TOWLINE

More Gliding Adventures *by Ron Ferguson*

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SGC / SGCSF MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 7184
Bellevue, WA 98008-1184

TRAINING CENTER LOCATION
30 Airport Street NE
Ephrata, WA 98823
509-754-3852 *[not attended fulltime]*

SGC BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2024)

Chairman:	Noel Wade	noelw@seattleglidercouncil.org
Directors:	Matthew Coleman	matthewc@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Dave Reusch	daver@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Ron Bellamy	ronb@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Tom Dixon	tomd@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Christian Klix	chrisk@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Tory Tolton	toryt@seattleglidercouncil.org

2024 VOLUNTEERS & COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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Treasurer	>OPEN< Randy Scott (Acting)
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Trailer Lottery Coordinator	Tom Dixon
Webmaster	Jim McNeil, Noel Wade
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Dust-Up Event Coordinator	Matt Coleman & Tony Puglisi
Methow Event Coordinator	Brad Pattison
Towcard Data Entry Focal	Randy Scott

SGC SOARING FOUNDATION BOARD 2024

President: Michael Bamberg (exp. 1/1/26)
Secretary: Henry Rebbeck (exp. 1/1/25)
Directors added in 2024: Jeff Baird, Terry Crippen, Marty Gibbins, Henry Irvine, Brad Pattison

SOARING SOCIETY OF AMERICA REGION 8 OFFICIALS

Region 8 Director	Craig Funston
Alaska Governor	Peter Brown
Idaho Governor	Tom Dixon
Montana Governor	Greg Mecklenburg
Oregon Governor	Michael Bamberg

(NEW) 2024 DUES, RATES & FEES (2024 Tow fees: TBD)

Membership:

Regular	- (includes 1 week of continuous facility use)	$90
Family	- (Spouse/Partner w/facility & voting privileges)	$35
Youth	- (25 years & under, incl. 1 week of facility use)	$50
Lifetime	- (incl. 1 week of facility use per year)	$1500

Tows (Ephrata) subject to change in 2024

Hook up and first 1500 feet	$50
Per 100 feet above 1500 feet	$1.70
Mid-week surcharge if fewer than 3 tows in a day	$15 per tow

Aero-retrieve or glider ferry $190 / tach hr.

Ephrata Facility Use Fee

Seasonal (April - October, full use of all facilities)	$100
Weekly (first continuous week included in membership fee)	$30

Glider Tiedown & Trailer Storage at Ephrata

Seasonal (April - October, reserved trailer spot)	$220 per glider
Weekly	$40

Ephrata RV Parking (facility use not included)

Seasonal reserved spot (April – October)	$550
Weekly (8 nights or less)	$120
Short Term (3 nights or less)	$60
EV Charging per day	$10

Notes:

- All fees are in USD
- SGC and SSA membership required for all tows behind SGC towplanes
- Tow fees are invoiced. All other fees should be paid prior to arrival at Ephrata.

CLUBS & OPERATIONS

Cascade Soaring Society	-	https://www.cascadesoaringsociety.com
Evergreen Soaring	-	http://www.evergreensoaring.com
Glider-Rides.com	-	http://www.glider-rides.com
Hood River Soaring	-	https://www.hoodriversoaring.org
High Desert Soaring Club	-	http://www.hdsoaring.org
King Mountain Glider Park	-	https://www.kingmountaingliderpark.com
Puget Sound Soaring Association	-	http://www.pugetsoundsoaring.org
Spokane Soaring Society	-	https://spokanesoaring.org
Vancouver Soaring Association	-	https://vancouversoaring.com
Willamette Valley Soaring Club	-	https://www.wvsc.org

From the Chairman, *submitted by Noel Wade*

SOARING SEASON APPROACHES!

Congratulations! You've made it through another winter, and flying season is upon us. We hope you're as excited as we are to get back out and fly (…hopefully at Ephrata)!

The offseason this year has been full of challenges and accomplishments. Board members and key Volunteers have managed the (ongoing) Cessna engine overhaul, negotiated a change in hangar rent / leasing with the Port of Ephrata, straightened out a series of IRS issues, performed detailed financial analyses to find a sustainable path forward, set 2024 dues & fees, got our Pawnee towplane annualed, and started organizing key events like the Dust Up and SSA Juniors Camp.

Photo taken at our Training Center on March 13, 2024 *by Chris Klix*

I'd like to recognize the Soaring Foundation's busy offseason, too: They established a whole new Board of Directors, granted the SGC $40,000 to assist with our Cessna overhaul, and are on the verge of installing an impressive new shade shelter to cover the entire deck at the Ephrata Training Facility.

Before we look at upcoming activities, I want to take one more moment to reflect on 2023 and thank a few key individuals who have not gotten enough recognition:

- **Randy Scott** has diligently served as our Treasurer for a couple of years (including a lot of work with the IRS to stop them from charging us improper fees/penalties). He has exited the sport but is selflessly continuing to serve as Treasurer through this fall.
- **Dennis Vreeken** has performed many maintenance tasks at Ephrata over the last few years and was a Facilities co-manager last year – sacrificing his body at times to ensure the bathhouse was functional and presentable.
- **Karen & Craig Funston** - Craig for serving as interim Treasurer for a few years, and Karen for volunteering her time and legal expertise to the SGC & SGCSF Boards.

Thank you to all who help make this organization a success! The more hands that contribute, the lighter the load for all of us.

Now it's time to do your part… As a member-driven organization, we **need you** involved in the following important activities. The good news is that a lot of them involve flying and having fun!

- Sign up to come out for the opening weekend in Ephrata, April 13th – 14th. We need help replacing some deck screws & other odd jobs. Once those are tackled, we can all go flying!
- Please fill out the tow fee survey if you haven't done so. Watch the meeting replay or read the presentation, then complete the survey. We must set tow rates in the next week, so don't delay!

- Spread the word and come join our April General Meeting at 7pm on Monday, April 1st (no foolin')! We'll have a presentation to help you shake off the rust and get ready for the Dust Up.
- **Come fly in Ephrata!** We are working to get towpilots scheduled more-frequently in 2024 and have lots of great events planned. You can also sign up for regular weekend operations.

Thermals are starting to appear and our towplanes will soon be ready to launch you. I can't wait to share a thermal with you in the sky, toast your soaring achievements back on the ground, and watch another beautiful sunset from our facility's deck. We'll see you in Ephrata!

Noel Wade, 2024 SGC Chairperson

2024 Seasonal EPH Glider Trailer Parking Lottery *submitted by Tom Dixon*

This will be coming soon, a reminder, that to be eligible to participate you must be current on your membership dues and have pre-paid the fee for a season's trailer parking for the April general meeting Trailer Lottery.

SGC Tow Plane Up-date *Submitted by: Chris Klix*

Left photo in Chelan on March 14th, 2024 – Right photo in the hangar in Ephrata on March 25th, 2024 *taken by Chris Klix*

The good news is our Pawnee (78P) has had its annual inspection and is back in Ephrata ready to go.

Unfortunately, the news about our Cessna 182 (79D) is not so good. As of March 21st, the shop that is doing the engine case work for the overhaul shop said it will be at least another 3 to 4 weeks. One excuse I heard is their line boring machine has a bad blade and they are having a hard time getting a replacement. This means there is a chance we may not have our Cessna 182 tow plane available for the Dust-Up event. However, we will do whatever we can to not let that happen and, just in case, will work on a plan "B" to ensure the event will be covered.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES

FIRST FLIGHT OF THE YEAR CHECK LIST

Submitted by: Tom Dixon

➤ Opening weekend at Ephrata is coming soon as is the soaring season in the northwest. We all know that after a long winter layoff we need to be ready for that first flight but how many of us think about that first trip to the airport with our trailers that have been sitting for months in storage or outside. Now is the time to do a check list on the trailer, (and the stored sailplane). You don't want to be dealing with issues on the day you head out to the airport. On opening

weekend at EPH your help getting the facilities going will be greatly appreciated. Following are some things to think about and check.

Getting some help with my pre-first-flight of the year (actually my ASG-29 wing being constructed at the Factory)

-Trailer Tires, how old are they? The rule of thumb is if older than plus or minus a year of 5 years old they should be changed. I know some that are on a 3-year term and they are usually owners who have had a failure

-Ok, tires are not too old, how about the pressure. I guarantee they lost pressure during the winter. To facilitate this and help my memory, I have Sharpied the pressure on the trailer next to the wheel well for convenience. On the subject of tires how about the SPARE. Check that too! On the newer Cobra trailers with the spare under the trailer, to do this is a real pain. I suggest you put an extension on the tire valve to facilitate this job.

-Trailer hitch, on my Cobra trailer there are two grease fittings -Zerk fittings, get your grease gun out and pump some in. Check your hitch fitting to your vehicle trailer ball, make sure the lock works, safety chains ok and about that hitch ball on your vehicle, check it for wear and tear. If the coating is all worn off and it is rusty, beat up and worn out, change it. If it is in bad condition it wears on the inside of your trailer's hitch! Also, now is the time to make sure the ball is still tight on your tow car's hitch. It can come loose. While in this area look at your trailer light harness, any exposed wires, bad light bulbs or connection plug. Trailer break, on the Cobra trailer if the handle/arm goes past 90 degrees when pulled full on, the breaks need adjustment.

-Paper work, over the years my wife or I have been stopped twice by the Highway Patrol – another story at a different time -. Both times they asked for the registration, not just for my vehicle but for the trailer. Where is yours, how about the license plate AND the light over the plate for night driving?

-Inside your trailer, did you leave anything over the winter that might have frozen? Most polishes, window cleaning fluids do not like to be frozen. How about edible stuff, you don't want to open your trailer for the first time and find rodent stuff all over AND in your sailplane…. Is everything there for your flights, grease, rags, wing stands, water bucket, tie downs – good shape? maybe need replacing? Ok, here we go again with the tires. On your tail dolly and wing dolly, are they worn AND again I bet they need to be pumped up as the pressure will be lower than you want. The same for the tires on your self-assembly equipment, check the tires.

Tires are flat, won't be very useful first assembly of the year.

-Your sailplane, again with the tires…. Main wheel AND tail wheel. On my sailplane the tailwheel has to be removed – good time to check the bearing – and a

very unique valve extension is used to check and air it up. Get them up to pressure now, not at the airport when you want to go fly. A repeat of the trailer, I have Sharpied the correct pressure on the inside of my gear door and on the rim of my tailwheel so I don't have to look it up in the Ops. Manual. With it right there, it is more likely that it will be checked more often. Are the tires in good shape, you don't want a failure on the ramp.

-Fittings, now is the time to clean and grease all the pins and fittings. This is a 'greasy' job, why not do it before you are trying to get to the grid before it is too long.

-Sailplane, did you take anything out that you need for safe flights when you stored it? HMMM, maybe this stuff is not in the trailer and you get to the airport and it is home. Bummer. Charts, relieve equipment – check this for the rodent factor, you don't want blockage or leaks now. Drinking water equipment-did you leave water in it over the winter, maybe a good washing is in order, instrument software/hardware updates, O2 equipment -short story here, many years ago on a safari one of our group left candy bars in his sailplane and overnight the rodents attacked his glider for food and also ate the two nose tubes off his canula…. SO, look for rodent messes!!! Check your instrument tubes and wires, they like to chew and gnaw on those too!! Right KF and others?

Is my software current and ready for the year?

Proper attire is mandatory. (Kelvyn F. model)

HMMM, found these under the seat pan where do they go??

Ok, the above items are some of the highlights of getting ready for your first trip to the airport and first flight. Now is the time to do it, not at the airport on your first flying day. Even with these items being checked, please do a very detailed pre-flight check per your Ops. Manual. Nasty things can happen during long periods of storage.

More Soaring Adventures
By: Ron Ferguson

Continued from page 18 in the March 2024 edition.

➢ **Flying Foxtrot Zulu in the Pacific Northwest**

I arrived in Seattle in early September, 1974, started my new job at Boeing, and immediately joined the Seattle Glider Council (SGC). At the first monthly council meeting I attended, I found everyone very friendly to newcomers, and I met many of the people that I'd be associated with for the next 25 years.

The SGC was (and still is) an umbrella organization for gliding throughout the Pacific Northwest, and members of several other local area clubs are also members of the SGC. Boeing Employees Soaring Club (BESC) was one such organization, and their members were very active in the SGC. I never joined the BESC, but was close friends with the BESC members.

Most of the serious cross-country gliding in the Pacific Northwest was flown from the Ephrata Municipal Airport in Eastern Washington. Flying starts in early spring, with as many as 45 high performance and training sailplanes stationed at the airport. Pilots from the Seattle area, Vancouver, and Wenatchee would arrive on Friday night, and then fly throughout the weekend on cross country routes that might take them 300 miles – or even further.

Ephrata is one of the best soaring locations in the U.S., due to the hot summer days in Eastern Washington and the dry land wheat and fallow fields that kick off tremendous thermals. If you've ever driven through there and seen the huge dust devils racing across the fields, then you've seen a powerful thermal, forming at the ground, visibly as it picks up surface dirt from the farm fields, and strengthens enough to begin its rise to cloud base. These thermals would lift our sailplanes to heights of 14,000' (occasionally higher), at climb rates (measured by instruments in the cockpit) of 1,000 feet per minute.

Around the time I joined the SGC, it had begun the tradition of hosting the Region 8 Gliding Championship, and Ephrata became the primary base for that operation.

That first year of 1975, I chomped at the bit to fly in the Region 8 competition. I won the coin toss with Bob and Nancy to see who would get to fly our like-new ASW-15B. It was the highest performance sailplane in the region, and everyone ogled it.

Being a hot shot competition pilot – *particularly in my own mind* – and being the unknown pilot from the East Coast, I had several local area top-rated glider pilots worried that I was the guy to beat. I settled that question, though, on the very first day of the competition, foolishly charging out on course from the start gate, flying past a couple of thermals to stretch my glide to the maximum . . . and landed ignominiously in a farmer's field about 10 miles out on course. That put me solidly in last place for the day, and that's pretty much where I stayed for the remainder of the competition. It also brought a touch of humility to my swagger, but just a small touch, and not enough to keep me out of trouble.

Later in the summer, airport temperatures often climb to an unbearable level – it's not uncommon for July temperatures on the hot asphalt ramp that we operated from to reach 110°. When that happened, the SGC and BESC would move their gliding operations around the region to find more temperature-friendly and interesting places to fly.

The summer of 1975 took us to the tiny Cascade Range village of Packwood, about 80 miles SE of Seattle, population under 1,000, where we set up a two-weekend camp to sample mountain flying. With my Fayence experiences behind me, I was excited to take our ASW-15 for some mountain ridge soaring flights, and had no problem talking the Zirkles into going.

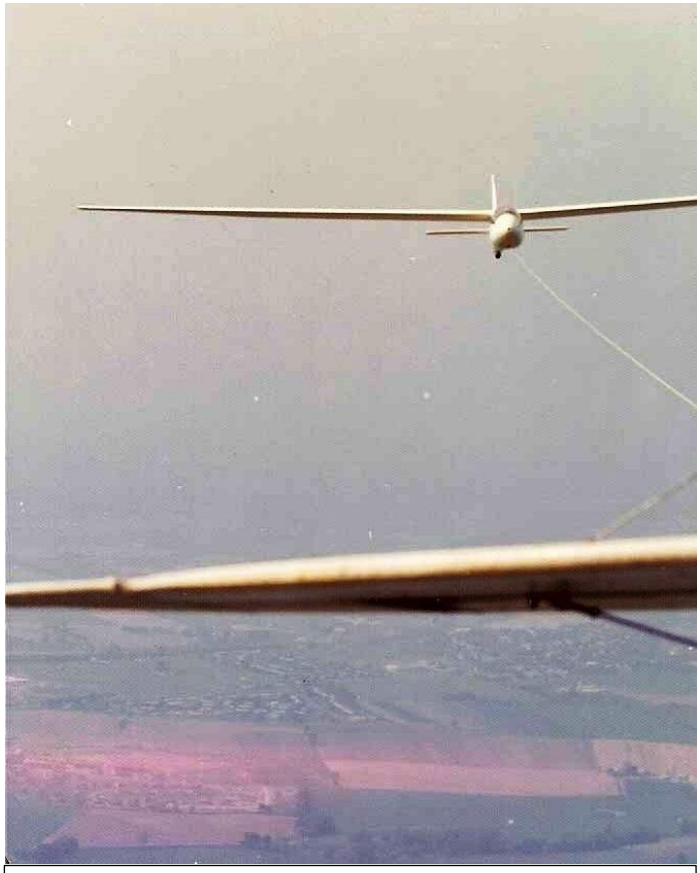
Waiting in the launch line at Packwood - Kathryn Parks on the left (she was known as Kapi to everyone at the time); I'm standing to right; John Hope, a BESC member and noted flight simulator engineer at Boeing, is in front of me. Little did we know this would be my last-ever flight in Foxtrot ZuZu. Kathryn and I were just casual friends at this time.

The SGC and BESC each ferried a towplane – trusty Piper Super Cubs with 180hp engines and climb props – to get us quickly up to mountain ridge altitudes. There were 10 or 12 other sailplanes and pilots in the encampment.

The primary interest in flying out of Packwood Airport was its proximity to Mt. Rainier, some 18 miles to the north, flying in an area called the Tatoosh Wilderness.

Taking off from the airport, we'd circle on tow over town to gain some altitude, then head straight for the first peak that begins the Backbone Ridge, releasing at about 3,000'. With the wind blowing from the west, and perpendicular to the north- south ridge line, it sets up very good ridge lift. We'd then work our way north along the ridge, gaining altitude as the foothill mountains became taller approaching Mt. Rainier. If we got lucky, this technique would possibly get us into the mountain wave lift that forms above Mt. Rainier, where the Washington State Glider Altitude record of 32,270' was set by longtime BESC/SGC member, Joe Robertson, in 1964 (and still unbeaten to this day).

The Last Flight of Foxtrot Zuzu. On the first Saturday at Packwood, Bob and Nancy took flights in Foxtrot Zulu, while I worked on the ground helping with sailplane launching.



Foxtrot Zulu on tow from Packwood Airport, on August 23rd, 1975. We're heading for the peak shown in the previous photo.

The next day, Sunday, August 23rd, was a great day – blue skies and lots of sun – and it was my turn. I towed off at about 11:0AM, but found the ridge lift very spotty and after two hours of difficult flying, I was still no higher than the top of the ridge, only 7 miles up the ridge from my point of departure. I was tired of the struggle and I had no sooner made a radio transmission back to my friends on the ground at Packwood saying I was planning to return and land when the real trouble began.

The scenery along Tatoosh Ridge was spectacular and drop dead gorgeous. Every time you came within camera range of anyone else flying on the ridge, you snapped photos. I have no recollection of who took these photos of me in Foxtrot Zulu that day. Note in the bottom photo how steep the mountain sides were.

As I initiated a right-hand turn away from the ridge, I felt a strong gust of wind push the aircraft forward – in my brief experience, I had never known a gust to do this. My flying speed instantly dropped, and I could feel the right-wing stall. As I was in a turn, this stall accelerated the speed of the left wing, causing a classic spin to the right. I was maybe 100' above the trees on a steep slope of the mountain, and even in the best of situations, a spin can take as much as 200' loss of altitude to recover.

With all the spin practice I had at the SHAPE Gliding Club, I instinctively initiated standard spin recovery the moment I felt the insipient spin – which is to center the stick and jam in opposite rudder – and this is intended to stop the rolling of the fuselage.

The right wing dropped off in an instant, the fuselage nose whipped around and pointed, at what felt like straight down. With insufficient height above the trees, my spin recovery actions were of no consequence, and I was into the tree tops in a couple of seconds at most. I was close enough to the ground that I knew there was no recovery, and impact would be imminent – and like hitting a brick wall.

As the sailplane plummeted towards the ground, I distinctly remember screaming my bloody head off, and although everyone says your life flashes by you in an instant at a time like this, the only thought I clearly remember was, "*Oh, shit! I've really screwed up this time, and I'm going to be dead at the bottom*!"

By an incredible stroke of luck, Foxtrot Zulu came straight down through a dense stand of Douglas Fir trees – probably averaging 80'-100' tall – and the right side of the fuselage and the right wing were tucked in close to the trunk of one of the trees. The tree limbs were fairly small, and the wings snapped them like matchsticks. With each branch, I felt a jolt as we crashed to earth.

I have no idea how fast I was going when the fuselage nose slammed into the ground, but it was an incredibly hard straight-on nose landing. Later, I discovered dark purple bruises on both sides of my chest and shoulders from the cockpit shoulder harness – and the bulkhead holding the bolts for the shoulder straps was shattered. I can attest that it was a damn hard landing!

Now What! Interestingly, the first thing I sensed after the impact was a cascade of tree limbs raining down on me – it was the broken-off branches that followed me to the ground.

The next thing I thought was, "*Damn, I'm alive!*" I must have been in immediate shock, though, as my first instinct was to get the hell away from the wreckage as fast as I could – I distinctly remember looking to my right, seeing the right wing split completely open, and then thinking "*I have to get out of here before this thing burns and explodes!*"

The photos here and on the next two pages were taken by Kathryn Parks and Norm Austin, club friends who hiked into the wreckage two weeks after the accident. Top photo: On the way down, the fuselage, by absolute chance, tucked in next to the tree on the left, with my right wing closely shearing off limbs as it passed. Bottom Photo: The left wing sticking out into an open area indicates that if I'd been a few feet to my left, I'd have come straight down, with no trees to break my fall, and the result would have been very different.

Now that's strange. A sailplane doesn't have an engine, and therefore no fuel, so it can't burn or explode. Shock-induced instinctive thoughts don't always have to make sense.

The cockpit canopy had blown off at the moment of impact (it was later found about 75' below the crash site, fractured in several places). I know this because I have a very distinct recollection of broken-off tree limbs cascading past my face and piling up in my lap. The surrounding cockpit area was shattered and crumpled all the way up to my waist.

<u>And what about my feet, you might ask?</u> Well, during flight they are in the rudder pedals just a few inches (maybe 6") from the fuselage's fiberglass nose. Inspection by Norm and Kathryn two weeks later determined that the fuselage nose – by some incredible luck – just happened to hit the ground in between two heavily rotted deadfall trees spaced a foot or so apart and that tight space greatly slowed me for the final impact in the soft humus on the forest floor.

It's difficult to figure out the juxtaposition of Foxtrot Zulu's vertical tail and fuselage in this photo. Aft of the N-number on the fuselage, you can see the jagged break in the tail cone in front of the rudder and elevator. The tail section snapped off on impact and fell crashing downward, landing upside down but was hung up by the control cables to the tail surfaces. Otherwise, the tail was fairly intact. The cockpit radio's antenna is located in the tail, and the co-axial cable to the antenna was broken. I didn't have the presence of mind to even try the radio, as the instruments were a mess, and I figured they were all toasted.

These two photos show the horrific damage to the cockpit area. At left, the fuselage fracture at the instrument panel is all that can be seen of the fuselage (which is where my feet were). The remainder of the nose shattered like an egg shell on impact. When Kathryn and Norm visited the site, they were amazed that my feet weren't smashed right up to my knees. On inspection, they found there were rotted-out tree trunks lying imbedded in a very thick layer of decayed leaf and needle detritus, and I apparently managed to slip between two logs for a somewhat cushioned impact. At right, this is a view of the cockpit area as Norm and Kathryn found it. As far as we know, they were the first to reach the crash site – but others found it in the coming days.

With the panic that was setting in, though, I feverishly pawed at the pile of debris around my legs (where they disappeared into the highly damaged fuselage nose), with the busted-up instrument panel and pile of instrument wiring that my feet were tangled up in. I finally (15 minutes?) worked myself free and "stepped out" of the fuselage on the uphill side. I had a short perusal of the wreckage and then began a hard scramble up the very steep hillside – so steep that I had difficulty keeping my footing. The incredible thicket of deadfall trees and downed branches from a century of layering also made it a tough slog.

I didn't scramble uphill more than a few hundred feet before the heavy, thick trees opened into an expansive alpine meadow, with small fields of snow scattered around, and top of the ridge receding to the east. I didn't realize it then, but I was just below the 7,000' level of the Cascade foothills, and I was looking at Tatoosh Ridge that I had just been flying over less than an hour before.

Rescue from Tatoosh Ridge. My "escape" off the mountain took 36 hours from this time, through a steady rainfall that arrived that evening, dropping as much rain in a 24-hour period as the Cascades

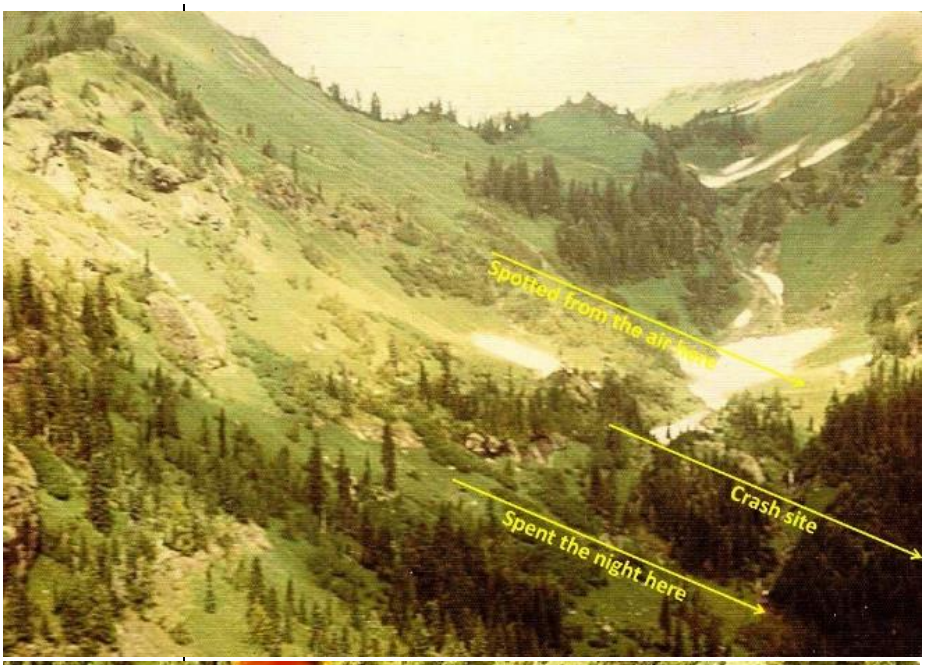
normally get in the entire month of August. Because my flight began on a warm late Summer day, I was dressed in light clothing – jeans, short-sleeved shirt, light loafers, and a light jacket that I'd tucked in the tiny baggage compartment of Foxtrot Zulu.

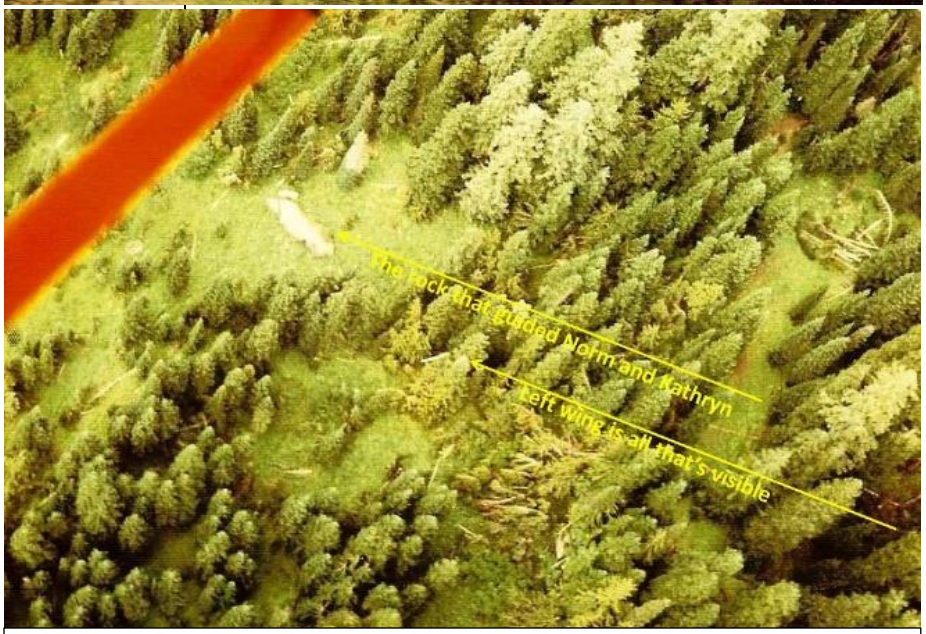
Throughout the afternoon I could hear towplanes buzzing overhead, and it looked like they were flying in a search pattern, so I knew they had figured out that I'd gone down. In mid-afternoon I returned to Foxtrot Zuzu to see if the radio worked (it didn't), and to see if I could grab something that might help them spot me – the best I could do was my parachute. At the time, I was a smoker, so I had a pack of matches in my pocket.

Back at the clearing, I gathered up sticks and twigs and built the largest fire I could manage. Then, when I spotted a towplane coming anywhere near me waved my arms wildly, but watched in dejection as they flew overhead and didn't see me. (Turns out, the smoke from the fire only went up about a hundred feet and then dissipated, not visible from any higher.

Late in the afternoon I decided to open the parachute canopy and spread it out in a large circle. I cut the shroud lines and spread it in a nice 26' white circle, hoping they wouldn't think it was snow.

My rescue started with the amazing help of the BESC towplane crew searching for me, locating me seven hours after the crash. As they circled over me, with Kathryn Parks in the back seat of the towplane dropping basic survival supplies and gear to me. This included a sleeping bag, a couple of





Top photo: This is the bowl that I scrambled to after disentangling myself from the wreckage. The peak is at 7,000' elevation. The crash site is not in the photo - it's several hundred feet to the right of the photo, and downhill a couple of hundred feet. The bottom yellow arrow marks the approximate spot where I spent the night, shivering from the cold and rain. The crash occurred in late August, but note the remnants of snow in the bowl at that time. Underneath the snow was the beginning of a small stream bed with just a trickle of water coming from it. This is where I located "driftwood" that I used to build a fire to signal the search planes - to no avail.

Bottom photo: This is a view of the crash site, taken from the BESC Super Cub. The arrow points to Foxtrot Zulu's left wing sticking out of the trees – barely evident even from directly overhead. In fact, it looks very much like any one of the dozens of windblown tree trunks littering the area. When Kathryn and Norm made their way in, the only way they could find the crash site was by locating the rock that's seemingly pointing to the spot. One interesting note – if Foxtrot Zulu had come down just a few feet to the left, I very well might not have had the cushion of the dense trees – pretty scary.

flares and a flare gun, a mirror for signaling, a pair of clear plastic pants and jacket for wet weather, and some candies to munch on. The towplane pilot, Bill Reed, had a bull horn, and as they circled overhead he told me in no uncertain terms not to leave the area on my own, as there were cliffs and even steeper terrain below where I was.

This was followed the next morning by a Fort Lewis rescue helicopter attempting to pluck me from the clearing, but couldn't get to me due to dense clouds that completely enveloped the mountain area. It was exasperating to hear it buzzing around, and they gave up when it was obvious the clouds weren't going to rise.

Later that next day, and completely unknown to me, the local Sheriff's office attempted a rescue with a pair of pack horses, climbing up the eastern side of the mountain (I was on the western side). The Sheriff carried a flask of hot coffee and some candy bars, and it was very welcome when we met him halfway down the steep switchbacks late that afternoon

In the end, my rescue came from two Weyerhaeuser guys – called "timber cruisers", riding on two-wheel drive motorbikes. They act as timber spotters for the timber company, sighting and identifying trees for the logging crews. They too had come up the eastern slope of the mountain ridge, making their way up the switchbacks to the ridge, crossing over to the west side, left their bikes due to serious deadfall and an almost non-existent trail, then made their way north on foot for at least a mile (maybe two). With my parachute folded up in a small square, it served as a carrier rack seat on the guy's bike for the 7,000' ride down.

All of this was cheered on by a dozen of my SGC/BESC gliding friends who hung around at the trailhead throughout the 36 hours, waiting for my return.

An excellent article of this episode was written by a good friend, Marion Barritt, and published in the July, 1976 issue of Soaring Magazine. To this day, I believe it's one of the best adventure stories ever published in the magazine. I have permission for reprint of the article, and if Chris Klix is interested, I'll see if I can get a usable digital file of it for a future Towline.

Editor's Note: With your SSA membership you can view the article on the SSA website at:(Foxtot Zulu, Where are you?)

The Soaring article is accompanied by a set of four amazing watercolor paintings by another SGC member and close gliding friend, Jack Olson[5]. Jack later sold the original watercolors to me for $40 each, and because they're so amazingly painted, they are prized possessions.

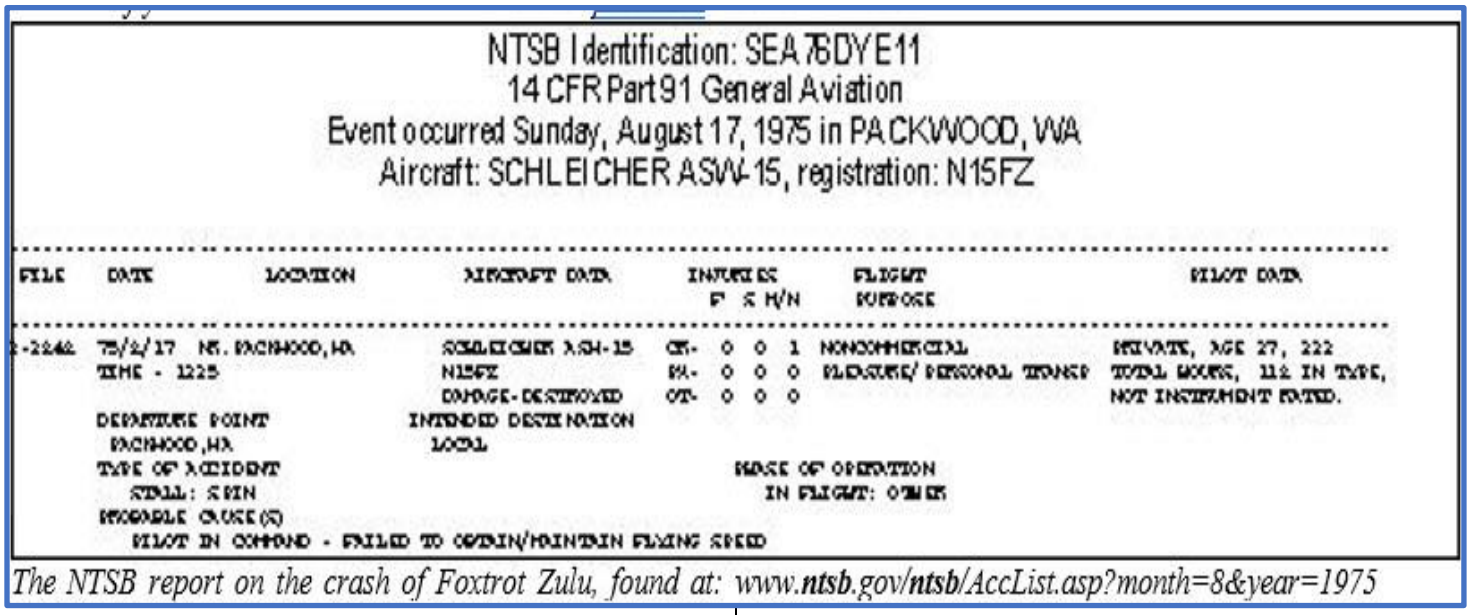
Jack Olson was a very active member of the SGC and BESC – plus just an amazing guy. Not only was he a wonderful gliding friend, but he was also an incredibly prolific industrial designer and watercolor artist at Boeing. Among many other projects, he designed the Boeing Jetfoil (and held the design patent) - the 90' passenger boat that cruises at 50+ MPH on an airfoil below the water surface, allowing the hull to "fly" 12-15' above the water. Jack produced dozens of visionary illustrations of space exploration, and 21 of his paintings are on display at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum (maybe still are; maybe not).

Within a few days of the accident, I duly reported it to the FAA in a face-to-face interview at the FAA Center on Boeing Field. I was not cited with any flying violations, and the crash didn't have any adverse effects on my pilot's license (or our glider insurance either). As you can see from the accident report below, it was noted that the cause of accident was "failure to . . . maintain flying speed".

We were also notified by the U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station near Packwood that several requests had been received from people they believed to be scavengers. We were advised that if we wanted anything salvaged from the wreckage, we'd better get in there in a hurry.

Almost immediately volunteers started coming out of the woodwork who wanted to hike into the crash site. The list was paired down to a workable number, and the following Saturday, six of us from the SGC and BESC attempted a hike to the site.

On the morning of the hike, we headed out from Seattle, and at the base of the eastern slope of Tatoosh Ridge, we hiked up the same 43 switchbacks I'd come down the previous Monday evening. It was



NTSB Identification: SEA76DYE11
14 CFR Part 91 General Aviation
Event occurred Sunday, August 17, 1975 in PACKWOOD, WA
Aircraft: SCHLEICHER ASW-15, registration: N15FZ

FILE	DATE	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT DATA	INJURIES F S M/N	FLIGHT PURPOSE	PILOT DATA
1-2242	75/8/17	NR. PACKWOOD,WA	SCHLEICHER ASH-15	GR- 0 0 1	NONCOMMERCIAL	PRIVATE, AGE 27, 222
	TIME - 1225	N15FZ		AR- 0 0 0	PLEASURE/ PERSONAL TRANSP	TOTAL HOURS, 112 IN TYPE,
		DAMAGE-DESTROYED		OT- 0 0 0		NOT INSTRUMENT RATED.
	DEPARTURE POINT	INTENDED DESTINATION				
	PACKWOOD,WA	LOCAL				
	TYPE OF ACCIDENT			BASIS OF OPERATION		
	STALL: SPIN			IN FLIGHT: OTHER		
	PROBABLE CAUSE(S)					
	PILOT IN COMMAND - FAILED TO OBTAIN/MAINTAIN FLYING SPEED					

*The NTSB report on the crash of Foxtrot Zulu, found at: www.**ntsb**.gov/**ntsb**/AccList.asp?month=8&year=1975*

raining throughout the 6,000' ascent, and it was surprisingly cold.

At the ridge, we began the four-mile hike North on the unmaintained, and sometimes barely discernible trail on the eastern side of the ridge. At a critical point, we were supposed to find a fork in the trail that would take us across to the western side of the ridge, from where we could then descend 1,000' into the bowl near the wreckage. We missed that trail fork, and ended up on a snow field covering dangerous piles of loose rock. By the time we turned back, miserable, cold, and without sufficient overnight gear, we decided to end the trek. We all went home disappointed.

Without telling anyone, the following day BESC and SGC members, Kathryn Parks and Norm Austin, returned by themselves to the trail head, and starting out very early in the morning (and still with wet boots and gear), they successfully made the hike in and located the wreckage.

They had the barest description how to locate the wreckage, but with the aerial photo showing the nearby rock pointing to it they were able to locate it. After seeing the wreckage up close, they later told me they both stood quietly, in absolute amazement that I wasn't now 2' shorter – or worse. After photographing the site, they cut loose the instrument panel and packed it out. Surprisingly, we found that all the instruments still worked – the only glitch was a blown in-line fuse from the power source to the radio.

Insurance? The glider was fully insured for replacement value – luckily, not for original purchase cost, as we'd paid $8,600 in 1972; now in 1975 its replacement value was $13,000. Within a month of the crash we received a check for the full $13K.

The money was immediately earmarked by Bob, Nancy, and I for purchase of a new ASW-19, the model that Schleicher introduced to replace the ASW-15B.

Epilogue. For me, the crash had a profound impact, on my soaring career, and also on my perspective on life.

I now realized I was mortal, something that isn't often understood by youth – certainly not by me at that age!

More importantly, I began to suspect that maybe I wasn't as smart as I previously thought.

As the months went by, I thought and thought about exactly how the accident occurred. I talked to people about the flight sensations in the instant before the spin – the sudden acceleration from behind, the instant loss of speed, and the unexpected right wing drop that began the spin. It was concluded that I

encountered a strong tail gust of wind from behind, and that wind gust, coupled with an already too-slow flying speed dropped me below stall speed. With the right wing down at the initiation of a right-hand turn, the spin was inevitable.

My lack of flying experience was the biggest factor. I had only 232 total flight hours at the time of the crash, flying a very sophisticated sailplane. I was careless, at a time when maximum flying concentration and skills were required.

At the time, I thought I was as experienced as anyone in the club in mountain ridge soaring. After all, hadn't I spent three summers ridge soaring in the Southern French Alps? Yes, but I failed to realize the very different type of terrain between the French Alps and the Pacific Northwest Cascade Mountains, and how that terrain would affect wind flow. The Alps were mostly long ridge lines, largely barren of trees. The Cascades are also made up of long ridge lines, but heavily forested, and most importantly, have dozens of "false" ridges that jut out in all directions, creating huge terrain "bowls" at high altitudes, causing very squirrely winds.

The lesson sank in even more two weeks after the crash, while visiting with our good friends in the Vancouver Soaring Association at their airfield in Hope, B.C. An experienced Canadian pilot in a borrowed sailplane spun into the end of the runway from about the same altitude as when my spin began. He was killed instantly, and we all witnessed it. The causes leading up to the crash were different from mine, but the biggest difference was, he had a treeless runway beneath him, whereas I had huge, 80' Douglas Fir trees that helped break Foxtrot Zulu's out-of-control plummet to earth. When the whole situation really sunk in later that night, I was a total wreck – from guilt having survived my crash and he didn't – and I spent the entire night at the Greyhound Bus depot coffee shop in downtown Hope, dealing with my grief.

Within a few weeks, I got into a two-place sailplane and flew once again (with an instructor in the back), much like a thrown rider gets back on his horse. I was terrified the first few times I found myself close to a ridge, within only hundreds of feet from the hill or mountainside.

The following spring, Foxtrot Zulu was replaced with a new ASW-19 (sporting the same FZ competition call sign). With various new sailplanes, I continued to fly for the next 25 years, although it was never with the same intensity as before, and my log book shows decreasing flight hours each year. During that entire time I only racked up 400 flight hours.

The fate of Foxtrot Zulu? A few weeks after the accident we received word from the U.S. Forest Service that the crash site was within the boundaries of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The letter advised us, that the glider being of "non-biodegradable" fiberglass construction, would have to be removed and we were responsible for it. At first, we were worried, but then quickly realized we no longer owned Foxtrot Zulu – the insurance company did, and it was now their problem.

A few days later, the insurance company sent out a large mailing that offered Foxtrot Zulu, as is, where it is, to the highest bidder, hoping to flog off the wreckage and get it out of their hair.

To our surprise, a non-glider pilot named John James – who only flew RC model gliders, and was a fiberglass modeler for the Boeing wind tunnel, put in a bid for $200 and won it. We believe his was the only bid.

After winning the bid, John called me to ask about the exact location of the crash site. He was making plans to hike in to the crash site, secure the wreckage, and airlift Foxtrot Zulu out of the trees.

I drew a crude map for him, and within a matter of several days, John and his son hiked into the site. He later told us how they'd located the wreckage. When they were searching around the woods fairly close to it, they heard a nearby voice of a small boy holler out, "Hey, dad, it's over here!" They followed the voice and found a guy and his young son looking over the wreckage. Face-to-face with the guy was a bit tense

at first, but when John showed him the Bill of Sale from the insurance company, the pair quickly skedaddled.

John and his son soon saw that scavengers had already found the site, as the motorcycle battery that powered the instruments was gone, and the landing gear had been partially disassembled – but not taken.

They were able to de-rig the remaining wing that was attached to the fuselage, packed everything piece-by-piece out to a nearby clearing, bundled it all together with ropes, and then rendezvoused with a helicopter that was waiting at Packwood airport to sling it out. The cost of the helicopter charter was $800, so for a total of $1,000 he now had a three-year old high-performance sailplane – but much the worse for wear.

Over the winter, an advertisement to purchase the left wing of an ASW-15B appeared in the SSA's Soaring magazine. John knew the left wing wasn't repairable, and he advertised every month for a year. But apparently no one had crashed an ASW-15B with a left wing still in good condition.

A year or so later, Kathryn and I paid a visit to John at his home in the Bothell area north of Seattle, and we got to see Foxtrot Zulu for the first time since the crash.

It was both amazing – and disappointing. The fuselage was in his garage. The nose and cockpit area had been repaired, and it seemed like a pretty workmanlike job.

On top of the fuselage behind the cockpit, though, there were obvious and significant whoop-de-doo's in the fiberglass. When we asked him about that, his response was, "Oh, it undoubtedly came out of the factory like that when new." I personally took delivery of Foxtrot Zulu at the factory, and it certainly did not come out that way. We told him so, that these were obviously stress fractures from the crash that have weakened the structure, but he disagreed. We said no more.

He then took us to his living room – yes, living room – to see the repaired left wing. It was on its leading edge, spanning the entire room, ***diagonally***, from corner to corner. He told us it had been there for a year, where his whole family had to climb over it to cross from one side of the living room to the other!

Soon after, another Boeing engineer offered to buy Foxtrot Zulu – and because he'd been unsuccessful in locating a right wing, John took him up on his offer.

Little did he know, but the guy had somehow located a right wing, quietly bought it, and now was able to complete the repair.

Last we heard, Foxtrot Zulu was in the Atlanta area, where the new owner was working on a project at a Boeing subsidiary. We later met up with him on a visit to Atlanta and learned that he'd flown the pants off the sailplane, including several of his Diamond Badge flights. He loved the ASW-15B!

Interestingly, an Internet search on N15FZ comes up with a surprise. The FAA N-number, N15FZ, was assigned in 1990 to a Rutan Long EZ power plane. Somewhere along the way, possibly when the crash was reported to the FAA, the original N-number assigned to Foxtrot Zulu was struck from the rolls. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that Foxtrot Zulu is still flying, but we don't have any recent details. Without knowing the N number, it's harder to track down.

And Kathryn Parks – who wouldn't date anyone who owned an airplane? (I reported on this in last month's article, so didn't include it again here.) After the crash, I now didn't own an airplane – at least not for a while – so that stigma was no longer attached to me.

Kathryn's efforts in the towplane during the rescue, and later when she and Norm Austin located the wreckage and packed out the aircraft's instruments brought us a bit closer as friends. It wasn't long before we started dating, she shrugged off the

boyfriend she was currently dating. We became a steady couple by the end of 1975.

In the summer of 1977, we married on the conditional rain day at the end of the final competition day of the Region 8 Soaring Championships – a competition that I had organized and she had worked in. And because we hadn't needed the rain day to complete our competition, a lot of our soaring friends were in attendance.

In the coming years, we purchased an ASW-20 (competition number UZ) that we flew for almost 10 years. Later, we upgraded to a newer model of the ASW-20 (which burned to ashes in a hangar fire on the first day of a U.S. National Championship at Barstow, CA that Kathryn was to fly in – I was in Saudi Arabia on business at the time). This was followed by an LS-6b and an LS-4 that we owned at the same time and flew together. Most recently, we took delivery of an ASW-27 that we owned until 2015, which we sold to a New Zealand pilot and shipped to Christchurch.

Kathryn is inspecting our ASW-27, UZ - "Uniform Zulu", - hangared at Pacific AeroSport, LLC at Arlington Airport, in western Washington.

After that, we developed an interest in a 62' motor yacht that we annually cruise on for 3-4 months, mostly up and down the Inside Passage to SE Alaska.

Soaring is still in our blood, and even though we haven't flown for several years, we still consider ourselves sailplane pilots.

ADULT AND JUNIOR AVIATION MILESTONES AT HRS, submitted by: Brian Hart

There was not a lot of in-glider instruction at Hood River Soaring (HRS) over the winter, nor any new solos, but there was one new certificate—my AGI certificate. We expect all of the on-field activity to ramp up quite soon once the annual is done on the ASK-21 and the weather becomes more consistently good. Here are a few of the winter's activities nonetheless:

- Juniors Henry Mason and Kylan Mullis joined Jonathan and me in attending the NW Aviation Conference where we joined forces with Brad Pattison and the rest of the Puget Sound Soaring folks at their soaring booth. Jonathan gave a short presentation each day on how to save $8000 by starting in a glider on the way to a commercial license as part of Brad's glider presentation. Brad hosted all four of us at his home overnight between the conference days so we did not have to make the very long trek back home in between. While we were at the conference, we ran into our neighbors from the Hood River airport—the Hood Aero powered flight instructors and flight training administrator. That conversation led to their employer deciding to sponsor all of them to become licensed glider pilots and instructors. Not only that, but we apparently sold the glider concept so thoroughly that they now they want to offer glider licenses part of their official flight training package, in partnership with Hood River Soaring and using our glider and tow plane resources. So, we anticipate yet another avenue to help us burst at the seams with activity as spring arrives.

- The Ximango motor glider never really quit flying over the winter. Jonathan and I spent 45 minutes in early February riding convergence lines between Black Butte and Mt. Jefferson after flying the Ximango to Madras, Redmond, and Bend. I have done 63 takeoffs and landings—and 33 hours—in the Ximango since January 1. In March alone, I flew it 16 days for a total of 25 hours. It is 40 miles one way to the gliderport for us, so I drove almost 600 miles in one week alone when I flew seven consecutive days. I am specifically working on one of my commercial glider requirements—100 takeoffs and landings in a glider as PIC, and using the motor glider for that kept me going even through times when the runway was surrounded by snow so the tow plane and Hood River Soaring gliders were inaccessible. And I plan to fly the Libelle every good day as well once the weather stabilizes.

But that is just for a couple of us and too narrow to be big news, and there is big news from Hood River Soaring over the winter, big news that was visible not out at the gliderport, but largely out of sight in our training room and at the PSI exams (FAA) test center. It begins here: we host three-to four-hour study and simulator practice nights in Hood River from 18:00 – 22:00 each Thursday night. We split the time between FAA and Bronze Badge test prep, general glider training, and Condor simulator practice and contests. With everything from pre-first-lesson 11-year-olds to 17-year-old licensed glider pilots, it is something of a one-room schoolhouse for soaring training and creates quite a challenge to keep everyone engaged.

Still, in November and December, we hosted an eight-week guided-study series aimed at preparing student pilots—youth and adult—to pass the FAA Private Pilot Glider written test—and seven of them did so! In January and February, we switched gears to host another eight-week study series, this time to prepare many of those same students to pass the Bronze Badge written test. To date, five have done so, and we expect at least three more to do so in the coming weeks. That is all keeping resident SSAI Mark Stanfield busy reviewing test results and planning everyone's Bronze Badge flight tasks.

Here are the Hood River Soaring adult and junior aviation milestones between November 2023 and March 2024 along with some of their goals for this year:

Juniors

Kylan Mullis: Passed Private Pilot Glider written test; Passed Bronze Badge written test; Plans Private Pilot Glider checkride on his 16th birthday in July

Henry Mason: Passed Private Pilot Glider written test; Passed Bronze Badge written test; Plans to attend XC academy in Ephrata in July; Plans Private Pilot Glider checkride on his 16th birthday in July

Isabel Ulland: Passed Private Pilot Glider written test; Plans to attend XC academy in Ephrata in July

Anastasia Mitsky: Passed Private Pilot Glider written test; Plans Private Pilot checkride this summer

Teaghan Oakes: Passed Private Pilot Glider and Bronze Badge written tests

Ori Maccabee: Passed Bronze Badge written test

Jonathan Hart: Passed Commercial pilot power written test; Passed Fundamentals of Instruction written test; Passed CFI written test; Passed CFIG written test; Awarded $2000 SSA Dr. John Campbell CFIG scholarship; Plans to attend the DustUp, Region 8 contest, and junior XC camp in Ephrata in July—all as a tow pilot; Plans five check-rides in the two weeks on & after his 18th birthday in July: Commercial power, CFI, Commercial glider, CFIG, CFII

Adults

Banyan Carman: Passed Private Pilot Glider and Bronze Badge written tests; Plans Private Pilot checkride this summer; Plans to attend the XC camp as an adult mentee

Fritz Horst: Passed Private Pilot Glider written test; Plans Private Pilot checkride this summer

Brian Hart: Passed Fundamentals of Instruction written test; Passed Advanced Ground Instructor written test; Earned and now holds AGI certificate; Passed Commercial glider written test; Passed CFIG written test; Plans commercial glider and CFIG check-rides this summer; Planned and will direct the upcoming cross-country academy in Ephrata in July.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS FOR 2024

- SGC April General Meeting (on-line)..... April 1st @ 7:00 PM
- SGC Board Meeting (on-line) ..... April 8th @ 7:00 PM
- Ephrata Dust-Up (tentative)..... May 25th thru May 27th, 2024
- Evergreen Encampment..... May 27th thru June 1st, 2024
- Wiederkehr/VSA Cross-Country Week ..... June 1 thru June 8th, 2024
- Methow Encampment (tentative)..... June 15th thru June 22nd, 2024
- Region 8 Contest ..... June 23rd thru June 29th, 2024
- SSA Juniors Camp..... July 1st thru July 6th, 2024
- Mackey, ID ..... July 8th thru July 21st, 2024
  Contact: Tom Dixon, 208-867-6953 or tfdixon@msn.com
  Local accommodations are limited, reserve early!
- WVSC Alvord glider Safari, OR ..... July 20th thru July 27th, 2024

SGC General Meetings are held online the first Monday of the month at 7:00 PM, Jan through May & Oct through Dec.

- All pilots can join by clicking going to the SGC website homepage and clicking the link under "UPCOMING EVENTS"

SGC Board Meetings are held online every second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM

- Note: this recently changed from the second Tuesday of the month.
- SGC Members are welcome to attend. Email the SGC Board to request a meeting link.
- A representative from each Club in the Region is invited to attend for maximum coordination & mutual benefit!

--Chris Klix, 2024 SGC Board

On behalf of the SGC Board of Directors
Thank you to the Towline Publishing Committee and all the volunteers that contributed to this newsletter! This publication is such an important communication tool in helping keep SGC the heart of the PNW soaring scene.

Please send any articles/pictures for submission in future publications to:
Towline@SeattleGliderCouncil.org

Note: Deadline for submissions is 7 days prior to the end of the month preceding the issue.