

Newsletter of the Skyline Soaring Club for June, 2022



SKYLINES

Photo of Mia Anderson by Robb Hohmann

TO MOM'S SURPRISE!

Kari/Mia Anderson

Would be nice to be young again . . . As many members know (see the masthead phot!) Mia is an accomplished student pilot, logging solo time in preparation for her PPL(G) practical.



Occasionally mother Kari will log onto one of the several tracking apps just so see where she is, how her flight is going. Not too long ago, she was a teeny bit surprised by the fight track her daughter had just logged . . .



WHAT ARE THOSE BUILDINGS?

Jim Perlmutter

While flying, did you ever notice those red-roofed buildings SE of Front Royal in the gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains??

For those of us who motor to FRR on Virginia State Route 55-John Marshall (Fourth Supreme Chief Justice) Highway, the five miles from the Apple Store exit, have you ever noticed the street names at the busy intersection by the KFC and CVS crossing, US Route 522. The sign to the right reads Commerce Avenue and one the one left, Remount

Road. Well, for this closet history buff, the term Remount refers to military horses. So up Remount Rd. a mere two miles is a gated entrance to an old US Army post, now housing the 3,200 acre campus of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI). Prior to the Smithsonian's ownership and from its inception in 1909 this, acreage was known as the Aleshire US Army Quartermaster Depot (Remount).

Remount is the term to describe the purchase, training, breeding, husbandry, disposition, and delivery of horses and mules used by the US Military. Prior to the 20th century the Army really had no well organized system of acquiring equines. It was a former Cavalry officer and latter Quartermaster General, Major General James B. Aleshire who created the Army Remount Service (1908) at seven locations throughout the United States. Virginia was chosen as it was known for the best horse breeding practices in the country and Warren County for its adequate rail access. Many famous stallions were brought in from the Jockey Club of New York, Kentucky and other selected areas. Eventually 715 were acquired producing 230,000 foals during its 28 year operation. Later dogs and pigeons were included in the system.

The post increased to 5,000 plus acres during both World Wars. It contained a Veterinary Hospital and research laboratory, medical dispensary, granary, 11 barns, sheds, stable complexes, race track, five blacksmith forges, horse cemetery, administration buildings, mess hall, barracks, quarters, fire station, a railhead, and a command of over 400 military and civilian personnel. Also at the Front Royal Depot there was (K9) working dog training facility and housed a German Prisoner of War camp.

During WW-II tens of thousands of horses and mules were utilized in combat operations. Despite the increase use of motorized vehicles and tanks, equines were invaluable in mountainous locations in both war theaters. Horses and mules were utilized

by artillery, cavalry (reconnaissance/security) and engineer units to haul equipment and supplies.

Noteworthy was that several Front Royal remounts received medals in the 1936 Berlin Olympics in Pentathlon and dressage competition General Pershing's mount, Kidron, which he rode in WW-I Victory parades is buried at the Depot and some Lipizanner stallions rescued by General Patton found a temporary home there as well.

Toward the end of WW-II, the need for equines diminished, the Remount Service was dissolved and by the late 1940's the post closed and the facility was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and used as a cattle breeding station. During the Cold War period other federal agencies acquired buildings and land for continuity of government operations. Since 1974 the Smithsonian became the primary landlord.

Today, SCBI continues research in veterinary medicine, reproductive physiology, and conservation biology, especially in captive breeding and reintroduction of endangered species. It also shares various partnerships with Virginia Tech and George Mason University. Among the 400 animals, the Center houses: bison, cheetahs, cranes, kangaroos, wolves and zebras. Also it is the location of the Northern Virginia 4H Education and Conference Center. Some federal agencies also train K9 working dogs on the compound.

Prior to Covid, the SCBI would hold a yearly open house in October to the



public. Obviously this opportunity has ceased but I still plan to visit someday. So if you ever soar due

east from the field and south of Front Royal toward the Blue ridge you can't miss the manicured red-roof complex. Andrew Nielson flew me over once in his power aircraft. From the air it looks like a Hollywood back lot ready for a period movie production.

Editorial sidebar - - many years ago, pre-cellphone, pre-GPS, I landed on that facility on a flight out of the Warrenton Soaring Center. Walked to the nearest building to use a phone to call my crew, met what looked like a farmer in overalls and a straw hat. Turned out he was a world-renowned ornithologist responsible for the ostriches in "my" field!!



AWAY DAY AT BURNER FIELD . . . AKA FAMILY DAY

Erik van Weezendonk



You can read the Ops Report from Saturday, May 21st and look at the numbers, accolades, etc. However, I'd prefer to address different issues that our most recent day at Burner Field (VG55, if you prefer) brought to my attention. Hence the title of this article.

Technically, we don't have a Family Day, or a Burner Day...we just have Away Days. We even have little rules in



the Ops Manual about unfamiliar fields. We (the BoD) deleted the rule about mandatory field checkouts because we had cancelled so many Away Days. Technically, I don't think anybody in the club was "field" current. My bigger point is that, at least for me, the Away Day at Burner Field is our FAMILY DAY. It was definitely cool to see families out in force at the hangar. Moms and Dads, husbands and wives, kids. A great mix. I think the youngest out there was Ian, age 6, and he got a glider ride with his Mom, which is awesome. Mia was able to solo out there and within the month (c'mon girl, you're almost there!!!) should have a private glider rating and can take Mom or Dad flying. Those are two of our younger participants this past weekend. At the, ahem, other age of the spectrum we had quite a few veteran members. John was able to take Bill up for a spin, George provided a lesson or two, and Jim Kellett provided some instruction as well. I guess my point is two fold.

First, we need to continually encourage younger participants. We've got SSEF and FAST flights, but we need to keep priming the pump. The SSA continually beats the drum about declining membership, and most of that is simply folks aging out in the senior years with less of younger folks joining up. So...talk to neighbors, your kids, maybe grandkids, and let them know the opportunity is out there to learn to fly gliders. We can't have FOTD by Piet Barber, who started soaring at age 13 (close?) all the time...somebody has to come up from the ranks to replace him!!! Let them know about Chris Zabodji, who was awarded a Kolstad Scholarship a few years ago...\$5,000 towards college. Now an airline pilot, and when he gets the time, he'll start flying with SSC again. Oh, by the way, that same scholarship is now \$10k, for anybody who's thinking about it!!!

Second, I think our club might be unique, but I don't have a lot of comparison to other clubs. We're definitely a club that prides itself on student pilots and earning ratings. Other clubs might stress cross country. Each has their own method. What I'm

noticing is that we're doing our part to bring in more ladies. I don't think it's been a mandate from anywhere or a conscious decision, we simply have quite a few making their mark at SSC. I mention this as an observation because I remember being a new member, bringing my girlfriend, and she noticed that it seemed uber competitive and mostly male. In the old days of soaring, it was a male pilot on the grid with his wife that held the umbrella, then chased him on the course while driving the car with glider trailer. I think we're getting away from that model. So my point is...your daughter or your granddaughter will fit in just as well here if they're at all interested.

Yep, wrapping it up. Just some things I noticed at Away Day. Oh, and it was a fantastic day with lots of soaring and I'm hoping we can do it again in the Fall. If you have any suggestions on how to make it better, reach out to me or any other member of the BoD so we can improve the experience. See you out there at the field!!!



COFFEE WITH A NEW PILOT – CALEB SMITH Marcelo Moricchi

1. When did you take your practical test?
A: I took my practical test in September 2021
2. How long did it last?
A: The test was 3 hours long
3. Who was the tormentor (Designated Pilot Examiner)?

A: The designated Pilot Examiner was Mr. Piet Barber. With all due respect, Mr. Barber is an EXCELLENT CFI, coach, mentor and thorough examiner. So I wouldn't quite identify him as a tormentor but more of a role model.

4. What were the flight conditions that day?
A: The flight conditions for this day was perfect for a check ride. The winds were variable around 5-7 knots; 10 miles of visibility with no clouds in sight.
5. How many flights did you complete?
A: Two (2) flights were completed this day.
6. What do you remember most vividly about that flight?
A: After my first flight, the traffic level around the airport started to increase. Keep in mind, this is a fairly quiet airport. Usually not too much activity.

It was the second flight of the check ride - I anticipated an emergency procedure. After departure, the tow plane waved off my glider (meaning, the tow plane rocks its wings back & forth to signify a loss in power). As I released the tow rope from the tow plane, I immediately turned back to the airport, and prepared to enter the traffic pattern. The traffic pattern at Front Royal (KFRR) is unique because gliders perform right patterns and powered planes left patterns. As I completed my landing checklist and entered downwind, I spot a powered plane landing on the runway. I then see a glider in-line to land in front of me on base. There was also another plane on the downwind parallel with me on the other side of the airfield. As I enter the base leg, the glider ahead of me landed and stops on the runway to get pushed off by the pilots. Since gliders do right patterns and powered do left, the powered plane is right in front of me. Since I notice two hazards in my way, I make a call on the radio to divert to the grass emergency landing area. The powered plane on his left base hears and sees me, so he proceeds to go around as I land in the grass. Soon after I landed in the grass, we towed

the glider back to the ramp, and I was finally awarded my pilots license.

The knowledge test tends to be something many student pilots procrastinate on. What's your helpful advice for them?

A: Motivation. Prioritizing time management. Identifying your goals, never give up. Imagine and focus on the end result.

Who was your first passenger after you became a pilot?

A: Once I completed my check ride and received my temporary private pilot's license, my father was the first passenger.

7. What is your most memorable flight since you become a pilot?

A: The most memorable flight since becoming a pilot would have to be the club's newest glider – the PW-5. This is a single-seat glider.

8. What are your goals as a glider pilot for the next two years?

A: My goals as a glider pilot for the next two years would involve building my flight hours and skillset so I can eventually become a CFI/CFII and then apply for a commercial license. Some of my short term goals include flying new gliders, increasingly gain more experience, and obtain additional flight badges.

9. If you met with Caleb when he started his flight lessons, what advice would you give him?

A: I would first encourage to do the best I can. Make time management a priority. Adopt a good study habit. Remain teachable and don't get cocky. Focus and maintain your goal in sight.

10. What are the two things that Skyline Soaring Club does well in developing new pilots?

A: The club has a robust software tool that is constantly updated by the instructors to inform others on the progress of the student. So everyone is on the same page. The club members are extremely supportive, volunteering their time to perform duties at the FBO, and unselfish about providing their experience, strength, and hope.



11. What is the one thing that could be improved?

A: Some equipment items need to be updated, but other than that, there's nothing else that needs to be improved. The skyline soaring club is a great organization!



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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