

# CONVECTOR

September 2009

photo by Baude Litt

NEWSLETTER OF  
THE MID-ATLANTIC SOARING ASSOCIATION

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## From the Board

*by Michael Higgins*

**FDK Facility Lease News** The Frederick Airport and City management contacted M-ASA this past month and notified us that the FAA is insisting that our lease be renegotiated to be consistent with "fair market value". Apparently, reviewing airport leases and insisting on fair market value facility lease rates are normal FAA practices when they provide federal funding for airport projects. And FDK has been receiving and hopes to continue to get federal funding to support the continued expansion and development projects (adding a control tower, new T-hangars, extended runway, ...). We are expecting the City to approach M-ASA with a new lease proposal in late September. We'll communicate news with the membership as it becomes available in the coming weeks.

**Club Aircraft Financial Responsibility** M-ASA largely self-insures its glider and tow plane fleet (only the two Grobs and Super Cub have commercial hull insurance coverage). Our operations manual has stated that members are financially responsible for up to \$500 of hull damage when operating our club aircraft, assuming that any accident occurs while operating within the rules and regulations of the FAA and M-ASA. If rules are knowingly broken, and damage occurs, then higher financial responsibility for the pilot can be assigned by the M-ASA Board. Please note that this last month the Directors voted to increase the responsibility to \$1000, from \$500. This increase is intended to recognize the increased cost of repair now, as compared to 10 to 20 years ago when the \$500 was set. Please fly our aircraft with great care and responsibility -- they are very important assets to the club, and our gliders must be flyable for our club to be successful.

**FDK Landing Policy** Over the past years we've suffered a number of runway light strikes at FDK with our club gliders. These

## Events Calendar

*September 12th*

**Club Introductory Meeting-FFD,  
contact Wayne Elseth (see last page )**

*October 10-17*

**Region 4 North Contest-FFD**

*October 24-25*

**Freedom's Wings International-FFD  
(see page 3)**

▶▶ incidents are expensive for both the club (damaged wings) and airport (damaged lights). Our new policy is that when flying club gliders, if landing on the paved runway, stay on the paved runway until coming to a stop. After stopping, manually pull the glider clear of the runway. Do not attempt to roll off the runway between lights. Remember, the paved runway 12-30 is our primary landing option, but the parallel grass is available (as well as paved 5-23) if there is a conflict or hazard with the primary pavement.

**Club Godfathers** Periodically the club directors review the godfather assignments and responsibilities and make changes. It's now time to do that again. We ask that all those interested in being a godfather (maintenance leader) for a club tow plane, glider, or trailer please reply to Mike Higgins (whiskeymike\_masa@msn.com) or Dan Morris (derdan@comcast.net) by Sept 13th. If you're currently a godfather and would like to continue, you should also email to let us know your intentions. If you are not a godfather, but would like to contribute to the club in that role, please email us with your interests. We've also written a Godfather Roles and Responsibilities Summary and have included it below. This clearly defines what is expected of each godfather. Remember that the godfather doesn't have to do all of the items on this list himself, but instead should serve as the project leader to make sure it is done. We're hoping that each godfather role can be set up such that it merits a full exemption from serving as OD. Properly maintaining and improving each of our club's aircraft and trailers is very important to the membership and the success of M-ASA. We're looking forward to having an enthusiastic and energetic group step forward to help with this.

**New Transponder** M-ASA Letter of Agreement is being renewed this month with the FAA, which assigns a glider-specific squawk code of 1230 and tow plane code of 0130. When the local air-traffic controllers see these codes pop-up on their screens, they know that gliders are in the area. The intent is to build better situational awareness of all pilots in our operating airspace, and avoid conflicts between gliders and commercial/controlled traffic. M-ASA installed a transponder in our Grob 103TA two years ago as a trial, and the results have been good. It's now time to expand the transponders into other club gliders. We'll next install a transponder in a FDK based 2-33, and hope to continue adding transponders in subsequent years. If you would like to install a transponder in your private glider, and be part of our purchase and installation process, please contact Gene Wilburn.

Fly! We now have only two months of predictably good weather left in the soaring season. Get out and fly before the ice and snow grounds us.

## **Defined Roles of Godfathers**

### **All Aircraft Godfathers**

- 1) Report any open discrepancies for resolution.
- 2) Perform preventative maintenance items if qualified (change tires, brakes, etc.).
- 3) Ensure all maintenance performed is signed off in the aircraft records.
- 4) Perform thorough preflight once per month and get discrepancies repaired.
- 5) Tire pressure checked regularly.
- 6) Seating – cushions and belts in place and condition.
- 7) Registration and airworthiness certificate present in aircraft and legible.
- 8) Flight manual (if required) present in aircraft and legible.
- 9) Placards in place and legible.
- 10) Aircraft records (logbooks, etc.) kept orderly.

### **Gliders**

- 1) Ensure that all instruments and avionics are functioning properly
  - a) Perform radio check
  - b) Transponder check date.
- 2) Wash/ aircraft at least twice per year.





- 3) Wax aircraft once per year.
- 4) Open clean and lube in prep for annual inspection.
- 5) Ensure that Annual inspections are completed. For 2 place gliders also ensure that 100hr inspection is complied every 100 flight hrs.

### Trailers

- 1) Trailers to be in road worthy condition
  - a) Good tires and inflation proper
  - b) Lights operational (common light connectors)
  - c) All fixtures and tie downs available
  - d) Trailer registration and tags current and installed on trailer

### Tow Planes

- 1) Ensure all instruments and avionics are functioning properly
  - a) Perform radio check
  - b) Transponder- check date.
- 2) Headset present and operational
- 3) Clean air filter every 25 hrs
- 4) Change oil and filter every 50 hrs or 6 months
- 5) Oil leaks find/fix
- 6) Battery water level check every 50 hrs
- 7) Clean cowl /oil from belly
- 8) Wash/wax aircraft at least once per year

## Freedom's Wings International Flying For Persons With Disabilities

Freedom's Wings International is a non-profit organization which provides the opportunity for persons with physical disabilities to fly in specially adapted sailplanes.

On Saturday, October 24th and Sunday, October 25th, Freedom's Wings will offer free introductory rides to interested disabled individuals. The event will be hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association at their airport in Fairfield, PA located approximately 8 miles southwest of Gettysburg, PA. Additionally, there will be a cookout Saturday evening for all participants and their families.

Interested participants should call the toll free number to reserve a time slot for a 20-minute ride. There are only a limited number of flights available so call now if you want to experience the thrill of soaring.

Check out the pictures and comments from last year's participants at our website.

Freedom's Wings International  
[www.freedomswings.org](http://www.freedomswings.org)

1-800-382-1197



## A Near Mid-Air Collision near Fairfield

By Rick Fuller "CL"

Few events are more horrifying to a pilot than the thought of a mid-air collision. In my 20 years of flying for the US Navy, only a few incidents were as threatening as the near mid-air collision (NMAC) on the last Sunday in May two miles west of Fairfield. In the soaring community we spend the vast majority of our time aloft scanning for other aircraft, don't we? Then, how could four qualified glider pilots miss seeing the other aircraft until the final 3-4 seconds?

I launched right after the Grob-103 with two M-ASA pilots on board. On tow in our Discus CS behind 58L at 2500 feet, I was climbing out toward Jacks Mountain, where others reported finding adequate lift. In mild turbulence I was totally focused on maintaining my high tow position. Any spare brainpower was allocated to "when to release".

The Grob appeared in a wings-level attitude at my one o'clock high position to the right of the tow plane perhaps a hundred feet away. I transmitted twice to the tow pilot "Grob 3 o'clock" in hopes that the tow pilot would see the Grob and take evasive action if necessary. I heard no response from 58L, nor did the tow plane take evasive action. The Grob took no evasive action. Seeing that our vertical separation was our safety margin, I instinctively lowered my nose, grabbed the release handle and went through the wake to roughly the low tow position. I did not release. The Grob continued in wings-level flight and appeared to cross our path at the midpoint of the tow rope. I estimated it was 30-50 feet over the rope. From my position, it continued from my one o'clock through 12 o'clock and went out of view at my eleven o'clock high position. The entire event happened in what I estimated to be 3-4 seconds.

A three-person Incident Review Team was convened to analyze the NMAC cause and make recommendations to the club to prevent or minimize the chance of this happening again. An experienced instructor, an experienced tow pilot and a field Safety Officer received statements from the four pilots involved and made recommendations that focused on scanning techniques and communications. As much as pilots would like to think there's a silver bullet, a magic gadget or a simple fix to prevent incidents like this, there isn't.

To summarize the team's findings, all M-ASA pilots need to place the highest priority on scanning for aircraft and improving scan techniques to enhance separation during ALL phases of flight. That shouldn't come as a surprise to any pilot with more than a few hours of flight time, but it needs frequent emphasis in our sport. Tow pilots should think like glider pilots and avoid flying into the path of area gliders. Pilots should use radio communications sparingly, only as a supplemental tool and not rely solely on communications as a way to form their situational awareness. There were other communications difficulties that day. Suffice it to say that all pilots need to be familiar with their

### Scanning for Traffic on Tow

*My first instructional flights in gliders, taught me that the proper tow position was to put the tow plane's main wheels on the horizon. In later years, I discovered other minor variations of that position, e.g. top of the vertical stab on the greenhouse. I found that any deviation from my wheels-on-the-horizon technique demanded my full attention...as much as 90% of my focus while on tow. On turbulent days, it required 100%. Any other task, however brief, meant I would be out of position when returning to my task of position keeping.*

*Once after a 2-month layoff from flying, I asked a fellow M-ASA pilot to fly the Grob 103 with me to note any bad habits or accumulation of rust in my piloting skills. The only comment he had after a 45-minute flight was "I never saw you scan for traffic on tow". That caused me to self-examine the amount of time I spent checking for traffic among other activities while on tow. I increased my occasional scans.*

*During discussions of my reactions during the NMAC with two instructors I discovered that I still spend far too little time on tow looking for conflicting traffic and thermalling gliders. One instructor said he spends an average of 60% of his time on tow looking for traffic. Yikes! At that rate my remaining time would be spent recovering from disappearing tow planes and extreme tow positions only seen during BFRs and wave rotors. I needed to change something.*

*I discussed my dilemma with our Chief CFG. Glenn suggested a technique I hadn't heard of in my relatively brief soaring career. He often flies a position that is lower than high tow, just above the tow plane's wake. This puts the tow plane much higher on my canopy. I find this spot (1) requires less concentration; (2) prevents the tow plane from disappearing over my standard class nose at typical tow speeds; (3) provides a much-improved forward view ahead of the tow plane; and (4) provides a mild buffet if I get low. I like it. I feel safe taking this position after the first 500 feet on climb out. Give it a try on your next flight.*

▶▶ radio equipment and preflight it carefully before launch. As a result of this incident, standardization of tow plane radios is now a long-term M-ASA goal. Communications between aircraft and the Operations Director should be improved. The Board of Directors is now considering handheld radios for all OD's to monitor both the published airport frequency and 123.3.

*A Couple of Photos from The Fairfield Open House in August*

*photos by Rick Latoff*



*"Big Wheels"*



*"Life Flight"*

## Duty Schedule

by Ray Watson

Date	Field	Operations Director (OD)	Tow Pilot	Assistant Ops Director (AOD)
9/5/09	FDK	Bob Bigler	Dan Morris	Mel Donahoo
9/5/09	FRF	Mark Segall	Don Robb	
9/6/09	FDK	Andreas Schliessler	Mark Mercer	Bob Filipchuk
9/6/09	FRF	Bill Whelan	Bob Gardner	
9/7/09	FDK	Roger Thompson	Ed Breau	Janice Farr
9/7/09	FRF	John Hearn	Buddy Denham	
9/12/09	FDK	Holland Ford	Bob Ball	Todd Rosenfeld
9/12/09	FRF	Gary Cassell	Max Ullmann	
9/13/09	FDK	Kai Rasmussen	Bob Andrew	Alex Rossulek
9/13/09	FRF	Wilmar Sick	Hans Jorgensen	
9/19/09	FDK	Steve Kidd	Glenn Collins	Hope Howard
9/19/09	FRF	Rick Latoff	Bill Savory	
9/20/09	FDK	Steve Silverman	Olin Kinney	Rex Bullinger
9/20/09	FRF	Bob Krzystan	David Pixton	
9/26/09	FDK	David McConnell	Lance Nuckolls	Dowdy Jackson
9/26/09	FRF	Peter Blacklin	Bob Jackson	
9/27/09	FDK	Pete Kern	Mark Mercer	Vic Filipchuk
9/27/09	FRF	John Mitchell	Peter Welles	
10/3/09	FDK	Mario Piccagli	Dan Morris	Don Emert
10/3/09	FRF	David MacVeigh	Mike Smith	
10/4/09	FDK	Steve Shelton	Ed Breau	Herb Hoffman
10/4/09	FRF	Jim Lewis	Jim Chick	
10/10/09	FDK	Luis Fernandez	Glenn Collins	Mike Dalke
10/10/09	FRF	Jim Homer	Mike Grinder	
10/11/09	FDK	George Fekete	Bob Andrew	Lucien Tessier
10/11/09	FRF	Christophe Blanchi	Bob Gardner	
10/12/09	FDK	Mehrdad Bayat	Dee Torgerson	Hope Howard
10/12/09	FRF	Chris Williams	Buddy Denham	
10/17/09	FDK	Bob Bigler	Lance Nuckolls	Rex Bullinger
10/17/09	FRF	Gary Cassell	Don Robb	
10/18/09	FDK	Gary Baker	Mark Mercer	Earl Hill
10/18/09	FRF	Stefan Schroth	Max Ullmann	
10/24/09	FDK	Andreas Schliessler	Dan Morris	Mel Donahoo
10/24/09	FRF	Jeff Rose	Hans Jorgensen	
10/25/09	FDK	Dick Mott	Olin Kinney	Janice Farr
10/25/09	FRF	Laura Hession	Bill Savory	
10/31/09	FDK	Dan Meyer	Glenn Collins	Bob Filipchuk
10/31/09	FRF	Erik Nelson	Rich Horigan	
11/1/09	FDK	Eric Schuyler	Ed Breau	Zach Bowen
11/1/09	FRF	Chris OCallaghan	David Pixton	
11/7/09	FDK	Mike Vance	Lance Nuckolls	Hope Howard
11/7/09	FRF	Guy Pfeffermann	Bob Jackson	

<i>Date</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Operations Director (OD)</i>	<i>Tow Pilot</i>	<i>Assistant Ops Director (AOD)</i>
11/8/09	FDK	Rob Myhre	Bob Andrew	Rich Matheus
11/8/09	FRF	Baude Litt	Peter Welles	
11/14/09	FDK	Holland Ford	Dan Morris	Rex Bullinger
11/14/09	FRF	Kolie Lombard	Mike Smith	
11/15/09	FDK	Ben Mwendwa	Dee Torgerson	Alex Rossulek
11/15/09	FRF	Manfred Beutgen	Jim Chick	
11/21/09	FDK	Bill Whelan	Glenn Collins	Todd Rosenfeld
11/21/09	FRF	Dave Weaver	Mike Grinder	
11/22/09	FDK	Ricardo Cibotti	Olin Kinney	Dowdy Jackson
11/22/09	FRF	Kai Rasmussen	Rich Horigan	

**M-ASA Duty Notes:** Members assigned to operations duty must be on site in enough time to start operations by 10:00 a.m. and stay at the field until operations are concluded. Each person listed on the duty roster is responsible for that day's assignment. In the case of "no-shows," the person acting as OD should indicate this fact on the flight sheet. "No-shows" will be fined \$100. Every effort will be made to accommodate the new member's stated duty preference whenever possible. M-ASA Scheduler: Ray Watson 410-484-0333.

## For Sale

***FAIRFIELD PRIME LOT FOR SALE.*** Plot of land on north side of and adjacent to Rich Horigan's hanger. 1.5 acres plus. Easy site development for aircraft or glider hangers. Direct access to clubhouse and runway. \$18,000 firm. Available January 2010. Contact George Green at [gdagreen@yahoo.com](mailto:gdagreen@yahoo.com)

***USED PARACHUTE FOR SALE:*** Strong Model Mid Lite BK \$500 See it at FDK Clubhouse Jeff Rose 301-335-0533

## WHO TO CALL

Godfathers:	
Grob 103 (FDK)	Victor Filipchuk
Grob 103 (FFD)	Chris Williams
Grob 103 Trailer	Vacant
Ka-7	Andreas Schliessler
Ka-8	Danny Brotto
Pilatus B-4	Jeff Rose
Pilatus trailer	Andreas Schliessler
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)	Bob Gardner
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:	Vacant
Tug Maintenance Officer:	Bob Gardner
Field Safety Officer:	Rick Fuller (FFD) Paul Rehm (FDK)
Fairfield Facility Manager:	Val Brain
Frederick Facility Manager:	Mehrdad Bayat
Mentor Program Lead:	Wayne Elseth
Membership Chairman:	John Wallin
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 Rick Fuller Michael Higgins Daniel Morris Jean Posbic
Officers:	President - Michael Higgins Vice President - Daniel Morris Secretary - Manfred Beutgen Treasurer - Michael Hearn

## Club Introductory Meetings

### By Wayne Elseth

We are continuing our series of M-ASA Club Introductory Meetings for 2009. The intent for these meetings is to quickly bring 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 airports (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 meetings 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 (240) 205-4566. If you can't make it to one of these scheduled weekend meetings, I'm always happy to get you going with a personal briefing if you contact me to make arrangements. The information being presented is important and we want everyone to attend one of these briefings prior to flying.

In 2009 I anticipate needing help presenting a number of the monthly briefings. It's a great way to meet new club members and is fun! If you a current member and are interested in being a presenter on any of the dates listed above please contact Wayne Elseth.

September 12	FDK
October 10	FFD
November - February	happily provided upon request.