SOARING100

FIRST FLIGHT FOUNDATION TAKES LEADERSHIP ROLE; INVITES PARTICIPATION FOR “SOARING100” EVENT

KITTY HAWK, NC—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—AUG 9, 2010: The First Flight Foundation announces its support and involvement in the planning of the prestigious 100th Anniversary of Soaring (SOARING100) Celebration planned on the Outer Banks of North Carolina from October 21-24, 2011. “It is fitting that our foundation participate in a significant way in planning this event as our primary purpose is to improve the visitor experience at Wright Brothers National Memorial and help tell the story of the lives and character of the Wright Brothers,” said John Harris, First Flight Foundation President.

Almost a century ago, on October 24, 1911, Orville Wright soared for 9 minutes and 45 seconds in Kitty Hawk, a record that held for almost 10 years, and started the sport and science of modern soaring as we know it today. To celebrate Orville’s accomplishment and acknowledge his last experiments on the Outer Banks, the First Flight Foundation is teaming up with the Soaring Society of America, US Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association, National Soaring Museum and Vintage Sailplane Association for an international celebration called SOARING100. Host sites are Wright Brothers National Memorial and Jockey’s Ridge State Park.

"We appreciate the efforts of the Soaring 100 event planning committee to recognize the achievement by Orville Wright and are looking forward to the event," said Wright Brothers National Memorial Superintendent Mike Murray.

Exhibiting and flying 1911 glider replicas being built by three independent teams from different parts of the country and static displays are lining up nicely. An historical symposium being coordinated by Tom Crouch, Senior Curator of Aeronautics at the National Air and Space Museum is being planned and will whet the intellectual appetite of historic vintage to modern glider aficionados as well as the public from across the United States of America and beyond.

"We’ve already heard from some of our friends in France and Germany who plan to attend and participate”, said Jim Short, SOARING100 Event Chairman. Short, retired aviation industry executive from Chicago and airplane/glider pilot/instructor, originated the SOARING100 idea to recognize the importance of the Wright Brothers and the Outer Banks to aviation.

Debo Cox, Jockey’s Ridge State Park Superintendent said, "We’re excited to be involved in the celebration of this historic event, and equally excited to recognize Jockey’s Ridge State Park as a place were soaring flight takes place to this day.”

Short asked the First Flight Foundation to take a leadership role in planning the event and has welcomed their Executive Director, Lola Hilton as well as Rick Young and Lisa Loy, First Flight Foundation board members to help plan the event. Billy Copeland, City Manager of the Kill Devil Hills BB&T Bank has also agreed to join the team as event Treasurer.

Hilton, responsible for the logistics and implementation of the event, is building a cadre of volunteers and hosts and invites anyone interested in getting involved to contact her to join the team. “The
excitement is already building, and we’re going to have so much fun. Thank you, Orville!” she said.

To become a volunteer or host for the event, send your contact information to lolahilton@firstflightfoundation.org. Donations are also being accepted with checks made out to the First Flight Foundation/SOARING100 and mailed to First Flight Foundation, PO Box 1858, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949. All donations are tax deductible. For SOARING100 updates check out www.firstflightfoundation.org.

Save the Date now for this historic event, October 21-24, 2011. What better time of the year to visit the Outer Banks than October: www.outerbanks.org.