

**Soaring Society of America**  
**Region 1 & Region 3 Report**  
**August 21, 2015**  
(Submitted by: Ann Lafford)

**General Summary Update:**

- Attended the SSA Board Meeting in Greenville, NC in February.
- Visited the 15 Meter Nationals at Harris Hill Soaring.
- Planning to host and Contest Manage the Region 3 in August 2016 at Finger Lakes Soaring in Dansville, NY.
- General Highlights
  - o Membership is holding even. Some members leave and new ones have joined.
  - o Two week long Youth Encampments hosted at Sugarbush to promote youths in soaring.
  - o Girl Scouts Young Eagles glider ride event held at Finger Lakes Soaring.
  - o Aviation Education Camp (AEC) hosted by New England Soaring.
  - o Orientation flights to Civil Air Patrol Cadets held at Connecticut Soaring.
  - o Freedom Wings Flights to individuals with disabilities held at Adirondack Soaring.
  - o CFI-G week long encampment held September 2014 at Springfield VT Airfield was a success. This was accomplished with support from New England Soaring, Post Mills Soaring, Sugarbush Soaring, and Franconia Soaring.
  - o Some clubs are continuing to use Condor as part of their training and seeing benefit from use of this tool.
- Issues requesting SSA support:
  - o Would like SSA involvement in supporting use of driver's license in place of 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Medical for tow pilots. Would like to see the SSA become involved with the AOPA and the EAA in defining requirements with respect to the medical exemption currently being developed before the legislature and the FAA. The SSA should be attempting to ensure that the exemption will include towing or not restrict the types of aircraft we use for towing.
- Lack of FAA examiners.

**New York Sites:**

- o **Dansville, NY** – Finger Lakes Soaring Club
  - Membership is up for this year at 40 as we gained 4 new members.
  - Have added 1 instructor, now with 5 (3 of 4 also tow pilots) and 2 more in the pipeline.
  - Instructors conducted 177 instructional flights (59hrs) with several newly certified PPG and Commercial ratings added.
  - Have a newly appointed DPE in the club able to also certify new instructors.
  - One instructor is using Condor with a couple of students. Need to develop more scenarios to get other instructors to use.
  - Events this year included: Western NY Aviation Camp (Condor, tour and glider flights), Soarfest week long glider encampment, Labor Day glider rides.
  - Issues:
    - Would like SSA supporting use of driver's license in place of 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Medical for tow pilots.
  - Airport development work ongoing that is not favorable to our soaring operation. Attending planning sessions to attempt to influence long-range plans that may adversely affect our operations.
  - Recent FAA inspection raised concerns with “parallel runway operation” by our gliders not having sufficient spacing from paved runway. Do not know what action the FAA or airport operator will propose as club has safely operated in this manner since 1963.
- o **Elmira, NY** – Harris Hill Soaring
  - o Membership is up by 8 at 142. The most important membership retention element is to quickly and effectively train new members. If we can get them to solo and then to the Private Glider Pilot milestones we have an excellent chance of retaining them as active, productive members of HHSC. Condor training has helped in this regard. The breakdown is as follows:

Senior Active	60	55	59	66
Associated Limited	27	34	36	31
Associated Active	3	3	3	3
Life	10	9	9	8
Charter	1	1	1	1
Junior	27	37	26	33

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- o Currently have 11 CFI's and are working with two senior members to augment what is always a much needed resource.
- o Continue to find Condor as an effective tool to improve our primary training efforts, and have increased the scope of using Condor in the training syllabus. The areas added this year are X-wind patterns and landings. One introductory flight with a CFI is provided and after which the student works on the training syllabus using Condor, and once proficient with Condor he/she returns to the aircraft for in flight training. We see a significant difference in skill levels and the rate of learning and skills retention between those who have successfully completed Condor training and those that did not use Condor.
- o Hosted the 15 Meter & Sports Class National Contests this year, and internally have or will have 6 picnics & dinners for members and guests throughout the year. Our summer operations (7 days per week) are taking place between the Labor and Memorial Day Holidays.
- o Future events: The NSM & HHSC will host the 2016 IVSM from July 9th through July 17th.
- o We greatly appreciate the CFI insurance that was made affordable this year, and currently pay for the coverage of this liability policy.
- o Soaring achievements this year:
  - Junior members: Solo (2), 2 Hr Flight (1), 5 hr Flight (2), Silver Badge (2), Gold Distance & Diamond Goal (1), Commercial Pilot (1), CFI (1), One day second place Sport Class National flying as a guest (1), Senior Soaring Achievement: Gold Distance & Diamond Goal (1)
- o **Hamilton, NY** – Iroquois Soaring
  - No new information communicated from contact..
- o **Saratoga Springs, NY** – Adirondack Soaring Association & Saratoga Soaring Association
  - Membership at 74, down 3 from last year. Had about 5 students join this spring but these new students haven't been too active. Tend to lose about 5 members a year but gain 10 new members. This year we haven't gained the number of new members that we typically do.
  - 25+ private sailplanes. Several new sailplanes this year. Club purchased a used 1980 Grob 103 II and will be selling one of our L-23's. (3) DG-300's, Grob 102, and DG 101 were imported from Europe as privately owned sailplanes. We currently own (2) L-13's with less than 1,800 hours TT that we aren't sure what to do with. We have (2) L-23's, a Grob 102, a Grob 103 Twin II, a Grob 103 Twin III, and (2) Pawnee Towplanes.
  - Have 10 CFI-G's, Also have a DPE. Tow pilots are at 11. We recently had two new younger pilots join.
  - Currently not using Condor for formal training. Some students do have the program.
  - Events this year: Lake Placid Wave and Soaring Encampment - September 24th thru 28th, Freedom Wings Flights - October 10th and 11th.
  - Currently working with Saratoga County on creating additional grass runway(s) for landing and asphalt staging areas on Runway 32.
  - Need SSA help in returning the L-13 to service.
  - Saratoga Soaring Association:
    - Active membership down to less than a ten. Mike McCarron , critical driver of the club passed away last summer.
    - Glider is a Grob 103 Twin II and a Pawnee Towplane. Have a privately owned ASW-19 and an LS-4a.

- o **Towanda, NY** – Niagara Soaring Club
  - No new information communicated from contact.
- o **Freehold, NY** – Nutmeg Soaring Association
  - No new information communicated from contact.
- o **Mayville, NY** – Aero Soaring Club
  - We acquired 2 new members this year: Jerry Vogt, and Sean Reagin. Sean is a 16 year old who recently soloed, and yesterday had a 1.5 hour flight in our K-8. One of our tow pilots, Dick Farver, had his first glider solo in our K-7 today on his way to getting a glider rating.
  - Club members worked to get 2 vintage gliders back in the air after long periods of storage. One, a Pirat, had not flown in 30 years, and never in this country. The other, a SGS 1-26C had been abandoned in our hangar over 15 years ago by a former member who purchased it in Canada, but never registered it back in this country. -A second 1-26 was acquired from the owner of our airport and is now up for sale.
  - We have not used Condor in our training because unfortunately it does not offer simulation of our vintage gliders (K-6, K-7, K-8, 1-26, Pirat).
  - Generally it has been a good year weather-wise for us with flying almost every weekend.

**Vermont Sites:**

- o **Morrisville, VT** – Stowe Soaring
  - Stowe Soaring has had an interesting time over the last two seasons. First, KMVL was closed last year from early spring until August 1st so the runway and ramp could be repaved. Needless to say, the new pavement is wonderful and a huge improvement. Flights were way down due to the shortened season and the new airport operator, along with the Portland FSDO, have decided they don't like us using the parallel grass strip that has been in use for the last 40 years! We have spent way too much time trying to resolve this and hope to do so by the end of this season. Beyond this problem, we have a good group of new students this year and have had many good soaring days up and down the Green Mountains and over to the Whites in New Hampshire.
- o **Springfield, VT** – New England Soaring Association (NESA)
  - Membership is up slightly up. Currently have about 40 members (35 reported last year).
  - Gained one instructor from the CFIG camp held last fall. While there are technically six within the membership roster, only 2 to 3 are regularly active and all 3 are also tow-pilots.
  - Despite the above increases, activity and in particular student activity for the year seems down. Need to do some active student recruiting.
  - Limited use of condor. They have a computer, pedals and joystick available in the FBO. While members are encouraged to make use of it, it has not been formally adopted into the training program.
  - Activities this year include providing youth flights in conjunction with the A.C.E. Camp held at Springfield. Another instructor camp will also be held at the airport this fall, however NESA have no candidates to participate this year.
- o **Post Mills, VT** – Post Mills Soaring Club
  - This past year our board established a safety committee consisting of three members. They are charged to improve and oversee club equipment usage policies, flight and site permis-

sions, member safety concerns, and CFIG ongoing training. One member of the committee is on the board. The other two are our chief flying officer and our tow committee chair.

- Supporting a CFIG candidate intensive workshop with the other Vermont clubs. We have 5 CFIG candidates.
- o **Warren, VT** – Sugarbush Soaring Association
  - No new information communicated from contact.

#### **Massachusetts Sites:**

- o **North Adams, MA** – Mohawk Soaring Club
  - No new information communicated from contact.
- o **Sterling, MA** – Greater Boston Soaring Club
  - No new information communicated from contact.

#### **Connecticut Sites:**

- o **Danielson, CT** – Connecticut Soaring Association
  - CSA has instituted a youth tow program where our junior members can work on the flight line and earn tows for flight training.
  - We now have permission from the State of Connecticut to erect a new storage shed at Danielson Airport (LZD). We're hoping to put up a 12 x 16 building this fall.
  - training program continues with success. We are currently training four new students. We have three students with solo status.
  - We are hosting an "Open House and OLC Contest" on September 12th. We are inviting the public to visit us and are planning displays, lectures and intro flights. One of our members sold tee shirts with glider graphics on the internet and the proceeds are to be used to fund the intro rides. (this was very successful, he did two different designs.) In addition to the public, the Greater Boston Club has been invited to attend. We'll be having events for the glider pilots including a spot landing contest, highest altitude gain, duration and an OLC event. Food will be available all day and we'll end with a cookout.
  - We purchased a used EZ-GO Workhorse that is servicing us very well. It's a more heavy duty golf cart with a dump bin that passengers can sit in so allows us to transport visitors to the flight line more safely.
  - We continue to have a fairly steady run of FAST flights. This is a great program and we hope SSA will continue it. We've been successful picking up new members with this program.
  - We have two members attending the week-long instructor training camp next month at Springfield, Vermont. CSA is providing one of its 2-33's for use at the camp during the week.
  - We began using a software from France called Click n Glide. It's a scheduling software that allows club members to sign up for tow plane duties, flight instructor duties, student flights, field ops duties and rides. You can also leave messages and there is a chat window. We're still learning the best ways to use this but so far we like what it offers and is intended to begin having tow pilots and instructors sign up two or three weeks ahead of a flying weekend so students are sure there will be instructor ops. Other clubs may consider looking into the software and a trial membership is available. Costs for the full membership is very inexpensive. (I think less than \$10 a month for us).

#### **New Hampshire Sites:**

- o **Francoina, NH** – Franconia Soaring Association
  - Continue to see about 10% attrition, but our total membership remains about constant. Right now we stand at about 40 members. Twenty are active/regular flyers.
  - Instructor and tow pilots are badly needed. At present we have three instructors and five tow pilots. We have a large student base because of our juniors program. I would say that most of our tows are instructional, then rides, then private member tows. Our instructors don't get

much chance to fly for recreation because, if they come out, they teach. Leading to instructor burn out.

- Don't use Condor, Yet? Possibly we will implement something later this year..
- Host a local outreach effort every year, where we give low cost rides to locals in the surrounding town. This year its on 8/22/2015. We give 10 minute rides for 30 dollars. Five dollars of each ride will be donated to a local church food bank.
- We have an adaptive day in late September where we give free rides to the physically handicapped, paid for by a local adaptive group and our club. This will occur on 9/29/2015.
- We are involved in the Gorham wave camp with GBSC, PMSC, and NESAs.
- We hosted our annual safety meeting in April and listed the event on the FAA/Wings web site. We gained a couple of new club members as a result.
- Our airport is in jeopardy of being sold for house lots. The situation is not dire, but we have a limited amount of time, maybe two years. We are currently in an effort to migrate the club to a 501(c)3 organization. Once we have tax exempt status, we plan to crowd source the purchase of the airport property. This effort is my highest priority.

#### **Pennsylvania Sites:**

- o **Pittsfield, PA** – Brokenstraw Soaring Club
  - Up by 5 members this year with 4 being students.
  - Loss of 2 more instructors not renewing their CFI's results in only 3 CFI's available but meeting the student needs.
  - Have Condor on a three screen simulator, but have not used it for instruction yet.
  - Lack of close (and affordable) available DPE's is major factor for us when a student is ready for their checkride.
- o **Eighty Four, PA** - Pittsburgh Soaring Club
  - Contacted new President Tom Stepleton. Waiting for some input on their club.