

Newsletter of the Skyline Soaring Club for March, 2022

SKYLINES

Photo by Andrew Neilson

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Stephanie Zilhora, President

In December, we wrapped up the last scheduled soaring day of the 2021 season. We have been fortunate enough to have a few ad hoc days since then to help fill the monotony of winter, and I daresay we are all looking forward to officially kicking off the 2022 season in a few days! But what do chilly, season-end days in December, surprisingly mild ad hoc days in February, and the dog days of soaring in August have in common? They are all made possible by volunteers.

Skyline Soaring Club depends on volunteers, and all members are expected to chip in on a regular basis to the best of their abilities. Whether you're wing running or running the show from the Duty Officer table, SSC needs you. If you think about it, each glider flight takes between five and seven

volunteers to launch—a D.O., a tow pilot, the A.D.O., maybe an instructor, and one to three additional pushers. These volunteers make it possible for you, the pilot, to fly, and you're expected to reciprocate by helping to launch others. A reasonable plan, as a rule of thumb, is to help launch as many flights as there were volunteers helping to launch yours—and multiply that by each flight you take. No one should ever be bored at the field, unless we've got all our gliders up in wave for hours!

Anyone receiving instruction is expected to be at the field at show time to help with preflighting and pulling out gliders. If you are arriving at the field for afternoon flying, then plan on staying until the end of the day to help put gliders away. Of course, these are minimum suggestions—it's so much fun hanging out, flying, and helping to

launch gliders that you may want to stay all day, even if you beat Keith to the field!

Putting in time at the field, as part of the duty crew or as a helpful club member, is only one way to participate in the club, however. We are fortunate to have a number of folks who donate their time as treasurer (and assistant!), secretary, equipment meisters, board members, etc....but we need a few more! We are looking for a meister for our new PW-5 Smyk as well as a trailer meister to look after our glider trailers. If you have wanted to get more involved in SSC, now is a great chance! We have a great group of experienced club members who will help you transition into the role, so please don't feel like you need to be an expert already. SSC needs you!



SOARING RETIREMENT PLAN

Joel Hough

I got Covid in April 2020, and am classified as a long hauler. In July of 2020, I thought I might never get well enough to pilot again. There are several

Joel's thoughtful note should serve as a reminder to ALL members – not only the old farts like me! – that a part of our Safety Culture is that we should ALL have a plan for enjoying our sport as long as we safely can, making good decisions before someone else makes them for us. - Editor

long haulers in the support groups that walking 50 yards without getting winded is a dream. Many were active (riding bikes 50 miles hilly terrain), who are washed up. So I still fear getting a big dose from an infected person. I never thought I would make it half way through implementing my retirement from flying at 57. I was at tow rope preparation at the end of July 2020 from COVID and didn't know if I would ever get better. I am back at cycling 40 miles on the flat, and still improving. Below are my graduated steps (not necessarily in strict order) for aging gracefully, including retirement from flying, to live a full life.

Do you have plans to gradually retire from the sport?

- Providing Primary Instruction.
- Giving rides
- Instructing rated pilots on rough vigorous rotor days
- Instructing rated pilots in calmer rotor
- Instructing rated pilots in gentle thermals
- Sailing instruction
- Biking
- Tow rope preparation
- Taking pictures of aircraft
- Taking pictures of clouds
- Watching clouds each cloud has a story



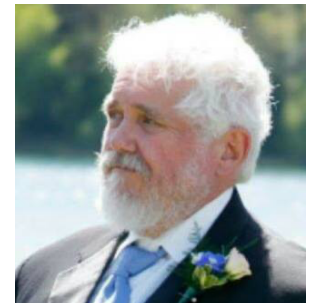
MEET YOUR FELLOW MEMBER – KEN RING

Interview by Marcelo Morichi

1. When did you join SSC? How did you learn about the club?

I joined in April of 2012

2. How long have you been a glider pilot? Where did you learn to fly gliders?



I started flying gliders at SSC and I am still learning to fly gliders. Someday I hope to have it figured out.

3. What ratings do you have?

I have commercial license with Glider, SEL, SES, and MEL also an instrument rating. I hold a Instructor Certificate with Airplane Single and Multi Engine, Glider, and Instrument.

4. When did you fly for the first time? What do you remember about that experience?

The first time I flew all I can remember is being strapped into the back seat of what I think was a Piper J5. The plane had a single seat belt for my

brother, sister and I. I don't even know if we flew or just taxied. Then as a teenager I got a couple of rides in a seaplane.

5. How long and what is your commute like to the airport (routes you take, time you leave home, any favorite places to stop along the way?)

My commute is about a half hour. Sometimes I stop at 7-11 in Front Royal for a coffee and I have been known to stop at Griffin Tavern in Flint Hill on my way home for a Guinness.

6. Who were/are your mentors are SSC?
I did a lot of flying with Bob Sallada, got my first wave flight with Shane, and did the license prep with Piet.

7. What do you like the most about flying in the Front Royal area?
It is close to home and I like to hang out at airports.

8. What is your more memorable glider flight? When did it happen? Why do you remember it?
I don't remember it.

9. Any close calls?
In gliders no. In airplanes I have had an engine failure, heading indicator failure in instrument conditions while climbing out (magnetic compass does not work when the aircraft is pitched up), and a student wrecked me on takeoff in a Champ.

10. What do you do for a living (or did, if you are retired)?
After being an electronic technician in the Air Force I spliced long distant telephone cables and spent a few years maintaining the cables, repeaters and microwave radios. The next 20 years were spent working as a programmer analyst mostly on mainframe computers.

11. Where did you grow up?
According to my many folks I have not grown up - however I did spend the first 18 years of my life in the great state of Maine.

12. What do you like the most about SSC?
The people. That is why I show up many days with no intention of flying.

13. What's on your gliding bucket list?
Just to keep flying

14. What do other members might not know about you?
I spent a number of years training and competing with dogs. Because of this I got to be photographed for the "Popular Dogs Series" St. Bernard issue and film for the TV special "Smithsonian: Designing Dogs"

15. What would you tell a student pilot who struggles to see the light at the end of the tunnel?
Fly both days every weekend if possible and choose instructors that make you feel good.



LANDING OUT – Part One
(A Rashomon Story)
Erik van Weezendonk's Version

Last month I wrote about flying in QQ, how/where/why to get training and become a rated glider pilot (aka private or commercial). This month I'm going to talk about "landing out", which is where my contest flight with Piet finished...in a land out. Here goes...

There are many firsts in one's life. First time you travel for vacation, first day of school, etc. As you age, some of the firsts are more memorable...like driving for the first time (legally) or maybe voting. Then, there is aviation...your first flight in an aircraft, first time you actually flew an aircraft and getting better-your first solo! Your first rating? Your first bonafide instrument approach to minimums. Lots of firsts. Well, for me, the airline pilot, the first happened in October last year. My first land out.

For the veterans, a land out is no big deal. It happens. For the newbies to soaring (I'm still one of those, truthfully), the land out is something to avoid. Mostly because I didn't want to inconvenience folks that would have to come get me. Additionally, the knowledge and feeling that I just ruined a day at Skyline because that glider is out of commission until it gets back to the club and reassembled. I have always avoided the land out because I didn't want to be "that guy". I'll touch on this again...in a future article! (Hey, don't like my reading? You write something for the newsletter!!)

The weather didn't look great for flying, but after a couple of cancelled days, the Contest Director (CD) decided we were going to launch the fleet. Piet and I were towed up to 2,000' AGL and circled in a gaggle (4-5 other gliders) waiting for the rest of the competitors to get airborne. Finally, it was time to go, and we left the start cylinder, looking for lift, but really trying to get downrange out on the course. We found a few thermals here and there, moved further east, and eventually were bogged down over York, PA. I think we got down to 1,500' AGL, had already picked out a land out site, when the birds rescued us. Watching 2-3, then all of the sudden 5-6, then more of these flying signposts gave us lift (and hope). I think it had been 15 minutes of looking at this ideal field, from a low altitude, that made me realize a land out wasn't so bad. The field was long, looked very smooth, great landing surface, and the only gotcha was an obstacle about 1/2 way down the length, but well off to the side. I think we had judged the length at about 3000 feet long and easily 300 feet wide. It would have been perfect...but again, the birds were our signpost and we thermalled up and up. I think we probably made it up to 3,000 AGL courtesy of those big birds.

So, back out on course, but then the clouds are starting to form. Not the good kinds of puffy cumulus or even just wisps of lift. This was a thin stratus layer, probably in the mid-teens, and it was looking kind of gray. We pressed on for a few more miles (total flight length was somewhere

between 1-2 hours, I think) and then were looking for a landout site. I was amazed that it was going to happen, and glad I was with Piet. Our field was green, had trees at both ends, but was wide enough to not worry about wingtip clearance. We discussed the approach end (Piet was going to dogleg the base to final leg to avoid the trees) and the plan. Eventually it was a foregone conclusion...here we go!

Piet flew a downwind leg, we sized up the field one last time, then he got the gear down and used the spoilers. Flew past the trees a bit, then turned base and then cut the turn to final to avoid the trees with plenty of room to spare. Arcing turn and on final, a nice field, reminded me of Bill Burner's farm strip, maybe a little bit wider even. We landed in 6 inch tall grass, rolled out, and we were able to take it to the end which had a conveniently placed dirt road. When we came to a stop, the wingtip dropped, and then it was a moment to gather our wits. With the exception of a grass landing and some bumps, it was not much different than landing at KFRR or Burner Field. It truly was a non-event.

Well, we weren't the only ones to land out. We had a dedicated recovery crew (Chris Carswell) that was ready to drive Piet's truck and the trailer. All Chris had to do was start the car and find us (which actually was pretty easy due to cell coverage in PA....maybe out West that would be more difficult?). Chris was there with the trailer 1/2 hour after we landed. He'd been watching us and thought he might have to come get us. No big deal...we had QQ packed up and were on the road back to MASA within an hour. All in all, a great experience and one that I don't apprehensively approach in the future. Next month....a bit more about land outs and the idea that it is a badge of honor, not a scarlet letter to be ashamed of.



LANDING OUT – Part Two
(A Rashomon Story)
Piet Barber



We got stuck over "Lake Meade" for 30 minutes. This made a brutal hit on our speed-on-course.

We started out at 1200 feet AGL, got to a low point of 961 feet AGL (right over that landable field), dug out to a dizzying height of 2501 feet AGL (we could see the whole world from there!) (3025 feet GPS altitude). We never got that high again, but got close, as we headed south toward Taneytown, MD.

Here's the URL with the 3D playback <https://seeyou.cloud/flight/public/6g96dkxNHaA-6h7a-hn--> and here's a URL with a 3D playback that has a better grip on our actual altitude over the ground: <https://ayvri.com/scene/gdkz6erljz/cl04q2o5g0001376ni52glrhe>

Here's the photo album of our landout shots: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/ucf37fCV3EYpJ9uc7>

Erik forgot the best part! We were in third place. If we had gone 4 more miles we would have made the minimum distance. If we made the minimum required distance, then the minimum number of contestants in the sports class would have made the minimum distance. If that happened, it would have been a day, instead of a canceled day. If that day had points that would have counted, we would have gone from 3rd place to 2nd place. Also, the contest wouldn't have been devalued, and my ranking would definitely have gone up as a #2 place in a sports class contest for a fully valued day.

All because we didn't go 2 miles further into the circle, and make it as far as we did (4 miles total). Boo!



SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

See something suspicious at the airport?? Don't be shy about reporting it! Yes, vandals or thieves DO occasionally damage aircraft at airports like ours!

Mike Christensen's Cessna Cardinal was broken into and had the avionics stolen while parked on the transient parking line at Charleston Executive Airport in South Carolina on February 9. A Garmin 650, and a BendixKing KX155 NavCom radio were stolen.

The avionics stack of Mike's Cardinal, now missing its Garmin 650 and Bendix NavCom KX155.



The break-in also resulted in airframe damage that included a bent window, forced entry into the pilot, co-pilot, and baggage compartment doors, and damaged door latches. The Cardinal's oil port door was also opened, and the dipstick was unthreaded. Concerned with possible oil contamination, Mike had his oil changed and oil



filter sent out for forensic analysis.

About two weeks earlier, another aircraft break-in and avionics theft occurred at the Warrenton-Fauquier Airport in Virginia, where an aircraft

awaiting maintenance from a local maintenance shop was robbed of its Garmin GNS 530 GPS/com and GNC 255 nav/com.



BOB SALLADA – MASTER MODELLER

Dan Ernst

If you haven't seen the newest museum piece in the Front Royal terminal building, you will soon. This is my side of the story about how it came to be there and what it represents.

Quite awhile ago I was flying with Bob Sallada on a nice day for what was either a backseat checkout or a Spring Check. As we were drifting back down, Bob said he had heard that I was a model airplane builder. I allowed as how this was true and one of my earliest memories is of building a model plane with my father in our cool basement on a hot summer day. Bob said he was considering embarking on a quest to build a model of all of the airplanes that he flew in the Navy. Once we got back on the ground there ensued a question and answer period. What scale did I favor? (1/48th) Did I use an air brush? (Yes, tricky to use and hard to master, but essential) Did I subscribe to a modeling magazine? (No, but I would buy them if an article was of interest) Bob asked if I would advise him.

I readily agreed because after all, he had spent a ton of time teaching me to fly a glider. But in fact the whole idea was just cat nip to me. I have always been a fan of naval aviation and had considerable close contact with it first as a student Naval Flight Officer and then as the intelligence officer in an F-14 squadron. I had begged rides in the F-14 and had four "cats" and "traps" in the tanker version of the A-6. I debriefed pilots after particularly challenging traps in bad weather and I had great respect for them. Bob had flown the F-8 Crusader early in his career and I had heard from other pilots who had flown it how challenging it was. I knew that as a long time test pilot Bob had flown a number of aircraft both to experience

their handling qualities and to actually test them for carrier suitability. So I was all in for a project that was truly special to me and thus began a collaboration that lasted many years. I sent Bob pictures of my completed models with extensive narration on the build and he told me about flying those airplanes and others now in his collection.

At one point Bob became frustrated with his cleaning lady breaking his models and dusting them himself. Previously, I had sent him a picture of my models in a case I had built. He asked if I would build a case for his models. He had a very specific place in his apartment it would go and I adapted a design from a woodworking book it fit that space. You may have guessed already, I like to make stuff. This was at the time I was moving south from Alexandria to the Tidewater area. It took a bit of time to get moved into our new house and to get my shop set up, but eventually I completed the case in March of 2020 and got it delivered to his place just before the Covid boom fell. I set up the case and left, never seeing his models in it until I saw the picture of Bob in the mask taken by Peter.

So as you may or may not know, Bob has had to move to an assisted living facility in the Roanoke area and could not take the case with him. He forwarded me an email trail among himself, Keith Hilton, Andrew Neilson and his daughter Lianne about bringing the case to Front Royal. I immediately interjected myself into the process because I had considerable experience moving 30+ models of my own from Alexandria. I developed a process, cribbed from the Air and Space Museum, to move the delicate models. If you haven't done it, it looks easy, but it is very hard. My system consists of Lowes small-sized moving boxes and 1/2 inch plywood bottoms. The boxes are 12 x 16 and as it turns out you can get 24 bottoms out of a single piece of plywood. Then I glued wooden blocks padded with foam arranged specifically for the model to support it and small screw eyes to tie them down. Having a standard box greatly speeds the process. For Bob's move I cut a pile of wood cutoffs into support blocks and

got a hot glue gun and raided every bit of leftover foam we had.

It took two trips to Gainesville to pack everything up and then the move day arrived. Andrew was tied up with a work obligation so Keith offered to rent a trailer and we arranged to meet at the condo. True to form, Keith was there early and had almost everything loaded by the time that I arrived. It is a pretty short drive out to Front Royal and when we got there an ad hoc operation was in full swing. It was nice to see a bunch of folks that I had not seen for awhile.

Keith unpacked the models and I placed them in



the case. I came prepared with super glue and accelerator, tooth picks and tweezers. As expected, several needed what I will call battlefield repairs when we took them out of the box. When we arrived we heard that Rock was not at the field and was in fact sick at home. So we picked a spot for it and hoped it would be OK. In the event he did come out to the field and approved the location.

Looking around in the case you get a tour in miniature of many significant aircraft of the 60s, 70s and 80s. It comprises lowly training aircraft to Mach busting jets and everything in between. And not just Navy ones. One of the most interesting is the FB-111B which the McNamara Whiz Kids tried to force the Navy to adapt into a carrier plane to save money. Bob flew the early evaluations of the aircraft flying the baseline version. He gave it low marks. It was a hard plane to fly and proved even harder from the deck of a ship. Vice Admiral Thomas Connolly was able to fight off the Pentagon at the cost of his career. Navy lore has it

that the last of the long line of Grumman carrier based fighters was named the Tomcat in his honor.

See <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/06/09/us/thomas-connolly-86-top-gun-admiral-dies.html>. Bob

also tested the A-7 ground attack aircraft. After wringing it out over Patuxent River, he flew it in combat in Viet Nam.

Bob started at the Purdue University Aero

program (Neil Armstrong was an alum) and went on to have a phenomenal flying career by any standard and only some of it is represented in the case: his total count was over 100! Once at Front Royal while waiting for the weather to clear, Bob told us he had stopped logging his flight time. I knew that high time pilots in my squadron had three logs books of flights. Bob said he had four. That's a lot of flights! Those models represent a flying career well spent as well as many good memories and I am sure a few scared shitless moments. And to think, he ended that phenomenal flying career with us at Skyline! Folks like me can only dream of a career like that, but I got a wonderful connection working with Bob and his models. So I hope that you enjoy them, I am sure Bob does, too.

(If you are wondering about the cracked mirror, I built the case in my unheated garage over the winter of 2019/2020. I worked with a local glass place to get the mirror to fit the back of the case precisely "as built" with no gaps. After an hour in



Bob's warm apartment, it cracked with a loud pop. I was mortified. We were headed out to lunch and Bob ushered me out saying it was no big deal, he loved the case anyway.)



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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