

Region 7 report

Over the past year I have either visited the following Clubs/Commercial operations or been in contact with their leadership:

Chicago Glider Club

Sky Soaring, Inc

Windy City Soaring

Chicagoland Glider Council

Highland Soaring

SilverCreek Soaring

Sylvania Soaring

Red Wing Soaring

Minnesota Assoc of Soaring Clubs

Silent Knights

Hartford Soaring Club

Wabash Valley Soaring

Lake Village Ind Club

Overall, the operations that I talked too had fairly stable membership numbers for the year but most had fewer flights due to the wet weather early this season in the upper Midwest.

I attended the Chicagoland Glider Council seminar in February. It is a biannual meeting of soaring pilots(approximately 120 this year) from the upper midwest for an all day seminar held at the Elgin Community College auditorium. There were 4 speakers(topics included safety, weather, and soaring in the Utah mountains), several vendors, a used equipment swap/sale table, and a great lunch provided by the culinary school at Elgin Community College. It is a great event for getting ready for the soaring season and catching up with fellow sailplane pilots while in the middle of winter here.

Mid May was the first Region 7 Contest since 2007! Thanks to the hard work of our Contest Manager Leon Zeug and the Albert Lea Mn Airport Manager Jim Hansen. I was talked into being the CD. We had 13 contestants sign up and 11 showed up to fly. The first two days of the Contest were more like winter (low ceil-

ings, 30 knot winds, and high temperatures in the low 40's). We ended up with 4 scoreable days and everyone had a great time. Planning has begun for 2016.

Late July I spent the week at Oshkosh manning the SSA tent/exhibit along with Scott Manley who provided his new Silent Electro 2 for static display, stalwart volunteers Anne Mongiovi, Gene Franklin, Lee and Jim Murray, John Phelan and many others throughout the week. The weather was fantastic (we missed several good soaring days), we spent many hours talking soaring with sailplane pilots and those interested in soaring from all over the country and world. I talked to pilots from Italy, France, Germany, Czech Republic, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Russia, Japan, and Austria. The Perlan prototype was on static display along with sponsor Airbus. It will begin flight testing later this summer. I had the unique opportunity to interview Luca Bertossio World Glider Aerobatic Champion for an upcoming article in Soaring magazine. It was a great week of spreading the word about soaring and showing the SSA banner at the world's largest aviation convention.

Geoff Weck

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