

President's Prerogative

George Hazelrigg

There is an old Chinese maledict that goes, "May you live in interesting times." Unfortunately, we are living in interesting times. Our population centers are experiencing devastating growth with rapid disappearance of open land. Limited resources, notably oil, coupled with exploding demand are driving up costs. World anger, outrage and discontent coupled with concentrations of affluence and easy world-wide travel give rise to threats of terrorism. Increasing societal demands on national security ease the way for increased regulation and restriction, especially of aviation. We are indeed in interesting times, and there is no small threat to our sport.

Only a few short years ago, we were grounded altogether and then faced the threat that we could not fly our Pawnee merely because it had the capability of being and used for agricultural application—an apparent synonym for terrorist activity. Our neighbors to the north have faced considerable ordeal, especially with the periodic appearance of a TFR space around P-40. And we all know about continuing threats to our use of public-use airports, despite the legal requirements for such fields to accommodate gliders.

Soaring is, no doubt, a different kind of flying. And differences, whatever they may be, generally lead to prejudice and discrimination. It does little good to argue that all general aviation is under threat, and that we all would do best to stick together. The prejudices will dominate. Gliders are different than airplanes. They don't have engines (usually). They are the black sheep. We can try our best to integrate our operations with other traffic, we can do our best to promote safety and efficiency. But that doesn't remove the prejudice. In the end, most people just feel more comfortable when

they are in a homogeneous group rather than a mixed crowd.

Overall, life follows the basic laws of thermodynamics: 1) energy—you don't get something for nothing, 2) entropy—things always go from good to bad and bad to worse, and 3) action—things always get worse in the most expeditious way possible. In thermodynamics, the only way to beat back entropy is with energy. In our environment, the only way we can maintain operational status is with our energy. We are flying, and we will continue to fly—for the time being. But the outlook for the long term is not as bright as we could wish. It is up to us to put forth the energy to preserve and grow our sport. It is not a time for divisiveness. It is a time to stick together and to work together with all members of the aviation community, but especially with other soaring clubs and with our society, to assure the freedom to soar in the future. I wish I could convince power pilots that it is in their interest to encourage soaring. A glider rating makes one a very much better pilot—the Air Force knows that. And squeezing out one segment of aviation makes it just that much easier to squeeze out the next. But it's probably a waste of effort to try.

One of the ways we gain power in our struggle to preserve our sport is to gain control. Control comes through ownership and through size. I suggest that we need to take on some big new goals for the short term. First, we need ownership of our facilities. Second, we need to form coalitions with other soaring clubs to grow in power. Third, we need to have a voice and be heard in our society, and we need feedback from our society. And fourth, we need to grow. We need to recruit new members and train new glider pilots.

This is more of a time of crisis than you may know. We will all be called upon to support our sport over the next year. I hope we are all up to the task. 

De ja vu all over again?

California Pilots Protest "Eviction"—Small-aircraft owners and the businesses who service them say they are being unfairly pushed out of a California airport so more jets can move in. The fracas has erupted at Carlsbad's McClellan-Palomar Airport over developer Palomar Airport Center's plan for a \$30 million upgrade of part of the airport. The \$30 million may not be the problem—it's the development that would replace old hangars housing about 100 small aircraft, half a dozen businesses and a historic restaurant with 19 new hangars designed... not for them.

The 100 planes have to move by the end of the month and

businesses occupying the space must be out by the end of September. Go team. The 301-member Pacific Coast Flyers, a business owner and a former airline pilot have each filed complaints with the FAA over the evictions. "The fact they've given us eviction notices with no other alternative is our main issue," Matt Goddard, spokesman for the Pacific Coast Flyers, told The San Diego Union-Tribune. Airport Director Peter Drinkwater said the aircraft can move to other airports until an additional 80 tie-down spots are completed in about 18 months. Palomar Airport Center President Richard Sax also suggested pilots pool their money and rent some of the new hangars.—*AVflash 10.35a*

On the Home front—

Lessons learned from an old man

Dick Otis

The kids are off to college and I spend much of the week at work. The weekend comes, and I'm either off to the airport, or trying to recover the jungle surrounding my house. I can't remember the last time I did something with my wife Trish, who I'm only seeing a few hours a week. When Trish suggested we join her best friend and her husband taking square dance lessons, I'm thinking "you've got to be kidding" as I respond "what a great idea! Sure, why not?"



Ten months later, we've been to two major festivals, (check it out at

<http://homepage.mac.com/otisra/41stSSBF/41ssbf.htm>), made numerous friends, attended weekly dances all over the Washington DC area, and have greatly improved our general health. So here is *your* chance. After those long hours at the airport, why not come home and spend some quality time with your significant other? Free introductory lessons (*two!*) are available this September at Beaux and Belles, Leesburg, VA (and many other locations throughout Virginia). No, you do *not* need to get fancied up. Go ahead. Do it. For further information, check out the club website at: <http://www.beauxandbelles.org>

Half-Way to P-burg

Bob Collier

On Saturday, August 7th, "289" took another shot at Petersburg. Off tow at 1500ft in what seemed like pretty good stuff turned into a ten minute scratch job, but eventually got high enough to think about going somewhere. I asked SSC Ground if there were anybody willing to crew for a trip to Petersburg, and Bob Critchlow graciously accepted. Because of a fairly strong headwind (for a 1-26), progress was dialectical, four miles forward and three back, etc. Beyond the Shenandoah Valley stretched the heavily forested array of closely spaced ridges providing plenty of incentive to get high and stay there.

There were small clumps and some isolated potential landing sites here and there, but no way to judge their quality from the safety altitude. Courage was bolstered by 6 to 7kt thermals which kept us close to cloud base, about 7000ft, but every so often there were stretches with ear-squashing descents. Once we got sucked down to about 4000' before finding zero to one or two up. After awhile the cloud a couple miles to the south began to look like it was darkening; so, we chanced it, and it paid off, back to cloud base.

With the crisis over I had a chance see where we were. It was right at the eastern end of the dig for the new interstate that's going to take the place of Va-55. I'd been in the air for more than three hours, and I suppose I would have had Petersburg made before the lift died or 289 succumbed to nature's relentless call. The short version is that I said "The hell with it" and turned tail and headed for home. It was an easy run to the safety of the west edge of the valley. One good thermal and we were back at the field.

See, 1-26s really can go fast under the proper conditions. I reported in to Bob and released him from his commitment. Since we were back at cloud base and the lift had given no sign of quitting it seemed like we couldn't get into too much trouble going up to Winchester. I could prevail on Tracy if the unthinkable happened. This leg was pretty

much cross wind and three strong thermals did the trick. On the way back it turned out to be a porpoise job.

Back at the field it looked ops were winding up in that the tent was down. Since I didn't want to be the only glider type left on the field with a glider to disassemble, it was time to give nature her due. People materialized out of nowhere to help. It sure is nice to be in a club where we all look out for one another. Well, the end to a nice day of soaring and a trip to the Mill and some mild exaggerations about the day's accomplishments or were they?

Fortunately I wasn't the last one to leave for the Mill in that my ol' trusty blue monster's transmission gasped its last while waiting for the light to change just short Dean's Restaurant. Thankfully Fumagali and Garrison stopped on the way to offer help and spread the word to the guys already at the Mill. We got both car and trailer moved to the median strip and Team Hazelrigg with same size hitch got "289" back to the field. Do we have a close-knit club or what? Thanks a lot, you guys. The wrecker finally showed in an hour or so (from two blocks away). Well, it was a Saturday evening. By then Tracy was there to retrieve what was left of the weary pilot. Thinking about the circumstances that could have ensued if there had been a very remote landout got me to wondering, what made me decide to turn back. Amen.—"289"

Bob Collier in 289 by Dick Otis



Food for Thought

At the start of the 2004 season M-ASA formally launched the new Mentor Program, whose goals are to more rapidly, safely, and smoothly, integrate new members into our organization. This program consists of an approximately one hour long mandatory-for-all-newmembers orientation session, with follow-on support provided on an "as needed" basis by the team affiliated with the program. These sessions are scheduled on a once-per-month basis or more frequently as necessary. Current Mentors are Cathy Williams, Sarah Macpherson, and Bob Jackson at FFD and Paul Rehm, George Simms and Bill Whelan at FDK. Topics in the briefing provide a good introduction to M-ASA, covering the rudiments of safety, ground handling/ operations, and club procedures. The program was informally launched last September with the first orientation briefing then and at least one briefing monthly thereafter. The orientation briefing consists of a 40-slide Powerpoint

presentation posted on the club PCs at both sites. With the help of membership Chairman Hope Howard, newcomers and prospective members are steered into the program either before or immediately after joining. Since its inception we've had a total of 31 new members—or prospective members—attend briefings. 24 of the attendees have joined M-ASA. In 2003 of the 8 attending 7 joined M-ASA. As of June 17 2004, 23 people attending an orientation have decided to become M-ASA members. Since M-ASA presently has about 160 people on its active roster, 24 program participants represent a very creditable 15% of the current total membership of M-ASA. Feedback from those attending has generally been very positive. At present the M-ASA Mentor program appears to be successfully meeting its goals of educating and setting appropriate new member expectations. By so doing it should prove beneficial both to the new members and to the club as a whole.—*Bill Whelan, M-ASA Convecton*

Curmudgeon—noun: a crusty irascible cantankerous old person full of stubborn ideas.

Jim Kellett Resident Curmudgeon

While curmudgeons sometimes irritate, they are often valued by seekers of truth for their clarity of vision and their intolerance for fools and transient cultural values... so from time to time, I propose to irritate and, hopefully, illuminate with a bit of tongue-in-cheek commentary.

The popularity of the English language on this planet is due, at least in part, because it offers the widest nuance and precision of meaning. If we can't achieve political or economic hegemony, there is still a chance we might achieve linguistic hegemony!! Sadly, Americans—particularly younger ones—risk degrading the language by ignoring that precision and so misusing the power of English.

One example of the popular decline of English usage was the recently published Glider Flying Handbook. In the GFA, one would be instructed on how to be launched by wenchs (rather than winches), and use air breaks (rather than air brakes). Perhaps Lesson One for the e-mail Club for people who fly gliders could be a review of the primary definitions of these words:

Wench, noun: A young woman or girl, especially a peasant girl; a woman servant; a wanton woman.

Wench, verb: To frequent the company of wenchs, or women of ill fame.

Winch, noun: A lifting device consisting of a horizontal cylinder turned by a crank on which a cable or rope winds.

[syn:windlass] <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=windlass>

Winch, verb: To pull or lift up with or as if with a winch; "winch up the slack line".

Note that both words are pronounced exactly alike.

Brake, noun: A device for slowing or stopping motion, as of a vehicle, especially by contact friction. Something that slows or stops action.

Brake, verb: (transitive) To reduce the speed of with or as if with a brake.

Brake, verb: (intransitive) To operate or apply a brake. To be slowed or stopped by or as if by the operation of a brake.

Break, noun: The occurrence or act of breaking.

Break, verb: (transitive) To cause to separate into pieces or crack suddenly or violently.

Break, verb: (intransitive) To become separated into pieces or cracked or split.

Again, break and brake are pronounced exactly the same. 

Next month: The Magical Misunderstood APOSTROPHE!! (Homework: what's the difference between a transitive verb and an intransitive one??)

I'll Fly Away

Bill Vickland

Paul Schweizer died yesterday, August 18 at about 2:30 in the afternoon. He was 91. He had recovered from cancer but it had left

him weakened and he died of an apparent heart failure. Although weakened, Paul's mind was clear to the end. A private memorial service is planned in the next few days and a larger memorial program will be held in about two weeks at Harris Hill which will include a fly-over. ...

Paul was a major contributor in establishing the 1-26 Association and was involved in organizing annual 1-26 regattas during



TC3 Photo — Castle Air Force Base Museum www.elite.net/castle-air

the period that the 1-26 was being produced. He was a great advocate of the concept of one-design soaring competition. He has written or contributed to the writing of several books, including Lewin Barringer's "Flight Without Power" in 1940. He was the author, with Martin Simons, of "Sailplanes by Schweizer". More recently he wrote "Soaring with Eagles" and has recently completed another book which will be released around Thanksgiving time.

If you wish to send condolences, please address them to Mrs. Virginia Schweizer at the National Soaring Museum, 51 Soaring Hills Drive, Elmira, NY 14903. These will be delivered to Ginny as a group. If you wish to make a contribution in his honor, it can be made to the National Soaring Museum. I would also suggest making it for the Schweizer Gallery of the Museum. Over the past few years, Paul had made the Schweizer Gallery his favorite project, visiting and working every Tuesday and Thursday. Further development of the Schweizer Gallery would be a fitting memorial.

The soaring community as a whole and the 1-26 Association especially, has lost a major supporter and friend. We will miss him.

Bill Vickland President, 1-26 Association.

Editor's Note: On several occasions I talked to Paul by telephone regarding a colleague's father, Eliot Noyes, who purchased the very first glider Schweizer sold. On one hot August day in the 1980s, I called his office. His secretary told me he wasn't in but I could call him at home. I said no I wouldn't want to bother him. She said

Chief Tow Pilot Ramblings—Weather or Not

Dick Otis

Earlier this year, your CTP created an international incident when, in conjunction with the Duty Officer and Flight Instructor of the day, he elected to cancel operations the night before scheduled operations, thus violating the sacrosanct Kellett's Law which states "no matter what the weather forecast or conditions at your location, the duty crew MUST go to the airport to cancel operations." The thought being the weather is often flyable at FRR when it is solid IFR elsewhere, and if it isn't (flyable) there is always work to be done.

In general, I agree and subscribe to Kellett's Law, having seen it in action more often than not. Case in point was last Saturday, which dawned to heavy rain and thunder in the Washington DC area, with a forecast of continued thunderstorms, heavy rain and flash floods throughout the day and evening hours. A review of Doppler radar however, showed a sharply defined, extremely long, but relatively narrow, line of heavy rain and thunderstorm activ-

he'd be glad to discuss the subject further, so I called.

He was most cordial. "No you didn't interrupt anything. I was just working in my garden." We shared that passion as well. I sent him a book of my own flower photography and he reciprocated with a nice print of a 1-26E.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Paul and his wife Ginny at Jan Scott's several years ago. We talked of flowers and 1-26s. I told him how damn much fun I've had in 081 and a few other of their planes. It was a nice afternoon I'll remember fondly.

Schweizer Aircraft Acquired By Sikorsky

Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., of Stratford, Conn., announced on Thursday that it has agreed to acquire Schweizer Aircraft Corp., a family-owned company based in Elmira, N.Y., that produces sailplanes, light helicopters, agricultural airplanes, reconnaissance aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). "Schweizer Aircraft is a great strategic fit for Sikorsky, providing us with proven leadership, a highly skilled and dedicated workforce, and immediate access to the light helicopter and UAV markets," Sikorsky President Steve Finger said in a news release. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed. The takeover, which has been approved by the leadership of both companies, is expected to be complete by late this year. "We have grown to the point where we can benefit from the increase in financial, technical and marketing resources that Sikorsky offers," said company President Paul Schweizer. Schweizer's 421 workers and management team are expected to remain in place after the acquisition.

Schweizer, which began operations in 1930, is the oldest privately owned aircraft manufacturer in the United States. The company has produced 2,160 sailplanes, 2,650 agricultural airplanes, more than 60 special-purpose fixed-wing aircraft and unmanned vehicles, and more than 900 helicopters. Schweizer manufactures three proprietary helicopters: the piston-powered Model 300C and 300Cbi helicopters and the turbine-powered Model 333; two types of covert reconnaissance aircraft, the SA 2-37B and RU-38B; and the unmanned Fire Scout VTUAV air vehicle under subcontract to Northrop Grumman. Schweizer will operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Sikorsky. Sikorsky is a subsidiary of United Technologies Corporation, of Hartford, Conn.—*AVflash 10.36a*

ity extending from Boston over Washington, and down to North Carolina. Behind that line, perhaps 80 miles west, was an identical, second line running parallel to the first. Washington FSS confirmed that there would be a lull between the fronts with light to moderate winds from the NW. Despite encountering torrential rain until the outskirts of Front Royal, I arrived at the field confident I would eventually find adequate ceiling and visibility to get in some flights. Two flight instructors (one needing 3 flights for a BFR), a DO and an ADO were almost ready to go. I pulled out the Pawnee, did a pre-flight in light drizzle, and conducted 3 tows in the pattern with marginal ceiling and visibility. It was solid IFR a half mile south of the field, but flyable to the north. Subsequently, as I put the Pawnee away, the rain stopped. By the time I jumped into my truck to depart, it was raining again. I got in four circuits of the field, and a club CFI got current. In this case, Kellett's Law worked again.

My point is the ultimate responsibility for accessing the weather is a pilot-in-command decision not an adherence to doctrine. Duty Officers, Tow Pilots, and glider pilots ALL have a responsibility to review the weather and make mature, professional decisions. In

the interests of safety, ANY dissenting opinion should trump other pressures to operate, regardless of where and when they are made from. We have a natural pilots tendency to “go look”. That is not a bad thing, but it does not relieve you of your responsibility to gather all information available on the weather. In the end, Kellett’s Law is not really a law; it’s more of a guideline.

Use it wisely.

PS: The performance of the Pawnee in light rain on a hot day towing the Grob with two FAA+ souls on board is less than impressive. Climb rates ranged from 1-2 kts off the runway, increasing to about 4 kts in the climb to 1000 feet.—Richard the Chief Tow Pilot 

What really matters in a landing?

Judah Milgram

Recently, one of our tow pilots wondered about the secret to making perfect landings in the Pawnee. I told him the secret was proper definition of “perfect”.

He probably thought I was kidding. The Pawnee’s landing gear is a bit stiff for the weight we y it at, and it’s hard to consistently set it down gently. So his question reminded me of something I’ve been thinking about lately, namely, what does a gentle touchdown have to do with a landing being “perfect”?

Answer: not much! I tell students that what counts is arriving over the threshold at the right airspeed and the right altitude. Airspeed and altitude combine to yield total energy, and the total energy at the threshold more or less determines how much of the field you’re going to use. After that, a feather-light touchdown on a predetermined spot is a *mere parlor trick*.

Terms like “grease it on” are part of the vocabulary, and we’ve probably all heard airline passengers applaud after an especially gentle touchdown. But they don’t know how much runway the pilot used along the way, or how sloppy his approach was. People say “nice landing” if the touchdown looks soft, and if you bounce, they tease you—with no regard to where you were in the “total energy box” when you arrived over the threshold. Personally, if I’m too high or too fast, or have to add power on final, I give myself zero points, no matter how sweetly the wheels kiss the ground.

I am reminded of “Zen in the Art of Archery”, in which the author describes spending months and months with his Master doing nothing but releasing the shot ... without even a target. Finally, he asks, “what about aiming?” and the Master says “big deal!” gives him an impressive demo of target shooting, splitting his arrows etc. The point being: it’s not about hitting a target, it’s all about proper shooting. That said, in flying, if the approach is good, and you arrive over the threshold with the right energy, most of the time the rest seems to take care of itself.

(Not to say there isn’t technique to be mastered in roundout and touchdown) Consider that, in a glider, every landing is practice for an off-field landing, 2 where the goal is to get it into the field in the space available and touch down with minimum energy. Who cares whether the wheel touches down over here or over there, (provided you miss the gopher holes and the rocks), or how firmly (provided you don’t break anything).

And the FAA checkride exercise has always baffled me: “touch down smoothly within the designated area” and roll to within 200 ft of a designated stopping point. OK, it’s the FAA, so we have to teach it, but to me a more realistic test would be “arrive over the threshold at the right altitude and airspeed”. Jim Kellett points out that the Bronze Badge “spot landing” requirements are more rational, because they’re framed in terms of a landing distance requirement.

At one time I had plans to build a 4 ft. styrofoam fence on the grass on 27. The point was to see how little runway we could use, with the constraint that we don’t hit the fence (which would harmlessly disintegrate if we did). Reggie even OK’d it provided he could be there to watch (but probably wouldn’t go for it now). Nowadays, we have to land our gliders “somewhere” on the first half of 27, far enough up so we can roll all the way to midfield. This is very bad training—you couldn’t design a better exercise to teach imprecise flying if you tried! Sure, you can try to touch down adjacent the third runway light or the culvert or whatever, but again, touchdown location isn’t the important thing. From this point of view, runway 09 is much better for our purposes—the “imaginary fence” is much easier to see.

Perhaps my towpilot friend has been doing perfect landings all along, without realizing it! 

John Lewis on final by Fred Mueller





Photo Album

Some of Dick Otis' fine snapshots of the pure pleasure of flying and the great natural beauty around FRR for which there is no extra charge (yet)! Tiffany Blakely, 12 experiences her very first glider flight with George Ross at the controls. (above) Curtis Wheeler and his step daughter Adell after her first glider flight (below) These big grins really say something about soaring! Wouldn't it be nice to put grins this big on many more young potential soaring pilots?



Dave Weaver posed a question to me: if Sikorsky made a glider, what would it look like?—*Judah Milgram*



Thing by Judah Milgram

The National Board Glider Seminar—Saturday afternoon John Sharp presented a glider program seminar. It was well attended and we were fortunate to have Air Force Colonel George Sciss, our CAP representative at the Air Staff. Col Sciss is an SSA member, owns a glider, and is a member of Skyline Soaring in VA. He briefed ongoing efforts of his office to restore our ability to use appropriated funds. Col Sciss and his folks have submitted a plan to Air Force leaders that would allow cadet programs such as the glider program to use appropriated dollars. Our job at this time is to patiently wait, giving the plan a chance to work. If the plan is approved we will be able to fund glider acquisition, maintenance, and orientation rides, if the plan fails we will seek alternate actions. The glider seminar is posted at <https://ntc.cap.af.mil/ops/DOT/Glider/indexcfm>. —*Jim Kellett*

Women Soaring Pilots Association Raffle—

The 2004 WSPA raffle of a 1-23 model was won by Frauke Elber who donated it back to WSPA. The Model complete with stand will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. The bidding closes December 1, 2004 in time for Christmas. The full size version of this plane is in Mojave, CA. Send your bid to f_elber@yahoo.com



Photos: Frauke Elber

When Ops are from 27, Reggie would like the car parked on the apron by the tent, not on the grass. He says it's killing the grass...

Ten Best Things about Living in Hobbs

by Carlos Reyes (M-ASA's past Convectur editor, recently relocated to Hobbs, New Mexico)

10. WalMart Supercenter—One stop shopping 24 hours a day.
9. All tows cost just six bucks (winch).
8. Anywhere you go, there's always lots of free parking.
7. Nothing says good morning like the smell of petroleum in the morning.
6. Yeah, but it's a dry heat!
5. No danger of getting distracted and flying into the side of a mountain—we ain't got any.
4. Ten minute drive to anywhere in town—guaranteed.
3. No need to explain to soaring pilots where the town is.
2. No terrorist targets—nearest mall is 100 miles away.
1. Nearest doctor is never too far away.—*M-ASA Convectur*

For Sale—Schweizer 1-35c. Kilo Whiskey for sale. 2200 TT.

Current annual, good overall condition, open trailer and easy to assemble light wings. Cambridge audio netto, new Borgelt B-40 w/audio, G-meter. 10 amp hour battery, O2, new tire and brakes. \$15,500. This is an excellent first x-country glider, it has taken me from hanging about the field to a Gold badge in just a few short years and could do the same for you! Paul Rehm 703-430-7625 or darthbair@aol.com



The above screen grab is from a friend's flight simulator. He spent a lot of time in England during WW II and loves to fly his Lysander over familiar English and French countryside.

The picture serves to remind us that as long as there is one Lysander flying anywhere on Earth, Judah's Sikorsky sailplane isn't the ugliest aerial vehicle in the history of flight.



SKYLINES

September, 2004

Phil Jordan, Editor

pjordan@skylinesoaring.org

Skyline Soaring Club, Inc.

<http://www.skylinesoaring.org>