

PSSA Newsletter

April, 2004

Upcoming Events:

What's coming? The 2004 soaring season, we hope! Really, it's been a struggle. The unexpected delays in finishing the needed repairs to the SuperCub have been a bummer, but there is a light getting brighter at the end of the tunnel.

Without the special efforts of a small band of dedicated zealots, a.k.a. "maintenance dogs", we wouldn't be back to normal operational strength this coming Saturday, the 17th. That's the word from Big Dog, Terry Crippen and his biggest helper, Joe Salz who have been working diligently with Don Burt to get N333TM back in the air. We know there have been some frustrated souls out there, especially students and their instructors, who have been gnashing their teeth over recent excellent flying weather and no plane to fly. Keep the faith and don't forget to thank Terry, Joe, Mark Allen, Stefan Perrin, Van Chaney, Dave Kremers, Tim Heneghan and Robert Rackl for their time and effort in getting the Cub work finished.

We have plans to hold another of our **Fun Fly** events on the weekend of **May 1st and 2nd**. In the past this has been an excellent opportunity for member pilots who have not been in the air recently to get up with an instructor, to shake off the cobwebs and then to compete in some congenial competition to sharpen those skills for the coming season.

Read further and you will learn of a different kind of operation scheduled for **May 16th**.

And speaking of that soaring to come. Of course there will be some great days right here at Bergseth when the ridges will be working, both front and back, but have you been thinking of moving up to the more challenging and rewarding flying at places like Wenatchee, Ephrata, Montague, Alvord? Check out Wayne Ginther's rundown on those plans for this summer.

Summer trips:

It is time to stretch those soaring wings and the best way is to join up with a group of like minded flyers and head out to explore new country and new horizons. Cross country is the method of choice and here are two great trips already set up for you

The first confirmed trip with towing is Pangborn field at Wenatchee, May 27th to May 30th. There will probably be a joint potluck social event with the Cascade Club on Saturday the 29th. See their web site Cascade Soaring Society. This is an ideal location for the L13 since there is ridge soaring, thermals, grass and paved runways, and possible wave, sometimes directly over the field. Also, cross country possibilities are there over the plateau to places such as Waterville and beyond. We need a trip captain for the L-13 (please volunteer) and should have about 5 people or more that want to fly the big bird. The plan is to transport the L-13 and private gliders Wednesday evening to Pangborn for assembly, fly 27-28-29-30th and trailer back the evening of the 30th. Plenty of reasonable motels (need to reserve) and restaurants in the area.

The second confirmed trip with towing is once again to the Montague-Yreka-Siskiyou-Mt Shasta area. July 10-17th with fly days 11-16th and travel days 10th and 17th. Need a trip captain for the L-13 and people who really want to stretch their limits. Please let me (Wayne Ginther) or Dave Kremers know ASAP on your participation in these trips so we can make lodging arrangements and complete the planning. Because of fewer flyers these years the Willamette Valley Club, Cascade Club, and other friends of soaring are invited on these trips. I will send out detailed information as soon as we have a list of people going.

Unconfirmed trips include the Alvord (talk to Don Crawford if interested crawdad92399@earthlink.net. He's organizing a trip for July 18-25 to include pilots from the Willamette club and any PSSA members interested.),

Ephrata June 19-20, Ephrata Aug. 14-15. (These are suggested dates, subject to interest. Again, taking the L-13 along for members is an option.)

Wayne D. Ginther, 253-863-6469, novheart@gte.net

Recent Events:

You were at the Glider Expo at Museum of Flight, weren't you? We know some of you came by to see the Sparrowhawk and the Atlas motor glider. Sexy stuff. PSSA had a very successful presentation and a good response from the public, displaying J.C.'s PW-5 along with our videos and informational displays. Interested attendees got a copy of Tim Heneghan's spiffy new brochure (Let us know if you can help us get more copies of this out to the public). Thanks to another of Tim's great ideas, we offered a drawing for a free glider ride which garnered over seventy entries and, with it, a list of contacts for our membership drive. All in all a good showing. Thanks to those of you who volunteered to man the booth over those two days, your support was much appreciated.

Membership:

Nothing new to report here. But have you been looking for any chance to interest someone in coming out to take an introductory ride? This is something we all can help with. One new member per current member and we would be on our way to becoming a stronger, more vital club. And we need that NOW. We have business type cards, posters, and brochures to help in this effort. Let us know.

Reports From Members:

This is the place where we hear from members who have informative, instructional, and inspirational messages to share with all of us. One such member is J.C. Hauchecorne who, as a board member has something very important to share this month. It fits in with your board's resolution to address the pressing need for increased membership and with it, a chance for our club to survive.

HELP! - WE NEED SOMEBODY. HELP! - NOT JUST ANY BODY. HELP! - SOMEONE...

Well, we don't just need some **one**, we need a whole bunch. We need a whole bunch of new and active members. We just finished the glider expo at the Museum of Flight, and yes we got some new names which we will attempt to convert into new members. But, of course, much more needs to be done.

We need to be much more visible. We all love "our" Bergseth field, but as far as visibility is concerned, we are hidden away from everyone. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but every once in a while we need to come out and face the public.

The board has decided that one day a month we will come out of hiding and go on a promotion tour. Once a month we will go out and conduct our operation on a new airport. This mobile operation day will have several exciting results. First, we all have a chance to fly on a new airport with new surroundings, new procedures, etc. This will keep us sharp and ready for any XC experience where we may have to land at an unfamiliar airport. Second, it will give us exposure, and we need exposure to attract new members.

Our first mobile operation is scheduled to be at SeaTac International Airport. I figured why not start at the top. At SeaTac International Airport, public exposure is a sure thing. There is plenty of runway space available, lots of traffic to get familiar with, we even have a chance to talk to all kinds of controller type people, such as departure clearance, ground control, the tower, departure control and who knows who else will want to talk to us. I have not received an official OK to conduct an operation at SeaTac, every time I call I get passed around from one supervisor to the other and then they hang up on me, so I am assuming it is OK, since no one told me we can't do it.

But, while I am waiting for the official OK for the SeaTac operation, we will start at a more mundane location. The Pierce County Thun Field. Thun Field is a great little airport. Single runway, plus taxiways and plenty of space to stage our gliders. The additional bonus on Thun Field is the fact that a

lot of people go to the airport and have brunch at the restaurant on the field. We should be able to stir up a ton of interest.

There is one small caveat. **We need everyone's help** in order to make this a successful operation. Being a busy uncontrolled airport we will need manpower to make this work. Essentially, we need every member of our club at Thun Field helping with pushing gliders off the runway, staging for the next take off, promoting our club, answering questions, taking reservations for rides, etc.

Let's face it. If we don't rejuvenate our club with new members and cash, at the current burn rate we will be out of business within two or three years. Yes, that's right, **out of business in two or three years!** We all have a stake in this club. It is the best club in the Northwest, with the best glider field within 1,000 miles! Let's not squander that by being lazy or uninvolved. We all need to be involved 100 percent. There is a reason why we are a member of PSSA - we have put up 350 bucks to join and why we are still paying 35 bucks a month to be part of it. We love the sport of soaring. There is nothing like the sport of soaring, nothing! Our goal is to double our membership by the end of this year. I can't do it by myself. The board can't do it alone. We all have to get involved and be actively committed to achieve that goal. Please don't fail us, please don't fail the board.

The date for the mobile operation is pending final airport arrangements, but we see **Sunday, May 16th**, as the hoped for date and will let you know as soon as we have that confirmed.

J.C,

Aircraft for Sale:

John Ennes and Mike Thomas still have their Libelle up for sale. It's a Standard Libelle (11JN). Sale price is \$15,000. Contact John directly for further particulars.

Training and Safety:

Let's start with safety first. Your Training and Safety Officer, J.C. Hauchecorne has given some serious thought to the challenges we all face coming into a new season without having flown with regularity, especially after the kind of winter we've just had. His ideas:

SAFETY (Antonym - DANGER)

Most of you have already heard about the very recent accident of two glider pilots, members of the Evergreen Glider Club flying out of Arlington. For those who haven't, there was a midair collision of two gliders, apparently flying along a ridge. One pilot was able to parachute to safety, the other was fatally injured. The official NTSB report reads as follows:

"A GLASER-DIRKS DG-400, N400WJ, GLIDER AND A STD LIBELLE 201B, N161D, GLIDER, COLLIDED MID-AIR UNDER UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PILOT OF THE N400WJ WAS FATALLY INJURED AND THE PILOT OF THE N161D RECEIVED MINOR INJURIES, WRECKAGE WAS LOCATED NEAR MT. WHEELER, ARLINGTON, WA."

Our condolences go to the Club and the family. Unfortunately, sometimes lessons in our sport are learned under these tragic circumstances.

Thus, here are a few thoughts about our just-starting soaring season:

Most of us have not been in the air for a while. We are rusty, anxious about getting back in the air, and vulnerable to making mistakes. This is normal and expected. So lets review how we can get ourselves mentally current again. Close your eyes, climb aboard my ship and lets review a few items.

Mentally go through every sequence of the flight. System check, hook up, initial take off, release,

soaring, approach, final approach and landing. Accidents happen because we have not prepared ourselves for an emergency. We are mentally not ready to do what should be done in an unusual situation, even if the procedure simply calls for reaching for the procedure manual and opening to the appropriate page and following the instructions.

As you make yourself comfortable in the cockpit, acquaint yourself with the controls again. The stick, the pedals, flap handle, spoiler handle, release etc. In your mind, go through the take off. Where are your hands? I am assuming right hand on the stick, but where is your left hand. It should be on the release. If there is a rope break you want to get rid of the part that is dangling from your nose **NOW!** Where are your eyes? Yes of course you are looking at the tow plane ahead of you, but what instrument are you looking at in the cockpit. Yes, the Altitude indicator. Where are your mental markings of what to do in case of a rope failure? Below what altitude will you fly to your emergency landing field which is..... **DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR EMERGENCY FIELD IS?**

You must go to the emergency landing field before your first flight of the year! You must walk that field and inspect from the ground what the field is like. Our emergency landing fields are not ideal. They are surrounded by tall trees, power lines and residential housing that make landing a challenge in the best of circumstances, never mind a stressful situation like in a rope break. As you walk the field, look at the trees how high are they? Where should you be in reference to the surroundings as you level out for the final glide to your touch down. There is no excuse not to make a safe landing if there is a rope break and you can't make it back to the airstrip.

Back to our mental flight.... Are you still with me? What if the altitude instrument fails, and it does not show a climb. Or how about if somehow in your climb into the cockpit you inadvertently touched the adjustment knob on the altimeter, and it shows you are at sea level or at 3000 feet. What visual reference will you use for altitude, on take off and on landing. This is a good exercise, because, if you go cross-country and are forced to land out, you will not have a clue what altitude the landing field is. You will have to estimate your altitude by visual clues.

Let's keep flying and go through the release procedure. What will you do if you can't release – and, of course, the radio is not working. Know your signals to the tow pilot. In your mind work through what to do if neither you nor the tow pilot can release, and there is no radio communication. What are the procedures, what will you have to expect.

OK, back to the release point. You are off the hook sniffing for that first thermal. Got it - and you start your turn. **DID YOU CLEAR THAT TURN?** Clearing every turn is a must. Once you made the decision to start a turn in lift, don't look at any instruments, don't look at the vario to see how fast you are climbing, **IRRELEVANT!** What is important is to look over your shoulder in the direction of the turn to make sure there is no one there. Yes I know, the airspace over Bergseth very seldom gets crowded. But you may not always fly at Bergseth Field. And maybe, just maybe, I may be there working the same weak thermal. Get used to clearing every turn. **EVERY TURN!**

Time to get back to the field. Before you start your approach, go through the landing sequence. Take out the approach procedure manual or checklist, go through all the checks. Make it a habit to actually look at the procedure manual and go through each item. One day you may fly a ship with retractable gear and ballast, and it may be coming home from a very long and cold XC flight. You would not want to forget to dump the ballast or lower the gear because you thought you knew the procedure by memory but fatigue, dehydration or even lack of oxygen made you forget an item. It is not a good idea to go through the checklist on final either. You may discover that the valves for the ballast are frozen shut, and you can't dump, but it is too late to do anything since you are now on short final. (For those who fly power, **THERE IS NO RED KNOB TO PUSH IN!**) In your mind go through some unusual circumstances, like not having an altimeter, airspeed indicator, spoilers, brakes etc.

Your mind is an excellent flight simulator. Use it! And guess what - it's free. I frequently sit in the cockpit and go through every procedure, normal and emergency. Did you ever watch an aerobatic pilot go through his routine while standing on the ground? In his mind he goes through every maneuver in sequence. His mind does not know the difference between imagination and reality. His body does, there are no g-forces pulling on him, but his mind does not. The same for you. Your mind does not know that you are sitting in a cockpit fixed to the ground. But guess what, since the mind does not know if it is stuck on the ground or in the air, it will do what you have thought it to do no matter real or imagined.

Just to recap, here are some items you ought to do before your next flight:

- Physically - this is not something you can do in you mind - walk the emergency landing field. Do it!
- Memorize the visual clues as to your altitude. What is the visual clue for the safe altitude to turn back to the airport in case of a rope failure? Same with the approach. Don't use the altimeter for your landing.
- Make every landing count. By that I mean, don't land the same every time. Did you ever consider landing to the West? Do it!
 - What is the shortest landing distance you need to land safely? Have someone spot your touch down spot and measure how long of a landing distance you need. Visibly mark it, and see what that distance looks like from the air. Land once using the brakes, once without using the brakes. See what difference the brakes have on your landing distance.
 - Land with no spoilers. **DON'T TOUCH THEM!** This is not easy to do with a glass ship. You will be surprised how long you will float in ground effect.
 - Deploy the spoilers on downwind, and assume you cannot retract them, leave them deployed throughout the landing sequence.

By saying, make every landing count, don't misunderstand. I don't mean do something stupid. For example, if you try to land without using the spoilers, and it looks like you will be floating the length of the field with a nice little tailwind, which we normally get at the Bergseth Field, **FOR GOD SAKES DEPLOY THEM BEFORE YOU RUN OUT OF RUNWAY!**

All I am saying is - experience the differences in the "safe-zone". Get to know the ship you are flying and how it flies in different situations and configurations, but don't go into the danger zone. For that you can use the mental flight simulator.

Disclaimer: Yes, I have to make a little disclaimer, just to make sure we understand each other. I am not a glider instructor. I have been around soaring for 30 years and I have learned and observed a lot but again, I am not an instructor. The above comments or any comments I make with respect to safety and training are intended for the fully licensed glider pilot, not for the students. I respectfully ask the students to follow the instructor's guidance throughout the training. What I am writing should be thought provoking and stimulate the safety concerns of the fully licensed glider pilot. Under no circumstances should you execute any of the above-suggested training maneuvers if you don't feel confident that you can execute them with sufficient safety margin. If you have any questions, consult with one of our instructors on how to execute the maneuver safely. In respect to the mental exercise you should be OK to do them any time and anywhere on the ground. You may consider wearing a helmet and a parachute but that is your decision.

J.C.

Operations:

We had a successful day last Sunday thanks to help from John Carson who provided tow service. We will be back in the air with our own tow plane this coming weekend, so be ready to pick it up again. As previously noted, we will have a Fun Fly event again this year. Plan on being at the field on May

1st or 2nd to get your licks in at brushing up the flying skills. Stay tuned for a further announcement reminding you of this valuable opportunity and a refresher on contest rules.

Instruction continues to be available on a regular basis, but be sure to make a call to the on-duty instructor to verify and make a firm date. Check the web site if you're unsure of who's on duty. We encourage all to get out there when the getting is good to keep those valuable skills in tune.

Field managers! Be aware that there might be some people showing up with special coupons which will entitle them to a ten dollar discount for an introductory ride. Be sure to collect these coupons and send them along with the day's flight log to Stefan. Also, don't miss the chance to pitch the introductory membership program, giving them their (lower) half of the Introductory Membership sheet. The new rule at the field for rides subsequent to the initial intro ride is: **NO 30 DAY INTRO MEMBERSHIP SLIP - NO FLYING.** And- **CASH OR CHECK ONLY** for any flying after the initial \$40 intro ride. We have had problems with one, people flying past the 30 day period and two, some have not been responding to billing. We need to have these people join as members to continue to fly after the 30 day agreement.

Thursday operations:

As the better weather arrives, we will be looking for the chance to fit in Thursday operations as tow pilot availability and interest dictate, so listen to the ops message for the word when the weather looks good.

Field Manager schedule:

Sat. April 17 - Stefan Perrin
Sun. April 18 - Wayne Ginther
Sat. April 24 - Joe Leysath
Sun. April 25 - Dave Kremers
Sat. May 1 - John Anderson
Sun. May 2 - George Mollison
Sat. May 8 - Marlene Nelson
Sun. May 9 - Kenji Ominato
Sat. May 15 - Robert Payne
Sat. May 16 - Stefan Perrin
Sun. May 22 - Robert Rackl
Sat. May 23 - Dariush Zand
Sun. May 29 - Curt Chenoweth
Sat. June 5 - Terry Crippen
Sun. June 6 - John Ennes
Sat. June 12 - Wayne Ginther
Sun. June 13 - Tim Heneghan
Sat. June 19 - Dave Kremers
Sun. June 20 - Joe Leysath
Sat. June 26 - George Mollison
Sun. June 27 - Marlene Nelson

Special Note: Until May 17th any changes to your assignment should be reported to Dave Kremers (206) 323-2493 instead of to Van Chaney. After that date contact Van, as usual, at (206 937-4218).

Newsletter contributions:

As always, your input to this newsletter is very important. Please let us know if you have new information, valuable experiences, constructive comments, even gripes which will help to make this a better club offering the safest and most cost effective soaring opportunity in the area. Send items to Dave Kremers (dkremers@earthlink.net) or Robert Rackl (robertrackl@rad129.net).

