



**WANT TO FLY MORE?
(Another Musing from the President)**

The COVID pandemic has certainly complicated things for all of us this year. I think we've been appropriately judicious on taking precautions that have enabled us to carry out at least some flight operations, although the pace has been agonizingly slow. The Board constantly reviews the changing scope of what is known about the pandemic, and adjusting our policies as needed.

Each of us have different risk factors to consider – our own health, the vulnerability of those we live with, the exposure our work environment puts us in, and more. So we each have to make some often difficult decisions about how to engage in non-essential (but important to us!) things like soaring. (We also recommend installing the Covidwise

smartphone app, developed by the Virginia Department of Health, on your smartphone.)

Some time back, a survey of the members indicated that about 1/3 of our membership was interested in some level of flying. But a smaller fraction has been performing the 'duties' of towpilot, instructor, and duty officer far beyond their normal frequency as volunteers to keep us in the air; to them we all owe a big thanks!! Still, you'll notice that more than a couple of weekend days have not garnered enough volunteers to allow safe operations. So, please think about volunteering to fill these positions (and hanging around to get equipment out and returned) ***provided you are comfortable with your personal assessment of risk and aren't putting other members at risk!!***

We can get through this by working together and supporting one another.

THE GROB IS GONE!!



On August 7, Eric and Annie Ellis, who plan to use the glider to start up a new club, Mallards Soaring Club in Locus Grove, GA took delivery of our beloved Grob.

Thus ends a long effort by a lot of your fellow club members, to whom we all owe a big debt of thanks! Over several months, Dick Garrity led the advertising and negotiating with potential buyers; Bill Burner stored the assembled glider in the hangar at his airport; Keith Hilton, Shane Neitzey, and others performed lots of maintenance and modifications to get the trailer roadworthy. Steve Rockwood managed the financial transactions, and



*Dick Garrity, Steve Rockwood, and Annie Ellis
Finalize the transaction.*

many others such as Jim Perlmutter, Erik van Weezendonk, John Noss, Matt Vosica, Evan Dosik, and I suspect several others carried out the myriad tasks it took to make this happen. And, finally, on August 7 a final delivery team convened at Burner Field, to pack the glider up and turn it over to the buyers.



Eric Ellis, Bill Burner, Eric van Weezendonk, Dick Garrity, and Jim Perlmutter.

Well done, guys!!

Photos by Jim Perlmutter



RYAN TREXEL LIFE CELEBRATION

A little after noon on Saturday, the 8th of August there was a gathering of family and friends for Ryan at the Harris Pavilion in Manassas. This unique covered outdoor venue is located in the middle of "old town" situated by the historic and still active Amtrak and VRE railroad station. A large crowd including Skyliners Bob Sallada, Joe Lingeitch, Erick von Weezendonk, Tim Moran, Stephanie Zilora, Andrew Neilson & Jim Perlmutter were in attendance.



As requested, many showed up wearing Washington National attire. There were red and white balloons in Nats colors, a large silver balloon with Ryan's name, and well displayed tables of his favorite memorabilia. One table was full of high school cross county clothing and gear, another table decorated with his beloved baseball items and the third full of soaring related items, including his log

book, bucket cap, FAR AIM and Glider Handbook, current Washington Sectional aeronautical chart, PTS, photos, and other student pilot items. Ryan's Grandfather, Ralph Sharpe, acted as master of the event sharing fond memories of his baseball adventures, attending games, including last year's World Series, and of his time with Skyline Soaring, instruction, WOT, and his coveted solo. Bob Sallada provided comments and memories of his tutelage and passing the torch of our avocation. A family friend read a beautifully crafted letter on Ryan's life written by his Mother. We did learn that in addition to his soaring activities, Ryan was a Blackbelt in Taekwondo, a gifted artist, and had been the official Bat Boy for the Nationals minor League team, the Potomac Nationals. The weather held out nicely for this emotional and dignified event. As a final act, little glass containers of soap bubbles were handed out for all to blow representing rising currents of air for Ryan's final flight. The red and white stings represent the hand bracelets that he always wore and made himself.

>Jim Perlmutter



I LEARNED TO SPIN TWICE
William O. Banks

Disclaimer: I believe in Spin Avoidance & Training.

When I graduated from medical school in 1968, "the doctor draft gave me five choices for when I finished my internship: Army, Navy, Air Force, Public Health Service or Canada. (In case you are wondering about the Marines, whether they like it or not, they are a part of the Navy — they don't like it at all ...). I chose the Navy because, IF I had a commission in the Navy, I could get a flight in the back seat of my older brother's Phantom. I also learned that, at that time, Student Naval Flight Surgeons spent the last 6 weeks of their 6- month training program learning to fly.

After internship, I received orders from the Navy assigning me to Naval Flight Surgeon Class 119, reporting for duty at NAMI (the Naval Aerospace

Medical Institute). Our medical training before we got to fly was exceptional. We had time in the high altitude chamber including a full pressure suit run with explosive decompression to 100,000 feet, a ride on the Martin-Baker Ejection Seat trainer with a half-load, and centrifuge stimulation of vertigo including a course taught while sitting on the floor of a rotating room, one in which the rotation started and accelerated so slowly that you did not feel the motion until you tried to move, stimulating semicircular canals in the ear: talk about sudden onset vertigo !

But a shortage of basic instructors in the T-34C, a tandem-cockpit, T-tailed Bonanza used by the Navy for basic flight training, led to our class of 65 Student Naval Aviators to be sent to the Advanced Training Command for de novo flight training in the T-28C: 1285 horsepower rotary engine; lower the flaps to access the step to get up to the cockpit. WOW.

Spin Avoidance & Recovery Training Episode 1: T-28C



In the Navy syllabi, a "Spin" was defined as: "An aggravated stall resulting in auto-rotation." (We will look back at that definition later ...) The text then described:

1. The Normal Spin,
2. The Progressive Spin, (a spin in the opposite direction after recovery),
3. The Inverted Spin, and
4. The Flat Spin.

Since there was no recovery from a flat spin in a T-28, there was no flight training in that, and since inverted flight, other than at the top of a loop, was forbidden for Student Flight Surgeons, neither entry nor recovery from an inverted spin was taught. In

the T-28 itself, most of us learned according to that previous definition, so at altitude and after clearing turns, we would state our altitude to our instructor, trim for level flight along a ground reference line, pull the nose well above the horizon and continue pulling back on the stick until the moment of the accelerated stall, feed in full rudder (right or left), and count the revolutions by the ground reference line out loud. After the specified number of rotations (usually up to three), recovery was effected with full rudder opposite the direction of rotation and stick slightly forward of neutral.

Rotation would initially increase, then stop after a half or full rotation, at which point the controls needed to be neutralized to avoid entry into a Progressive Spin in the opposite direction. The “end altitude after recovery” was then reported to the instructor. The Progressive Spin was not taught, but most students entered one at least once in their training. Although approach turn stalls and recovery were taught (also at altitude), spins from an approach turn stall were never taught.

My saddest moment was when I soloed the T-28C. Sad because it was the last time I soloed a military aircraft. But I got a reasonable amount of flight time in several jets, just never solo. And I flew a lot of formation.

Spin Avoidance and Recovery Training Episode 2: Ka-13



While I was stationed as a Squadron Flight Surgeon at NAS Albany, Georgia (home of the Navy's RA-5C squadrons, landlocked base for carrier reconnaissance aircraft), I took a T-34 B from our flying club and flew 2.0 hours up to Bermuda High Soaring Center in South Carolina one morning in November 1970. I had nine flights, eight in an SGS 2-

33, a simulated rope break on the third, qualified for solo on the sixth, two solos in the 2-33 and then a 3,000' tow for my ninth glider flight, solo in a 1-26. I had become a Tail Hooker with my first carrier arrested landing, and a Hooked Glider Pilot with that flight in the 1-26. I smiled broadly throughout the 2.8 hour return flight to NAS Albany.

But my schedule in the Navy did not allow time for a repeat of that experience. After discharge, I was able to spend only one more week of soaring in Calistoga California with Jim Indrebo. Then I was off to Marseille, France for more medical specialty training. I was there with my wife and daughters, ages 7 and 4. There was no work on weekends for me, so we decided to explore the region. One weekend we went to St.-Rémy-de-Provence to visit an area where Van Gogh had painted. After a drawn-out lunch, I heard an airplane straining overhead, looked up and saw a glider on tow. I pulled out my Michelin map of the region and found an airport, Romanin-des-Alpilles, just outside of town.

That is the start of a long story that I might tell, but another time. Suffice it to say, I joined the Aéro-Club-de-Saint-Rémy les Alpilles and became a member, inexpensively. Since I lived more than 90 km away, I could stay with my family in the club barracks any weekend for free. And other families with kids the ages of mine were there on weekends. As a member, I had to pay a small amount for each tow, but the use of one of the club's five AS Ka-13 trainers, parachute, and all instruction was included in membership.

Because my American pilot's license had not been signed off for gliders, the only way I could fly was on a French student license. In order to solo I had to follow a French syllabus for my glider training, study French soaring manuals, and pass a French national written examination for glider pilots. A great way to learn to speak French.

One neat part of our club was the fact that the airport was situated at the base of a 1,634' ridge (498 m), the same ridge on which the FAI record-duration flight was flown (56 h 15 min, April 2-4, 1952). Club lore said the pilot was asleep when he

landed. In any case, ridge and wave lift were frequent and flights were often limited only by daylight.

Another club benefit was that when members of the military flew in club gliders, the club received subsidies in AvGas for the tow planes for each hour they flew. These members consequently became instructors rapidly, and to maximize their time in the air, training flights were longer than we experience in the US. My first seven flights in the club, all dual instruction, were 1.4 h, 1.4 h, 1.3 h, 1.7 h, 1.2 h, 2.3 h, and 1.6 h. Each flight was also a private French lesson for me, of a very specialized part of the French language, and of both ridge and wave soaring techniques. This became the second time I learned to spin.

“Balzac” Plouchart was a short (OK, I’m 6’4” tall so it is hard to judge) soft-spoken member of the French military who spoke a bit of English, and spoke well-enunciated French without much of the local patois. For me he was a great teacher of both language and flying. I had two flights on February 11, duration 1.7 h and 1.2 h, and the ridge was working well: 800 m average (>2,600’ agl). In addition to practicing slow flight, stalls, and steep turns, we had spent a lot of time “working the ridge.” On the second flight, after gaining a bit more altitude, we moved slowly out over the valley. Balzac had me work on slowing my slow flight to as slow as possible. We did a slow 90° turn to the left, and then one to the right, “a bit slower” he said, “not too much bank ... keep it turning ... a bit more rudder” — and BAM ! The left wing shot up as the right wing dropped down and the ground was directly in front of me. Balzac was laughing uncontrollably as I recovered, and he asked, “Do you know what just happened?” (...asked in French, of course). I replied in English, “Yes, I spun over-the-top, but I can’t say it in French. That was impressive, and fun.”

Our discussion resumed in French (I had to learn the language, after all, as well as the flying). Simple concept: “progressively slowing flight and increasing the rate of turn to line up with the runway” can also be described as “a skidded approach turn stall” and that leads rapidly to a spin over-the-top. Close to the ground it is fatal, almost always. This particular

entry into a spin should be practiced at altitude, but requires a seductively soft-spoken instructor to introduce it the first time. The surprise decreases with repeated experience; the sensation never changes.

The definition of a spin that I received in the Navy: “an aggravated stall resulting in auto-rotation”, includes the word “aggravated” that doesn’t always apply. In fact, for glider flight training, the subtlety of onset of the conditions that initiate the spin must be emphasized. The skidded approach turn stall/spin is one that is usually fatal. The other dangerous spin in gliders is the skidded steep turn while thermalling, which can turn fatal if you fall into another glider in a gaggle, or try a low altitude “save”. Both should be practiced at altitude because the physical sensations are phenomenal.

But the other place these spins should be practiced, at low altitude, is using the Condor 2 Soaring Flight Simulator and a Virtual Reality headset.

Recently, while discussing a skidded approach turn stall/spin scenario with an instructor and DPE flying a Condor-simulated glider, I saw a brief glimpse of the ground in front of the glider before his recovery occurred at grass-top level. The gear was down, but the right wing was broken off by impact with a tree — the fuselage, however, stayed between those trees. That crash would probably have been survivable. It certainly was impressive on Condor.

In the section on “Spin Recognition and Recovery”, Manley’s Condor flight syllabus says: “If you enter a spin from sufficient altitude, you will need to know how to recover. At low altitude, there is no time to recover from a spin, so your best bet is to avoid entering the spin in the first place by recognizing the warning signs.”

I agree that it is best to avoid entering a spin at low altitude, but I would recommend that simultaneous recognition and institution of recovery techniques can be learned by a combination of:

1. Spins during actual flight at altitude, and
2. Spins entered at low altitude in the VR environment of the Condor 2 Soaring Flight Simulator.

PS: Recently while ridge soaring in a JS1-18 close to the Matterhorn (Condor 2, of course), flying slowly and trying to gain enough altitude to cross a saddle in the mountain, my audio vario and cockpit noise ceased. As I started a turn away from the ridge I stalled. Then the controls stopped working and I entered a spin. By the time I lifted the VR headset to see the keyboard and find the ESC key I was deeply in trouble! The audio came back on and the flight controls started working again. Headset back on. I was all over the sky, pointing down, pointing up ... I finally got control of the glider pointing straight down and recovered level flight beside the ridge — about 500' higher than I had been when I departed normal flight — high enough to cross the saddle I had been climbing beside and continue on my cross country flight. I am sure it was a programming glitch, not Virtual Reality. But the unexpected spin was exciting.



Pop Quiz: Who can name the pilot, the glider, and the location in the masthead photo this month?? First one with all three gets a prize!!



MAXWELL McGOWAN SOLOS!



I am a 16 year-old high school student living in Herndon, Virginia. I have been flying sailplanes with the Skyline Soaring club in Front Royal since my "Discovery Flight" in November 2018 with Dick Otis. It was a great flight! My experience aviation has been brief but is something that I have wanted to do with my whole life. I have taken a major interest in anything mechanical since before pre-school and it has been a lifelong goal to be at the controls of an aircraft. In 2017, I joined Civil Air Patrol (CAP) cadet program to get closer to this goal. I just had the exciting opportunity to fly SOLO with SSC club on 18 July! I am so happy to have had this opportunity and thank Bob Sallada for all the time

he devoted to training me to be a safe and skilled student pilot - He is a great mentor! The flight went smoothly and I look forward to more advanced training and skills. I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank Shane Neitzey for his initial simulator training and the Skyline Soaring Education Foundation (SSEF); both made my solo possible. I apologize for not having a photo, we didn't take time to take a formal one because of COVID-19.



CONGRATS TO TWO NEW PILOTS!



Stephane Zilora and Ben Bierstine successfully completed their private pilot practical tests on Saturday, August 22nd right after the 2020 WoT. Pictured here, from left to right, Stephanie Zilora, Andrew Neilson (Stephanie's husband and personal towpilot, the one mooning), Piet Barber, DPE, and Ben Bierstine



**SNOW WHITE, FAIRY TALES, ETC.
Erik van Weezendonk, Safety Officer**

Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the safest glider pilot of them all? Maybe Disney will forgive me the borrowing lines from the Evil Queen, but it does become a great starter for a conversation.

Obviously, 2020 flying, COVID, the world, etc is a bit different than last year. We started 2020 on Jan. 1st with a great day of Ad-Hoc flying, then had Pete's tragic accident in February, followed shortly

thereafter by Ryan's unexpected and way too early passing. RIP, both.

Now, we're sorta getting into a rhythm of weekend flying. Like everything we do, folks are getting sick of masks, sick of staying at home, etc. I'm not taking a stand or offering an opinion on govt mandates, masks, testing, anything with COVID. However, what worries me now, as we make that transition to more flying, is that complacent starts to creep into our operations.

There have been multiple studies, and from my recollection, they all talk about a steady rise in safety and proficiency, then a plateau, then (sometimes) a lull, and eventually a steady rise, albeit shallower. Why, one may ask?

First of all, think of our student pilots. SSC and our instructor Cadre do an EXCELLENT job of teaching our students. You know what I never hear....talk of "how many flights" or "how many hours" before somebody solo's for the first time. This is great. I totally understand that the first solo is an incredible accomplishment, and a big moment in one's life (my first was at USAFA, summer of 1991, in a glider, and I remember it vividly!). There is no contest of "first to solo" and this takes of the pressure. When will John or Mary solo??? When the CFI thinks they are ready and safe to take to the skies, alone.

Then, slowly, we get beyond student status and pass our checkride- QUICK ASIDE, CONGRATS TO OUR NEWEST RATED GLIDER PILOTS BEN & STEPHANIE!!! I know that these spent lots of time, especially in the past few weeks, studying in preparation for the oral exam. Do you think the DPE asked questions that they didn't know the answer to? Darn right. However, they were probably up to speed a lot more than some rated pilots, who whether or not they realize it, have probably forgotten some of that knowledge.

After we get our private license (it used to be said that this moment is really the license to learn) we're really not required to take much more instruction than a Flight Review. However, you'd be stupid to not realize our instructors are there to teach, to

impart wisdom, to share experience. Also, none of us is immune to refresher training. So...use it.

When do we get dangerous? Two attitudes are discussed in the literature. One is the daredevil attitude, showing off, flat-hatting, or being stupid. Practicing stalls at high altitude? That's fine, it maintains proficiency. Practicing spins because you can, without training...dumb. High speed low level pass to impress us on the ground.....doesn't impress us much.

Another attitude...it can't happen to me. Complacency. The normalization of deviance is when we accept a lesser standard or proficiency, again, and again. Or we allow a safety violation (just a wee little one) to continue so often that we eventually don't even recognize the danger. Grounding wires while filling a plane...standing "barely" in front of the wing while tow plane takes out slack...getting a bit slow on final while trying to stretch a glide....making the "low save" while out on a cross-country. These things all happen. Every year.

George's article last month was a nice break for me...but it also hit the nail on the head. So, as I wrap it up, I ask that you ensure you're not being complacent. I also ask that you look around, speak up when needed, ask questions if you're unsure. Let's make SSC as safe as we can....and be able to look into the mirror.



**1968 OPEN CIRRUS (8AN) FOR SALE \$16,000
w/trailer**

If you've ever thought about buying a glider for yourself, or with a partner, FIRST read this article <http://www.glidersource.com/buyingyourfirstglider.shtml> It's the article that made me decide to buy the Cirrus when SSC decided to sell it. BTW, if you're not remotely interested in owning your own glider, you can stop reading now and go study some glider material.

Cirrus 8AN is a former SSC-owned, single-seat, fiberglass, retractable-gear glider—resurrected and

looking good. Honest flyer, no bad habits or gotchas, and a great transition from our two-seat club gliders, but with better performance! Even the decrepit trailer has been remarkably improved (still gets 1st Place in the UGLY contest, but she's functional and tows behind any car much better than most other glider trailers, thanks to the long wheelbase).

Awesome history (and complete logbooks) to share. Came out of Schempp-Hirth factory in May, 1968, had three flights prior to customer delivery, and then first owner took her to the World Glider Championship (WGC) in Poland. I think it took 9th or 10th (don't quote me on that). Eventually exported to Canada where it resided and flew a lot until coming to VA in early 2000's.

She's got a 44:1 glide ratio when brand new, so take a bit away for age and she's still 40:1 and an amazing minimum sink speed of 98 ft/min....therefore you can stay up all day long and get FOTD quite impressively. Trying to get from your present position to a target....if you can see it, you can make it!

Guido and I spent \$4,400 at Gerhlein (wing waxing/reconditioning and getting the tail bushings replaced), replaced the main gear door bungees, and a BRAND NEW CANOPY (\$7,400) has been professionally installed (completed in May). She/s back in the hangar, so check her out! Please be gentle if you decide to take a peek.

Benefits of owning a glider include: no time limits so you stay up as long as you can or want to, no scheduling conflicts, and you only pay for the tow. Downside includes assembling your ship (pretty easy with this glider) and if you're trying to save money, well... you cover insurance, registration (minimal \$) and maybe hangar fees. Luckily, right now Cirrus 8AN has a spot in the hangar. You could save money by storing her in the trailer, but I advise keeping her in the hangar for ease of assembly. It would be your choice, of course.

We prefer to see her stay within our club. Partner-up and split a glider or buy it for yourself! So far I've had three folks tell me they're interested. Call me if

YOU are interested and I can tell you who else is...maybe there is a partnership in the making.

For Guido and I, 8AN has been great, but he's moved to FL and I'm going to concentrate on flying SF-9 in the future. That's why we're selling her.

Contact Erik van Weezendonk at 703-786-0552 or erikvw@verizon.net



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Your board met only once in August, and our Loyal Scribe (Keith Hilton) was away all month on his day job, so here's the highlights from Bill Burner's notes. (Thanks, Bill!)

Part of the proceeds of the sale of the Grob will go to replacing the tow hooks on both towplanes with the much safer Tost releases, and the remainder used to accelerate pay down of member loans made to help purchase our newest K-21. We also agreed to a proposal by the FBO to offer fuel discounts in return for making advance purchases, which should also help our financial bottom line. Finally, the Board approved the nomination of Chris Zaboji to be a member of the Skyline Soaring Educational Foundation (SSEF) Board of directors.



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

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