

# SKYLINE



SKYLINE SOARING CLUB NEWSLETTER

May 2009

## President's Letter

**May** has finally arrived and if you've been out flying in the last couple weeks you should've seen a few booming days for soaring.

The first few months of 2009 didn't give us the best weekend weather and may have dampened some of our enthusiasm but many of your comrades have been busy working on their flying skills. When the weather was poor for soaring it was usually good for training and our dedicated instructor corps took advantage of it. Part of their success can be seen in the two new glider pilots, Craig Rordarmel and Dave Collier, who successfully passed their check rides in sporty conditions. So far, even with all the lousy weather, we're pretty much on track with last year's banner year for flights. A lot of the credit is owed to Curtis Wheeler and Shane Neitzey for their hard work in building up our corps of tow pilots and keeping the tow planes up and operational.

I hope you've noticed the increase in weekday operations this year. It has helped improve training opportunities for students and provided some relief to the flying queue on weekends. This is all due to a few dedicated instructors, tow pilots and ground crew volunteers who have been able to break away from work to pursue their love of flying and help others learn. If you read "Flying," "AOPA Pilot" or the AOPA online news you should have noticed that soaring has gotten some great press coverage during the last

few months and I expect that it will stir more interest in this fabulous sport. Almost every month we've seen new members join us and I hope all of you get out to meet them and share your soaring experiences.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who loaned money to the club to purchase the Cirrus. Due to your generous loans we're now purchasing this high-performance single-seat glider that our members can use to expand their flying experience and build the confidence for cross-country flying. We'll be asking for more help from a few club members later this month when we take the Grob apart to replace a bolt to comply with an Airworthiness Directive. This will be a good opportunity for some of our new members to experience the disassembly and assembly of a glider. So when you hear the call for volunteers from Sobek Dziadek, our Grobmeister, please respond and come out to help.

The hard work and dedication of all the volunteers who make our club run smoothly is worth it when you finally get up and experience an exhilarating flight. The last Sunday in April was an exceptional soaring day and you couldn't have asked for more. However, when I rolled into a fantastic thermal and was climbing through 8000 feet a beautiful Osprey rolled in to join me for the rest of the climb to 10,000 feet and I knew it couldn't get any better. If you haven't been out flying much this year, it's now time to get out to the field and be a part of it.  
—Craig Bendorf, SSC President

## Glider Crash in Pennsylvania

### *Pilot's Condition Improves*

**The Evening Sun  
May 1, 2009**

"The condition of a pilot injured in a glider crash last week near Fairfield has moved from serious to satisfactory, according to officials at York Hospital.

Officials said Frederick Mueller, 41, of Stephens City, Va. was in serious condition following the accident but was downgraded to satisfactory condition by Wednesday."

Read the complete story at: [www.eveningsun.com](http://www.eveningsun.com).

## Skyline Members

Be prepared if there should be an incident or accident at Skyline Soaring. Review the club's emergency response plan online at: [www.skylinesoaring.org/docs/](http://www.skylinesoaring.org/docs/)  
—Richard Freytag  
SSC Safety Officer

# Copy That **i**

## New Safety Officer

Give club instructor John Noss even more respect the next time you see him at the airport. John has agreed to accept the board of directors' invitation to serve as the club's next safety officer. John is an experienced glider flight instructor who's recently returned to soaring with a vengeance. After joining Skyline, getting checked out in the club's gliders, he traveled to Marfa, Texas to get a most thorough CFI(G) revalidation checkout from none other than Burt Compton, a trustee of the Soaring Safety Foundation and the owner of Marfa Gliders, Inc., a commercial glider operation. John brings not only his soaring experience and recent re-training to the table, but also a career of experience in airplanes, so he's well steeped in aviation safety issues from several perspectives. He's also the proud owner of a new Schempp-Hirth Ventus A in which he plans to put into practice what he learned from Jim Garrison's recent cross-country ground school. Congratulations, John.

—Jim Kellett

## New Private Pilots

Congratulations to Craig Rodarmel and Dave Collier who passed their check rides April 23 on a day of challenging conditions. Marvin, the flight examiner, was overheard saying he was never so scared in all his life. I'm not so sure if he was talking about the check rides or me towing. Special thanks to Chris Groshel and Jim Kellett for helping out.

—Bruce Codwise



**John Noss**

---

**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**



## Want To Fly With an Eagle?

Karl Striedieck lives and flies from his ridge top strip on Bald Eagle Mountain near State College, Penn. He's a U.S. Air Force and Pennsylvania Air National Guard pilot, and, more importantly to this conversation, started flying gliders in 1965.

In 1968, Karl set an out-and-return world distance record flying a Ka-8B from an auto-tow launch out of his home field. Later that year those of us at the Capitol Area Soaring School in Leesburg, Va. were privileged to have him visit and describe this impressive flight, and show videos of him doing touch and go landings on his mountain top strip.

Karl went on to many more national and international soaring accomplishments, too many to list here, and was named to the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame at the National Soaring Museum at Harris Hill, N.Y. in 1980.

Generous with his time and talent Karl often offers other pilots the chance to fly with him in his Duo Discus during soaring contests. For a \$200 donation to the U.S. Soaring Team Fund you can spend the day in the plane with one of the finest soaring pilots in the world. He will do this again at the Region IV North contest to be held in Fairfield, Penn. (hosted by M-ASA) on Oct. 11-17. At this time there are slots

available on three of those days. You'll learn more about real soaring in one day than in any other six months of your life. To get more information or to sign up write Karl at: [karls@uplink.net](mailto:karls@uplink.net).

—Jim Kellett

## Are You Really Ready to Learn?

Having small kids is teaching me a lot about how to guide people, for adults it's called "managing." Probably this is because as a programmer this is the first time I really must get it right.

Attending to my own children forces me to really attend to every little detail and clue that might help me get it right the first time. Why the first time? Because, if you tell a young child something wrong, they learn it and it takes forever to unlearn it. This is the principle of "primacy" that Jim Kellett brings up occasionally. Let me tell you it's true in spades with young kids. I mispronounced the word "hitched" as "hatched" once when explaining the act to my son and he still uses the wrong word now two years later.

And because we didn't tackle the problem of nose picking early I had to make up a whole story prominently featuring the word boogers to unteach the idea that boogers were for eating. I'm still a bit nauseous after that multi-hour story session. And of course knowing what he should do isn't changing my son's behavior entirely on this sticky subject. It seems going from knowing to doing is a big step in life.

Anyway, back to incentives and listening. I was listening (and talking way too much) to a prominent economist in the Clinton administration and a Democrat partisan through-and-through and he kept telling me how they would make this telling point and that point against the Republicans. And,



# Copy That 1

Continued

eventually, I do what I always do when I'm around my betters; I asked the annoying and uncomfortable question. This time the question was, "so what do the facts matter when the people that control the Republicans hold on power do not care and do not listen?"

The great and good Democratic economist pressed the argument, "they made a few good points" and I think I annoyed him. My loss of course, and I'm sure I did not add to his store of knowledge (I learned later he enjoyed it, wonder of wonders).

The parallels with flight safety fairly leap forth. The uncomfortable question for pilots is, "why should anyone bother to tell you anything about how to fly more safely if you do not care to listen?" If you're not listening, no one will expect new "guidance" to change your behavior. Eventually it's up to the student to somehow signal that they want to hear. The usual approach is to ask questions. The only thing you risk by asking dumb questions is that you might appear dumb.

This is why I'm deeply suspicious of prideful and quiet pilots and I'm an advocate of ad hoc committees to discuss incidents, so long as they apply to everyone and always. I think it's a fair trade, pride for safety. So, a few words about pride. I take an extra hard look at myself these days. I always did but somehow seeing your small child behave like you, good and bad alike, is humbling. When it's "good" I wonder if I my definition of good is really good or just for my convenience. When it's "bad" I look for where he learned that and it's usually me. And as we already discussed it is really hard to un-teach things, especially those implicit lessons from daily behavior. Most of our flight students have gotten some really bad examples from the movies.

So here is another uncomfortable question for my betters (instructors). If you're not willing to publicly question yourself are you teaching the right lessons of continuous learning to your

students? If you can't humble yourself to write a Doofus Report or invite criticism, is it not hypocritical to expect better of your students?

That was a lot: primacy, listening and teachability; changing behavior, pride and teaching by example. Cheers.

—Richard Freytag

## Charlie Spratt Makes Final Glide

I don't think many Skyliners, certainly not the newer ones, knew Charlie Spratt, but anyone who ever met him, will never forget him. He was a fixture at soaring contests for decades and lived the life of a true soaring vagabond. He experienced most genuinely the camaraderie that exists among those who have slipped the surly bonds of earth. He was living proof that there is an American leisure class at both ends of the economic spectrum, and he enjoyed his—on the lower end—his entire life. Charlie finally slipped those bonds last month after a long struggle with kidney disease, when his third transplant failed.

Charlie was a legendary contest director. He was also a most unlikely caretaker of children. Dozens of "crew," all children, some even grandchildren, of contest pilots, traveled with Charlie from contest to contest during the season. They helped out on the line and at the gates of soaring contests, and getting a far better education than in fancy schools.

Several years ago, when Charlie finally realized that his health was seriously in decline, he gave what many of us considered his farewell speech at the SSA Convention. It was there that I discovered that, although I'm not a contest pilot (and have no motivation to become one), his company alone was worth spending time at contests. Moreover, I realized that in some dark way we were personal soul mates, both raised in the south at a time when parental supervision was oriented more toward promoting independence than providing protection. We shared some experiences



Charlie Spratt

kids just don't see these days. This is not the place to repeat some of his stories but let's just say that we shared the typical adolescent boy's fascination with explosives. You can read about his experiences in his book, "See ya' at the Airport," available from Cumulus Soaring. (<http://tinyurl.com/cptmg1>)

There will be a memorial service during the 15 meter Nationals at Cordelle, Ga. in the middle of May and probably one at the Region 2 contest the last week of May. Karl and Iris Streideick plan to plant a tree in Charlie's memory, with some of his ashes, during the service.

—Jim Kellett

## Creative Daily Reports 101

### The Three Little Pilot Piggies

Once upon a time at an airport far, far away three pilots emerged from their cavernous hangers and positioned their aircraft on the 27 ramp. Although the sky at this far away airport was blue and nary a cloud was in sight, the Big Bad Wind Wolf lurked menacingly about.

The first Little Pilot Piggy in a craft made of wood gleefully taxied to 27 and moved down the runway. Suddenly, the Big Bad Wind Wolf awakened. He huffed ... and he puffed ... and blew 20 knots across the beam. After takeoff the poor, little piggy's flight almost came to a stop with the fiercest of headwinds. He promptly landed and put his wooden toy away having learned his lesson from the Big Bad Wind Wolf.

Laughing, the second Little Pilot Piggy emerged in a high-wing airplane made of aluminum and assumed his position on the ramp, certain in the construction of his craft. Confidently, he too strode down the runway and into the air only to be swatted aside by the same Big Bad Wind Wolf. He huffed and he puffed and he blew the Cessna all around. The teller of this tale knows not where he landed.

Then the third Little Pilot Piggy—you remember, the one who built his house of bricks—emerged from the hanger with wings so long they surely could touch the sky. Actually, it was a small bevy of Piggies whose craft

were well engineered machines made of fiberglass and steel. The power pilots laughed and cried out, "You have no motor. There is too much wind. The Big Bad Wind Wolf lurks about. Surely, you cannot fly!"

The Big Bad Wind Wolf smiled and licked his chops as the third Little Pilot Piggy completed positive control checks and preflight checklists and soared toward the heavens. Once again, the Big Bad Wind Wolf arose. He huffed and he puffed ... and he howled from the north and tried to blow the gliders all around. It was, however, to no avail as these aircraft may as well have been made of brick and stone. They licked the wind and the Big Bad Wind Wolf and soared and soared in lift of +4, +6, +10 knots and even more. The Big Bad Wind Wolf was last seen slinking away into the midfield ravine.

Alas, our fairy tale ended with but seven flights; three FAST certificates and four member flights on a good soaring day at Front Royal. Flight of the day honors went to Curtis Wheeler in the Cirrus at 2:40. His last report was "7,300 feet over the knob and climbing at ten knots!" He eventually topped out at 10,000 feet.

A special thanks to my other fairy tale buddies—Mr. Tow-Man, Steve Wallace; Mr. Instructor-Man, Curtis Wheeler; and Mr. ADO/Instructor-Man, John Noss. Absent you, this tale never would have been told. And they lived happily ever after.

**The End**

**—Robert Creedon**

## You, Too, Can Learn to Fly

Want to speed up your learning? Here's a summer holiday suggestion you can't refuse. The "Gang of Three," Bob Salada, Bruce Codwise and Jim Kellett have set aside the entire week of July 20-24 as an opportunity for Skyliners to "get on with it" with a week's intensive instruction. Jim McCulley, famous F-86 driver and tow pilot, will also assist on July 24. That's right, every day for a week, read, study, talk and fly, whatever it takes to accelerate the pace of your learning or re-establish proficiency. Come for the entire week, or two or three days. Space is limited so making arrangements in advance is important.

Pre-solo students will get top priority for equipment and instructors, fol-

lowed by students working on B, C, and Bronze Badges and preparing for practical flight tests. Weather permitting they should expect to fly a lot each day.

Everyone else is welcome to hang out or, if equipment is available after the first two priorities are filled, to fly. If you want the Sprite or Cirrus for duration or altitude flights, or even Bronze Badge spot landing practice, just work it out among yourselves. Owners are always welcome to get a tow for their ships.

We'll start early, perhaps 8 a.m. and try to fly as long as possible each day. It's suggested that you consider finding a local motel so you're alert and ready each morning. Your family might even want to come with you; they can float down the Shenandoah on a tube or visit the many caverns or whatever while you're working.

Do not plan on dropping by unannounced for flight instruction if you can get away at the last minute unless you're willing to accept lowest priority for instructors. On the other hand, it's fine if you want to drop by unannounced to hang out, help or maybe, as a bonus, fly.

We'll have things to talk about and several hours of classic soaring-related videos for evening entertainment or anytime the weather tanks. So, take a look at your calendars now and tell the Gang of Three that you want to come out for all or some of that week. Let us know, to the best of your knowledge,

your level of interest—from "definitely count me in for all week" to "I'd like to, but won't know until early July."

There's no guarantee about the weather, of course, but we'll do something instructive every day. On flyable days expect the chance for several flights.

Remember, a bad day at the airport is still better than a good day at the office.

**—Jim Kellett**

## Competitive Soaring

We don't have many (any?) racing pilots at Skyline, but it's a topic that can be, and is, exploited with several efforts to promote the sport within the larger aviation community. There's a nice blog post at AOPA's "Let's Go Flying" blog about sailplane racing. (<http://blog.aopa.org/letssofar/?p=120#more-120>)

For Skyliners who want to get a closer view of this aspect of the sport they should attend one of the two very popular SSA contests in Region IV, in Fairfield, Penn. Oct. 11-17 and one in Newcastle, Va. Sept. 21-26. You'll see a whole different kind of operation.

**—Jim Kellett**

## Reading List

Everyone should be familiar with the SSC operations manual and emergency plan. They can be found online at: [http://skylinesoaring.org/docs/Manuals\\_OperationsManual.pdf](http://skylinesoaring.org/docs/Manuals_OperationsManual.pdf) and <http://skylinesoaring.org/docs/Emergency%20Response%20Plan.pdf>.



**Part of Martin Gomez's preflight checks as a tow pilot is to extend the retractable tow rope and check it for wear and proper functioning.**

**It is this type of care for club equipment that keeps all club members safe in the air.**



# Photos by **Martin Gomez**



Recent photos of Skyline Soaring Club operations by club member and tow pilot Martin Gomez.

To see more of Martin's images go to [www.Flickr.com](http://www.Flickr.com) and search for the screen name Xferner.



# Thought Experiment:

**Joe** Parrish will pose a new soaring scenario or problem each month and call for SSC members to come up with their best solutions. Members should e-mail their answers directly to Joe at [joe@parrish.net](mailto:joe@parrish.net).

## Cross-Country

### Q: April's Question:

#### You're Going Cross-Country Like it or Not

It's a remarkably calm day, with no evidence of lift, sink or wind in any direction. You take an aero tow from Front Royal Airport to 3000 feet AGL in the ASK-21 and release directly over the field. The ASK-21 is brand new and you believe that it is performing as well as it possibly can within its design limitations.

Immediately after you release from tow Skyline ground calls you on the radio to tell you that hordes of locusts, AIG executives, North Korean dictators and American Idol judges have descended upon the airport and it's now impossible to land there.

You have a handheld GPS onboard. It's springtime and there have been heavy rains lately so landing on a grass surface is likely to result in an unpleasant retrieve at least, and could possibly damage the ship. You feel a very strong obligation to not land anywhere that might cause injury to people on the ground.

Where would you go to land, given that Front Royal is no longer available?

—Joe Parrish

**A:** Mike Ash provided the first correct response. Congratulations Mike. His reply was presented so nicely I thought I would share it with you.

—Joe Parrish

"Given the assumptions stated in the question, with the additional assumption that I can come to my decision

after only a small amount of time in the air, my destination is Winchester airport. According to Skyvector, OKV is 14.5 nm from Front Royal, which at the 34:1 best glide ratio of the ASK-21 means a 2,591 feet altitude loss. Since we started at 3709 feet MSL, and realistically it's more like 3800 feet since we can gain a bit off the excess speed of the tow, that leaves us at 1,118ft MSL at OKV, which is 392 feet above OKV's airport elevation, just enough for a very abbreviated pattern. If we were going for runway 32, that end is slightly closer to FRR than the other end allowing us to fly straight into a base leg with a reasonable margin remaining. Since this is a tremendously thin margin I'd really rather find some other place if this were to actually happen to me. Since all the other airports in range are unpaved (as far as I know) I'd probably head north and look for some quiet unoccupied road surface. My recollection is that there are some unfinished subdivisions in that area which might serve. If none could be found I'd probably take my chances in a field, trying to find one that is adequately drained. But, since the question says that I can count on my machine to deliver and the weather not to interfere, this isn't necessary within those bounds."

—Mike Ash

### Q: May's Question:

#### Tension Headache

This month's question has several parts, but the theme is common—tension.

You're in the ASK-21, with a friend,

at maximum gross takeoff weight. The ship is brand new and you have every reason to believe that it is performing exactly to the specifications in the operating handbook. You take off from Front Royal (KFRR) on a cross-country tow to Petersburg, W. Va. (W99) behind the Pawnee. As you climb out at 60 knots your variometer reads a steady 600 feet / minute climb.

1. How much tension is in the tow-rope now?

You continue to 3000' AGL and the tow plane levels off but maintains a steady 60 knots. You are now level behind the tow plane in the cruise portion of the tow.

2. How much tension is in the tow-rope now?

You're now in level flight midway between KFRR and W99. It being the Appalachians you encounter moderate turbulence over terrain that appears unlandable for as far as you can see. Due to the turbulence you're building large amounts of slack in the towrope and a rope break in this area would be very bad. You're unable to raise the tow pilot on the radio and you're getting very nervous. After messing around with yawing, pitching, cursing, rolling and crying you finally get the idea to pull the dive brakes. Because the ASK-21 adheres to the JAR 22 design standards you know that the lift/drag with dive brakes extended is 7:1 or less. For the purposes of this discussion let's assume 7:1.

3. How much tension is in the tow-rope now?

—Provide answers to all three questions.









