

SSA NEWS

New Clubs and Club Bulletins

Several new gliding and soaring clubs can be reported, two with organizations completed. The most prominent and most active, according to our information, is "SUN-BIRDS OF NEW MEXICO." This club, at Hobbs, under the leadership of Art Hoffman and Wm. D. Boone, II, consists of 14 members, owns a TG-3 and a tow ship, displays a very good looking insignia and reports 70 flights as of April 1st, some of them to more than 13,000 feet within a few minutes after release. This report is made with an invitation to visitors. We believe they will have some.

Another club that is reported as organized and underway is the one of the Goodyear people of Akron. More information is needed.

Among those in process of organization are: At Fort Morgan, Colorado, by Paul D. Quillen; at Omaha, Nebraska, by Charles Phelps; at Holloman AFB, New Mexico; at Moultrie, Georgia, by Bright W. Denison; at Tulsa, Oklahoma, by Bill Beuby and others.

Three new bulletins are in the mails these days, all of them highly interesting and unique in their own way. First to come our way was the "DOUGLAS DUST DEVIL" by the Douglas Soaring Club of Los Angeles. This is a sparkling edition complete with first class art work and including inhabitants of the "living desert." This bulletin is edited by Houston Damron, secretary of the club.

Another new bulletin to reach our desk is a spicy item put out by the Toledo Glider Club and edited by the club secretary, "Silent" John Nowak. (Wow!) To most soaring people that's enough, but to the others, this bulletin is like its editor, it wears a big round smile that is contagious. You'll like it from its first word to its very last. We're already watching the mail for the next issue.

The third new bulletin, just received, is one by the University of Illinois. Glider Club, Urbana, Illinois. This is a newsy publication but it is without a name until one is selected by a contest that is being conducted. The Club's Faculty advisor is Tom Page, its president is Carl Rauchenbarger.

Affiliates

There have been many questions lately regarding SSA affiliates and there has been a great deal said about the subject, although it is very difficult to find anything authentic about required qualifications for identification as a club "Affiliated with the Soaring Society of America."

Of course (at least one member believes) there can be no objection to any club which cooperates with the Society claiming affiliation. To the degree of their cooperation, they are affiliated. They help to determine the policies of the Society through their comments and suggestions. They have authority in governing the Society through the voting power of their active Society members.

This is all well and good but it is not good enough. We will never have a well-knit, strong and forceful national organization or strong local clubs throughout the country under such an arrangement.

One very important step forward was begun by the Board of Directors at its recent meeting and it will be completed with the cooperation of the membership in the next few months. That is, a proper membership and subscription rate structure was adopted, one that will eventually enable the Society to render more and more worthwhile and constructive services to its membership.

Now let us begin to think of the next step — a real national organization, one that will include all soaring enthusiasts, one that will include local clubs, not as step children, but as local chapters, a part of the national organization.

Of course this will mean complete reorganization of both the national and the local groups into the type of organization which most successful national organizations are. It will mean that all members are members of the Society as well as being members of their local club. It will mean that a portion of all dues are sent to the national office for its support, or that all dues are sent to the national office with a portion returned to the local club. It will mean that the Soaring Society can really be a strong and forceful national aviation organization, in a position to promote activities which will benefit its members and make itself heard by government and industry.

This cannot, and will not, be accomplished quickly, but considering the great progress we have made lately and the new rate structure as

step No. 1, in our current "Renaissance of Gliding and Soaring" in America, let us begin seriously to think of this as step No. 2.

Membership Committee

The SSA Membership Committee is still without a chairman. There are several things which would make the work of membership chairman extremely interesting. One problem to solve, is a method of getting into the SSA the fifty per cent or more of club members who are not yet SSA members. Another would be to induce the many hundreds of former SSA members again to become members.

A survey conducted several months ago revealed that there are many more soaring enthusiasts outside of the Society than there are in it. Many of these enthusiasts are members of gliding and soaring clubs and only require some organized effort to bring them in.

Casual conversations with aviation people all over the country during the last few years, indicate that there are many hundreds of former members of the Society who could be induced to rejoin and again become active members.

It has long since ceased to be a surprise to hear an airplane mechanic, an engineer, yes, a chief engineer, or even a president of a large manufacturing firm say "I was a member of the Soaring Society many years, back when —" The answer to the obvious question is always, "Oh, I don't know, just sort of lost contact —"

All indications are that these people could be re-introduced to the Soaring Society by the proper approach.

To find that approach and to see it succeed should be a highly interesting and fascinating job. There is no doubt that the membership, and the effectiveness of the Society's objectives, could be doubled, and that a great deal of pleasure could be derived from this accomplishment by some member of the Society.

Nominating Committee

Written SSA by-laws require that a Nominating Committee be appointed by the President, to nominate two SSA members in good standing for each of six expiring terms. The active membership is to elect six of these, or any other six active members to serve three years.

The Committee has been appointed and consists of: Howard Burr, Chairman, George Downsborough and Vic Saudek.