

SKYLINES

Newsletter of the Skyline Soaring Club for April, 2025

WINGS OF A SEASON

William Brian Wark

Glistening white wings of summer lift me through
The purple haze of late July,
Let me drink the cooling mist of cloud-base
And visit secret places in the sky.

Just in this single moment by my transport to
Shining heights that only eagles ply,
That I might breathe this lightning blue of mid-
year
And hold the bank with steady hand and eye.

Embrace the lightest nudge of stick or rudder
To keep the fickle yaw string flowing true,
To climb and circle deep the joy withing me,
Among these feathered streets so home to you.

For surely it will not always be summer
As soon the gray of autumn winds will blow
And bend too hard against the spars that hold me,
Besetting skills and loves gained long ago.

The distant firelight of spring is waning
And only dreams of flight too soon I'll know
The steady touch which this day smooths the
turning
Shall tremble in Decembers crusting snows.

So glistening white wings of summer I beg you
promise,
When that darkening winter night for me draws
nigh,
That you'll one last time life me beneath the
heavens
To that place where great soaring and old pilots
never die.



THE GATHERING OF EAGLES

Photos by Greg Ellis and Jim Perlmutter

Some highlights from the Club's annual
membership meeting . . .

Greg and Eric
– our parking
attendants!



And the man of
the year, Erik von
Weezendonk,
recipient of the
Gogos Award!



Just two of Piet
Barber's
accomplishments!



NEW MEMBERS JOINING IN 2025

Tim Moran

Christopher Billips

Christopher is a Civil Air Patrol cadet and an SSEF scholarship recipient.

Anatol Dziadek

Anatol is an SSEF scholarship recipient, and the son of inactive club member, Sobek Dziadek. He made a FAST flight last year with Ron Wagner and was immediately hooked.

Sam Gilbert

Sam is an SEL and glider-rated pilot who visited our operations early in the season. He learned to fly gliders at a small grass airport in Morgantown, PA, and is looking forward to getting back into soaring.

Kobe Kerns

Kobe is an SSEF scholarship recipient. He is currently preparing for his checkride for a single-engine private pilot's license, and will begin glider flight training with Skyline in May.

Fritz Treyz

Fritz is an SEL and glider-rated pilot who visited our operations last year and is excited to return to soaring.

Fritz Treyz was born in Tucson, Arizona to an Arizona pioneer family. He had a 26-year career in the US Army Armor branch in which he commanded units from platoon to brigade. After the Army, Fritz was an executive at Raytheon

Cindy
Lawyer and
Nick Meeder
for most
non-
Instructional
flights.



Uwe Jettmar
earned the most
OLC flights in the
club!



Two of Treasurer
Ralph Vawter's
favorite "big
spenders" –
Cindy Lawyer
and Nick Meader



Company
Airspace
Management and
Homeland
Security for 14
years. As the son
of a US Air Force
fighter pilot, he
has had a lifelong
interest in
aviation. He
presently enjoys
oil painting, and
his works have been exhibited at many galleries
and shows in northern Virginia.



MEET YOUR FELLOW CLUB MEMBER

Mike Osmers, Interviewed by Marcelo Morichi

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

A: Early last year

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

A: I've been a glider pilot since 1971 so 54 years! I soloed about 10 days after my 14th birthday. I learned at the Schweizer Soaring School in Elmira, NY. They had a camping area there and free use of the office/schoolhouse that also sported a small kitchen and shower.

What ratings do you have?

I have commercial glider, CFI A&I MEI, ATP with type ratings in Convair 580, B737, B757, B767, B777 and B787.

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

A: My first flight was for my 6th birthday from an airport that was located close to LaGuardia in New York.

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?)

A: I live in Bentonville which is south of Front Royal on 340 so my trip to FRR is 15 minutes in heavy traffic if I hit all the lights

Who were/are your mentors are SSC?

A: . I think 'mentor' might not be the right expression, but I think I connect very well with Ron Wagner, Hugh and John Noss who all have very interesting and helpful insights on our sport and operation.

What do you like the most about flying in the Front Royal area?

A: . I enjoy the visual landscape of the mountains framing the Shenandoah valley and how the river snakes its way through.

What is your more memorable glider flight? When did it happen? Why do you remember it?

A: As a new solo student, I had a magical experience of over an hour flight at the end of my training which kind of ticked the Schweizer people off, I totally lost track of time, it was amazing!

Any close calls? If so, please provide a brief description.

A: Last year I seriously misjudged my glide back to FRR in one of my first flights in Pee-Wee (it doesn't penetrate so well I found!) which resulted in landing on 10 during 28 operations to make it back. Goes to show you, always have pay close attention to your energy state!

What do you do for a living

A: I'm a retired United Airlines captain and line check pilot.



Where did you grow up?

A: I grew up mostly in central New Jersey, Freehold, Monmouth County.

What do you like the most about SSC?

A: SSC is a great group of friendly people, some of whom are extremely knowledgeable aviators who willing share their experience with all the members. The whole operation is very safe and professionally run which I really appreciate.

What's on your gliding bucket list?

A: Learning cross country flying.

What do other members might not know about you?

A: I'm building a Bushby Mustang 2 in my garage! Hopefully I'll finish it some day

What would you tell a student pilot who struggles to see the light at the end of the tunnel?

A: Fly smooth with a light grip in the stick. Think of flying as guiding the sailplane. It will fly very well by itself, you only have to guide it to where you want it to go. Most worthwhile things take constant work and attention but the completion of that work is hugely enjoyable and satisfying!



CARL CAN FLY!!

Piet Barber

Carl used to fly airplanes. Long ago. Life was different then—headsets, pattern work. Going cross-country didn't involve toll booths. But over the years, Carl drifted away from aviation. The medical expired. The logbook gathered dust. Eventually, he stopped renewing anything. His flight review is ancient history, and his wings were officially clipped.

Then one day, Carl noticed a glider soaring silently overhead. No engine. No noise. Just lift, grace, and freedom. And just like that, Carl was hooked again.

In his airplane days, he didn't even know that soaring was a thing. But now he's back—older, wiser, and wanting to learn to fly again... this time the glider way.

Legally, Carl has a few hurdles. He holds an airplane certificate, but it's not current. He doesn't have a glider rating. And since he hasn't completed a flight review in over 24 months—and hasn't added a new rating—he's not allowed to act as PIC of anything. Back in 2008, somebody asked the FAA legal counsel if a pilot in Carl's situation was able to get training in gliders and solo. The glider club wanted to treat Carl like a student pilot, rather than a rated pilot. The FAA's chief legal counsel ruled that Carl was not a student pilot, and therefore needed to comply with 61.56 -- The common interpretation by most people was that Carl needed a flight review in an airplane.

There are many pilots who have been in this situation, and were forced to go do several hours of remedial training in an airplane before they were allowed to solo a glider. For years, it appeared that pilots in Carl's situation gave up, deciding that going back to airplanes just wasn't worth it.

But here's where things get interesting.

There's a smart, FAA-approved path forward that helps Carl can receive glider flight training and satisfy his long-expired flight review at the same time: He can do this with the WINGS Pilot Proficiency Program.

Here's how it plays out.

Carl begins glider training with a certified flight instructor (CFI-G) at Skyline Soaring. As part of the club's curriculum, many of the key maneuvers—launches, tows, slips, pattern work, simulated rope breaks—are already structured to align with WINGS flight activities.

Even though Carl receives training like a brand-new student in gliders, he's still a certificated pilot. With his instructor's guidance, Carl begins completing three knowledge activities (online FAA

courses, safety seminars, etc.) and three glider flight activities, all logged through [FAASafety.gov](https://www.faa.gov/safety/education/training/wings).

Once those six WINGS activities are complete, Carl earns Basic Phase 1 of the WINGS program—and satisfies the 14 CFR §61.56 flight review requirement. That means the moment he finishes his WINGS training, he's also currently qualified to act as PIC. No separate flight review needed. No need to get his old headset out, dust off his airplane logbook and go climb into a Cessna. He can do it all in gliders, and still be legal.

It's a win-win: Carl gets structured training, documented proficiency, and a seamless return to the cockpit. Plus, the WINGS program lets him train at his own pace—across multiple weekends, even with different instructors. No stress, no rush, just solid instruction.

Skyline Soaring Club actively supports this pathway. In fact, it's highlighted on our FAA WINGS Activity page as an ideal option for reactivating lapsed pilots who want to soar. Please take a moment to go to our public-facing website, <https://www.skylinesoaring.org/documents/faq-wings-activity> to find more details and scenarios where pilots can use WINGS activities to supplement or replace the traditional flight review.

Carl's story could be any airplane pilot's story. If you're a former pilot, curious about gliders, and wondering how to get airborne again without starting from scratch—consider following Carl's lead. The sky isn't just calling.

It's whispering: thermal's good today... where are you?



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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