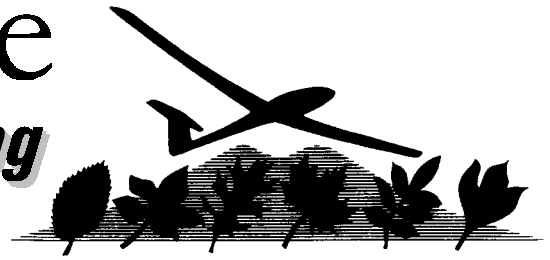


# The Flight Line

## News about Sugarbush Soaring



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## From the President's Cockpit

Planning for the coming season is well under way. As yet, we have not set opening day, but I hope it can be earlier than last year, as we seem to be having a comparatively dry warm winter. The ASK-21 will be back with refinished wings and horizontal stabilizer, the old gelcoat having had to be totally replaced with a new polyurethane finish. Your board is actively seeking a replacement for the Grob 103 lost in the accident. John Mahony has added a Piper Pawnee to the tow fleet. Harvey Howell has the planning for the Region One Contest to be held starting June 19 well under way, and we will be asking for volunteer help. It takes a lot of effort to run these contests, but if many people help, the burden is lightened. We have scrapped the National Soaring Seminar, and plan to hold an additional Youth Soaring Camp in its place.

Bill McGinty will be back behind the office counter again. We welcome Damon Hussar to the Board as our new Secretary. Tony Lauck, who bore the secretarial mantle last year, will continue to edit *The Flight Line*, at least whenever people send him material. Thanks for your efforts, Tony.

Rick Hanson will be conducting seminars on Operations and Safety on Saturdays and Sundays during the first two weekends we operate. All members will be required to attend one of these before flying. Anyone who can't make it will be briefed separately.

In 1998 the board voted to make Myndy Woodruff a Life Honorary Member. Unfortunately I was not able to present him with the award at the closing dinner, as he was suffering most painfully from carpal tunnel syndrome. I have since done so. It is impossible to place a value on Myndy's many contributions to Sugarbush Soaring



### Myndy Woodruff

#### Honorary Life Member

through the years, but we owe him a very large debt.

At the closing meeting last year, I said that we were finishing the season financially in the black. Strictly speaking, I was right at the time. However, as the bills continued to come in during November, it became plain that we would be in the red. In order to pay our bills promptly, we arranged a line of credit with the bank to see us through the winter. This will be paid off rapidly as we collect 1999 member dues. Let's hope for a lot less rain this year.

Dues will remain the same for 1999. However, I remind you that, as usual, interest will be charged on unpaid dues after May, and must be paid off in full before

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Send your stories, photos and comments to:

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## Turning My World Upside Down

### *How I Spent My Spring Vacation*

Lennies hovered above the Sierra Estrella ridge to the West as I made my way down the Maricopa highway. Arizona Soaring, a.k.a. Estrella, was my destination on this beautiful desert morning. Butterflies performed loops in my stomach as I neared the airport. Great expectations, indeed.

An artfully-painted Pawnee was tugging a Grob aloft just as I pulled into the airport lot. It was only 9:30. After checking in at the office, I had time to scope the operation since Bruce Stevens, the owner/acro instructor, had just launched for the first lesson of the day. The first thing I noticed were three 2-33's tied-down next to the runway, ready to go. In fact, everything was ready to go, other Grobs, Pawnees, line crew. This is a well-run operation. The planes are all in excellent condition; in spite of the harsh Sonoran environs. No reservations here. Except those damn butterflies....

The Grob returns to Earth, still intact, and Bruce introduces himself as we go inside for some initial ground schooling. He explained all the maneuvers we would be doing over ten flights. His hands went into gyrations as he led me through the loops, rolls, and inverted moves. 80 knots,

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Turning My World Upside Down

*(Continued from page 1)*

45 degrees nose down, 2g pull, stop over the horizon, full aileron and rudder, full top rudder, stick forward.....my mind reeled with the images. I'm going to be able to do - that? In a glider? No way....!

Ready to go? Ready as I'll ever be. We pull the 103 onto the line. This plane too is in great condition. Actually, aerobatics, done properly, are not very rough on the gliders, just the pilots. We strap in. Getting the belts tightened sufficiently takes a few extra minutes. Oh, yeah, those toe straps are here for a reason as well. Check list done, thumbs up, rudder wags, off we go. Each acro tow is 5k, so I got plenty of tow practice over the week. 6300 feet msl, soft release, clearing turn, suddenly the expanse of the Sonoran desert opens up before me. Is that Mexico? Okay, down to business.

Bruce would demonstrate a move, then it would be my plane. A couple of loops, no sweat. Then the half-roll to inverted. Your basic unusual attitude. As soon as the desert rose above us, I learned the value of tight straps. Mine weren't. As I hung in my shoulder straps, I realized there was nothing between me and the desert nearly a mile below but some webbing and 1/4 " of perspex. Control of the glider was difficult as I flopped around in my harness, trying to keep the nose above the horizon. As if that weren't enough, inverted flight requires counter-intuitive inputs. Not only do you push the stick in the "wrong" direction for a turn, you use opposite rudder as well. Over the course of the week, I found this was the most difficult chal-



lenge; however, after getting the straps right, it didn't take long to become comfortable with the new perspective. Once Bruce demonstrated the roll-out maneuver, the world was once again as it should be: blue up, brown down. Next came the full roll. Although very difficult to master with precision, the full roll is a blast. The main goal is to make the nose draw an oval around a point just above the horizon. Any incorrect input, or timing, will throw the nose out on some tangent, then -forget it. As the week went on, I became somewhat proficient in the basics, so we moved into half-cubans and the occasional cloverleaf to round out the program.

Aerobatics are more fatiguing than you might imagine. Although the actual flight only lasts about ten minutes

after release, the amount of intense concentration is surprising. That's why each student gets only 2 flights a day. After that, your performance suffers noticeably.

The trip out to Estrella was well worth every penny. The operation is efficient and professional; and Bruce is an exceptional instructor. The ability to recognize and deal with any attitude you and your glider may fall into instills great confidence in one's flying skills. Besides, it was just about the most fun I've had with my clothes on.

Oh yeah, the afternoon flights around the desert in the Pegasus weren't too shabby either...

Happy landings.

Tim Larson

## From the President's Cockpit

*(Continued from page 1)*

you fly.

I wish you all a safe and successful soaring season.

John Daniell.



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