



HIGH FLIGHTS SOARING CLUB

Meadow Lake Airport
Falcon, Colorado
www.highflights.com

Located near mid-field on the west side of Meadow Lake Airport, High Flights operates a fleet of about a dozen sailplanes (four Club and the rest privately owned) weekends and holidays, and sometimes during the week when the soaring weather is especially good and members can get off work.

In the fall of 1976 Milt Johnson, John Galbraith and a handful of other folks formed High Flights Soaring Club from the remnants of the disbanded soaring arm of the Fort Carson Aero Club. The Conovers, as the primary airport authority, gave the fledgling club wholehearted support and encouragement and with their help the club members literally built a glider runway by pick, shovel and wheel barrow – in the area that is now occupied by the now-closed Hangar Restaurant. By early winter the runway was ready for operation and on 4 December 1976, Milt Johnson made the first flight in the club's one leased two-place glider behind a Super Cub from Dave Johnson's fleet.



You've come a long way, Baby! In recent times the club has averaged a bit over 1000 flights a year, owns two two-place, three single-place gliders and a tow plane, and has gradually built membership to over 50.



The original goals have never changed!

To provide FUN, SAFE, CHALLENGING, and INEXPENSIVE soaring to its members, with emphasis on SAFE.

High Flights is one of some 200 chapters of the Soaring Society of America (Hobbs, NM) which is the US National controlling agency for the sport of soaring on behalf of the National Aeronautics Association (NAA). In turn, the NAA administers US Soaring (among its many other programs) for the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) in Paris. Soaring has been a major sport in Europe since the 1920's and in fact was scheduled to be introduced as an Olympic sport at the summer games in Berlin (pre WW II) but that plan was overtaken by events.

High Flights has been unusually successful over the years largely because of the great leadership and untold hours of hands-on work by dedicated members. However, equally important to the club's success has been the concept of having everyone actively participate in the whole operation. That practice has kept members interested and flying regularly enough to be proficient, hence safe. Everything is done by unpaid volunteers -- tow pilots, instructors, equipment and facilities maintenance, line crews -- you name it! To be a member you must be willing to pitch in and work, a duty that our members consider to be both a privilege and a pleasure.



Who are these working, flying, having-fun members? Ages range from mid 80's to mid teens. Retired fighter pilots to first timers in an aircraft, Airline captains to college professors to computer engineers to a teen age national track star. People bound together by a common love of soaring flight.

What kinds of things does the club do? Well, for instance, within the limits of instructor hours available, we take persons who have never flown before and teach them to fly -- to pass their FAA written exam and flight tests and to become accomplished soaring pilots. We take power rated pilots and provide them the training necessary to pass their FAA flight checks and get a glider rating. We fly cross country, we hold competitions, we take our equipment to places like Westcliffe, La Veta, Creede, etc. for long weekends of spectacular mountain soaring. Several of our members hold various types of state and Rocky Mountain Regional records (37,200ft altitude for example) and members have won or placed highly in regional and national competitions.

Many of us have experienced at least once the breathtaking thrill of literally soaring in formation with Colorado's Golden and Bald Eagles high in the Rockies along the Continental Divide!

Like everyone who is all fired up about what they are doing, we always enjoy introducing new folks to our sport. To do that we provide "Introductory Soaring Flights" (for a nominal charge) on a space available basis.



You can find more information about our club, where we are located and how to contact us thru our website, www.highlights.com.



In short, we are a group of enthusiastic pilots actively enjoying the sport of soaring in the SUPERB conditions of Colorado! We welcome visitors -- come "hangar fly", look around, take a ride, or just sit with us and enjoy the sunshine! If you like what you see, fill out a membership application form and get on the waiting list. You will be taking that first step toward truly SOARING WITH EAGLES.

So you say it sounds like great fun but it's probably pretty expensive! Not so. Soaring (as a club member) is less expensive than golf or downhill skiing, or going out to dinner at a nice restaurant once a month!! For example, an average training flight will cost about \$30 to \$50, and when you get your license and are taking your family or friends for a flight on your own you can stay up for an hour for about \$30. Club soaring is one of the few real bargains left in the sports world!





Now that you're interested in learning to fly gliders (sailplanes), what do you have to do to get there??

Glider pilots are licensed by the FAA just as are power pilots, so in order to fly a glider solo you must take instruction from an FAA Licensed instructor who will help you learn the things you need to know and the skills you must have in order to fly safely.

Almost everyone can learn to fly. Your past experience and how you apply yourself in the learning situation will determine how long it will take you to progress to that thrilling never-to-be-forgotten day when you make your first solo flight. On average if you have never flown any kind of plane before, you will probably need 40-60 flights with your instructor (dual flights) before he and you will feel you are ready for that great day. At the other extreme, if you are already a rated power pilot and reasonably current, you may solo after a very few dual rides. (A person may solo as young as 14!!)

After solo you will continue to study for the FAA written exam and you'll practice the flying skills you need to demonstrate to the FAA flight examiner when he gives you your final flight check. Then, when your instructor finds you ready he will sign you off for that ride. When you pass the FAA flight check you'll receive your FAA PILOTS CERTIFICATE with a glider rating and you'll be a full-fledged member of the wonderful world of soaring pilots. Here is a listing of what the FAA requires for glider ratings:

