SSA
Region 1 & Region 3 Report
February 2019
(Submitted by: Linda Evenski)

General Summary Update:
- Our newest Club in Maine is hosting a CFIG prep encampment in September.
- Finger Lakes Soaring in Dansville, NY just purchased a Pegasus, selling the Grob and Blanik.
- Connecticut Soaring is looking to venture out to include flying in Springfield, North Adams & Wortsboro due to their poor soaring conditions. Has a DPE in their club.
- Harris Hill will be hosting the Region 3 and Junior cross country in 2019.

General Highlights
- Membership is decreasing in some clubs.
- Sugarbush continues to hold the Youth Camps. They offered three camps this year.
- Several clubs using Russell Holtz instructor manuals for training.

Governors Update: Have new Governor for state of NH, Jim David. All others remain the same.

Fall Status Summary:
New York Sites:
- Dansville, NY – Finger Lakes Soaring Club

Update for Winter 2019
- Purchased a Pegasus
- Soarfest event in July
- Participate in the Geneseo Airshow July 13-14
- Give rides during the Labor Day Balloon Fest
- Updated Instructors teaching manual to Russell Holtz

Membership
- Overall membership is 39. This year we gained 2 members and loss 1.
- Junior program has 4 members with 1 that moved to college student membership.
- Currently at 5 instructors. This is on the low side for the number of students and limits us to instruction on Saturdays and an occasional Sunday. Would like to have at least 7 instructors. We have two members who are CFI’s who plan to become CFIG in the next year. This will also add to our commercial pilot ranks.
- Have 7 tow pilots of which 3 are also instructors. 2 tow pilots are new this year, lost 1.

Hosted Activities:
- Thunder of Niagara: Buffalo NY. June 9th – Airshow and STEM Expo – Set up booth to promote soaring (see attached PDF).
- Greatest Show on Turf- Geneseo Airshow, Geneseo NY - : July 14th and 15th – Setup booth and static display of Schweizer 1-26 to promote soaring and attract members. Also provided tow services for Manfred Radius Aerobatic act (flying a Salto).
- Hosted Upstate Aerospace Campers - each camper received a quick overview of glider operations and a flight. 2018 was the 5th year FLSC hosted the campers.

Future Activities planned:
- Labor Day Balloon Festival – Dansville NY: Setup booth and static display of Schweizer 1-26 to promote soaring and attract members. Provide Rides to the public as fundraiser.
- Soarfest/Cross Country camp - looking to combine our annual Soarfest week with a cross-country camp by opening up the event to other clubs. In planning stage only for 2019.
Elmira, NY – Harris Hill Soaring

- Membership numbers: Active members - 63, Associate/Life members - 27
- Our biggest problem is not training all the new people that come through the door but they leave before they are certified. If we could crack the code on this one the membership at HHSC would be growing. The website continues to be an asset in attracting new members. Unfortunately, Tom Berry our former webmaster died this past year. He will be very tough to replace.
- Junior membership: Rob Tarnocsy is the new junior member coordinator. There are 30+ unrolled but it still seems to be a solid 6-8 who are really doing all the flying and working. Just as well as our club really couldn’t support 30 kids flying at reduced costs for a sustained period.
- Instructors: Having enough instructors who can commit to training adults private pilot candidates continues to be our greatest obstacle as a club. We especially have a need for instruction that can be scheduled. People who have the money to do this sport usually don’t have the time to wait around and maybe to get a lesson or two. The SSA should lead a nationwide program to train more CFI’s.
- Events: Combining the junior camp/race in conjunction with R3 was a big success in 2017. We plan to do it again in 2019. The R3 task area is pretty ideal for people flying their first contest. The classroom facilities at the NSM are ideal also. Getting a bunch of juniors together was great fun and added a lot to R3. The idea of a contest pilot coming to the regional and bringing a junior or two from his club to the Junior camp has great potential to bring people from further away.
- Projects: Work begins on the new club house this fall. Demolition of the old building will happen in September. It is an approximately $260,000 project and should be pretty nice. The cabins are being restored by me and I am making slow progress on them. This last year we purchased an additional Pawnee from the Wings of Eagles (formerly from the Schweizer Soaring School). This enabled us to send one Pawnee to PA for restoration and recover. Afterward, we plan to do the same with the other Pawnee and then sell one.
- Club Fleet: 11 gliders: SGS 1-26, SGS 1-34, Discus CS, SGS 2-33 (3), ASK-21 (4), Duo Discus. 4 Tow planes: Pawnee 235HP (3), Super Cub 180 HP

Hamilton, NY – Iroquois Soaring

- No new input since Fall 2016 which is as follows:
  - ISA membership stays about the same 10-15 members and usually just operate on weekends.
  - Have stopped giving rides because of members worry about liability and the work involved. We did make a lot of money with the Soaring Adventure rides. They were a good organization to work with. The main concern is that if we happened to not be in compliance with some FAR or a member somehow injured a passenger we would not be insured. We had many elderly passengers.
  - Our only other concern is the lack of new members but that has always been the case in our area. We have 3 instructors so that is not a problem. Otherwise ISA is doing well and happy with the system.

Saratoga Springs, NY – Adirondack Soaring Association

- Update for 2019
  - We are down about 10 members. We have had some long distance members. We are down to about 72 members
  - 14 Tow pilots, 8 Instructors, 55 Regular Members
  - 17 Junior/Long Distance Members
  - Age range is 12 to 86 years old
  - We are having a hard time getting people to stay interested and continue with their training. We offer instruction on weekends and during the week. We don’t believe some want to put the required work to achieve their solo and licenses. We have established a syllabus last year thru Russel Holtz.
  - We starting a push to get more young instructors,
  - Planning on a wave Soaring Encampment in Lake Placid, NY
  - Junior Membership which is $100 to join and $15/month for dues.
  - Intro. Flights and we are also in the SAA Fast Program.
• Our current membership is at 85 members. The membership has been pretty steady with loosing and gaining 6 or so members.
• We are looking to recruit another couple of instructors and towpilots.
• Events
  • We will be hosting another soaring and wave encampment in Lake Placid in October.
  • Unfortunately, we had a kitting accident aero towing a glider with a CG hook this spring. No one was hurt but this destroyed one of our Pawnee towplanes. We purchased a new Pawnee but are working to install the tow hook and radio. We do have a second towplane that is getting its work out.
• Membership Retention:
  • We believe keeping prices affordable brings new ones into the sport. Our current membership dues are $25. Month for regular membership and $15/ mo for Junior & Long Distance memberships. Tows are $40 to 3K, $30 to 2k, and $25 to 1.5 K.
  • We have tried various events to obtain new members but we tend to do best with walk-ons or those that find us. We are located in the Albany, NY / Saratoga Springs Area and have plenty of people to pull from.
  • We use Clicknglide.com to schedule our towpilots and instructors. A great cost effective program that has a lot of benefits.

Saratoga Springs, NY – Saratoga Soaring Association
  • Own a Grob 103 Twin II and receive tows from Adirondack Soaring
  • Last flown Grob 103, last September.
  • Occasionally uses there Light Sport Aeronca Champ.

Towanda, NY – Niagara Soaring Club
  • The Niagara Soaring is in better shape this year.
  • We have picked up a second tow pilot which has freed up our other tow pilot who was also our only instructor.
  • Membership is still low, however two new students may join us next season.

Freehold, NY – Nutmeg Soaring Association
  • Nutmeg held its annual open house event in June. The weather cooperated and we had good attendance from the surrounding communities this year. As a result we got 5 new members for a net gain of a couple after some of our older members dropped out.
  • NOTE: (Some details on the event) We advertised it on social media and also put out flyers in local businesses as well as putting some sandwich board signs on street comers. We dedicated the day to doing rides. We gave away some free rides via drawings and otherwise sold basic rides (the passenger doesn't touch the controls) for $139.00 and of course sold memberships as well. The local civil air patrol assisted in handling security and parking as well as operating a food stand from which they made a little money for their chapter. We had a number of aircraft on static display like an airshow, and a PA system for making announcements. The weather turned out ideal. A high overcast kept the temperatures mild, there was light wind and pretty smooth air. Not a great soaring day but a pleasant day to be outdoors and we were trying to keep the rides fairly short anyway so we didn't keep people waiting to long.
  • Flying activities are about on par with last year varying largely due to weather.
  • We had one member get his glider CFI rating over the winter and that has helped spread the instruction load around a bit however we could always use more instructors.
  • Last year's application for state DOT grants to repave the runway and update the mowing equipment were not successful. We got a debrief from the NY DOT and submitted new applications for the next round of funding. We are making additional efforts to connect with the chamber of commerce to see if they can assist with our application.
- Mayville, NY – **Aero Soaring Club**
  - **No new input since Fall 2016 which is as follows:**
  - Aero Soaring Club at Mayville, NY is on a downward trend in terms of membership and at risk of going extinct if this continues.

**Vermont Sites:**

- **Morrisville, VT – Stowe Soaring CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE AS OF 8/2018**
  - The season has been slow so far due to all the rain and cloudy weather but we are still having fun! We didn’t have any of our usual strong spring long distance days, but we have brought in a number of new people to soaring and lessons are up this year – when the weather allows!

- **Springfield, VT – New England Soaring Association (NESA)**
  - **Last update was Fall 2017 as follows:**
  - Membership is holding level at 46 members.
  - Instructor count is adequate for current student base and could in fact handle several.
  - Events – Scheduled to host Region 1 contest again this year.
  - We hosted the Soar Vermont CFIG camp in the fall for the third year. There is discussion about possibly hosting one for 2018.

- **Post Mills, VT – Post Mills Soaring Club**
  - The Post Mills Soaring Club continues to grow in a number of ways. Over the last year we added new members and expanded our capacity to train them as additional members participated in our CFI-G cadre.
  - The long row of trailers on the east side of the field is a real eye opener to those of us who were here in the late 1980s when the club started.
  - While continued growth last year is welcome it was not the result of a focused effort. Our topmost priority for a couple of years now has been to take the steps necessary as a club to help manage the inherent risks of soaring more effectively, and to make this evident at all pilot skill levels. Considerable work went into the planning stage to see how we could make actual gains rather than paper ones. Now we have moved out of the planning stage into implementation. One result already has been the further structuring of the club to support a wider focus. Our CFI-G group is responsible for more than pre license instruction. They will work as needed to support a separate group whose sole focus is advancing airmanship club wide. The methods this group uses will be a creative challenge limited by imagination and pilot feedback. Besides providing useful instruction and coaching a key target will be to foster a conversation where we share comfortably our mistakes as well as our gains.
  - There is much work ahead. Risk will always be there. Pulling together to advance our airmanship seems the best way to keeping everyone safe as we push the envelope in the sport we love.

- **Warren, VT – Sugarbush Soaring Association**
  - **Update Winter 2019**
    - Membership down by 13.
    - Have expanded their Youth summer camp to 3 weeklong camps with 9 students from the age of 13-18 each week.
    - Plan to expand into power instruction this year.
    - Have a “Flight Experience For Youth” program that is filed as a 501c3, that subsidizes the line crew grogram, offers several scholarships for the camps and helps to fund program development behind their youth program.
- Offers scenic ridges and flight instructions. The support the Fast ride program, but in recent years have seen very few of them.
- Member-owned glass gliders down to single digits and being flown far less.
- Require annual check rides for members annually and require visiting pilots to have a check ride as well.
- Holding their second “Wings and Wheels” summer event.

- We suffered from poor weather on a number of key weekends in 2017, so our total number of flights for the season were down to 1,636 from 2,033 in 2016. Our number of rides given nearly matched 2016 (394 vs. 401).
- Our overall membership was up to 136 from 125 in 2016. We were down three full members, but this was made up for with young adult and student memberships. Several of them are prepping to solo during the 2018 season and one is working on his Commercial. We are quite encouraged by this trend.
- Our overall financial position remains strong. Rides and instruction make up the majority of our revenue, and flights by the “Great White Fleet” continue to shrink.
- We had two successful youth camps in 2017, and plan to offer three camps in 2018. Thanks to some advertising in AOPA and good word of mouth we expect to be fully subscribed (see http://sugarbushsoaring.com/rides-lessons/youth-soaring-camp)
- We are satisfied an unfortunate with the student base for our roster of instructors, and are fortunate to have a DPE available on site.
- We had setback at the end of the last season when an un-forecasted wind storm tore the tie downs on our two 2-33’s and totaled both of them. One of them is being rebuilt by K&L and we have ordered another PW-6. We expect to have both available by the start of the 2018 season.

Massachusetts Sites:
- **North Adams, MA – Mohawk Soaring Club**
  - Update as of Winter 2019
    - They were down to about 12 and now are at 16.
    - Mohawk hoping to participate in the SSA CFIG scholarship program with one potential CFIG candidate.
    - Last year ran two 1 week glider training encampments at a nearby airport (7B2 Northampton, MA) aimed at acquainting power pilots and power students with soaring. The encampments were pretty successful as we soloed almost every participant and a few have become members.
    - We have also have been participating for the last 5 years in the Soar VT Glider Flight Instructor Encampment with our 2-33 one instructor and some instructor candidates.
    - We don’t have a junior program although we do occasionally have younger people interested. We have youth rates for membership. Our current membership is all male 40-78.
    - We offer guest rides under our limited 30 day membership program to abide by Ins. regs. For $130 1 flight and 30 day membership which allows guest to return for additional flights at member rates ~$40. It seems that in the last few years the SSA has been more supportive of basic club needs in addition to the competitions. An example is the CFIG Scholarship program which I think is terrific. Also the list serve communication amongst club officers. I use that a great deal.
  - 2016
    - Mohawk is holding on but it is a struggle with low membership.
    - Have 3 CFIG’s.
    - Just acquired a new (to us) 2-33a. Still recovering from the L-13 grounding and Lark age expiration/renewal issues.

- **Sterling, MA – Greater Boston Soaring Club**
  - Membership is roughly stable, currently 113. This is our first year offering 90-day trial memberships. We are off to a good start, with 8 new trial members, but success depends on whether any become
regular members. Trial members do not pay the initiation fee, but pay more per tow and can convert to full membership with full credit for anything paid toward the normal initiation fee, etc.

- **Instruction:** we have 1 more instructor this year (a returning member). This really helps. Instructional capacity is adequate but students sometimes face long waits. We seldom have two instructors scheduled, but unscheduled instructors often come forward to help the day’s scheduled instructor.

- **Activities:**
  - Mifflin Ridge camp went well in May, with a Diamond Badge completed and a 750km for another pilot.
  - Six members participated in the Region 1 Contest. Much praise to Alister Crawford and the entire NESA crew.
  - Our September Franconia, NH encampment has 18 members signed up. This is an annual event and a 30 year tradition. We will be guests of Franconia Soaring Association. Great to get two clubs together. And great to be able to fly away from our customary flatlands.
  - We will join other clubs at Mt. Washington Wave Camp over the Columbus Day weekend and the following week.

**Connecticut Sites:**
- Danielson, CT – Connecticut Soaring Association
- **update as of Winter 2019 as follows:**
  - We have a Pawnee, 2 2-33s a 1-26 and a 1-34. We have a generous membership, especially Dave MacKenzie, who you may know, who has made numerous loan agreements so we can acquire equipment over the years.
  - This year, we decided to fly through the winter and even flew yesterday!
  - Conditions aren’t great in CT, so we are looking to venture out more, including Springfield, North Adams, and Wurtsboro.
  - We even have Daryl Smith in the club and is a DPE so we are very fortunate..

- 2017 was a successful year, building on the strong foundation we have built over the last few years in which we:
  - Bought our fourth glider, a 1-34
  - Rebuilt our towplane engine
  - Trained several new CFI’s and Tow Pilots
  - Have benefit of a glider DPE within the club
  - In 2017, we had 37 flying days, with a total of 525 flights logged by club members – both of which are records (by 100%)!
  - Of those 525 flights, 354 flights were instructional flights. Two instructors had over 100 lessons each!
  - Our busiest month was October with 104 flights logged, and we actually flew all the way to December. We tried to do a New Years Eve flight day, but the weather didn’t cooperate.
  - We have brought on several new tow pilots, and that has helped share the load.
  - We had three new solos, one private add-on, and one sport pilot add on.
  - A lot of discussion about using the Sport Pilot route for power pilots who are out of currency – see discussion in our recent newsletter.
  - We also ended the year financially strong, and paid the loan for the Pawnee in full. We now owe three members who loaned us money for the 1-34 purchase, and we anticipate being able to do that over a two year period.
  - Membership is flat to up slightly. We had a large cohort of students/transition pilots who are making their way to solo and flight test.
  - We are still having a difficult time attracting youth, but we are attractive to adults who have the time and disposable income to try something new.
  - The instructional program is the subject of a lot of discussion among the CFI’s, including:
    - The Sport Pilot sign off regulations/implications
    - FIRCs – many of us use the AOPA online FIRC. Since there are electives that are available for some of the FIRC lessons, it was suggested that SSA work with AOPA to add a glider lesson elective to the
AOPA FIRC, or to develop its own online FIRC for those who can’t get to the in-person FIRC locations.
- Using our syllabus more effectively
- Teaching students better risk management skills
- Balancing maintaining our operating efficiency during the day while ensuring sufficient time for lessons,
- How to put together an effective ground school – perhaps an online virtual ground school using Skype or other technology would be successful?
- Maintaining student records at the field.
- In short – we are working hard to continuously improve our instructional effectiveness.

- We do most of our marketing through facebook, since it is easy to maintain. We do have a website, but keeping up with it is hard and takes commitment. We also have a Yahoo groups site that we use to communicate within the club. The Yahoo groups site is members only so we can discuss club business.
- For 2018, we want to continue to move our students through the instructional process and encourage people to improve their skills and enjoyment of the sport. We would like to participate in some regional activities to get experience flying in other (ie. Better) soaring conditions, for example at Wurtsboro, Mifflin, and Springfield.
- The SSA magazine continues to be excellent – thanks for the effort that is put into that!
- We probably don’t make use of the SSA discussion group as much as we should – I will work on that.
- Upcoming events include a winter luncheon at the New England Air Museum on Feb 3, and our annual meeting and safety seminar to be held at the end of March to prepare for the upcoming season.

New Hampshire Sites:

- **Franconia, NH – Franconia Soaring Association**

  **Update as of Winter 2019**
  - Membership remains constant with 25 more active
  - They founded the Franconia Soaring Foundation, which is a 01c3 Educational foundation
  - They just purchased the Franconia airport
  - Currently have 3 two place gliders, (twin Astir, Blanik L23 and SGS233. Have 2 single place gliders (B4, and SGS126 and an towplane L19
  - Have 6 tow pilots and instructors
  - Wave camp in October were Post Mills, Greater Boston, New England and Mt Washington Soaring get together in Gorham NH.
  - Do offer Fast Rides, but mainly give more general rides, due to the ground school lessons under the Fast program.
  - Working on several grant programs hoping to build a new clubhouse in future
  - Would like to find out how the SSA can announce the purchase of the Airport and help fund raise. What grants are available for airport improvement or education?

- Last update was Fall 2017 as follows:
- Franconia Soaring Association is at 50 members including 10 youth members. Membership is stable.
  - Instructors and towpilots are needed.
- Host four events during the year
  - Post Mills - July 4th
  - Greater Boston - Labor Day
  - Airport Awareness Day -Aug 26 (Host a local outreach effort every year, where we give low cost rides to locals in the surrounding town. We give 10 minute rides for 30 dollars. Five dollars of each ride will be donated to a local church food bank.)
  - Adaptive Day - September 28 (We give free rides to the physically handicapped, paid for by a local adaptive group and our club.)
  - We are attempting to purchase the airport. Currently have a handshake agreement, however the owners are trying to modify the agreement which is causing some problems. We are starting a fund raising initiative. How can the SSA help?

Pennsylvania Sites:

- **Pittsfield, PA – Brokenstraw Soaring Club**

  - Weather was a problem for flying in early spring/summer again this year.
  - Membership steady lost a couple and gained a couple.
- Number of instructors is OK for the limited number of students we have.
- Could use a couple of tow-pilots as others have moved away or are busy doing something else.
- No activities planned this year.
- Member flying participation has decreased due to a variety of reasons, mostly aging pilots and other family commitments.

- **Eighty Four, PA - Pittsburgh Soaring Association**
  - Membership is flat at 38. While we have had a number of orientation flights, few have converted to members.
  - Training activity and normal membership flying has been suppressed by unusually wet weather this season.
  - Using a leased 2-33 for training as opposed to our L-23 (which is being repaired after a hard landing) has also reduced cycles, since we were a month without a trainer during the season.
  - One of our 2 CFIG’s has moved out of the area. I am personally pursuing a CFIG rating to fill in the gap, but won’t be ready until the 2019 season.
  - We didn’t do an airshow this year (in 2017 we did 2) because one was cancelled and the other was going to charge us for our involvement. We haven’t spent on promotion because maintenance has been soaking up our excess funds.

- **Sanford, Maine - Sanford Soaring Club** (not a member of SSA)
  - **Update for Winter 2019**
    - Have 4-5 instructors with 2-3 in the queue.
    - Have 4 Tow pilots
    - We have about 30 members now out of which 20 are active.
    - Three members are age 18 or under, taking advantage of our reduced youth rates or family memberships.
    - Most members age range is 45-70
    - Hosting a CFIG prep encampment in September