



The President's Corner

It's hard to believe that August is upon us! I'd like to highlight an opportunity to volunteer with the club as Treasurer. Ralph has done a phenomenal job and has really modernized how Skyline's finances are handled. But now he deserves a well-earned break. He has written a comprehensive "how-to" for his successor, and it could be you! If you're interested, please reach out to Ralph for more information.

I'd also like to mention a couple of other notes about the airport. First, the keypad and fobs have been replaced. If you had a fob, there is a key card with your name on it waiting at the airport. For other club members, we are working with the airport to get additional key cards issued—please be patient and know that we're working on it! Second, there will be runway repaving happening at KFRR likely sometime this fall. We are working on alternate options for operations, but we need your input! Please be on the lookout for an email with a survey link.

Lastly, we wrapped up a successful Week of Training earlier this month. Check out Fritz's article later on in this issue of Skylines!

Notes from the Board

At its July 23 meeting, the Skyline Soaring Club Board reviewed several important operational and financial items. The Board voted unanimously to purchase a new wheel assembly for one of the ASK-21s based on Joel's report, choosing the full assembly rather than replacing individual parts. The Treasurer also reviewed recent cost pressures, including higher fuel and maintenance expenses, and the Board approved increasing tow plane rental rates from \$90 to \$100 per hour and increasing the glider hookup fee from \$25 to \$30, effective August 1.

The Board also continued planning for the expected KFRR runway paving project, which may require a 30-60 day closure with limited advance notice. Possible alternate operating locations discussed included Burner Field and Tom Feaster's field in Petersburg, though both would involve logistical challenges. Other updates included Andrew McGowan taking over as the club's new Safety Officer, planning for the fall Burner Day on October 24, new airport gate access cards, and continued maintenance attention to tow ropes, batteries, and club aircraft.

Safety

I would like to introduce myself. For those of you I haven't met, I am Andrew (Andy) McGowan. I recently volunteered to take on the role of Safety Officer for the Skyline Soaring Club. I started flying in late 2019 and earned my glider pilot certificate in 2024. I live in Herndon and retired from the federal government in 2022, though I continue to work as a government contractor.



I am currently reviewing our club safety documents and will soon be soliciting your thoughts on safety within our club and at the Front Royal-Warren County Airport (KFRR). We have done an excellent job maintaining a safety-first mindset, and we must continue to build on this foundation. If you ever have a concern, please speak up and tell someone—whether it is me, a CFI-G, a DO, an ADO, or a club board member. We need to look out for each other. Because safety should be an ongoing conversation, we are introducing a dedicated safety section in each issue of the Skylines newsletter. While these updates may not always be long or profound, they will serve to make us pause and think about how we can actively reduce hazards.

In this issue, I want to highlight two important items:

- **SSF Annual Report:** Please review the latest Soaring Safety Foundation (SSF) Annual Safety Report, which covers the period from November 1, 2024, to October 31, 2025. You can access it directly through the Soaring Safety Foundation website (https://www.soaringsafety.org/accidentprev/SSF_2025_annual_report.pdf). While we typically review these data during our yearly safety meeting, it is well worth reading now to understand our industry's long-term and annual trends. These trends will frame our upcoming newsletter conversations.
- **KFRR Operational Growth:** Most of you have noticed that KFRR has experienced a significant increase in operational tempo over the last few years. The airport is thriving. However, our airspace has become much more crowded with general aviation traffic,

flight instruction, skydiving, drone activity, ultralights, and rotary-wing operations. The county has invested more resources into KFRR, a growth trend that will undoubtedly continue. Alongside new hangar construction, you have likely noticed new signage along the taxiways—such as the restriction on run-ups at the hold-short line. As the airport grows, we glider pilots must remain highly mindful of how we integrate into this changing landscape to keep everyone safe.

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you all at the FBO!

The Week of Training 2026

Camaraderie, Learning, and Soaring:

[A story by Fritz Treyz]

Some moments in a glider pilot's life stay with us because they reveal why we fly. The Week of Training (WoT) 2026 was one of those moments. It reflected the camaraderie, focus, and shared purpose that define Skyline Soaring Club.



Fritz's first solo in 37 years!

Our club is more than a collection of individual pilots. It is a close-knit community united by a love of flying and a desire to learn. During the WoT, members had a meaningful opportunity to meet one another, understand how the club operates, and concentrate on glider flight training.

A Culture of Lifelong Learning: The best pilots remain students throughout their flying careers. They know there will always be more questions to ask, more skills to refine, and more judgment to develop.

At Skyline Soaring Club, Piet Barber embodies that mindset. Since the beginning, he has organized and led the Week of Training each year, recognizing that soaring—like any serious sport—draws on the human drive to learn, grow, face challenges, and excel.

The Week of Training brings together many factors that shape a pilot's experience:

- Weather, terrain, and altitude
- Speed, observation, and risk management
- Luck, courage, and even fear

Origins of the Week of Training:

Piet's first glider flight was in a Schweizer 2-33 on August 6, 1986, when he was 14 years old. When asked where the idea for the WoT came from, he pointed to the lasting impression made by the Civil Air Patrol National Flight Academy in Mattoon, Illinois. Watching how the Civil Air Patrol ran its flight camp gave him practical ideas for organizing a focused week of training.



From Front Royal to Petersburg: Skyline's first WoT, held in 2009, was led by Bob Sallada and John Noss. In its early years, the training was loosely organized—more like a series of ad hoc flying days than a structured program.

Running a week of training from Front Royal is logistically easier, so holding the WoT in Petersburg, West Virginia, raises an obvious question: Why fly there?

Why Petersburg Made Sense: Skyline Soaring Club has hosted Wave Camps in Petersburg, West Virginia, since the 1990s. The airport was already familiar to the club, and U.S. Soaring Hall of Famers Tom Knauff and Doris Grove had been holding Wave Camps there as early as the 1980s. Petersburg Airport sits near Cave Mountain, where local terrain and weather often create favorable lift conditions for glider flying. The airport also offers a campground with restroom and shower facilities.

The idea of bringing the Week of Training to Petersburg took shape around March 2017 when both Piet Barber and Peter Maynard proposed it while attending a Petersburg Wave Camp. At Front Royal, the club would be fortunate to launch four gliders an hour, limiting each student's training time. Petersburg offered a stronger training setting: Its 5,000-foot runway allowed a glider to land in the first third, connect to a waiting tow plane, and relaunch within 30 seconds without moving off the runway.

The first Petersburg WoT began on July 10, 2017, and proved successful. Flight activity increased steadily through the week:

- Day one: 36 flights
- Day two: 41 flights

- Day three: 44 flights
- Final day: 50 flights

Benefits of Training Away from Home Field: Holding the Week of Training in Petersburg offers important advantages. Students, instructors, tow pilots, and other members stay together after flying rather than scattering at day's end. That shared time creates more opportunities for discussion, review, and connection. Flight recaps and activity reviews can take place at a nearby campsite or in the Petersburg FBO, strengthening both learning and camaraderie.

Another major advantage is consistency of instruction. Pairing each student with a dedicated instructor throughout the WoT supports steady progress; in earlier WoTs, students often flew with a different instructor each day.

Daily Operations and Teamwork: The first day began with roll call in front of the hangar at 9:00 a. m. sharp. Piet Barber assigned each student a number and instructor, then reviewed the week's goals and coordinating instructions.

Stephanie Zilora, President of Skyline Soaring, served as "Air Boss" for the WoT operations, an important position of leadership and safety. She managed and coordinated the key safety and operational authorities of the air and ground.

She followed Piet with a weather briefing and an overview of the operations flow. First flights usually began around 10:00 a.m., after the gliders were prepared and moved to the launch point.

From the beginning, it was clear that glider training is a team effort. Each launch depended on the coordinated work of:

- Instructors
- Wing walkers
- Assistant duty officers
- Tow pilots
- Students and other volunteers

Training Challenge: Limited Flight Time: One of the main challenges in glider training is limited flight time. Because students are often not using lift to remain airborne, each flight is generally limited to the glide from release altitude back to the airfield.

Shorter flights mean students need more total launches to complete the required training. On a typical flight, there may be time for only a few

repetitions of a skill before preparing to land, which can make it harder to build proficiency.

Stephanie strongly believes the WoT is worthwhile. She explained that, in Petersburg, students typically complete 14 to 18 flights with the same instructor over four or five days. At Front Royal, by contrast, a student might fly three times a day, two to three times a month, often with different instructors. The WoT helps Skyline Soaring students progress faster by reducing the time between flights and providing repeated, back-to-back opportunities to practice, receive feedback, and improve.

Instruction, Safety, and Skill Development: The WoT gave instructors time to assess each pilot's readiness to solo while reinforcing safety, knowledge retention, and skill development. Students worked with assigned instructors and discussed key topics, including:

- Flight fundamentals and aerodynamics
- Local weather conditions and interpretation at Petersburg
- Preflight procedures
- Emergency procedures
- Club safety protocols

Together, these experiences strengthened the quality of glider training and supported a safe flying environment.

Student Perspective: Student Masha Nizheberskaya described the value of the week well: *"Throughout the week of training, I got a lot of back-to-back experience and feedback. We would land, my instructor would tell me what to correct, and almost immediately I would get an opportunity to try again. What stuck with me most was how everyone worked together as a community to make the week of training happen."*

Chris Billips had his 16th birthday at Petersburg and made his first solo!

Aerotow Experience and Safety: Students also had the opportunity to fly in the Husky with Andrew Neilson and experience an aerotow from the tow plane's perspective. Instructors emphasized that the glider pilot shares responsibility for the safety of both aircraft. The greatest risk occurs just after the glider lifts off. If the glider climbs too high before the tow plane is airborne, it can pull the tow plane's tail upward—a condition known as "kiting"—while the tow plane

is still on or near the ground, increasing the risk of an accident.

Launch Operations and ADO Duties: Successful aerotow launching at the WoT depended heavily on the work of the Assistant Duty Officers (ADOs), Jim Perlmutter and Chris Weurker.

Jim explained that ADO duties at Petersburg differ significantly from those at Front Royal. At Petersburg, the team manages two tow ropes, which must be laid out parallel and close to the launch point at the start of operations. After each landing, the ropes must be retrieved quickly and prepared for the next launch.

The ropes took significant wear as they were dragged through tall, often wet grass. During one takeoff, a rope broke near the nose hookup. Students saw the incident firsthand, making it a valuable learning experience.

Jim and Chris noted that the operation is busy and recommended assigning two experienced ADOs. They also enjoyed teaching Wing Walker and ADO duties to students when they were not flying, especially younger students.

A Strong Finish for the WoT 2026: The Week of Training 2026 in Petersburg, West Virginia, was a tremendous success! Every launch reflected the coordinated effort of members working together, and the training environment encouraged pilots to share knowledge, learn from one another, and support each other through mentoring and teamwork.

Despite challenging weather, the Petersburg WoT produced 157 flights. Members at every level had a supportive setting to strengthen their flying, build proficiency, and continue growing as pilots, while several pilots soloed and also completed PW-5 checkouts. As is tradition, Piet Barber presented the students and attendees with a WoT patch that he designed to mark the event. The club is already looking forward to Week of Training 2027! This experience strengthened the close-knit community that keeps Skyline Soaring Club thriving.

On behalf of all the students and participants, I would like to thank Piet Barber, Stephania Zilora, and ALL the club members who made "Week of Training 2026" a success.

Instructor Talk

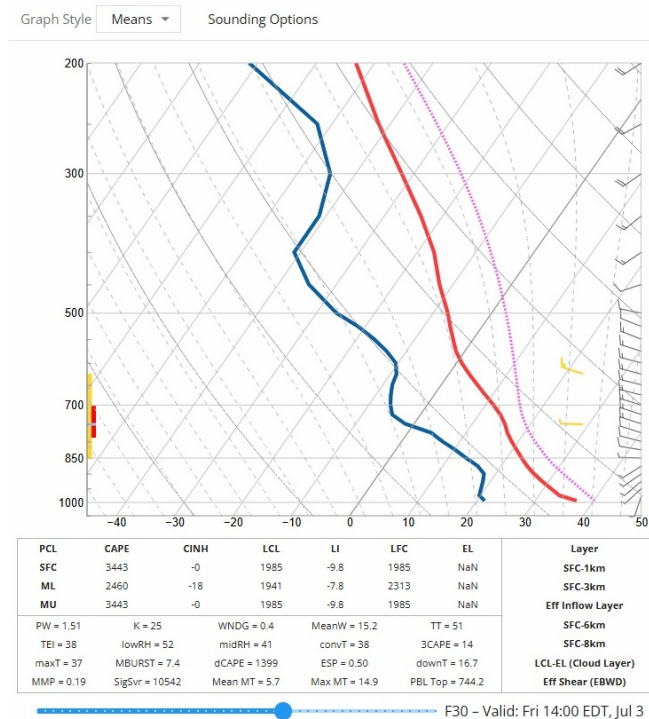
Food for Thought—Skew-T/Log-P Charts, Source and Terminology:

[John Noss, Chief Instructor]

For many years, glider pilots who were serious about understanding the daily soaring weather forecast would turn to interactive Skew-T/Log-P charts, easily available for free at rucsoundings.noaa.gov, but that site and its products were decommissioned several years ago. On my very first visit to Skyline Soaring in 2008 (after many years away from gliding), I vividly recall the DO (Jim Garrison) laying out a printed Skew-T chart on the card table and offering to explain it to anybody who wanted to know more. I was impressed. I had not seen a Skew-T chart since a meteorology course in 1971, which I had dismissed at the time as being silly and irrelevant. I have now grown to appreciate them. Today, there are improved but starkly different offerings that are typically difficult to find on government sites, there are a few good ones on some free sites, and a few on paid soaring-specific sites such as SkySight and XCSkies. There is also a lot of new terminology that caught me off guard recently, so I made an effort to discover what it all meant.

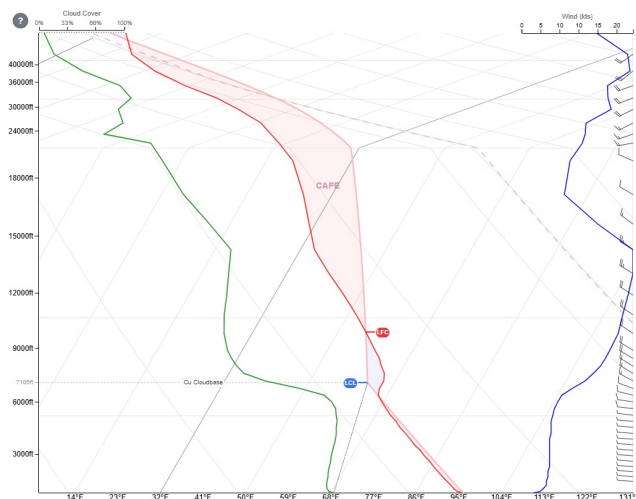
To start with, where can you find a Skew-T chart? I've put a handful of links on the club weather page. There is also a link to a tutorial, and a chart to estimate standard-day altitude (feet) from pressure (millibars), which is the vertical axis on a Skew-T chart. SkySight and XCSkies both require a paid subscription, and have the Skew-T charts, though without much text to accompany them. Both have other excellent displays that are much easier to understand for soaring conditions, plus graphical thermal and wave and ridge predictions. They also show altitude in feet, so you don't have to look it up. On the official NOAA sites, the DESI product (experimental but excellent) gives a 48-hour look ahead with lots of text details, and the READY products (which are a bit tricky to navigate) offer a choice of models and a 10-day look ahead and an option to generate an animation over a time period (like the upcoming weekend). The free Tropical Tidbits site is easy to navigate, and looks forward up to 16 days, and has lots of text details. The free Windy site has a right-click dropdown menu option for a sounding (Skew-T) forecast up to 15 days ahead. There are other obscure NOAA sources

with even more detail, but only for the last sounding results, not as a modeled forecast. Many of these products offer the choice to switch between different weather models, and the variation is sometimes extreme, and always worth checking.



Editor's note: This figure can be enlarged for improved clarity.

Now let's talk about terminology. I noticed recently that there are a lot of relatively new abbreviations that show up on some Skew-T products, and I was embarrassed that I didn't know them all, so I dug deeper. I can recall a day at Front Royal when I launched in the back seat with just a few clouds in the sky, and before our planned release it was raining so hard we could barely see the ground. It turned out there was an extremely high CAPE number (Convective Available Potential Energy), and in a few minutes conditions went from just a few clouds to a torrential downpour, with no warning from an approaching front or line of clouds. That's how I became a believer in checking the numbers. CAPE used to be just a single number, now there are many different variants, depending on the parcel of air that is evaluated as it is moved upward (or downward) based on the Skew-T chart modeled forecast. <https://forecast.weather.gov/glossary.php> is a great place to start decoding obscure abbreviations. Here are some details and definitions, taken from multiple



Editor's note: This figure can be enlarged for improved clarity.

public sources:

In meteorology, convective available potential energy (CAPE) is a measure of the capacity of the atmosphere to support the vertical movement of air that can lead to cloud formation and storms (expressed in joules/kg). CAPE is calculated by vertically integrating the upwards buoyant force between where the parcel first becomes warmer than its surroundings (the level of free convection, or LFC) to where it eventually becomes cooler than its surroundings (the equilibrium level, or EL).

SBCAPE, MLCAPE, and MUCAPE are all measures of atmospheric instability that meteorologists use to predict thunderstorm strength and severe weather. They differ strictly by the exact “parcel” of air chosen to calculate the energy.

SBCAPE (Surface-Based CAPE) measures the instability of an air parcel resting directly on the ground. It is highly sensitive to daytime heating, often giving the highest CAPE values. However, it can overestimate instability if a storm ingests air from higher up. When meteorologists talk about standard, single CAPE, they are almost always referring to SBCAPE.

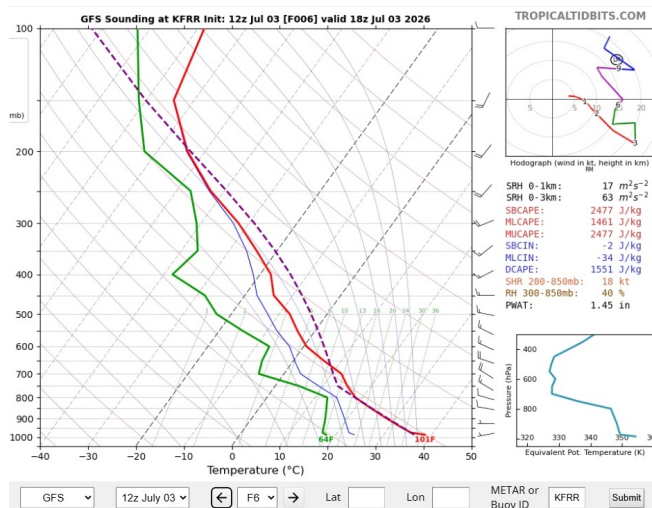
MLCAPE (Mixed-Layer CAPE) averages the temperature and moisture of the lowest 100 millibars (about 3,000 feet) of the atmosphere. This smooths out small, localized variations and often provides the most reliable and realistic estimate of the energy available to a typical thunderstorm.

MUCAPE (Most-Unstable CAPE) scans the lowest 300 millibars to find the single parcel of air with the most buoyancy. It is incredibly useful for

predicting “elevated” thunderstorms that develop above a stable layer of cool air near the ground. MUCAPE may be a more appropriate measure of the buoyant energy available to a thunderstorm with inflow originating well above the surface. MUCAPE is often the same as SBCAPE, but not always.

SBCAPE is typically higher than MLCAPE in situations supporting thunderstorm development, and MUCAPE is by definition equal to or greater than SBCAPE and MLCAPE.

3CAPE (often written as 3km CAPE) stands for Convective Available Potential Energy in the lowest 3 kilometers (roughly 10,000 ft) of the atmosphere. While total CAPE measures the cumulative buoyancy available to a rising air parcel through the entire depth of the atmosphere, 3CAPE focuses strictly on the immediate low-level environment (from the surface up to 3,000 meters).



Editor's note: This figure can be enlarged for improved clarity.

A minimum of 1,000 J/kg of CAPE (Convective Available Potential Energy) is generally required to fuel the strong updrafts needed to produce severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. The potential for severe weather scales with CAPE values as follows:

- Below 1000 j/kg: Weak instability; low thunderstorm potential.
- 1000 to 2500 j/kg: Moderate instability; severe thunderstorms possible.
- 2500 to 4000 j/kg: Strong instability; dangerous storms likely.
- Above 4000 j/kg: Extreme instability; explosive supercell development.

The LCL (Lifting Condensation Level) is the level at which a parcel becomes saturated. It is a reasonable estimate of cloud base height when parcels experience forced ascent.

The numerical methodology underlying CAPE can also be performed for portions of the atmosphere where an air parcel would be denser and cooler than its surroundings. These areas have negative buoyancy, resulting in the force of buoyancy acting downwards. Integrating within these areas, typically between the surface and the LFC, results in a negative value also known as convective inhibition (CIN). Additional upward forces are required for an air parcel to rise against negative buoyancy, with CIN providing a measure of the work required to overcome negative buoyancy and reach a freely buoyant height.

A similar quantity is downdraft CAPE (DCAPE), which integrates the negative buoyancy potentially imparted on an initially saturated parcel as it descends from some arbitrary height to the ground. This measure is used to quantify the potential for downbursts.

LI stands for Lifted Index. It is a stability index used by meteorologists to measure the stability of the atmosphere and assess the potential for thunderstorms and severe weather. The Lifted Index calculates the temperature difference between the surrounding environment and a parcel of air that has been lifted from the surface up to the mid-levels of the atmosphere (specifically to the 500 millibar pressure level, which is roughly 18,000 feet up). Because of how the formula is set up, negative numbers indicate instability:

- 0 to 4 = Stable, Thunder-storms unlikely.
- 0 to -2 = Marginally unstable, weak thunder-storms possible.
- -3 to -5 = Moderately unstable, thunder-storms probable (some severe).
- -6 or lower = Extremely unstable.

As always, sorry if I made your head hurt... ☺

[Note: John Noss has also provided a challenge problem, which I have included below as this month's challenge problem. Editor]

Diagnosing Power Issues:

[Joel Hough, Instructor and Rope Meister]

This is a history of trouble shooting a possibly

intermittent battery problem. April 14, 2026, Joel Hough flew with an instructor and one of the batteries did not work in N321K. This is ok, because there are 2 batteries which supply power to the radio, vario, and transponder fuses in the upper left (Fig. A). Switching the power between the 2 batteries is done with a 3 position switch in the upper left. Up selects battery 1, middle selects off, and down selects battery 2.

John Noss noticed that N341KS would only power either the radio and vario, or power the transponder, by switching batteries. Joel put both batteries in N341KS, and had no problem. Next load tested both batteries in N341KS, and did not see any problem. N341KS is wired differently with One battery powering the radio and vario, and the other battery powering the transponder. So losing one battery unpowers the radio and vario, and losing the other battery unpowers the transponder (Fig. B). The battery discharger lets you pick a constant current mode which was set for 1.8 Amps (A) and later 2.0 A (Fig. C).



Figure A. N321K Battery 1/2 Switch, Vario, Radio, and Transponder



Figure B. N321K transponder, Radio and vario in instrument panel.



Figure C. Battery and Battery Discharge Setup.

The discharger can be controlled by a phone App, or by push buttons and a scroll button on the discharger. Both batteries load tested good by

staying well above the cutoff voltage of 12 volts (Figs. D, E and F).

The lithium iron phosphate batteries have a discharge cycle life of 3,000 to 5,000 discharges. So, at 100 discharges a year the batteries should last 30 years with proper care.

So, after Joel packed up his tools to go home. He remembered that he might have gotten the wrong glider, and he recalled flying with an instructor. So, N341KS's batteries were tested, and one battery did not supply any power (Figs. G and H).

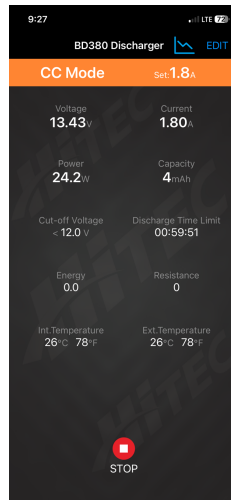


Figure D.

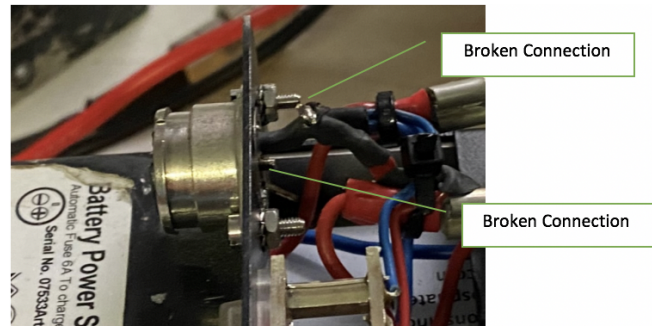


Figure H. Zoom of Broken Connection

intermittently transmitted.

The repaired battery plot looks good as it is well above 12 volts to operate the instruments (Figs. I and J).



Figure I. Discharge Testing Repaired Battery

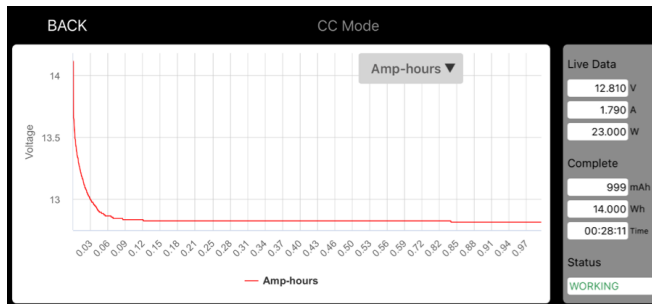


Figure E. First N321K Battery Discharge Plot

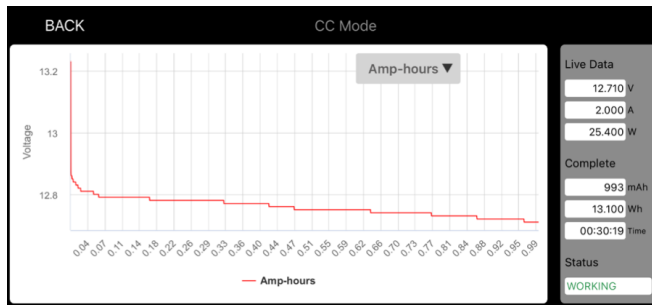


Figure F. Second N321K Battery Discharge Plot

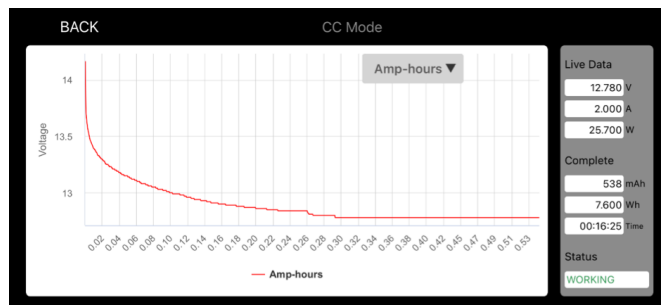


Figure J. Repaired Battery Discharge Plot

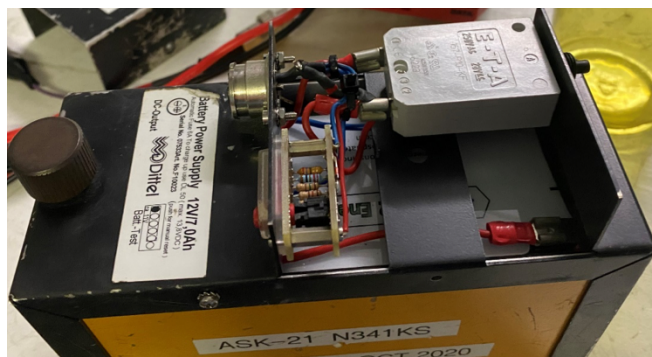


Figure G. Battery with Broken Connection

The connection looked like it was in the correct place but easily pulled apart. Power may have been

Lessons learned:

1. Report equipment issues as soon as possible at <https://skylinesoaring.org/logsheets/maintenance/>.
2. Have discharge testing equipment. For example, sometimes a multimeter is not sufficient as if the power circuit can only support 0.5 A the radio will receive well but will not transmit well. Also, a multimeter will show that the voltage is good.
3. Color code the batteries, so that batteries are less likely to be installed in an incorrect

glider. Installing functional batteries in different gliders has no effect on operations. However, defective batteries are harder to track down, when the defective batteries are moved to different gliders.

- 4. Batteries could be keyed to only work in one wing of one glider, but this reduces flexibility and people might try to force a battery that used to fit.

Kudos

- ★ Kudos to Piet Barber for a great (in his words) Week of Raining. Despite the weather, the “crew” managed to perform 157 training flights with some notable events cited here.
- ★ Tom Brice and Fritz Treyz re-soloed after long soaring hiatuses.
- ★ Chris Billips made his first solo flight and received his A Badge at the WoT. Chris also received his B badge for the flight-of-the-day (1:17) in the PW-5 on July 25 with low ceiling and rather poor lift.
- ★ Chris Billips and Sebastian Noessner made their first flights in the PW-5.
- ★ Anatol Dziadek soloed the PW-5.
- ★ Kudos to Shane Neitzky for contributing several photos to the July edition of Soaring magazine.



Jim's Shempp-Hirth Cirrus (The 18 meter Cirrus, not the standard). One of the very early fiberglass gliders, this picture was also the centerfold in Soaring magazine some years back. When the ship was first designed in the 1960s, there was actual concern about how to get such a slick ship down. So in addition to very effective spoilers, they added the dragchute.

A: Private ASELI, Commercial/CFI glider.

Q: *When did you experience flight for the first time? What do you remember about that experience?*

A: June 1965. I was working as a service camper at a private summer camp and one of the counselors had a J-3 and took me for a ride in it.

Q: *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: ca. 1:15. I-81 north from Harrisonburg.

Q: *Who were/are your mentors at SSC? Who are the SSC members who made a lasting impression on you?*

A: I didn't ever have what might be called a “mentor.” But I was influenced by people like Bela Gogos.

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

A: Got my diamond altitude in North Carolina in the lee wave off Mt. Mitchel. Liked hearing Atlanta center redirecting airliners around me at 23,000.

Q: *What did you do for a living?*

A: Sigh. Pharmacist, college professor, science advisor to Illinois state assembly, manager of science education programs at the National Science Foundation, Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute, Director Mt. Weather Special Facility.

Q: *Where did you grow up?*

Meet Our Member: Jim Kellett

[An interview by Marcelo Marichi]

Q: *When did you join SSC? How did you learn about the club?*

A: 1991, I was one of the founders. I was also part owner of the Warrenton Soaring Center, and negotiated the sale of WSC equipment to the club.

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

A: 61 years, Capitol Area Soaring Schools, Leesburg VA.

Q: *What ratings do you have?*

A: Spartanburg, SC.

Q: *What do you like the most about SSC?*

A: Equipment, training and safety record.

Q: *What might other members not know about you?*

A: I live in a continuing care retirement center (been here since 2009).

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

A: Hang in there.

Q: *You held leadership roles at SSC and have been an active member for many years: What advice do you have for future club members?*

A: Learn to adapt. The sport I started in 60 years ago is totally different today.

Q: *What made you become a flight instructor? What did you learn from your experience teaching others how to fly gliders?*

A: Ha! I think I didn't even learn to fly until I became a CFI! I honestly can't say what drove me to become a CFI, it just seemed to be the normal next step.

Meet the Meisters

The Skyline Soaring Club has roughly 100 active members some 30 of whom volunteer extra time beyond their regularly scheduled duties (DO, ADO, towpilot, DI) to keep the club functioning smoothly by performing a myriad of functions to assure that our equipment is safe and operational and that our bills are paid on time. That's nearly one-third of our membership enabling all of us to enjoy our sport. I was recently asked to recognize these people in this newsletter. But there are so many that I have decided to break the group into subgroups that enable me to provide more information than just a list of persons and positions. In this month's newsletter, I will introduce our meisters and follow up in future months with the chiefs, the instructors, the board and miscellaneous others. [Editor]

Andrew Neilson —

Towplane Meister: My main task is to coordinate maintenance, repair, and inspections for the towplanes. I have to keep track of when annuals are required,



transponder/ADSB checks, and act as a central contact for anything that crops up that needs to be taken care of. I keep an eye on the condition of the airplanes, noting tire and brake wear, when oil changes are due, and coordinate with Nick Bousquet (our A&P) when repairs are needed that are beyond my ability to handle, either legally or not being trained to do the fix.

I do perform tire/tube changes, oil changes, and have been trained and "blessed" by Nick to change brake pads. He still has to sign off on the brake work, but I am able to actually do the work.

It's very helpful if you like to work with your hands and have some mechanical aptitude. I've always done a lot of my own work on cars and motorcycles, so airplanes were a natural fit in that department. It does draw a lot of my time. I've spent many a Friday at KFRR doing what needs to be done.

Joel Hough — K-Meister and Tow Rope Meister:

For the K-meister: Keith Hilton, the 5-a.m. both ASK21s preflighted and taking care of the K's

as if it his own K-meister left a lasting impression on me. As he announced his leaving, I asked myself what could I do for the person who has gotten me and probably every student club member a few extra flights early in the morning. So, I helped out when I could. He appreciates it when you keep the bottom of the K clean. I have a Mechanical Engineering degree, am an amateur bike mechanic, own a Fluke meter and have done factory automation electrical work, so it is not a big stretch.

For the tow rope meister: Once upon a tow rope, I made a casual rushed inspection of a tow rope. Dave Boehmer Senior, had his 2 sons, a brother and himself depending on the tow rope. Dave reinspected the tow rope by pulling about 2 feet, while feeling both sides, visually inspecting one side, and then flipping the rope over to inspect the other side. I inspect the ropes that way ever since. Have you read my tow rope dissertation?



Kevin Barrett — PW-5 Meister (and alternate Rope Meister): Some people choose their favorite glider because it's the fastest, the fanciest, or has the best glide ratio. I chose the PW-5 because someone had to. As PW-5 Meister, my goal is straightforward: keep the aircraft safe, reliable, and ready to fly. That means coordinating inspections and maintenance, fixing the little things before they become big things, and making sure our club's PW-5 continues to give members an affordable, enjoyable way to build skills and simply have fun. I also like that the role lets me give something back to Skyline Soaring. Every club depends on members who are willing to look after the equipment we all share, and I'm happy to do my part.



Robert Jacobsen — Discus Meister: The meisters responsibility to the club is to ensure the gliders under your stewardship are always ready to be flown by the club membership. This means all paperwork is current and in place, all maintenance has been performed, to include annual inspections. Associated parachutes have been inspected and repacked within the last 180 days. The meisters regularly inspect the glider's to ensure that they are airworthy and safe to fly. This means checking airframe and controls, tires etc. and doing (or arranging for) the necessary repairs.



Fritz Treyz — Merchandise Meister: The aim is to boost Skyline Soaring Club's presence with gear that bridges practical flight needs and pilot camaraderie. It is all about capturing the spirit of flight and turning it into something tangible that members can take



home, wear at local airports, and community events. From sleek apparel featuring soaring, caps, logbooks, decals, cups, and patches. The items selected will reflect the practicality, elegance and thrill of gliding.

Steve Paris — Gator Meister: Steve Paris is responsible for general maintenance on the gators. Many others have contributed to keeping the gators running also, big thanks to Tom Flynn for diagnosing and replacing a clogged carb earlier this summer. Thanks to all club members for your commitment to the continued safe operation of our ground tow vehicles.



Ertan Tete — Field Computer Meister: As the Field Computer Meister, my main responsibility is keeping the club laptop up and running. This requires minimal time and primarily involves installing software updates, ensuring network connectivity is configured, and managing access to Manage2Soar, our new web-based records management software developed by Pier Barber. Prior to adopting Manage2Soar at the beginning of this year, I had to update and rebuild the old logsheet program every couple of years—a task that is no longer necessary.



Ertan is the one on the left.

Additionally, I maintain the club webcam installed at the FBO, which is accessible via Manage2Soar. Since connecting the FBO router to an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) a couple of years ago, network connectivity has been very stable. On rare occasions following an extended power outage, the router loses its port forwarding rules and requires manual reconfiguration. Beyond that, the webcam requires virtually no maintenance.

Ken Ring — Hangar Meister

Cindy Lawyer — Merchandise Meister

Harold Chadsey — Trailer Meister

Challenge Problem

As yet, no one has sent a response to the July Challenge Problem to me. But this is a real problem that each of you might experience. I have, twice. Once, soaring at KFRR in the Grob 103. What occurred is pretty much exactly what I describe. I won't tell you what I did, but leave it to you to decide what you might do when this happens to you. So, I'll leave the problem open for another month and "strongly" encourage instructors to give their responses as well. To remind you, the following is July's challenge problem:

It's a beautiful, cloudless day with 100-mile visibility and a 15-kt WNW wind on the surface at KFRR. In a K-21 (no GPS nav), you take a tow to 4,000 feet AGL and connect with wave. Ten minutes later as you are climbing through 8,000 MSL, you are suddenly enveloped by a cloud that developed out of nowhere. You push the stick forward and soon emerge in front of a lenticular cloud climbing at 6 kts, still with excellent visibility in the clear. You continue climbing above the clouds to 12,000 MSL, but suddenly it closes out beneath you with no visible holes through which you might descend. What do you do?

- A:** Call ATC on 121.5 and declare an emergency.
- B:** Immediately trim to 55 kts, pull full spoiler and perform a benign spiral to beneath the clouds.
- C:** Use the map function on your cell phone for navigation to KFRR and descend through the clouds over the field.
- D:** Call Potomac Approach on 120.45, describe your situation and ask for clearance and vectors to beneath the clouds over KFRR.
- E:** Decide to stay high until you find a hole through which you can descend.
- F:** Other—describe your personal plan.

The following is the real August Challenge Problem provided by John Noss: Pick a random airport anywhere in the world at mid-afternoon (their local time), pull up a Skew-T chart for that location and time, and guess at what the cloud base and soaring conditions might be. Then, pull up the actual reported conditions for the same time, and see how you did. For a few examples of what Skew-T charts look like in comparison to actual weather reports and photo of the skies, see https://noss.ws/ssc/SkewT_Photos.pdf.

Email your answers to both problems to me together with a corresponding explanation, ghazelrigg@verizon.net. I'll publish answers anonymously in the August newsletter. I especially encourage all student pilots to submit a response. These relate to things you may need to know to save your life someday. Non-SSC members are welcome to respond.

The Photo Gallery

I'm devoting this month's Photo Gallery to pictures of the 2026 Week of Training. Credit goes to Fritz Treyz for the photos. Several additional photos are posted on the club website (<https://www.skylinesoaring.org>).



The student pilots (José Aviles, Masha Nizheberskaya, Chris Billips, Beni Brice and Anatol Dziadek).



The tow pilots (Andrew Neilson, Richard Good and Hugh McElrath [not shown]).

Operations

The following is a special notice to pilots operating from fields other than KFRR in the event that you



The instructors (Uwe Jettmar, Chris Norris, Ron Wagner, Piet Barber and Shane Neitzey [not shown]).



The ground crew (Jim Perlmutter and Chris Wuerker).

plan to fly into our home airport.

- Note that gliders use right-hand traffic in order to remain unconflicted with airplane traffic, which uses left-hand traffic. All gliders flying



The boss (Stephanie Zilora).

with the Skyline Soaring Club have radios and announce takeoffs and landings on 123.00. Expect that gliders will be using runway 28 unless winds dictate the use of runway 10. Also, gliders are approved for use of the grass area to the north of the runway for landing.

- Be aware that skydiving operations may be conducted concurrent with SSC operations depending on the weather. Operations are announced on 123.00 beginning about five minutes prior to jump time and at *jumpers away*. Please avoid the area directly over the airport and to a radius of one mile until all jumpers are clearly in sight. Jumpers typically land in the grass areas directly adjacent to the taxiway on both north and south sides. Gliders can safely fly a normal approach to runway 28 while jumpers are in the air, but should stay north of the tree line on downwind leg. Jumpers will strive to remain clear of the grass area where gliders land.

- Airport Access (from John Bert): We will be finalizing the new gate access system within the next two weeks. With that update, we

will be issuing new access cards that are preprogrammed, based on the list of those who currently have access fobs. The new system should be live very soon. Until the switch occurs, continue using your fobs to access the restricted area of the airport.

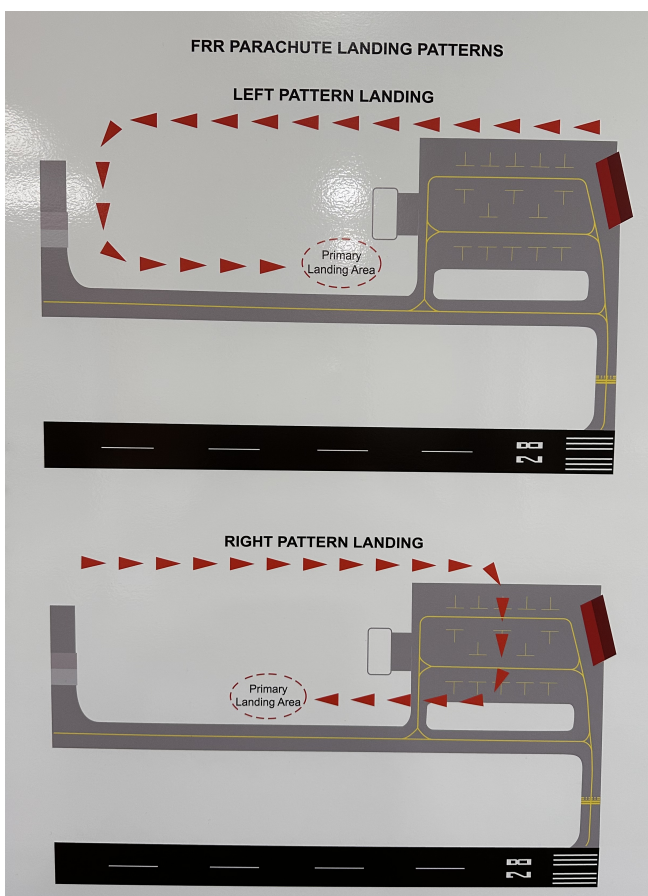
In the meantime, we will be distributing the new cards beginning June 19th. Just stop by the terminal and see either Jake or I to sign for and get your card. Keep your fob until the switch-over, then kindly return the fob once it is no longer functional. Once we have a firm date for the switch-over, we will send another message.

- You will notice that there is new signage at the entrance to runway 28 and on the taxiway asking pilots not to run up in an area that could affect our operations. These signs will afford us some protection from aircraft that would otherwise perform the run-up blasting their prop-wash (and associated debris) at staging gliders (see the figures below). The additional figures provide information regarding parachute operations and parking areas on the ramp.



Upcoming Events

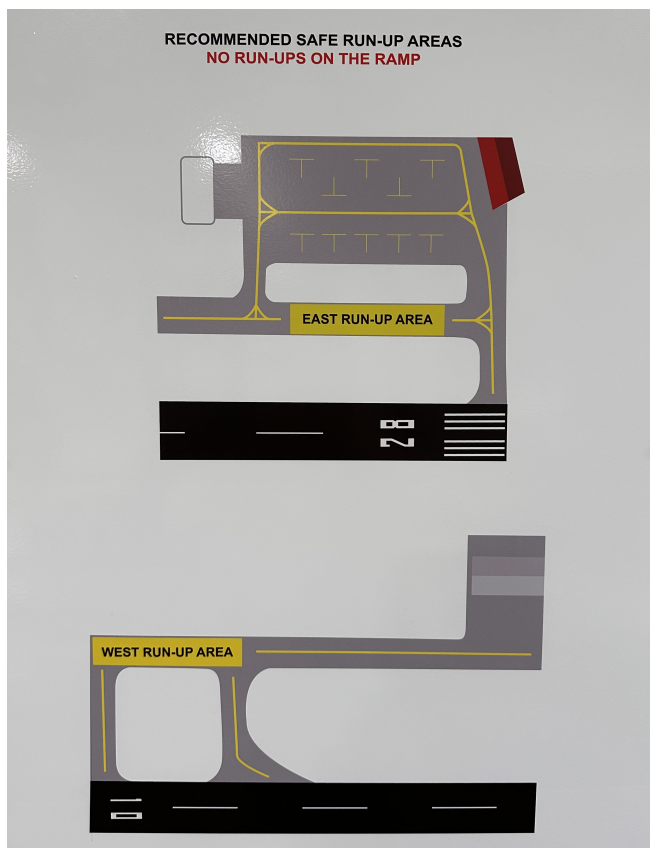
- There's a small group of aviation oriented folk (and their partners) who convene monthly for lunch at the Sweet Rice Thai restaurant on Rt. 7 just east of I-66. The next luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26 at noon. The group is moderated by Lucinda Vavoudis. Come join us! [*Jim Kellett*]



- The KFRR Great Pumpkin Drop, anticipated during October, will feature a pancake breakfast and a pumpkin drop from airplanes.

Notice: Help Wanted

Club Treasurer: The Treasurer position with Skyline Soaring will be transitioning to another member in 2027. Who that member will be remains to be identified. I have had the pleasure of undertaking that role for several years and am



ready to turn the job over to someone else. The job is not as daunting as you may think. The books

are kept online using QuickBooks Online. I have worked with QB a lot and am ready to hand off the knowledge that I have learned from the years of using QB Online.

Now is the time to for someone to step forward and volunteer to take over this essential role with Skyline Soaring. I will be the primary user for the balance of the year, giving someone ample time to learn how to use the system to manage the club's financial records. You won't be left hanging without the proper knowledge to run the system. I will be available full-time to teach, assist and work on the system in parallel with you this year.

If you would like to have a test run to view the system and see if it is something that you can and would like to do, that would work out also. Please let me know as soon as possible, the end of the year is quickly approaching.

You can contact me, Ralph Vawter, at my email address as listed on the Club Roster page. I look forward to hearing from you.

For Sale

This section is to allow SSC members to post items (preferably, but not limited to, aircraft-related stuff) that are offered for sale or as freebies.

Rolladen-Schneider LS1-f, N6108J, 1974, based at Warren County Front Royal airport (KFRR). Contest number 6E. 2863 hours TT, fresh July 2027 annual. Borgelt and Winter varios, Dittel VHF radio, one-man rigger & Mountain High O2 system. 1995 Anschau KOMET trailer. Trailer and glider in good condition. Buyer has first right to the Front Royal hangar it's currently stored in. Reduced price to SSC members at \$16,000. For information, call: Evan Dosik (703-338-4688) or Tim Moran (202-247-8820). See photo on the next page.

Want to Fly the Pawnee? Start Here. By now, you've probably flown behind the Piper Pawnee countless times. But have you ever thought I'd like to do that — but I lack a tailwheel endorsement and 10-hours tailwheel PIC to begin training as an SSC tow pilot? Well there now exists a clear path to get there—and a local resource that can help you take the first steps. Virginia Tailwheel



Academy, based at Warrenton-Fauquier Airport (KHWY), offers dedicated tailwheel instruction in a fleet of well-equipped Cessna 140s—electric start, ADS-B out, and AV30 PFDs. Most pilots earn their endorsement in 7 to 12 hours. Once endorsed, you can continue building the required PIC time through dual or solo rental of the Cessna 140—making it a practical one-stop path from zero tailwheel experience to SSC tow pilot candidacy. You’ll receive dual ground and flight instruction from SSC’s own Robb Hohmann; commercial pilot, airplane and glider CFI with over 600 hours PIC in tailwheel aircraft.

For the full picture of what’s required, the SSC operations manual states: *“To begin training as an SSC Tow Pilot, a pilot must have logged at least 200 total hours flight time in airplanes and have a tail-wheel endorsement. Additionally, the pilot must have logged at least 10 hours of pilot in command time in tail wheel airplanes after receiving a tail-wheel endorsement.”*

To make the investment manageable, the academy offers discounted block time: 10-hour blocks at 6% off, and 20-hour blocks at 12% off. Given the endorsement training plus the 10 hours of solo PIC time you’ll need, a 20-hour block is worth considering from the start. If you’re ready to start working toward the endorsement, Virginia Tailwheel Academy is ready to help. info@vatailwheelacademy.com, 540-783-7FLY.

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