

Masthead photo by Dick Otis

Aviation Education Exposition

Spencer Annear

On Friday, October 22, SSC and the Skyline Soaring Education Foundation (SSEF) shared a booth at the 5th Annual Aviation Education Expo at Leesburg Airport. Several hundred high school students and adults attended the Expo which was designed to expose young people to the various aspects of aviation and to educate them about aviation careers.

The Expo was held in the ProJet hangar. The periphery of the hangar held booths of several universities and flight schools, aviation organizations, several government agencies including FAA, TSA and Customs and Border Patrol, as well as, some non-aviation private sector corporations. The Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines were also represented. The central area was given over to participant seating for the program.

Static displays in the hangar included: Av-Ed Flight School's C-172; Potomac Flight Training's King Air; ProJet's GulfStream G-5 and Jim Kellett's sailplane. A number of aircraft including helicopters and private jets were on the ramp in front of the hangar.

SSC's booth was manned by Bob Jullien, Jim Kellett and, Spencer Annear. The booth was located between AOPA's booth

and the Warren County-Front Royal Airport booth, just off the wing tip of Jim's sailplane. While participants circulated around the periphery many stopped to see the soaring video Jim played on his computer. Many of the participants stopped to ask about soaring



Bob Jullien Explains Soaring to a Student

Photos by Jim Kellett



Speakers Address Students About Careers in Aviation

Hotel Three and a Low-Performance Self-Launching Motorglider

Jim that evening. This was the first such event that involved the new Skyline Soaring Education Foundation, and SSEF is “the” organization that is truly aligned with the purposes of the Aviation Youth Exposition. Outreach efforts such as the Expo can only pay big dividends in the future for both Skyline Soaring and

and learning to soar. SSEF gave out a number of flyers describing its programs.

A couple of old friends from the Warrenton Soaring Center were at the Expo. Don Robb, a former partner in WSC, who now owns AV-ED Flight School was there for a while to see how his booth was going. Nate Lainey, a line boy at WSC, brought his son, a high school junior who is interested in flying helicopters for the Coast Guard. They live in Front Royal so they often see our sailplanes while hiking. SSC member Bruce Codwise attended the Expo as Chief Flight instructor for Potomac Flight Training.

Thanks are due to John Noss for helping Jim assemble his sailplane in the Projet hangar Thursday evening and for hosting

KFRR Management by adding new resources to our rosters.

Networking with many public interest organizations for follow up on SSEF activities can spread the soaring message to wider groups of aviation interested youth.

SSEF continues to look for donations. Anyone who is considering making year end donations should consider a gift to SSEF to help educate young people about aviation, particularly the sport of soaring, and to help expose members of the public to the sport of soaring either through our web site or by mail to:

SSEF Donations 2022 North Kensington Street
Arlington, Virginia 22205.
www.ssefva.org/SSEF/Home.html



Skyline Soaring Supports Region 4 North Contest

John Noss, Skyline Safety Officer

A few months ago, Jim Kellett let us know that the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association (M-ASA) was looking for an additional towplane for the Region 4 North soaring contest, which they host at their Fairfield PA location (W73). The board approved exploring the situation further, and Curtis Wheeler, as chief towpilot, was kind enough to work out the details with the M-ASA staff. I volunteered to do the flying.

So on Saturday 9 October I flew the Husky up to Fairfield, met with the contest organizers, attended the first pilot meeting, and commenced towing for the practice day. M-ASA had their two Pawnees in service, and contracted with two other towplanes (another Husky and a Cessna AgWagon), and with our Husky that made a total of five aircraft.

The scheduled contest days (Sunday 10 October through Saturday 16 October) did not enjoy very cooperative weather, but it

was amazing that the event still managed enough valid tasks and days to qualify as an official SSA contest. One day was canceled for rain, the final day was canceled for nasty winds, and the rest of the days were weak by any standards, with challenging winds.

Nevertheless, some of the best pilots in the country, flying some of the best sailplanes money can buy, still turned in some very impressive performances. As a towpilot, I found this some of the most challenging flying I have ever done—launching 40 aircraft in 50 minutes using 5 towplanes into congested airspace, followed by lots of re-lights, required some truly heads-up work by everybody involved including glider pilots, tow pilots, and ground crew. This was a great way to see a contest from the towing perspective, and the contest staff did a great job of making everything run smoothly and safely. They also took good care of me, and I learned a lot in the process. It turns out the Husky loves to land on the grass, by the way!

My thanks to everybody involved, including Curtis for coordinating the agreements, and at M-ASA Bob Jackson, Jim Chick, and Preston Burch.



Membership Report

Steve Rockwood, SSC Membership Officer

Our membership has remained stable over the last month. The club now has a total of 102 active members, including two new Probationary Member, two new Student Members and six Introductory Members in the month of October. Welcome the following members who have recently joined with Probationary Membership status:

- Ken Ekman: Ken recently relocated to Virginia and lives in Vienna with his wife and kids. Ken is a very accomplished pilot with commercial ratings in single engine, multiple engine, and gliders. He is a part owner in a Grob 103 and owner of a vintage 1-26. In fact, Ken competes in the 1-26 Nationals and other 1-26 events. Welcome to the club Ken, you made the right choice in joining our club.
- Robb Hohmann: Robb lives in the DC area. He originally joined the club with a FAST voucher and flew several times with the club before deciding to become a Probationary Member. Robb is a very active student pilot and typically at the airport every weekend. Welcome to the club Robb.

Welcome the following members who have recently joined with Student Membership status:

- John Westenhoff: John is 14 years old on November 1st. Happy birthday John.

- Christopher Zaboji: Chris is 13 years old.

Both John and Chris are friends that have decided to obtain glider rating together. Both have been out to the airport on numerous occasions for flight training and from what I here are doing very well. It's great to see youth membership in our club.

We have six (6) new Introductory Members for October; Lisa and Tommy Childress, Sanjeev Deshpande, Hillary Mason, Virginia Troncoso and Don Watts. Lisa and Tommy came all the way from Virginia Beach to fly with us, I am sure the trip was worth it. Virginia Troncoso is Carls Troncoso's cousin. Include his father, Gonzalo that makes three of the Troncoso clan that have experiences engine less flight with our club. I hear Gonzalo will be coming back to the airport in the near future to fly with us again. Welcome all to the club and we hope you decide join the soaring club as Probationary members in the near future.

Robert Jullien successfully completed his one year of probation and was unanimously approved by the Board of Directors for Full Standard Membership. Robert is great person to be around, easy to talk to and real asset to the club. He volunteered for the recent Air Show and pitches in to help operations run smoothly.

Welcome to the ranks of the voting members.

Soaring as an Aviation Screening and Leadership Tool

CDR Brian H. Randall, USNA
Soaring Program Officer Rep, CFIG

Building on the success of 2009's Summer Soaring Program (SSP) which provided aviation exposure to 150 members of the Brigade, USNA increased funding to expand Soaring training to more midshipmen for 2010's Summer Training. As a result of the hard work of numerous midshipmen, staff, TAD Ensigns, and military veteran volunteers, the Naval Academy Fixed-Wing Training Squadron (VT-NA) safely completed over 900 training sorties with 400 midshipmen assigned to the Naval Academy's Summer Soaring Program!

Who is VT-NA and what purpose does it serve?

The Naval Academy Training Squadron (VT-NA) is USNA's only midshipmen-led professional development Aviation ECA, providing leadership & flight training opportunities (through Soaring) to aspiring Naval Aviators.

Why would the Naval Academy have a Soaring Program- isn't the Navy about ships and submarines?

USNA is the Navy & Marine Corps' single largest aviation accession source with over 40% of each graduating class service-selecting aviation: 75% pilot, 25% Naval Flight Officer. We commission nearly as many aviators per year as US Air Force Academy (USAFA), yet USNA does not provide any formal flight program(s) for its midshipmen prior to service-selection. (USAFA provides Soaring, Powered-flight, & Sky-Diving programs to all their Cadets- regardless of service-selection)

Why did VT-NA choose sailplanes over powered aircraft to provide initial flight exposure to midshipmen?

Sailplane training is the safest, most relevant, & cost-effective initial flight training tool available. (Ref: USAFA's successful cadet-run

"Soar-for All" program that has provided over 7,000 flight instruction sorties per year since 1964)

How can USNA provide a relevant introductory flight program for midshipmen during tight budgetary times?

Due to sailplanes' inherent simplicity, glider flight training operating costs are usually less than 1/3 that of powered aircraft. Additionally, by contracting with civilian Soaring facilities, USNA can provide its future Naval Aviators with Soaring instruction & leadership opportunities at a fraction of the cost of USAFA's "Soar-for-All" flight/leadership training program.

VT-NA Soaring Program's Mission

The Naval Academy Training Squadron (VT-NA)'s Soaring Program is a highly structured midshipmen-led military flight training operation that provides year-round ground, simulator, & flight instruction, as well as a dedicated Summer Soaring Program. Our mission is to provide leadership opportunities, & act as an early flight-screening tool for midshipmen who wish to pursue careers in Naval Aviation. VT-NA's Soaring program is open to all classes yet specifically targets 3rd Class & 2nd Class midshipmen prior to service-selection.

Why Sailplanes?

The long, efficient wings of sailplanes allow for very low stall speeds & benign handling qualities (a key safety feature for new students), & are particularly sensitive to adverse yaw (the tendency of an aircraft to turn away from the pilot's desired direction of turn). A sailplane pilot must quickly learn to precede any lateral stick movements (roll) with appropriate pedal inputs (yaw). This combination of low speeds, benign handling, & adverse yaw renders sailplanes the most appropriate platforms for new students to learn the fundamental "stick & rudder" skills required for safe, coordinated flight.

Additionally, midshipmen are introduced to a critical decision-making process which involves reading weather patterns in order to snatch energy from the atmosphere resulting in prolonged flights; handling emergency procedures; and approach & landing

considerations. The training provides a solid aeronautical foundation invaluable to the success of our future Naval Aviators.

An Incremental approach to Flight Training

In education, as well as flight training, an incremental “crawl-walk-run” approach is the most effective way to learn. No one would dream of running a marathon without first learning how to walk!

Therefore, starting with sailplanes, VT-NA’s goal is to safely screen aviation-motivated 3rd Class & 2nd Class midshipmen prior to service-selection through the academic year & Summer Soaring Programs. After making a career decision for Naval Aviation, successful screeners could then advance to powered-flight where they would be further exposed to the complexities of the airspace environment.

Upon satisfactory completion of these two “crawl-walk” stages, newly commissioned Ensigns & 2nd LTs would be ready to “hit the deck running” when they report to Pensacola for flight training in the high performance T-34C Turbomomentor & T-6 Texan II turboprop training aircraft.

A detailed analysis of cost to train and attrition data conducted in 2002 revealed that each attrited Student Naval Aviator costs the US taxpayer upwards of \$160,000. It doesn’t take long to see the value of a proper flight exposure and/or screening program.

A flight-screening process that quantifies aviation candidates’ aptitudes early on, as afforded through VT-NA’s Soaring Program, would greatly aid USNA’s general service-selection process. The incremental approach would significantly improve the competency of flight students entering the Naval Aviation Training pipeline; thus reducing the numbers of flight attritions leading to a sizable savings for both the Navy & the US taxpayer.

2010 Summer Soaring Program: making it come together!

Shortly after the completion of 2009’s Summer Soaring Program VT-NA’s midshipmen kicked-off planning meetings with USNA’s leadership. Armed with the favorable exit surveys from the 150 midshipmen who had participated, VT-NA approached the former Commandant, RADM Mathew Klunder, with a proposal to increase the scope of the Soaring program to reach a larger percentage of the Brigade who wished to pursue careers in Naval Aviation.

Anticipating a larger number of midshipmen for the 2010 Summer Soaring Program, a plan to increase staff was created. VT-NA’s midshipmen held weekly planning meetings to create training schedules for midshipmen tow pilots and glider instructors. **Yes, VT-NA’s midshipmen make up the bulk of the acting tow pilots and FAA-designated flight instructors for the program.** Nearby gliding clubs were contacted to muster up additional volunteer support. A new contract was hammered-out with 2009’s host, Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association (M-ASA), to provide aircraft and their Fairfield, PA glider port for the exclusive use of flight training midshipmen and staff during weekdays over the summer months.

M-ASA and Front Royal Soaring club graciously stepped-up to the plate by providing voluntary Certified Flight Instructors-Glider (CFI-G) and tow pilots, most of whom are military veterans, to augment VT-NA’s flight staff. These FAA-certified flight instructors helped VT-NA qualify additional tow pilots and flight instructors from among the ranks of military winged Aviators and midshipmen. With M-ASA’s facilities, aircraft and military veteran volunteers, USNA was able to meet the needs of growing Brigade interest.

Midshipmen Leadership

I’d like to emphasize that VT-NA’s Soaring Program is not just a flight-training tool that introduces members of the Brigade to an

aviation experience; it is also a very effective leadership program for the midshipmen and TAD Ensigns who run the VT-NA year-round.

From inception through completion, VT-NA’s Summer Soaring Program is a midshipmen–led training evolution. They run the daily flight schedules, and are in charge of the logistics, billeting, and transportation issues. Midshipmen coordinate with USNA staff and volunteers to maintain the watch bills required for safe glider port operations, tow piloting, and flight & ground instruction.

Running the Program!

From June 2 – August 18, 2010, the Summer Soaring Program provided initial flight exposure to midshipmen in six training blocks lasting two weeks each. Approximately 65 midshipmen were assigned to each block. These midshipmen were identified as the target audience because they would soon have to make their service selection decision. Each two-week training block encompassed 35 hours of intensive FAA ground school instruction covering the principles of flight and regulations. Additionally, a sailplane flight-training regimen was developed to take the midshipmen from classroom to cockpit.

Upon successful completion of the Summer Soaring Program, qualified participating midshipmen earned a logbook endorsement to take their FAA Private Pilot written exam. (Approximately 150 midshipmen satisfactorily met the FAA requirements). A sheet reflecting their exam scores and flight performance was entered into their midshipman Aviation Service Selection Board packet for future consideration.

Once again, the Summer Soaring Program proved to be popular with the midshipmen who participated. The most common request heard from many of the midshipmen was “more flight time and less class time, please!”

Perhaps the most important metric, however, was a frequent comment made in the numerous exit surveys submitted by those desiring to service select Aviation: **“the soaring program is one of the most relevant training programs currently available at USNA.”**

We wholeheartedly agree.

Fly Safe!

CDR Brian Randall, USNA '94, flew MH-53E's & MH-60S' helicopters in the Fleet. He is currently an instructor in the Aerospace Engineering Dept, and is VT-NA's Soaring Officer Representative and CFI-G. 410-293-6408 / 443-875-8941

<https://www.usna.com/SSLPage.aspx?RSS=whatsnew&referrer=&id=11185>

This article, excerpted from **U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association & Foundation**, was contributed to Skylines by SSC Chief Tow Pilot Curtis Wheeler, CAPT, USN. (see Skylines , May, 2010)



Leo Meacher—The Final Action

Joe Rees, Past President, SSC

25 October was a lovely, if sad, day for an early morning drive to Arlington National Cemetery to say good-bye to our good friend Leo Meacher. I joined a crowd in one of the four waiting rooms in the administration building and reintroduced myself to Leo's widow Linda. Precisely at 0845 hours one of the "Arlington Ladies" (a group of volunteer women who assist with the burials) and her Navy Honor Guard escort came in to get us into our cars for the ride to the grave site; timing and protocol are everything, there were four scheduled burials for 0900 and four more at 1000.

I caught a ride with Leo and Linda's daughter Delaine Walker who said they had picked this day because they could get a fly-over. After a short drive to the grave site, we pulled up to a waiting honor guard. As they moved the casket from the hearse to the grave, it struck me that the slow pace and the deliberate and somewhat stilted movements of the honor guard are the same as every presidential funeral I have seen. On the hill behind us I could see the ground controller for the fly-over on the radio as we followed Leo to his final resting place. Once in place and with the honor guard at attention holding the flag over the casket, we were asked to direct our attention to the southwest as four F/A-18s came low across a cloudy but bright sky with a perfect execution of the missing man formation. After a few words by the chaplain, a twenty-one gun salute (I know they are coming but I still flinch with each volley) and taps, the flag is folded in the precise way of the military and presented to Linda. And then it is over. The honor guard, the riflemen, the "Arlington Lady" and the air controller are off to other duties. The planes are again landing and taking off from National and the sky is beginning to clear as the sun gets higher.

Linda Meacher adds this note:

the flyover for Leo was at 0909 at Arlington. Flights into DCA were put in a holding pattern. Well, one airline, Spirit airline was low on fuel and had to divert to Dulles. The Spirit pilot told the passengers that they had to divert because of a ground incident at DCA. As you can imagine that kind of alert really sets off nerves in DC. As it turned out, the holding pattern was for Leo's flyover, 4 F-18's. (The Spirit pilot knew that it was for a flyover but decided to twist it a bit.) They flew low over us, then one broke formation, zoomed straight up and away, rocking its wings.

Mark Grainger was piloting a Delta flight in the holding pattern also. Folks on the plane started grumbling about having to wait for a flyover, and Mark told them what it was about, and that it was for his flight instructor, an American Vet who helped preserve their freedom.

Anyway, here is the link that we listened to that night, : <http://www.tbd.com/articles/2010/10/spirit-airlines-flight-202-diverted-to-dulles-from-reagan-25271.html>

Editor's Note: in the late 70s my little wife read an article in the Post's Weekender about Warrenton Soaring Center. That story featured a teenage Mark Grainger soaring in some great photos. She called WSC and got me a surprise demo ride for my birthday.

When I showed up, demo certificate in hand, I was met by Mark Grainger and my demo flight pilot—Linda Meacher.



Photos by Joe Rees



If you noticed *Jim Kellett's note* in the last Skylines about ordering SSC-logo items from Land's End, be advised there was a typo on the customer number—our customer number should be 3622569. The specific logo also has a number of its own, 0152832. I just ordered a jacket and cap, they were very helpful on the phone. <http://ocs.landsend.com> is good for the website, and 1-800-587-1541 is good for calling them to order once you have your items picked out from the website.

—John Noss

Congratulations to Charles Norman on earning his Commercial Pilot-Glider rating on October 3.

Here's a link to a somewhat long (11 minute) but very high quality video of the 2010 Vintage Gliding Club (VGC) rally at Tibenhem. Just a pleasant way to see how the simple camaraderie of glider pilots can provide a most pleasant week without futzing about with fancy equipment, etc. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNjHk_-kLc&feature=youtu.be&hd=1

I had the privilege of attending one VGC rally many years ago, at Schaffhausen in Switzerland. There, I had the great fun of flying a real antique—an Olympia Meise (there's a fascinating story, too long to relate here, about the Olympia family of gliders.) It was owned by the brother of a good friend (Barbara Harding) who lives here in the US.

How about flying open cockpit gliders? How about flying some with no landing gear at all!?! (Yes, there are some that take off and land on a simple skid, and others that have a droppable dolly for takeoff, landing on the skid.) How about winch launches from a huge grass strip?

At each VGC rally, there is entertainment, provided by the participants from all over Europe. Also an "International Night" for food, always "ethnic" food provided by participants from different countries.

Simple pleasures, GREAT fun!!

—Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon

According to the Web site,

<http://www.crosscountrysoaring.com/florida.html>

beginning in mid-January, Don Ingraham will once again be offering Winch Launch Training in Florida.

I took the seminar in early February this year (yes, while you were "enjoying" back-to-back snowstorms) and consider it well

worth the \$600. For that, you get some ground school, 20 launches, and a logbook endorsement.

If you still have that pesky Aero Tow Only restriction, and can find the time, check the on-line scheduling link on the site, pack the sunscreen, and GO ! Don uses a Grob 103, so most everyone will be current at flying, but the first few launches will leave you about a week behind the plane ! Whee !

It will take 2 or 3 days, depending on how the scheduling works. I recommend NOT staying in Immokalee. Try Naples, Bonita Springs, or Fort Myers.

That's my pitch, and I'm sticking with it.—Fred Winter

FAA Expected To Add Photos To Pilot Certificates—The FAA will publish a new proposed rule in the next few months that would require pilot certificates to include a photo, an FAA spokesperson said this week. Currently, pilots are required to carry a government-issued photo ID in addition to their pilot certificate. U.S. Rep. John Mica, R-Fla., recently wrote to the FAA, the TSA and the Department of Homeland Security asking why they haven't complied with a 2004 law that requires pilot certificates to include not only a photograph but a means to record biometric data such as fingerprints and iris scans. The FAA's Sasha Johnson said the FAA will release an NPRM by the end of this year, according to The Associated Press. She also said that the current plastic certificates already are capable of holding biometric data, although no such data currently is required.

"It is mind-boggling that six years [after passing the law], after spending millions of dollars, the FAA license still does not have a photograph," Mica wrote. "The only pilots pictured on the license are Wilbur and Orville Wright. ... It is absolutely astounding that DHS, TSA and FAA could, after six years to implement the [law], still achieve such an incredible level of incompetence."

(Aw, come on Congressman, what do you *really* think of the FAA?—SSC Editor)

<http://www.avweb.com/eletter/archives/avflash/1755-full.html#203484> <http://www.avweb.com/newspics/pilotcertificate.jpg>



You can never have enough help!—

Mike Christensen and Hugh McElrath work on the K under feline supervision.

Photo by 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

or e-mail welcome@skylinesoaring.org.



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Secretary—Jim Kellett

Treasurer—Thomas Park

Membership—Steve Rockwood

Chief Tow Pilot—Curtis Wheeler

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