



Masthead photo: Dick Otis

## From the President

*John Noss*

Well, the month of May, as hoped for, delivered some really great soaring weather. Although it started off wet, and we slipped Family Day at Bill Burner's for two weeks, that turned out to be a smart move, the weather was just perfect for that. We also had some of the best thermal soaring conditions we have seen here in years. There were lots of long flights, including a silver badge distance leg for Ertan Tete, and two gold badge distance legs which also completed gold badges and were diamond goal legs for Piet Barber and Chuck Stover. And Piet made a strong statement by retrieving the Boomerang the very next day after JP Stewart came up from New Castle to take it, a really impressive feat. Four good days in a row over the long Memorial Day weekend put us well ahead of where we were last year in terms of glider sorties flown by this date.

Special thanks to Dick Edge, who put in a lot of effort to turn our two retired Pawnee radios into a legal base station for glider ops, with real antennas that will finally allow us to talk to gliders further away than the other end of the runway. When tested last week, on 123.3 we had clear two-way communications with gliders over Woodstock and White Post. Two important cautions about the new system! First, take care of it. There are instructions in a plastic folder attached by Velcro to the inside of the radio rack at the back of the ops trailer, don't guess if you are unsure how to

use the radios. As with any radio system, do not kink or crush the coax cables that run to the antennas, don't damage the fiberglass poles or the antennas themselves by piling junk on top of them in the trailer at the end of the day. Second, we are not an authorized base station for 123.0 at Front Royal, everybody needs to know that, and do not abuse it for that use. We will monitor 123.0, but transmitting by Skyline Ground on that should be reserved for genuine safety of flight issues. 123.3 (primary) and 123.5 are legal glider common frequencies, and that's what the license for the system allows. If you are flying around outside the pattern and want to ask the DO what your takeoff time was, or if anybody is waiting on the Sprite, or to discuss other club-related ops business, use 123.3, Skyline Ground should always be monitoring that now. So that the DO will know when you are calling on 123.3 instead of 123.0, just include that in your call. ("Skyline Ground, glider 17Bravo on 123.3, anybody waiting for the Sprite?") This will improve safety by keeping unnecessary club chatter off of the CTAF frequency. Remember to check that you have switched back to 123.0 before entering



Photo: Kaye Ebel

the pattern.

Hard to believe, but Week of Training will be here soon, starts at the end of June! You'll hear more in the coming weeks as we refine the plan and the list of participants. Volunteers are always needed to help with instructing, towing, DO and ADO – long hot days really require split shifts.

---

## Boomerang—What Goes Around Comes Around

*Piet Barber*

While we ate sausages and cookout food at Burner Field, an insidious theft was being performed. A member from the Blue Ridge Soaring Society snuck up the Allegheny mountains and landed their club's glider at Front Royal. His mission was to reclaim the coveted "Boomerang Trophy."

The Boomerang Trophy was created by the Blue Ridge Soaring Society in 1969 to foster inter-club cross country flying. The trophy works like this:

- The trophy sits in the clubhouse until a visiting glider pilot arrives to claim it.
- The visiting glider pilot must arrive by cross-country glider flight.
- The visiting glider pilot who shows up must have performed a flight of at least 100 km, (or 50 km if it's a lower-performance glider).
- If two different gliders show up on the same day, the one with the longer distance takes home the award.
- The trophy gets the visiting pilots name, date, and distance flown added to the list of names on the trophy.
- Another club now has the opportunity to get the trophy relocated to their clubhouse.

This tradition has been going on since 1969. It has traded clubs 78 times until Sunday. The previous flights were when our club's Shane Neitzey retrieved the boomerang from an incredibly long flight to Erwin, NC, covering 259 miles. Two members from Fairfield's M-ASA (Litt and Higgins) came down to steal the boomerang from us, and Shane promptly retrieved it a few weeks later.

Sunday was JP's chance to return the Boomerang trophy to New Castle for the first time in ten years. When he landed at Front Royal, he looked around and probably wondered if he landed at the right airport. Where are all of the gliders? Little did he know that they were all at Burner Field, being flown by well-fed pilots who

*BOO, Hiss... JP Stewart flew to FRR from New Castle in an LS-6 to claim the Boomerang. Photo by Chuck Stover*



Finally, and sadly, Skyline Soaring pays its deepest respects and condolences to the family of Bob Collier. He was a founding member of the club, an avid 1-26 cross-country advocate and mentor, and always seemed to have a smile for everyone at the airport. That's something we should all aspire to.

Fly Safe, Fly Often, Have Fun!



had consumed their fill of cookout food.

A few Skyliners eventually arrived and welcomed him warmly while JP waited for his retrieval crew to arrive. JP's crew showed up and packed up his club's LS-6 "X8" and took the Boomerang trophy with him.

New Castle is located along a thoroughfare of ridge flying that stretches north all the way to Williamsport, Pennsylvania. It's not impossible or even improbable that an enterprising pilot from Julian Pennsylvania could fly down to New Castle and relocate the trophy well outside of our club's reach. The trophy has gone as far south as South Carolina in the past. The longer the trophy sits at New Castle, the more likely it will get relocated outside of our club's reach. Immediate action had to be taken. ...

Pretty soon, I found only my tow pilot and my ground crew willing to go out to the airport on Monday to assist on my task of retrieving the Boomerang. The ball was in motion. I don't think the Boomerang had ever been retrieved on back-to-back days before,

---

***Perhaps our two clubs should have a meeting to establish North and Southbound routes to reduce the danger of midair collisions—Chuck Stover***

---

and we thought this would send a message to the other clubs in the surrounding areas.

I got my manager to allow a short-notice leave of absence (due to me coming down with an acute case of avi-itis (pilots joke around that avi-itis is the inflammation of the aviation, known to pilots on good flying days that would otherwise be interrupted by work (It's good to have an understanding manager). I arranged to have the tow pilot and ground crew at the airport around 10:00 or so on Monday morning. I checked the BAK40 plots one last time that morning, and agreed that Monday's soaring was going to be as good or better than Sunday's soaring.

I hooked up the trailer to my ground crew, Bruce Zivic's truck. "It doesn't matter where I'm landing, there's just no way I'm landing back at this airport" I told Bruce. ...

*YEAH, right on...Piet arrives at New Castle to take the Boomerang back to its natural home. Selfie by the man himself.*





*JP struggled valiantly in defense of the trophy...*



*But soon he gave it up, and posed for a nice photo*



*Fabulous panoramic picture of Juliet Sierra and the New Castle airport*

Total flight time off aerotow to landing was 3 hours 19 minutes, with an average velocity of 78 km/h. I made an uneventful landing. ...

The previous winner of the Boomerang trophy, JP Stewart, was in Roanoke engraving his name onto the trophy. He learned of my exploits from Facebook, and had contacted me to arrange the transfer of the trophy. In the meantime, I waited for Bruce to show up with the trailer, so we could take Juliet Sierra home. Bruce arrived 47 minutes after I landed. ..

JP and I met up near Interstate 81 to hand over the trophy. He's a surprisingly good sport, considering the short turnaround time. The trophy had hardly one night in its home clubhouse.

I have taken the trophy to an engraver, who will polish the trophy, that is starting to look rather tarnished, like it hasn't been polished since it was made in 1969. The trophy will be finished on Wednesday, and returned to Front Royal on the weekend of the 1st of June. If anybody lands at Front Royal to claim it in the meantime, I will ship or deliver the trophy to the new winner.

Super huge thanks go out to my retrieval crew Bruce Zivic and tow pilot John Noss. Without whom this day's victory could never have been accomplished. Also a huge thanks goes out to Shane Neitzey for inspiring me to go get that trophy back as quickly as it was taken. Finally, thanks goes out to JP Stewart, who came and got the trophy. Without the trophy going someplace else, it would just be sitting in our FBO, getting ever more tarnished and dusty.

*Photos and text from:*

<http://blog.pietbarber.com/2014/05/brss-boomerang-trophy.html>



*Bruce, the trailer, and Juliet Sierra, getting ready to pack up and go home*

## Our Man in Mifflin

Shane Neitzey, XZ

This is the third contest I have entered. The Mifflin PA area is a soaring wonderland with an extensive ridge system. There were miles and miles of ridge flying at 120 kts, thermals to 9000' and a touch of wave. Flying through rain and snow showers and completing the task.

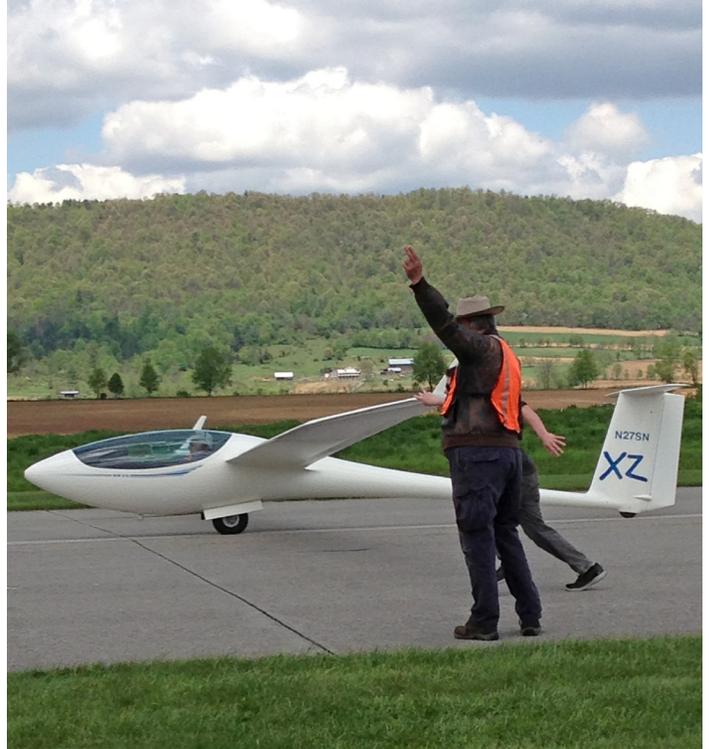
I flew 8 days totaling 21.4 hours flight time. Two of my contest days were poor performance, I attribute to lack of sleep from a combination of excitement and a bad mattress in my camper. I spent half of my nights at Chris's house, there I slept well. New mattress is on order.

You are flying with the big boys at Mifflin; with the likes of Karl Striedieck, John Seymore, John Goode, Erik Nelson, Frank Paynter and many others who fly faster and farther than most. A fun learning experience with plenty of humble pie.

I want to thank Chris Groshel for crewing, 15 minutes and ready to push out to the grid. Always there and much more.

It would be nice to see others from our club flying at Mifflin next year. The farm fields in the area look like a magnificent Amish quilt. Maybe you can join me at Fairfield, PA in October.

Be Safe, Have Fun, Get Home, Finish the Task. 



Above: Off to the ridges. Below: Landout at Penns Cave. Bottom left: Ridge map before ridge flight. Bottom right: Snow at 8000' actually going UP!

Photos provided by Shane Neitzey and Chris Groshel





### Anatomy of a Landout—Two Views

Joe Lingeitch and Martin Gomez

landed out for the second time this year at River Bend field. The message from the owner (Paul Miley) is that it is a private field and we should not be using it. He told me that I should spread the word at Front Royal. The field has planted corn about 4 in tall now. So if you are in that vicinity and need to land, I think Piet’s field at Seven Bends State Park, or Burner Field (private strip but I hear the owner is a great guy) are much better options.

I understand his concern. Their crops are valuable.

My gratitude to the retrieval crew consisting of Michael Christensen, Matt Linger and Martin Gomez.—*Joe Lingeitch*

Photos: Martin Gomez



Top: Plane Air landscape

Above: Crop duster

Above right: Joe and two-thirds of his retrieval crew; Matt and Mike.

Right: Mike Ash’s photo of Paul Miley’s corn field/airdrome. Mike’s caption: “Joe’s in the brown field in the middle, in the bottleneck near the left side. Tiny white speck.”—(Sure he is Mike if you say so).

The owner of River Bend airport, Paul Miley, acknowledges that his cornfield is listed as an airport on the sectional chart. However, he points out that...

- It’s listed as a PRIVATE airport
- It’s HIS private airport
- It’s been an airport for 60 years, listed as private on the charts, and has never had a problem with unauthorized landings until now.

**He does not want us to land on his property.**

I think the next guy to land there will have a really heated reception. Moreover, that corn will grow to 7-8 ft tall so the field will quickly stop being a safe landing spot. **So please choose another land out site.**

We exercised all the “land out diplomacy” techniques from our training: you won’t be out of pocket, apologies for trespassing, showed due regard for his property, small talk about the crops and the field, offered a free glider ride. It helped...he was less pissed off at the end than when Joe arrived, and he even helped load the glider onto the trailer. It also helped to have Mike Christensen with us...he was able to “talk farm” with the owner, whereas I’m a city boy who wouldn’t know a cowplop from a gigaaflap.

You’ve been warned: the next land out on River Bend will face a rough time, and it will not reflect well on our Club or the sport of soaring. I suggest we pass the message onto M-ASA and SVS...all the denizens of the ridge.—*Martin Gomez*



## What a great day!

Keith Hilton, DO

First off I would like to thank Bill and Sharon Burner for hosting our first family day of the 2014 soaring season. From the great weather that Bill ordered up for the day, to the use of his “convertible” 1963 Schweizer SGS 1-26, 1959 Scheibe Bergfalke, and Champion Citabria to tow a couple of aircraft, the day was nearly perfect. Not only did the Burner’s provide the field, gliders, and tow plane, and friendship, they also provided us with great food and drinks to quench our thirst.

I would also like to thank Steve Zaboji and his family for providing the delicious sausage, potatoes, bread and other tasty food as well as Steve’s grilling expertise.

It was also great to see Bob Sallada out and about. He looks great and can’t wait to get back in the cockpit to dispense his vast knowledge of soaring.

Thanks also go out to Craig Bendorf for dispensing a combined total of 72,600 feet of altitude for 27 flights. And thanks to Scott Graham for giving Craig a well-deserved break for some lunch by towing for four flights and fueling up the Pawnee.

Additionally, thanks to Martin Gomez for piloting Bill’s Citabria and towing Robert Gray and Greg Ellis into the sky. Thanks to George Hazelrigg, Curtis Wheeler, and Scott Graham for providing expert



instruction to our student pilots.

The day would not have been the great success without the assistance of Dick Garrity for serving as the DO at Front Royal ensuring the club ships were launched in a safe and timely manner and my ADO Guido Kramp and friends for keeping the glider launches safely moving at Burner’s.

Thanks also to Chuck Stover for assisting with the recovery and put away of gliders and equipment back at Front Royal at the end of the day.

The day began with Kaye Ebelt and George Hazelrigg flying the ASK-21 from Front Royal to Burner’s in 52 minutes followed shortly by Evan Dosik and Curtis Wheeler in the Grob in 61 minutes, and bringing up the rear was Vern Kline in the Sprite on his 46 minute flight.

### **“OH! I HAVE SLIPPED THE SURLY BONDS OF EARTH**

Joshua Morgan, Eric Tarring, Timothy Moran, Mario Simula, and Matt Linger also had the opportunity to receive instruction from the beautiful grass field at Woodstock.

### **AND DANCED THE SKIES ON LAUGHTER-SILVERED WINGS;**

In what seems like his endless attempt at a Gold distance badge, Chuck Stover was able to stay aloft for 3 hours and 46 minutes in RW. He did not earn his





**— WHEELED AND SOARED AND SWUNG HIGH IN THE SUNLIT SILENCE. HOV’RING THERE,**

Robert Gray took Bill’s 1-26 “sport” for a quick 13 minute flight, followed shortly by Curtis Wheeler for a 12 minute flight in the top down glider. Having not flown a 1-26 for over 20 years, John Noss ventured into the blue skies in the topless 1-26 for 45 minutes. He had a great time even though his hands were nearly frostbitten when he returned.

**I’VE CHASED THE SHOUTING WIND ALONG,**

Kaye Ebelt and Scott Graham ventured out in Bill’s Bergfalke for a 1 hour and 30 minute flight. I thought they got lost up there somewhere! They came back with smiles that I thought would take plastic surgery to remove.

**AND FLUNG MY EAGER CRAFT THROUGH FOOTLESS HALLS OF AIR....**

Vern Kline and Chris Zaboji also enjoyed flying the Bergfalke for a quick 30 minute flight.

**UP, UP THE LONG, DELIRIOUS, BURNING BLUE**

Noting the “family” in “family day,” George Hazelrigg took his son George for a 33 minute flight in the ASK-21. Ertan Tete took his wife for a 33 minute ride in the Grob, and Chris Zaboji took his grandmother Ilamay McConaughey for a 24 minute flight in the Grob.

**I’VE TOPPED THE WIND-SWEPT HEIGHTS WITH EASY GRACE.**

Gold distance badge, but he did receive the more prestigious award of Skyline Soaring’s flight of the day.

**SUNWARD I’VE CLIMBED, AND JOINED THE TUMBLING MIRTH OF SUN-SPLIT CLOUDS,**

Charles Norman also assembled 3B and was able to rack up a 2 hour and 12 minute flight.

**— AND DONE A HUNDRED THINGS YOU HAVE NOT DREAMED OF**

Bill Burner displayed his soaring skills as he took to the air in his Bergfalke with Vijay Balakrishnan for a 30 minute flight and again later in the day with Joseph Narus for a 40 minute flight.



John Noss also took to the sky with Sandy Turney for 21 minutes in the Grob and our newsletter editor Phil Jordan for 17 minutes in the ASK-21.

**WHERE NEVER LARK, OR EVEN EAGLE FLEW —**

Additional flights in the Sprite included Chris Zaboji (22 minute flight), Dick Garrity (1 hour 16 minute and 56 minute flights), and Greg Ellis (18 minutes).

**AND, WHILE WITH SILENT, LIFTING MIND I'VE TROD**

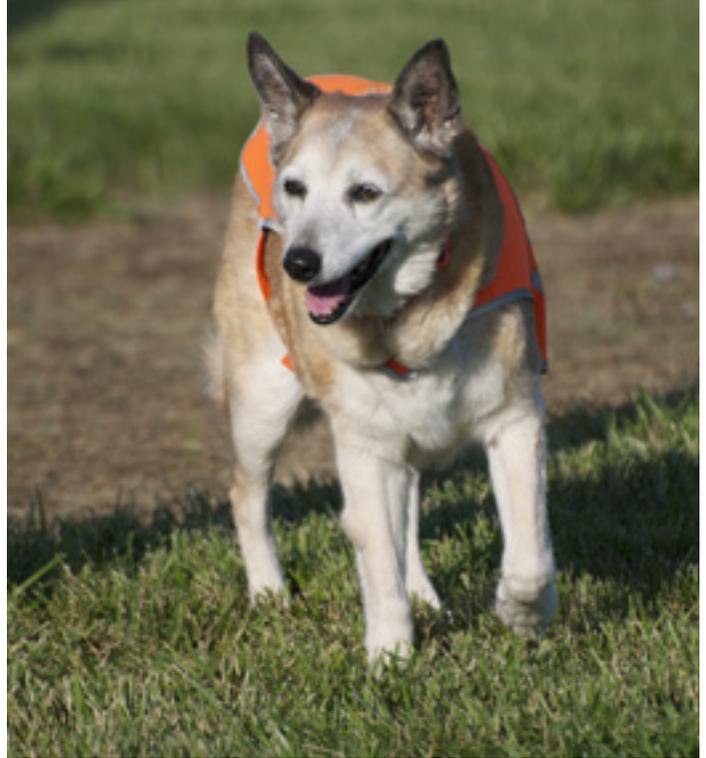
Greg Ellis took "Dewi" McElrath for a 36 minute flight in the ASK-21 and Michael Bishton took to the sky solo for 44 minutes in the ASK-21.

**THE HIGH UNTRESPASSED SANCTITY OF SPACE,**

As the sun began to settle in the West, Chris Zaboji set out back to Front Royal in the Sprite for a quick 27 minute flight. After refueling, Craig headed back to pick up Matt Linger and George Hazelrigg in the ASK-21 for a 27 minute return flight, and as sunset was quickly approaching Ken Ring and Curtis Wheeler set out in the Grob for a 24 minute flight making a beautiful landing on runway 10 with the sun setting to their backs.

**—PUT OUT MY HAND, AND TOUCHED THE FACE OF GOD.\*\***

As the sun continued to set, Chris Zaboji took Matt Linger for a quick flight around the flagpole with an instructor from Randolph Macon in a Cessna 172. The aircraft were quickly put to bed and



everyone departed the field completing yet another great day of fellowship and soaring!

Chris Zaboji's video of the day's events:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZHcScpyoDM&feature=youtu.be>

Once again, thanks to everyone for making the day such a great success and my job as DO a breeze (pun intended)! 

*\*High Flight by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.*

*All photos: Johnny Jordan*



## Gold Distance, Diamond Goal

Piet Barber

I've failed the documentation for the Silver Badge in so many different ways. The Gold Badge is more involved—a 300 kilometer flight, and a 3000 meter gain in altitude. I succeeded in my 3000 meter altitude gain in 2006. Although I've been a glider pilot for 28 years, it has taken me a while to get up to the Gold Distance. One of the major obstacles holding me back was having never landed out. I solved that last month. I have most certainly performed gold distance flights before, but I have never declared it and executed it well enough to submit the paperwork for the award.

On Saturday, May 17 I finally achieved this milestone in my soaring career. Saturday looked to be an absolutely outstanding soaring day. A cold front had blown through, leaving all of the air aloft to be much cooler than the air below. Once the sun came out, the ground heated up just enough to make that warmer air rise skyward at about 10 miles an hour. The excellent soaring days are also the days when the weather on the ground is perfect, too. Any surface heating is quickly removed by a cool breeze. It didn't get too cool because the sun could occasionally peek through the clouds, warming up the surface for the next thermal.

Heading South after a quick turn in the start sector (bottom) The day looked good enough that Joe Lingeitch, Chuck Stover and I set out to accomplish our Gold Distance task. The two other guys decided to start at Signal Knob (just west of our airport) head 68 statute miles south to Waynesboro's glider airport "Eagle's Nest." Their second turn-point was a small airport near Martinsburg, WV. Their final point on the triangle was a return to Signal Knob. My task was only slightly different. I declared a shorter task starting at Signal Knob, south to Waynesboro's Eagle's Nest, north to the West Virginia Border near Summit Point Raceway, at a small airfield named "High View Farm", and returning to Signal Knob. The other two guys set out first, and I had a launch 30 minutes behind them.

The lift was strong enough that I didn't have to circle very often. I was not terribly impressed with the thermals on the Massanutten, and soon headed across the valley to the Blue Ridge mountains.

Once on the Blue Ridge, the amount of lift available to me changed for the better. I could cruise comfortably without having to circle. I just bobbed along under the clouds, slowing down a bit more under the clouds, where the wide area of lift allowed me to gain modest amounts of altitude. Once the lift stopped, I pointed the nose down, and gained a little speed. I headed northbound along the Blue Ridge mountains.

The other who were attempting the Gold Distance made the turn-point at Waynesboro at about the same time as me—four minutes apart. Instead of taking the Blue Ridge on their northbound route, they chose to return to the Massanutten mountains.

It was here that the strength of the Blue Ridge mountain chain was much better than the Massanutten.

We were essentially neck-and-neck until the other two guys got to Luray, where their thermals got weaker. In the meantime, my thermals were so unbelievably strong that I was ignoring thermals with a mere 600 feet per minute, eschewing them for the 800 and 1000 feet per minute thermals.

Joe hit what he described as "a wall of sink" and was forced to land his glider in a field 5 miles to the south of Front Royal's air-



Photo: courtesy of Piet Barber

port. Chuck managed to break free from the wall of sink, but was far behind me. He got to the West Virginia border 35 minutes after I did.

I approached my turn-point at High View Farm. If you don't know where this field is ahead of time, it's nearly impossible to find from the air. There are many better, longer, flatter fields immediately surrounding this small runway. A few miles to the northwest of High View Farm is the Summit Point Raceway, which is a far better turn-point, much more obvious from the air.

I made my turn, made a short video on my iPhone, and headed south. My task is running smoothly, and the lift has proven to be quite plentiful. I was aided by a tailwind on the northbound track, but found myself battling a 17 knot headwind, and less plentiful lift on the way to Signal Knob. It was still a great soaring day by almost any measure.

I approached the second turn-point twice. Rookie mistake! After further review, it was completely unnecessary.

Since my flight computer was deactivated with a dead battery, the day was still pretty strong, and I wasn't that far from the turn-point, I turned back, and made double-sure that I had crossed into the right area around the airport.

It's obvious now that I was well within the turn-point sector, but I really didn't want to discover that I was too far east of the sector after the flight. The second trip to the turn-point cost me time and average ground speed. Most importantly, the second approach to the turn-point meant that I would be fighting a headwind home with ever increasingly weaker thermals.

The second southerly trip to the final turn-point left me really regretting the back-tracking to the second turn-point. The nice white puffy clouds that marked all of my thermals no longer looked as good as they did before the turnaround, and there was a huge distance to the closest thermal markers to the south.

I tiptoed along at the most efficient speed, attempting to circle in any lift that was available along the way. I also knew that with the headwind and the weaker thermals that I would get blown further from my next waypoint. In other words, each time I stopped to thermal in weak lift, I would be taking one step back after two steps forward.

I finally made it to the city of Strasburg, VA, and performed a climb just high enough to comfortably get across the mountain, past my turn-point.

After I landed, I found out that both Joe and Chuck had landed out. Chuck landed out at Martinsburg, WV, where the lift had gotten so weak that he couldn't gain any headway against the winds.

I wonder if he would have found his Gold Distance flight if he had followed me along the Blue Ridge.

I submitted the paperwork to the SSA, and received this note May 22: "I have processed the application for a Gold Distance and Diamond Goal claim on your May 17, 2014 flight. I am happy to approve these claims and your records have been updated. This completed your requirements for the Gold badge and I issued you Badge #2690. Congratulations on your achievements

The Award will be coming separately from the SSA office in the near future. You should see your flight listed in the August issue of Soaring Magazine. You will also find that the flight will be included in your member achievement record.

Rollin Hasness, FAI Administrator"

<http://blog.pietbarber.com/2014/05/gold-distance-diamond-goal.html>



Photo: Steve Zaboji

**Rite Of Passage**—Chris Zaboji's first encounter with the SSC was during the Memorial Day weekend 4 years ago when a chance family drive into the country stopped at KFRR to check out a glider club. Chris seemed interested but it wasn't until September of that year

that he returned, joined and started lessons at the age of 13. He took to the sky like a bird and now nearly 4 years later he stands 6'3" with a private glider license in his wallet.

I was his first passenger and many followed as Chris honed his soaring skills. The social and flying environment found at the SSC helped shape Chris's skills in a manner that reached far beyond the stick and rudder.

Pictured left is Chris preparing to launch yet another flight with a close family member, his grandmother Ila Mae McConaughey who was visiting from her home in Cameron WV. A beautiful day at the Burner Field outing was an ideal setting for his grandmother's first glider ride. See her reaction and the flight itself, on the following URL.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psMH5gPHDTE&feature=youtu.be>

Taking your grandmother for her first glider ride is truly a privileged "Rite of Passage." —*Steve Zaboji*



**Couldn't resist this view** of "Fred Flintstone, Towpilot" today! (You should see those feet move on the takeoff roll!)

Thanks to Paul Seketa (top half) and Curtis Wheeler (bottom half). —*Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon* Photos courtesy Jim Kellett



**Congratulations to Keith Overstreet** who earned his "A" badge with his first solo in the Club's G-103 on Saturday, May 31. —*Jim Kellett*



## Bob Collier—Salutes to a Life Well Lived

never flew with Bob while we both were at Warrenton Soaring Center, but shortly after we moved to New Market Bob and I took a casual flight in the old Ms Daisy before her face lift. I had over 10 years of soaring at that time and fancied myself an experienced sailplane pilot.

One of his PhDs was in surface convection and he took me to school that day. Every move I made he showed me how I could do it better—and did so with humor and non-judgemental good will.

By the time we landed I realized how much I didn't know about thermalling—and how very much he did. We laughed with and at each other and continued to do so until a short time ago.

The following remembrances of Bob will certainly prove to any skeptic that what he shared unconditionally of himself with his fellow pilots constitutes an immortal spirit. —Phil Jordan

Bob and I flew together and were close personal friends for decades. I've so many memories of hanging out, flying, partying, and arguing about politics with him that I have no idea where to start or even which examples to pick!

For sure he was not one to waste money on a high tow—his reputation for taking pattern tows and disappearing for hours was legend and well deserved.

He was also not at all put off by 'unusual attitudes' (well, I might add that applies both on the ground and in the air, but I'm not going to go there!). One example: we were both flying 1-26s (back then, I had N8630R) out of the Flying Cow Farm (Jan Scott's place in Lovettsville), and chatting on our latest electronic marvel, CB radios. I hear him say "I'm coming up on your left"; I glanced left, and sure enough, there was Bob, upside down on the top of a loop about 200' off my left wingtip!

And then there's the story about his design for a personal ballast dump before that kind of thing was talked about very much... and the time the distal end of his device got caught under the tire of the 1-26 on landing...and, shall we say, made it exciting in the cockpit!

I miss him so much...He never lost sight of why we fly—it was for fun! *Dance the skies, Bob.* —Jim Kellett

**My last job at the FAA** was Director of the Office of Accident Investigation, which entails receiving text messages on everything that goes wrong in the skies. One day I received a message with the location of the event as Front Royal, which of course caught my eye. Then it said "Glider became separated from towplane." (Not always a bad thing!) Then as I read the details I laughed since I could see it was nothing more than Bob Collier, the king of the early release (frequently followed by a land out) doing his normal thing. I used to joke with him that I looked forward to towing him above 800 feet some day.

One day Bob invited me to fly 289, my first flight in a 1-26. During the cockpit check I asked him about the brakes and he said "Oh all they do is fill the cockpit with smoke." I managed to keep 289 right-side up for the entire flight, something Bob did not always do. One day I watched him do multiple loops, which looked to have a diameter of about 2 fuselage lengths and be effortless.

There was something more colorful about his generation of aviators. *RIP Bob Collier*—Steve Wallace

**What I remember about Bob, in addition to his humor** and quiet, humble ways, was how smart he was. He always had an insightful explanation for things that confused me. He was a PhD physicist,



and I believe his interest was in electromagnetic radiation. He told me a story once about his being called to Cyprus to help them figure out why the strength of their radio signals to the mainland (Turkey, I guess) varied so much—and frequently vanished. After a while he discovered that the signal strength was best when the weather was poor, but when the weather cleared and the seas calmed the radio signal would disappear. He measured the height of the transmitting antenna above sea level, and the distance from the transmitting to the receiving antenna and figured out that, for the frequency, or wave length they were forced to use, with calm seas some of the radio waves reflected off the water exactly out of phase so that they nulled out the signal. They did not need a more powerful transmitter or more fancy equipment—they only had to relocate the antenna to produce consistently strong signals. —Bill Burner

**I first met Bob not long before I got my rating** (I think) when he was pulling his plane along the taxiway to go fly. I don't think I had ever seen a 1-26 in the flesh before. I also hadn't seen a glider where both ailerons pointed down at the same time before. I asked him if that was normal, and it turned out that it was not normal, but an assembly error. Apparently this made an impression on him.

Before long, he was coaching me in cross-country flying and offering me the use of his glider to do it in, and volunteered to crew. I racked up a number of landouts and some great flights. This was generous to an extent that's hard to put into words. I returned the crewing favor a couple of times, but obviously nothing that would qualify as paying that back.



All photos: Dick Otis

Iconic bookends for Dave Collier to emulate.

pretty loops and landed. I am pretty sure that was his farewell flight and he never flew again. But Bob still came to the airport to crew for Dave and had uncounted stories of things he did in a 1-26. Bob never seemed to plan a flight or have a fixed goal, he just got in and flew as far as he could and landed out, just for the joy of it. We'll all miss his infectious enthusiasm. Salute to a life well lived.

—Dan Ernst

Eventually, I decided that 1-26ing wasn't for me, partly for ergonomic reasons, and partly because I had glide ratio envy. His son Dave was getting into gliders so it ended up being sort of a hand-off from me to him. For my last flight in his 1-26, we decided to go for a Silver Distance flight the old fashioned way, with a straight-out flight and a barograph. After plopping it into a field near Harrisonburg, I checked the barograph to discover that it had jammed and never turned for the whole flight, leaving me with nothing but a vertical mark, and no valid claim. From what I hear, this is an accurate part of the "old fashioned" experience.

I remember when the club changed the tow fee structure a couple of years after I joined. Previously, we charged a hookup fee and then 50 cents per 100ft, with no minimum. It got changed to a flat rate for hookup plus the first 1,000ft, then 50 cents per 100ft thereafter. Subsequently, Bob started releasing at 1,000ft instead of his more usual 6-800ft, because he figured he might as well get everything he paid for.

He'd radio back to the DO immediately after release, while climbing out from these ridiculous release altitudes, and make sure they knew exactly what to charge him for.

He wasn't around the airport much these past few years. We kept in touch a bit. He liked to see the traces from my big flights on OLC. I sort of ended up transferring the friendship over to Dave too.

I didn't know him nearly as long or as well as some of you, but he's certainly had a big impact on my life, and I felt I should share.

—Mike Ash

**One day when I was ADO** Bob came out to fly. Bob was famous for getting off tow early because he felt what was a good bump to him and off he would go, not to be seen again. Steve Wallace once told me he had to keep climbing to reach pattern altitude when Bob got off very early. Bob never seemed to be wrong about one of his bumps and even if he did not go very far, he never came back to Front Royal. So this day he told the tow pilot he wanted to go to 4,000. And he told me to be ready with the tow car. He was going way high and coming back. Pretty unusual, for Bob. Then he told us he was going to do a couple of loops before he landed. With a big smile he got in his 1-26 and launched. Sure enough he did two very

**Damn! We shall miss him**—a man of wit and humour. Who else would walk up the hill at Larry Omph's airport whilst describing how he was losing altitude, and to look for him to be arriving from the South—without mentioning he was on foot—walking up the hill as we all gazed into the southern sky?—

Who else would land his glider at that airport after first doing a screaming loop—with every crack in his revered aircraft screaming?

His comments and e-mail messages were among the most discussed—and sometimes just cussed—whilst we eagerly awaited the next.

With heavy hearts, —Pat & Liz Goodman

**Bob was my demo pilot on a flight in the early 70s.** Karen (later Karen Kranda) made sure I was getting the best. We were up for hours over Front Royal and beyond—in an old 2-33. Tow pilots buzzed us trying to get us back down. But we had thermals to climb. Bob would yell... "Oh yes!—that was a Silver climb!" And on and up we went. Finally with a big loop over the airport, we landed. Of course I became a glider pilot! I will never forget that flight.

May he rest in peace. —Linda Lawrence Meacher

**Bob was one of a kind**, and I mean that in a very good way.—I remember one time I was ADO and Bob had taken his usual "low tow" and gone on to spend the day flying around most of the state of W.Va. By the end of the day, everyone else had landed, and eventually all present had gone on to have dinner at the Mill. I stayed behind waiting for Bob, and I kid you not, it was dark by the time he landed!

I asked him why he came back so late, and his reply was "I was having too much fun!" —Carlos Roberts

**Bob was a friendly, easy going pilot**—always ready with a smile no matter what the situation. A very welcoming person. I remember him fondly as the guy who once landed his 1-26 in his back yard. I will miss him. —Greg Ellis

**I remember Bob from my Warrenton days**, later at Woodbine and finally at SSC where until recently he could be seen hanging around

the DO's table chewing the fat with his fellow pilots. Often our conversation would drift back to WSC 30+ years ago and the various soaring personalities we knew. A truly nice man and a fine pilot, *the Soaring Community will be poorer without him.*—Bruce Spinney

*Like many early Skyline members,* I met Bob Collier at Warrenton Soaring Center in the mid-1980's. He and Bill Vickland were among the first ardent 1-26 pilots I met there. At the time, I very much wanted to learn how to fly gliders cross country and they were doing so with regularity. I admired them greatly (still do) and worked hard on my skills. In fact, it was during a 1-26 gathering at Warrenton that I finally felt it was time to make my Silver distance flight (I cheated though and used a 1-23).

As most know, many of the pilots who populated the Warrenton Soaring center moved to New Market with the newly formed Skyline Soaring Club and then on to Front Royal. Bob Collier and I were among them.

One day at Front Royal, Bob had completed a reasonable 1-26 task (as judged by the fact that he did return to the airport). I remember helping him put his ship on the trailer and watched as he headed out for home. Bob's older, blue Ford was of similar vintage to his 1-26 and not long after he left the airport, we got a call that his car had died. He was stranded in Front Royal just before the intersection of US 340 and West Criser Road (the little street at the stoplight where the 7-11 sits).

A number of us went to the rescue and managed to push his car and the trailer up onto the grass median between the N and S lanes of US 340. All who pushed the car in the 90 degree heat decided that Bob had landed out...and that we clearly deserved the traditional dinner for the retrieve. We petitioned for said dinner, Bob agreed, but for some reason we never met for the dinner. I am sorry about that.

Bob was always cheerful and encouraging at the airport, *I will miss him.*—Jim Garrison

*Two of Skyline Soaring's most gifted mentors.*



*Every landout was a time for fun and new friends.*

*He took me under his wing* as his student when I started flying with the club. He was a wonderful person to be around and I enjoyed his company. Even though I've only known him since last August, *I already miss him.*—Dustin Stern

*Snowbird, Snowbird, Say Your Location*—Bob Collier and I began flying together in 1973, more than 40 years ago. It seems like only yesterday. We were members of the National Capital Soaring Club based at Jan Scott's airstrip at Lovettsville Virginia. We were part of a currently fading era in soaring history that regularly flew the Schweizer 1-26 in straight-out cross-country flights to certain landouts. Our group included Al Dresner, Dudley Mattson, Dick Mott, Jim Hard, Jim Kellett, Greg Niswonger, and later, Key Dismukes, a former Skyline member. Back then, our flying identity was defined by our glider nicknames. For obvious reasons, Bob was Snowbird, Dudley was Redwing, and I was Dirty Bird. Bob was the epitome of our approach to X/C flying that was characteristic back then, taking off in questionable soaring weather but flying to his intended goal. Within the memory of most Skyline members, Bob launched on a day that most skyline members considered to be a non-flying day. He flew to Waynesboro never getting over 2500 feet. This kind of spirit is in decline and exists mostly only in the southern California and the southwest today, although one of Bob's best friends, Jim Hard continues every year in Bob's tradition to make annual straight out X/C flights of up to 400 miles. Bob currently holds the 1-26 regional 200 km triangle record, and has undoubtedly made literally hundreds of landouts. Bob is the also the only 1-26 pilot to replicate the historic flight of Richard C. Dupont from Waynesboro, Virginia to Frederick, Maryland.

Our group would meet at Jan's on a Saturday or Sunday, and without benefit of a weather report, take a tow to 2000 feet and head out for a badge attempt, knowing that we would land out. I could not count the number of 9 mile X/C flights we made in our collective silver badge attempts. Not all of our flights were that short and many resulted in great flights from Jan's airstrip but yet with remote landings as far south as Petersburg and Newcastle, VA. Bob's landing sites became a source of great memories. On one occasion he found himself with limited options, one of which was the bare crown of a hill near Front Royal. With enough speed to climb to the top, he zoomed toward the base, climbed up the slope and dropped Snowbird right on top. We had to recruit a half dozen

helpers to walk the glider down off of the top of the hill. At Petersburg, WV, he was dumped by the powerful wave rotor between the ridge and the Alleghany plateau into an area where his only options were again, uphill. Flying safety is not all about altitude above the ground, but rather about total energy, i.e., altitude and airspeed. With a PhD. in Physics, Bob was well aware of this and brought his glider to a safe uphill landing in a field not more than 80 feet wide and 200 feet long.

Our retrieves were not always the easiest, but that was the nature of our sport and not surprisingly created some of our great memories. Our group always assisted each other in our retrieves, and Bob was always there to support others who landed out. Bob was there in Cumberland when we had to carry Dirtybird in three pieces from my landing site 1.5 miles to the nearest access to a usable road. Bob and Tracey were great supporters of my X/C attempts, crewing for me on several flights extending over a full day of driving.

We regularly made group attempts for diamond distance flights, often using the Massanutten ridge to increase our average speed. The flight plan was to fly down the Massanutten and back to Front Royal, from there to High Rock near Fairfield, PA, south to Elkton, VA and back to Front Royal. Bob barely missed his achieving his Diamond Distance in one of these attempts, where he and Dudley had selected a start and finish goal at Hayes Field near I-66 and I-81, rather than Front Royal. Bob was only a few miles short of making it to Hayes Field, but made his Gold Distance. Had his goal been Front Royal instead he would have made his Diamond Distance Badge.

Dudley Mattson, Bob, Al Dresner and I may have made 20 or 30 collective attempts at this task. And on one of our more ambitious X/C attempts, Bob and I set out on a Diamond Distance attempt with this plan. Bob had taken off 20 minutes before me and was returning from the south end of the Massanutten as I was heading south. At the south end where the ridge is perfectly shaped we could fly at near red line in smooth ridge lift at almost tree top level. Cruising at almost 100 mph in smooth air is an unforgettable experience in itself. Knowing he was approaching me at a high rate of speed, I called him on the radio, "Snowbird, Snowbird, say your location." He responded, "just turning north, I'll be high, you stay low," and three minutes later he passed over me by about 200 feet at a closing speed of close to 200 mph. It was a thrill to watch him pass by. It is one of my favorite memories. My battery failed shortly after that, and I lost radio contact. When I had not returned as the day came to an end, Bob and Key rented a Cessna 1-72 to look for me in the area that he had last heard from me.

Bob and I spent many, many hours in my garage, recovering our gliders, painting, tuning our radio antennas and generally maintaining our gliders. (His career was in designing antennas). In preparation for the 1-26 Championships at the U.S. Airforce Academy, Bob, Dudley, Al and Dick Mott brought their gliders to my house for routine maintenance. Snowbird had acquired a rodent nest in the outboard section of his wing. The only access was from the wing root, so we threw a rope over a high tree limb in my front yard and lifted the wing so that the root was 5 feet off the ground. Then with an extension to my air compressor hose and after several hours of blasting, we removed the remnants of the nest out of Snowbird's wing. If you can, visualize Snowbird's left wing hanging from the tree, right wing on the ground and fuselage leaning slightly on a foot stool, my glider on trailer partially out of the ga-

rage. Al's glider on its trailer in the driveway Dudley's Redwing was on a trailer on the street. After purging the nest from Snowbird's wing, we sat down on the lawn to enjoy a beer. Shortly, a police car arrived, and as the officer exited his car he began laughing. He said, "I have to tell you that I am here because someone reported a big airplane crash."

Other great memories include our four car caravans to Cumberland and Harris Hill where we flew in weekend regattas, stopping for dinner on a late Sunday night, chattering on our CB radios to stay alert while driving home late at night. The caravans also included three and four day trips across the county to attend the 1-26 Championships. Bob's flying style in these events was always aggressive but safe, making choices in task direction in the contests that seemed to defy conventional wisdom, yet finishing the task and on occasion winning the day. He did this at Hobbs at the 1-26 Championships, blowing away the rest of the fleet on a day with 20 knot winds, one of the few to finish. His patience in weak lift was incredible. He would hold on to zero sink and a 50 fpm thermal for seemingly hours, thinking as long as he is flying he is not landing out, and then climbing out to finish the task.

I see these characteristics in Dave as he flies Snowbird, and it is difficult to believe that it is not Bob who is flying. These sights conjure up all the great memories of flying with Bob, and with his passing, I see the passing of an era of great friendship, great flying, great memories and great fun.

Snowbird, Snowbird. You stay high, and I'll stay low—for just a while longer. This is Dirty Bird. *Over and out.* —Bill Vickland 238 



Recycled  
Information  
Worth  
Repeating

# SAY AGAIN



**Please welcome Bill Bank**—(a very experienced glider pilot) who joined us as an intro member.—*Chuck Stover*

**MUST Read for all pilots flying in/out of JYO**—Today the FAA issued a new NOTAM for the DC SFRA especially applying to Leesburg. The link is:

[https://www.faa.gov/files/notices/2014/May/Leesburg\\_Manuvering\\_Area\\_FDC\\_4-9152.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/files/notices/2014/May/Leesburg_Manuvering_Area_FDC_4-9152.pdf)

Please read the entire NOTAM, but a few highlights are as follows:

**Effective: 15 June 2014**

- All aircraft going in/out of KJYO will squawk 1226 both inbound and outbound
- specific announcing is required
- you can now file a flight plan for pattern work and request to perform practice approaches during patternwork (Potomac Tracon workload permitting)
- all pilots operating in the the DC SFRA area are REQUIRED to take the SFRA training, and those who have already taken it are highly recommended to take the new revised training course at <http://faasafety.gov/> which will be available after 5 June 2014

Again, please take the time to read through the entire NOTAM! Safe flying!—*Dick Otis*

**Yep, it's that time again**— this year, the WoT will be held June 30 - July 4, plus (of course) the weekends prior and following.

Most of the planning has already been done, using the information provided several weeks ago. I have updated the Roster page <http://members.skylinesoaring.org/ADMIN/rostermake.cgi> to include known committed 'staff' and known committed students.



**Skyline Soaring Club, Inc.**

is a private, 501(c)7 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)

President—John Noss  
Secretary—Jim Kellett  
Treasurer—Thomas Park  
Assistant Treasurer—Dan Ernst  
Membership—Steve Rockwood  
Chief Duty Officer—Craig Bendorf  
Chief Tow Pilot—Martin Gomez  
Chief Flight Instructor—Piet Barber  
Safety Officer—Charles Norman  
Skylines Editor—Phil Jordan  
flyingfish2@cox.net

Directors—John Noss, Jim Kellett,  
Richard Garrity, Keith Hilton,  
Ertan Tete, Martin Gomez

I took some liberties and assigned some specific dates for some of the 'staff', which should be reviewed and determined to be satisfactory. Towpilots, instructors, DOs, and ADOs are not only free but welcome to swap things around at their discretion - just let me know.

If any students have a change in plans, it is imperative to let us know IMMEDIATELY. Please do not assume that you can drop out at the last minute w/o incurring the displeasure of the other volunteers and members! And, remember "Kellett's Law", which can be translated into "be at the field barring meteorological catastrophes of Biblical proportions". There are things to learn even if it's raining!

And, a reminder to everyone of the ground rules:

Plan to spend the entire day. Do not plan to come out, fly, and go home - everyone will be expected to help out from startup to completion

Plan to start 'early', having things set up and first pre-flight briefings completed by 0900 hours

The goal is for every student to get at least three instructional sorties/day, more if load permits

Priority for equipment is in the following order: Scheduled Practical Examinations, Pre-solo instruction, Post-solo instruction, post-solo flight experience logging, private owners' tows.

Instructional sortie times limited to 35 minutes, release altitudes limited to 2,500' AGL.

Some ground school may be offered, contingent upon availability of a qualified CFI to do that and weather conditions.

A daily ops plan will be created specifying the order of flight and who flies with whom, based on conditions.

Some additional tips:

Stay hydrated!

Bring bug repellent and sunblock

And, finally, PLAN TO HAVE FUN!

—*Jim Kellett, Resident Curmudgeon and Flight Instructor*

**Vintage Sailplane Quilt to benefit VSA on its 40th Anniversary**—

Dody Wyman has made a spectacular eight by nine foot (full bed-size) soaring T-shirt quilt to be raffled off for the benefit of the Vintage Sailplane Association (a worthwhile cause!). The Quilt got lots of attention at VSA's booth in Reno. It will be on display at the VSA 40th Anniversary bash at Lawrenceville, IL from June 11 until the drawing on June 14 this year. It features worldwide soaring T-shirt art including from the Wasserkuppe, Lasham, and New Zealand in addition to plenty of American locations, clubs, and, of course, gliders. For a quick peek, go to <http://soaringcafe.com/2014/03/ssaz2014-a-video-tour-of-the-exhibit-hall/> where The Quilt shows up at 0:35, 0:42, 0:50 and especially at 4:17.

Raffle tickets are still available. They'll be sold at upcoming vintage glider meets <http://www.vintagesailplane.org/events.shtml> (for schedule). They're also available by mail. Tickets are \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. Please send your check (for this exceptionally worthwhile cause!) to:

VSA Quilt 31757 Honey Locust Rd. Jonesburg, MO 63351

Please specify that your check is for The Quilt Raffle. And be sure to provide your name, phone number or e-mail address, so you can be notified when you win! The drawing will take place on June 14, as one of the highlights during the VSA's 40th anniversary gathering at Lawrenceville-Vincennes Airport, Lawrenceville, IL.—*SSA E-News*