



Masthead photo by Dick Otis

## Memorial Day Remembrance

**N**ot long ago I heard a young man ask why people still kept up Memorial Day, and it set me thinking of the answer. Not the answer that you and I should give to each other—not the expression of those feelings that, so long as you live, will make this day sacred to memories of love and grief and heroic youth.

But Memorial Day may and ought to have a meaning also for those who do not share our memories. When men have instinctively agreed to celebrate an anniversary, it will be found that there is some thought of feeling behind it which is too large to be dependent upon associations alone. ... The soldiers of the war need no explanations.

But even if I am wrong, even if those who come after us are to forget all that we hold dear, and the future is to teach and kindle its children in ways as yet unrevealed, it is enough for us that this day is dear and sacred. But as surely as this day comes round we are in the presence of the dead. ... where the ghosts sit at the table more numerous than the living, and on this day when we decorate their graves—the dead come back and live with us.

... in our youth our hearts were touched with fire. It was given to us to learn at the outset that life is a profound and passionate thing...

So to the indifferent inquirer who asks why Memorial Day is still kept up we may answer, it celebrates and solemnly reaffirms from year to year a national act of enthusiasm and faith.

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Memorial Day, May 30, 1884,

Keene, NH,

John Sedgwick Post No. 4,

Grand Army of the Republic



Phil Jordan



*Karl Striedieck with eager passenger John Noss in Duo Discus, ready to launch on sniffer flight.  
Photos courtesy of John Noss*

## A Rare Opportunity

### *Flying with Karl Striedieck at Mifflin Region 2 Contest John Noss*

Last year, in the July '09 Skylines, Jim Kellett posted a note about the opportunity to fly with Karl Striedieck in competition. For a \$200 donation to the US Soaring Team Fund, you can spend the day seeing a contest and flying in the back seat of his Duo Discus. Karl is "a member of the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame. He was an early pioneer of ridge soaring in the Ridge-and-valley Appalachians in the 1960s, ultimately setting nine world records flying gliders there. He was selected for the U.S. national soaring team 12 times, and won a silver medal in the world championships in 1978 and 1983." (Wikipedia)

I tried a couple of times to make this happen, but Karl's schedule fills up quickly. Last winter I tried again, and was fortunate to reserve a slot at the recent Region 2 contest at Mifflin County Airport near Reedsville, PA. I actually reserved two days, Tuesday and Thursday, to improve my chances of getting good weather. That turned out to be a wise choice, since Tuesday was cancelled for rain. Wednesday was a marginal day for soaring, but still very busy—I volunteered to help out on the line, and that was a great experience in itself. I hooked up 70 aircraft for launch within a couple of hours, including 'relights' for people who wanted to try a second or third

time to stay up and make a minimum distance. The pace of launching that many aircraft as quickly as possible is amazing. Cycling five towplanes across the grid for 2000' tows means there is almost always a launch in progress, and not a second is wasted. Towplanes typically are only stopped for a few seconds while the actual hookup is occurring, the rest is continual motion. After a few hours of grabbing a moving rope, hooking up, and rolling under the wing or sprinting around the wingtip to repeat on another ship, I was pretty beat.

My day to fly was Thursday, and it turned out great. The weather forecast was for a good day, but the thermal activity didn't seem to be happening on schedule. Karl, who

was the Competition Director (CD) for the event, was flying in the Sport Class, and the rotation happened to put that class as the first launch of the day. Karl lined up in the first position and we launched on an early 'sniffer' mission to find very little to work with. He called back to the field to officially slip the launches, and called a pilot meeting to announce revised tasks, reducing the number of turnpoints and minimum course times. Just after noon, we launched again as the first aircraft in the first class, into a cloudless and quiet blue sky. 15 minutes after the last aircraft in the class launched, the task was officially 'opened', but everybody was scratching hard just to stay up. There were a few relights for pilots who didn't have the luck to scratch in the right place. Finally, after about an hour, there was a hint of a cumulus cloud building on the horizon in the direction of the first turn point. Karl was one of the first brave souls to head out across the heavily wooded mountains, with no lift enroute at all. Getting low as we crossed into a valley with suitable fields and a few airports, there was finally a hint of lift, and Karl worked it to get back up to a comfortable altitude. By then some good clouds were building nearby, and we struck out in that direction. Eventually we were joined by a sister-ship Duo piloted by Heinz Weissenbuehler, really about our only company for a couple of hours. Under the Turn Area Task (TAT) concept, each pilot can pick how far to go into a large circle around the turn point,

*The Mifflin grid, 48 gliders ready to launch in to a cloudless blue sky*





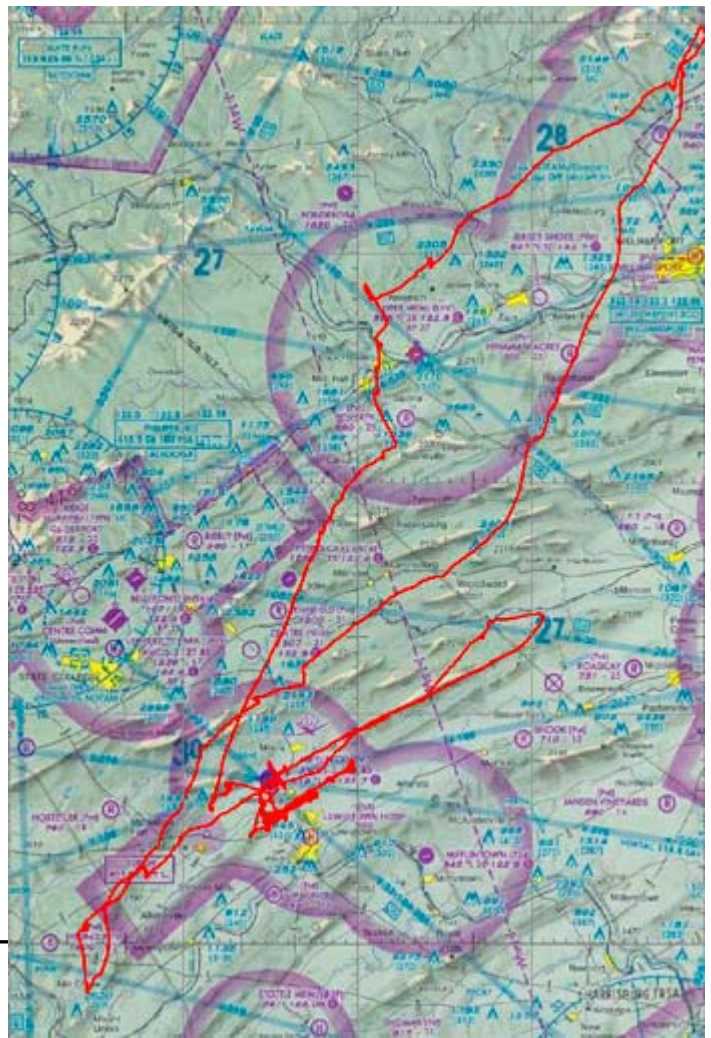


which is driven by where the lift is, how much minimum time is required on the course, and how to achieve the best average speed for the selected track. So we went to the far side of the 20-mile turn circle where lift was good, then departed for the next point, a long drive with almost no turning enroute as Karl tried to string together sketchy lift. That was the real art. Finding very little to work with at the second turn point, he didn't go very deep into it, departed for the final turn point, and enroute we finally got back up to about 9000', and stayed high and fast. Watching the clock for minimum course time, and the computer for final glide calculations, Karl eventually decided it was time to turn for the finish. We landed in a very full pattern, with just over 5 hours total for the flight, 219 miles at an average speed of 58 knots on the task.

I can't say enough good things about this experience. First, Karl is superb airman and is very generous to open up his Duo for just a modest contribution to the US Soaring Team Fund. There is absolutely no better way to see what contest flying is all about, than to sit directly behind one of the world's best and watch him work. The contest itself was a very professional operation in every respect. Dr Iris Striedieck, by the way, was the contest organizer. The array of flying machines was truly impressive—more expensive fiberglass than I have ever seen in one place. Looking out at the grid, I figure there was well over 5 million dollars worth of the best sailplanes money can buy. The flying skills of all the individual pilots was astonishing. With the pace of activity, and limited space to work with, everybody had to do everything just right to ensure a safe operation. It was normal and unavoidable to have landings occurring simultaneously on three different surfaces (taxiway, runway, and grass), rolling out just short of a line of stopped aircraft.

So, my thanks to Jim Kellett for publicizing the opportunity. Thanks to Karl Striedieck for making this experience possible, and for being a great mentor. If you ever want to see a contest from the best seat in the house, consider it!

*Top: Sister-ship Duo piloted by Heinz Weissenbuehler, near first turn point  
Above left: Busy Mifflin County Airport from downwind after 5-hour flight”  
Below: 219 miles at 58 knots average*







## Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation

*Dick Otis, CAPT USN (Ret)  
Chairman, SSEF Fund raising Committee*

Getting youth into flying is always a challenge. Virtually every kid will go for a glider ride if offered, but only a select few have the fortitude to tackle the challenge of book work and are willing to make the time commitment required to become a glider pilot. Additionally, kids (teenagers, young adults, in fact students in general) are usually not financially positioned to tackle the cost of getting a glider pilot license.

In order to tackle this challenge, Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation of Virginia (SSEF) was established in February 2010. The brain child and passion of our own Skyline Soaring Club founding father, Spencer Annear, created with the assistance George Hazelrigg, Martin Gomez, Bob Gould, Charles Norman and myself, SSEF was recently received approval to be incorporated in the State of Virginia. The foundation is a not-for-profit, charitable organization under IRS 501(c)3 organization which makes all donations to the foundation tax deductible.

Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation's will promote aviation education among the public, in particular young adults, by providing opportunities to participation in the sport of soaring. This mission will be carried out mainly by three means.

First, youth flight scholarships will be awarded. These scholarships are intended to give selected youth the knowledge and experience necessary to prepare them to solo a glider. Scholarship awardees will be chosen by the Skyline Soaring Education Foundation Scholarship Committee from college or high school students who meet SSEF criteria.

Second, orientation flights will be awarded to give a single flight experience to people who have shown an interest in soaring flight but who are not qualified for flight scholarships. These flights are intended to give the experience of soaring flight to a broad spectrum of people with

emphasis on those with special needs.

Third, Skyline Soaring Education Foundation will set up presentations with various school and civic organizations to educate them on the sport of soaring.

This year (2010) SSEF intends to award one or more flight scholarship designed to provide either an orientation flight, or full funding for thirty flights towards a glider rate. Funds for this effort are being solicited in the form of tax exempt donations from the general public.

As members the close knit Soaring community, the SSEF Directors are asking Skyline Soaring Club members to consider including SSEF in your 2010 charitable donations plans. It would be a wonderful statement of support if each SSC member would make at least a small donation (e.g. 100% participation). Even small amounts of \$25, \$50, \$100 or \$200 will go a long way towards awarding our first scholarship this year. Of course, larger contributions would also be appreciated.

Contributions should be mailed to: SSEF Donations, 2022 North Kensington St., Arlington, Virginia 22205. Acknowledgment for your donation will be provided by return mail.

Details of Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation of Virginia (SSEF), including scholarship application criteria, will be published soon on a new website, [www.ssefva.org](http://www.ssefva.org)



Photos by Phil Jordan

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## Kellett's Law

(A Primer)

**Everyone's heard of "Murphy's Law", right?** ("If anything CAN go wrong, it will".)

And it's corollary, "If more than one thing can go wrong, the first one will be the one that does the most damage".

In recent months, several Club e-mails have referenced "Kellett's Law", another "rule to live by" known to most Skyliners, which may be new for some of our newer members. In it's short form, Kellett's Law is "There is no satisfactory way to determine the weather suitability for flying unless physically present at the airport".

So here's a primer on the string of decisions that inexorably leads the rational pilot to the right conclusion, using good judgement, to determine the correct action on any day the Club is in operation:



Phil Jordan

Step One (Optional):

- a. Read the Club website's weather forecast. Make notes.
- b. Call Flight Service, ask for the "soaring forecast" for Front Royal. Make notes.
- c. Use the Blipspot website (link on the Skyline Soaring website). Make notes.
- d. Use the "XC Skies" website for more information about weather at KFRR. Make notes.

Step One (Mandatory)

- a. Discard all notes if Step One (Optional) was performed.
- b. Check weather services for storm warnings or watches at KFRR.
  - (b)(1) If severe warnings are in effect, study a good soaring book.
  - (b)(2) If none, drive to KFRR.

Step Two

- a. Check surface wind (anemometer in terminal building).
- b. If surface winds have a direction and speed that permit safe operations, check visibility
  - b.(1). If the ceiling appears to be significantly higher than the ridge tops to the east and west, launch.
    - b.(1)(i) If you can find lift, IT IS A GOOD SOARING DAY
    - b.(1)(ii) If you CANNOT find lift, IT IS A GOOD TRAINING/PRACTICE DAY
  - b.(2) If the ceiling is no lower than the tops of the ridges to the east and west, launch.
    - b.(2)(i) If you can find lift, practice "scratching".
    - b.(2)(ii) If you cannot find lift, it is an excellent training day.
  - b.(3) If you cannot see the ridges to the east and west, sweep out hangars, polish gliders, rearrange battery charging table(s), check merchandise inventory, wash towels, restock soft drinks in fridge, empty trash, vacuum gliders and towplanes, wash grease off towplanes. Look for something to clean or repair or label and store properly.
- c. If more than 12 kts, sweep out hangars, polish gliders, rearrange battery charging table(s), check merchandise inventory, wash towels, restock soft drinks in fridge, empty trash, vacuum gliders and towplanes, wash grease off towplanes. Look for something to clean or repair or label and store properly.

This is not as funny or silly as it sounds.

First, the Shenandoah Valley enjoys a micro meteorology that is very different from that found east of the Blue Ridge, which is where most Club members live. In addition, there is a crude but useful generalization that the weather is usually better in the valley than east of the mountains. Very often, it can be raining cats and dogs in Fairfax, while there are booming thermals over Strasburg.

Second, too many pilots, especially student pilots, simply do not understand the weather requirements for suitable gliding - - for example, many beginning student pilots look for "good soaring days" (i.e., lots of good lift) before deciding to drive to the gliderport. Wrong!! In fact, the first 15 or 20 flights a student makes would be more productive in the learning process if the weather were dead calm - no lift or turbulence or strong winds at all! And experienced pilots can sharpen their skills on poor days by practicing precision landings, and/or "scratching" (or looking for and working weak lift) in preparation for the time they'll really need it when far from home and looking for a place to land.

Third, think of yourself as a fractional aircraft owner (look it up). YOU own this operation, and the more our members do to keep our equipment fully operational, the less it costs everyone. And the more operations we conduct, the less expensive, overall, is each individual's financial burden.

Think about it. It works. *Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon*




## President's Report

Craig Bendorf

We are now 5 months into 2010 and things haven't gone as smooth as we would like, but things are looking well for the Club. As far as operations go, we are short about 40-50 tows from what we had for the last two years at this time with a just over 330 tows. This can be attributed primarily to the many days of marginal weekend weather this spring and the Grob being down for maintenance early in the year. All four Club gliders and two tow planes are fully operational, are being flown regularly and operations are running pretty smooth. However, we need to get more of you out to the field and flying since the weather is improving and we have had multiple good days with few people showing to take advantage of it.

As the summer weather picks up many of you will be looking for more Club activities. Unfortunately we have had to postpone the "Away Day" at Craig Hageman's field, but we hope to set up a new date in the fall. This 4th of July weekend isn't too far away and maybe someone would like to step up and try and organize some activity at the airfield. Also in July will be have our second annual week of soaring. We will run normal operations on the weekends and conduct operations every weekday from 19-23 July with priority given to student training. This will be a great opportunity for students to get an intense week of instruction and leap forward in their training.

One of the most important things I would like to do is thank Tom Parks for stepping forward and volunteering to take on the Club Treasurer position. This is one of the most critical jobs in the Club and the Board is excited that he is willing to take on the challenge. Tom will be taking over from Vern in early June and will need all of your help to make this a smooth transition. I also want to thank Vern for taking on the job temporarily and keeping things running smoothly since last January.

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

**Komet Test Pilot Dies**—Rudy Opitz, the chief test pilot of one of the most uniquely ambitious programs of the Second World War died May 1 in Bridgeport, CT at the age of 99. Opitz headed up the testing and eventual deployment of the Me 163 Komet, which still holds the distinction of being the only rocket-powered airplane to enter combat. Opitz was snapped up by the U.S. occupying forces after the war in Operation Paperclip and became a U.S. citizen in 1955. He joined Lycoming to run their jet program but he never lost his love for gliders, which, after seven minutes, the Komet became.

Opitz taught himself to fly in a homemade glider in his birthplace of Silesia, Germany, before he took formal instruction in 1932. In the U.S. he was a glider and soaring

instructor and an FAA glider examiner. He was named to the National Soaring Hall of Fame at Elmira, N.Y., in 1994 and FAA Instructor of the Year for New England. <http://www.avweb.com/eletter/archives/avflash/1627-full.html#202518>

View Opitz's obituary online at Legacy.com. <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ctpost/obituary.aspx?n=paul-rudolf-opitz&pid=142633817>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Cz3ftXZpsw>

**1935—It was a very good year for aircraft designers**—By chance I note that on this date, May 28, 1935, the first Messerschmitt Bf 109 was first flown and on July 28 the first B-17 flew. They seem to be made for each other. On December 17, 1935 the first DC-3 took to the air from Clover Field Santa Monica.

In late May, 1946 I took my first airplane ride. It was in a DC-3—the DC-3 and I were the same age.

As that big ole Pratt & Whitney turned over and emitted a smoky black belch, the young flight attendant leaned over and patted my arm. "Don't be afraid honey". I blurted out "Lady, it's going to take one hell of a lot more than that to scare me!"

I spent the entire flight with my nose to the window and it's been that way ever since.—*Phil Jordan*

**Mai and Jan Scott** are selling their farm and airfield in Lovettsville Virginia. For more information, go to [www.flycow.com](http://www.flycow.com) and click on News and Updates.

**Nuptials**—On Sunday, May 16th, Skyline members Guinevere Burner and Josh Kutella were married at the Flying Cow Farm in Lovettsville.—*Jan Scott—and best wishes from all SSC Members.*





**You Should Have Been There!—ADO report for Sunday, 5-09-10**—Only 3 showed up; and all three, I can speak on their behalf, had flights that were like none before. *Congratulations to Curtis Wheeler*, who obtained his silver badge. His flight started from Winchester and went down to Eagles Nest and back to FRR. His flight totaled 5 hours, 20 minutes, and went to a max altitude of 12.5K. One day, I'm dreaming, I will do this. Mike Ash went from FRR to Massanutten ski resort and back for a duration of 1 hour, 6 minutes. And Sobek and John Noss went up for 3 hours exactly, and carved custom clouds while silently soaring the stratosphere. The wave was in action today.

What a great day we had and what an awesome club we have. Thank you Dan Ernst, John Noss and Steve Wallace for a day well spent. —*Chris Martzloff*

*John Noss' cell phone photo of the shadow of the K on the clouds below the aircraft, with double rainbow halo taken during the flight of May 9.*



**Soaring Outreach**—SSA strongly encourages all Clubs and Chapters to engage in activities that promote soaring to other aviation groups AND to non-aviation organizations that have some influence on soaring, i.e., the general public.

Several area Clubs have taken up this challenge seriously, doing things like taking disabled veterans for glider rides, teaching Navy Cadets to fly gliders, displaying gliders at airshows and other exhibits—and often get great publicity not only for soaring in general, but for their own clubs! One example is giving talks to service organizations—such as the recent breakfast talk given in Waynesboro, VA.

Within the last couple of months, all the Clubs in Virginia formed a new organization, the Virginia Gliding Association, specifically to work on promotion of soaring in Virginia, in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Aviation. Skyline is, of course, a member of the VGA.

Recently, there was a front-page article in the Richmond Times-Dispatch about another soaring club, SVS, taking a WWII veteran aviator for a glider ride, and just last week, there was a

great TV News story about Tidewater Soaring Club taking kids associated with the Tuskegee Airmen for glider rides! See <http://www.wavy.com/dpp/video/local-children-take-flight>

NOTE: in that clip, you'll see the beautiful glider that Skyline tow-pilot Jim McCulley built! Hint: it's the v-tailed one!

Our Club's Strategic Plan calls for increasing our activities in this regard, and is still searching for a member who'd like to become the lead advocate and coordinator for such kinds of publicity. They'd work to find opportunities for displays, talks, and events, and work with SSA's publicity Chair (Val Paget, from Texas) to "get the word out" about Soaring and Skyline!

If you're interested, get in touch with me—*Jim Kellett*

**Thanks**—to Phil Jordan and all who contribute to the newsletter. Special thanks to Dick Otis for capturing Bacil Dickert's excellent hang-glider flight from Woodstock firetower to KFRR. We appreciate the coverage and even some fraternal ribbing in the spirit in which it's intended - but just to be clear, hang-glider pilots (at least the ones who wish to survive) are quite rigorous about pre-flighting their gliders and performing a pre-launch "hang check" to make sure they are properly hooked into the glider, zipped/buckled into the harness, helmet buckled, reserve parachute pins correct, instruments set, variable geometry set, etc. See you on the ridge! —*Hugh McElrath*, USHPA region 9 director

**Update from Fred Winter**—All, today's visit to Geisinger gave me back my left leg !The orthopedic surgeon who placed the screw in my fractured pelvis told me I could place as much weight on the leg as I was comfortable with. My best so far today is from the computer desk to the bathroom and back, but that's a whole lot better than this morning ! As you would suspect after over 6 weeks of inactivity, the leg is quite weak, despite (almost) daily exercise and the mile or so travel each day in the wheelchair during the contest. I may have been tired when I left most days, but I am delighted that I was able to attend and make a contribution to Team Mifflin.

Not out of the wheelchair or the walker just yet, but my goal is to use them less each day.

A HUGE THANK YOU ! to everyone who offered get-well wishes, opened doors, brought the wheelchair to the car, and in general helped me on my path to recovery. —*Fred Winter*

**PIREP:** Fred Winter was at the Mifflin contest, in good spirits, in command of operations any time he could get his hands on the radio, mobile in his wheel chair (faster than I could walk), aggressive driving the golf cart, bummed out that his glider may not be practical to repair, but happy to be in the middle of things.

—*John Noss*

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



*President*—Craig Bendorf

*Secretary*—Jim Kellett

*Treasurer*—Tom Parks

*Membership*—Steve Rockwood

*Chief Tow Pilot*—Curtis Wheeler

*Chief Flight Instructor*—Piet Barber

*Safety Officer*—John Noss

*Skylines Editor*—Phil Jordan

*Directors*—Craig Bendorf, Jim Kellett, John Noss, Joe Parrish, Paul Seketa, Curtis Wheeler