NEWSLETTER

Brookhaven Airport — Shirley, NY — November 2026



FLYING GLIDERS SINCE 1955

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LONG ISLAND SOARING ASSOCIATION
EST. 1955
LONGISLANDSOARING.COM

CLUB OFFICERS

President	Katelyn Erthal
Vice President	Andrew Apicos
Chief Pilot	Brian Robey
Operations	Pierre Grellet-Aumont
Maintenance	Craig Rhein
Treasurer	John Bresnik

President's Report

Dear LISA Members,

As we reflect on another productive quarter, it's clear that this has been a year of growth, accomplishment, and meaningful change for the Long Island Soaring Association. I would like to take a moment to recognize these achievements and share a few updates as we head into the winter season.

We are excited to congratulate Jacob on passing his glider checkride, officially making him our newest glider pilot! This is a tremendous accomplishment and another great addition to our growing soaring community. We also congratulate Morgan on passing his Private Pilot checkride in the Cessna. It's always rewarding to see members reaching their aviation goals, and we look forward to seeing what comes next for both of them.

In another important development, we have reintroduced a tailwheel instructor to our training pipeline. This is an important step toward providing opportunities for members interested in getting checked out in the Super Cub. Beyond expanding access to the aircraft, this helps establish a path for those interested in eventually becoming tow pilots. Building and maintaining this pipeline is essential to the long-term health and sustainability of our operation.

As many of you have noticed, LISA continues to evolve in how we manage our organization and communicate with our membership. We are seeing gradual growth and development of the club website, along with a shift toward greater transparency and member responsibility in day-to-day club operations. As these responsibilities evolve, we will continue to identify areas that require attention and communicate issues as they arise. Associated costs and expenses will be reflected in club fees. Our goal is to maintain that the club remains sustainable, well-maintained, and positioned for the future.

This year has brought many changes as we modernize and automate more of our processes. Change can take some adjustment, and we recognize that. The President and Board sincerely thank the membership for its patience, flexibility, and willingness to embrace these improvements. Your cooperation is a significant part of making this transition successful.

2026 has been a year of many changes for the Long Island Soaring Association. We've celebrated individual accomplishments, strengthened our training programs, made improvements to our facilities, and continued modernizing the way we operate.

On behalf of the President and the Board, thank you to every member who has contributed their time, effort, and support. Whether you've been working on projects, helping with operations, pursuing new certifications, or simply staying engaged, your participation is what makes this club successful. We appreciate everyone's willingness to adapt as we move forward. Our shared goal remains the same: to maintain a strong, welcoming, and sustainable soaring community that provides opportunities for everyone to enjoy aviation.

Thank you for being part of LISA. Here's to continued progress, safe flying, and a great year ahead!

Blue skies,

Katelyn Erthal
President

Club Checkrides

By Andrew Apicos & Katelyn Erthal





Congratulations to Jacob Abramovich on earning his private pilot glider certificate on Saturday, November 7, 2026. Jacob passed his checkride as his mom and dad looked on from the grass runway, along with a half dozen LISA members and his DPE, Edward J. Winchester. A big thanks to our CFIs—Andrew, Brian, Mike, and Shawn—for helping Jacob hone his glider skills, and also to our tow pilots, Charlie, Pierre, and Wayne, for getting the gliders in the air.





We'd also like to extend a big congratulations to Morgan on passing his Private Pilot checkride in the Cessna! Special thanks to his CFI, Aidan Apicos, whose guidance and expertise helped make this achievement possible.

October Work Party

By Katelyn Erthal

Our October work party was a tremendous success, with outstanding participation from the membership. We made great strides on several projects and improvements around the premises, and the level of involvement was encouraging to see. Thanks to Craig and James, who were able to install new tires onto the gliders, which was no easy feat.

We would also like to recognize several members who have gone above and beyond to improve our clubhouse and support the day-to-day needs of the association. A special thank-you to James Erthal and Mike Hanson for taking the time to patch the clubhouse roof and address needed maintenance. We also extend our appreciation to Les for generously donating a whiteboard, and to Anthony for getting our new club printer set up and operational. We are fortunate to have members willing to step up, contribute their time and resources, and take ownership of our shared spaces. Thank you to everyone who came out, helped with projects, or contributed in other ways. Your efforts make a real difference!













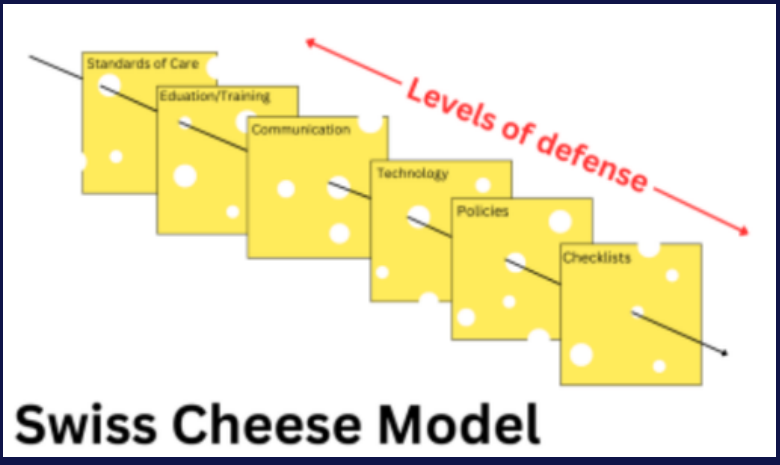
Safety & Education

By Andrew Apicos

The framework used in aviation and among pilots to help prevent accidents—and to better understand how they occur—is the Swiss Cheese Model. Imagine multiple layers of Swiss cheese stacked one after the next (see photo), where the holes represent weaknesses. When holes align across multiple layers, a failure can occur, which in turn can lead to a minor incident, serious incident, accident, or deadly accident. Each layer of cheese can represent a policy, procedure, minimums, personal minimums, or checklist. For example, being hurried and distracted when rigging your glider can lead to an improper aileron connection. Couple this with a poorly executed positive control check—or the lack of one—and several slices have aligned, putting the path to a potentially deadly accident in the making.

How many layers are there? You've done your due diligence by properly planning your flight and glider. You completed your preflight checklist, followed by a thumbs-up, wing up, rudder waggle, and off you go—wings level, accelerating to 70 mph! Yet somehow, just six seconds later, the tow plane is a wreck and the pilot is dead or severely injured. What went wrong? It was one second of inattention, perhaps due to a distraction. In one second at 70 mph, you move 100 feet. In one second, you can easily be out of position above the tow plane, pulling up its tail. Kiting occurs when a glider pilot flies high above and loses sight of the tow plane (see diagram). A tail-up, nose-down pitch for a tow plane at a low altitude is a serious matter. In this instance, there is only one slice—your attention—and it is required (demanded) to be at 100% during tow.

Instructors need to be vigilant when training students during this phase of flight. Solo pilots need to ensure that all items—such as water bottles, cameras, and phones—are properly secured. Student pilots should review Chapter 8: Abnormal and Emergency Procedures in the Glider Flying Handbook. To answer the question of how many layers there are: well, there can be only one during critical phases of flight.



Swiss Cheese Model



Annual Party

By Katelyn Erthal

We are pleased to announce that our annual LISA Holiday Party has been planned and reserved!

Friday, January 29, 2027 | 7:00 PM – 11:00 PM

Shandon Court – 115 East Main Street, East Islip, NY 11730

The evening will feature a buffet-style dinner, refreshments, and an opportunity to get together with fellow members, friends, and family away from the airfield. Loved ones are warmly invited!

- Adults: $67 per person
- Children: $28 per child
- RSVP deadline: January 22, 2027
- RSVP to: Mike Hanson or Katelyn Erthal

There is parking available on premises, and a cash bar will be available downstairs.

We hope to see a great turnout!



Safety & Education-AI, AI and more AI

By Andrew Apicos

The August issue of Soaring magazine featured an article by Lawrence Spinetta titled "AI Glider Coach." Upon reading the article, I decided to give it a try and have AI critique an instructional flight that I recorded. I used Grok. Further investigation could compare and contrast analyses of flight data using the same prompts across other AI engines.

Andrew- “Next, I will upload an IGC file. I am a glider pilot flying a SGS 2-33A glider. You are an expert certified flight instructor. Analyze this flight and provide constructive criticism regarding all phases of the flight. Be specific and cite specific data from the IGC data. Be critical not polite.”

GROK- “Once received I will parse the full track (time, lat/long, pressure/GPS altitude, groundspeed, etc.), reconstruct the flight path, identify phases (tow, release, thermalling, gliding, pattern, landing), and give blunt, data-driven criticism for a SGS 2-33A. Expect specific citations of times, altitudes, speeds, climb rates, turn radii, energy management, etc. No fluff.”

Andrew- I drag and drop my IGC into GROK. A summary of the response is below. I used 2-33A instead of 2-33B this choice was based on the knowledge that data AI references would be awash 2-33A information. The 2-33B is relative new with 3 models having been built and delivered thus there would be limited information available. Further queries could be made determine if in fact this conjecture is true. AI is imperfect, as you may have suspected, releasing at a safe margin above stall in incorrect. Like anything else further queries would be needed to determine how AI made this observation. Was it looking at the correct moment in the data? The suggestion of how to fly once off tow is sound. The analysis of the pattern was accurate as this pattern was a student’s first attempt.

GROK- “The airplane and the tow got you to 3000 ft safely. Everything after that was mediocre technique for a training glider. Next flight: brief the tow pilot on target speed, release at a safe margin above stall, immediately transition to min-sink or best L/D and look for lift, and fly a disciplined pattern with stabilized approach speeds. The 2-33 rewards precise energy management; this flight did not demonstrate it.”

A student can upload the flight data they collected using Copilot to a search engine and try this for themselves. Solo students can do the same; you can edit the prompts and limit the analysis to only one phase of flight—for example, thermalling. It would be interesting to investigate AI’s ability to compare two or more files and prompt it to determine if there are any noticeable improvements in pattern work between flights.

Soaring Movie Trivia-Answers

By Andrew Apicos

The answer to last issues was The Thomas Crown Affair, 1968 Starring Steve McQueen and Fay Dunaway (not pictured, Astrid Heeren was pictured). The glider flown was a Schweizer SGS 1-23H and was piloted by Leonard McMasters.

There was a second remake of the The Thomas Crown Affair can you name who the stars were, the year released, glider and glider pilot.



Soaring Magazine Photo

By Jerry Pokrywka

Congrats to Pierre on making an appearance in the September issue of Soaring magazine. The photo was captured at a 1-26 contest in Hinckley, IL.

Pierre scored 14th place out of 22, with a total of 1619 points overall!

#	Points	Name	mi	mph	Aircraft	Airport	Date
7	131	Pierre-Alban Grellet-Aumont Long Island Soaring Association	43	25	Schweizer SGS 1-26	Hinckley United States, Illinois	05/20/2026 18:01 → 19:49
8	57	Pierre-Alban Grellet-Aumont Long Island Soaring Association	19	21	Schweizer SGS 1-26	Hinckley United States, Illinois	05/16/2026 19:43 → 20:43
9	174	Pierre-Alban Grellet-Aumont Long Island Soaring Association	57	24	Schweizer SGS 1-26	Hinckley United States, Illinois	05/14/2026 17:35 → 20:20
10	134	Pierre-Alban Grellet-Aumont Long Island Soaring Association	43	21	Schweizer SGS 1-26	Hinckley United States, Illinois	05/11/2026 20:08 → 22:13



Pierre-Alban Grellet-Aumont on tow at the 1-26 Nationals, Hinkley, IL. Stefan Seville

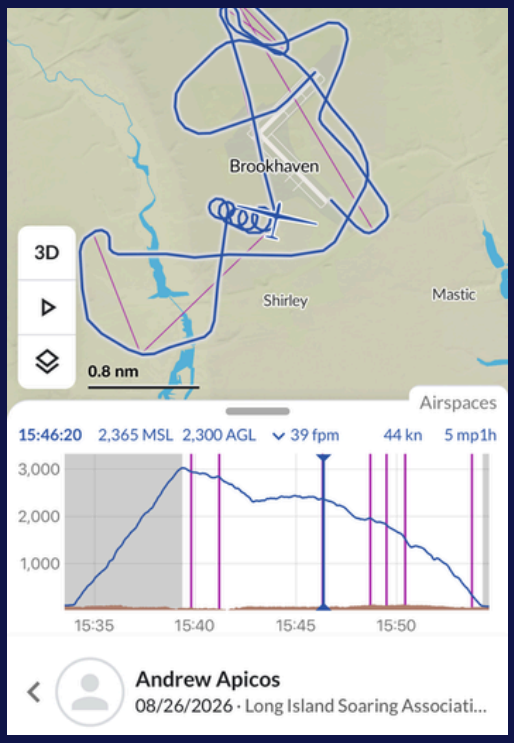
WeGlide and Copilot

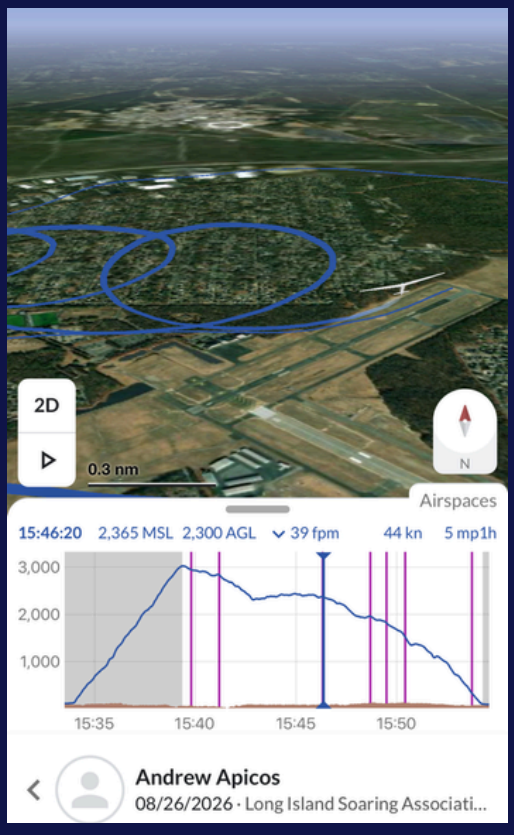
By Andrew Apicos

In short, Copilot records your flight, and WeGlide is where you can post your flight for you and others to view.

WeGlide and Copilot are apps available to you by virtue of your SSA membership. If you haven't already done so, take the time in the next week to download both apps to your mobile device. They are available for both Apple iOS and Android devices. Essentially, WeGlide is a platform for sharing your flights, stories, and photos with other glider pilots worldwide. WeGlide includes contests, and it can score your flights and tasks. Copilot, on the other hand, is a sanctioned flight recorder, meaning it's an official digital record of your entire flight.

The SSA has a program for awarding badges based upon pilot achievement. Your A badge is earned when a student pilot completes their pre-solo training and completes their first solo flight. One requirement for the Silver badge is a climb of 1,000 meters after tow release and from a low point. This can be proven by carrying a barograph or by using an officially sanctioned flight recorder such as Copilot. In WeGlide, you can review your entire flight by replaying it in either 2D or 3D (see screenshots). The quality of your thermalling is easily viewed (no squinting allowed), as well as your straight glides and 90-degree turns while in the pattern. Altitude, airspeed, time of flight after release, and max altitude are all on display for your review and reflection. These tools, along with input from your flight instructors, will better aid your progress.





Looking Ahead: Winter Is Coming

By Katelyn Erthal

We've been fortunate to enjoy some beautiful, warm weather lately, giving us plenty of opportunities to fly and enjoy the club. However, as we transition into the colder and slower winter months, it's important to remember that progress doesn't have to stop when flying activity slows down.

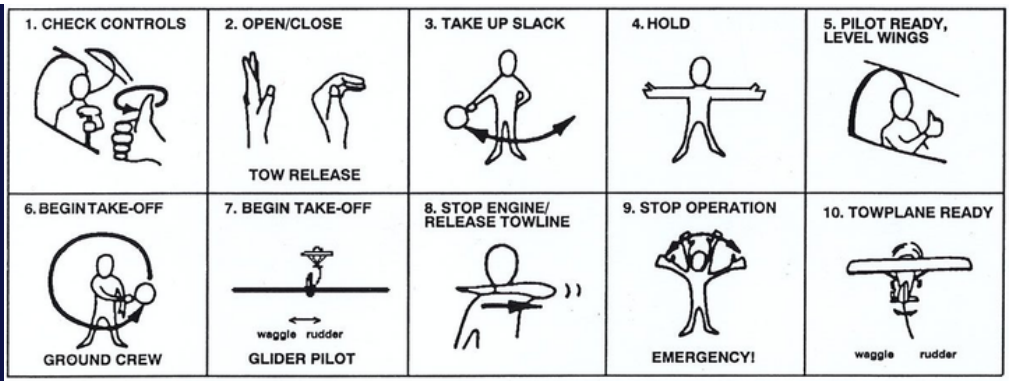


This is an excellent time to take advantage of the resources available to you:

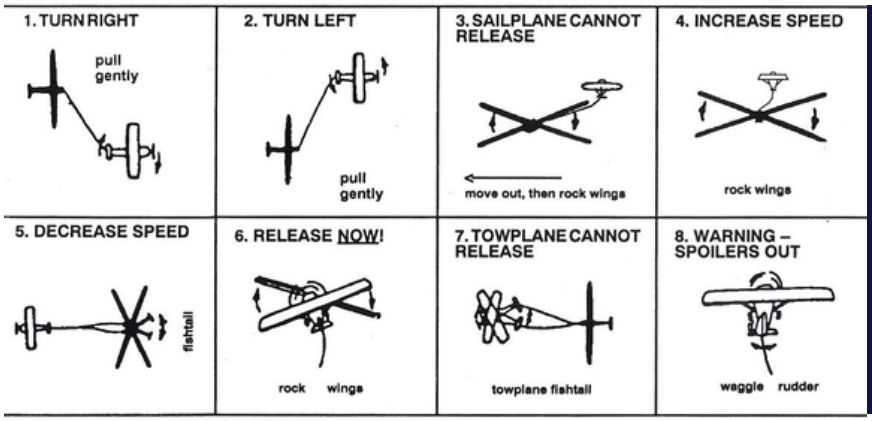
• Utilize the simulator: Keep your skills sharp and practice procedures in a low-pressure environment.
• Attend a ground school: Strengthen your knowledge and prepare for your next rating or certification.
• Study up: Work through the material you've been putting off and get ahead for the upcoming season.
• Set goals: Whether it's earning a glider rating, getting checked out in the Super Cub or Cessna, pursuing a tow endorsement, or simply becoming a more proficient pilot, use the winter months to make meaningful progress.

The spring flying season will be here before we know it. Those who use the winter wisely will be ready to hit the ground running when the weather turns.

AMERICAN SOARING GROUND SIGNALS



AMERICAN SOARING AIRBORNE SIGNALS



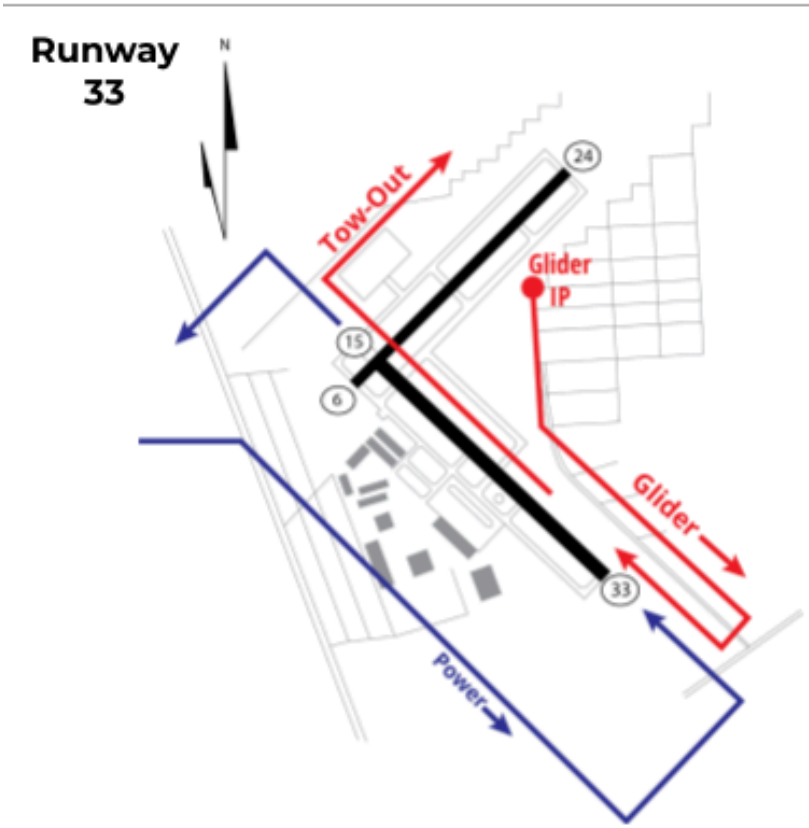


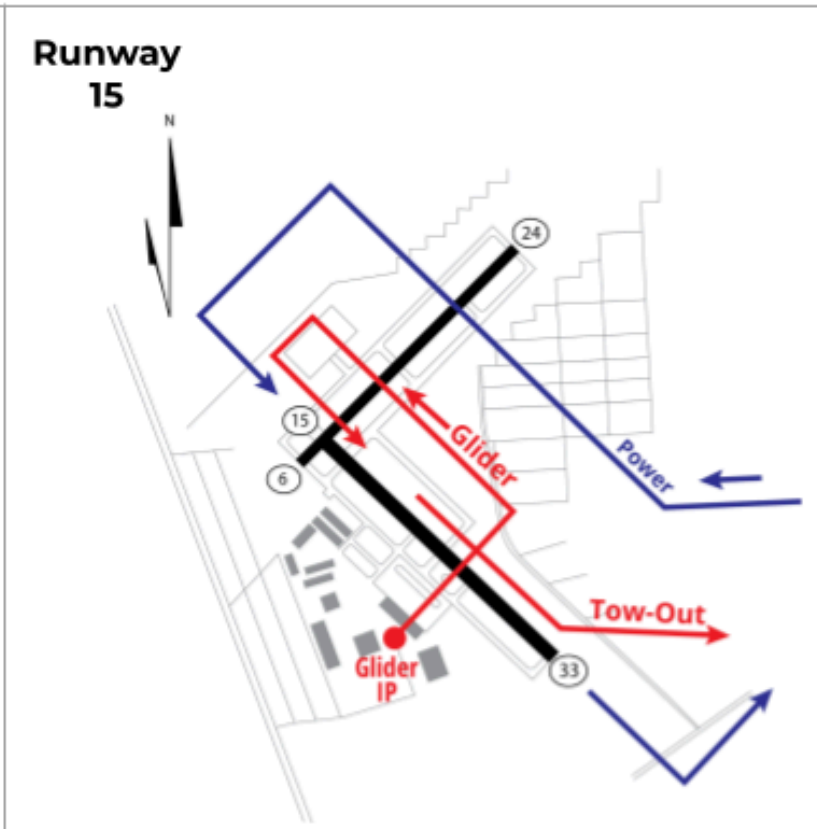
Jacob enjoying a late afternoon flight.

Recommended Links

Soaring Society of America
Wing Runner Course
WeGlide
Aviation Weather
Glider Flying Handbook
FAA's Practical Test Standards for Gliders

Brookhaven Airport Traffic Patterns









LISA's Club Surface Wind Limits		
	Max. Winds:	17 knots
	Max. Gusts:	22 knots
	Max. Crosswinds:	9 knots at more than 45 degrees


www.longislandsoaring.com