



Hangar Soaring

February 2024

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WOMEN SOARING PILOTS
ASSOCIATION.

<https://womensoaring.org/>

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1979-2024



During the recent World Championships in Australia, Sarah Arnold, after she landed out in the boonies, had to climb a tree to get cell phone contact with her crew/husband.

Both photos by Sarah Arnold

THE WOMEN SOARING PILOTS
ASSOCIATION (WSPA) WAS
FOUNDED IN 1986 AND IS
AFFILIATED WITH THE SOARING
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Badges

Recorded through Jan.2024

Gold Altitude

Fiona Harnischfeger

Silver Badge

Jenna Cooper

Silver Altitude

Jenna Cooper

Silver Duration

Jenna Cooper

Bronze Badge

Erin Firth
Jenna L. Cooper, CO

C Badge

Erin Firth
Elisabeth Westfall
Stephanie M. Zilora

B Badge

Meridith Williams
Olive Gantham
Erin Firth
Elisabeth Westfall
Jennifer Defosse

A Badge

Maxyn Hallare
Olive Gantham
Meredith Williams
Nerissa N.Zobell
Erin Firth
Elisabeth Westfall
Jennifer Defosse

Kolstad Awards

Century III: Jenna Cooper
Century I: Jenna Cooper
Century II: Jenna Cooper

STATE RECORDS APPROVED

COLORADO

Erin FIRTH

Youth

Free Out and Return Distance:
146.4 mi

Avery SIMER

Female Open Singleplace

Free Out and Return distance:
160.45 mi
Free Distance: 97.88 mi

(Continued on page 4)



From the Editor

With this issue I am beginning my 24th year as editor of Hangar Soaring, never imagining such a long tenure when I took over in 2001. I wasn't even sure I could do it. But the late Bertha Ryan pushed me on. Just this week I got a note from a fellow newsletter editor "I am enjoying the high quality and content of your publication." Kudos like this make it all worthwhile.

A lot has happened in these years. When I took over less than 10 members had e-mail addresses. I still typed on wax stencils and copied the newsletter from these. WSPA grew from a small interest group into an international organization.

I learned to use the Microsoft Publisher to produce the newsletter, which now goes out electronically (I hope all members are on the WSPA mail group) and is also posted on the webpage www.womensoaring.org.

In the soaring world itself a lot has changed. We have now OLC and weGlide, two platforms that let us see what other glider pilots all around the globe are doing. WeGlide is the newer one and has advanced features compared with OLC. The following is an example of what can be done now: compare your own flight with anybody else's (as long as subscribed to weGlide) and as you can see in the example the "coach" can tell you what you could have done better.

"This is one of the many impressive things about WeGlide Coach - you can do a deep dive into everyone's flights, not just the ones done by yourself. (There are graphs of the flights in the story. For space restraint I was unable to copy these here). And the best - analyzing with Coach is fast.

A short example. Let's take the stunning flight done by Jonas Meier. Last year, he did a big triangle and missed the 1000k only by

Scholarship deadline March 15, 2024

President's Note



Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Lynda LaBerge. I was born quite some time ago in Newark, New Jersey. I can still remember, at the age of six, pressing my nose against the large, cold plate glass windows at the old Newark Airport watching in wonder as the planes took off, one after another without bumping into anything in the air. I was convinced you could walk on those puffy white clouds without falling through. It wasn't until I turned seventeen that I took my first commercial flight. I learned that for all those years how wrong I was. Admittedly, I was a bit disappointed. None the less, as the years wore on, I quietly promised myself I would investigate the possibility further.

It was through women such as Amelia Erhardt, Poncho Barnes, Beryl Markum and oh so many others who shared my love of horses that I learned women could fly and do it well. Strong women, unusually brave, tenacious and clearly undaunted by the challenge of the unknown. Could I ever aspire to gain their confidence?

Following the dots connecting the events of my life, I graduated college with a degree in microbiology and later a Masters in psychotherapy. My love of horses and fascination with flight remained strong, opportunity not so much. Until one day, a gentleman walked into my life. As God had planned it, he was a pilot and, as you probably have guessed, he offered to teach me how to examine the unexplained events in the sky of my childhood. He was an awesome Delta captain who insisted I learn to fly a

(continued on page 3)

9 kilometers. Indeed, gliding is a complex sport with a lot of variables. But anyway, can the Coach find a pattern of Jonas' flying style, which he could improve quickly and easily?

Overall, this flight looks pretty well done. Regarding the Speed to Fly, Jonas flew quite optimally. But wait, what is the yellow circle at the top? By clicking on it, we get a suggestion from the Coach - he took too much water on this flight and would have been 1,8 km/h faster with a lighter glider. Jonas needed about 9,5 hours for this flight. By adding less water, he would have flown about 20 kilometers more. Surprisingly, 1000k was possible without changing his habits to fly the Ls8 neo on this day - thanks for this information Coach."

magazine.weglide.org@mail.magazine.weglide.org

Have a great and successful new year.

Franke

glider first, then tail draggers...or as I remember calling them "tail wheel draggers" at the time. I was clearly ab initio. I was taught to land "like a butterfly with sore feet."

The moment in my life came, as it probably has yours, that I had to reach down and pull that release knob from the tow plane for the first time solo. I clearly remember my physiological transformation and feeling totally responsible for myself for the first time in my life. It was also the closest I have ever felt to God. Landings are mandatory. It was magical. I recognized the roots of confidence growing in me much like I had imagined in the hearts of Amelia, Poncho, Beryl... and many if not most of you reading this.

My flight instructor, now my husband, and I opened a glider school (and horse breeding farm) in Concord, Georgia, he as the flight instructor and me as the tow pilot. Coming from a history of office jobs, I rapidly became known as best dressed tow pilot in the business, a.k.a. "Tow Diva".

I have finished my instrument, commercial, and multi-engine rat-

(Continued on page 4)

2024 WSPA Scholarships

Alice Palmer, WSPA Scholarship Chair

It's time once again to think about our WSPA scholarships. For most scholarships, applications and all materials are due by **March 15**.

If you or other women soaring pilots in your club or commercial operation are eligible for one of the scholarships, please apply. International WSPA members are also encouraged to apply, as almost all scholarships are open to members regardless of where they live. The exception is the Competition Scholarship, which is only for U.S. residents planning to compete in a SSA-sanctioned contest.

Our WSPA Scholarship Committee members, who also serve as judges, are **Elaine Ernewein**, **Cathy Keller**, and **Judith Galbraith**. Our Scholarship Director on the WSPA Board is **Kristin Farry**. We also have a large number of WSPA members serving as mentors to our past scholarship recipients. I want to thank all of these women for their dedication and the hard work they devote to our WSPA scholarship program.

Information and online application forms are available on the WSPA website: <https://womensoaring.org/scholarships/>. The scholarship page also includes tips for preparing a good application.

If you have any questions about eligibility or requirements, please contact me at scholarships@womensoaring.org. Canadian WSPA members can also contact our Canadian WSPA scholarship contact, **Elaine Ernewein**, at ernewein@execulink.com.

We are looking forward to receiving your applications!

Karen Becker (2022 Mid Kolstad Scholarship recipient), just passed her Private Pilot-Glider practical test with Rex Mayes at Williams, CA. Congratulations Karen



Women Cross Country Camp

By CarolAnn Garrett

Calling all women glider pilots who want to fly away from their home airport but haven't learned how to cut the apron strings. The XC Women's Cross Country Camp, in Moriarty, NM, is open for registration. Our dates this year are June 30 – July 5, 2024.

After our extremely successful 2023 camp with eight women from AK, AZ, CO, MN, OK, PA and VA flying over 3000 kilometers and with lots of social media coverage, we are expecting a full class of 10 women this year. You will receive three and a half hours of morning lectures and guided afternoon soaring with increasing task difficulty. You choose your task based on your progress.

The building block approach increases your confidence with each step and you will be in a very supportive environment.

This is designed for women who have been thermaling around their local airport for several years. Completing the requirements for your Bronze Badge and working on your Silver Duration is highly recommended. Although this is not for newly minted glider pilots, we have two dual ships available if all the registration slots aren't filled.

Please check out the Maria Faber Scholarship at womensoaring.org/scholarships. You can apply for that scholarship to help defray your registration and flying costs at the Camp. Act quickly though—the deadline for scholarship applications is March 15.

If interested, please send an email to cagarratt@gmail.com with XC Women in the subject line. We look forward to seeing you in Moriarty, NM, in July this year.

Invitation to the 1st Women Friendship Soaring Meet, June 29-July 6, 2024 At Uebersberg Gliderport, Germany



Ulrike Franz, last year's WSPA Seminar hostess writes:

Inspired by the 2023 WSPA-seminar on the Uebersberg, my female soaring-friends decided to start something similar as a recurring event on our gliderport, maybe every year or every two years, we do not know exactly yet, based on making connections, getting new friends, network-

(Friendship on page 4)

(Continued from page 2)

Female 15m

Free Out and Return distance:
160.45 mi
Free Distance: 103.69

Female Standard

Free Out and Return Distance:
160.45 mi
Free Distance 97.88 mi
Free 3 Turnpoint Distance
272.4 mi

Female Sports

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
249.25 mi
Free Out and Return Distance:
146.81 mi
Free Distance 89.56 mi

Youth 15 m

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
272.4 mi

Youth Standard

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
272.4 mi

Youth Sports

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
249.25 mi

Brooke HUGHES

Female Open Singleplace

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:

189.66 mi

Free Triangle Distance 87.48 mi

Free Out and Return distance:
146.98 mi

Female 15 m

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
189.66 mi
Free Triangle Distance:
87.48 mi
Free Distance: 87.44 mi
Free Out and Return distance:
146.98 mi

Female Standard

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance :
87.44 mi
Free Out and Return Distance:
146.98 mi
Free Triangle Distance:
87.48 mi

Female Sport

Free 3 Turnpoint Distance:
173.54 mi
Free Triangle Distance:
80.04 mi
Free Distance: 80 mi
Free Out and Return Distance:
146.49 mi

Youth 15 m

Free Distance 87.44 mi

Youth Sport

Free Distance: 80 mi

She has a Dream

Hangar Soaring received the following from Paul Esser, editor of the 1-26 newsletter.

16-Year-Old Washingtonian Ishitha Arekapudi, 2022 WSPA Sky Ghost winner and winner of the 2023 1-26 scholarship achieved her Glider Pilot License, inspiring youth against all odds.

Woodinville, Washington July 13th - **Ishitha Arekapudi**, a determined and visionary 16-year-old from Washington, has reached another milestone on her journey to become an Astronaut, defying all the odds by attaining her Glider Pilot License.

Ishitha's ultimate dream is to become an Astronaut, and she has tirelessly pursued this path against all challenges with unwavering focus. Her achievements include her Glider Solo at the age of 15, her Power Flight Solo at 16, and now the remarkable attainment of her Glider Pilot license at 16, accomplished at the Arlington Municipal Airport on 9th of July. As a passionate space enthusiast, Ishitha is also a staunch ambassador for promoting aviation and space exploration. She is the founder and President of Sky Rider's, an organization dedicated to spreading aviation and space opportunities and knowledge among youth. Furthermore, Ishitha actively contributes as a valuable member of the Northshore Civil Air Patrol Squadron, holding a Sergeant position, and participating in the Red Tailed Hawk Pilot program. Her commitment to learning and sharing her passion for space and aviation is truly commendable. Additionally, she serves as the Official Youth Ambassador for EAA Chapter 84, leveraging social media to disseminate aviation news and foster interest among young individuals.

Ishitha Arekapudi is immensely grateful for the unwavering support and guidance she received from her instructors, Eric Haupt and Lawrence. Eric Haupt, the instructor who signed her off for the Solo, went above and beyond, providing exceptional support and training. Ishitha deeply appreciates Eric's voluntary dedication and considers herself indebted to him for his invaluable assistance. Additionally, Lawrence, another instructor, generously shared his wisdom, boosting Ishitha's confidence when she needed it the most. Their contributions played a significant role in Ishitha's achievements.

These milestones would not have been possible without the support of Ishitha's parents, sister, all volunteers in Evergreen Soaring Club and the organizations that have awarded her scholarships, including Soaring Society of America, Women's Soaring Pilots Association (WSPA), and 1-26 Association.

Ishitha's journey towards achieving her Glider Pilot License has been filled with twists and challenges, but she remained undeterred. Accessibility to training proved to be a significant hurdle, requiring her to work with six different instructors and face limited weekend operations, which reduced her training opportunities. Despite these obstacles, Ishitha's determination and positive mindset propelled her forward. She is an inspiration to youth, having not only overcome challenges but also achieved her goals with unwavering passion.

Driven by a desire to inspire others, Ishitha shares her story and spreads her joy and passion for aviation among teenagers. She founded and currently leads the Sky Riders Club at Inglesmoor High School, a platform aimed at promoting flying and providing opportunities for teenagers to pursue their dreams.

You can follow Ishitha's extraordinary journey on Instagram at @nasa.starbound.

Ishitha expresses her profound gratitude to everyone who supported her in achieving this momentous milestone, and she finds it challenging to put into words the immense happiness she feels. She is truly "FLYING HIGH."

(Friendship from page 3)

ing and just having fun together for one week.

Women are encouraged to bring their own gliders or the club-gliders to have great flights along the Swabian Alb ridges.

Those who don't want to fly solo or do not have any license yet are welcome to fly with our double seaters with a PIC or with a CFI flight instructor of our clubs.

For more information, also about cost, see our website:
www.uebersberg.de

(President from page 3)

ings.

And now it is time to give back. The dotted lines of my experience have lead me to this point. I am assuming the position of President of WSPA standing on the incredibly capable shoulders of Cathy Williams. Gliders have blessed me with a willingness to trust my own judgement. At times I have put most cats with nine lives to shame, however I have peace in my decision making and have learned from each mistake with the confidence I had learned after pulling that release knob for the very first time. I look forward to conducting the business of this amazing family of talented women with the integrity, professionalism and open-mindedness that their courageous character deserves. My cockpit is always open...don't hesitate to call.

Blue Skies,

Lynda LaBerge

Ishitha herself writes (her application for the 1-26 scholarship)

Flying, for me, means being free and in the skies. Ever since I had my first flight, I knew it would be a big part of my life. I first started out with EAA's Young-Eagles program and had my first flight with them. I really loved their program and started volunteering for my local chapter and soon became an official board member and Chapter-84's Youth Ambassador. I have been awarded our chapter's highly distinguished President's Award as well. To further spread aviation, I have also founded an aerospace and aviation club at two schools in my area as well as a county-wide community outreach program. I organize guest speakers, share opportunities, and create a welcoming community. With the help of EAA, I then went on to start glider lessons. I was able to solo in a glider this February, and it was a truly incredible experience. Some of my short-term goals are to get my license by the end of this summer at 16 and get my power plane license at 17. I would love to continue to become a CFI and give back to the community later on. In the long term, I plan to become a NASA intern, so I can learn more about the industry and work towards becoming a medical astronaut. Other aviation programs I am a part of and volunteer at include Civil Air Patrol (I hold the position of flight sergeant and lead cadets), Red-Tailed Hawks Flying Club, NASA's ROADS on Ice (I lead a group of teens and we won first place at a national level NASA contest), am a NASA space camp graduate, and I have volunteered and held leadership positions at Arlington Skyfest. In the soaring field I have soloed, and after getting my license plan to do more cross country flying as well as instructor training. Currently, the club where I train doesn't have a 1-26 glider plane, however I have heard lots about it, and I am really interested in learning to fly it. Going further into my gliding career and as I advance into single-seat gliders, there are many other places in WA state to fly gliders and I am hoping to get 1-26 experience next summer. This scholarship would really help my family with financing because aviation can be expensive, and because of my dreams to fly so much at a young age, it is a hindrance. This award would give me the chance to fly and gain my private pilot's license for a glider, as well as further my goals to become an astronaut. Starting to fly at a young age can be hard without the proper financing, and this scholarship will help a lot in getting my glider's license. Currently, my parents are paying for my flying, but it is hard with my father's current job loss and because of everything else that needs to be paid. This scholarship would really help us take that burden off so I can still achieve my goals.



Transitioning to a Flapped Sailplane

Cathy Keller

With the help of an enthusiastic mentor, instructors, glider manual, and flying as often as I could in my LS8-18 "A1" and various two-place glass ships, I had been preparing to fly my ASG-29 "12" sailplane all season. Except as a backseat passenger in an Arcus sailplane during the WSPA seminar in Übersberg, Germany (das war wunderbar!), I hadn't flown a flapped sailplane before. The ASG-29 is an 18 m sailplane with seven flap settings, 4 being neutral, 5 and 6 being for thermaling and the pattern, L for slow/landing, and 3, 2, and 1 for cruising. I pulled out the fuselage several times in the last few weeks to familiarize myself with the instruments, controls, and landing gear. I got lots of advice and tutoring from the previous owner, and I received a cockpit check-out and logbook sign-off from a club instructor on October 1.

Monday, October 2, was a beautiful blue day for flying at Sterling, MA. Lift, if found, would be weak and not very high, so it was a relatively calm day for transitioning to a new glider. I felt I was ready; with the support of the few people out for a glider operation that day, I went for it. I took a 4k AGL tow to have more time to check out the sailplane and ended up with a 1.5 hour flight. Overall, the flight went well and I sure love the ship!

I used the advised-for-beginners neutral flap setting for take-off. My take-off roll started off perfectly, but then I ended up falling behind the action letting the glider veer off to the left some feet, had a tiny bounce, but then was airborne staying nice and low, getting back in line behind the tow plane after he lifted off. The tow was smooth and the tow pilot executed shallow turns making the tow uneventfully pleasant. I released at 4500 ft MSL and did some tests advised by the instructor during the cockpit check-out.

After some clearing turns and stowing the landing gear, I did a straight ahead stall in the flap setting used for tight thermals and landing patterns, gently and slowly pulling the stick back. I released stick pressure during the buffeting and didn't wait for the full stall. I was already down to 33 kts or so. Then I extended the landing gear and tried it again with some dive break open, again releasing back pressure when the buffeting occurred in the low-30's kts. Very docile behavior.

I also tried transitioning between pattern flaps and landing flaps a few times. I didn't think there was anything remarkable in the transition. I raised the gear and did some turns to a point in the neutral flap setting. What a nice and easy to fly glider! I had a tendency to under-rudder a little during this first flight, which may be understandable given that it is easy to over-rudder in the LS8 so you don't use much rudder in that ship. The other pilots were staying up thermaling, so I decided it was time to try that, too.

*The instruments in "12" are ClearNav, while the instruments I was used to in "A1" are LXNav. It took a while to figure out that the constant what-I-would-call-encouraging beeping tones of the ClearNav vario (CNv) were **not** indicating lift, but sink. Finally, when there **was** lift, the beeps increased frequency and went a higher pitch. Then the thermal assist screen would start showing a green portion of the circular curve rather than red! I might want to adjust the audio settings a bit to my liking.*

Thanks to the audio vario, I was able to look out the window to observe other gliders in our gaggles and keep a steady attitude on the horizon. I was starting to get used to transitioning from neutral to thermaling flap settings when entering a thermal. What a joy thermaling with those settings were. So nicely trimmed, it was pretty easy to stay in the best thermal of the day slowly taking me back up to 4k MSL. (Mostly we all were between 2500-3500 that day). I also played with some straight and level flying, speeding up in sink, and using flap settings 4 and 3, but I didn't do any real zooming to try out more negative flap settings. The lift

(Transitioning on page 8)

Ed. note: Last semester I took a class on the Baltic States, knowing very little about these three small countries in NE Europe, except that they changed hands several times mainly between Russia and Germany. My maternal great-grandfather was born in a town near the then Prussian Lithuanian border. One of my lecturers, Felicitas Purdey, sent me the following when she learned that I was a glider pilot.

"I think you would also be interested in the story (1933) of two Lithuanians who tried to fly further than Lindbergh. They hoped it would give international attention to Lithuania. There is an exhibit about them at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington! They are known as DARIUS and GIRENAS

The American-Lithuanian pilots, **Steponas Darius** (1896-1933) and **Stasys Girenas** (1893-1933) attempted in the year 1933 to beat Charles Lindbergh's non-stop distance record across the Atlantic by flying from New York City to Kaunas, then the temporary capital of Lithuania.

The pair formed a flying partnership dedicated to a well-publicized trans-Atlantic flight. Girenas also had a similar background as his partner, having been born in Lithuania, educated in Chicago, and serving in the U.S. Army in World War I. The duo purchased a used Bellanca Pacemaker plane from the Chicago Daily News in 1932, dubbed it the "Lituanica" and modified it for their flight. Money was raised from numerous Lithuanian clubs and organizations to finance their operation.

The duo left Floyd Bennett Airport in New York City headed for Kaunas on July 15, 1933, and crashed over Soldin, Germany (115 km. north of Berlin) on July 17 after 35 hours in flight, more than 6,400 kilometers."

Here is what I found about the flight and the pilots on Wikipedia

[Lituanica - \(see full article there\)](#)

On June 18, 1932, the pilots purchased the Pacemaker airplane, serial no. 137, registered as NC-688E, from the Pal-Waukee Company for \$3,200. First produced and flown in 1929, forty units of the CH-300 Pacemaker were eventually built. It was a single-engine, six-seat, high-wing monoplane. The fuselage was welded chromoly steel tubing covered with fabric. The cabin interior was covered with a sound-absorbing material. The wings had two gasoline tanks with a total capacity of 88 US gal (330 L). Funds for the plane were raised from numerous Lithuanian clubs and organizations,^[1] including air shows.

On January 20, 1933, the aircraft was moved to E. M. Laird workshops at 5321 W. 65th St. in the Clearing Industrial District, Chicago, where she was rebuilt and outfitted for the transatlantic flight. New elongated wings were built, with two additional gasoline tanks installed in the fuselage, having 220 US gal (830 L) and 185 US gal (700 L) capacity, each equipped with emergency dump valves. Beneath the pilot's seat a 25 US gal (95 L) oil tank was outfitted with 12 cooling tubes. A longer horizontal stabilizer was built. Aero-dynamic wheel fairings were installed, and the fuselage received a new fabric covering. A new, higher compress-



sion engine, 365 hp (272 kW) Wright Whirlwind J6-9E, ser. No. 12733, had a "speed ring". On March 29, 1933, the rebuild was complete, and the registration number was changed to NR-688E, and the aircraft was painted orange. On both sides of the fuselage scrolls with the names of the sponsors were painted. The aircraft was dubbed *Lituanica*, Latin for *Lithuania*.

The pilots Steponas Darius and Stasys Girenas were Lithuanian pilots, emigrants to the United States, who made a significant flight in the history of world aviation. On July 15, 1933, they flew across the Atlantic Ocean, covering a distance of 3,984 miles (6,411 kilometers) without landing, in 37 hours and 11 minutes (107.1 mph). In terms of comparison, as far as the distance of non-stop flights was concerned, their result ranked second only to that of Russell Boardman and John Polando, and ranked fourth in terms of duration of flight at the time. Although Darius and Girenas did not have navigational equipment and flew under unfavorable weather conditions, the flight was one of the most precise in aviation history. It equaled, and in some aspects surpassed, Charles Lindbergh's classic flight.

An ordinary unmodified plane of this size cannot cover a comparable distance (the Cessna 152, for instance, has a range of 1200 km), even today. The flight was also important from a scientific and technological perspective, as it explored air flows and the capabilities of this type of aircraft. In their last letter, the pilots wrote that either a successful flight or a possible catastrophe would be valuable and significant enough and hence it was worthwhile to fly in either case.

After taking off from Floyd Bennett Field in New York on July 15, 1933, 6:24 am EDT, Darius and Girenas successfully crossed the Atlantic, only to perish on July 17, 0:36 am (CET) by the village of Kuhdamm, near Soldin, Germany (now Piszczelnik, near Mysłibórz, Poland (52°51'11.57"N 14°50'17.78"E)). The planned route was: New York – Newfoundland – Atlantic Ocean – Ireland – London – Amsterdam – Swinemünde – Königsberg – Kaunas airport (a total of 7,186 km). Due to weather conditions over Ireland, they veered to the north and reached Germany via Scotland and the North Sea. In 37 hours and 11 minutes, until the moment of the crash, they had flown 6411 km (over 7000 km in actual flight path), only 636 km short of their goal—Kaunas.

A Lithuanian board of investigation was appointed to determine the cause. It concluded that the pilots were properly qualified, and the aircraft was properly outfitted. They added that the most difficult part of the flight was executed with great precision. The commission concluded that during the crash the aircraft engine was running (the propeller was rotating), and there was enough fuel on board.^[1]

Some sources mention pilot error, but both pilots were highly experienced. During his career as pilot, Darius had never been

involved in any previous accidents. In 1931, Girėnas had won first prize in a flight festival in Chicago for gliding his plane and landing with a dead engine.

According to the board, the catastrophe occurred due to difficult weather conditions combined with engine defects. The crash most probably was a result of failed emergency landing. There were rumors and suspicions in some quarters, that the plane was shot down, having been mistaken for a spy plane, because it flew near a concentration camp. Autopsies of pilots revealed no signs of bullets.¹ However, not all parts of the plane were returned to the Lithuanian government.

On July 19, a German Deruluft airplane carried the bodies of the pilots back to Lithuania.

In 1934 the bodies of Darius and Girėnas were embalmed by professor Jurgis Zilinskas. In 1936 the Lithuanian government decided to build a mausoleum for Darius and Girėnas in Kaunas' old cemetery, that was destroyed after Soviet re-occupation. From then until the present day, the wreckage of *Lituanica* has been on display in the Vytautas the Great War Museum in Kaunas.²

The pilots' bodies rest in the Military Cemetery of Šančiai, Kaunas.

Before the flight Girėnas and Darius left a testament to the Lithuanian nation:

"Young Lithuania! Inspired by Your spirit, we embark on a mission we have chosen. May our success strengthen Your spirit and confidence in Your own powers and talents! But should Neptune and the mighty ruler of storms Perkūnas unleash their wrath upon us, should they stop our way to Young Lithuania and call Lituanica to their realm – then You, Young Lithuania, will have to resolve anew, make sacrifice and prepare for a new quest, so that gods of stormy oceans be pleased with Your effort, resolution, and do not summon You for the Great Judgement. May Lituanica's victory strengthen the spirit of young sons of Lithuania, inspire them for new quests. May Lituanica's defeat and sinking into the depths of the Atlantic nurture perseverance and resoluteness in young Lithuanians, so that a Winged Lithuanian conquers the treacherous Atlantic for the glory of Mother Lithuania! We therefore dedicate and sacrifice our flight for You, Young Lithuanians."



Monument marking the crash site near Pszczelnik in Poland



Stamps commemorating the flight



1/3 scale Model monument in Kaunas, Lithuania

(Transitioning from page 5)

was not so intense, so I can't say I experienced much seat of the pants feelings, but some.

After this fun, I decided I should get to the business of doing the landing while I was still fresh. So with 1500 ft to spare I headed towards the initial point (IP) side of the airport. I extended the landing gear and again tried the transition from neutral flaps to pattern flaps to landing flaps while maintaining approach speed. So the most notable thing is that positive flaps do want you to fly slowly, so I trimmed forward to make it easier to maintain 54-60 kts. I did a few more turns to a point, tested dive breaks and did my landing checks. It is easy/logical to remember setting flaps along with trim on the checklist. When I called crosswind leg on the radio, I decided I'd doublecheck my landing gear position and I added "landing gear down and locked" like my mentor does, so that he'd know I checked it.

The landing pattern speed control went well. The manual suggests putting the flaps in the landing setting only during final when you know you've made it and only if there isn't a strong headwind. I decided I was comfortable enough with the flaps now, so I did put them in the landing setting on final approach. I decided where I would touch down, planning to stop well before our airport's cross taxi-way and before the area where other glass ships were disassembling. I modulated the dive breaks to achieve a desired aim point. I flared, but I didn't hold off as well as I should have, had a small bounce, settled down, and steered off the grass runway.



Cathy with ASG 29 at Sterling, MA

In the News

Cathy Keller, from the Greater Boston Soaring Club (GBSC), and one of the WSPA Scholarship Committee members, passed her Commercial Glider Check ride on January 27, 2024. Her primary instructor from GBSC was Eric Foertsch. She trained for a few days at Seminole Lake Gliderport with CFIG, David Hart, and took the check ride with DPE Franklin Burbank.



L to r:
CFIG David Hart
Cathy Keller
DPEF Franklin Burbank

Giving kids wings

Just in time for Thanksgiving, we are stoked to announce that Amani K has joined an elite club, as she successfully flew her first glider solo on Sunday, 11/20/2023, at [Chilhowee Soaring Association](#) in Tennessee. Congratulations, Amani!

We thank our partners in empowering Amani to reach this milestone: **Sarah Arnold**, flight instructor and owner of Chilhowee Gliderport, [Grady Nace](#), teacher, tow pilot, student advocate, and coordinator of details, teachers Heather, Katherine, and Danielle, who chaperoned this summer, and the many, generous donors who have helped cover the cost of Amani's training.

Most of all, thank you, Amani! You have persevered, worked hard, and believed in yourself through many challenges, not the least of which were weather and scheduling issues. We admire your dedication to your learning and your dream.

You have taken a huge step toward your goals. Keep believing in yourself and daring to soar!

And to everyone in the community, stay tuned for more pictures and video later this week.

[#firstsolo](#) [#milestones](#) [#summercamp](#) [#glidercamp](#)

<http://givingkidswings.org>

the mission

Giving Kids Wings Flight Academy (GKWFA) is a 501(c)3 public benefit corporation. We teach math and science through aviation, introduce high school students to aviation careers, and provide career flight training. Our program pays special attention to increasing the participation of minorities and women in aviation.



From Germany

Thursday, Feb. 8, 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM (MEZ) (1:30-2:30 PM EST)

Aeroclub NRW (north Rhine Westphalia: Women Soaring Pilot Association):

Ulrike Franz introduces to us the American Women Soaring Pilot Association. Activities at WSPA are the annual, week-long soaring seminars as are the scholarships for women gliderpilots for all levels of experience.

Youth member **Maxyn Hallare** has been accepted to the Air Force Academy

2023 World Gliding Championships in Australia

6 US pilots competed in these Championships

Standard Class: **Sarah Arnold**, Tom Holloran

15 m Class: Rick Indrebo, Tim Taylor

Club Class: **Tony Condon**, Mike Westbrook

Sarah reports

To say this contest hasn't gone the way I'd hoped is an understatement. Today there was a storm on the first leg and I wasn't able to connect with the shelf and got flushed instead. Knowing how hot and windy it would be on the ground, I landed close to shade trees near the edge of a giant wheat field. I had gotten a couple "InReach" messages out but knew Jason would prefer to hear my voice. Way back (2013) at the WGC in Argentina, some advice given was to try climbing a tree if there is no cell service, and that is what I did. The phone worked fine up there, and I got to feel like a kid again. Ultimately Jason arrived in a Ute with 13 year old twins (Will and Lochi) who drove him out to find me. They had been up running farm equipment since 3 am. This is an 80,000 acre farm and I was several miles from the homestead.

See cover photo



3 WSPA members at the Worlds: Tony and Leah Condon, Sarah Arnold

From Ritz de Luy's blog

Namibia ,more specific Bitterwasser (SW Africa), is now looking back at their season.

The season in Bitterwasser is slowly drawing to a close. One by one, the gliders are being loaded into the containers. And still some teams fly over 1000 kilometers every day. The results of the whole season are impressive! Over 230 flights have already exceeded the 1000km mark. Well over 580,000 kilometers were flown over Namibia from Bitterwasser.

Ed. note: Bitterwasser is the Mecca for European "snowbird" gliderpilots. It's located in Namibia, in SW Africa in the Kalahari dessert. Before WWI it was a German colony and it's capital city Windhoek still today has German character. For every 1000km flown in Bitterwasser a Kingpalm is planted at the glider lodge. The season there runs from November until January



The Perlan Project looked back on the highlights from 2023 and one of them definitely was the **world's first automated aerotowing connections from Magpie Aviation.**

Last spring this was another "first" for the Perlan Project team. This is how it works;

"Perlan Pilot Tim Gardner towed Chief Perlan Project pilot Jim Payne up in a glider. On the end of the tow rope was a Magpie receptacle Active Hook, the device responsible for autonomously connecting the two aircraft in the sky. On the nose of the glider was a probe. Jim released from tow separating from the receptacle. Then Jim chased the end of the tow rope to slide the glider nose probe into the sensor receptacle. It was the first ever in-flight hook up with a glider. They were 8 of 8 for positive re-connections after which Tim could tow Jim higher to do it again.

Ed. note: Perlan is a high altitude research glider, holding the present glider altitude record with 76,124 ft. The final goal is 90,000ft.

See also the book "Soaring Beyond the Clouds" Einar Enevoldson Reach-ers for 1000,000 feet" by Bertha Ryan

Short Term Holiday License to fly Solo in Germany

By Cathy Williams

Flying solo in Germany is possible but not too easy. Our WSPA international director, Ulrike Franz and her husband, Heinrich, arranged for me to borrow a lovely Ka6-E to fly during our 2023 seminar at Uebersberg, Germany. All the other North American participants chose to fly dual and avoid the hassle. I needed a legal way to fly solo in Germany.

There are two ways to obtain a validation that allows pilots from Non-EASA countries to fly solo in Europe. Enter "Aopa.de/ueber-uns/private-pilot-license-validation" in your search and you will find information, directions, links to the pertinent EASA regulations and links to the application forms for the two methods. The Validation/Conversion method is a 12 month EASA private pilot license with complicated and costly requirements. I believe this is what our competition pilots are using. Several have had difficulties getting their licenses.

I was able to obtain the Short Term "Holiday License" and have been asked to share my experience. This license allows one, up to 28 day "Short Term Holiday License" each calendar year to be used for specific noncommercial tasks. The application form is in German but otherwise appears pretty simple. I found there were some unwritten expectations from the LBA (German equivalent of the FAA). I could not have succeeded without a representative in Germany and a German friend in my club to help me translate and complete the application. Both of my friends had several phone discussions with the LBA representative before the process was completed.

Here is a list of the unexpected hurdles the LBA presented:

1. insisted I have a second class medical even though the requirements do not state that. Several people disagreed with that interpretation, but I did not have time to protest that a third class medical was sufficient.
2. required I provide the registration number of the one glider that I would be flying. No problem for me, but what if you were going to an operation with multiple gliders you might want to solo?
3. required that I provide where I would be flying from. What if you planned to fly from several places?
4. insisted that my representative from Germany explain why I needed to fly in Germany. It seemed to him that my license might have been refused if he had not made a strong case that I was president of WSPA, this was an international event, and this license would facilitate international women soaring pilot cooperation.
5. required a German representative (POA) in Germany who could sign for me, receive notifications at his address, and pay my fee (150 Euros). The LBA communicated with him not me.

(Licenseon page 10)

(License from page 9)

It was definitely worth the effort to enjoy long solo flights over Uebersberg. My suggestions if you want a Short Term Holiday License: Start early. Get a second class medical. Get help from a friend in Germany (or the country you plan to visit) and a local friend who is fluent in the required language. They should be able to find answers to the questions asked above. I can give you contact information for the wonderful people.



Photo: Corinne Baudisch

German "Hexentreffen" (meeting of women aviators)

Ulrike Franz reports: Despite a paralyzing German rail strike over 100 participants from all over Germany made it to the annual gathering in which members of all aero-sports participated. The meeting featured many interesting presentations including one by an airship pilot, who unfortunately fell sick and had the presentation delivered by Fritz Guenther, a friend.. 4 WSPA members attended the meeting: Ulrike Franz, who presented her t-shirt design for the upcoming Friendship meeting; Britta Schlenker; Elke Fuglesang-Pettersen and Anette Weidler.



Photo: Ulrike Franz

Sisters Maria and Emma Steck modeling Ulrike's new t-shirt

Mark Your Calendar

March 15, 2024

Scholarship Deadline

April 30, 2024

AML Trophy deadline for flights up to Feb.29, 2024

June 30– July 5, 2024

Women Cross Country Camp, Moriarty, NM

June 24-July 6, 2024

1st International Women Friendship Camp (Germany)

July 22-26, 2024

46th WSPA Seminar, Sunflower Aerodrome, Hutchinson, KS

October 24-26, 2024

SSA Convention, Knoxville, TN



Famous Woman Pilot: Ritz de Luy, Netherlands

Ritz laudation Majewska Medal in 2015:

Ritz de Luy has spent more than 50 years in soaring. Although her active gliding period was rather short, she stayed involved in gliding. She was several times team captain for the Dutch team, which won several gold, silver and bronze medals over that time. During that period she got to know the Australian people and that resulted in a 10 year adventure in Australia where she owned and ran the Sportavia Soaring Centre in Tocumwal [Australia]. During her last two 2 years there, she was the PR manager, and wrote the daily Latest News at www.sportavia.com during the soaring season. That was the start of her soaring writing career: writing "the daily bulletins" of many competitions. She started her own blog (soaring.eu) when the technology gave her that possibility. Via these blogs, read all over the world by (glider) pilots, she became a bonding factor in gliding.. During this period she twice was member of the Jury at a World Competition.

In a blog in December Ritz wrote:

Today I turn 77!!! On my way, I hope, to 80! OLD yes INDEED!!!!

Looking back at my soaring life it started in March 1967, 20 years old, when I saw a glider for the first time.

Had a flight, liked it, started flying lessons, got solo, had no feeling for orientation at all, stopped flying again, stayed in the soaring world and started all kind of jobs.

Crew, Team Captain, Steward, Juror and Editor at many big competitions as World Gliding Championships, Junior World Gliding Championships and Women World Gliding Championships.

I was very proud of the honor I got when unanimously was decided that I should receive the Pelagia Majewska Medal (the highest honor worldwide for a female gliderpilot) for my service to gliding in 2015.

I had the pleasure of flying and hanging around with many interesting people, certainly when we were running for 10 years the Sportavia Soaring Center in Tocumwal, Australia. Huge job, but a very rewarding life-style.

Now in 2023, the young ones in the family are slowly taking over. My daughter Inge was crew in Narromine and granddaughter Indya [20] Team Captain for Luxembourg. That really pleased me...3 generations now in our beloved sport.

AND....I still could do my writing, but from home this time, a lot of work but with all social media it is possible, certainly when you have a lot of friends/mates who share their words with you.

I hope to add 2 more years of writing when hands and head keep going. Thanks for your ongoing support in reading with so many the weekly blogs.

Ed. note: I never met Ritz in person, but we have been in contact for many years. Without her blog I would not have all the news you find in Hangar Soaring. Her blog can be found at www.soaring.eu. Go to her Christmas 2023 blog and see our cooperation.



The WSPA Seminars throughout their History

1979	Tehachapi, California
1980	Ridge Soaring, Julian, Pennsylvania
1981	Wave Flights Inc./Black Forest Gliderport, Colorado Springs, Colorado
1982	Texas Soaring Association, Midlothian, Texas
1983	Seattle Glider Council, Ephrata, WA
1984	Texas Soaring Association, Midlothian, Texas
1985*	Air Sailing Gliderport, Reno, NV (WSPA proposed)
1985*	Ridge Soaring, Julian, Pennsylvania
1986	Tucson Soaring Club, AZ (WSPA founded)
1987	Ridge Soaring, Julian, PA
1988	Texas Soaring Association, Midlothian, TX
1989	Skylark North, Tehachapi, CA
1990	Bermuda High Soaring, Chester SC
1991	Turf Soaring, Phoenix, AZ
1992	Caesar Creek Soaring Club, Waynesville, OH
1993	Black Forest Soaring Association, Elbert, CO
1994	National Soaring Foundation, Hobbs, NM
1995	Sugar Bush Soaring Association, Warren, VT
1996	Sailplane Enterprises, Hemet, CA
1997	Caesar Creek Soaring Club, Waynesville, OH
1998	Texas Soaring Association, Midlothian, TX
1999	Tidewater Soaring Society, Orbit, VA
2000	Air Sailing Gliderport, Reno, NV
2001	Sugar Bush Soaring Association, Warren, VT
2002	Caesar Creek Soaring Club, Waynesville, OH
2003	Albuquerque Soaring Club, Moriarty, NM
2004	Harris Hill Soaring Club, Elmira, NY
2005	Air Sailing Gliderport, Reno, NV
2006	Chilhowee Glider Club, Benton, TN
2007	Central California Soaring Society, Avenal, CA
2008	Central Indiana Soaring Club, Alexandria, IN
2009**	ALC, Lesce-Bled, Slovenia
2010	Air Sailing Gliderport, Reno, NV
2011	Tucson Soaring Club, Tucson, AZ
2012	Chilhowee Glider Club, Benton, TN
2013	Albuquerque Soaring Club, Moriarty, NM
2014	York Soaring Association, Arthur, Ontario, Canada
2015	SoaringNV, Minden, NV
2016	Aeroclub Adele Orsi, Varese, Italy
2017	Chilhowee Glider Club, Benton, TN
2018	Truckee-Tahoe Soaring Association, Truckee, CA
2019	St. Louis Glider Association, Highland, IL
2020	Canceled due to COVID19
2021	New England Soaring Association, Springfield, VT
2022	Chilhowee Glider Club, Benton, TN
2023	Uebersberg/ Reutlingen, Germany
2024	Sunflower Aerodrome, Hutchison, KS

Several seminars were made possible with help of additional clubs

*attempt to hold the seminar in the East and the West

** first out-of-the-country-seminar



The proposed 2024 seminar logo by Ulrike Franz

Membership Dues Structure

[WSPA Membership Application & Renew](#)

WSPA ANNUAL DUES

Full Members & Associate Members (Mail In, Zelle) \$25.00
Full Members & Associate Members (PayPal) \$28.00
Youth Members (Under 19) (Mail In, Zelle) \$10.00
Youth Members (under 19) (PayPal) \$11.00
Life Members (Mail In, Zelle) \$350.00
Life Members (PayPal) \$365.00

WRITING A CHECK TO WSPA

Checks to WSPA should be written *to the order of* **WOMEN's SOARING PILOTS ASSOCIATION**.

On the *Memo line* write the **purpose** of the check.

MAILING A CHECK OR DOCUMENT TO WSPA

Send correspondence to:

Margarett Roy
PO Box 1197
Central Islip, NY 11722-0950



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Newport News, VA 23602



First Class Mail