



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, INC MAY 2010

Masthead photo by Dick Otis


President's Report

Craig Bendorf


Have you been out to fly lately? We are now a third of the way through the year and the weather has improved dramatically but we are not flying as much as we usually do during this time of year. I have been out to the field multiple times on the weekends with beautiful weather flying gliders and tow planes with few regular members showing up. We have even had a few great flying days with only FAST introductory flights given and the field crew closing up early for lack of customers. I expect some of you have looked at early local weather reports and decided not to bother and missed some good flying days. Don't give up too early since Spring weather forecasts change rapidly and Front Royal weather is usually different than that forecast for the Washington D.C. area. Make sure you use some of the weather links on our Club website to help you make your decision on whether to trek to Front Royal because Spring offers some fantastic flying.

For the more experienced pilots you have probably seen the email traffic about the Mike Ash's On Line Competition (OLC) challenge. Mike's challenge was thrown out to the members to get more members interested in learning cross country flying and to start a friendly competition. A few of us have joined in and it has been a lot of fun and we are learning a lot. Yes you need to record your flight to participate, but you don't need an expensive system since almost any GPS device that can capture the track in the right format will work. You also don't have to go far to rack up the

distance since I was able to get credit for about 192 km flight and I was never out of gliding distance of Front Royal. Even if you had a short flight its fun to post your flights and check out what other people have done.

As you will see in other articles in this issue of Skylines, your Club officers have been working hard to set up a few events this summer that should be fun and great learning experiences. The June Off Field day and the July week of soaring are not only great flying opportunities but also good opportunities to meet and exchange a few good stories with other members. So please mark your calendars and come out and enjoy some soaring. 

We Need You!

Yes your Club needs you. We are in need of a new Club Treasurer and we are looking for someone to step up to the task. Vern Kline volunteered to take over the position temporarily until we could find someone willing to take on the position and it's now time for someone to stand up and be counted. Yes the job is a bit more demanding than some other club jobs, but it comes with a few incentives. The Club Treasurer is exempt from all other duties (i.e., DO, ADO, etc.) and as of the 18 April Board meeting a full time Treasurer will be exempt from Club dues while in the position. The Treasurer position is a critical Club officer position that helps the Board make sound key decisions on how we can make the Club better now and in the future. If you are interested or want to learn more please contact Craig Bendorf or Jim Kellett. 

Soaring in Piet's Basement

Rob Creedon

I have been out of the cockpit for almost a year. Anxious to return to the field, I read Piet's recent invitation in the Sky-lines newsletter to fly a computer simulator with interest. Having developed a severe case of corrosion in the last year – way worse than rust – I considered Piet's offer as a way to reacquaint myself with soaring.

I arrived at Piet's home at 7:00pm on a Friday evening. In true Piet fashion, he outlined the missions we would fly. After becoming acquainted with the software, I strapped myself into his desk chair, found the rudder pedals and performed my preflight checks. "Open the spoilers," Piet said, "and look to the right and you'll see the tow plane." With a "TrackIR" version 5 mounted on the visor of my ball cap moving my head along any axis appropriately changed my view outside/inside the cockpit – pretty cool.

The tow plane assumed its position and with neither a first-flight release check or tail waggle, we lumbered down the runway. The visual cues were amazing – FRR airport, windsock and even our standard 15 knot NNW crosswind were on hand. "A wee bit of right aileron and a tad left rudder should counteract that," I thought.

I had the stick in what I considered a neutral position but eventually needed a good deal of back pressure to become airborne. That movement, combined with a slow reaction caused me to balloon behind the tow plane. A short rope, wings not in concert with the tow plane and pilot corrosion conspired to keep me from maintaining proper position behind the tow plane as I chased my prey throughout the tow. That's my story and I'm stickin' to it.

And then it started – "Stay behind the tow plane!," "Yaw string! Yaw string!," "Don't lose sight of the tow plane!," "You're going to break the rope!," "Who signed you off anyway?" "Ahh, yes," I thought, "It's just like flying with an in-



Photo by Piet Barber

Terry Tripp slips the surly bonds of a basement room

structor at Skyline Soaring." (Relax Instructors, I'm just taking a little literary entertainment license).

After clearing the tow plane left and the glider right I released and began to soar – slow flight, 360 degree turns, steep turns, stalls – "Don't forget your clearing turn!," -- slips and all the rest. The graphics on the Condor Simulator were superior and therefore situational awareness better than Silent Wings. That said, stick and rudder controls were realistic and comparable.

Piet's representation in Skylines is right on the mark – from takeoff to touchdown I found both simulators absolutely worthwhile for both students and pilots suffering from corrosion. The experience is something I plan to repeat.

Piet, thank you for offering this training opportunity to the members of our club. I think it will make all who chose to attend better pilots

2010 "Instruction Week" Set!

Jim Kellett

Want to get cracking on your training goals? Want to get a bit of concentrated flight instruction? Skyline has set the date for it's second summer week-of-training, July 19 - 23. If you add the weekends to that, it's conceivable that you'll find instruction available for eleven straight days! Um, weather permitting, of course.

For this week, pre-solo students get first priority, and post-solo students come next . . . everyone else is welcome as a time-and-equipment available basis. You should expect to pretty much spend the day, during which you should be able to get in three, possibly more, flights-and to help out others as needed, including setting up and putting things away.

BONUS: We will have a prototype soaring simulator on-site for the week! This prototype was developed by Piet Barber, and we hope it will prove to be a time and money saver, especially for the beginning student. BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE! Yes, some ground

instruction will also be available to fill in the gaps between flying, and/or during your "down times" before and after flying!

Now, THAT means that, depending on how many instructors can be there on any given day, the weather, and the specific trainer you need to use, the number of students could be limited to as few as three a day; e.g., if there's one instructor, and that instructor is, say, Jim Kellett, it'll be three max to enable everyone to get in some serious flying time. If we have two instructors and the students can use both trainers, we can get more done.

Like any other program, though, there may be exceptions if some of the flights happen to be very short. Bottom line: if you're interested in this opportunity, please sign up for the days you need instruction and let Jim Kellett, who's coordinating the planning, know. First come, first served, and let him know which trainer you require or prefer.

We're working on the staffing right now (towpilots, instructors, Duty Officers and others), but you should expect at least one Club instructor on the field each flyable day. NOTE: If you're a towpilot or instructor, please contact Jim to get on the roster! We'll post to the Club mailing list the names of instructors, towpilots, and other helpers as we learn them.



Mark Your Calendars

Jim Kellett

The 2010 “Away Day” is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2010 (Rain date June 12). That’s when we split the Club’s operations, taking the Husky, the K-21, and the Sprite to enjoy the hospitality of Craig Hageman, the owner of High View Farm Airport (61VA), just a few miles NE of Winchester, VA near Berryville, VA. It’s a lovely, private grass strip—what a real gliderport really SHOULD look like—and is where Santa Claus traditionally flies an antique biplane to visit local kids just before Christmas!

Can YOU Find it?? (It’s right in the middle, with the 3000’ x 150’ runway parallel to a line of trees)

The Club will need “double-staff” that day, and we’re in the process of putting that together as I write. Meanwhile, YOU should be deciding which Skyline gliderport to use that day! And let Jim Kellett know if you plan to come to High View, so that we can help assure that everyone gets to fly where they want to.

And remember, one of the Club’s requirements for flying Club ships cross-country is to land at some field from which you did not take off. More important, High View offers the perfect experience for finding a potential landout field, since it doesn’t LOOK like an airport! Great place to work on spot landings and see some very different scenery!

Those coming to High View should pack a lunch & bring a chair.

How to get there: check out the map from

<http://tinyurl.com/y4qm3hm>.

You can get satellite views and maps from that site.



Birds of a Feather

Dick Otis

With the graceful descent of an eagle, Bacil Dickert, “dropped in” to FRR in his hang glider on Sunday April 18th, after a 2.5 hour flight from Woodstock Tower. *Editor’s note: see Bacil’s update on page 7.*

Below left: Dan Tomlinson, Karen Carra, Matthew Graham and Bacil Dickert.

Below right: preparing to launch.



Left: “checklist....what checklist?”. Below: launch view from Woodstock Tower Hang Glider jump point. All photographs by Dick Otis



Where in the World is Mike Ash?

Jim Kellett

Hotel 3 (the ASW-20C owned by Richard Freytag, Jim Kellett, and Mike Ash) has acquired a new, safety-related toy. It's a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) called "Spot". Here's what it looks like:



It's about 4" long, and comes with both a velcro-fastened loop and a carabiner, so you can strap it onto your arm, or clip it onto a parachute strap. It's powered by a couple of AA batteries, which will power the unit for days. It contains an antenna (under the logo, so it must always be able to 'see the sky') that both downloads position data from GPS satellites, and transmits data to an array of orbiting communications satellites.

So, what does it really do? The short answer is that it makes it possible for your crew or family or fellow club members or even

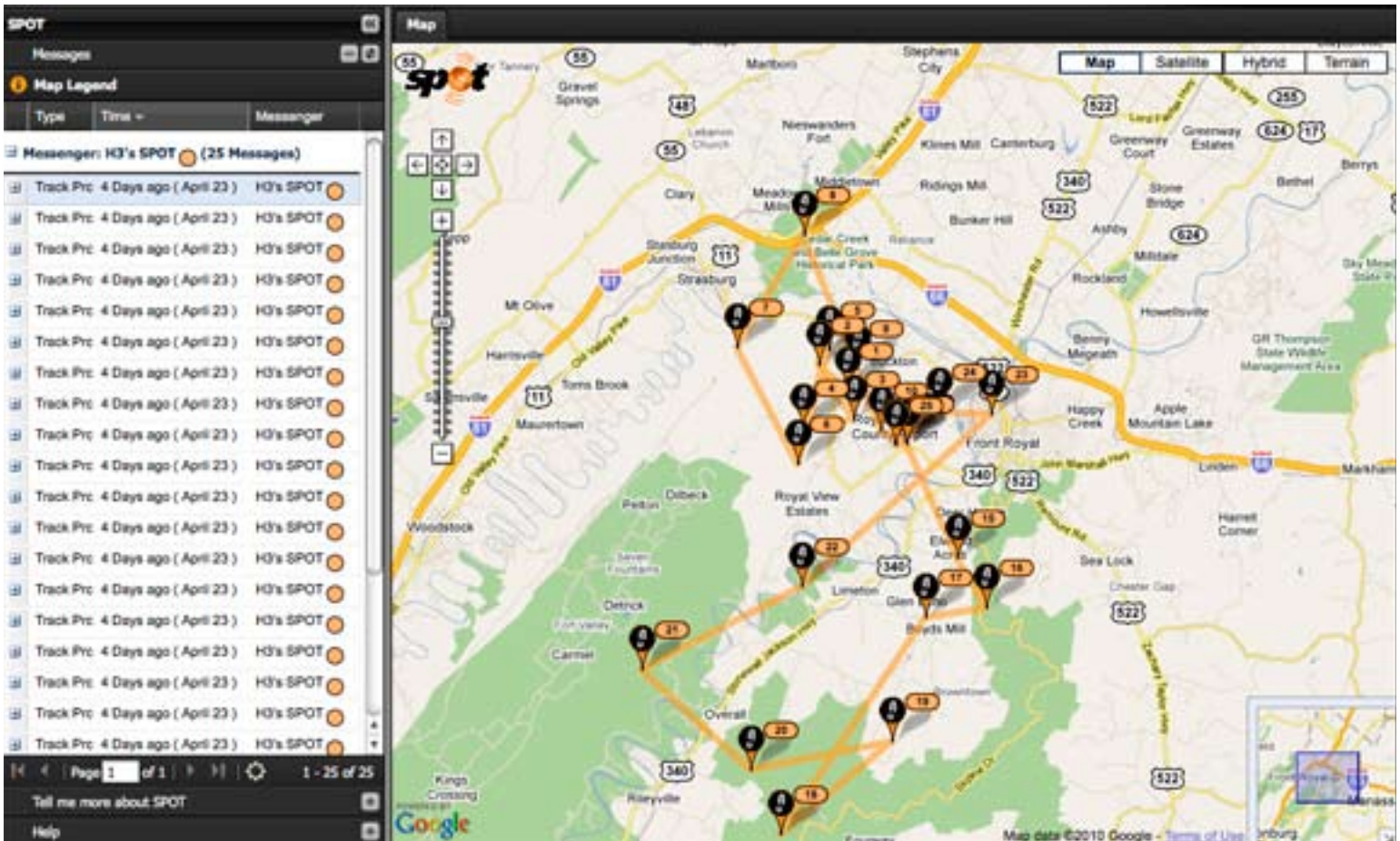
just curious people anywhere in the world to find out where you are! It does that by sending, every ten minutes, a map coordinate to the company's website. And, if you've landed out and need a retrieve, it will contact your crew with an e-mail message (like, "I'm here, I'm OK, come get me!") with the coordinates of your position. But if you're in deep doo-doo (but still conscious!), you can "call" 911-it'll send a message to their emergency center which, in turn, contacts the emergency service nearest you. Caution: It is NOT "automatic", like an aviation Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) which is triggered by the G-forces in a crash; you have to be physically able to press the "SOS" button (see picture), and the SPOT has to be able to see the sky.

Oh, yeah-it does all this by satellite, NOT by cell towers—so you can be down out in the boonies, but as long as you have a view of the sky, it will tell your crew or emergency services where you are.

The Soaring Society of America has built into its website (ssa.org) a new link, "Track a Sailplane", that's available to anyone, (not just SSA members, so that includes your significant other or friends). The Duty Officer at the Club's desk can, of course, also access this site. (Just click on "Track a Sailplane", and then find the name of the person you want to track, and click on the "Click Here" link in the column "Locator URL").

The graphic below an example of what you'll see, from one of Mike's recent flights:

The map's from Google, so you can click on terrain or map view, zoom, pan, etc. And on the left side you see the record of every location the unit has sent, arranged in order for the flight. If you click on the orange dot, the actual track on the map blinks—that way, your family, friends, or other club members can follow you during the course of any flying day!



Friendly Reminder

George Hazelrigg

This is a friendly reminder that it is not acceptable to simply miss duty days. Of course, well in advance, you can specify your blackout days. Sometimes, however, it becomes necessary to miss a day after the duty assignments have been made. In that case, you MUST find a substitute. Usually, you can trade days with another member. Other clubs impose rather hefty fines on their members for missing a duty day without getting a substitute. SSC has chosen not to take this route. However, this means we need to pay particular attention to attendance on our duty days. Recently, we instituted the Skyline Soaring Club Fecal Roster (SSCFR) to make public the names of those who fail to show up for their duty days. Here are the rules on the SSCFR:

1. If you fail to show up for a duty day, I will e-mail you to remind you that you missed the day.
2. You then have 4 weeks to schedule a make-up day and, by return e-mail, advise me that you have a make-up day. Preferably, you will cover the next scheduled date for the person who took your place on the day you missed.
3. If you schedule a make-up day and notify me within 4 weeks, I will remove your name from the SSCFR.
4. There will be two SSCFR lists, a public list and a non-public

list. If you get on the SSCFR, your name will not go on the public list for 4 weeks, and it will be removed from the list if you meet the above condition (3).


5. If you fail to schedule a make-up day within 4 weeks, I will ask that you be assigned two make-up days in addition to your regular schedule, and your name will go on the public list. Your name will then stay on the public list until you have completed your make-up days.

6. Each month, I will forward the public SSCFR to the editor of Skylines so that all club members can know who is not doing their duty.

We are taking these steps in hopes that attendance for assigned duties improves. Please take your duty assignments seriously. Other people who do make it possible for you to enjoy soaring on your non-duty days. You owe the same to them.

I also ask that the DO (or in the DO's absence, the ADO) e-mail me if any person failed to show for their assigned duty.

Finally, with regard to FAST passes. It is imperative that we obtain the official, original copy of the FAST pass before a FAST-er receive a ride. Copies of the pass are not redeemable, and the club loses \$99 if we fail to get the official copy. Furthermore, and perhaps even more importantly, our insurance covers only members of the SSA. To be covered, a walk-on must have a FAST pass, which means that they are an SSA member.

Thanks for your help. 

Damn the Crosswinds, Full Speed Ahead!

Dick Otis



Above left: From the back seat Curtis Wheeler gives a Naval Academy Midshipman expert Tow Pilot Instruction.

Above right: Captain Curtis Wheeler, USNR and SSC Chief Tow Pilot, Midshipman First Class Nick Duckworth (in the Husky) and Midshipman Third Class Spencer Wilson.

Left: Looks like a good landing will be forthcoming. Gotta love those Navy pilots—even the Midshipmen!

Right: Husky on tow. 

Photos by Dick Otis



Homeless Cub Thief Gets Nine Months

The homeless man who tried to steal a Super Cub from the Frederick Md., airport in December will have a roof over his head for nine months, courtesy of the penal system. Calvin Cox, 51, who told authorities he'd lived in the woods by the airport for seven years, was handed the nine-month sentence Thursday in a deal that resulted in his pleading guilty to a single count of second-degree burglary. Cox got the Cub started and taxied to the runway but ran it off into the grass where it upended. As part of the plea deal, Cox will have to pay some restitution to the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association, which used the aircraft as a tow plane. The cost of the engine tear down and new prop was about \$12,000. ...

<http://www.avweb.com/eletter/archives/avflash/1619-full.html#202448>

As many of you know Ryan Hatfield

has enlisted in the Marine Corps and is currently attending "Summer Camp" at Parris Island, South Carolina.

Five weeks down and seven weeks to go (as of April 22). From his letters it sounds rough.

They are allowed to receive letters (no cards or care packages) so if anyone would like to drop him a letter of encouragement his address is:

Rct. Hatfield, Ryan M.
Platoon 1044, Co "B", 1st RTBn
P.O.Box 11044
Parris Island, SC 29905-1044

Thanks, Mike Hatfield

Jim Garrison's Candidacy as SSA Regional Director

Remember, it takes THREE nominations in writing or by e-mail to Denise Layton (dlayton@ssa.org) to place a candidate in the running for SSA Regional Director—my nomination is one, but several others are needed to confirm his candidacy. Please consider sending your own nomination. I firmly believe that Jim will be an excellent representative of our interests as a Director of the SSA, and encourage your support.—Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon

Club Benefactor Injured

Fred Winter, a charter member of Skyline and who owns the K-21 leased to the Club, was injured in an accident in his LS-4 on April



Fred Winter by Dick Otis

10 while flying at a gliderport near his home in Pennsylvania. He's undergone several surgeries to repair a cracked pelvis and a crushed vertebra at T-5; he also cracked his right scapula.

At this writing, he's an inpatient at a rehabilitation hospital (Health South Nittany Valley Rehab Hospital, 550 West College Ave., Pleasant Gap, PA 16823; phone (814) 359-3421) beginning what appears to be a long, and possibly painful, recovery. He currently expects to be allowed to go home in early May. As of April 25, it was difficult for Fred to keep up with e-mail.

Birds of a feather update

I landed again at Front Royal Airport this past Tuesday 4/27 around 3PM. Only Reggie was there. The air was rougher than on 4/18. Phew! Got her down OK. As I was staging to the north and east at about 1000 AGL, I heard a call on the Unicom about some guy approaching from the south. I checked the pattern and could see no one. He called a second time and I checked again. Just then I looked down and saw a helicopter skimming along the power line clear cut that runs SW/NE just east of the runway. I am very glad that he and I had plenty of vertical separation! Reggie invited my driver and I to do a static display at the airshow at your airport on 9/11/2010. I'm looking forward to doing that.—Bacil Dickert

Charles Norman adds new rating—PP SEL, ATV. Photo by Dick Otis



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.



President—Craig Bendorf
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Chief Flight Instructor—Piet Barber
Safety Officer—John Noss
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