

SKYLINE



SKYLINE SOARING CLUB NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2008

Operations Suspended

Normal operations are suspended for winter until Feb. 23. Ad-hoc operations will occur as weather and interest allows.

2008 SSA Annual Convention

Registration is open for the annual Soaring Society of America convention to be held Feb. 12-16 in Albuquerque, N.M. Registration forms and online registration is available at the SSA website - www.ssa.org.

You can also fax registration forms to (505) 392-8154 or e-mail them to merchandise@ssa.org. Registration is also available by calling (505) 392-1177.

The convention host hotel is the Albuquerque Doubletree Hotel at 201 Marquette Avenue, NW Albuquerque, NM 87102. Room reservations can be made by calling (505) 247-3344.

Safety Seminar

Feb. 23, 10 a.m. - The Skyline Soaring Club annual safety seminar is mandatory for any member planning to fly with the club in 2008. The meeting will be held at the Front Royal-Warren County terminal. Normal club operations will resume after the meeting.

For more information contact Richard Freytag at rfreytag@skylinesoaring.org. A videotape of the meeting may be available for viewing at the field at a later date and a copy may also be available online some time in 2008.

How the Duty Roster Works

As we begin a new year and get ready for our next soaring season, I'd like to talk about the club's duty roster and how it works. I would especially like to explain this for any new members but it may be a handy refresher for others.

Skyline Soaring Club depends directly on the labor of you, its members, to get anything done. We need four people to smoothly operate on a regularly scheduled flying day and you'll get to be one of those four at least several times throughout the year.

If you're new to soaring and afraid you won't know what to do, don't worry, we'll start you off easy.

The club's duty roster lists scheduled flying days, who is scheduled for duty on those days and what each person's job is. You can view it at <http://skylinesoaring.org/ROSTER/> and it is also e-mailed to all members once a week.

The roster is created in two-month blocks throughout the year. About a month before the end of the current roster I make the schedule for the following two months.

One month before a new schedule is due I send a request for blackout dates to the membership. These are dates when you know in advance that you'll not be available for duty. It could be because you're traveling, working, have a party planned, or anything else. If there's any reason you can't work at Front Royal on a particular date, tell me when I send out this request and I'll make sure not to schedule you.

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Soaring Links

If you'd like to see what's going on in the rest of the soaring world you'll find a list of links to national soaring organizations on the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale webpage.
<http://start.fai.org/gliding-federations.asp>

This image of a K-2 flying over Niagara Falls was made by a German pilot visiting Canada and published in **Freeflight**, the journal of the Soaring Association of Canada.



How the Duty Roster Works - continued from page 1

Of course it will happen from time to time that you end up getting scheduled for a date and you can't make it. Sometimes people miss the request for blackout dates, forget to reply, or just don't know about their personal events that far in advance.

Once you have been scheduled for a duty slot it becomes your responsibility to ensure the slot is filled. But if you can't make it, don't despair. I can't un-schedule you from this slot but you're free to trade duty days with someone else. Send an e-mail to the membership explaining the situation and with any luck you'll find someone willing to switch days with you. Be sure to tell the duty officer for that date about the switch, or if you are the DO, tell the membership.

If it's your first time pulling duty at Front Royal, or you want a refresher, refer to the duty officer checklist available at <http://skylinesoaring.org/docs/DOInstructions.pdf> and the club's operations manual at <http://skylinesoaring.org/docs/OperationsManual.pdf>.

That should just about cover everything.

To summarize: watch the roster so you'll know your duty days, tell me if you know in advance of a date when you'll be unavailable, and if you can't make a day when you've been scheduled arrange to trade with another club member.

If you have any questions about the roster and scheduling feel free to ask me directly at mike@mikeash.com.

Have a great 2008 season.

—Mike Ash, rostermeister

“Why does one want to walk on wings? Why force one's body from a plane to make a parachute jump? Why should man want to fly at all? People often ask these questions. But what civilization was not founded on adventure and how long could one exist without it? Some answer the attainment of knowledge. Some say wealth, or power, is sufficient cause. I believe the risks I take are justified by the sheer love of the life I lead.”
—Charles Lindbergh

Skyline Soaring Club, Inc. is a private, 501(c7) non-profit organization, dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of the sport of soaring. SSC is based at the Front Royal-Warren County, Va. airport and is an affiliate club of the Soaring Society of America. For information about the club go to www.skylinesoaring.org or e-mail welcomem@skylinesoaring.org.

President – Shane Neitzey

Secretary – Craig Bendorf

Treasurer – Daniel Noonan

Membership – Steve Rockwood

Chief Tow Pilot – David Dawood

Skylines Editor – Dennis Johnson

Skyline Soaring Club website – www.skylinesoaring.org

Soaring Society of America website - www.ssa.org



Skyline News

Road Rash

Many club members who were here back in the late nineties to early 2000s may remember Dave Brunner, a teacher at James Madison University who learned to fly gliders with us at New Market and later owned a Schweitzer 1-26 at Front Royal.

He's Canadian, raised in the United Kingdom, who worked here for several years before moving to teach in the UK. He had a well-deserved reputation as "Mr. Fixit" on pretty much anything mechanical or electrical. He was not only a good pilot but a most helpful club member with a great willingness to assist anyone, anytime.

Anyhow, he reports that he took a spill on his bike, the worst in his life. He was in a busy roundabout when he went down on slick pavement, busted his helmet and was rendered unconscious for a moment. The good news is that the car behind him not only didn't hit him, but carried an emergency responder, and two cars behind him was an ambulance returning from a call. Several hours, 16 injections, one cracked tooth and 30 stitches later he was on the mend, but you have to admit he really looked like ... well, you decide. Many of us who recall Dave fondly will share, I'm sure, in wishing him a speedy recovery.

—Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon

Petersburg Wave Camp

Feb. 23 to March 3 – The annual Petersburg, W. Va. wave camp is being planned for Feb. 23 to March 3 at the Grant County Airport, Petersburg, W. Va. Tows may also be available on Feb. 22.

If you've not been to the wave camp before it's a great site to fly and pilots who attend this meet have a great time. It's a safe place for beginners to fly and you'll get lots of advice (more than you might want) from experienced pilots.

The Shenandoah Valley Soaring Club at Waynesboro has volunteered to help, as have Skyline Soaring Club members. Members interested in attending the camp should note their interest on the member's mailing list.

If you have questions contact Bill Vickland at billvickland@verizon.net, (703) 527-5302 or contact Larry Stahl at the Petersburg airport at (304) 257-4435.

The board wants to know who's interested in participating. We may take a two-place ship and/or the Sprite for that week. This consensus will determine if and what equipment we take to Petersburg.

—Shane Neitzey



Former Skylines member Dave Brunner is on the mend after a serious spill from his bike.

Soaring Archive

I'm cleaning my attic, which includes about 30 years of Soaring magazines. If anyone is interested I can bring them to the field or mail them to individuals. If you need reading materials e-mail me at billvickland@verizon.net.

—Clayton Vickland

Which Runway?

During the Jan. 26 operations we were operating on runway 27 the majority of the day with light winds primarily from the west. Late in the day the winds began to shift, eventually coming from the east at about three to five knots. In discussions with the tow pilot of the day, Bill Vickland, operating on 27 with a slight tail wind was not affecting safe operations with respect to landings or take-offs of the tow plane. Near the end of our operations the FBO told me that 09 was now the active runway. I radioed to the glider in the air that 09 was now the active. Bill came over and immediately corrected me. By announcing 09 as the active, you have effectively accepted responsibility for any issues that may arise from operations on that runway.

What I should have said was: "for your information the last aircraft landed on runway 09, or the winds are out of the east at five knots. Responding in this manner leaves the responsibility of flight safety to the pilot in command of the aircraft. This is an excellent point that I did not know, and I assume many duty officers are unaware. Keep this in mind as you perform your DO duties.

—Steve Rockwood

Runway Rebuttals

Steve, Interesting point, but I'm not sure I agree with Bill on this subject. First and foremost the pilot in command is always ultimately responsible for the safety of flight.

Second, FRR is an uncontrolled airport and the FBO (fixed base operator) normally notifies aircraft of what they feel should be the active runway based on current conditions. Since the airport is uncontrolled the FBO's call is an advisory to help avoid confusion in the pattern and to help transient aircraft.

However, as it states in AIM (Aeronautical Information Manual), "If a pilot prefers to use a different runway from that specified or most aligned with the wind the pilot is expected to inform ATC (air traffic control) accordingly."

But since FRR is not under ATC control this is done by a normal announcement of which runway you intend to land on.

All you did was to notify the airborne aircraft that the FBO had changed the active runway. This has special meaning to our operations as we have an agreement with the airport manager that we will change runways as he requests to make it easier on local and transient aircraft that do not want to land downwind.

When you notified the glider all you are really telling him is that ground operations are moving to the other runway and for them to plan their landing accordingly for easy recovery

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and turn around. The glider pilot still can use his best judgment to determine which runway they want to use and make the appropriate radio calls to notify anyone in the area.

However, if you are worried about someone trying to blame their incompetence on your radio call I would just notify the glider that “glider operations are moving to runway 09,” this way it is a simple notification of ground operations intentions.

—Craig Bendorf

January Soaring Magazine Cover Shot

Kudos to Dick Otis for getting in this month's Soaring magazine with both a great cover shot and centerfold, right in the middle of a great article by George Moffat. This is unprecedented, as far as I know.

—Judah Milgram



Photo by Dick Otis

Peel Off Lady, This is a Fighter Mission

Dick Otis sent this link to an online video called “Pilots,” which is actually an extended advertisement for a Swiss watch company. For those who haven't seen it yet, it's certain to be a classic.

http://iwc-media.futurecom.ch/technics/pilots/_mov/pilots_big.wmv

Board of Directors' Meeting

Summary of the discussion and decisions of the January Skyline Soaring Club board of directors meeting. Some other topics to be reported in the annual meeting summary by Craig Bendorf.

Tow Plane—The Pawnee's annual inspection was completed in early January and is ready for winter ad-hoc operations.

Instructors—Bob Salada notified the board that he would like to step down from the chief flight instructor position. The board is in the process of identifying a replacement.

Duty Officers—The issue was raised that some duty officers have been late getting the daily activity report sheets and payment checks sent in. The board would like to remind DOs that it's very important that these be sent as soon as possible (within two days) after the day's operations.

[see *New Procedures for Daily Log Sheets*, page 5]

Hanger Issues—Due to additional space requirements and safety the board agreed that the refrigerator should be moved from its current position near the Pawnee to another location in the hanger.

New Hangers—The Warren County Airport Commission is building additional hangers at Front Royal and has discussed

the club's future space requirements with the board.

January's Soaring magazine cover featured Dick Otis's photograph of Skyline's home, Front Royal-Warren Co. Airport.

Visiting Pilots—The board passed a new Section 3.11 for inclusion in the operations manual covering visiting pilots.

3.11 Visiting Pilot Member: Visiting pilots may be interested in receiving a tow for their own aircraft from a club tow plane. A visiting pilot membership is limited to 10 days per calendar year. Rated pilots may be granted a one-day membership upon completing a logbook review by a club instructor or duty officer to verify that SSC currency requirement of 1.10.3 para.(a) is met. The pilot must be a member in good standing of the Soaring Society of America. Prior to being connected to the club tow plane the pilot must complete a membership application and present a check to the duty officer for the cost of the anticipated tow plus a \$10 daily membership fee.

Additional tows on that day must also be prepaid. This category is intended for experienced pilots flying their own sailplane, and is not to be used for instruction or in lieu of the introductory membership category. A visiting pilot may not otherwise use club equipment.

Winter Operations—The club will use normal ad-hoc procedures (until Feb. 23) and Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association pilots can participate by complying with the new visiting pilot rules and procedures.

Volunteers—Dennis Johnson volunteered, and was accepted by, the board for the Skyline's editor position.

Members who have issues for the board to discuss should e-mail them to the SSC directors at directors@skyline soaring.org.

—Craig Bendorf, SCC secretary

The Grobmeister Speaks

The Grob doesn't need much work this year. The annual inspection must be done in January, the tail wheel replaced and the front canopy seal replaced. I'm trying to schedule all these in January. I'm waiting on a response from Eric Litt on his availability to perform the annual. I'll update everyone when I have a date.

—Frank Banas

Sprite Status

Well, we have the Sprite back up. The repairs to the canopy did not come out as nice as I'd like; matter of fact they're quite ugly, but sound. That should hold us for a while. I never got to recovering the elevators but will probably take the time to do it in the spring. Maybe the canopy will be replaced at that time too. The club is still looking for a Spritemeister.

—Chris Groshel

Tax Time

Those who own personal gliders, and store them in hangars one and five at Front Royal Airport, need to provide the owners' name, addresses, phone numbers, year, make and model of the aircraft to Reggie, Front Royal Airport manager, at (540) 635-3570 or (540) 631-8429.

View Tow Plane Accident Online

Richard Freytag sent this link to a video depicting a dramatic encounter between a power plane and a tow plane and glider.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTemKnL8X30

I was just reviewing this video again. Is there more information? I wish I knew:

1. What happened to the glider? Looks like they released or the tow plane would not have been climbing at that angle shown in the video.
2. How early did the tow-plane/glider spot the plane doing the filming?
3. To me it's clear the filming aircraft should have yielded because:
 - a. Tow operations have the right-of-way
 - b. Aircraft approaching from the right have the right-of-way
4. Of course, rules don't matter much if you are dead, so the tow-plane pilot did what he could to avoid. Too bad the filming aircraft didn't dive. I think that would have been the fastest change of vector.
5. The filming aircraft is lucky the cable didn't ensnare the BRS (Ballistic Recovery System) shrouds. Is there a European Union website with accident reports like we have in the US? I'm sure someone will object to one of these points, enough to get a good discussion going.

—Richard Freytag

Weekday Flying

Club members interested in flying during the week—don't you guys have jobs?—will receive notices about weekday operations only if they are subscribers to the weekday list. Subscribe by going to:

<http://skylinesoaring.org/mailman/listinfo/weekdays>

New Procedure for Daily Log Sheets

Pay attention! I've written an interface that allows duty officers to upload the Skyline Soaring Club operations log sheets directly to the website. From now on please use this interface instead of sending log sheets by e-mail. At the end of each soaring day the duty officer must upload the day's log sheet to: <https://members.skylinesoaring.org/LOGSHEET/> before leaving the field.

Soon, I will make a change to the mail server that will gently reject your e-mail and remind you of the new procedures.

Why this program is better than the old system

We've had a heck-of-a time knowing who was an introductory member and who was not. Introductory members are now entered into the database immediately upon upload of the log sheets. Hopefully this will make it easier for the member meister to know when a new member enters the system.

Another cool feature of this upload program is that it automatically e-mails the information you enter for the new member to the member meister and the flight instructors.

Tow pilot comments on the log sheets are also e-mailed to all the tow pilots at upload. The tow pilot comments at the end of the log sheet submission, quite honestly, got lost in the flood of data. Now they go somewhere for somebody to act upon immediately.

Remember that if there is a critical issue with the tow plane you should call the maintenancemeister, Shane Neitzey, at (703) 753-3806.

Computer Headaches

In the past I had to take the e-mail containing the log sheet, figure out how your mailer attached it—you'd be amazed how many ways different e-mail programs attach things, I thought there was supposed to be standards for this stuff—manually extract the log sheet, run it through an insertion program, and check the output. *Nightmare*. This was extremely time intensive and it sometimes took a long time to catch up with the log sheets. I once described the procedure to Vern, who responded, "I'm sorry I asked."

Flight Statistics Now Available

With this new system the data from flights are immediately available for any club member to review. "What flights?" you may be wondering. Go to the members-only section of the page, then the link named "Your Flights" and you should have a succinct list of all the flights we have for you since about 2005. You can also get a break-down of the club flights by visiting the "Aircraft Statistics" link on the left menu. If your dog eats your logbook, at least you can use this to help reconstruct your old flights with Skyline.

These statistics are also important for making reports to the club board of directors, so they can get an idea how the equipment and other resources are being used.

The instructors have had a hard time making progress reports for introductory members, but now they can easily track their students' flights. Hopefully, now that this data is being inserted at upload time we can get closer to the goal of having records that match reality.

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Photo by Jim Furlong

East coast pilots prepare to launch under sunny New Mexico skies during 2007's annual trek to Hobbs.

GO WEST: TREK TO HOBBS THIS SUMMER

EAST COAST PILOTS PLAN ANNUAL VACATION TO HOBBS, NEW MEXICO. ALL SOARING PILOTS WELCOME TO JOIN.

Every summer a group of pilots, primarily from the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association, treks to Hobbs, N.M. towing their gliders for a one- or two-week soaring holiday. Over the years it's become a rather popular holiday excursion.

—Jim Furlong, a M-ASA pilot, reports

We had a meeting at Frederick, Md. and here is what we know so far.

There are approximately 10 people with eight sailplanes who plan to go. More are certainly welcome.

We plan to leave here on June 18 or 19 and take the trip in three legs. Hobbs is about three miles west of the Texas border in the southeast corner of New Mexico. It's approximately 1,700 miles to Hobbs from here. In the past most of us convoyed; although this isn't necessary it's a lot more fun, especially if you carry one of those cheap little walkie-talkies with you to chat and plan rest and fuel stops while rolling. We plan to begin our return drive on June 29 or 30.

The Llano Estacado Soaring Society, really the SSA staff on their off time, have arranged for us to stay at the local college dorms for about \$14 a night, way better than \$80 at the local motels.

They will also rent us their hangar, moving out their toys, boats, cars, etc., so we have a place for our ships and to operate from. It has refrigerators, bathrooms, a sink, tables, chairs, and even a shower.

They furnish us with food and drinks for the refrigerators and often host cook-outs. We pay for these things by putting money in a large piggy bank. This works out wonderfully when we come home from a long retrieve at Oh-Dark-Hundred tired and hungry. We just raid the refrigerators before going back to the dorm to sleep.

Rentals are reasonable; I think about \$10 a day. There is no contract, so you only get charged by the number of days you use the hangar. With the exception of the beer and food piggy bank, all charges are computed and levied on you at the end of your stay. You can put them on your credit card if you wish.

There are no local tow pilots there, or tow planes, so we usually get Bob Lynn to fly down from Colorado in his brand new Husky to tow. He spends most of his summer towing at the various national contests.

Hobbs Industrial Airpark is a World War II B-17 base with many long runways and a 600-foot wide, two-mile long ramp that we use for take offs, landings and tie downs.

We love the fact that you can untie your ship, push it back 50 feet, turn it, hook up and take off.

The flying can be very exciting with pegged varios to 18,000 feet or higher, but hey, it's the weather. And it sometimes is no better than here in Virginia. Usually, when you can't get more than four knots out of thermal either you aren't centered or you just push on to the big one.

There're many places to land-out including quite a few airports and many, many crop circles which are large and landable.

We retrieve each other and any extra people who come along are highly appreciated and often earn a free retrieve dinner from grateful land-out pilots.

Most of us go there to do badge hunting in a new and exciting area.

The Hobbs Soaring Society is a tiny club, also located on the field. They're friendly people but don't have tows or rides. They ground launch by car on one of the long runways. Charles and JoAnn Shaw are members of this club and were very helpful with information about flying safely in the area.

Feel free to call Gary Baker or me with questions, and if you feel you might like to go send us your phone number and/or e-mail address and we'll let you know when we'll meet next to plan the trip.

Gary is the primary coordinator and can be reached at (703) 434 -1558 (cell) or (703) 455-9371 (home), but you can also contact me at flightsong@verizon.net or (703) 980-1132. —Jim Furlong



Photo by Jim Furlong
The sun sets over the World War II era expanse of tarmac at Hobbs, New Mexico.

Skyline Members Attend SSA Regional Leadership Conference *Group Explores Future of Soaring in Region IV*

Skyline's former president, Joe Rees, and former board member, Chris Groshel, led the Skyline Soaring Club delegation to the first Soaring Society of America Region IV Regional Leadership Conference, held at the Chesterfield Co. Airport in Chesterfield, Va. Feb. 2.

Special thanks to Gary Van Tassel, the president of Tidewater Soaring Society for organizing and chairing the conference, and to Eric Lambert and Lukas Atzigen of Merlin Soaring for arranging the meeting site and logistics.

The conference was attended by 15 leaders from eight of the 10 SSA chapters in Region IV, which in turn represent over 70 percent of the SSA members in Region IV.

During the day-long conference the group explored a wide

range of issues facing soaring clubs in the area including recruitment and retention of members, outreach activities, insurance, various organizational structures, volunteers, airspace and airport access issues, and ways to share information between clubs.

There was an extensive discussion of how regional clubs could accommodate visiting pilots from other clubs, which resulted in agreements to add links to other regional clubs on all websites, and to add links on each website explaining what visiting pilots should expect at each club.

The group agreed to meet again in 2009 and in the meantime explore an experimental regional information sharing website to be set up by Gary Van Tassel. —Jim Kellett



Members of SSA Region IV clubs meet at Chesterfield, Va. Feb. 2 to discuss common issues and how to expand cooperation among clubs.

Photo by Jeanne Pitsenberger

Some Cold-Weather Flying Tips

By Jim Kellett, Skyline Soaring Club resident curmudgeon

Yes Virginia, there really is soaring in winter, even thermal soaring on the coldest of days.

Once, many years ago on a bright January 2nd, I flew a Schweitzer 1-23 more than 150 miles from Front Royal to North Carolina in pure thermal lift.

However, normally the best and most exciting soaring opportunities throughout the winter are to be found in ridge and wave lift.

Conditions

Winter flying can be tricky; the really good conditions aren't for sissies. The winds are often strong and gusty. Be sure you're quite comfortable flying...um, landing really...in 15-20-knot winds; sometimes crosswinds.

And if the lift fails you over snow-covered ground you may find all your normal cues to landable sites "out the window."

When you're landing on a recently plowed runway remember those snow banks on the edge of the runway can be hard enough to seriously damage your glider if a wingtip hits one.

Winter days are shorter too, which means a really good flight often starts near first light with a plan to be on the ground by 4-5 p.m.

There's a lot more but the most common issue of winter flying for glider pilots is the cold.

Brrrrr... Cold

Do the math. You plan a wave flight that is likely to take you to somewhere between 10-15,000 feet msl; reaching these altitudes is common in Virginia between January and March.

If the standard lapse rate is 4 degrees Fahrenheit per thousand feet, expect temperatures in the range of 40-60 F less than on the ground. Meaning, if it's 40 degrees F. on the surface you're flying into air that's likely to be minus 20 to zero F. It's not at all unusual to see air temperatures even lower than that.

There's no bad weather, just bad clothing.

Your head is a serious radiator. It's more vascular than anywhere else on your body, so if your head gets cold you're going to get cold; and generally vice versa. To keep your core temperature safe keep your head warm. That's relatively easy; a fur hat with ear flaps generally does a good job.

Hello? Can you still hear the radio?

It can be challenging to find warm clothing that's not so bulky you can't move in the cockpit. Quilted polyfiber clothing works well.

Layer your clothing starting with a good quality set of long johns. There are many good ones on the market and I particularly like the polypro ones because they wick away sweat.

Pilots often work up a little extra body heat assembling their glider so you'll want to keep that sweat from building up next to your skin. Layers allow you to wear what you need ac-



The Pawnee tows the club's Grob during a clear winter's day of flight operations at Skyline Soaring.

Photo by Dick Otis

ording to your activity level. You can postpone donning the final layers until you're ready to strap into the cockpit.

Most glider pilots know it's their extremities, especially their feet, which get the coldest fastest. Blood circulation in the feet or hands is not as good as it is in the scalp, and to add insult to injury, most gliders keep your feet in the shade.

This is not a trivial point, sitting in a modern glider is like sitting in a solar collector and you'll be surprised to learn how much the sun heats your upper body, but not your feet.

"Winter flying can be tricky; the really good conditions aren't for sissies."

Finally, many gliders—especially stock Schweitzer iron—have air leaks in the nose that circulate truly frigid air around the pilot's feet. Frostbite is a very real risk.

For several decades the recommended footwear for high-altitude flying has been the "Moon Boot." There are other good alternatives, but if you're looking for something light and very well insulated you can't go wrong with these.

Wear one or two pairs of good socks. I like a thin silk liner-sock, topped by a high quality wool/polyester mixture, especially merino wool. Be sure the boot is sized to accept all this without compressing the socks. Remember, it's the trapped air that provides the real insulation in any good sock and boot combination, so making them too tight reduces their

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Upload, Don't E-mail

If the log sheets get e-mailed directly to the treasurer, they may never make it into the system, messing up all of our records for the year. So remember to use the interface instead of only e-mailing it to the treasurer. The program sends the e-mail to him automatically and everything is saved for future reference. It's very easy for a log sheet to completely slip through the system if you send it directly to the treasurer.

Upload the log sheet as soon as you're done with operations, especially if you have introductory members. Do it at the field; there's a wireless network you can use. If the wireless network isn't connecting on the laptop you can still go into the FBO and upload it with the computer there.

You're not done with the daily report? No problem. Upload early and upload often. The system is smart enough to figure out when there are multiple copies of the same log sheet and will act accordingly. A note will be sent to the treasurer with the new log sheet indicating that it's an update to a previous one.

What's in a Name?

If there's a new member take special care to type in his name correctly. This is the name that the system will know him for eternity, or at least for the entire time he's in our club. If he goes by a nickname—"Woody" instead of his given name, "Sherwood"—then use "Woody." Don't use a proper name that nobody else uses. I could go back and change all this stuff later, but to keep the laptop, instructors reports, membership database and treasurer's records in sync, start with the right name in the log sheet program. It will save ulcers and confusion later on.

Use the name completion feature in the log sheet program for people's names. You would not believe how many different ways George Hazelrigg is listed in the log sheets of 2007 (George Hazelrigg, George A. Hazelrigg, George Hazelrigg Jr.).

Check that all flight times are filled in correctly. If you don't know, make an educated guess. An educated guess is better than an empty field. You can always change the log sheet later if you get more accurate information.

Did you really mean to check the "landed out" checkbox? According to the log sheets, we had three land-outs in 2007 with the ASK-21 and two for the Grob.

Software Updates

Make sure to use the latest copy of the log sheet program. Jonathan is making code changes all the time; and it will make my task easier if I don't have to use log sheets generated by a program three years old. You can find the latest download on the members-only section of the website under the left menu link "Log sheets." This is also the place to upload log sheets; just follow the link "Upload" that is shown on the log sheets page.

The program works on Windows and Mac OS X, and I've even used it in Linux with WINE, and it works just fine.

The upload program checks a few things to make sure you're not polluting the database with junk. If the program finds discrepancies it will report them and give you the opportunity to correct them or to override. As the program checks off each item it will show a green "Ok" to show your progress.

I have taken all of 2007's log sheets and run them through the program manually so I have a pretty good idea that the normal situations have been dealt with. But this is a new program and I need feedback if something is broken. If you have problems e-mail me at webmaster@skylinesoaring.org and include your log sheet.

—Piet Barber, webmaster in exile



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effectiveness.

Finally, you might consider electric socks or disposable foot-warmers. Available from Wal-Mart or sporting goods stores the disposable warmers need oxygen to work and you'll find they become ineffective over about 15,000 feet.

Mittens provide more warmth than gloves but hinder the manipulation of instruments with small buttons or knobs such as the radio and variometer. Some mittens and gloves have removable sections or fingertips so you can get your fingers out easily. Otherwise be prepared to pull them off and put them on again quickly when you have to turn a knob.

Waterproof Gore-Tex gloves, such ski gloves, allow heat and perspiration to pass out of the gloves, preventing sweaty cold hands, and keeping your hands warm and dry, especially if you spill the contents of your water bottle.

Air and Water

There's a lot more—we've not even mentioned the most critical aspect for safe, high-flying, oxygen—but that subject is covered in a lot of other resources. Just don't ever minimize the importance of staying oxygenated when flying high.

And even if it's below zero F. pilots need to stay hydrated, you may not think so much about drinking water when it's so icy, but it's always important.

Kick the Tires

So, let's get the tow plane out of maintenance hock, break out the club's oxygen bottle, and start exploring the ridges and waves at our favorite gliderport.



Photo by Louis Plummer
A lenticular cloud over Mount Shasta viewed from Interstate 5 near Weed, California.