

SKYLINE



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, INC APRIL 2010


Masthead photo by Dick Otis

Look out for the survey

Jim Kellett

One of the major inputs members made to the Board of Directors in preparing the 2010 Strategic Plan* was the desire to acquire a third two place sailplane (possibly a high performance one) to reduce waiting times, permit more sharing of soaring with family and friends, and expand training opportu-

nities. Now it's time to figure out how we can do that. In April, you will receive another survey, this time dealing with some of the details of how to make this happen. Please be on the lookout for the announcement - it'll come by e-mail - and respond completely and thoughtfully. Your answers will guide the Club in making this important next step!

*You can review the Strategic Plan, which was presented at the January, 2010 Annual Meeting, in the Members Only section of the Club's website, under "Restricted Documents". 

March Board Meeting Highlights

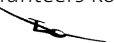
Jim Kellett, SSC Secretary

The Board was invited by the Warren County Airport Commission to comment on their plans for expansion of the hangars at the airport, specifically with regard to the possibility of moving into larger accommodations which could be configured to house the Club's equipment more efficiently. Such an opportunity is attractive, but there are many details to work out. The Board established a working group consisting of President Bendorf and Past President Rees to work with representatives of the Commission to discuss the details.

The Board also began working on implementing the several

recommendations of the Strategic Plan which was approved at the January, 2010 Annual Meeting. Two items which emerged from the Plan as having high priority were:

- o Researching the ways to find and finance a third two place glider. (Jim Kellett and Joe Parrish are working on another survey to gauge member preferences on how to go about this.
- o The acquisition of additional ground towing capacity (another car, golf cart, etc.) while disposing of the two ATVs. (If you have a functional old car you'd like to donate, talk to Dan Ernst.)

Several maintenance issues were addressed, including the repairs of the Cirrus and Grob trailers which damaged in a February wind storm, and correcting some deficiencies in the Grob which remained after completing the 3,000 hour lifetime service extension examination this winter. Club volunteers Rockwood, Dziadek, and Groshel are leading these efforts. 

Glider Simulator Training

Piet Barber

Dear Skyline Students: Are you tired of paying big money to get only a few minutes in the air to practice the mundane stuff that you just aren't getting better at?

Don't you just hate having flight after flight of 15 minutes at a time—not enough time to getting the foot-coordination thing figured out?

Wouldn't you like to be able to practice landing after landing to get it right, especially when you can get only one or 2 flights every few weeks?

Would you like to get some of that winter rust off before resuming your spring flying?

Do you have trouble with the aero-tow portion that you just can't get past?

How about the landing sight picture? Do you have TLAR figured out yet?

Do you have 20 flights or more, with no actual experience in thermals?

Have I got a deal for you!

I have a purchased at considerable expense and for my own personal use, a fully functional (non-moving) flight simulator at home, built especially for glider pilots practicing cross country flight. It has an excellent ability to be used as an instructional aid, too. I have most of the features you need to get a good simulation experience to speed up your training program with REAL gliders.

Microsoft Sidewinder 2 Force-Feedback control stick

CH Pro Throttle (used as dive brakes)

CH Pro Rudder pedals

Track IR Pro 5 Head-movement tracking gear (This is superway-cool)

Condor Soaring Simulator, and/ or Silent Wings Soaring Simulator
Fast computer system to get high frame rates at maximum resolution and maximum detail

Big monitor.

I have some experience using the simulator to accelerating the training of a student. It works better when we start from scratch, where the biggest overall impact on your training program at Skyline. However, that's not to say you won't get any benefit from using a simulator if you already have 40 flights.

Here's where I have seen the greatest impact on a student's progress:

Use of Checklists

Rudder Coordination practice

Speed control

TLAR and landing-sight picture

Runway lineup, touchdown and rollout

Crosswind conditions, completely controllable in the sim, ranging from the benign breeze to the "we would never fly in these conditions" direct crosswind.

Aerotow (I had a student do a completely unassisted aerotow after 2 hours of training on the sim, on his 3rd glider flight overall).

Abnormal aerotow procedures

Review and Evaluation: We can take the IGC files from your flight and display them in Google Earth, to get a 3-D perspective on the flight.

Please contact me privately to set up sessions at my house on a weekday evening.

This is being done to evaluate the effectiveness of using computerized flight training as a supplement to our flight training program. If it goes well this year, the instructors may ask the Board of Directors to fund a flight simulator for the club.

<http://www.pietbarber.com>

<http://pietbarber.blogspot.com/>

FAA Special Awareness Training

Piet Barber

This is a private message sent to all rated pilots in Skyline Soaring Club who haven't previously indicated to me that they have completed the FAA's Special Awareness Training as required by 14 CFR 91.161.

Most of you in this list have probably done the online training. If this is the case, just let me know that you have successfully completed the training and have your certificate. Once you inform me, I will update the club's records, and never bother you about this again.

If you haven't already done the FAA's Special Awareness Training, please take a time to visit the URL below and do so now. The course is offered by the FAA, and is free to take. It is simple to learn the material. We are within the critical distance from DC VOR/DME and all pilots operating out of FRR are required to do the training -- even if you will never fly out of gliding distance from KFRR.

<http://skylinesoaring.org/TRAINING/Syllabus/7g.shtml>

There is no need for you to send me a copy of the certificate or anything like that. Just let me know that you have done the training, so I can update the records.

When a Club is not a Club

Dennis Johnson - Former Skylines Editor

Every Skyline Soaring Club member should stand up, turn to face Front Royal and give thanks that they are members of such an active and organized soaring club. Although members sometimes wait all day for a seat in the ASK or Grob, it could be much worse. You might not have any good German glass to fly at all, or even a club that acts like a club.

I moved to Hoboken, New Jersey in the summer of 2008 with

plans to join a gliding club somewhere in western New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania or in New York's Hudson Valley. After perusing the SSA website to learn "Where to Fly," I visited most of the clubs within a 90-minute drive. That includes about five clubs in New Jersey, three in Pennsylvania and two in New York. My experiences were far from encouraging for soaring's future in America.

On a sunny Saturday around noon I'd arrive at the airfield listed for a club only to find one guy somewhere out in a shaggy field with his head buried in a glider. I'd walk over and ask if he knew anything about the club.

"Yeah, I guess."

He's a member and really surprised that there's nobody else around, it's such a nice day.

"So, where are the club gliders?

"Club ships? Well, we have that Schweizer 2-33 over there."

"Hmmm, that one in the weeds covered with bird poop?"

We're gonna need a weed whacker to even get near that 2-33.

"Uh yeah. So, ya might want to join the club? Ya'd need a checkout in the club aircraft. I guess you'd have to call one of the club instructors, don't know who exactly, and figure out which one could come out and check you out. One's available most weekends."

"How do you get the aircraft pulled out of the weeds and preflighted?"

"Well, there's a commercial operation on the field; ya gotta go over and buy a tow from them. They give instruction too. That's their two Schweizers over there."

How a single pilot pulls a poop-covered 2-33 onto the runway and does a positive control check, or where the poop-cleaning supplies are kept is still a mystery.

"Not much on club camaraderie, huh?"

"Well, I just come out every so often to fly; I don't really know the members very well."

This was my experience at three gliding sites I visited. I'd arrive on a beautiful sunny day to find just one guy (I'm not exaggerating) puttering around with a glider on some far corner of the field.

One club I visited was fairly active. There was a group of people sitting in the shade of a canopy and some instruction going on in 2-33s. They were a friendly bunch but the airfield seemed poorly located, the landscape was flat and dull and the ridge was somewhere over the horizon. The primary club ships were all 2-33s with perhaps one Schweizer 1-26 tied down in the grass. There was no sign of any trailers containing members' personal glass ships. From chatting with one veteran club member I got the impression that "no one with glass would fly from here." So, if I wanted to make sinking circles over a field in a 2-33, this would've been the club for me.

I should also mention the high prices to join some of these non-clubs. One requires \$2000 as a refundable initiation fee and \$600 for a non-refundable initiation fee, plus other club fees and a lack of any decent aircraft. I think this is also the club that couldn't give me an orientation flight before joining. Well, that's an open-arm welcome for you. Makes me wonder how they attract any new members at all.

If you grumble about performing your duty officer duty at SSC a few times a year, consider joining a club where no one shows up and no one flies. I can give you contact information. Bring your own poop-cleaning supplies.

So, for half of 2008 and all of the 2009 season I trekked south to Front Royal to fly. Even though I can stay with family near Harrisonburg, it hasn't worked out so well. The weather may be gorgeous, and the line for the ASK not too long, but making a "sled ride," after devoting a long weekend and making a six-hour drive, isn't very satisfactory. Between family obligations, work and travel commitments I can't really hit the weekends with the best conditions for soaring. Not quite like the day I was "sick" from work in D.C. and flew the ASK in wave to over 13,500 feet. (Thanks to

Dennis Johnson



Jim Kellett in the back seat). That's the sort of flight you can rarely plan much ahead of time.

I've not mentioned any clubs by name, but I will mention Nutmeg Soaring Association at Freehold Airport, New York. They have a beautifully situated airport that they own, pristine aircraft, an active membership and almost reasonable fees. (The fees are a bit high, but I think that's due to their ownership of the airport) The only reason I haven't joined that club is that they are about two and a half hours from Hoboken and I still had some hope of finding a club not so far away in 2009.

I've made two observations. The first is that "you've got it pretty good at Skyline." Beyond having good facilities and aircraft, the members act like a club. They gather on

the FBO porch to just hang out, talk ("there I was, inverted ...") and teach flying, and sometimes to torture a few burgers on the grill. When someone drives up to Front Royal Airport on a sunny Saturday afternoon it's likely the first aircraft they see take off will be a tow plane and glider. And Skyliners are smart enough to strike up conversations with these spectators in the hope of reeling in another soaring club member. Or maybe it's just southern hospitality?

The second and more important observation I've made is that I don't know how soaring can remain an active sport in the United States with the level of club activity I've experienced here. Certainly, the days of youngsters gazing over the airport fence and being invited to go for a ride are over. Someone interested in learning about gliding would have been disheartened if they just showed up at those airfields like I did.

The circulation of Soaring is down to 11,000. If that's representative of the number of glider pilots in America, I think the sport is doomed. We must attract new people to soaring or more clubs will deteriorate to just one guy and his glider, and the sport may become the domain of just a few wealthy pilots.

Be thankful for the beautiful scenery and flyable ridges of Virginia, your proximity to the Washington, D.C. metro area (where I believe most club members must work to pay for their flying habit), the club's modern fleet and the hard work of your fellow Skyliners.

Skyline Soaring Club is a club that acts like a club—one that actively promotes the sport of soaring and the camaraderie of pilots.

Phil Jordan



Point of View Views

Dick Otis

As previously mentioned, I have been looking for a Point Of View (POV) Camcorder to record instruction videos at the club. A POV Camcorder is a very small video camera which attaches to your helmet, surfboard, race car, glider, tow plane etc to bring you hours of high definition Video experience from the "Point of View" of the wearer.

After the Annual meeting, Mike Peterson graciously loaded me his newest toy, the Contour HD POV Camcorder by VholdR (<http://vholdr.com/>). This camera takes 720p HD video (newer ones are 1080p). I have already taken several videos - a nice one of Jim

Kellett's Flight Review for example.

I also found the Go Pro (<http://www.goprocamera.com/>) with 170 ultra wide angle in WVGA, 720p, or 960p mode, and 127 wide angle in 1080p mode, plus a 5 megapixel still mode, including single shot captures modes every 2, 5, 10, 30 or 60 secs.; a 3 photo burst; and a self-timer.

After much research, although there is much to like about the Contour HD, I bit the bullet and bought the GoPro. Here in Skylines, you will (hopefully) find a sample of a photo - one of a series taken at 2 second intervals before and during takeoff.

Hopefully in the coming months I'll be able to provide some short snippets of interesting things like boxing the wake, stalls, steep turns and landings for your educational enjoyment.

photos by Dick Otis



World's skinniest photograph—Hey, got to fill this space with something!

VT-NA: Give me a fast ship...

Curtis Wheeler

If you have been keeping up with Ops reports, you may have heard lately that we have a few Naval Academy Midshipmen flying here at Front Royal.

After M-ASA's Super Cub was damaged in a theft accident a few months ago, CDR Brian Randall, leader of the Naval Academy's soaring program, asked the Skyline Chief Tow Pilot to provide some training for their new towpilots here at Front Royal. After conferring with the Skyline Board of Directors, the plan was approved and training was begun on February 28th.

SSC is training two new towpilots in support of the USNA's new soaring program, also known as the "VT-NA". Nick Duckworth and Spencer Wilson are new SSC student members who have started training flights in the SSC Husky (and in Shane's Capstan) in order to build experience towards becoming VT-NA towpilots. In June, they will transition to M-ASA's towplanes. While flying here, they will fly dual instructional flights only, including some dual tows at FRR.



The VT-NA will be flying approximately 150 Midshipmen at Fairfield this summer through an agreement with M-ASA from June 1st through August 18th. M-ASA's gliders at Fairfield include one Grob 103, one KA-7 and one SGS 2-33.

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

The Skyline Soaring Education Foundation (SSEF)

is in the process of applying for its 501(c)(3) status. The organization is now accepting tax-deductible donations for the purpose of providing soaring flight education scholarships to young persons in the metro area. When considering giving to SSEF, also consider that many employers will provide matching funds just for the asking. For this first year of operations, SSEF hopes to raise enough funds to provide at least one scholarship to a deserving young person in the area. Donations may be mailed to: SSEF, c/o Charles Norman, Treasurer, 2022 North Kensington St, Arlington, VA 22205. For more information on SSEF, contact *Spencer Annear, President*, at sannear@verizon.net.

Crossfield Education Award Nominees Sought

Children all over the U.S. are being shown opportunities in aviation thanks to some enlightened teachers, and the late famed test pilot Scott Crossfield was one of them when he was in school. Crossfield

established an award to recognize those teachers' efforts, and AVweb's Russ Niles spoke with his daughter, Sally Crossfield Farley, about this year's competition. http://www.avweb.com/podcast/podcast/AudioPodcast_ScottCrossfieldEducationAward_SallyCrossfieldFarley_202175-1.html?kw=AVwebAudio

This article is right on the money.

[I] attended a flight safety presentation last evening from a retired AF Major test pilot from Edwards, Bill Koukourikas, now serving there as a civilian. During the course of his presentation, his statement- No future attack military aircraft within the next 15 years will have pilots in the cockpit. The last tactical aircraft with a pilot in the cockpit will be the F-35. He also indicated that within the next 10 or so years all UPS and FedX cargo flights will be with pilot-less aircraft. This prediction coming from their test shop at Edwards.

All drone testing, development etc. is taking place just south of Edwards in the Palmdale area. Sounds like a continuation of the skunk work developments of Lockheed which previously took place in that area.

Simply amazing. Hey, are we a dying breed or what??
— Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon

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 welcome@skylinesoaring.org.



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Secretary—Jim Kellett
Treasurer—Daniel Noonan
Membership—Steve Rockwood
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Chief Flight Instructor—Piet Barber
Safety Officer—John Noss
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