

TOWLINE



**Solo flight out of Chateau-Arnoux
Saint-Auban, France**

Photo by: Tory Tolton

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TOWLINE is the Newsletter of the Seattle Glider Council

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



SGC BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2023)

Chairman:	Noel Wade	noelw@seattleglidercouncil.org
Assistant Chair:	Matthew Coleman	matthewc@seattleglidercouncil.org
Directors:	Mike Bamberg	mikeb@seattleglidercouncil.org
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	Christian Klix	chrisk@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Henry Rebbeck	henryr@seattleglidercouncil.org

2023 VOLUNTEERS & COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Treasurer	Randy Scott
Secretary	Jim McNeil
Chief Towpilot	Ron Bellamy
Towplane Manager	Chris Klix
Ops Scheduler	>OPEN<
TOWLINE Committee	Dave Lindberg, Dave Reusch, Eric Greenwell, Tom Dixon, Chris Klix
Airspace Coordinator	>OPEN<
Contest Manager (Region 8)	Mike Bamberg
Insurance Coordinator(s)	Randy Scott & Nan Klix
Trailer Lottery Coordinator	Jim Dobberfuhr
Webmaster(s)	Jim McNeil & Noel Wade
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Elections Chair	>OPEN<
Facilities Manager(s)	Dennis Vreeken & Nan Klix
Dust-Up Event Coordinator	Mike Bamberg
Methow Event Coordinator	Brad Pattison
WA State Governor	>OPEN<
Towcard Data Entry Focal	Randy Scott

SGC SOARING FOUNDATION BOARD (2023)

Director:	Phil Rose	(exp. 1/1/24)
Director:	Henry Rebbeck	(exp. 1/1/25)
Director:	Mike Bamberg	(exp. 1/1/26)

SOARING SOCIETY OF AMERICA REGION 8 OFFICIALS

Region 8 Director	Craig Funston
Idaho Governor	Tom Dixon
Montana Governor	Greg Mecklenburg
Oregon Governor	Mike Bamberg
Washington State Governor	>OPEN<

DUES & FEES

Membership:

Regular - (includes 1 week of facility use)	\$75
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)

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 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

Seasonal reserved spot (April - October)	\$550
Weekly (8 nights or less)	\$120
Short Term (3 nights or less)	\$60
EV Charging	\$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.cascadesoaringociety.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.facebook.com/flyWVSC



SGC: NOT JUST A SUMMER THING!

Every summer the SGC roster swells to over 150 members. Practically everyone who comes to Ephrata has a great time and talks about the lasting memories, the new friends, and new soaring achievements.

As the weather turns to fall and Ephrata tow operations cease, the SGC does **not** shut down! Here are several ways you can be involved, keeping friendships alive and your soaring skills sharp:

- **Join our General Meetings!** They are held online and resume on **October 2nd at 7pm** pacific time ([here's a link to join the meeting](#)). Each meeting will have a presentation about soaring skills, the future of our organization, or a member's report from a special event or location.
- **Come to the work party at Ephrata on October 7th & 8th!** We need to winterize the training facility and perform some light maintenance. We'll provide pizza and beverages, and we'll provide tows if the weather cooperates. This is your chance to give back and ensure the facility is usable in 2024 and beyond.
- **Fly with us via the Condor2 simulator!** Mike Bamberg runs a winter series of flights where participants can fly on their own time *or* join in group sessions with multiple gliders "in the air" - all chatting online as we fly. It's a great way to keep your skills sharp and stay in touch with your fellow aviators. [Email Mike Bamberg](#) to get more info and join the group.
- **Attend our Annual Meeting & Banquet, December 2nd!** We'll be holding it at the McMenamin's Anderson School location in Bothell, WA. We'll celebrate key achievements, volunteer efforts, and catch up with soaring compatriots old & new. Tickets will be available on our website soon.

Soaring skills are perishable, and our community is full of great people. Join us in keeping these skills and friendships active year-round. Whether it's at a meeting, a work-party, or flying online in Condor2 – we look forward to seeing you there!

I want to close with a special note of thanks to **Phil Anderson**. Phil is retiring from tow duty after *many* years of stalwart service to multiple glider clubs. In addition to his ace flying skills (honed in the Air Force, perfected in the Pawnee), Phil's broad grin and quick wit brought joy to everyone around him. Phil, on behalf of pilots throughout the Northwest, Thank You for your flying, your service, and your joy!

Noel Wade, 2023 SGC Chairperson



Letters and Articles

Flying the French Alps

By Tory Tolton

I recently had the opportunity to participate in the six-day advanced mountain soaring course at the Centre National de Vol à Voile (CNVV) in Chateau-Arnoux-Saint-Auban, France, August 7-12, 2023. I've been considering it over the past five years or so – on the recommendation of former SGC member Thomas Van de Velde. It was an incredible experience, and I thought I might share more about it.

The CNVV (<https://cnvv.net>) is a training center affiliated with the French Glider Flight Federation (FFVP), with two large hangars full of top-of-the-line dual and single place gliders, on-staff instructors and maintenance personnel, a fleet of tow planes, and on-site accommodations. It's technically a club with an open membership, and pilots participate from all over Europe and the rest of the world.



Hangar for Single Place Gliders

The CNVV offers two different mountain courses for glider pilots – a dual-only course for pilots who have less experience or otherwise don't want to fly on their own, and an advanced course for those wanting some mix of instruction and solo flights. I opted for the advanced course as it offers more opportunities for flying and a larger canvas for learning.

The flying and the terrain itself is the main draw of course, and it's phenomenal by any standards. St Auban is located in the foothills of the southern Alps, with the high Alps accessible to the northeast.



Lac Serre du Ponçon and Pic de Morgon – looking north

Conditions were phenomenal on four of the six days, tougher on two days with clear and stable conditions, but all six days were soarable. The weather was highly varied with wave conditions on a few days, ridge lift extensively and thermals everywhere, with some areas of overdevelopment and variable micro-climates in different regions.

I flew three days in dual instructional flights in an Arcus, and three days solo in a Discuss 2c 18m. On the best days we made it to Italy and nearly as far as the Swiss border to the northeast, Ecrin National Park to the north and the Rhone Valley to the northwest. We explored the Alps of Upper Provence extensively, including Dormillouse, Cheval Blanc and the Verdon Gorge.

Traces and photos of my flights can be seen on my SeeYou profile by navigating to <http://flights.tolton.net>.





Parc national de Ècrin - looking south toward Barre des Ècrin (peak obscured)

My instructor Pierre has instructed in the Alps for decades, with deep knowledge of every possible nook and cranny, and proficiency in English. He had me do almost 100% of the flying myself, guiding me on where to go for the best conditions considering the terrain, wind and (extensive) airspace limitations. This approach means that the flying experience is based on the pilot's skill level – those who are better prepared will experience more, and those with lower proficiency will be working and stepping up from where they are.



L'Albaron - looking west

After one day of instruction (and the paperwork for my FAA certificate validation), I was signed off for solo flying. Solo flights for me were limited to a 25:1 glide ratio to airports within 50 km of St Auban while I gain

experience, and check-ins via radio on progress with the instructor every 20 minutes during each flight was a requirement for everyone flying solo in club gliders.



Aérodrôme de Château-Arnoux-Saint-Auban, Montfort village above

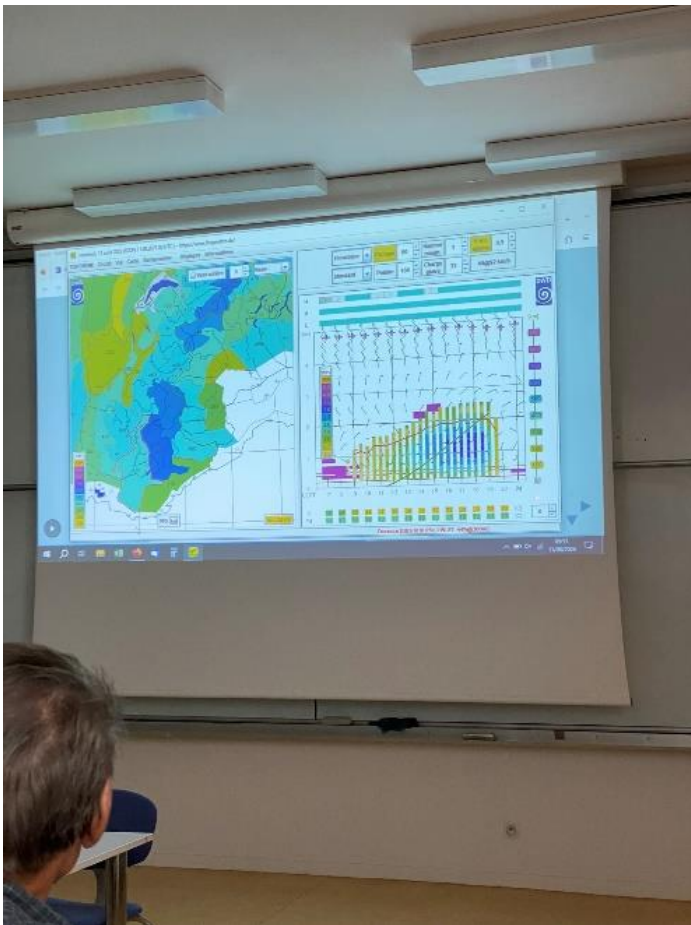
There was extensive ground instruction as well, with a thorough operations and airspace briefing, lessons on mountain flying techniques and safety, and detailed discussion about the previous day's flights using SeeYou. Pilots are organized into small instructional groups based on their proficiency levels and the debriefs are conducted together. The other pilots in my group already had extensive experience in the Alps, so I was able to learn a lot from the reviews of their flights.



Daily group debriefing and instruction with Pierre



There were mandatory weather briefings each day, which were very thorough and efficient, limited to 20 minutes.



Flugwetter weather app (from Germany) during briefing

Registering for the program was easy, with an online process to confirm glider and instructor availability and reserve accommodations. There was a liaison who speaks English to assist with details and trip preparation. The onsite accommodations and food were great, with other local options for both available as well. Costs vary depending on the season and accommodations selected and are very reasonable.

Pilots who wish to fly solo must obtain validation of the FAA certificate by the French civil aviation authorities. This involves filling out the French paperwork (English translation is available), obtaining a letter of verification from the FAA (confirming the

pilot and medical certificate details) and presenting an appropriate FAA medical certificate issued within the last 12 months (as medical exams are required for glider pilots in France). Pilots not willing or able to complete this process can fly in the dual instruction course instead.

As I look back on the program now six-weeks later, I realize how my perspective about mountain soaring has broadened, with a much wider aperture to see what's possible in a glider. But more than anything specific that I experienced and learned on my last trip, my biggest takeaway is a desire to just keep going back for more.

Feel free to reach out if you're interested in learning more about it.

Gear Door Protection and Main Tire Protection

Submitted by Tom Dixon



Over the years I have seen a number of glider gear doors damaged due to the tiedown cable being pulled when located on the EPH cable. So, I fabricated a wood board with a groove on the bottom side for the cable that my main wheel rolls onto. This holds the cable down and allows my glider to be centered over the cable. The structure is 19" long, 10" wide and the wood is 1" thick (see photo 1 & 2). The groove is a bit oversize for the cable and less than half the thickness of the wood.

Using normal airport tie downs and protecting the main tire is another issue. With my 18 m ship I have to off-set the glider to fit into normal airport tiedowns which puts my main wheel right on top of one of the wing tiedown spots. This way I can use the wing tiedown spot for the left and right wing. BUT, the main tire can be damaged sitting on top of tiedown fitting affixed into the ground. So, another

fabrication, (see photo 3) piece of metal plate 19" long, 10" wide and 5/16" thick. I tried to use the wood one used on the cable but it broke under the weight of the glider as it has to cover a hole where the tiedown fitting is fixed into the surface and the groove made the board too weak.



Solos and Endorsements

Tomorrow's Towpilots:

From Hood River Soaring, Oregon –

Fox Gossett began taking lessons with Neil Cahoon, Jonathan Hart's power instructor, at Grove Field in Camas, WA a few months back, and Fox soloed the Cub Sept 4th. Fox flew the Hood River Soaring L33 glider at the DustUp this year.



Upcoming Meetings and Events for 2023

- SGC General Meeting October 2nd @ 7:00 PM
- SGC Board Meeting October 10th @ 7:00 PM
- Ephrata Winterization Work Party October 7th – 8th
- Ephrata Glider Aerobatic Camp (Tentative) April or May 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 Tuesday (recently changed from Wednesday) of the month at 7:00 PM

- 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, 2023 SGC Board

REMINDER NOTICE TO ALL SGC MEMBERS

Anyone curious about our recent Bylaw changes is encouraged to [read the SGC Bylaws online](#) (available through our website under the “Information” page).

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the SGC Board of Directors at: sgcboard@seattleglidercouncil.org

Season Ending Weekend in Ephrata, October 7th & 8th

GROUP EFFORT, GROUP FUN

Please mark your calendar for October 7th & 8th. That will be your chance to show support and appreciation for the SGC, as we'll winterize the facility that weekend. We don't have paid staff; your help is necessary to ensure the site is usable next year. Watch your inbox for further details, and thanks for remembering that this is your organization!

Also, calling on towpilots to help degrease and wash the tow planes. This is not a small task so the more help the faster it will go.

On behalf of the SGC Board of Directors we thank you for your participation.



We are still scheduling tow operations for the remaining 2023 Season. In order to commit towpilots we need glider pilots to express their intent to soar. Please Indicate that you would like tows using our [SignUp Genius](#) system.

That also goes for towpilots as well. If you would like to tow for us in Ephrata, please sign up, even if there are no glider pilots signed up yet. Sometimes that is all it takes to get the glider pilots to commit.

To sign up for tows:

1. Use the link above or go to the SGC website and over **EVENTS**, then click “**2023 Ephrata Operations Signup**”.
2. Click the “SIGN UP!” image to go to the SignUp Genius calendar.
3. Use the “Sign Up” button next to each of your desired dates, then click “Save & Continue” at the bottom of the page to confirm your signups.
4. If you would like to edit what you have committed to you will need to create an account and log in.

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

