



# Nutmeg Newsletter



Volume 50, Issue 3

March 2009



Carol, Mac, and Linda enjoy a hearty laugh at the recent Nutmeg banquet. Courtesy: Tom Albrecht.

## Key Dates

Jeff Driscoll

- **Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>** - Safety Meeting – Miry Brook Firehouse, Danbury, CT.
- **Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>** – Official Opening Day. There may be informal preparations occurring at the airport April 11<sup>th</sup>.
- **Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Safety Meeting – Freehold Airport

Attendance at one of the two Safety Meetings is mandatory. ♦

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## Soft Turf Warning

Tom Albrecht

Recently, I spent a couple of hours at the airport. During that time I did my mid-day 1 1/2 mile walk on the turf adjacent to the runway and found the turf to be **very soft in places!!** The ground still has frost in it and when the upper surface thaws out the water can't drain down.

A number of aircraft movements were observed yesterday afternoon at Freehold airport, two of which caused ruts in the turf. We should remind ourselves and other pilots to keep the aircraft off of the turf until advised that it is dry enough to taxi on.

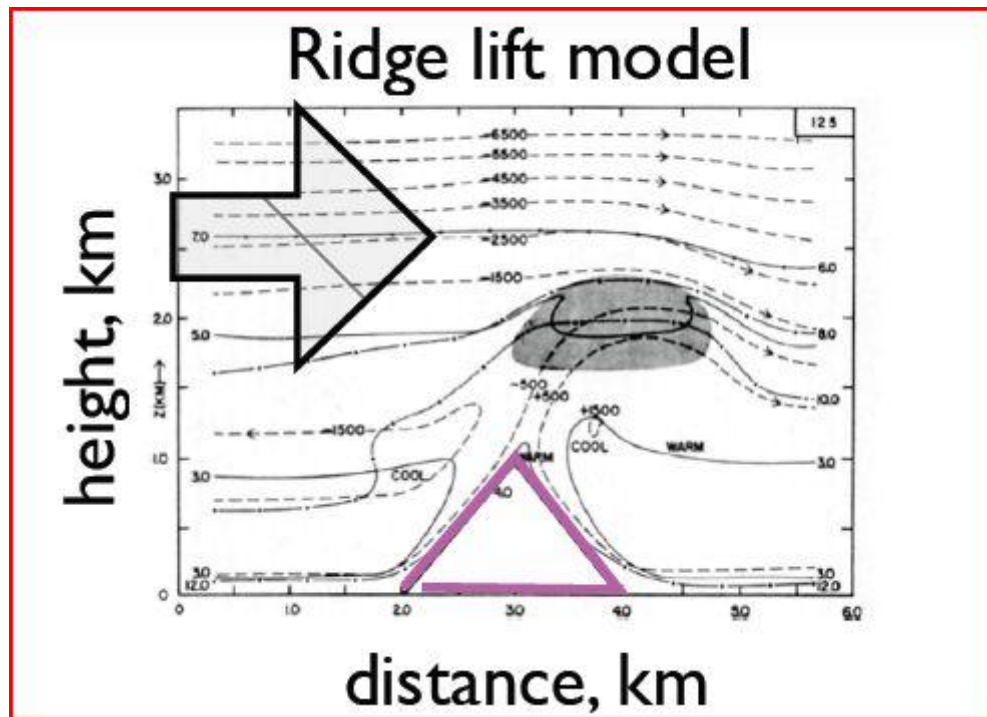
The same advice applies to golf carts. Please be cognizant of where you drive a golf cart at the airport during late winter and early spring. Thanks for understanding. ♦

## Soaring over the Catskills - Safety! (Part 2 of 3)

Bill Kenyon

### Lift over the Catskills

If you're observant, you've already noticed that cumulus develop earlier over mountains, are more numerous, and last longer. We often see a line of cumulus over the Taconic Range, 35 miles or so east of us. Robert Scorer starts one of his articles "Cumulus grow preferentially over mountains" (1955).



In the figure above, the conclusion agrees with common sense -- you're going to look for lift coming off the upwind side of the ridge. This is another reason to ***know the wind aloft before you fly.***

Be wary of turbulence coming off another ridge upwind of you, particularly on WHP.

If the sun is heating the upwind side, there will be more lift, but we usually don't have that combination of circumstances -- except sometimes in late afternoon.

If you're losing altitude while thinking that the lift should be there and you're going to find it soon, don't fall into the sucker trap of getting low-and-slow over the ridge:

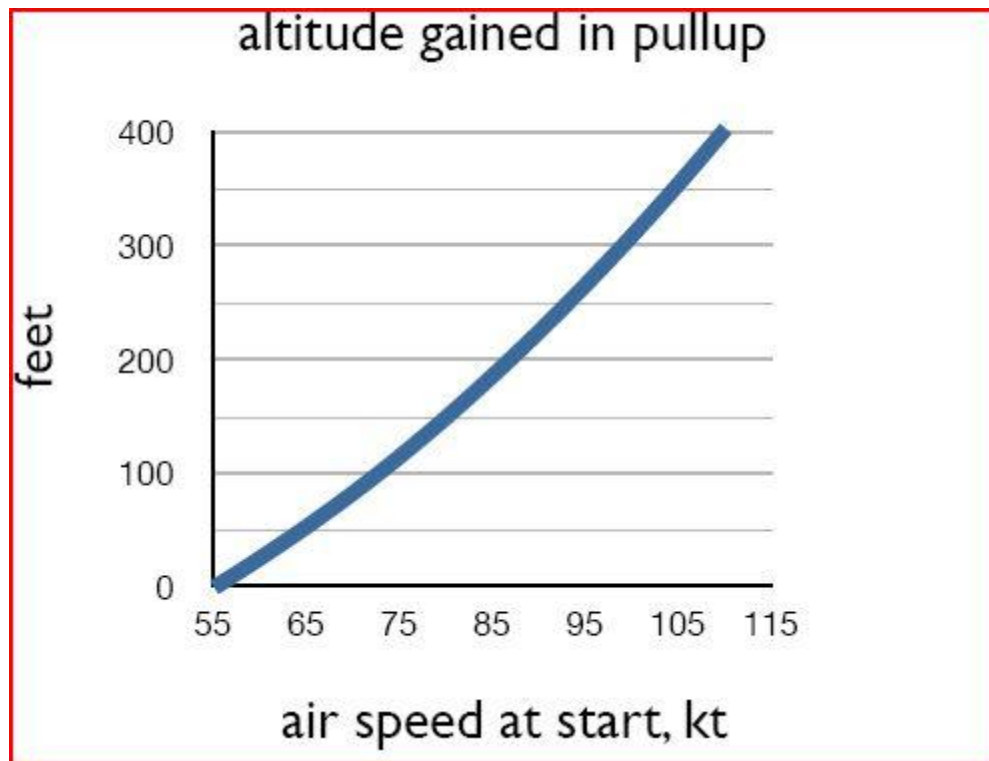
**A fundamental principle: NO low-and-slow EVER!  
or better: ALWAYS be prepared for a burst of sink!**

Remember that sink and turbulence are commoner and stronger over the mountains. How can you be

prepared for sink?

### 1. Fast: go fast if you're low -- or in turbulence.

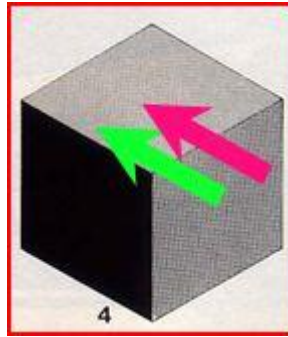
The chart below shows that if you're going 75 kt and pull up to 55 kt, you gain ~ 100 feet, or 12 seconds worth of time in our 500-fpm-down scenario; if you're going 110 kt, you gain about 400 feet. These numbers are max -- they'll be smaller if you're flying poorly because your eyes are looking pleadingly toward the exit.



Another reason to go fast is that you have much more control authority (since control-surface forces go up with speed-squared) so you can maneuver faster -- to overcome turbulence and **at the same time** (say) to roll away from a slope.

Take into account what glider you are flying: the 2-33 wouldn't stall in a 45-degree bank with full back-stick, but the Superblanik will drop a wing readily when circling at marginal speed. So your number for 'low' needs to be bigger in it.

## 2. Exit: stay near it

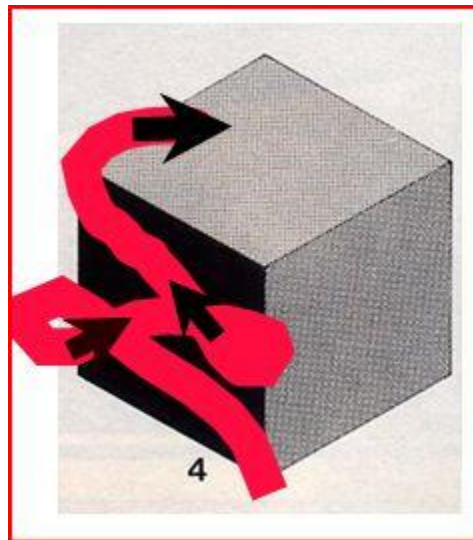


In the diagram above, the two gliders are flying over a mountain shaped like a table. For the green glider, a turn to the left puts him, in just a few seconds, high over the adjacent valley, where he is safe. The red glider is low over the top of the table, and is in danger from sink.

The same logic applies to being over steep slopes (safer) versus shallow slopes (more dangerous).

## 3. Murphy's Law: respect it, because unexpected bad stuff happens all together at the worst possible time.

In the figure below, the pilot has worked his way up the steep face of the mountain, using S-turns that always turn away from the slope (***never towards the slope***). When he thinks he's high enough, he starts a complete circle over the flat top of the mountain.



About 150 degrees into the circle, he (actually, it was me) encounters a burst of sink. This is the worst possible place to encounter the sink -- going back is no faster than finishing the circle. To get out of the sink, he must pick up speed, but that means putting the nose down -- aiming right at the trees, and that's not a good feeling. The lower your altitude, the farther you must put the nose down to pick up speed fast (up to a point, you realize).

If you were making 1-minute circles, a full circle at 500 fpm sink gives you 500 feet altitude loss.

Bottom line -- be prepared for bad things to happen at the worst possible moment.

#### 4. Plan: waaay ahead

A strong example of the need to plan ahead is the ridge-approach-from-downwind discussed earlier.

In the figure below, the glider pilot is checking out a valley or canyon on the left side of the mountain (we are looking down from above). At the bottom of our field-of-view, the mountain face is vertical, like a cliff.



However, as he proceeds along, he comes to an area where the mountain slope is less steep (at the top of the figure). Now he is in danger, because a blast of sink can put him down near the slope, where he has no room to make his turn away to the left.

He probably could have anticipated a likely blast of sink, based on his knowledge of wind direction and speed -- so **plan!**

#### 5. Recalibrate -- for experiences, the day's conditions ---

If you thought you were in the trees for sure on your flight last week (as I did once last year for 4 seconds, even with the mistakes of others fresh in my mind), increase your margins! If Ed had to make his pattern on the wrong side of the airport, ask him in a friendly way what happened, and learn from it.

If you find yourself in circumstances you haven't been in before, be more conservative! Height and speed that worked fine for you on one day won't be adequate for a day when the wind is stronger, or when there is more atmospheric turbulence.

A route that kept you away from sink and turbulence on one day may not do so if the wind direction is different.

Expand your envelope gradually -- and make use of our inexpensive but highly experienced group of instructors.

Summary of Always-be-prepared-for-a-burst-of-sink: Remember the acronym **FEMPR** for Fast, Exit,

Murphy, Plan, and Recalibrate. You should recognize that Always-be-prepared...-sink is a particular example of Always Have a Plan B, specialized to the case of sudden sink. ◇



## Parachute Repacking

### Peter Meny

John Spear, from Ellington CT is available to repack chutes. Since I live pretty close to him, I would be happy to pick up anyone's chute at the March 28 Safety Meeting, bring it to John, and deliver it to Freehold on Opening Day.

John charges \$50 and prefers a check made out to him.

According to him the FAA has extended the repack schedule from 120 to 180 days. ◇



## FAA Written Exam Milestone

### Tom Albrecht

In late February a Nutmeg Soaring Association member, Christopher Atkins, successfully passed his FAA written exam for Private Pilot-glider.

Chris has been a member of Nutmeg Soaring Association for about 4 years and started his ground school studies last summer. During the winter he completed many practice exams and felt he had a chance at passing the written exam. So in late February he made his appointment with the testing facility and chewed his finger nails in anticipation of the questions to come!

He passed with a score of 90 and is now happily looking forward to finishing his primary flight training.

Nutmeg Soaring Association congratulates Chris Atkins on one of the big milestones that a student pilot experiences!

When you see Chris at the airport please extend a personal congratulations! ◇



## Spring Quarter 2009 Duty Pilot Roster

### Peter Meny

Date	Duty Pilot
18-Apr	<b>Frank Molnar</b>
19-Apr	<b>Mike Opitz</b>
25-Apr	<b>Bob Pett</b>
26-Apr	<b>Jeff Quackenbush</b>
2-May	<b>Ben Ramey</b>
3-May	<b>Lee Ramsdell</b>
9-May	<b>Walter Rogg</b>
10-May	<b>Peter Scarpelli</b>
16-May	<b>Rudi Szigetti</b>
17-May	<b>Randoll Webb</b>
23-May	<b>Peter Whitbeck</b>
24-May	<b>Tom Albrecht</b>
25-May	<b>Chris Atkins</b>
30-May	<b>Dan Baroody</b>
31-May	<b>Scott Baroody</b>
6-Jun	<b>Matthew Beattie</b>
7-Jun	<b>George Buzas</b>
13-Jun	<b>Linda Demarco</b>
14-Jun	<b>Bob Duckworth</b>
20-Jun	<b>Dave Jackson</b>
21-Jun	<b>Nan Jackson</b>
27-Jun	<b>Sydney Kohrs</b>
28-Jun	<b>Doug Laitinen</b>

◇

## Virga

### John Boyce on behalf of the late Jerry Bramblett

With spring comes spring weather, with summer weather to follow. With summer weather comes the occasional TRW+.....that's weather shorthand for the stuff you want to stay far away from. One of the accompanying benefits of the TRW+ is.....VIRGA!

Here is what Nutmeg's Poet Laureate; the late Jerry Bramblett had to say:

Virga's rain that starts to fall  
But doesn't reach the ground at all.  
Even to a seasoned pro  
It looks like VMC below.

But venture underneath that stuff,  
You'll find it can get very rough.  
There's much in flying that can thrill'ya,  
Believe me, though, that stuff can kill'ya!

The heat that makes the raindrops go  
Can leave the air as cold as snow.  
Then down from out the sky it drives,  
A microburst that threatens lives.

So, when you see that floating Cu  
With streaks below that fade from view,  
Best give it lots and lots of room.  
There's nothing gained by tempting doom. ◇



## 2009 Banquet Kudo's Review

**Carol, Mac, Winnie**



**The "Lock Busters" team accepts their award.  
Courtesy: Tom Albrecht**

- 1. MY LADDER'S TOO SHORT.** Frank Molnar for getting stuck on top of his camper.  
Prize: Whistle and Picture of him on camper.
- 2. LONGEVITY AWARD.** Len Herman for longest instructions ever to a tow pilot and taking 26 years to get license. Prize: Aircraft Radio Communication Timer.
- 3. HIGH TEA/CULTURAL UPGRADE.** Karen Bennett for efforts to bring a little class to the field.  
Prize: Tea Infuser and Napkins.
- 4. INGENUITY AWARD.** Lee Ramsdell for the unique counterweight used on the barbeque spit at the pig roast. Prize: Picture of Counterweight.
- 5. BITS AND PIECES.** Jim Sidway for cutting label for instrument panel on Pawnee project.  
Prize: Children's Scissors and Tape
- 6. LOOSE SCREWS.** Bruce Stein for having so many things torn apart in his hangar.  
Prize: Loose Screw jar
- 7. SILK PURSE OUT OF SOWS EAR.** Estebon Dragonovic for improvement of "rust bucket" golf cart.  
Prize: Dried Pig's Ears
- 8. DON QUIXOTE AWARD.** Bill Kenyon for efforts cutting brambles on hill at end of the field.  
Prize: Bramble Bashing Band-Aids
- 9. COOL PILOT AWARD.** Bruce Stobbe for helicopter flights and flying Pawnee while tied to the ground.  
Prize: Toy Plane with Fan
- 10. YES, I CAN AWARD.** Lynn Stein for taking flying lessons after being afraid to go in small plane.  
Prize: Preflight Wipes



**11. CAT BURGLAR AWARD.** Amy Driscoll for breaking into several trailers that people were locked out of. Prize: Cat Mask

**12. LOCK BUSTERS TEAM AWARD.** Bruce and Lynn Stein, Kendall and Dawn for amusing efforts to get into locked vehicle. Phrase, "how many white men does it take to break into a truck". Prize: Large Key on Chain, Coat Hanger and two Megaphones.

**13. DON'T FORGET TO COME TO THE FIELD AWARD.** Rudi Szigeti for missing lots of Freehold Fun last year. Prize: Finger Cap with Ribbon and Toy Boat

**14. DUMPSTER DIVING AWARD.** Mac gave Winnie Kenyon for twice losing sun glasses in garbage at end of cookouts. Prize: Rubber Gloves and Mask

**15. NO SMOKING AWARD.** Winnie gave Mac for quitting smoking. Prize: Air Freshener ◇

## Calling All Duty Pilots!!

### Peter Meny

The 2009 season will be here before we know it (April 18 if Mother Nature cooperates!!). One of the key elements of a safe and efficient ground operation is the Duty Pilot. The alertness, responsiveness, and effective management of the duty pilot can prevent accidents and injuries. By making the ground operation run smoothly, wait times for launch are also shortened.

This year I have created a schedule for the entire season to allow people to check their calendars and to switch with other members if they know they are unavailable on a certain date. Some members, like tow pilots, instructors, and board members are exempt, but the rest of us are needed to be the duty pilot "du jour" two to three times per season. The list has been reviewed by Board of Directors, but if you are on the list and think you should be exempted, or if you're not on and think you should be, please contact me.

As always, please remember that it is your responsibility to arrange coverage if you are unable to make your scheduled duty date. Fortunately, our website makes it very easy to check the schedule and make changes online. I have found that contacting a few people by e-mail when I need to switch is an easy way to make changes. Once we've agreed to the switch, I go to the website duty schedule and make it official.

As in the past an e-mail reminder will also be sent to you in advance of your date.

I have re-posted the checklist of duty pilot responsibilities for your review.

Thanking you in advance for your help. ◇

**The Nutmeg Newsletter is the official publication of the Nutmeg Soaring Association, Inc.**

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