

# SKYLINE

SKYLINE SOARING CLUB NEWSLETTER

August 2009

## *Students Attend a Week of Intensive Flight Training*

Skyline Soaring Club held nine continuous full days of operations July 18-26. Bookended by the two weekends the week was intended to provide intensive training for Skyline students, and it delivered. The numbers are impressive—86 tows over five days and 29.6 hours of glider flight time involving all four club and two private gliders and earning several thousand dollars in revenue for the club. One pilot made his first solo in a glider.

The intangibles were equally impressive if more difficult to convey, such as watching students advance visibly, sometimes dramatically, over the course of just a few days; following a private glider from cloud to cloud and seeing its owner start to feel at home in his ship; soaring in a gaggle of hawks while listening to students on the radio doing pattern after pattern or just listening to a new member talk endlessly about the joys of his first glider flight.

Monday was a strong start to the training week. While many students who signed up were not able to attend, this only meant that those who did show up were able to fly an enormous amount. Hugh McElrath took the first flights and was soon checked off and flew his first solo in a glider. New member Brian Foster took several flights with Jim Kellett and was so enthusiastic about his experience that it was certain he'd be back. Oliver Ash (my brother) and Carlos Ferreira took a bunch of instructional flights.

John Noss did some learning of his own as he worked on assembling his



**Club member and hang glider pilot, Hugh McElrath, gives the "wing up" signal for launch on his first solo flight in a glider July 20. Many students made great progress in their flying skills during the week-long intensive training camp July 18-26. Photo by Dennis Johnson**

Ventus, but finally got it together and took it for a nearly two-hour flight, easily taking flight of the day. Dennis Johnson and Jim Kellett also took pleasure flights as the day ended.

Tuesday turned out to be the best soaring day of the week. John Noss assembled his Ventus once again. He obviously learned some tricks Monday because, while not achieving the instantaneous magnetic insertion and alignment that everybody wishes to see from a glider assembly, he had it together with far less fuss than before. John then took it up for a 3:17 flight, earning him flight of the week. I took H3 up for a 2:17 flight and Dennis Johnson got 40 minutes in the ASK-

21 later in the day. Much training was also accomplished and I hope those involved will forgive me for not listing every student who participated every day.

No soaring was accomplished on Wednesday or Thursday, but much training was still accomplished. Wednesday ended up being our short day with "only" 14 tows. Prefrontal weather on both days made for poor soaring and ugly conditions, but we dodged rain and storms well enough to get in a full complement of training flights just the same.

Friday looked like it would be the best soaring day of the week, but bands of high clouds ended up killing

the day. Soaring conditions were really nice before they came through, with John Noss, Vern Kline and me logging flights of around an hour, and I saw 8 knots on the vario' at one point.

As on the other days we had a great many training flights. My attempt to find lift after the high clouds passed was cut short by a report from the ground that a nasty storm had popped up nearby on the weather radar and I ended the week with a 140-knot dash back to the field (unnecessary, but fun) as everyone came together to hangar and disassemble the gliders.

Of course this article wouldn't be complete without acknowledgements. I would like to thank Bob Sallada and Jim Kellett for organizing the week and coming out every day to instruct; Bruce Codwise for flying nearly 70 tows in four days and instructing on the fifth; Jim McCulley for towing on the fifth day; John Noss for helping out with instruction; Vern Kline and the other club webmasters for providing the flight times and keeping the club's backend system humming so smoothly that most of us barely realize it's there; last, but not least, Steve and Becky Rockwood for lots of physical and administrative help on the ground.

If I have forgotten anyone, take it as nothing more than an indication of my forgetfulness. All in all it was great fun and allowed several Skyline students to compress a great deal of learning into a very short time. Here's hoping we can do it again next year.

—Mike Ash, SSC Rostermeister



**Above: Mike Ash assists John Noss in assembling his "new" Ventus. John purchased the glider last year and flew it once before completely updating the instrument panel.**



**Left: Before the first flight of this season John used an industrial scale and a common bathroom scale to determine the new weight of his aircraft after the modifications.**

**Photos by Dennis Johnson**

### **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](http://www.skylinesoaring.org) or e-mail [welcome@skylinesoaring.org](mailto:welcome@skylinesoaring.org).

President — Craig Bendorf

Secretary — Jim Kellett

Treasurer — Daniel Noonan

Membership — Steve Rockwood

Chief Tow Pilot — Curtis Wheeler

Chief Flight Instructor — Jim Kellett

Safety Officer — John Noss

Skylines Editor — Dennis Johnson

Directors — Shane Neitzey, Spencer Annear, Paul Seketa, Jim Parrish, Vern Kline





# Copy That **i**

## Do You Subaru?

Val Paget had an article about soaring published in the summer issue of Subaru's *Drive* magazine. You can read the article online at: [http://www.subarudrive.com/Sum09/Sum09\\_feature.htm](http://www.subarudrive.com/Sum09/Sum09_feature.htm)

## Special Room Rates for SSA Convention

The DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas is offering special room rates for SSA members attending the SSA convention Jan. 28-30, 2010. For more information go to: <http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/LITMBDT-SAA-20100121/index.jhtml>

## A Book Review—

### *The Times They Are A-Changin'*

Many of us ponder how parenting changed between the time our parents were children and when they raised us; and some of our own children undoubtedly feel the same sense of strangeness when thinking about how they grew up. For a few of us we wonder at the vast gulf between how our children are raising our grandchildren and how our grandparents raised our parents.

There's a really good book that shines some light into that gulf and it includes flying. It's a book I was given by a former Skyliner, John Lewis.

Written by Rinker Buck, *Flight of Passage* describes how his parents encouraged him (age 15) and his brother Kerhanan (age 17) to restore a J-3 Piper Cub and then fly by themselves from their home in New Jersey to southern California.

Now, as pilots, you can imagine even before reading their account the kind of adventures they had flying a simple taildragger "IFR" (I Follow Roads) and unencumbered by such luxuries as a radio, across America.

It's a lovely story of a unique rite of passage for two young men and it highlights so clearly how parenting

has moved over four generations from an emphasis on self-reliance to one of self-esteem and vigilant protection from all of life's vicissitudes. Whether this is good, bad or irrelevant, we'll leave that to the reader. Enjoy.

—**Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon and Interim Chief Flight Instructor**

[Editor's note: The book is available at Amazon for about \$12 and an interview with the author can be found at: <http://www.randomhouse.com/bold-type/0697/buck/interview.html>]

## Blipspotting

If you are at the airport and using the FBO's computer, or if you've got your own laptop there, and would like to see Dr. Jack's blipspot for that day (requiring free registration), rather than the previous day's, log on using the ID "SSC" and the password "KFRR".

—**Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon and Interim Chief Flight Instructor**

## Christmas Party Volunteer Needed

The board is seeking a member to organize this year's Christmas party to be held in early December. Duties would include locating a venue that should be central to the homes of a majority of club members. The volunteer would also organize contributions of food, or money to buy food and provide directions. Traditionally the party has been BYOL with the club providing soft drinks. To volunteer contact Jim Kellett, Secretary to the Board of Directors

## I Learned Something That Day

A few weeks ago, while pushing the ASK-21 out to launch on runway 27, I made the radio call after three of us all looked up at the pattern to ensure it was clear. After I made the radio call I got a reply, "... on short final ...". Sure enough, there below the distant tree line, was a homebuilt on an exceptionally long and low final approach. We were still short of the hold line, but embarrassed. So, I learned a lesson that day. Checking the pattern means looking all the way to the ground, not just where you normally expect to find aircraft.

—**John Noss, SSC Safety Officer**

## Runway Incursions

After reading John Noss's note (above) about checking the pattern, it made me think that wing runners should also glance down the edge of the runway for wildlife that might be thinking of bounding across the runway during a launch.

—**Dennis Johnson, Skylines Editor**

## International Vintage Sailplane Meet

The 2009 International Vintage Sailplane Meet was held June 27 to July 4 at the historic Harris Hill Gliderport near Elmira, New York. More than 40 vintage gliders were brought to the meet by their owners, most constructed of wood and dating from as early as the 1920's. (The gliders, not the owners)



To see new photos of Piet Barber's Swiss soaring adventures go to: <http://pi-casaweb.google.com/PietBarber.com/SoaringOverSaanenBESwitzerland#>

I drove up Friday, June 28 and pitched a tent alongside 15 others at the youth camp. The weather was great, and no bugs to bug us campers.

The days started with two morning presentations plus a safety briefing. Each presentation was unique and worth attending, far too much to describe here.

Launches started around 11 a.m. with about 80 tows per day. That's quite a challenge considering the 1100 foot runway ends basically at a cliff with a 700 foot drop. It may as well been the deck of the Nimitz.

Every day we flew there was some kind of lift regardless of the cloud cover and rain showers. I made 22 flights in the Capstan which was all I could do—land, get in line, land, get in line. The line did move very fast with four tow planes, 10 very young ground crew and 2000 foot tows.

This was the best soaring event I've ever attended, with lots of socializing and plenty to see and do. Sobieslaw Dziadek and Chris Groshel were also

there for the first two days.

— **Shane Neitzey**

## The Check's in the Mail

SSC sent out the first year Husky loan principal and interest repayments to those members who participated in this part of the Husky purchase. So, if you received Skyline checks in the mail, that's what they are.

—**Dan Noonan, SSC Treasurer**

## Skylines Public Relations Officer Wanted

Good public relations is important to any organization and Skyline Soaring Club has grown to the point where the directors believe the club would benefit by having a member working to enhance the club's visibility in the local, regional and national communities. Note that is "communities," not "community." Skyline's success and continued growth is increasingly affected by flying groups other than

just soaring, and perhaps even more challenging, by political and social communities in which aviation is not the central focus.

Do you get along well with people? Do you have good judgment? Are you a competent, experienced soaring pilot? Do you think strategically and appreciate how a variety of tactics are employed to reach strategic goals? Can you find opportunities rather than wait for them to appear?

There's no fixed job description, but here are some examples of what a club spokesman or "public relations officer" might do.

- Coordinate with the FBO and the club's directors on cooperative ventures such as air shows and seminars, etc.
- Coordinate with SSA's Public Relations Chair, Val Paget, and area news outlets to publicize members' personal accomplishments,

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## Spreading the Joy of Soaring

Those of you who were out at the field July 18 may remember Jessie, who I took for a couple rides. She's the one who brought all the food. She sent me some of her photos and I thought I would share them with the club. It's always interesting to see what people select to shoot photos of, and I particularly like a couple from the landing pattern that show a view we pretty much never see ourselves, since we're always concentrating on the runway. You can view her pictures at: <http://pix.mikeash.com/v/guestride/>

Jessie is still a student, and thus has no money, but she's says that when she graduates next year and starts actually receiving compensation for her work she would strongly consider taking up glider flying, perhaps with our very own club.

—**Mike Ash**



such as earning badges, FAA certificates and contest flying.

- Arrange for club members to speak at community service organization functions.
- Ensure the airport commission is aware of the club's positive effect on the airport's operations and economics.
- Meet with leaders of other soaring clubs to identify joint activities to promote public awareness of soaring and its benefits to their communities.
- Seek out and organize for favorable coverage of club activities with radio and television producers.
- Publicize "good works" by the club and individual members, such as the club's "charitable" activities and members' non-soaring contributions to their communities.
- Provide regular reports to the board on planned and ongoing projects.
- Develop other methods to promote soaring and Skyline Soaring Club that no one else has thought of, yet.

***To be considered as a candidate contact Jim Kellett, Secretary to the Board of Directors***

## Vickland Finally Solos in SGS 1-26 #238

After three summers at the Caesar Creek Soaring Club [Waynesville, Ohio] Youth Summer Camp, Vickland has finally soloed in Schweitzer SGS 1-26 #238. Not Bill, the 78-year-old version, who built 238 as a kit and has flown the glider since 1966, but Zachary, his 16-year-old grandson.

In 2007 Zach completed four and half hours of dual instruction and, by the end of the five-day camp, was able to control a Schweitzer SGS-2-33 through an entire flight. By the end of the 2008 camp Zach soloed and during his second solo flight soared to 5000 feet on a 50-minute flight, his longest flight to date.

Zach crewed for his granddad at the 1-26 Championships at Moriarty, New Mexico this summer and on the way home to Virginia attended the youth camp once again. This year Zach completed 10 solo flights in the 2-33 which are required by CCSC to solo a 1-26. With time running out on Thursday, July 16, the afternoon winds were approaching 20 knots, too strong for new solo pilots. For Zach, who was ready to solo at noon that day, it was a suspenseful afternoon and he was concerned that he wouldn't be able to solo and then be able to add more flights on Friday, the last day of the

camp.

As the normal flying day ended with the winds still brisk, the CCSC staff decided that if the winds subsided after dinner they would extend the flying day for Zach and one other pilot. At 8 p.m., after the dinner meal, the conditions were perfect and his take-off and landing were absolutely smooth. He lifted off and held the 1-26 smoothly three feet above the ground during the take-off and climbed out maintaining his altitude with the tow plane. At landing he touched down smoothly and put the glider almost precisely into the 200-foot spot landing area. The next day he added three more 1-26 flights in his logbook.

Zach is an honor student, a great baseball player and, when receiving adulation from his parents and grandparents, tends to discount it all as normal performance. However, his reaction was clearly emotional as he landed after his first flight in the 1-26. His face was beaming with pride and pleasure as he gave his granddad a big hug and proclaimed, "That was sooo great." Granddad's face was also beaming as he could not be more proud than to see his grandson solo in the 1-26 he built 45 years ago.

***—Bill Vickland***



**Zachary Vickland, the 16-year-old grandson of Skyline member Bill Vickland, solos his grandfather's SGS-1-26 at the Caesar Creek Soaring Club [Waynesville, Ohio] Youth Summer Camp July 16. The elder Vickland built the 1-26 as a kit and has flown the glider since 1966.**





# Working Away at Play

Photos by Martin Gomez

## Martin's Skyline Images

Martin Gomez regularly produces great images for *Skylines* and *Soaring* magazine. To see his latest online image collections go to:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/21003395@N08/sets/72157621221221393/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/21003395@N08/sets/72157620825483845/>



**Top:** Mike bolts the wings of his Schweitzer SGS-1-35 together for flight.

**Middle:** Paul Seketa provides glider tows with the Pawnee.

**Bottom:** Steve Rockwell prepares the club's Cirrus for another day of soaring.