SSA Region 5 Report
February 2019 Board Meeting
Submitted by: Michael Solley (MS)

Region 5 SSA Governors
AL – John Mittell            MS – Robert (Bob) Herndon
FL – Shawn Knickerbocker    NC/SC – Michael Simmons
GA – Hartley Falbaum        TN – Linwood (Steve) Stevenson

GA State Governor and Record Keeper changes
Hartley Falbaum is taking over for Rob Ware, as the new GA state governor. Richard Kennedy is the new GA state record keeper.

Input from State Governors
Georgia – Hartley Falbaum
Mid Georgia Soaring is holding its annual Safety Day meeting at Delta training center Feb 16. Non-MGSA pilots are welcome, but MGSA must know in advance to get passes for entry. MGSA is also holding an annual Cross-Country Seminar Feb 2, aimed primarily at Silver Distance candidates. Open to non-MGSA pilots as well.

Mississippi – Robert Herndon
There has been remarkably little activity in Mississippi. The club in Brandon (Jackson area) has been trying to train two students but the weather and runways have been so wet that one, almost ready for solo and another a little further from solo haven't been able to fly since before Thanksgiving. In fact, we haven't had a glider in the air since before thanksgiving and no end to the rain in sight. The Starkville club (Mississippi State) has a hard surface runway but as far as I can tell has had little activity in this same period.

Tennessee – Linwood Stevenson
Linwood is recovering well and hopes to be soaring again soon. Linwood has served as TN governor a couple of times and has been the state record keeper for more than a decade. He thinks someone new for one or both positions would be a good idea. We are currently looking for volunteers.

2019 Carolina Wave Project
The 2019 Carolina Wave Project at Shiftlet Field, NC (9A9) is scheduled for February 26 – March 7. The dates are convenient for folks attending the SSA meeting in Raleigh and for members traveling from the north to the Seniors. Sarah and Jason always do an excellent job hosting the wave project. John Good is helping again this year with rides and instruction in his Duo. John also helps with some of the evening cooking, which is always excellent. Additional background and information on the camp can be found on Sarah’s Wave Project webpage:
https://sites.google.com/a/chilhowee.com/waveproject/

Commercial Operations
The commercial soaring operations in R5 continue to be a major contributor to member growth and new pilots. Seminole Lake, Chilhowee, Bermuda High, and Citrus Soaring have new student solo flights and completed check-rides on a regular basis. In addition to their full end-to-end training programs, they also work well as “finish-up” locations for students that start at various clubs around the region and across the US.
Training and Club activities
Many of the clubs seem to be doing well, with enough new members coming in to replace retiring pilots. There has been interest in developing new CFIGs and potentially using the SSA scholarship program. Several of the clubs have new leadership for 2019.

The FAA change to remove geographical limitations on DPEs has already been useful. The ability to give 3 check-rides per day should also be helpful going forward.

Several members, students, and instructors have commented on how great the Webinar series has been. Kudos go to David Lessnick in Nevada and all the presenters across the country that have made these possible. More instructors, students, and recurrent pilots are also using the FAA Safety Wings process thanks to the webinars.

Contests
Seniors – The Seniors contest is oversubscribed again this year, with more than 70 pilots registering for the 55 slots. Rich and Virginia continue to do an outstanding job organizing this event each year, as shown by the contest’s popularity. The contest participation is also a clear indication that many pilots are still willing to travel great distances. Approximately 60% of the pilots are from outside Region 5, with some coming from as far as California and Canada.

R5N, R5S, 15m Nationals – The two Region 5 regional SSA contest are filling up nicely. The 15m Nationals scheduled at Lancaster is also drawing a good list of pilots. Like the Seniors, both R5N and the 15m Nationals have pilots registered from California to Canada.

GTA Race Series – The GTA series is expected to again host a dozen or so races in 2019. The series will have a new OLC speed trophy for 2019. There are typically more than a dozen weekend events scheduled at 10 different sites. Additional info can be found on the GTA webpage: https://gta-racing.info/