

The President's Corner

Another month has ticked by at KFRR. As we close out October with the ScarePort and look forward to the SSA Convention in Reno, we are also looking forward to seeing some new members at the field! Fritz has been diligently onboarding new folks, as well as updating the New Member Orientation. Say hi and introduce yourself next time you see someone that you don't recognize at the field. Welcome to all of our new members!

I'll close out with a hearty thank you to everyone who helps keep our club running—the latest kudos need to go to the crews who have been working on the ASKs, including troubleshooting battery connections, replacing tires, replacing brake parts, and working on the release mechanism. It's a lot of work to keep our fleet in good shape, and we're fortunate to have members willing to step up! (And we're still looking for a treasurer, for anyone else who wants to be more involved in SSC.)

Board Notes

Front Royal Airport Closure Update: Erik provided an update on the Front Royal Airport closure, noting that operations would cease on September 20^{th} for approximately 8 weeks to allow for runway paving, with the project reaching its funding threshold after approval from Warren County, Virginia Department of Aviation and the federal government. Stephanie requested that the airport closure discussion be addressed before discussing new student intake, as the relocation options would impact their capacity to take on new students. [Editor's note: The airport closure has been delayed until spring 2027.]

Team Operations and Planning Updates: The team discussed several agenda items, including reassigning the incident report template task to Andy as the new safety officer, which Carlos agreed to coordinate. They voted 5-0 to join the waitlist for a T-hanger with Eric handling the deposit, though they decided to postpone decisions about other hanger types until Ralph returns. Stephanie and Brian will work on calendar planning, with a focus on collecting milestones for trophies before the next annual meeting, which Brian marked as a winter project.

Aircraft Maintenance and Award Updates: The team discussed the Gogos Award which was not awarded last year due to oversight, and decided to close it for 2026. Rob reported on annual condition inspections for the Discus aircraft, noting needed repairs including roller push rods, bearings, and elevator fitting replacements for NY, with FW

requiring less immediate attention. The team agreed to address small cracks in the aeroshell during next major maintenance, with Rob planning to coordinate with Rudy for the repairs over the winter when aircraft aren't flying. Stephanie suggested creating duplicate toolkits for both Discus trailers to prevent tool theft, which Rob agreed to implement.

Oxygen System Replacement Discussion: The board discussed replacing the oxygen system, with Kevin presenting pricing options of $2,960 for one bottle replacement and $4,260 for complete system replacement including two bottles. The group decided to postpone the decision to the 2027 board due to the significant cost and current financial constraints from a slow flying season. The meeting also covered a proposal to use a gator to tow gliders to the runway, with Stephanie offering to help develop the safety procedures and Carlos agreeing to work with Andy on creating the new protocol.

Treasurer's Report and Leadership Updates: Stephanie presented the treasurer's report, noting that the organization has barely exceeded expenses year-to-date and may not break even on variable costs due to limited flying days remaining. She reported that aircraft revenue is in the red for some aircraft but noted positive performance on the Discus's, and mentioned that funds are looking decent around $100,000. The group discussed voting on Fritz to take over membership officer responsibilities from Todd.

Membership Waitlist and Probationary Process: The board approved Fritz as the new membership officer, and he reported reviewing 30+ people on the waitlist, forwarding 10 candidates to the board for consideration. The group discussed how to handle probationary memberships, with Stephanie suggesting people should either commit to joining or return to the waitlist rather than trying to schedule specific activation dates. Erik raised a concern about implementing requirements for probationary members to maintain active status through regular flying, otherwise they would go inactive and allow others on the waitlist to join.

Membership Decision During Closure: The board discussed whether to accept nine new members during the airport closure period. Stephanie and Brian advocated for accepting the members and collecting their dues, while Fritz had already contacted potential members who were receptive to returning to flying. The group ultimately decided to table the membership decision until they determine how to operate during the airport closure starting in mid-September. Brian also agreed to inform Pete about Steven's emeritus member status. John reported that only about half of the 30 people on the student roster have flown this year, with three not having flown at all.

Student Duty Participation Concerns: John raised concerns about low student participation for upcoming duty officer shifts, particularly noting only one student signed up for the upcoming Saturday with good weather forecast. The group discussed solutions including organizing a social event like an Oktoberfest gathering or combining the new member orientation with a social activity to better integrate members. Fritz volunteered to set up a membership meeting that could incorporate a social element, though the board decided this didn't need to be formalized as an action item.

Duty Officer Training Review Meeting: The team reviewed a delinquent duty officer report and identified several members who need to complete required training or duty assignments, including Harold, Rich, and Juan Carlos. Carlos agreed to contact these specific members about their training requirements. The group also discussed issues with the new duty officer system, where some previously qualified instructors like John and Brian no longer appear on the authorized list, and Stephanie expressed concerns about instructors being able to self-qualify as DOs. The conversation ended with John being requalified as a DO and discussion about addressing the hangar member survey, though that topic was not fully covered.

Location Change to Petersburg: The board discussed moving operations from Front Royal. They determined that Petersburg would be the best alternative location, though it requires a 2.5-3 hour drive, leading to discussions about potentially adjusting the schedule to every other weekend or focusing on specific weekends like Columbus Day. Stephanie agreed to contact Tom Feaster to confirm if Petersburg still has available space and what the storage rates would be for approximately 9 weeks of operations.

Flight Operations Weekend Planning Discussion: The team discussed planning flight operations every other weekend for an eight-week period, with specific focus on the 20^{th}

and coordination with duty crew assignments. Stephanie agreed to confirm arrangements with Tom Feaster regarding the hangar, while Carlos offered to coordinate with the duty crew for the selected weekends. The group also discussed potentially adding ad hoc days and considering the Fairfield contest for additional opportunities to generate club revenue through towing services.

Tow Plane and Equipment Maintenance: The team discussed maintenance updates for tow planes and equipment. Stephanie reported that the tow planes are in good shape and need only consumables, while a compass leak in the Husky was identified but determined to be manageable. The tow vehicle, operated by Steve Parrish, was noted to have an idle issue but remains functional. Joel provided updates on trailer maintenance, including replacement of rear tires and tubes, installation of spare nose and tail wheels, and a project to replace bolts with carriage bolts to prevent damage to equipment. The team discussed the cost and feasibility of purchasing a spare main wheel, with mixed opinions on the investment given current financial constraints.

Aircraft Towing Service Discussion: The team discussed a recent incident where the rope release handle came undone on landing after being reassembled, with Kevin planning to check and secure it with Loctite. They addressed a request from Fairfield for aircraft towing services from Saturday through Sunday during a weekend when the club wouldn't normally be flying, considering both the Husky and Pawnee aircraft options. John expressed concerns about the Husky's capability for downwind takeoffs with two-seater gliders, while Erik agreed to contact Mike Higgins to discuss constraints and logistics for the potential arrangement.

Rob Jacobsen also contributed the following: The Annual Condition Inspections were performed on the two club Discus CS gliders on Thursday August 20, 2026 by Dan Wells (an A&P) who has performed these inspections for many of the past years.

1) While both 9Y and FW passed, the board needs to be aware of issues developing with 9Y (FW is good, no issues). Specifically the 4 vertical pushrods connecting the control linkages to the auto-connect mechanism horns, have self-centering ball-race bearings at their upper lengths and bushings at their lower. All of the ball-race bearings are showing visible wear and are no longer finger tip pressure rotational flexible. Dan wells was prepared to sign off as he does not consider their present condition as being a flight safety issue, however he wants them replaced sooner as opposed to later.

2) The fitting in the elevator witch engages with the two tapered interface rods (mounted at the top of the vertical stabilizer) and which retain the elevator, also needs to be replaced - it has reached the end of its adjustment capability. Once it has been adjusted to decrease the free-play to acceptable levels it is so tight that one can only remove the elevator with great difficulty.

3) I am in contact with the Discus dealer, Yankee Composites and are awaiting a quote for the replacement parts.

4) John Noss provided a rivet hole alignment tool to use in place of the existing "jimmy" bar.

5) I am putting together a common toolbox to support the assembly of the Discus. I plan on keeping it under the rear of either of the trailers. It will contain everything needed to assemble either Discus.

Safety

Andrew McGowen, Safety Officer

I had several people express concern over some point of safety in the past month, so I thought I would highlight concerns in upcoming issues. Most are common sense, but sometimes we get distracted or new members don't have the experience to realize the potential outcomes. We are a small, diverse club and need to take care of each other. The below points are here for your consideration.

Distractions on the Ramp: It was a late summer day. Weekend operations were typical. There were a decent number of club members flying, the jumpers were cycling through their jump sorties, and the usual GA traffic was operating out of KFRR and arriving for cheap gas. A relatively busy day. On this particular day, an SSC member began getting mobile phone calls—unclear if it was

work or personal, but it was a point of distraction for that person. They focused more on the phone calls than operations at the airport. The member was pushing gliders out with everyone else (always a plus!), but at one point paused to continue a phone conversation away from aircraft doing run-ups. The member stopped on the walk back from pushing out a glider, and was engrossed in the phone conversation while standing at the edge of the taxiway in front of the grass safety area. This person would have been in danger of being hit, had a near-silent glider been landing on the grass safety area. When we leave the FBO, especially when traversing between the FBO and Runway 28, we should look up and move with purpose. If helping with glider ops we should all refrain from being distracted from our devices—phone calls, texting, taking those cool photos, programming our flight computers—until we get back to the FBO. We all get distracted; I've left the FBO area and was reminded to be aware of the aircraft around me. Sometimes we all need a gentle reminder. If non-members want to help, check with the DO first....especially with pushers. They are probably unfamiliar with airport operations. This article below states the point well:

A county airport ramp can look quiet, but it is an active work area. Aircraft may taxi or move with little warning, vehicles and ground equipment can cross your path, and propellers and rotors may be difficult to see. A phone conversation can pull your attention away from these hazards—even if you're only walking.

Talking while walking divides attention: you may be less likely to notice movement, hear warnings, watch where you're stepping, or make eye contact with pilots and vehicle operators. That can put you and others at risk. Aviation ramp-safety guidance identifies phone use as a visual and mental distraction that can undermine awareness and communication.

Make the call from a safe place. Before answering or placing a call, stop in a designated safe area away from aircraft, taxi routes, vehicle lanes, and other ramp activity. If you're already on the ramp, end the call or tell the caller you'll call back, then move to a safe location using the airport's pedestrian routes and procedures.

While on the ramp:

- Keep your eyes up and your attention on the surroundings.
- Don't walk while talking, texting, or wearing headphones or earbuds.
- Follow posted signs, markings, escort requirements, and local airport rules.
- Stay clear of aircraft, propellers, rotors, and moving vehicles; never assume an operator has seen you.
- If you're unsure where to walk, stop somewhere safe and ask airport staff for guidance.

A simple habit helps: stop, get clear, then call. At county airports, staying focused on the ramp is part of keeping everyone safe.

Instructor Input

Food For Thought—Clearing Turns and Minimum Altitudes

John Noss, Chief Instructor

I'd like to discuss a couple of areas that are not well understood, because FAA guidance is vague or conflicting, and because there is a lot of 'how we learned it' negative training inertia out there.

First, clearing turns—it just seems logical that before you do something that might cause a sudden change in altitude or heading, or be unpredictable to other aircraft, that you make sure no other aircraft are close. And, in fact, that's a pass/fail criteria on a glider checkride. From the Private Pilot Glider PTS: "Typical areas of unsatisfactory performance and grounds for disqualification are .... failure to use proper and effective visual scanning techniques to clear the area before and while performing maneuvers." But it does not specify which maneuvers require a clearing turn, or what a clearing turn is.

If ALL maneuvers require a clearing turn, then according to the Airplane Flying Handbook (AFH) Ch 3, that would include the "four fundamental basic flight maneuvers upon which all flying tasks are based: straight-and-level flight, turns, climbs, and descents." You would not be able to perform a clearing turn without doing a clearing turn first. The Glider Flying Handbook (GFH) says to make clearing turns before performing stalls (and spins). The Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) ¶4-4-15 strongly urges flight training programs to adopt robust visual clearing procedures. It states that "appropriate clearing procedures should precede the

execution of all turns including chandelles, lazy eights, stalls, slow flight, climbs, straight and level (?!), spins, and other combination maneuvers."

So what is a clearing turn, and how is it performed? Trick question. The term is not mentioned anywhere in Part 91, and the procedure is not defined in the GFH. It is mentioned in other places, but not consistently defined. Logically, you have a good view to both sides from the front seat of a glider (level, above, and below), limited visibility below your nose, and almost no visibility behind you. So turning 90 degrees should give you the visibility you need in those directions and elevations as well. Some glider pilots routinely make a clearing turn 180 degrees or 360 degrees, probably because that is how they learned it. The important part is that you look in all directions, above and level and below, before doing anything unpredictable, and should call it out to confirm you have cleared the airspace.

Some confusing guidance from other places: From the AFH (Ch 7), "pilots should always clear the area with two 90° clearing turns looking to the left and the right, as well as above and below the airplane." Also from the AFH (Ch3), "pilots should always clear the area with two 90° clearing turns looking to the left and the right, as well as above and below the airplane." You will find this rigid 'always turn left first, then right' procedure embedded in many flight school programs, the AOPA, Flying Magazine, CFI Notebook, ERAU, and other sources.

Now let's talk about minimum altitudes. The FAA Private and Commercial Glider PTS require the pilot to select an entry altitude that allows the stall maneuver to be completed no lower than 1500 feet AGL (and within gliding distance of a safe landing). So, many glider pilots assume that is the floor for everything other than landing. But boxing the wake, for example, does not have a 1500 AGL floor. In fact, the GFH just says "boxing the wake should commence outside the traffic pattern area and no lower than 1000 feet AGL." The GFH does say 1500 AGL minimum for completing spin recoveries (our local procedure is to initiate spin recovery no lower than 2500 AGL, by the way, which is very conservative).

The FAR 91.119 section is an interesting case for gliders. Since the 'power unit' is always failed in our gliders, we must always have altitude to allow a landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the ground. Over congested areas, gliders rarely press the limit of 1000 feet above the highest obstacle with 2000 feet of the aircraft. Over other than congested areas, the minimum is 500 feet above the surface, except over sparsely populated areas (undefined). In those cases, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure. So, if you are barreling down the ridge at 200 AGL and fly over a hiker or a truck or a cabin, you have violated that rule. Not surprisingly, there are lots of hiking trails all along the Massanutten Ridge, so lots of hikers, especially on weekends.

Yes, the rules can be confusing and ambiguous and conflicting. But it is good to at least know what they actually say, and always use common sense and good judgment.

Kudos

- ⋆ Congratulations to Fritz Treyz for earning his C badge in August.
- ⋆ Also congratulations to Rich Hiegel for getting his B badge in September.
- ⋆ We should also extend our Congratulations to Peter Holzgang for his most recent solo flight in a glider (October 25), returning to the basics after pushing heavy metal around for more than 40 years.

Meet Our New Members

Fritz Treyz

Let us welcome the newest members of Skyline Soaring Club. They represent a wide range of professions and life experiences, including engineers, lawyers, professional pilots, teachers, students, and retirees. Their varied skills, perspectives, and aviation backgrounds strengthen our club.

Our new members joined Skyline Soaring Club in search of a fresh challenge. Some see gliding as an introduction to aviation or a foundation for further flight training, while ALL are drawn to the focused calm of unpowered flight, the skill of using rising air to remain aloft, and the ongoing development of sound judgment and precise flying technique.

They already know a successful flying day at Front Royal relies on members working together

to prepare gliders, conduct launches, retrieve aircraft, maintain equipment, and support students and instructors. Club membership also provides opportunities for friendship, mentoring, recreational soaring, and cross-country skill development toward FAI badges.

Welcome to Skyline Soaring Club!



Peter Holzgang: I started soaring in August of 1972 as a junior in high school at Calistoga Soaring Center, located in the Napa Valley of California. I earned my private glider license my senior year. I entered the USAF Academy following high school and became a CFI-G in the cadet soaring program. I graduated from the academy in 1978. With one exception in 2012, my last soaring sortie was in December of 1978. After pilot training, I became a T-37 instructor then a C-5 instructor/evaluator and had a 20+ year AF career. After retiring from the AF, I began my airline career and retired as a B-717 captain from Delta Air Lines in September 2020. While I enjoyed my airline and military flying, nothing can compare to soaring. I'm looking forward to soaring again after a prolonged absence.

Brandon Jones: I grew up in Detroit, Michigan, where I learned to fly at age 16. I am a father of 3 beautiful girls, and a Captain at United Airlines. I enjoy introducing young people to aviation, and support summer ACE camps and the EAA Young Eagles program. I am excited to connect my love of sailing with my love of flying, and get back to my roots in aviation.

David Cole: I obtained my PP-ASEL in 2002 at the Flying W Airport (N14) and my instrument rating in 2004 at Essex County Airport (CDW), both in New Jersey. My interest in soaring was ignited by the extensive glider activity at Van Sant Airport (9N1), where I completed my tailwheel endorsement and aerobatic training. I still have vivid memories of Pawnees launching sailplanes from the rolling grass strip into the picturesque skies of Bucks County, PA.

I took a 13-year hiatus from flying in 2009 when my daughter was born, returning to aviation in 2022. I am a member of the Prince William Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol and hope to complete my commercial airplane rating soon. I am excited to be a member of the club and enjoyed my first opportunity helping with operations in early October.

Originally from Talladega, Alabama, I reside in Haymarket, Virginia, with my wife, Renee, and daughter, Gabby, who is a senior at Battlefield High School.

Quinn Martinez: I'm Quinn Martinez, recently relocated to Arlington, VA, from Tallahassee, FL, with my wife and our nine-month-old baby.

I've spent nearly 20 years in aviation, starting as a USAF air traffic controller before moving into airport operations and management at San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, and Denver International airports. I hold a commercial pilot certificate and CFI, originally pursuing a C-130 pilot slot with the Air National Guard before being medically disqualified. Since then, flying has remained an expensive but rewarding hobby! Some of my flying highlights include Catalina Island and Leadville, Colorado.

I currently work for the FAA's Office of Airports, and my wife is active duty Air Force. I'm excited to meet everyone and explore the world of soaring!

Reminders from the Chief Duty Officer

Carlos Troncoso

A Currency Reminder: Club vs. FAA Requirements—This past month, I came close to violating Skyline's currency rule. Being accustomed to flying regularly, I hadn't realized how much time had passed since my last flight. Fortunately, a conversation with Duty Officer Matt Vosika prompted me to double-check my currency before flying solo.

It's worth remembering that **Skyline club currency and FAA currency are different:** *Skyline Operations Manual - 3.1.5 Special Currency Requirements:* "Members may not fly a Club glider unless they have performed at least three takeoffs and landings in a glider within the last 90 days."

The rule also allows pilots to regain club currency by flying with a club-approved instructor and receiving a currency-flight sign-off, valid for another

90 days.

FAA - 14 CFR §61.57 (Recent Flight Experience): Requires three takeoffs and landings within the preceding 90 days to carry passengers in a glider. Unlike Skyline's rule, this does not generally prevent an otherwise qualified pilot from flying solo.

A useful safety resource: NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) allows pilots to voluntarily and confidentially report safety incidents and inadvertent FAA violations. Timely reporting may provide protection from certain FAA sanctions when eligibility requirements are met, while helping improve aviation safety through shared lessons learned. Reports can be submitted at `https://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/`.

This situation prompted me to review my entire flight logbook, going back to 2010. I identified possible instances where I had inadvertently flown without meeting currency requirements and, needless to say, submitted a report through NASA's ASRS.

My takeaway: Staying vigilant about currency is essential, especially when we haven't flown in a while. This was also a good example of Crew Resource Management (CRM), where a simple conversation with the Duty Officer helped prevent a potential club requirement violation. While it's a little embarrassing to acknowledge this oversight, I believe sharing them openly helps us learn from one another and prevent similar occurrences in the future.

The Challenge Problem

So far, I have received exactly no response to the questions below, all of which you all should know. Ergo, I'll leave these up another month so that you can learn them now. Please email your answers to me (ghazelrigg@verizon.net). I would like to know ~~how many~~ if any of you can answer these questions. They are important to your personal safety.

1. Why is it mandatory that the rear canopy of the ASK-21s be closed at all times when no one is sitting in or attending the glider?

2. Why must we know the difference between a tow plane wing rock and rudder waggle?

3. Why is there a maximum strength limit on the tow rope and what is it?

4. What are the names of the different tow hooks and how do they differ?

5. Is it possible to take off in an ASK-21 with the front canopy latched and the rear canopy not latched?

The Photo Gallery

This month's photo of Mount Shasta was passed on to me by Jim Kellett who received it from Charter Member Phil Jordan who in turn got it from "dear friend/former colleage" Gretta Brown (with permission to publish) who lives in Ashland Oregon. (I hope I got that right.)



Operations

Now that we haven't moved operations to W99, we're all back to "normal" at KFRR. For now, we are up and flying weekends as usual and ad hoc when not usual. Stay tuned for further announcements on possible future disruptions, currently expected during the spring of 2027.

I would also remind inbound traffic unfamiliar with operations at KFRR that gliders and other

"unusual" aircraft fly right-hand patters to remain separated from conventional powered aircraft. Also, beware that skydiving operations are conducted a KFRR. Listen on 123.000 for announcement of "jumpers away" and stay clear of the area over and to a distance of one mile to the north of the field. Jumpers land on the grass to the north of the runway.

Upcoming Events

- **SSC end of soaring season party** Skyline Soaring Club end of season party at Mike and Adelheid Osmers' house.

  ~ Sunday, December 13 post soaring until 7pm.

  ~ Expect German Christmas goodies, Feuerzangenbowle, Glühwein, Bratwurst and lecker sides. Please don't feel like you need to bring something, we got it!

  ~ 767 Jones Farm Rd., Bentonville, VA. It's 10 miles and 17 minutes according to Google Map south of FRR in the direction of Luray, white 'modern farm house, whatever that means'! house second to last on the gravel road. The road is straight to my neighbor where it turns left at his fence and terminates, you can't miss it! I or someone else will direct parking.

  ~ **Please RSVP** individually to mikeosmers @mac.com by December 6 so we may plan the food and drinks accordingly.

- 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, November 11, a bit before noon. The group is moderated by Lucinda Vavoudis. Come join us! [Jim Kellett]

  This is a monthly event. Please contact Jim Kellett for information on the next luncheon.

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 2026 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 $12,000 to allow for the 3,000-hour inspection, which will be due in another 136 hours. Also, for SSC members, the "1/2 Tee" hanger where it is currently stored is optionally available to convey to the purchaser. For information, call: Evan Dosik (703-338-4688) or Tim Moran (202-247-8820). See photo below.



This Rolladen-Schneider LS1-f is a joy to fly. The controls are well balanced, and the glider responds beautifully to a light touch. It thermals well, holding its bank angle with only minor corrections. The spoilers are effective and predictable, and the glider is straightforward to land. These qualities make it an excellent choice for a pilot transitioning from a two-seat trainer to a single-place glider.

The LS1-f was previously owned for 16 years by a SSC club instructor in Front Royal. Before that, it belonged to a German pilot who brought the glider with him when he moved to Winchester, Virginia.

Assembly is straightforward. A one-man wing rigger is included, and the wing spars, lift pins, and spar pins all go together easily. The Komet trailer tows well and is equipped with integrated surge brakes.

A previous owner refinished the upper surfaces

of the wings as well as the fuselage. During our ownership, we made many upgrades, including:

Mountain High EDS O2D1 oxygen system
IMI One-man wing rigger
New CG Tost hook
New gas spring for the landing gear lever
New gas damper for the landing gear
New gas spring for the canopy

This glider has been a pleasure to own and has given us many memorable flights, ranging from enjoyable local soaring to a five-hour duration flight and a Gold-altitude wave flight using the included Mountain High oxygen system.

We hope its next owner will enjoy it as much as we have.

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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