

The NASA Flyer

Newsletter of the Northeastern Air Sports Association - Chapter 221
December 2010

Member Highlights

Welcome back, Mike Smith! Some of you may remember Mike Smith who was a student at Mountain Wings beginning in April 2008. Unfortunately in the midst of the training season he made career and personal changes that relocated him and his family from their home in the northeast to North Carolina. Despite the move Mike was committed to continuing his training, and so he regularly made the 350 mile drive from his home to Lookout Mountain for lessons. He managed to make 10 mountain launches there, despite frequently investing in a 700 mile round trip only to have conditions not cooperate for him to get in any flying! His professional circumstances having changed again Mike and his family returned to Connecticut in August 2010 but Mike didn't get back to flying again until November, owing to a knee injury. But now he is back and we are certainly glad to see him again. Welcome back, Mike - we missed you!



Mike Smith

Club Facilities

Comfort Station Update! The new bathroom in the Mountain Wings hangar has been tiled and painted and a sink, shower, and toilet have been installed. Stop by to have a look and maybe a try!

No need to rough it in the porta-potty anymore...



The luxury of indoor plumbing awaits!!!!



“Hang Gliding” while hang waiting – Did you ever try out the Mountain Wings simulator? It's a great way to spend some time waiting out adverse flying conditions while sharpening your thermaling skills. Recently **Victor, Timo, and Cathleen** all “flew” through challenges set up by different avatar pilot skills and terrain (such as polar ice caps with deadly smokestacks or island lagoons with cliff side top landing zones). Greg coached us through reading and adapting to the conditions – to some triumphant – and some tragic – outcomes. But all in the safety of the lounge area of the Mountain Wings hangar. Check it out next time you have a chance.

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Timo thermalling in the Arctic Circle

Launch Update

North Knob Launch Protection - Carl DiPiero led another team to seal the launch planking and protect it for another season against punishing sun, storm, and extreme temperature. **Carl, Daniel Z, and Cathleen** spent an afternoon applying industrial sealer to the launch and newly-constructed hang check platform to keep it in shape for continued use.



Carl sealing the launch in the sunshine

Bush-whacking - Volunteers are needed to whack away a few bushes from the set up area to make it easier to get gliders to the hang check

platform. Consult with Greg if you are able to do this.

Storm Damage – The recent flooding in Ellenville took its toll on the segment of road paving the way from Route 52 up toward launch. Deep rivulets were carved in the gravel by the powerful current of water cascading from the mountain above. The photos below give dramatic evidence of the extent of the damage - the scars are at least a foot deep as you can see where it reaches on Timo’s legs. Unfortunately no work parties will be able to tackle this until the spring, when we will need to fill in the carved out areas and dig drains along/across the road. Until then temporary measures will be taken to divert the flow of water from winter precipitation and spring thaw.

Damage to the launch road



High Capacity – on a positive note, the North Knob set up area recently accommodated **nine** gliders waiting for launch – and there was room for a few more!

The more the merrier!



photo by Wayne Neckles

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Visit from Santa!

Have you been good this year? Well Santa recently came to the flight park to find out how some of the students measure up. Good news: everyone made it onto the “nice” list!



Timo, John, Carl, Josh, & Mark ingratiating themselves with the man in red

Better check that list, Santa – twice!



Clinics

Reminder about upcoming clinics

Stay tuned for information about a parachute party and other clinics planned for 2011. Watch your email for details.

So Long, 2010!

The end of this flying year was celebrated with an informal gathering at the end of December in the warmth of the Mountain Wings hangar. Weren't you there? We missed you!



Photo by Greg Black

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Photo by Timo Friedrich

Have a hooked-in holiday!!!

Best wishes for a happy holiday season and safe flying in the new year to everyone from your newsletter Editrix Extraordinaire, Flarabella Goodlanding (aka Cathleen O'Connell)