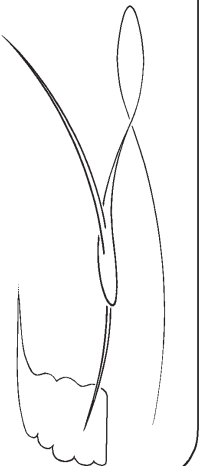


# AScent

the journal of the Alberta Soaring Council



## Notes from John

**John Mulder**, SAC Alberta Zone Director

<johnmulder@shaw.ca>

THE FLYING SEASON tends to be quiet for the SAC Board of Directors, and any required discussions take place by e-mail. The next face-to-face SAC Board of Directors meeting is 23-25 November in Ottawa.

The opportunity to present Walter Mueller with a plaque from SAC recognizing his contribution to soaring in Canada was the highlight in 2012 for me as a Zone Director. I can only hope that I can still be flying when I reach Walter's level of 'experience'. His many personal bests in recent flying years is magnificent indeed! Thanks from all of us for showing your enthusiasm, sharing your experience, and supporting our developing safety culture with your "I learned about flying from that" stories.

I flew with a Flarm this season, along with all the gliders at CAGC, and also with most pilots at the Region 8 contest in Ephrata, Washington. I had several first hand experiences of spotting traffic after being warned of their presence by the Flarm. In several instances, while looking for a glider indicated on the Flarm, I also spotted another aircraft that was not Flarm equipped, proving to me that Flarm works for traffic not equipped also (but not nearly as well) because it caused me to look outside more effectively than before. It has helped reduce the complacency in my traffic scan by making me look harder for the indicated traffic and also seeing some visually. One example of traffic avoidance occurred when a glider on a quartering intercept from my right near cloudbase in a mostly overcast sky was almost impossible to see over my shoulder. With Flarm, we spotted each other and were able to avoid; without it, we would have passed much closer!

I have been responsible for trying to keep the information on the SAC website accurate while making corrections to the information as it changes, but I am no website guru. The Board continues to struggle with how to manage it. Both the content and functionality need some effort, and possibly an update to the platform it is currently running on, *Joomla*. If you have some website experience as a manager, or even selecting a website development and maintenance supplier, I would be interested in hearing from you.

The website was designed so clubs could post their own stories, news and announcements there to keep the site interesting and current, but our clubs aren't using it much. Each club has a representative with web access, so please supply some stories, pictures, and announcements to keep it fresh.

The SAC AGM is scheduled to come to Calgary in March and I'm in the process of setting a date and attempting to find a venue close to the International Airport. It would also be a

good time to hold our annual ASC Safety Seminar in conjunction with the SAC AGM thereby saving a date and ensuring a wide attendance. The SAC AGM has been scheduled for an hour accompanied by lunch and awards presentations. This will leave the rest of the day for our seminar. If you have topics you would like to present, or a topic you would like someone else to present, please let me know!

I will have served on the SAC Board for seven years this spring, and Carol and I are very busy now with our children. It is time to start recruiting for my replacement. I've had the opportunity to meet pilots from across Canada and the US, providing some rewarding and interesting experiences and the start of some new friendships. The work can be busy but mostly it is during the off-season. I would like to introduce my successor to the Board at the March meeting in Calgary, and invite them to join me at the November meeting in 2013 to hand over the torch. If you are interested or would like more info about this wonderful opportunity, let me know. □

## Notes from Phil

**Phil Stade**, ASC Executive Director

<asc@stade.ca>

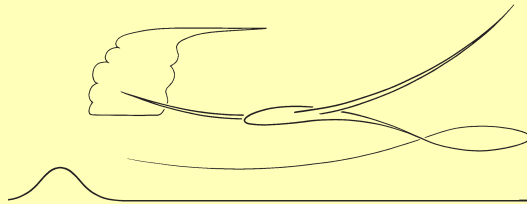
OUR FEBRUARY ASC PLANNING MEETING laid out plans for a very busy season at our clubs. All of us wondered how the busyness would affect our clubs, instructors and students. The verdict is in and it appears very positive results can be cited. Club membership is up. More women are taking up soaring and the stage is set for more activities in 2013 that will further attract them. New aircraft are now operational. Air Cadet pilots are joining our civilian clubs. Summer Cowley attendance was up nearly 50%. Elementary school children are getting introduced to our sport. The power pilot community is beginning to see soaring as a desirable addition to their skills. We have more instructors in our clubs as a result of the SAC instructor course. Aerobatics is beginning to be looked at less skeptically and Alberta has one more aerobatic instructor.

For many years declining club membership and the need for more participation in soaring have been issues raised at all levels of the sport. It appears to me that in 2012 we participated in activities that will grow the sport of soaring over the years to come. The secret to starting in this direction has been hard work on the part of our club executives, hard work by our instructors and hard work and patience on the part of our club members and particularly our students. While hard work has been in evidence at our clubs for many years it has now been combined with innovative ways of doing things.

The *Chics Take Flight* event held in July was a case study in innovation and hard work. A number of women at ESC, CAGC, and Cu Nim joined forces to organize a special →7

# ASCent

the 2012 season



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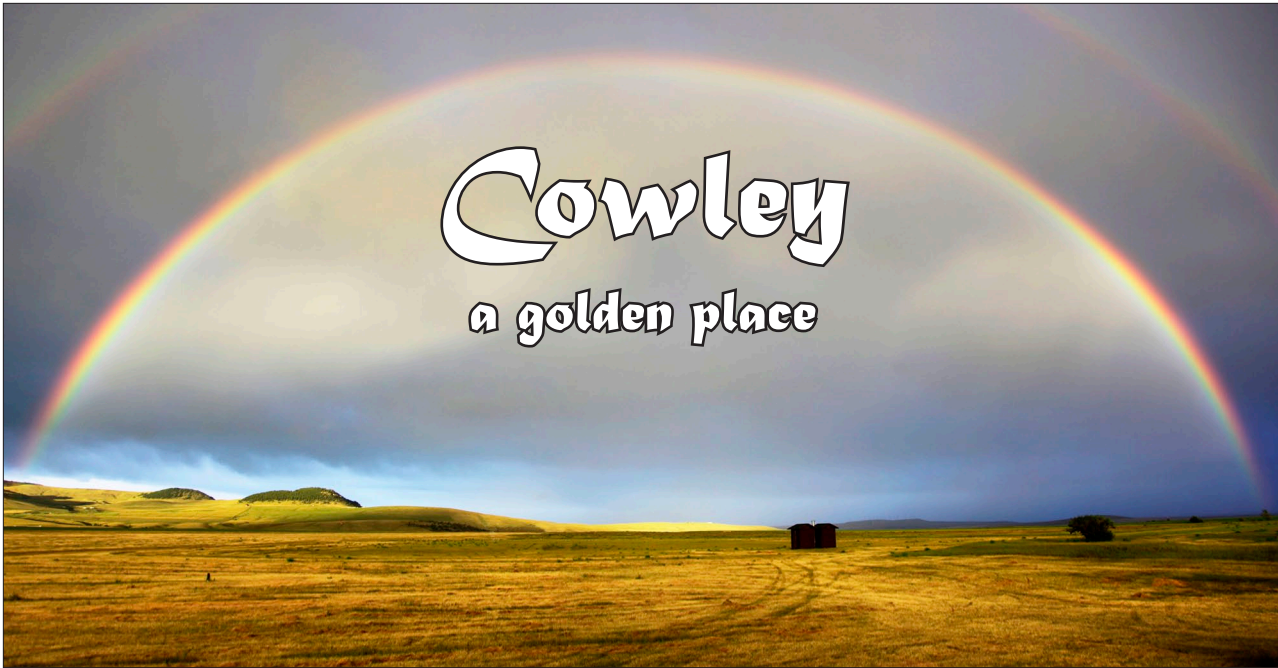
#### Cover

The great soaring day on 1 August of the Cowley Summer camp. Pat Pelletier from the Winnipeg Gliding Club flies his DG-300.



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### Eugene Zolenko, Cu Nim

**S**INCE THIS WAS MY FIRST CAMP at Cowley, I went with controlled expectations, prepared for a pleasant week off work, camping and having a few flights and maybe getting a handle on my take-offs. So we arrived, unpacked, and rigged the gliders. Allan Wood took me up. Naturally, with my very first flight in the area we got into the wave up to 10,600 feet, higher than I've ever been before. Allan told me I was getting spoiled and that my other flights won't all be that good. Well, it's comforting to know that instructors can be wrong too! (Hmm, actually not very comforting at all if you think about it.)

Student flights start fairly early each day. Officially that is so they can get a few flights in before everybody else wants to launch – the reality is much more sinister – students are used to test the air! Nobody cares if a student gets shot down!

When a student gets lucky, the takeoff line grows with alarming speed as all pilots race each other to the flightline. Once I went up with John Gruber in the middle off all that and spent the whole flight tracking gliders. Between John and me, we saw six to eight gliders in the immediate area zipping back and forth between thermals. That felt like a quiet rural road turning into a busy multi-lane highway in rush hour before I even got a driving licence!

All those gliders started dropping like a flock of birds hit by a military radar beam once the conditions changed. Retrieving the gliders on the runway is fun, at least partly, but I wish we didn't have to tow the gliders downwind so much. Driving in a

cloud of your own exhaust that perfectly matches your speed is a high price for the convenience of launching into the wind.

One time that I was really glad that the glider has dual controls (well, besides every landing I've ever done) was when Phil Stade and I set off in a search of an evening wave. The first time I realized something was unusual was when the 'spoilers-open' warning alarm in DG-1000 went off and I saw the tow plane dropping sharply down. "You have control", I said with relief and started to tighten the straps.

The tow pilot bravely pulled us to the face of the ridge near Centre Peak while Phil stubbornly refused to be shaken off (and shake it did!). Eventually we released and I realized that this is what a cat in a laundromat would go through. In the course of that flight I heard all the sounds the DG can make. Vario up, vario down, vario swapping one direction then another, spoilers with gear up, Phil making roller coaster sounds every time we dropped, and elevator music the Germans include to sooth nerves of the pilots in extreme conditions. I think I even heard the vario needle hitting the stops. It was an entertaining flight.

The practical demonstration of using spoilers on tow impressed me to the point where I started pulling spoilers instead of release at the first sign of slightly turbulent conditions. Simultaneously I also realized that it is probably a good idea to be checking if the rope is away before turning away from the towplane. This realization was driven home by Kerry Stevenson who had to pull the actual release before the rope broke, and he wasn't happy with me in the least.

Normally evening flights are quite serene, one can float for a while in still air enjoying the view and waiting for the sun to drop behind the ridge (well, a glider usually drops faster than the sun). Once in a while what is supposed to be calm air turns into the *Valley of Negative 10 Knots*. On one such day I went up with Al Hoar and, after scratching fruitlessly in what looked like a memory of an after-image of tiny wave-like activity, barely made it back high enough to turn right on final. Even a DG-1000 with wing extensions has its limits.

Student flights are usually limited to an hour, but sometimes that's enough to go places. I've been over Pincher Creek and Frank Slide a couple of times, and on the last day of the camp Phil decided to take me cross-country. We reached 11,000 feet fairly fast, then crossed the valley, reaching the ridge over Centre Peak, occasionally stopping to top up. Over the peak we circled with eagles and reached 12,500 at which point the next valley westward didn't look that bad even to me, even with its complete lack of landable terrain and overabundance of evergreens.

The next stop on the flight was Crowsnest Mountain. It pokes out in the middle of the valley like a rotten tooth. This is not a very pleasant image to invoke, so no wonder the locals had used some artistic license and didn't call it that. The view was quite impressive, but the radio failed to malfunction while Cowley Ground was helpfully hinting that we shouldn't get lost on the way back to the field, so we plotted the way home. It went directly around Crowsnest Mountain on a circle suitable for an Airbus carrying particularly airsick passengers (these gliders are quite hard to turn sometimes). Having finished the fly-by, we set up a final glide at 100 knots from 12,500 feet directly to the field. People on the ground were suspicious, but I still maintain that an extra twenty minutes is nothing in a rush hour!

My one complaint about the area is that all the wind turbines are often oriented in different directions and rotating with fixed speeds instead of always turning into the wind and thus serving as useful wind indicators. Maybe ASC can do something about that next year. □

Duo on take-off towards many other winged objects.



Peter Croner

### Shulamit Kuttner, Cu Nim

I HAD VISITED COWLEY twice before during the Summer camps in 2009 and 2010. I did not find that elusive wave during those summers, although I did enjoy some spectacular thermal flights, which in themselves were beyond anything I could have dreamed of previously.

On my third visit this year, I had already enjoyed an early afternoon flight with Al Hoar in the new DG-1000. We had danced in a thermal to about 11,000 feet and had taken a peek at the Crowsnest Pass, returning to the field after one hour and forty minutes. So having had my fill, I wasn't expecting much out of a further flight for the day and I was already content with my lot. I regarded this second flight as a nice little

bonus. Gliders were coming down, it was late in the day, and I figured I might go up for a quick instructional flight, and I didn't even bother taking my camera.

It's funny how selective memory can be, but I remember this flight in snapshots. Certain parts, the way things looked and felt, I remember very distinctly and other parts are more of a blur. I remember that we first explored the Porcupine Hills, and that we'd had some unexpected luck with some tricky thermals and we fought our way up. I was focused on keeping my flight and turns coordinated so, to tell the truth, what I mostly remember is being frustrated with myself.

We then turned towards the mountains and the north end of the Livingstone Range as we had a little bit of height to play

with by then. I saw the wisps of what looked like lenticular clouds forming and becoming more distinct and was wondering if we might get lucky...

When we first turned into the wave, it was like we'd stepped into heaven's corridor. I had not expected the air to feel so smooth – like sliding along an invisible silk ribbon in the sky. What came to mind were the words from the poem, *High Flight*, "Hov'ring there, I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung my eager craft through footless halls of air". The sunlight had an ethereal quality, streaming down from gaps

between clouds and spilling onto the peaks below. The mountains looked misty with edges softened, each layer in the distance looking hazier, like a watercolour painting; so different from the crisp lines from earlier that day.

I remember too, a final gentle thermal, like a parting gift. Part of me was tired, another part wanted to stay aloft forever. Everything seemed golden then, and soft, in the last low light of the day. It seemed a fitting ending to a great flight – a last slow waltz with the lift fairies before reluctantly turning back to the field. □



David McIntyre

### Brendan Mogan, Cu Nim

**S**UMMER COWLEY 2012 was looking like another year where work and family commitments would keep me away from the wave again. I've had some good flights in nice thermals in the valley and over the Porcupine Hills during previous camps in 2010 and 2011. I had never, however, connected to the fabled lift that attracts glider pilots from all over to this airfield in the middle of nowhere.

A quick look at the logbook reminds me it was Friday, 3 August, the only day I could participate. After a long and early drive from Calgary the day started out a downer. The sky was

overcast at 12,000 feet, slightly broken well to the north and fairly still air with some sinister clouds looming above the ridge line of the Livingstones. My choice to make was: drive home to face a mountain of issues waiting for me at work or, stick it out for a scratchy flight in weak and choppy thermals if they chose to materialize. The roster showed six pilots waiting for a seat in the K-21. Sigh!

There were about ten of us poking about trying to decide how committed we were to this day of flying. Here comes Phil Stade enthusiastically pointing out to everyone the shred of sunshine just north of Centre Peak along with some changes in the cloud formations. "That could be wave," says Phil, "any-

one taking the DG?" Everyone has a quick look at the evidence, and gives a few pleasant head nods and one or two "you might be right". The sceptics won, so no takers for GNIM.

I had never flown in the DG-1000 (new to Cu Nim in 2012) so when Phil turned to me as a possible volunteer I figured I would burn off a ticket and get some stick time in a new glider. I had only just licensed as a glider pilot a few days earlier so time with an instructor like Phil is always a good thing. I chime in, "If it is going to be a sled ride kind of day, it might as well be a sled ride in the new hot rod". "Great!" says Phil. "I'll add a ticket and we can tow to 4000 right over to that bit of blue by the mountains". My rubber arm being what it is, we were off in the DG into a westerly wind that appeared to be picking up a bit.

The tow was rough at times but not overly so. As we approached Centre Peak at 7500 feet I was not holding out much hope for this so-called wave. Clouds were clearly showing a gap just ahead and were organized more vertically than was visible from the ground. I was thinking about calling and asking PCK to turn back eastward to set up for the release. The thought was interrupted by big vertical movements followed by an excited vario, a "let's release here!" and a "turn into it ... no, steeper!". After a few other instructions I seemed to get us into the strongest part of the lift. I don't recall what we were averaging but after only a handful of turbulent turns we were at 9500. It was about then that I finally realized we were climbing between columns of cloud in wave.

Somewhere around 10,000 feet in much smoother lift, I remembered my phone was clipped to the chute. Handing over control to Phil allowed me to get several photos and video clips of this incredible scene. By 11,000 the lift was still there but had tapered off. Phil had us weaving through the cloud

couloirs just east of the ridge then, rounding the north side of a brilliant white cloud formation, we flew westward along its moving tendrils until we were a mile west of the peaks. Frank Slide was below off our left wingtip and the Livingstone ridge line came back into view as we turn north then east again.

Wow, what a flight! Sadly it was all fairly short-lived. In moments the lift vanished along with most of the cloud formations. We still managed to do a nice glide southward along the east face of the range. I had a good look at the summit cairn on Centre Peak and I worked a couple of thermals off the rocks of the higher foothills before heading back to Cowley.



Brendan Mogan

The wave was not at all what I had visualized, but comments about its unusualness from Phil meant the details were less important than the overall experience. What an initiation to higher altitude soaring. I also learned a lesson on the merits of just going flying when given the chance. Let's admit it – what we do for fun as glider pilots is pretty darn cool. □

### Executive Director notes

from p2

day of aviation activity for women. They started planning early and often, advertised effectively, corralled the help of others and put in many hours on the road to ensure interested groups were aware of the project and its goals. As a result about 28 women took introductory flights and we continue to have those women and their friends looking for more information and taking up soaring instruction. Women joining up today now have the enthusiastic example of other women at our clubs to follow. Thanks to all that contributed to the event.

The Edmonton Soaring Club has for the second year held a week of advanced instruction for young soaring pilots and particularly those coming out of the Air Cadet programs. The whole club has had to put in a lot of work and demonstrate

patience with the outcomes and each other to make these courses the success they have been. The results of their efforts have been seen in all Alberta clubs. Air Cadet graduates have been looking for information and joining for instruction in far greater numbers.

A downside of all this activity was that there was less time for some existing programs in 2012. The ASC winch project in particular was hampered when the upgrades expected during the winter of 2011/12 did not occur and then far fewer winch launch flights and courses were held as a result of instructor loads and club resources being tapped out. The good news is that the upgrades will be done this winter and the winch conversion course is being revamped to speed up the process of training. The 2013 season should see many of our pilots and instructors flying the winch. □

# Impressions of Ephrata

John Mulder, CAGC



John Mulder

**A**FTER AN ELEVEN HOUR DRIVE from Airdrie to Ephrata in pouring rain, I expected to find Ephrata wet. Fortunately, the worst of the precip must have missed the area as the ground looked to be mostly dry at the airport. As I drove down the airport road I saw lines of gliders and trailers tied down on this enormous ramp. I dropped my trailer in front of the clubhouse and unloaded my camper beside Dan Cook's that was identified by the Kelowna, BC decal on the back. Later that evening Dan arrived to explain that that is where the campers are manufactured.

I spent a few minutes introducing myself to a few people in the clubhouse and almost immediately met Dennis Vreeken from Vancouver. I joined the group on the deck and regained some acquaintances and made some new. I was very impressed by the clubhouse which was large, with several bathroom facilities, two large fridges in the fully-equipped kitchen, and several comfy couches occupied by pilots intently working on their laptops and iPads. I had stopped in nearby Moses Lake to pick up groceries and dinner since I thought a smaller town like Ephrata might have limited shopping options. I later found out that Ephrata has everything a person needs, including a big Walmart.

I had a good night's sleep with the furnace running on the first night due to the cool temperatures caused by the day's cloud cover. I awoke early the next morning to check out the additional bathroom and shower facilities within the container next to the clubhouse. With seven bathrooms available, six

with showers, there was no waiting to get in at 6 am. The time zone change worked in my favour as 6 am felt like 7 am for me.

I rigged on the concrete in front of the clubhouse using my one-man rigger which worked well on the even surface. The first practice day provided some reasonable thermals to 8000 feet and I stayed within 25 km of the airport to become familiar with the local area. The plateau to the west gives a feeling of being low on release until you cross the river and back over the city to realize you are still at 1500 'above airport level'. I was told before launch there is always a thermal available over the Walmart parking lot less than a kilometre south of the field, so I tested that out. I also checked the roads to know how to get there for additional supplies when needed.

There is a parallel runway to the ramp area where the glider operations take place, and another cross runway for landing if the strong west wind blows. Dan and I found tiedowns south of the terminal, so landing and rolling to the tiedowns was easy at the end of the day. Because everything is pavement, throwing the tail dolly on allows you to move the aircraft easily on your own to the tiedowns and to the grid. A wing wheel helps, so I would borrow Dan's to grid and then to move to the tiedowns at the end of the day. After several walks from the tiedowns in the morning to grid at the end of the runway, then back to the tiedowns with the wheel so Dan could grid, and back to the end of the runway again, I decided that having my own wing wheel will be mandatory next year. I helped a gentleman, "65", who was next to me on the tiedowns with





John Mulder

his PDA, and when he realized I needed a wing wheel, he mentioned he had a spare and would send it to me when I got home. If that doesn't leave a good impression of the folks flying at Ephrata, I don't know what will.

The terrain around Ephrata is rugged and landouts near the airport are not advised. The organizers provided plenty of information prior to my departure from home and after reviewing their flying orders and airport information, I was comfortable and confident on the first flight there, which can often be a challenge at a new site.

According to the locals, the flying conditions were considered weak; I only found a handful of 8 knotters and 4-6 was the norm. I always need a low save to keep me humble so I had to try that too – a 30 minute grind in a half knot thermal at a 1000 agl on a contest day certainly helps with that. There are several airports in the area so unless you are really low, there is something within final glide. The organizers and local pilots provided information on the best landout airports, and airports that look good from the air but are not. There are a few airports used by crop sprayers that look great until you realize they are 25 feet wide, and rough and undulating.

The first day of the contest, a line of showers cut off Ephrata from the task area to the north and a landout was necessary at Coulee City to the north. While entering the circuit I radioed the towplane that was passing overhead with Dan Cook on an aeroretrieve to request one for another Genesis. With-

in 20 minutes the first towplane arrived for "65", followed closely behind by another for me. Two folks from the company based there assisted me and "65" with the push back and launch.

One of the early days was forecast to be blue! I hate blue, particularly at an unfamiliar site. Once airborne though, the markers were very evident – dust devils thousands of feet high and often lined up in streets so it was easier than flying with clouds. Blue ain't so bad here! Generally the lift was consistent and predictable, but the locals continued to tell me how poor the conditions were, most likely due to the contest being a few weeks earlier to coordinate with all the other contests and the world gliding contest scheduled for Uvalde, Texas.

While on the grid waiting for launch, someone yelled "dust devil!" as one formed just to the south and west of the grid. As it came over the hangar line it began picking up debris and loose objects, including an empty five gallon plastic pail. Fortunately it moved in front of the grid and then moved down the runway parallel to us while dropping debris along the way. Had it passed over the grid, I expect some significant damage may have been the result.

The scenery is spectacular with plateaus, mountains to the west and north, two large coulees with the dam, and farm land to the south and east. Moses Lake International airport, located to the east of Ephrata, is used by Boeing for some flight testing and I watched a 787 completing low level maneuvers each day we were there. I can only think they were practising their air demo display for Farnborough, something Boeing has not done in many years. I also saw a "green" (no company paint yet) 747-800 in the area. The US military has some C-17 aircraft based there to support paratroopers and they often flew low level missions in the area. I only saw one while on course and he sure was "low level"!

The pilot meetings were held each morning at 10 am and were very well managed, providing an opportunity to listen to the winners describe their flight from the previous day, have a safety discussion and a review of line and grid operations. The weather briefings were very accurate and thorough and the tasks planned were appropriate for the conditions expected. We only changed task on the grid once to shorten the time due to the late developing conditions.

There were a few planned dinners on the deck, and nights that weren't organized still provided an opportunity to visit with fellow pilot and crews while cooking on the communal BBQ.

Ephrata exceeded my expectations in every regard. Facilities, organization, task planning, and the friendly and supportive pilots made Ephrata a place I plan to return to. □

# FL280

Tegen Jones, Cu Nim

**i**S IT POSSIBLE to reach FL280 in a glider? Yes, it is! On 1 October, I had my first Cowley wave flight. During that flight, Arel Welgan and I reached 28,000 feet in the ESC Puchacz.

I am a Flight Sergeant in the 952 WestJet Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron. I am also a relatively new pilot. I earned my glider pilot licence this summer at the Air Cadet Regional Gliding School in Gimli, Manitoba. During my training, I flew the 2-33. Following that, I attended the Canadian Junior Soaring Camp hosted by the Edmonton Soaring Club where I flew the L-23 Super Blanik, the Puchacz, and the L-33 Solo. Now I am a Cu Nim youth member and I'm flying the ASK-21.

That first morning at Cowley was colder than I had expected. It was cold enough that my mother sat in the van in a sleeping bag. A few gliders went up and came back down just as quickly – the conditions were not cooperating. However, leaving a glider on the ground after a disappointing flight wasn't good; Arel wanted to fly again. There was a discussion as to who would go up with him and I remember everyone looking at me. I was not going to turn down that opportunity – I was looking forward to my first flight at Cowley.

Because the morning was so cold, I was bundled up well. But my clothing seemed nothing in comparison to Arel's parka and fur-lined hat. We hopped in the Puchacz, did our checks and then we were off.

Despite the earlier frustrations of that morning, we managed to hit wave! This was something I had learned about, but never experienced. Arel showed me how to search out these areas of lift, and how to travel along them parallel to the mountains. I enjoyed being able to gain a large amount of altitude without having to thermal. Arel could always find the best areas of lift, but whenever I took control the lift never seemed quite so strong. But we continued to gain height, and eventually had enough to push forward through the ten knot sink, continue towards the mountains and the primary wave. We made sure that we were strapped in tightly prior to the bumpy ride through the rotor clouds, which I really enjoyed. Once we reached the primary wave, we began to gain altitude again.

I had never been close to going above 10,000 feet, so had not needed to use oxygen before. Using the mask was a brand new experience for me. It was exciting! It was strange to hear the puff of oxygen which is released every time you take a breath. When my friends ask what it is like to wear an oxygen mask, I tell them that it makes you feel like a fighter jet pilot.



The view of the mountains was spectacular, and I took quite a few pictures. Unfortunately our flight recorder failed at 12,500 so we took photos of the altimeter as we continued to ascend. At 23,500 feet, Arel told me that we were as high as he had ever been. And we kept rising! When we hit 28,000, the normal height limit set for the Livingstone Block, we took another picture of the altimeter as our “proof” and offered each other congratulations!

Because we were still in wave, we could have kept flying at 28,000 feet for a long time. But pretty quickly you notice the temperature that you have been ignoring and toes that are getting cold. During our ascent my excitement kept me warm but now I began to really feel the -40C outside. It was time to descend. There are very few times when a glider pilot is glad of -10 sink with full spoilers, but this was one of them.

As the morning had been so frustrating, we felt that we should come down so that others could use the wave we'd found. It was sunny aloft, but as we descended we found the skies were still as gloomy as when we left. The weather was too poor for any more tows, and it turned out that ours was the last flight of the day.

All of my friends were very impressed when I told them about our flight, although there is a Doubting Thomas or two who question whether it is possible to fly to FL280 in October. With the flight recorder failure, we have only our photographs as proof of our accomplishment. I will be reminding Santa, though, that my Christmas stocking is just the right size for holding a Colibri flight recorder.

I think it was my grandmother who said it best when she asked, with incredulity, “28,000 feet? Isn't that where jet planes fly?” Yes, Grandma, it is. And where I've flown too.

Many thanks to camp organizers for this amazing opportunity, to the clubs for bringing their gliders, and to Arel for so gladly having me tag along! □

# a good day turned difficult

Carol Mulder, CAGC

**H**AVING HAD MANY LONG FLIGHTS and several accomplishments, the Diamonds have eluded me every time I have tried. Achieving a Diamond flight shouldn't be easy, so I just keep on trying. My latest attempt was at Summer Cowley.

I had reviewed several 300 kilometre Diamond Goal flight options to fly out of Cowley and decided that a start-on-leg triangle of Twin Butte, Picture Butte, and Nanton would be easy to remember and met my goals of being able to fly over landable terrain for the most part.

One of my previous Diamond attempts was only missed due to an incorrect start, so my first goal was a good start. After being dropped near Lundbreck and climbing, I needed to return to the Cowley turnpoint to get a start on goal. I had been climbing with John Gruber in 4E, so when I returned a thousand feet below him, he may have wondered where I had gone.

After climbing to a good altitude, I began to head south. There were some good climbs on the southern leg, and it didn't take me very long to get to Twin Butte. That was my first decision point, as I had agreed to send an "OK" message on my SPOT if I was planning to continue on task. I thought the conditions looked good, so I sent the message and off I went towards Picture Butte.

I had never flown in the area south of Pincher Creek, but enjoyed flying over Waterton dam. My path was partly designed to skirt the area between the Indian reservations, as I recalled the story of Dave Springford landing out on the Blood Reserve during the 2005 Nationals and having to talk his way out of a jurisdiction dispute. I made decent time on the way to the Lethbridge area without having to worry much about altitude. I did fly south of the direct track as there was a bit of a blue hole on course. Over the reserve, I saw a giant teepee where there was a major event going on. I always wonder if anyone ever looks up without the sound of a motor to catch their attention.

I flew north to the west side of Lethbridge, and then made my way east towards Picture Butte. Interestingly, in the vicinity of Picture Butte, I climbed to cloud base which was only about 9000 feet, and everywhere else it was well over 11,000. At this point I heard Tony Burton in E2 flying near Vaughan Allen in 93, both somewhere west of Lethbridge also. Tony had been to Del Bonita and Lethbridge and said he was heading back to Cowley. A check of the time showed it was nearly 3 pm.

With a 15 knot wind out of the west, and scrappy looking conditions to the north towards Nanton, I decided that it

might be prudent to head for home as well so I decided to abandon my task. By the time I was back to the west side of Lethbridge, I estimated that I was about a half hour behind Tony. It took me a while to gain the height I wanted before heading home too. There were some pretty good looking clouds straight to the west, but there was also a bit of a cloudstreet heading northwest.

I made the choice to follow the cloudstreet which would take me further to the north than I wanted to be because it would put me behind the Porkies, but I didn't like the idea of heading into the wind with only a few clouds to find lift. The optimist in me also thought that if conditions were really good, I might still be able to make it to my third turnpoint at Nanton. The conditions were decent underneath the street and I didn't have to turn, but it was still somewhat slow heading mostly into wind. I soon heard John and Tony discussing landing options in Fort Macleod. At the time I had lots of height, and I considered diverting south to join them, as I was not too confident of what would happen once I made it to the east side of the Porkies.

I stayed with the street and ended up over Granum with lots of height, but not enough to go straight over the Porkies. The street ended there, and the sky did not look great, with only a few clouds in the vicinity. I decided to break off the task and work my way south down the east side of the Porkies, always having a landing field available if the conditions went flat. I managed to progress from cloud to cloud, and field to field at about 7000 to 9000 feet.

By now Tony had landed at Fort Macleod. John got there from the south and climbed but, after another attempt to head west in the dying lift and strong headwind, was forced to join him. I finally made it far enough south that I felt I could start to head straight west, and make an attempt back to Cowley. I was still under final glide, but only needed a few thousand more feet to make it.

I found enough lift on the way back that I arrived with a fairly comfortable margin. Wave was being reported in the area, and I made a short attempt to climb up higher to go hunt for it, but when I didn't find a strong climb, I decided to come in and land, thus ensuring there would be no landout.

I haven't flown a lot of long cross-country the past few years, so it felt good to have a successful flight (earning 290 OLC points) and get back, even though that Diamond Goal is still being elusive. It felt even better to know that I had made it home when even Tony had landed out! □

# the ESC cross-country season

**Bruce Friesen**

**D**REAMING OF THE SEASON TO COME, everything seems possible. Anticipating soaring through the heavens, aspiring to flights of fancy, flights of intrigue and challenge and accomplishment and satisfaction, one visualizes dreamy success as one falls asleep. Combinations of weather conditions and soaring territory and existing records are distilled into exciting opportunities plotted on maps and entered into loggers. Fulfillment awaits.



## Rain – wind

The Chipman soaring season got off to an encouraging start May 20, as several pilots shook off the winter cobwebs while covering significant distances: Trevor Finney settled back in to his ASW-20; Conrad Lamoureux flew a nice triangle in his Open Cirrus; and Guy Blood stretched his wings in his mighty Kestrel 19, astounding himself with the sort of average cross-country speeds he could achieve with his new machine. I was pleased to have seized the day, using the entire soarable period and flying a nice pointy triangle to maximize my Online Contest score – one “year-end keeper” of over 600 points, in the bag already!



## Rain

The entire first ESC flying week then passed by with no possibility of cross-country adventures. The following Saturday, May 26, however saw the same cast of characters in the air with more serious intent – and indeed accomplishment. Both Trevor and Guy flew declared 300km goal flights (with some turn area issues for Trevor but admirable none the less, embodying careful calculation and thought and, dare I say, dreaming?). I challenged one of my dream flights, a ridiculously long declared triangle – hey, if you don’t try... A start-on-leg triangle, with the first “half-leg” upwind to the northwest, which went well, was to be followed by a long second leg of over 250 km to a point south of Lloydminster. Just past Vermilion, approaching 200 km on that leg, I found myself wallowing around in weaker lift, the average speed decaying, and looking at a lot of alto-cu spreading out over the next turnpoint. I was pretty sure that I could reach it, but was also convinced it would be a slow slog using up too much of the day.

I decided to wimp out and default to an OLC points maximizing flight, a shorter but still large triangle, as against the risk of

no triangle at all, the risk of winding up flying just an out and return flight, or even worse for an OLC score, a landout. I turned my nose towards Camrose. In the event, I achieved a good westerly leg, heading for home just short of Camrose, and flew a triangle just a tad under 500 km. After my return to Chipman, I flew another 1.5 hours. Was that enough? Had the day been long enough to complete the original declaration? I will never know. Coulda? Shoulda?

Regardless, two good flying days for the club, and for me two good OLC scores, including that May 26 flight which held up as the top scoring flight of the year in Canada. We had certainly hoped for more, but it was a solid start, and the second flying week was coming up June 9. Eager anticipation!



## Rain

**Wind** – at least a windy day dries the airfield.

## Rain

Gary Hill, for one, had indeed indulged in off-season dreaming and planning, and had set his sights on collecting the Boomerang Trophy by flying to CAGC at Innisfail. By the Tuesday of the second flying week, June 12, he had cooled his heels as long as he could bear. “Gary, the forecast calls for early thunderstorm development.” No worries, says he, I will thread my way through, and off he goes.

Seventy kilometres on route, approaching Camrose, Gary was willing to admit to himself that gap in the line of thunderstorms was no place for a sane glider pilot, and flew back home. Glorious failure inspires others, apparently, because two days later, on the 14th, Trevor had joined Gary in his quest. “Gary and Trevor, the forecast calls for early arrival of a cold front and steady rain.” No worries, say they, we will be quick; and off they go.

Meanwhile, Conrad and I had both launched. Conrad made a valiant attempt at a 300 km goal flight, making his turnpoint but coming up just short of completing the return leg against a stiff headwind – did I mention the wind? – landing at Vegreville. I was fortunate enough to complete 440 km including a 380 km triangle, to chalk up my third “keeper” OLC score over 600 points.

Trevor and Gary had a marvelous adventure. Trevor, in the faster glider, flew off the edge of the world, or at least beyond his map. Luckily, Gary had come along behind, and, actually

knowing where he was going, was able to tell Trevor “come over here”, such that they both arrived at Innisfail airport just ahead of the advancing rain. With no prospect for much progress back towards Chipman, they both landed.

Excellent hospitality was extended by Central Alberta in the person of Val Deschamps, opening the hangar and helping tuck away the two gliders as the rain came down.

Who had the honour of towing Trevor’s trailer almost four hours through steady, heavy rain? And getting back to Chipman at three in the morning? Well, that would be me of course, after first soaring for almost seven hours. Not a problem, though, because the Chipman field was too wet to fly for the remainder of the flying week and through the weekend – did I mention rain? – so there was ample opportunity for all of us to catch up on our sleep. Never mind, I now had three solid flights under my belt towards the six necessary to secure a good OLC placing. The club scheduled another flying week early in July, and the season isn’t over by then is it? Is it?



### Rain

We knew what our weather problem was, also shared with most every club in western Canada. The jet stream was much “loopier” than normal, swinging down well south of us far into the summer, carrying with it a succession of low pressure areas. Rain from the depressions, or winds from the south and southwest – the kiss of death for soaring from Chipman – day after day. Guy was certainly still in there pitching – posting to the OLC on June 30, and July 2, 6, 7 and 9 ... he even made it back sometimes.

For example, July 6 found both Guy and me southeast of Vegreville, deciding around about the same time and place that it would be a good idea to head for home, with a security blanket overflight of the Vegreville airport just in case. We had a good climb over Vegreville, but could not quite achieve glide-slope home to Chipman against a strong headwind. Did I mention the wind? I left the thermal first and flew west as far as I dared without risking landout, well over half way, then decided to scoot back downwind to a paved runway. Not long later, Guy came winging his way west right under me. Just as I was muttering under my breath about 19m wings, and old wooden gliders and stuff, Guy advised he also was calling it a day with no final saving thermal to be found.

Barely had I cleared the runway before I had the pleasure of watching those long wings swooping down on final, just clearing the runway lights on either side. Quick as a wink, not one but two Pawnees were airborne from Chipman to rescue us. Thank you, Bob and John! So ended the cross-country component of my third block of time in Alberta. Fortunately for the club, training had progressed quite well that week, with some significant milestones achieved, but that would be another article.



### Rain

Around about that time, Henry Wyatt flew over the Chipman airfield in his little Skimmer, the two seat predecessor to the Lake amphibian, but there was far too much water on the field to land with the wheels down, and apparently not quite enough to land on the hull, so he flew back to Edmonton.

### Hot air, but up above

The weather story for the ESC Junior Camp, and the latter half of August, was the dome of warm air that settled over Chipman, persisting day after day. Although the surface temperature heated up nicely each, the air above was even warmer. The trigger temperatures were in the high 20s, but that achieved thermals only to release altitude. Finally, the last Sunday of the camp, August 26, we were treated to real thermals, with real cu. Cloudbase started around 3000 feet agl, which was enough to poke one’s nose away from the field.



I flew a fascinating flight in my new-to-me Discus, tiptoeing from one airport to the next, staying always within gliding distance of a runway – first reaching 20 km from the home field and requiring 2000 feet to return, the remainder of the 38 km to Tofield could be flown. I continued a further 20 km beyond Tofield. Hmm, not sure about Camrose, so turn for Vegreville, keeping Tofield in range, and cloudbase now about 4000 feet, giving a bit more breathing space. Vegreville achievable, then Two Hills, then St. Paul – a leg of 130 km, always near an airport. Turning west from St. Paul meant entering an airport-free area, but the conditions still seemed reliable. For about 90 km that proved true; however, from the look of the sky, things were almost certainly dying to the south towards Chipman, so timing a turn for home was a judgment call. As things turned out, the best I could find on the scratch for home was between one and two knots – care and persistence were necessary in working what nature provided.

It was a satisfying flight; an OLC triangle of over 300 kilometres exceeded my expectations for that late in the season and the Discus earned my confidence in weak conditions.

And that was how it ended – a late season flight beyond expectations but too late to influence my OLC standing. Having invested about forty days at Chipman, I had used to their best potential only three and a half of them.

For the club as a whole, a bunch of us had some good times. Those few good days once again demonstrated the quality of soaring available from Chipman, including that May 26 flight which held up as the top scoring flight of the year in Canada. The adverse weather pattern, however, limited our accomplishments for the year. Some dreams were realized; more were not. Now as we lie down of an evening, and close our eyes, and visualize rounding that next turnpoint, it is 2013 of which we dream. □

# Chics take flight

Shulamit Kuttner, Cu Nim

WHEN I THINK OF OUR *CHICS TAKE FLIGHT* EVENT, I imagine swimming swans – their beauty and grace above the surface makes their motion seem effortless. You don't see how hard their feet are paddling. That describes the impressive effort that it took to make *Chics Take Flight* a reality. The idea was conceived in the fall of 2011 by Cu Nim president, Pablo Wainstein. The vision was to hold an event that would promote soaring to women and increase the public profile of Alberta soaring clubs. Planning began in January.

The task of organizing the event was taken up by a handful of dedicated women pilots – *Chics* – from a variety of clubs and organizations across Alberta. The team was led by the determined Judy Soroka from Cu Nim. Committee members included Erin Doerffer from Cu Nim, Valerie Deschamps the Central Alberta Gliding Club president, Selena Boyle from the Edmonton Soaring Club, Ashley Gaudet from 187 Foothills Air Cadet Squadron, and Cherie Andrews, a former towpilot and glider pilot with Cu Nim.

The concept took shape as a one-day event on Saturday 21 July that would be hosted by Cu Nim. CAGC shut down their ops for the day and all members came down with the ASC towplane, a club glider, a retrieve vehicle, and seven campers (arriving the evening before to be greeted with a horrible storm that had the potential for tornadoes). There were also three ESC members who gave up their flying time. The event would feature prominent female aviators as guest speakers, a static display, mini-ground school sessions, and discounted intro flights. The SAC flight simulator would be available to give guests a feel for using stick and rudder before their flight. Lunch would be available. It was an ambitious undertaking.

Throughout the spring, a passionate promotion campaign was undertaken. The poster was designed with a smaller version for a postcard size. The posters and 1000 postcards were printed and distributed throughout central and southern Alberta. Erin, with the assistance of her brother, created the website <[www.chicstakeflight.ca](http://www.chicstakeflight.ca)>.

A couple 'Chics' dedicated their weekends to attend public aviation events across the province to get the word out. Valerie launched the efforts by promoting the event at the Red Deer Sportsman Show. Selena followed with a presentation at the annual COPA meeting. Judy and Valerie attended multiple fly-in breakfasts throughout central and southern Alberta as well as the *COPA for Kids*

event at Airdrie (page 17), and gave presentations at regular meetings of the several local flying clubs. Networking opportunities were established with the Women in Aviation International – Alberta Rocky Mountain High Chapter which previously ex-isted with the Women Soaring Pilots Association. Newspaper articles about the event were featured in the *Airdrie Echo*, *Innisfail Province*, *High River Times* and the *Western Wheel*, and Valerie was interviewed on-air by CBC Radio 1010.

Overseeing the actual event was coordinated by Erin – who would be 'Chief Chic' for the day. In the weeks leading up to 21 July there was a frenzy of activity taking place looking after last-minute details and ensuring that all the 'i's' were dotted and 't's' were crossed.

After all the planning, agonizing and scrutinizing, after the grass was cut, the hangar and clubhouse were cleaned, presentations developed and rehearsed, the makeshift ground school classroom and static displays set up, the glider simulator in place, lunch menu planned and prepared, tasks delegated and assigned – we all waited and held our breaths as the morning of 21 July dawned. As the sun rose over the Cu Nim airfield that day, it all came together...

How do you measure the success of an event like this? For me, it was about looking around me and seeing everyone being professional, engaged at their various jobs, talking to guests and spreading our enthusiasm for this sport that we love. Midway through the afternoon, I overheard Erin state



Gary Yan Overloop

She came just to look and ended up having a flight with Allan.

with satisfaction that the day seemed to be running itself. Gliders were launching, presentations were being given, and women, men, and children of all ages and walks of life were arriving to see what this soaring thing was about.

Its success was about the twenty-seven happy individuals who returned from the flightline with a look on their faces that they'd just done something amazing. Success was the enthusiastic response from the woman who had just come for the day to 'just look' then ended up going up for a flight. Success was in the words of a young lady who sat in the Jantar static display and exclaimed "WOW! This is so COOL!". Success was about a job well done by all those volunteers who supported the vision, then made the necessary effort to bring this event to life. They all deserve our thanks for raising the profile of this wonderful sport called soaring.

All this work demands a repeat – a similar Women's Flying Day is being planned for the summer of 2013. CAGC will be hosting it then. □

## Flyin' high

Gillian Duffy



I'VE SAID that I don't have a bucket list, but I can honestly state that I never, in a million years, thought I would find myself in a glider high above the earth. It wasn't even on my not-a-bucket-list! In the past I have been very fearful of flying. In fact, I relied on small prescription pills and liberal doses of gin in order to get off the ground. Anxiety and fear ruined travel days, leaving me an exhausted mess in the arrivals area. I have always hated that I hated flying and so have been working on it for the past while. And quite successfully, I might add.

Autopiloting home from work late one day, I perked up on hearing that the Cu Nim Gliding Club just south of the city was holding a *Chics Take Flight* day on Saturday. It would be a chance to mingle with flying types, learn a thing or two about aviation, and an opportunity to copilot a glider. Could I do it? Would I have the balls? Did I really want to? How could I not?

So I did what we all should do when we really want to do something but are afraid we won't – I publicly pronounced I was going to do it. I told my friends, slapped it up on my Facebook page, sent out tweets and generally made sure that if I didn't do it I would have to spend some time explaining why.

I headed out to the airfield bright and early on Saturday morning to ensure that, if there was to be a crowd, I would get a flight. I wasn't about to pump myself up for this and be let down due to bad timing and logistics! As one of the first to arrive at the clubhouse I quickly sign up for a flight, get weighed in (one of the first times in my life where it's possible I am underweight for an activity!), and head to the hangar for 'ground school'.

I'm a little bit nervous so I listen intently and take copious notes during the Airmanship, Meteorology, and Flight Theory classes as though the learning I'm doing is critical to the aircraft staying in the air. A quick visit to the flight simulator and I'm ready to go!

Shuttling out to the airstrip from the hangar I realize I'm not as nervous as I thought I'd be. I'm more excited than nervous; feeling daring, and brave, and oh-so-proud of myself. Although I do notice that the breeze is picking up and wonder how that will affect the flight. Soon I am greeted by some of the other women returning from their flights; their huge smiles are clear evidence that I am in for a great ride. Unanimously they tell me how fabulous it is up there, how they can't wait to do it again, and (most important to me) how competent and kind the pilots are.

Soon enough Allan comes over, introduces himself, and escorts me to the glider. Strapping a parachute on, I climb into the front pilot seat, my nerves climbing just a little bit also. He takes the time to describe all the instruments – altimeter, airspeed indicator, control stick, tow rope release, rudder pedals – but it all blurs together and sounds like the teacher in *Charlie Brown* to me. I'm not paying attention as I'm thinking about what I'm about to do and remembering back to all the fear I used to bring with me.

Jumping in behind me, Allan quickly secures the canopy, radios an okay to the towplane, and we're off! Within a few seconds



Gerald Ince gets a younger Chic ready for a ride in the back seat of the Duo-Discus.



Lyll George



Gary Van Overloop

Judy Soroka (left) and Erin Doerffer (right) from Cu Nim, and Val Deschamps from CAGC were the principle organizers of the event.

we are airborne, being pulled behind the still rolling towplane like a kite running behind a four year old. I watch as the small plane ahead also gains air and we start the dance up to 2000 feet; it dipping and swaying in the wind as it coaxes us up to the next level; we following along like a good dance partner, staying steady and waiting for our turn.

The radio crackles and Allan tells me he's going to release the tow rope. I realize I'm holding my breath as the rope flies free and the towplane banks sharply to the left. My breath is stuck inside me, released only in small squeaks as we bank just as sharply to the right at the same time.

And then ... nothing but the sound of the air rushing by the cockpit. I am transfixed by the feel of it under me. I watch as the wings flex their way through it. I can see forever: mountains, the city, hills, and nearby towns.

I relax into it, grab the control stick, and pay attention as Allan teaches me how to glide through the air. It's touchy, and responsive, and scary. When he asks if I want to take it on my own all my bravado falls to the earth and I tell him 'not this time'. I don't want to ruin the moment by being anxious. I want to enjoy every second and feel comfortable. We swoop and twirl a few more times before I can hear the last song being played and realize we must heed the call of gravity and return to the airstrip. And then I'm one of those women with a huge smile on my face encouraging others to give it a try.

In the end I was as impressed by the club members as I was by the flight. Over and over I witnessed



Gary Van Overloop

Darren Clarke took charge of the SAC gliding simulator in the hangar. It was an attractive draw for the kids.

members introduce themselves, get everyone all the information they wanted, and generally make sure everyone had a great time. This community-focussed, all volunteer club takes care of all the business of flying; tending the aircraft, mowing the airstrip, caring for the hangar, maintaining the clubhouse, barbecuing the hotdogs, and watching out for each other... all for the love of soaring.

Cu Nim Gliding Club didn't pay me to say all these fabulous things. In fact they didn't pay me at all, nor did they know I was going to write about them. They really were just that fabulous. If you're in the southern Alberta area, and are interested in gliding, I encourage you to check out their website – they do introductory flights all the time.

Thanks to all of you who made sure I had such a great day!





## Gliding is exciting and joyful!

Gerald Ince, Guy Peasley and I had offered our Duo Discus for some of the introductory flights to help the club accommodate the demand at *Chics Take Flight*.

The one flight that I really enjoyed was with a young lady by the name of Laurie, who had been waiting patiently for her first flight in a glider. She was with a gaggle of 11-year-old girls, already bubbling about the excitement of their own flights. We strapped her in and she could barely contain herself, "I can't believe it! I am actually going up in a glider!" Not just any glider, I thought to myself, and I emphasized to her it was a "Duo Discus" (you get to be a bit of a snob owning a share in one of these).

I demonstrated the controls, showed her the instruments and what they were for, and made sure the air sick bag was handy. I told her it would be a bit bumpy on take-off, and then it would get quieter and really quiet once we released from the towplane. She was very quiet on the tow and I asked her if she could see the airfield as we circled on our climb, and I pointed out some other landmarks in the area. She didn't seem too interested in that. After release we did some gentle turns looking for a thermal. I asked her if she wanted to take the controls for a bit, but she didn't seem interested.

After a moment she asked me, "Can I stick my hand out the window?" I had to think about that for a minute, it's not the usual request you get from a passenger, but I said sure, and

out goes her hand waving in the wind. "Wow", she says, "I actually got to put my hand out the window of an airplane!" I wondered to myself if she ever made that same request on a WestJet flight?

We weren't having too much luck over the north hill with finding lift, but off to the east I saw a hawk circling. I pointed this out to her and we made our way over to the hawk. There was gentle 1-2 knots of lift with our fellow avian and we started to circle the same direction. After a bit the hawk slid above the leading edge of our starboard wing and stayed there for about a minute as we circled. "Wow," she says again, "we are actually flying with a bird." The excitement and joy in her voice was so beautiful, it almost came out like a sigh. It is so hard to describe that feeling, it's something we all experience as pilots, the sights we see, the conditions we experience – that joy of flight.

We returned to the field and touched down; her girlfriends all ran out to greet her and find out about her flight and Laurie excitedly described to them the experiences she had. Watching them walk back talking about their flights really summed up the success of the day. While we measure ourselves as pilots as to how far we fly, how fast and how high, and are often disappointed when we don't reach our goals, it was wonderful to experience the innocence of that first flight where your biggest thrill was putting your arm outside the window of an airplane and flying with a bird on the leading edge of your wing. Those first times we never forget.

**Kerry Stevenson**



Tony Burton

COPA for Kids on 26 May at the Airdrie airport gave many youngsters rides in power planes. E2 was set up on the lawn near the clubhouse and it got a lot of attention from the Air Cadets. One that was strapped in the cockpit could hardly be pried out. After that he spent his time explaining to others how everything worked. Judy Soroka was also on hand advertising *Chics Take Flight*.

# our flying weekend

Walter Mueller, Grande Prairie

GPSS has, beside a grounded Blanik, a small membership and bank account, but big enthusiasm and the support of its friends from the Edmonton Soaring Club and ASC.

For the last few years a few of our members went to Chipman where ESC was a generous host. At a club meeting this spring we decided to have a flying weekend this summer at the Beaverlodge airport and then work started with the details. Dwayne Doll was the main organizer with the help of Lloyd Sherk and Lester Oilund plus all the others contributed what they could. The date was set for Friday, 1 June, to be concluded with a fly-in pancake breakfast on the Sunday.

On Thursday the ASC towplane arrived towing the Puchacz with pilot Neil Siemens, instructor Bob Hagen, and club president Brian Murray. With the towplane and the Puchacz securely tied down, the three pilots used a pickup, donated by a GPSS club member as shuttle vehicle, to get to the motel. Friday was a very active flying day; there were many intros and some training flights with Bob and Brian taking turns flying the Puchacz while Neil was the ever ready towpilot. At the end of the day it didn't take much convincing to get Walter Mueller up for a solo flight.

Saturday was again an active day when many people got the first time thrill of motorless flight and some, having either a private pilot or glider pilot licence from the Air Cadets, could take the controls of a high performance sailplane with Bob instructing. Arnie Mayer, a towpilot and glider pilot from the early 80s, squeezed himself into the front seat of the Puchacz for a flight of reminiscence. Alexander Miles, with a fresh new glider pilot licence from the Cadets, enjoyed a Puchacz flight, while his dad, Peter, took instructional flights with Bob and was otherwise helpful on the field. (Later in the summer Peter flew his Commanche to Chipman to get his first solo flight in a glider.)

That morning a Grumman Tiger arrived from Red Deer with John Mulder and Dale Brown with their boys. Around noon a meeting was called; Dwayne introduced the visitors from Red Deer and then John (the Alberta Zone Director) made a short speech and pulled a plaque from his pocket to present it to Walter in recognition of his contribution to soaring in Canada on behalf of the SAC Board of Directors.

The flying continued until the evening with some of Walter and Grace's girls taking turns as timekeeper. The day concluded with a potluck BBQ and socializing at the campground on the airfield – some camped there for the weekend although with very dry conditions, campfires were not allowed.

Sunday started with a clear blue sky and it was not very long before the first aircraft arrived for the fly-in breakfast, which we hosted together with the Peace Country Recreational Flyers (PCRF), which is affiliated with the RAA. Most of us from GPSS also belong to the PCRF. There were planes arriving from as far as Fort St. John and the usual bunch of recreational flyers from the Peace Country. The pancake and sausage breakfast was organized by Grace Wurst, who also cooked with the help of her husband Dennis, her sister Cloe with her husband Doug, and Walter's youngest daughter Tammie. Grace Mueller sold the tickets, so it looked like it was a family affair except for Tom Birch who donated the use of a big BBQ on a trailer and the tables were brought by Craig Ruether while Lloyd organized the space for this event. Lloyd directed the parking of the planes and over twenty arrived.

After breakfast Dwayne handed out some gifts to our ESC pilots and even the mayor of Beaverlodge, Leona Hanson, was present and gave a short speech. A radio reporter from Grande Prairie was also there to interview people.

Then our friends with their noisy flying machines started to depart again, and the ESC pilots wanted to get an early start for their return flight as a refueling stop at Whitecourt was needed. But first one more introductory flight was done when Cloe wanted the experience of a soaring flight and Bob gave her his specialty dive-bomber approach on final. As a final farewell to his own soaring life, Walter took Tammie up for a twenty-five minute flight, which was also his last flight as a pilot-in-command.

The flying weekend was a great success with fifty flights being logged and the club gained three new members while the sport of soaring got some broader public exposure. A very special "Thank You" to the ESC crew who came to help and to all the sponsors of this event. □



Walter is about to take Tammie up for her flight.



Marcel Keays

## Cu Nim

**A**FTER SOME INITIAL FLIGHTS early in one's training, you soon realize that soaring is a sport where perseverance and mental attitude is a big part of the way to success as a glider pilot. Surprisingly similar, club management requires the same skills and mental attitude that you need when scratching in a 2 knot thermal and you are low...sometimes very low.

Many Canadian clubs hit a low spot when the Blanik L-13s were grounded a couple of years ago. Fortunately, we had just purchased an ASK-21 so we had at least one flyable two-seater. From this low point, Cu Nim got to grow considerably and became a stronger club. The ASK-21 purchase was a success in every way you can measure it.

By early last winter we were scratching our heads to find a solution to our increasing need of a second two-seater. Another K-21, or shall we go for something else? After a lot of informed input from our members, the club decided to go for a DG-1000 and the funds were made available through a bank loan and by members lending money to the club.

But where do you find one when recently the USA had purchased several units and the waiting time is around two years? Suddenly a used DG-1000 appeared in the market in Germany. It looked really nice, the price was right and a couple of calls later we were sending the plane to the factory for a thorough inspection. It had the electric gear option installed at the factory before being shipped to us. The Unterwössen club was very helpful in the process and, with the help of a bunch of Cu Nimmers, we managed to have the plane flying early this year. It has been a huge success in both the 18 and 20 metre configurations, is a joy to fly, and has given new energy to the club.

The good start to the year with our new sailplane brought enthusiasm and three more big events. In general, female pilots flying at Cu Nim and in Alberta are increasing, so we had the idea of hosting the first women-in-gliding event in Alberta. I guess it was the first in Canada, but I'm not 100% sure. Judy Soroka took the lead and with the help of CAGC and other female pilots at Cu Nim, they created *Chics Take Flight*.

What a great event! We had dozens of people at the club, talks, simulator runs, and introductory flights with everything geared towards the ladies. It was very well organized and it served as a bonding event with CAGC and within female pilots in Alberta. Next year it will be hosted at CAGC in Red Deer, so get ready, it will surely be good.

The club has been growing and this is increasing the workload on instructors. As a result we asked Dan Cook to host a SAC instructor course at Cu Nim so more people could be rated in Alberta. The course ran very smoothly thanks to a well organized schedule by Dan and our CFI, Allan Wood. There was a considerable amount of home studying required prior to the course and that made a difference. Thanks Dan, it was great having you at Cu Nim.

Last but not least, the Calgary Flying Club and the Recreational Aircraft Association co-hosted their fly-in breakfast at Cu Nim for the second time. We doubled the number of aircraft that participated from last year, the food was delicious, and many power pilots had the chance to experience gliding. This event has been a bonding event with the power pilot community who are always welcome to swing by our club.

The snow is falling outside while I write this column and hangar packing will happen very shortly. The year has been a very good one for Cu Nim and I would like to thank everyone for their hard work. Now winter comes and gives us the chance to plan more fun activities and ways to promote soaring. There may be snow on the ground but we should not forget about flying – winter is the time to get ready to have fun in the spring. See you in the air.

president, **Pablo Wainstein**

## Central Alberta

**Flying** Over the season, and despite our late start and the weather, members flew on forty days at Innisfail, two days at Cu Nim, and attended both Cowley camps. The first of the season checkflights were completed while we aerotowed the 2-22 first to Red Deer in early April then back to Innisfail on

22 April. There's nothing like being on aerotow an extended period of time for your first flight of the year to show how rusty we can get over the winter. The club's first flying day wasn't until 29 April mostly because of the wet field. Our winch was hardly used this year, mostly because of limited resources. We had several days shut down by gusting winds, one that led to the overturning of the cadet glider at Netook.

The Bergfalke proved that it could still perform, regularly staying out for over an hour and a half while keeping up with demand on it for intro flights and student training. The 2-22 was also fully utilized for student training. The longest flight of the year was made by Tim Radder on 19 May when he took FOAK out for 3:44 hours. October 14 was our last flying day. But what a good day it was – a beautiful fall day, enthusiastic students, lots of ground crew support, eighteen flights. What more could we ask for.

We were asked by a member of the skydiving club to take him up in a glider so he could do a jump. After discussions, we removed the back door from the 2-22, he climbed in, and we were both given this unique opportunity. Our clubs fly alongside each other and have set up guidelines so both clubs remain safe. Situational awareness and communication are the keys to our successes, as they are to any glider operation.

**Membership** CAGC welcomed four new students this year: Scott Lipscomb, Jordan Mahrer, George Spencer and Norm Lyster who already has his power licence. One other new member, Dylaney Thompson, came to us from the cadet program and already had his glider pilot licence. Membership changes every year but the total stays around the same.

**Equipment** In the early spring the 2-22 was aerotowed to Red Deer where Jerry Mulder let us use his heated hangar to do some fabric repair. We used this opportunity to replace the canopy and complete some other minor maintenance. Work was done mostly on weekends where invaluable learning opportunities arose. Our winch needed transmission work and the golf cart needed some clutch work, both repairs were also done this spring. The Lark repairs continue and started out quite promising but eventually fell short. The Bergfalke will undergo some planned repair work this winter. The new tinted canopy arrived and has been sitting in the hangar since mid-summer awaiting installation. Thank you to everyone involved in the maintenance and repair of the fleet. We are very fortunate to have members with the knowledge and skill to tackle these repairs and to teach those of us who do not. New picnic tables were purchased and weekends saw members assembling them. Our friends' and families' kids were enthusiastic about being allowed to handle the paint brushes.

**Events** Club activities began on a cold weekend in March at the Red Deer Sportsman Show. The 1-26 was dug out of the snow banks and brought in for display and attendee interaction. Many people who had never seen a glider up close welcomed the opportunity to be seated inside for their

photos to be taken. The kids especially enjoyed the opportunity to be strapped in and say "ready for hookup". Thanks to our members who volunteered their time to make this the one of most successful community promotions to date.

Club promotions continued throughout the spring and early summer with tables set up at the Red Deer Fly-In Pancake Breakfast, then Sundre for their annual fly-in, then back at Innisfail a couple weeks later for ours. Valerie led these efforts, not only promoting soaring in central Alberta and western Canada, but by also getting the word out about the newly-planned women's flying day at Cu Nim, *Chics Take Flight*.

On 2 June, John and Dale flew up to Grande Prairie to support the CAGC fly-in weekend. The weather conditions on the flight back made for an interesting flight with their flight plans changed the closer they got to Red Deer. They didn't quite make it and had to detour to land at Innisfail. Meanwhile, the rest of the club was waiting for their return to join the planned barbeque that had been moved indoors. Despite the late afternoon weather, the evening turned out to be very nice. Good friends, good food; life is good.

The club decided to shut down our weekend flying for the *Chics Take Flight* event so we could support this special day and enable our members to contribute with the ground support. We flew PCK to Cu Nim prior to the event with the Bergfalke in tow. We also drove down the trailer loaded with the golf cart for additional ground support. We arranged for five camping spots and the last of our camping units arrived on Friday evening just before a severe gust front arrived and threatened to cancel the event. Our members had a wonderful time at Cu Nim and felt welcomed and a valuable part of the event. The 2013 *Chics Take Flight* will be hosted by CAGC and date has been set for 10 August.

By bringing the towplane and glider as far as Black Diamond, this also meant that we would have a glider nearby for use at the Cowley Summer Camp. Several of our newer members went down to enjoy the change of scenery. Night found us sitting under the sky identifying stars with a smart phone app and making jokes about all the 'spy' satellites flying overhead.

John and Carol Mulder got married in Red Deer on 24 August. Many of their CAGC friends attended, along with some from other clubs. Carol's attention to detail and John's eloquent speaking style were evident at the ceremony and luncheon that followed. They also held a barbeque at their home in Airdrie in the evening so their friends and co-workers there could be included.

We held a Potluck Barbeque on the September long weekend that included a couple of birthday celebrations. It is always enjoyable to see so many attend and join in the camaraderie.

2013 is going to be another busy year for us.

president, **Val Deschamps**

## Edmonton

**A**NOTHER BUSY YEAR stretching our resources. We ran three flying weeks; from May 19 to 27, from June 1 to 3, and from June 9 to 17. These are always welcomed though sometimes rainy. Dwayne Doll from Grande Prairie with his ASW-20 is a regular visitor. The benefits of the flying weeks show in the various badge and OLC flights described elsewhere in ASCent by Bruce Friesen.

The Grande Prairie club ran a promotional event June 1 to 3 at Beaverlodge. On their request, ESC sent Neil Siemens, Bob Hagen and Brian Murray with the Pawnee aerotowing the Puchacz for the three day event, bucking headwinds on the way there that sometimes nearly cut the tow speed in half. It was a long journey. Walter Mueller has written more in another article in this issue.

We are all grateful to Dan Cook for leading the SAC instructor course at Cu Nim from August 16-20. The training approach which has everyone prepared with the study programs before the course does leave more time for flying and avoids the late endings to the day; a great success. Jason Acker became a Class 3 instructor, Trevor Finney upgraded to a Class 2, and Gary Hill, who gave almost 200 flights in the year, upgraded to Class 1.

To add to Gary's accomplishments in the year, during the summer he flew from Chipman to Innisfail for the ASC club-to-club Boomerang trophy, with Trevor Finney in his ASW-20 close behind. At the end of July, Gary became a glider aerobatic instructor. He should be available to teach aerobatics from introductory unusual attitude courses to aerobatic sequence flying; a great addition to services available to the members from prairie clubs.

We ran our second annual Junior Camp from 22-31 August for pilots trained through the Air Cadet gliding program. Of the nine pilots, six were first time attendees and three were with us for the second time. The event is busy because the Junior Camp members are so keen to move on with an introduction to soaring. Almost all of them transitioned through the L-23 to the Puchacz and thence into the singles, and several achieved a P1 back seat endorsement. One managed a five-hour flight and many achieved two hours or more. In this very different setting we found safety management needed special care and we would be glad to advise other clubs about this on request.

Our Safety Management System (SMS) is beginning to work well. This year we introduced a complete revision of our Operations Manual using consensus for acceptance, not voting. The SMS introduces a different way of addressing hazards and thus requires a new way of thinking; such culture changes take patience but we are optimistic. In that connection we are worried about the number of near misses in all stages of flight. We did not record them in the past, but once we started looking for them they are there alright. We need to be careful.

Interest in Cowley was less this year than usual, but several members took their own aircraft down, and we sent the Puchacz there for the Fall camp from 28 September to 8 October. As always, thanks to Cu Nim who hold that event together and do the major part of the work.

Last year Dave Scott, an engineer by profession, designed and erected new hangar doors running on wheels in a ground track. He and Bob Hagen did nearly all the heavy work. What an improvement. No more finger trapping in between sheet metal plates. No more tugging away at unlubricated, worn tracks. Thanks Dave and Bob on a great job.

The achievements of Guy Blood, Jason Ackers (our new instructor), Gary Steadman, Thorsten Duebel, Ray Troppman, and Alain Letourneau, the youngest member of our club, are listed elsewhere. By the way, the benefits of flying a computer certainly show in those like Alain who have spent time studying that way.

Kary Wright has been a regular flying member. Kary is quadriplegic but he lets nothing hold him back. He's also a prime mover in the winter group simulator flying events. When the Perkoz with its hand controls arrives next year we can be sure he'll move on. Last, a warning for the OLC. Bruce Friesen now owns a Discus. Watch out.

So altogether not a bad year.

**Henry Wyatt**

## Grande Prairie

**A**T OUR FALL MEETING last year we decided as a club that we should start flying again despite the lack of a two-seat glider and our Blanik situation still looking bleak. We decided to at least fly our private gliders around Grande Prairie and to host a flying weekend to drum up exposure of our club. Dwayne Doll and I attended the ASC AGM to drum up support for the idea. Having a favourable response at the AGM, we proceeded with the club's plans for our event in June.

Along with the winter planning, Dwayne hosted weekly Condor simulator evenings so we could attempt to remove some of the rust that developed. We had lots of fun with it and had a few land outs. Dwayne also setup a new website for our club with photos of our activities.

Spring finally came and a couple of us drove down to the CAGC cross-country week. We had our checkflight and tried some cross-country. Dwayne had his first real landout near Hespero and met the farmer seeding his field. The weather did not cooperate for the latter part of the week so the group decided to drive to ESC in hope of better weather and took part in their first flying week of the season. The weather did not cooperate there either and we only got a couple of days of flying in. But during one of the flyable days, Walter Mueller had a flight that marked his seventy-fifth year of flying.

After returning home we had only a week to prepare for our event at Beaverlodge. June 1-3 was the scheduled day and the day before the ASC towplane and ESC Puchacz arrived. It was great seeing them arrive as we never had any glider activity since 2008. We had local radio exposure and community support that was overwhelming. During the busy weekend we were also able to get some tow training done as well. One of the highlights was seeing the look on Walter's face when John Mulder and Dale Brown showed up to present the SAC award in recognition of his contribution to soaring in Canada. It couldn't be more fitting having it presented here amongst his family. We should mention that this event could not have been possible without support from some sponsorship from local businesses and support from ESC and ASC.

In July we organized a small group to attend the ESC flying week for the weekend. We had a wonderful time flying and camaraderie with the ESC members at the BBQ that was hosted on the Saturday. One of our members, Peter Miles, flew in his Comanche and worked on his power to glider conversion. He was able to get to solo status that weekend and now has the soaring bug. One of the new enthusiastic members this year, Craig Ruether, was able to take some training flights there as well.

Later in the summer our newest towpilot, Wynand Wessels, got his 150 hp Citabria outfitted with a tow hook. So we went

out to Beaverlodge for our first club flying in many years. We had two sailplanes ready for our flights, Dwayne's ASW-20 and my Phoebus C. We had a great time that day and I was able to get in a four hour flight.

Dwayne attended the Fall Cowley camp for the first time to experience the wave flying. On the Sunday there was no wave and he had a great flight on his first orientation flight. The next day there was wave but the wind got so strong that they had to cease flying for that day. He was unable to get a flight in wave conditions but said that he would be there next year in pursuit of the wave.

After this year's soaring milestones, there are many things we are looking forward to in the expansion of our club. We have a group of young Air Cadet pilots refurbishing our former K8 to fly with us next season. Also Jordie Carlson is restoring a Schweizer 1-23D (formally owned by Julien Audette) and it will be ready for the 2013 season.

Despite the Blanik situation we are looking for alternative ways to acquire a two-seat glider. We are planning some fund raising ideas this winter with the plans to purchase a two-seat glider in the near future. If there is any information or ideas from other clubs regarding the purchase of a trainer, we would appreciate hearing from you.

president, **Lester Oilund**

THE AWARDS PLAQUE I hold in front of me now has me trying to recall what took place that morning.

When John and Dale flew in on Saturday morning I thought it was to give our flying weekend a boost by the presence of the Alberta Zone Director and the ASC chief towpilot. Then when a meeting was called right after lunch I found it a little strange that a pilot's meeting is at noon rather than in the morning or at the end of the day for a debriefing. Since I was letting the younger generation do their thing, I tried to stay in the background and see what happens. When John, after he was introduced by Dwayne, made a short speech and then pulled this plaque out of his pocket, I was so surprised and emotionally touched that I could not say much beyond a simple thank you.

The award recognizes my contribution to soaring in Canada. Now I am trying to figure out what contribution I did to soaring in Canada – I never won a contest, I didn't even complete my Diamond badge, but I did show what a positive attitude and enthusiasm to our sport can accomplish even at an age where others prefer a rocking chair; my rocking chair was the sling seat of my Cirrus, which I occupied for over 500 hours beginning at the age of eighty.

I can honestly not remember what John was saying at the time, I probably was on one of my daydreaming trips until my name



was called, and then I was completely flabbergasted.

I think what the Board of Directors was looking at was not so much my flying statistics but rather the human side of this sport, where I showed by example, enthusiasm, positive attitude, and perseverance to stay with gliding even when it looked hopeless for me (as it was sometimes with our club), and just simply be "a good sport" and help out wherever help was needed and my talent as a gadget maker was useful. And I know of at least one case where my love for this sport

with the flight on my ninetieth birthday was the catalyst to get a former Air Cadet glider pilot back into the air. I hope it also showed that age is no limit to go and do badge flights, and the many flights in the back seat of the Blanik were a selfless contribution to soaring.

I'm honoured and humbly accept this award knowing that our Soaring Association felt I deserved it. Thank you.

**Walter**

# Alberta pilot achievements in 2012

## Solo

Steve Deporto (Cu Nim)  
Thorsten Duebel (ESC)  
Jordan Lewis (Cu Nim)  
Eugene Zolenko (Cu Nim)

## Badges & Badge legs

Trevor Finney (ESC) – Silver badge (all legs), Gold distance, Diamond goal  
Guy Blood (ESC) – Gold badge, Diamond goal  
Jason Ackers (ESC) – C badge  
Trevor Finney (ESC) – C badge

## Licence

Alain Letourneau (ESC)  
Brendan Mogan (Cu Nim)  
Gary Steadman (ESC)  
Graham St. Thomas (CAGC)  
Ray Troppmann (ESC)  
Pablo Wainstein (Cu Nim)

## OLC – club results

Cu Nim	8063 km, 50 flights, 8 pilots	9600 points
Edmonton	8024 km, 37 flights, 8 pilots	9215 points
CAGC	1406 km, 15 flights, 5 pilots	1419 points

## OLC – top 10 best 5 flights

Bruce Friesen, ESC	2994 points
Steve Hogg, Cu Nim	2687 points
Tony Burton, Cu Nim	1961 points
Struan Vaughan, Cu Nim	1856 points
Guy Blood, ESC	1609 points
Conrad Lamoureux, ESC	1436 points
John Mulder, CAGC	1239 points
Trevor Finney, ESC	874 points
John Gruber, Cu Nim	786 points
Kerry Stevenson, Cu Nim	722 points

## Instructor ratings

Class 3 – Jason Ackers (ESC), Ab Fotheringham (Cu Nim), Steve Hogg (Cu Nim)  
Class 2 – Trevor Finney (ESC), Ieabeling Kaastra (Cu Nim)  
Class 1 – Gary Hill (ESC), Phil Stade (Cu Nim), Allan Wood (Cu Nim)

*Congratulations to all on these steps along the way.*

*What's your goal for 2013 – it's hard to improve without one.*

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