about a 6 mile round-robin. To this day I never hesitate to walk somewhere.

I ended up getting my PPL in late 1973 and I didn't really have any idea what was going to do next (The textile factory management thought I was going to make a career out of nylon!) Embury Riddle had called several times offering a "great deal" with a Professional Pilot course for only \$15,000! Resources were slim then and I opted to head to a school in Pittsburgh to learn aircraft maintenance for less than \$3000. This proved to be the greatest return on investment I ever had.

Allegheny County Airport (AGC) in Pittsburgh was a hot bed of GA activity in those days and everything that flew came through there. Going to school there, flying in a club and working part-time as a line boy at a Piper FBO based exposed me to some of the more interesting things in aviation. Cool things like my first ride in a corporate aircraft, a Cub checkout, flying off of grass, night flying, real cross countries. And not so nice things like aerial hearses, airplane "repo" guys, and my first engine failure.

From A&P School, I headed to Grumman American in Cleveland, Ohio and later Savannah, Ga, working on the light aircraft assembly line building Tigers and Cheetahs. I later transferred into the Gulfstream jet division where over the next 17 years I worked various jobs in a multitude of locations.

While in Savannah I collected my ratings and did an assortment of odd jobs on the side with every intention of making a living as a professional pilot. I was working on my CFI when I ran into gliders...

### A club of one...

On weekends I was flying an old Cessna 182 skydive plane at an airport an hour's drive out of Savannah and was making pretty good money, \$4.00 per load clear! Sylvania Plantation Airport was the place. A WWII relic with three 5000' runways. There were only about five aircraft on the airport and a new Twin Astir in the hangar. One of the ramp tenants was a beater 2-33. I asked the FBO manager what the deal was with the 2-33. The story was that three well-to-do locals bought it a couple years back and learned

to fly in it then went out and bought new glass ...the Twin Astir and two G-102's were their current mounts. They had formed a club with the 2-33, Sea Islands Soaring, but there were no active members. So the 2-33 languished.

I was interested but with a jump plane keeping me busy and no glider instructor anywhere to be seen the thought passed about flying gliders.

Well, one day, during a jump break I ran into a fellow visiting the FBO who mentioned he was a glider instructor who had just moved to the area and was looking to do some instructing. John Wilson and his wife Linda and I hit it off immediately and by the next week we had contacted the club owners who gave their approval and John and I were off in the 2-33.

We had a unique situation. We had two tow planes, a Citabria and the C-182 and a 2-33 that was in a club that had no members. That was the good part. The bad part was the -33 wasn't in the best of shape. It flew but barely by my standards.

That first weekend we went to cloud base and thermalled with some vultures and I soloed even though it flew without a working airspeed indicator.

And the 2-33 flew oddly...it had been damaged in a ground handling incident during a thunderstorm and not repaired very well. The repaired wing was so heavy that unless the opposite light wing was touching the ground it would flop back over on the heavy wing. It was not a pleasurable experience. I usually ran out of aileron effectively to the left. That's probably why today I thermal better to the right than to the left.

After approved to solo I was on my own to build landings for the checkride. Sylvania was so dead that I regularly hooked up the 2-33 to my four-speed, four cylinder Ford Fiesta and pulled it out to the active about 1000 ft away with no one to give a hand. The process went ... Pull 200 feet...stop....straighten the -33...pull, stop, straighten, pull, stop, straighten... Then walk over and get the FBO manager to bring a tow plane out. Hardly ever had a wing runner. Landings all done and off to Chester, S.C. to fly with Fred McFawn at Bermuda High for the checkride.

After a successful checkride, my flying continued back at Sylvania, again, with the 2-33 all to myself. Hey, wasn't a club supposed to have more than one member? The pattern was so quiet I regularly thermalled in the center of the field, always had the pattern to myself and usually landed on the taxiway, stopping next to the tie-down to avoid of the pull-stop-straighten routine.

One of the private ship owners, a Phil Morris, had me crew for him in the regional in Cordele that year and I became so immersed in gliders and soaring that by the end of the season I decided to purchase a kit of the popular Monerai, a V-tailed, welded and bonded glider that was supposed to be replacement for the 1-26. George Moffat had evaluated it in Soaring and gave it a thumbs-up. I got kit #176. I won't go into details on how the kit went but will just ask you "how many Monerai's have you seen"?

### Back to life.....

There was not much challenge flying the 2-33 and the only camaraderie was with the grasshoppers and gnats. It just happened, not long after, that I left Grumman/Gulfstream to take a position in Mobil Oil's flight department in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia as an aircraft technician. That was the beginning of a life of heavy traveling and the 80's found me in moving from Saudi, back to Gulfstream in Savannah, U.A.E., New York, L.A., London, Basel and Dallas. Somewhere in there the unfinished Monerai went away.



About 7 years after my last flight in a glider, while working in New York one summer, I ran into an interesting fellow, Hank Nixon. Hank was running a club in Middletown, New York; He was a great promoter and sensed my yearning to fly. He pretty much pointed to the 2-33 and said "get in". That summer was fun and convinced me never to stray too far from gliders again. I'll always owe Hank for that one.



The Grumman owners group kept me busy throughout the 90's with me taking the Regional Director's position and trying to coordinate events for the 250+ owners in the mid-Atlantic region. This turned out to be quite a job. Not long after I disengaged myself from the owners group, Skyline Soaring moved back to FRR.

One weekend my neighbor and I wandered out to FRR. It was more me trying to get my neighbor to get interested in flying when we met this "salesman type" working as DO who

Settling down in D.C in 1988 I immediately set my priorities straight and bought a plane, N26071 the Grumman Cheetah that I still fly today, and the next day I met Lianne, my wife to be. How's that for planning?


gave a great pitch. I think his name was Joe Rees...

Well it's 2007. I know I need to fly gliders a bit more but have to fit it in between my replica SuperCub project and a (another) new job. Sounds like a good New Year's resolution, doesn't it?

---

## Membership Report

*Steve Rockwood, SSC Membership Officer*

 Our membership has grown steadily this year and the club now has a total of 89 active members, including 4 introductory members. Welcome recently joined probationary members to the Skyline Soaring Club:

### **Mike Constandy - Alexandria, Virginia**

Mike obtained an introductory membership earlier this year but rumors of a transfer out of the area by his company postponed him committing to the club. Mike recently converted his introductory membership to a probationary membership and is coming to the airport regularly for training. Mike is a student pilot working on a private license. We are glad you are staying in Virginia.

### **Lynwood "Woody" Evans - Alexandria, Virginia**

Woody is a private glider pilot with over 1,000 hours of glider time. Woody was a founding member of a glider club in Maryland prior to coming to the Skyline Soaring Club. He joined the club in October and made several flights in the Grob and ASK-21.

### **Andre Gerner - Vienna, Virginia**

Andre has a commercial glider rating and is a certified flight instructor. He must have liked what he saw in the club and converted his introductory membership into a probationary member in September. Andre is a very experienced pilot and we are hoping he will join our flight instructor core.

### **Matt Jackson - Alexandria, Virginia**

Matt is a student pilot working toward his first solo flight.

### **Chris Martzloff - Arlington, Virginia**

Chris is a student pilot with about 40 glider training flights logged, including a dozen solo flights. Chris has taken his pre-solo written test and is working to regain his solo flight authorization.

### **William "Bill" Rew - Catlett, Virginia**

Bill is also a very experience glider pilot with a commercial glider rating and is a certified flight instructor. Bill recently took an hour plus long flight in the Grob to get familiar with the Front Royal topography. As with Andre, we are hoping Bob Sallada can convince Bill to join his team of very qualified instructors.

The club also welcomes flyers with introductory memberships including:

**Nathan Henry** - Celebrated his birthday on September 30th with an introductory membership and his first glider flight. His wife Cathy Suiter-Henry also took an introductory flight to experience soaring and celebrate her birthday on September 27th. No word on how old they are however!

**William Kelleher** - Has made the most of his introductory membership and shows up regularly to receive flight training.

**Michael Moore** - Has a power rating and is very interested in glider flight. He had an introductory flight of over an hour with Jim Garrison and assisted in assembling George's glider.

**Kursten Wood** - Kursten also, took an hour long introductory flight and then helped George Hazelrigg assemble his ship. Quite an interesting day I am sure.

Please welcome these new members to the Skyline Soaring family!

Copy



**That!** *Selected flotsam and jetsam from the editor's daily Tsunami of email*

Robert Link officially became inactive in April.

**Regarding my duty status**, apparently you did receive the memo that my work has taken me abroad, so I am semi-inactive at the moment. Regarding next year, I'll officially be inactive.—**Craig Sutherland**

**Vern Kline has been doing a lot work lately** to upgrade and update the website, including figuring out a way to electronically get new members names into the site so instructors can upload instruction reports real-time. Piet has incorporated a new area on the site were members can update or input a biography to share with other members and the outside world. Many of the bios currently on the system are old and outdated. As part of the overall website update, it would be great to have updated bios from some of our key members. If you have been included on the e-mail at your next convenience please go to the website and update your bio. If you are a board member and have not included your bio, it is important that the membership know something about you, please input a bio. Eventually, we will be asking all members that have not already provided a bio to do so, especially new members so we can get to know them. But for now we are asking for your support in this effort.—**Steve Rockwood, SSC Membership Officer**

...and congratulations to Steve Rockwood, SSC's newest PPL-G.



**John Lewis and Phil Jordan** are selling their 1-26, N126JL, and I'm trying to find some partners to buy it. The glider itself is in great shape, and the trailer needs some TLC. Total asking price is \$8,000, and total ongoing costs would be in the neighborhood of \$1100-\$1500/year, depending on how it's kept. It's currently at John's house in Winchester and is conveniently available for inspection for interested parties.

If you're interested or would like more information, please contact me directly.—**Mike Ash**

<http://www.mikeash.com/>

FAI World GP Gliding Championships newsletter:  
<http://hosted.verticalresponse.com/245920/5879e9f991/1402000022/67ab73481c/>



The "real" tow car photographed by Craig Bendorf

**Last week, cameras in Iowa** captured a giant atmospheric wave passing over Des Moines--see the movie in today's story. Atmospheric scientists believe these waves, called undular bores, may be more common and important than previously thought—**NASA Science News for October 11, 2007** See the full story at:

[http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/11oct\\_undularbore.htm?list999386](http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/11oct_undularbore.htm?list999386)



Dick Otis—source of all those neat photos.



<http://worteldrie.com/flash/emergency.swf>

—contributed to the editor upon his retirement from PIC by Dick Otis



**SKYLINES**

November 2007

Phil Jordan, Editor

Skyline Soaring Club, LLC

<http://skylinesoaring.org/>

[pjordan@skylinesoaring.org](mailto:pjordan@skylinesoaring.org)