



# SKYLINE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, INC      DECEMBER 2013

Masthead photo: Dick Otis

## From the President

John Noss

It's hard to believe that the scheduled soaring season is drawing to a close, but if you've been out to fly in our sub-freezing temperatures and very short days lately, it is obvious that winter is drawing down on us. Flying in November has been generally good, we lost a few flights to weather but got some back with two Fridays added to the schedule, we got a handful of folks soloed, and there were a few decent ridge/wave days. Thanks to everybody for another safe month of flying.

Hope to see lots of you at the club holiday party, Bruce Zivic has heard from about 58 folks—would love to see a good turnout at Aspen Dale Winery on Saturday 7 December.

Further down the road, we have tentatively set Saturday 11 Jan 2014 as the date for the annual membership meeting, but the Front Royal library was not available, so we are looking for another location that will hold 60 people or so. We will let everybody know when we have something locked in. We have also tentatively set Saturday 15 February as the date for the annual safety meeting.

The board continues to work out procedures we committed to last month, primarily in the areas of membership controls to improve management of student load, and procedures to reduce the workload of our duty officers. DO's will find that there is an automatic update script that pulls down the latest information from the club website if an internet connection is available when the log program is started up. We're working on procedures for mem-

bership applications to go through the membership officer (Steve Rockwood) instead of the DO's, and we are still not taking on FAST flights until the beginning of next season. We are trying to refine how we will implement a program to assign mentors for new students, and sponsors for new non-student members. Our goal is to have all this worked out and briefed at the annual membership meeting in January.

I would like to ask everybody to be more conscientious with 'housekeeping' and opening/closing routines at the airfield. Last week somebody threw pistachio shells all over the ground outside the terminal where we set up operations, when there was a trash can sitting outside and available for use. You wouldn't do that at home, don't do it at the airfield where we are guests. Also, after initial success with having the Saturday duty crew top off the gas tanks in both vehicles, we seem to have fallen down on that. When you put club gliders away at the end of the day, make sure all the batteries have been removed and are charging, and all handheld radios are accounted for and charging. When you take canopy covers off of the K and Grob, fold them with the outside out and do not put on the floor where they can pick up grit, and remember to put




Photo: Martin Gomez

them back on at the end of the day. Turn off the radio in the tow car so the battery will still have a charge on it for the next flying day. Make sure all the hangar doors are locked, and the combination on the main entrance lock has been zeroed out and the cover closed. Conducting soaring operations is a complicated business, we need to be meticulous about doing it right.

With only a couple of scheduled weekends remaining this year, and weather getting more challenging, let's all be extra care-

ful with every aspect of flying operations. It's a good time to get in some currency flights before the winter break, but be realistic in assessing your proficiency if the winds are howling. Don't hesitate to do a flight with an instructor if you think you are rusty. If we attempt ad-hoc flying days, watch the weather closely and think everything through in terms of operating with minimum staff. Be careful on the roads, too, throughout the holiday season.

Best holiday wishes to everybody! 



## Cirrus Centerfold in Soaring magazine

Thanks to Hugh McElrath, who evidently gets his copy of *Soaring* before the editor does, we know Dick Otis has another fine photo in the magazine—the centerfold no less. Not exactly *Playboy* but sure to turn on soaring pilots all over the country and put focus on SSC. Steve Rockwood stars in the role of Cirrus guider.

Nice going Dick and Steve—what a team!



Photos: Dick Otis



# What Everyone Should Know... (Especially the Duty Officers!!)

Jim Kellett

## “Keeping Aircraft Clean”

The flying day is not over until everything's back in the hangar, and all the aircraft are CLEAN! Here are a few pointers to keep your investment in our expensive equipment safe.



**1. Towplanes.** Probably the most critical part that needs cleaning is the prop. The propeller is exactly like a wing that happens to move through more air faster than the ‘real’ wings of the airplane! And THAT means the prop picks up more bugs than other surfaces of the aircraft. And THAT means that a dirty, bug-spattered prop is actually less efficient than a clean one! So give special attention to the prop. (Safety Note: Be CERTAIN that the switches are off, and even then stand well clear of any prop you need to rotate to get to all of the surfaces—it’s not unheard of for an engine to fire even with the switches off!)

All the leading surfaces should be cleaned with a moistened rag. Probably the easiest way to do that is to take one of the spray bottles of water, moisten a rag, and then spray the leading edges of the wing, tail surfaces, cowling, landing gear, etc. and proceed to wipe them down until there are no more bugs or splatters visible. You can find a container of rags, along with some spray bottles, in the Pawnee hangar:



Photos: Jim Kellett

**Now the hard part.** Clean off the accumulated exhaust stains and oil streaks on the underside of the fuselage. You’ll have to get down on the floor to do that, and if it’s not been done in a while, you’ll have to use a spray detergent and a scrub brush as well as rags.



**2. Now, clean the bugs off all of the gliders.** You can find a barrel of rags and sprayers in the K-21 hangar: (Note: If you have any clean rags or towels to donate to this bin, please bring them out!)

Wipe down the leading edges on the wings, tail surfaces, and nose. Check under the fuselage if the glider has landed on the grass safety area during the day and, if necessary, clean down there also.

**3. Canopies demand special care.** They are fragile, and EXPENSIVE and can easily be damaged by what seems like intuitive care. And if you ask five pilots the best way to clean canopies, you’ll get six or seven different mandates, all of which exclude the others! Here are some generally accepted ground rules to follow:

**First**, if a canopy is dusty or dirty, it is very easy to make it worse by using a procedure that puts very fine scratches on the surface. They may not even be visible just looking from the outside, but on a bright day the canopy will acquire a hazy appearance. So to clean a dirty canopy, use FLOWING water. If you need to wipe, often the best way is with your bare hand (with rings removed) while flowing water around it. Also OK is a chamois or microfiber cloth. In a pinch a very soft CLEAN rag can be used with the flowing water. DO NOT USE PAPER TOWELS!!

Occasionally a canopy will benefit from polishing. There are several satisfactory kinds of canopy polish in the hangar—here’s one in the cabinet next to the refrigerators, and also with some clean, soft cloths to be used (the yellow rags in the picture). Follow the instructions on the polish bottle. Note: Do not use circular motions when polishing canopies!



Glider canopies should also be covered when in the hangar. The Grob cover (blue on the outside) and K-21 cover (white on the outside), should be left in a clean spot (not on the floor!) when the glider is being used, and then placed over the canopy when being put away. It’s not necessary to clip the covers down, just carefully placing them over the canopies is satisfactory.

**Finally, a note about the silver sun protectors** for the K-21. These two ‘stretchy’ covers are stored in a silver bag that is left in the sailplane at all times. These covers are for use ONLY when needed to keep the cockpits from heating up while the glider is on the ramp waiting to be flown. They must NOT be left on the canopies when in the hangar!



## A Very Slow Soaring Student

Robert Gray

I started gliding on May 26, 1971 with two flights at Warrenton in a 2-33 (now called Miss Daisy) with H. H. Edwards. Two lessons followed in 1972 at N. Hatfield, MA and then I took a break to get a Master of Architecture degree in Eugene, Oregon.

In 1975 and '76 I took seven lessons in a Blanik L-13 at Adrian, Michigan where I was teaching, followed by a break to apprentice to an architect in Albuquerque, NM. I was working six days a week for minimum wage, so there was no flying.

In the fall of 1979 I moved to Brooklyn, NY and got a series of real jobs in architecture and construction management.

So I took up gliding again in 1980 and '81, first in a 2-22 at Forrestal, NJ and then in a 2-33 in Middletown, NY with Hank Nixon, where I soloed and flew his 1-26D six times. The totals to date were 24 solo flights for 7:32 and 72 total flights for 20:13 total time.

In 1982 I got soloed in a Cessna 150 and a 172 at Islip, NY, and took ground school at the Hayden Planetarium in NYC. My new wife also took some lessons in the Cessna 150 but did not solo. As a child her father had taken her flying in a Cessna 180.

Then the Recession of December 1982 stopped my flying, and the arrival of two children grounded me until 2012. We moved to South Kingstown, RI where there were great public schools, surfing, sea kayaking, rural bike riding, pond ice skating and RC model sailplane flying from the sod farms, but no real soaring. When I moved to Maryland in 2009 I continued the RC model flying.

Finally in January 2012 I took a vacation to Seminole Lake Gliderport (a large grass field with alligators in the swamp to the

west) in Florida and made 3 solos in a Blanik L-23 after 48 lessons (mostly pattern flights to knock the rust off—old age slows the learning process); and I passed the written. The instructor was Jan Driessen, a highly experienced Dutchman who constantly reminded us that “haste makes waste”. My solo flight was quite exciting because a strong crosswind developed after I took off. The first flight with Jan was in 5 knot winds. Luckily the landing area was a narrow slot in 50 foot trees and thus protected from the crosswind. Lining up with that slot with a tailwind on base was a challenge. Totals grew to 133 flights and 37:35 time.

In February 2012 I joined Skyline Soaring and learned how to fly a glider from a narrow paved runway with lights 64 feet apart. This was much harder because the trainers had to be kept within two feet of the centerline. Also Front Royal KFRR is a General Aviation County airport and radios have to be used.

Soloed again in the ASK-21 on June 9th with my totals growing to 161 flights and 46:39 time. In preparation for the Practical Test I took 26 more lessons in 2012 and 26 lessons in 2013. In 2012 I flew 10 more solo flights in the club's ASK-21 and Grob 103, but none in 2013. The large number of students in the club made it difficult to get solo time in the trainers. The club has a 1-36 Sprite for student use after solo and a Cirrus for experienced pilots. My problem was that I am 10 pounds over the Sprite's 205 pound limit so I could not fly it.

The solution was to buy a 1-26D #470 from Bill Bentley of Colorado, a former member of Skyline Soaring until 2007. I was in Minneapolis in early May taking care of my granddaughter. Bill and his wife towed the 1-26D to Faribault Field so that they could visit

*Pending student record holder Robert Gray (left) and Chief Flight Instructor Piet Barber on Robert's PP-G completion. Photo provided by the author*





their grandson in Minneapolis and sell me #470. My faithful 1996 Honda Accord wagon towed it back to Virginia without much trouble, except I had to slow down to 40 for rough pavement. I finally flew #470 on June 23rd.

After 82 lessons with almost every club instructor, 11 solo flights in the club ships, and 15 flights in my 1-26D #470, the club's Chief Instructor Piet Barber gave me the final lessons on slips to landing and pronounced me ready to take the Practical Exam. Slips are not nearly as easy in an ASK-21 as they are in a 2-33 or 1-26. The totals to the test date were 53 solo flights for 19:35 and 240 total flights for 75:43 total time.

I took my Practical Test Friday August 2nd with Designated Examiner Marvin Holland at FRR, starting the Oral at 10:00 am. FAA Examiner Patrick O'Neil observed the oral test. Luckily there is not a third seat in the ASK-21 or he would have come along for the Check Rides, which would have made me even more nervous.

We spent a good part of the oral reviewing my planned cross country flight and making sure that I could read every symbol on the Sectional Chart. The worst part of the Oral was when I could not accurately describe details of Front Royal's night lighting, and I had no way to look it up or look at the actual lights in daylight. After the test Marvin explained that my Private Glider Pilot is good for motor-gliders and some new motor-gliders have night lighting systems and are capable of 8 hour cross country flights. So the FAA is putting a new emphasis in the exam on Glider Pilots knowing about airport night lighting.

I took Examiner Marvin for two rides in the ASK-21, the first was 31 minutes for the air work and thermaling, and the second was for the rope break test. My flying in the checkrides was rough but within tolerances. This was partly due to a lot of turbulence and partly due to my flying. My slip to landing went well, but the worst point was when I was slowing down to stop the glider just before the cross taxiway on the first landing. I was going from the tail wheel on the ground to nose wheel on the ground and a gust of wind yawed the glider sharply to the left while I was in unicycle mode. I was moving so slowly that full right rudder had no effect, but luckily the ailerons were still working and I got the left wing up and well clear of the runway lights. I immediately pulled full wheel brake and stopped in 10 feet of roll and about 5 feet left of the center line. Marvin asked what just happened. I answered that a gust had turned me left and the full right rudder was ineffective, so I just stopped the glider as quickly as possible. That seemed to satisfy him and save that checkride from failure. The rope break was different because just as I called out "I can make it back to

the runway" at about 200 feet AGL, a sinking gust pushed us down and Marvin decided not to pop off tow until we were 400 feet AGL and we had turned right well away from the airport. I decided to do a big button hook turn to get back and lined up with runway 10 and did a good down-wind landing with full spoilers. I got a little fast on final so I told Marvin that I was intentionally speeding up to make the spoilers more effective (a little bit of the High Energy Decent Maneuver that I had discussed with Marvin during the Oral part). This was the second time that some quick talking snatched victory from the jaws of defeat on my checkride. My advice to future check riders is never get too slow on final, there is no way to talk yourself out of that mistake, and you might not even walk away from it. Also take your checkride before you get old and your reflexes slow down.

Do I hold the club record and the SSA record as the slowest glider student? Challengers please speak up. Just after college I took my first two glider lessons on May 16, 1971 at Warrenton, VA. We did straight flight and turn coordination. That is 42 years, 2 months and 17 days from first glider lesson to Private Glider Pilot. The delays were a short break for graduate school and a long break to raise two daughters. Maybe the SSA needs to establish a new record category for me.

Being a Private Glider Pilot means that I can fly a glider without getting an instructor's permission every day, I can fly cross country without getting an instructor's permission, I can enter contests, my insurance rate goes down, and I can take a passenger for a ride. The "Private" part means that I cannot charge money for a ride in a glider, but I can share expenses evenly.

Now I am happily flying my 1-26D and working on improving my skills for cross country flight. Most of the time I am comfortable flying alone, but there are times that I miss that instructor in the back seat. I have already made one off field landing and almost made a second one while tip toeing home for seven miles. I'm finding out the hard way that those perfect looking late afternoon clouds don't have any lift. I may even go to the 1-26 Nationals in June 2014. Someone has to be happy coming in last.

I want to thank all those who showed up on a Friday for my Practical Test, to help, push and encourage me, such as DO Dick Garrity, instructor Piet Barber, Dan Ernst, Clyde Kizer, Matt Linger, Mike Christensen and of course tow pilot John Noss—nothing happens without a tow pilot.

I also want to thank all the Instructors, Tow Pilots, DOs, ADOs and pushers who made possible the 109 club flights that got me to the Practical Test.

Chilhowee Soaring Association & Jay Campbell present

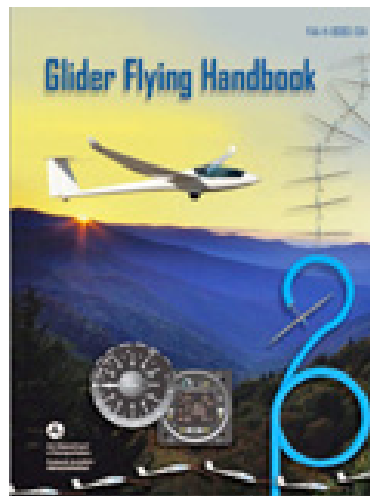
## The 2014 Carolina Wave Project, Feb 11-20th

**W**e look forward to seeing you, please promote the camp to friends, sometimes all it takes is an invite for someone to decide to come.

*I got my Diamond altitude at this site* in March of 1986. The wave is in the lee of the highest peak in the east at 6684'.

—Jim Kellett

<http://wavecamp.chilhowee.com/>



**I sure that all of you are aware that FAA** just released a new version of the Glider Flying Handbook (GFH). Well guess what, they have also issued their first corrections. Please note in particular that the procedure for signaling the towplane to turn right or left is reversed and update your GFH accordingly. Otherwise, you will have to overcome physics to get the towplane to turn in the direction you want. :)

See below for all of the corrections through October 21, 2013:

—Rufus Decker

**FAA-H-8083-13A  
Glider Flying Handbook  
Updated October 21, 2013**

### Errata as of October 21, 2013

1. In Figure 7-2 on page 7-3, the upper center and upper right labels regarding towing are reversed. The upper center label should read, "Towplane please turn left" and the upper right label should read, "Towplane please turn right."
2. In Figure 7-34 on page 7-35, the label pointing to the rudder should read, "Rudder deflected left."

### Errata as of September 17, 2013

1. On page 1-3, the caption under Figure 1-5 should read, "A DG Flugzeugbau GmbH DG-800B glider."

### Errata as of September 11, 2013

1. In the Acknowledgements (page v), the web address for the Soaring Society of America, Inc. should read, "www.ssa.org."

Photo: Martin Gomez



### **Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation**

would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday period and remind them that it not too late to make a tax deductible year end donation to this essential organization.

SSEF Donations

ATTN: Charles Norman, Treasurer

4020 N. Tazewell Street

Arlington, Virginia 22207.

(Receipts will be provided by return mail)

<http://ssefva.org/Home.html>



**The Women's Soaring Pilot's Association 2014 raffle** to benefit the scholarship funds will be the wire sculpture by George Popa "Spirit of Flight". Raffle tickets are \$5.00 each and they will go on sale on January 1, 2014.



To buy tickets contact

**Frauke Elber**

213 Anne Burras Lane

Newport News, VA 23606

Fandw\_elber@cox.net



**Hello, Skyline Soaring Club**— I am placing a box in the terminal building for a Toy Lift event for my 99s group. We are collecting items for the children who live at Fort Lee and for those living at the veterans hospital. Can you please pass the word to your members? I will be picking up the contents of the box on December 13th. The following items are needed:

toys for children of all ages (unwrapped)

Items for veterans, sweatpants, sweatshirts, socks, underwear, sports bras

shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, lotion, soap

**Laura Abraham**

Director of Flight Training

Randolph-Macon Academy

540-636-5492 office

540-636-5209 fax



## SSC DO Report Sunday 11-24-13

Steve Wegner

Very cold at FRR today (below freezing) with strong winds 10 to 20 but gusts 20 to 30 from 300 to 330 mostly, which made for biting cold wind chill.

So windy and cold that we only had two brave pilots launch early around 9am. Piet had FOTD with 2:24 followed by Shane at 2:07. Both could have stayed up as long as they wanted except for the frozen toes that brought them back too early. Shane launched first, planning to connect with the wave and go very high but decided to use the ridge instead. We watched his progress from his SPOT broadcast. Piet intended to fly a 300km distance on the ridge but the cold stopped his attempt too. Both were dressed like they had done this before.

To give you an idea of how strong the gusts were today, as Piet was on final, the big orange wind sock, near the fuel tank, blew off it's pole and across the ground toward the runway. Never saw that before.

Thanks to Craig Bendorf for towing, Bob Sallada for indoor instructing, Mike Peterson for ADOing, and Mat Linger and others for pitching in. It was a beautiful sunny day, just too windy and very cold.

*Shane also reports:* I want to thank those who helped make Sun-

day the 24th happen. Joe Lingeitch, Craig Bendorf, Steve Wegner, Mike Peterson, Mat Linger and Kenneth Ring. Forgive me if I forgot someone.

Surface conditions at launch time: 21F with winds 330 gusting 15-24. The challenging winds made for a fun and dynamic flight. The winds at 4,000' indicated 320 degrees at 56 knots and the ridge was working well at that altitude. I made to the South end of the Massanutten Ski area. The West was obscured by lake effect snow from the Great Lakes, visibility effected from Sky Bryce westward past Petersburg, WV.

I could have stayed up all day and gone places, but a climb to 10,000' set the level for the rest of the flight—FREEZING with an estimated minus 25C. First my water, then the ClearNav display, then my right foot.

It was definitely warmer on the ridge at 4,000', but the zero degrees was not warm enough to recover my foot. So I called it early to save the toes. Piet ended up having the same problem.

**Notes:** when I got my Camelback flowing again, I reverse blew to clear the line. This kept it clear for a subsequent pull of water. As for the ClearNav, I think the cold was past the LCD display limits. Just too dark to read without a lot of effort.

For the feet, I had heavy hiking boots with double sock's and activated charcoal tow warmers. Still need to find a better way to keep my feet warm. The rest of me was fine.

No gliders were harmed in this event. Only the windsock blew off the pole.



Piet and Shane—two hardy souls—photos by Steve Wegner

Recycled  
Information  
Worth  
Repeating

## SAY AGAIN



**November 21, I received, signed, and returned to Potomac TRACON** a revised Letter of Agreement which changes our glider transponder squawk from 1230 to the new national standard of 1202. This is effective immediately. There is no change to the assigned towplane squawk, still 0130 for our operation. I'll post the new document after the signature page has been incorporated, and a minor wording change has been corrected.

**Duty Officers**—through the end of the year, please brief the new squawk in the morning safety briefings. We will also need to change the default VFR squawk in the ASK-21's Trig-21 transponder to 1202.—*John Noss*

**So . . . have you ever been to a Soaring Society of America convention??** I have—more than 20 of them, and—spoiler alert—they can easily become addicting.

Why fly across the country for a three day convention about your hobby? Because it's a unique opportunity to schmooze with glider pilots from all over the US (and some from Europe); to look at, touch, and discuss with vendors all kinds of soaring equipment; meet the guys you just read about in the bar; and come away with a rather different perspective on 'how things are done' somewhere else. Excellent way to broaden your understanding of the sport far beyond your experiences at Skyline (although ours is still the best club, of course ).

The 2014 Convention will be February 27 - March 1 (Thursday through Saturday) in Reno, NV. You can register online now, at <http://store.ssa.org/cgi/search.cgi?terms=Convention::&category=Convention>. There's a special hotel rate for SSA members, and you can call them (Atlantis Casino Resort Spa) at 800 723-6500 for reservations, and be sure to ask for the Special SSA rate (\$109/night). There is an enclosed walkway between the hotel and the exhibit hall. There's some more information at the SSA website (q.v.).

I've signed up for the Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic (Tues-

day and Wednesday, before the convention starts on Thursday), the SSF presentation on Wednesday, the Instructors/Towpilots breakfast on Thursday, the Old Timers' Breakfast on Friday (Surprised? No, I didn't think so . . .), the Focus on Clubs Lunch on Friday, the Governors, Chapters, & Clubs breakfast on Saturday, and the Annual Awards Banquet on Saturday.

So, to quote our intrepid CFI/Towpilot/Competition Pilot Shane Neitzey, "Be there or be square"—*Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon*

**I looked at the forecast on Saturday morning**, and thought that Sunday (Nov.3) was going to be a better soaring day than Saturday. So I went for a long run on the Bull Run Occoquan trail, hoping that my assessment was going to be accurate.

I woke up on Sunday and looked at the BAK40 plot, and saw, to my horror, that the winds were far more northerly than had originally been forecast. Not the perfect 315 at 15, but more like 350 at 15. So wave and ridge lift was out of the question. But I had blocked off my Sunday for flying, so I was going to go flying, gosh darn-it.

I get out to the field, and none of the other private owners had assembled. I got early into the tow queue, and went out to play wind dummy. After release at 3500 AGL, I did 2 360 degree turns to give the flight computer a chance to calculate the winds aloft. The computer gave me an answer I didn't want to hear: 000 at 18 knots.

I turned back and headed toward the airfield.

**But wait! What's this? Lift?**

I figure 8'd back and forth several times between the fish ponds and Signal Knob. Eventually, after many back-and-forths at 0, 0.5 and 1 knots lift, I found myself at 7000 feet.

I later found stronger wave lift later in the day, and even got up to 10,440 feet (3180 meters)\* at maximum. The only reason I came down was because my feet were quite cold, and I really had to go potty. Nobody else assembled or pulled out their gliders. I had the wave all to myself.

Is this some sort of corollary of *Kellett's law*? If you bothered assembling your ship, you might as well go and fly, because it's probably better than it looks.—*Piet Barber*

**Is Kellett's Law Really a Law ?** An interesting project for some enterprising club member might be to find out what meteorological science is behind Kellett's Law. More specifically, why does Front Royal often have weather different from other places in the Piedmont ?

At 11 PM on Saturday night (Nov. 16) in Charlottesville, the fog was so thick you could not see the tops of our oak trees and it was raining. A low was coming up the coast and by 7 PM on Sunday morning the tops of the trees were still obscured, but at least it had stopped raining. I did not have much hope for flying at FRR, but drove north eating breakfast and enjoying music.

As I drove up Rt 231, the sun came out briefly near Banco (around Old Rag mountain) and it was beautiful, sun hitting the east face of the Blue Ridge, mist and clouds rolling up the mountains with blue sky here and there (OK—maybe you had to be there). However, by the time I got to Sperryville, it was practically IFR again and the fog / clag stayed intact all the way over Chester Gap. However, coming down 522 into Front Royal, Signal Knob was clearly visible and I thought—maybe we will have a day.

Indeed we did.—*Jim Garrison*



### **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)

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**Chief Tow Pilot**—Martin Gomez  
**Chief Flight Instructor**—Piet Barber  
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flyingfish2@cox.net

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