

CONVECTOR

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2007

photo by Jeff Rose

NEWSLETTER OF
THE MID-ATLANTIC SOARING ASSOCIATION

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From the Board

by Mike Higgins

M-ASA President

Another flying season is behind us and what a great soaring year it was! In the eight years I've been flying with M-ASA, I can't remember a season with better flying weather. We haven't tallied the operational statistics for the year yet (I hope to present those in the December Convector), but thinking back, I can recall numerous great soaring days spread throughout the spring and summer. (For instance, remember the weekend of July 20-22 with three straight days of 8,000' bases and 6kt thermals?) And the good weather continued and gave us the second successful October Region 4 North contest. Of course the drought conditions contributed to excellent soaring weather (sorry, farmers). And perhaps a little global warming, despite all the gloomy predictions of the future consequences, helped (and will give us better soaring weather in the years to come?). Anyway, I hope all M-ASA members were able to take advantage of the weather and generate some lasting memories of soaring adventures.



Gliders LBL and WM rest at 5 Lakes after pilots Baude Litt and Mike Higgins 960 km flights on Oct 28th.

photo by Mike Higgins

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we must continue to promote and nourish that. To that end, this winter we will be putting considerable effort into preparing an effective training program for next year. The Board intends to take a different approach to the spring mandatory meeting and offer a more focused and intensive training session. More to follow in the coming months as this develops. If any member has safety- or training-related input, please e-mail or talk to any club officer or director and we'll try to address it before the 2008 season starts.

Now that we're entering the off-season, it's time to focus on the maintenance and improvements of our gliders and towplanes. We all see that our fleet is aging, which will require increased maintenance as we go forward. The aircraft godfathers and maintenance managers will be meeting in the coming month to plan the winter work. We want to start the next season off with our flying assets in the best possible condition. If any member knows of a glider or towplane issue or improvement suggestion, please contact the aircraft Godfathers directly.

And speaking of our aircraft, the Grob 103 is online and flying at Fairfield, and the Grob Twin Astir is very close to being back in the air at Frederick. The Grob TA's landing gear is now repaired and functional after the replacement part came in from Grob Germany. As I write this, the aircraft just had it's annual completed and is being reassembled. A lot of hard work went into the TA over the past months – Paul Rehm and Victor Filipchuk did most of the hands-on repair with the support of Dan Morris, and Glenn Collins helped with the annual inspection. Anrdeas Schliessler (helping from Germany with Grob communications and logistics) and Jean Posbic were largely responsible for getting the replacement landing gear part from the factory (which was not easy... ask them to tell you the story). Please thank them for the extra effort.

George Burns, after years of energetic and productive service, is stepping down as our Fairfield Facility Manager. Val Brain, another Fairfield regular, has agreed to step up and fill the role in 2008. Please contact Val directly (and copy the officers) if you see any problem or issue with the Fairfield facility. Thanks, George, for the considerable effort over the years.

Michael Hearn is also now up and running as our new Treasurer (replacing Hans Jorgensen). Contact Michael directly with any club monetary/expense matters. His new e-mail is: michaelhearnone@aol.com <mailto:michaelhearnone@aol.com>

Finally, don't forget that our annual banquet is scheduled for Friday January 18th at the Ceresville Mansion. We're pleased to announce that Scott "Scooter" Altman, current NASA astronaut and Commander of the upcoming Hubble Service Mission, will be present to speak to us about his adventures flying F-14s (he did much of the piloting for the movie "Top Gun") and Space Shuttles. Please get your checks and forms into Sharon Pixton this month. I'll look forward to seeing you all there!

Have a great Holiday Season.



photo by Fred Mueller

Task Day

The Capacity to Assess Risk and The Capacity to Choose a Machine and Organize

by Chris O'Callaghan (OC)



- #1. Skill Managing the Aircraft
- #2. Skill Assessing the Evolution of Weather Conditions
- #3. The Capacity to Reformulate Competition Strategy
- #4. The Capacity to Adopt Tactical Decisions According to Circumstances
- #5. The Capacity to Resist Fatigue
- #6. The Capacity to Assimilate All Variables

- #7. The Capacity to Assess Risk

This is one of my favorite subjects in soaring because it is almost universally misunderstood. “Risk” is not a synonym for foolhardiness or a measure of success for an adrenaline junkie. It is the logical and studied assessment of actions versus outcomes. I have never met a glider pilot who willingly risks life and limb for a competitive outcome. Most accidents that can be attributed to the conscious actions of a pilot typically involve ignorance – leading to a lack of capacity to accurately assess risk. But let’s get one thing clear: when we’re talking about competitive risk assessment we are balancing our tactical options against outcomes, not whether we’re willing to bet our lives on an unsure thing.

Pilots by and large tend to focus on the prominent risks – and avoid them. They fail, however, to see that every decision they make presents risk. Let’s start with a simple example. We’ve planned a 500K diamond distance attempt. Our long leg (180 miles) will follow the ridges. Average lift this day is 5 knots to 6000 msl, and there is a 14 knot wind at cloudbase from the NW.

Our desired outcome is the successful completion of the flight for our final diamond. The soaring day will last seven hours, so to complete the flight, we will need to average about 50 mph. At 2:00 PM (two hours into the flight), we reach the first turnpoint, having averaged only 35 mph. If we continue to thermal cautiously (taking any lift over 2.5 knots and not dropping below 4000 msl), we will not complete the flight. We are faced with a set of tactical options, each presenting its own risks:

Tactical Option	Risk
1. Stay high, go slow	We will land out after a long final glide, somewhere just beyond the second turnpoint.
2. Fly the ridge	With NW winds, the ridge may work, but we do not know their strength at ridge top (2000msl). A weak ridge could lead to an early landout. An active ridge could increase our x-country speed by a factor of two or more.
3. Stop only for thermals stronger than 4.5 knots, using the ridge for saves	This will increase our speed, mitigating the risk of low saves since even a weak ridge tends to spawn parallel thermal streets. This should raise our average x-country speed to about 60. With 5 hours left in the day, we have a good chance of completing.

Risk assessment seems to favor the third option... But there is a fourth, and the one more commonly applied by pilots with ridge experience.

Select a section of the ridge with numerous boulder fields, clear cuts, or other obvious thermal sources. Dive at this part of the ridge. Test its strength. If the ridge supports speeds in excess of 70 knots, continue on the ridge to the second turnpoint. If it does not, exploit

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local thermal sources to return to a more comfortable height band and continue under option 3, while regularly assessing conditions to determine if ridge lift might be improving.

One of the reasons that longer flights are so difficult is that tactical options and their associated risks must be weighed every 10 minutes or so, even more often in mountainous terrain, where local weather patterns may force wholesale changes in strategy.

The capacity to assess risk is the pilot's ability to determine strategic and tactical options, compare them in the face of current and predicted conditions, and select those which maximize the chances of achieving the desired outcome. If you aren't exercising this capacity every few minutes, you're probably making poor choices based largely on ignorance – never a good approach.

#8 The Capacity to Choose a Machine and Organize

To focus on speed, you need to be free of other concerns. Comfort in the cockpit, control ergonomics, easy attendance to bladder relief, familiarity with instruments, and sufficient planning to address other needs (outlandings, hunger, thirst...) are as important as experience in determining the success of a flight. A pilot who is not comfortable or confident in a glider flies under a severe handicap. People go out of their way to avoid physical and/or psychological pain... without comfort or confidence, your ability to make performance-based decisions in the air will be compromised, with the potential to add risk to even the most safety conscious decisions.

Your choice of glider is the starting point. First, and foremost, can you sit in it comfortably for five hours or more? If not, you haven't found the ideal machine yet. Next, are you confident in your ability to control the glider throughout its speed range. If you fear its stall characteristics or are uncomfortable with its control feel at high speed, you still haven't found the ideal glider. Unfortunately, most of us have to go through a few ships before we find the one that fits just right. Happily, gliders retain their value, so except for the taxes and the chance that your perfect glider is a late model racer, the cost of exchange isn't too steep.

Here's a hint if you are still looking... the most comfortable, best mannered sailplanes were built after 1995. Of those built before 1995, the ones that retain their value are almost always among the best. If a glider doesn't cost much, there's a reason. And if its glider ratio is above 40:1 and price is under \$15K, it is a near certainty that it is uncomfortable to sit in and unforgiving when not flown properly. Comfort and confidence are each at least 25% of the overall performance of a pilot. Simple formula:

$$40:1 \text{ (HP 14)} - 10 \text{ (comfort)} - 10 \text{ (confidence)} = 20:1 \text{ (1-26)}$$

Organization is another thing. But this is a dense subject. I point you to Reichmann as the best condensed discussion what you need to be well-organized. Or, if you like, you might spend a morning with Dave Pixton, who is one of our better organized task day racers and is usually willing to share his insights.

That's it for the Brigliadori list of 8 skills of the competition pilot. Of course, I've only glossed over each of them. A read of the 300+ pages of *Competing in Gliders: Winning with Your Mind* will help organize your thoughts in each of these areas. I highly recommend it as a winter read and summer reference.

Experience is that marvelous thing that enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.

— *Franklin P. Jones*

Annual M-ASA Banquet, January 18, 2008

by Sharon Pixton

Please plan to join us for the 2008 Annual Banquet on Friday evening, January 18th. This year's gala will be held at the Ceresville Mansion, 8529 Liberty Rd., Frederick, Md., 21701 (301-898-3443). Cocktails will be served beginning at 7:00 PM; dinner will be served at 8:00 PM.

We have a very special speaker this year, astronaut Scott Altman. He's traveled into space 3 times and will be the Mission Commander for the upcoming service mission to the Hubble Space Telescope, scheduled for August 2008. As a Navy pilot, Captain Altman has flown approximately 40 types of aircraft. His glider experience is as varied as piloting a 2-32 and the rocket powered glider, better known as the Space Shuttle.

Like last year, it will be necessary to adhere to a deadline for reservations. In the past accommodating late reservations has cost us dearly because of decisions already made about menus, etc. This year I must have your coupon and payment by Thursday, January 11, 2008. This policy has been instituted to protect M-ASA's finances.

Please reserve your seats now by returning the coupon below. The cost is \$35 per person. You may learn more about the site, including directions, by visiting www.ceresville.com <<http://www.ceresville.com>>. I look forward to greeting all of you on January 18th..



Captain Scott Altman, Space Shuttle Mission Commander, this year's Banquet special guest and speaker

NASA File Photo

M-ASA Annual Banquet, January 18, 2008.

I plan to attend: _____

I plan to bring _____ as my guest(s).

A check in the amount of \$_____ is enclosed. Make checks payable to M-ASA.

Please return this coupon to:
 Sharon Pixton
 8206 Lookout Lane
 Frederick, Md. 21702

Task Day and Club Championship Business

by *Chris O'Callaghan*

The Racing Year ended on Sunday November 18th. We completed 31 tasks. Twenty-four pilots participated, and 10 different pilots had daily wins. You can visit the task day website for more specific results. We'll include them in Convector after the annual awards banquet.

The Club Championship is still in question. However, given the long flights of the current leaders, it seems unlikely conditions will favor an upset in the standings. But you never know...

This winter we will assess the current procedures for measuring Club Championship performance. I am asking for volunteers to form a committee to discuss the current CC rules and intent and to make recommendations for changes. This committee will consist of no less than three and no more than five club members who have posted flights to the OLC during the last three years. Please contact me by e-mail to participate in this committee. No changes are planned for Task Day rules for the 2008 season.

Next year's Club Championship Season begins on January 1, 2008. Task Day racing will recommence on March 15th. In the meantime, I'll be making some minor changes to the website, so don't let them throw you when you start searching for your scores next spring.

Schedule Preferences

by *Ray Watson*

It is time to get ready for the 2008 Soaring Season.

Preferences for next year are accepted, either by postal mail or e-mail. Go to M-ASA web site and click on members preferences <http://www.m-asa.org/cgi-bin/schedulePref.pl>. Congratulations to newly rated glider pilots, I have no way of knowing this unless you indicate this on your duty preference form.

In preparing for the new season, it is necessary to update and review the scheduling database. All preferences are cleared at the end of each year and new data is requested from all members. Exemptions must be requested and are subject to the approval of the president. Send your preferences in early, have your assignments early and fly during the best part of the season.

Please provide me with information on your preferences for OD and tow pilot duty for 2008. If you have preferences you wish to be considered, you must fill out and mail this form. If no form is received by the end of the annual meeting, it will be assumed that you have no preference. I would like to receive the new forms as quickly as possible for making the new season duty schedule.

This information will help me accommodate your wishes, while fulfilling the club's needs. Preferences will be accommodated only as long as club needs are met. If there are any days you prefer, or dates when you will not be available for duty, please list them below. If you do not get Federal Holidays off work, you should mark the space below. When completed, please cut out the form and mail it to me.

FORM IS ON NEXT PAGE

If you are viewing this online, please click on the link "Duty Preference" to take you directly to the appropriate page on the M-ASA website or fill out the paper form below, fold, tape and mail.

Duty Preference

M-ASA 2008 Duty Preference Form

Member Name: _____

Duty Type: ___ Operations Director/Record Keeper ___ Licensed Glider Pilot
 ___ Tow Pilot ___ I am under 21 years old
 ___ Exempt (requires explanation): _____

Field Preference (check one):

- ___ I have no preference.
- ___ I prefer Fairfield, but will serve at either site.
- ___ I prefer Fairfield and do not wish to serve at Frederick
- ___ I prefer Frederick, but will serve at either site.
- ___ I prefer Frederick and do not wish to serve at Fairfield.

Federal Holidays: ___ I am available for duty on Federal holidays.
 ___ I am not available for duty on Federal Holidays.

Additional Scheduling Considerations — Enter any dates for which you will be unavailable. You may also indicate a Saturday or Sunday preference. Enter the start date and stop date of any period you can't serve. Tow Pilots — enter your desire for any additional assignments. _____

From: _____



Ray Watson
M-ASA Duty Scheduler
7513 Rockridge Road
Baltimore, MD 21208-5733

Soaring Safety Foundation Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic

by Jim Garrison, Shenandoah Valley Soaring

Shenandoah Valley Soaring is sponsoring a SSF-Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic in Charlottesville, Virginia.

-- Information for the Charlottesville FIR Clinic --

Date - Saturday January 12 and Sunday, January 13, 2008

Times - Approximately 8AM to 5 PM Saturday and Sunday.

Location - Courtyard Marriott University / Medical Center Charlottesville, Virginia

Clinic will be presented by Rich Carlson (and possibly other instructors).

Fee - \$150.00 for the clinic payable to the Soaring Safety Foundation.

Fee includes lectures, handouts and food at breaks both days.

Attendees are responsible for paying for lodging and other meals
(Lunch and Dinners)

For Glider Certified Flight Instructors - Here is a convenient opportunity to renew Your CFIG Certificate - The SSF provides U.S. glider flight instructors the ability to renew their FAA flight instructor certificate in a class tailored to the need of glider pilots and students.

Unless otherwise noted all clinics will have the same time schedule. Classes will start at 8:00 AM both on Saturday on Sunday. See the Soaring Safety foundation's web site about the content of these clinics --- www.soaringsafety.org—firc.html

SSF FIRC's are open to any and all glider pilots who are interested in learning more about the art of Soaring. You do not need to be a flight instructor to attend an SSF FIRC. We welcome all glider pilots who wish to take advantage of this educational opportunity.

Hotel Information -- The Clinic will be held in a meeting room at the Courtyard Marriott University / Medical Center. The Address is 1201 West Main Street, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903. Hotel Phone is - 434-977-1700

Hotel Website is - www.marriott.com—chodt-courtyard-charlottesville-university-medical-center/

Interactive Map to hotel is -- www.marriott.com—chodt-courtyard-charlottesville-university-medical-center/

A block of Rooms will be available at the special rate of \$99.00 per night Ask for the -- "FIRC rooms" These rooms will be held until December 31, 2007

Other hotels within 1 block of the Marriott.

Red Roof Inn -- 1309 West Main Street, Charlottesville, VA, 22903 Phone: (434) 295-4333 Fax: (434) 295-2021 www.redroof.com—inn_details.asp

Hampton Inn -- Hampton Inn & Suites - At The University 900 West Main Street, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903 Phone: (434) 923-8600 | Fax: (434) 923-8601 www.hampsuities.com

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Other Things to do in Charlottesville....

Home to the University of Virginia, Charlottesville is an attractive tourist destination. Your family may wish to come with you to the Flight Instructors Revalidation Clinic to take advantage of the University or other area attractions.

University of Virginia - www.virginia.edu UVA Athletic Events - www.virginiasports.com Things to do at the University - www.virginia.edu—thingstodo

Charlottesville Attractions and the Downtown Mall -- www.charlottesville.org—Index.aspx Ice Skating -- www.icepark.com Skiing at Wintergreen - www.wintergreenresort.com—ski_and_ride Resturants - www.10best.com—index.html

Local Contact - The FIRC clinic will be coordinated by the local contact listed below. Please contact Jim via e-mail and he will send you a registration form.

SVS member - Jim Garrison Work Phone - 434-924-5618, Home phone 434-978-1299 e-mail - jcg8w@virginia.edu

Regional Ramblings

*by Jim Kellett, Director
Soaring Society of America, Region IV*

For several years, I've been SSA's rep to the National Coalition for Aviation Education (NCAE), SSA is a paying member of this organization, which promotes aviation through the nation's schools. They meet four times a year, almost always in the NOVA area, e.g., the Air Force Association building in Rosslyn.

Almost all of my representation involves sharing the dialog with SSA's Youth Committee Chair, John Campbell, out in Colorado, although we've been able to elevate soaring's visibility with this community in several other important ways. While it's possible for members to teleconference in, it's obvious that we get more/better information flows by sitting in the same room . . . so . . .

Two weeks ago, I moved from Winchester, VA to Harrisonburg, VA . . . that adds about 1.5 hours additional driving time for me to attend the meetings in NOVA. It's difficult for me to contribute five hours total driving time for a four hour meeting! So we are MOST needful for an SSA member to take this on . . . four meetings a year is not a burden, especially for someone in the DC metropolitan area, and the value of this relationship is critical to SSA's future. Who knows - we might actually have some educators who are SSA members, and for whom this activity would be supported by their employer!!

Please consider serving as a volunteer for this effort; just e-mail me, or call me at 540 437-8911!

FOR SALE: Security Seat Pack Parachute, highest offer over \$650 will take it, free shipping, contact ex-M-ASA member John Brent at 601-796-4932 or jtbrent@bellsouth.net.

FOR SALE: 1/5 memberships offered in '47 Luscombe 8E, all metal, 30 gal fuel, good looking interior, new glass, Cessna seats, GPS, Com+transponder, low-time engine, hydraulic breaks, wheel pants. Based at FDK, well run LLC, 3 year operation. Put the fun back in flying basic stick and rudder, plus tail wheel endorsement. All at a cost that is really affordable. Call me for a demo. Dick Bernstein 240-446-5827

FOR SALE: SGS 1-26B-#338, recent museum quality restoration-Army Air Corp color scheme, with trailer and many accessories. may be one of the best 1-26's around. Located: M-ASA Frederick \$7300 Call Jack Goehring, Cell 703-727-8941, Office 703-821-8222

See ya later....



*Jean Posbic in 2ET flying over Frederick.
photo by Jim Furlong*

WHO TO CALL

Godfathers:

Grob 103 (FDK)	Victor Koshmaryk
Grob 103 (FFD)	Chris Williams
Ka-7	Paul Rehm
Ka-8	Rick Latoff
Pilatus B-4	Danny Brotto
Pilatus trailer	Ed Breau
SGS-2-33 (FDK/Orange)	Jean Posbic
SGS-2-33 (FFD/Yellow)	Jerry White
SGS-2-33 (FDK/R&W)	Jim Furlong
SGS 1-36	Gary Baker
SGS 1-36 trailer	Jeff Rose
Tug N7799Z (FFD)	
Tugs N82096 and N8658L	Bob Andrew (FDK)
Tug N9809 (FDK)	John Vaughan

Chief CFI:	Glenn Collins
Chief Tow Pilot:	Lance Nuckolls
Fairfield Glider Maintenance:	Rich Horigan
Frederick Glider Maintenance:	Dave Schober
Tug Maintenance Officer:	Jim May
Field Safety Officer:	Rick Fuller (FFD) Dan Morris (FDK)
Fairfield Facility Manager :	Val Brain
Frederick Facility Manager:	Mehrdad Bayat
Mentor Program Lead:	Wayne Elseth
Membership Chairman:	Hope Howard
Convector Editor:	Fred Mueller
Flight Sheet Manager:	Rick Cordell (FFD) Bob Dutilly (FDK)
Hangar Waiting List Officer:	Danny Brotto (FFD) Bill Whelan (FDK)
Roster / Mailing List:	Dan Meyer
Scheduler:	Ray Watson
Task Day Chairman:	Chris O'Callaghan
Webmaster:	Alan Meyer
SSA Regional Director:	Jim Kellett (jim@kellett.com)

(Volunteers are requested to fill empty slots above. Contact the Board if you are interested.)

Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association

Board of Directors:	Preston Burch Michael Higgins Hans Jorgensen Jean Posbic James Trygg
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Officers:	President - Michael Higgins Vice President - James Trygg Secretary - Manfred Beutgen Treasurer - Michael Hearn
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Club Introductory Meetings

By Wayne Elseth

We are continuing our series of M-ASA Club Introductory Meetings for 2008. The intent for these meetings is to quickly bring a prospective, new, or returning club members up to speed in club procedures, safety, flight operations, and related topics. The meetings are held monthly, typically alternating between Frederick and Fairfield (but not always), on the Saturday after the monthly club meeting, at 9am. We have a prepared presentation that takes around 1.5 to 2 hours to run through explaining how we run our operations. Intro meeting are held the Saturday after the General Club meeting, rain or shine. Check with Wayne Elseth for last minute changes to time or location via email: masa@elseth.net or 443:812-8815. If you can't make it to one of these flying-day meetings, I'm always happy to get you going with a personal briefing if you contact me. The information being presented is important and we want everyone to attend one of these briefings prior to flying.

If you are interested in being a presenter please contact Wayne Elseth.

December	Only if requested
January	Only if requested
February	Only if requested
March 15	Frederick
April 12	Fairfield
May 10	Frederick
June 14	Fairfield
July 12	Frederick
August 9	Fairfield
September 13	Frederick

Upcoming Events

M-ASA Annual Banquet	January 18
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If you have an event you would like to appear on this schedule, email convector@m-asa.org