

# Freedom's Wings Canada

provides people with disabilities an opportunity to fly

website <http://freedomswings.ca/> click on the "contact" button information

Freedom's Wings offers both "Inspirational" Glider Flights & "Flight Training". Our program strives to improve the quality of life for persons living with disabilities by providing a physically and intellectually exciting and challenging introduction to flight.

Freedom's Wings brings the world of Soaring to disabled persons. Gliders are equipped with Transport Canada approved hand controls and allow qualified disabled persons to earn a Glider Pilot's License

*Editor's Note: In 2004 when I was at York Soaring, I got involved in the Freedom's Wings program. At the time they were flying a Peregrine, a Krosno derivative, and my main contribution was that I continually broke the hand control for the rudder, which in my mind was a useful indicator of a flawed design, and in their opinion, it was cause for being grounded. I have always enjoyed the feeling that comes from being able to take someone for their first flight, and I have participated in many COPA for Kids and EAA Young Eagles flights. In the Guelph and Waterloo areas these are often dedicated to disadvantaged youth such as foster children. There is a special thrill when the passenger is differently abled, and therefore less likely to be involved in such activities. Many years ago, at SOSA, Tom Coulson and I figured out that we needed to remove the canopy from a G-103 in order to facilitate getting a paraplegic passenger into the glider. Please see freeflight 2003-5 for articles about Marlowe Horn's first flight. It was inspirational to have been with her and her family.*

*I continue to support the program, and I met my partner, Laurie Arnott (in photo below), through Freedom's Wings. Here is a story of how a club got involved, and it is followed by a passenger's report.*



Doug Scott

## Geoff Minors, President, Lethbridge Soaring Club

It was a very long drive from Alberta to York Soaring in Ontario to collect FNUO. It all started when Pavan Kumar, the club's CFI talked to me about this Grob fitted with hand controls and after several conversations with Charles Petersen and a club meeting, I was on the way to York with my son to collect the Freedom Wings Youth Canada Grob 103. On the way back my car had a bearing fail on the serpentine belt near Moose Jaw on a Sunday afternoon. My goal was to get it back to Cowley for Monday for the last day of the ASC summer camp and use the tow planes for our first flights so that myself and the other instructor could be back seat checked out. I phoned Pavan and told him I was stuck in Moose Jaw and would not make it to Cowley on Monday. He then phoned around to see if anybody would drive to Moose Jaw and collect us and the glider so we could have it for Monday. George Haeh arrived with a borrowed truck at 10:30pm, We left my car in Moose jaw and set off home to arrive home around 4:30am. The glider got to Cowley on time and we managed to get four flights in. Thanks to the efforts of the Lethbridge Soaring Club.

The Lethbridge Soaring Club has 11 members so far, we are only two years old and we fly out of the well-known Cowley airfield. The members are very dedicated to making the club grow. To get the opportunity to lease the Freedom Wings G103 was a great way to promote the club and give something back to the community. A big "thank you" to Charles Petersen to make this happen.

We are now looking for donations so that we can get disabled people in and out of the glider safely and to improve the facility for this operation. Any help we can get will be really appreciated.

Please visit our webpage [www.lethbridgesoaring.ca](http://www.lethbridgesoaring.ca) we also have a facebook page LSC - Lethbridge Soaring

The photo below (page 14) is a group photo on the Monday when we had FNUO rigged and ready for the first flight at Cowley.

We are winch only using the ASC Roman winch, we have two training gliders now, a Schweizer 2-22 and the Grob Twin Astir T. I also wrote a blog on how I got my silver this year which maybe of interest.

<http://gsminors.blogspot.ca/2015/05/saturday-may-23-2015-task-cowley-to.html?spref=fb>.

## What Soaring Means To Me

Kary Wright

Imagine that you are free as a bird. You are a mile high, silently circling on a beautiful clear spring day, gaining altitude every turn. Slightly below you there is another sleek engineless aircraft taking advantage of the same thermal (a pocket of rising air). You gently move the joystick left and right, banking the aircraft to try to hit the centre of the rising air. You glance at the instruments being mindful of airspeed, rate of climb, and the other



glider. The more altitude we gain the longer we stay up! Your instructor, a friend in the back seat, is getting great photos of the other glider that is piloted by another club member. You see and fly with birds, and climb to the base of puffy cotton-ball clouds. You notice tiny dinky-toy cars creeping along a highway, and little towns a mile below. You constantly remain aware of your location, so you can always make it home. Two hours later, you finally give in and head toward the airfield. You steer around the traffic pattern, your instructor making the radio calls and operating the spoilers to lose altitude.

You watch your speed, adjusting it by raising and lowering the nose. You line up on the runway, gently pull back on the stick to "round out" as the field nears, and grease the landing! What a perfect day!

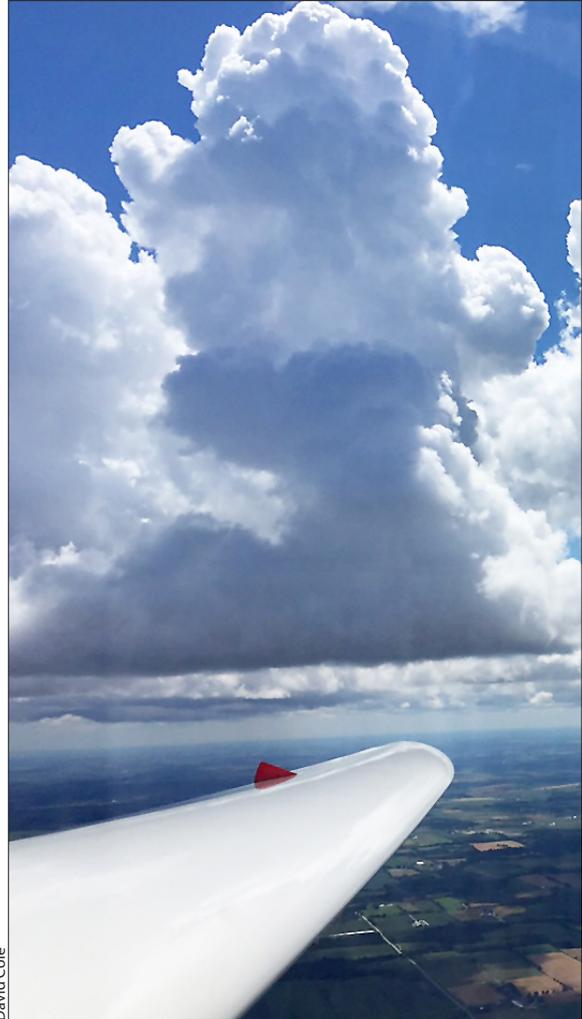
Soon after, you are confined to your cumbersome electric wheelchair. You are no longer a pilot. You are once again a quadriplegic, dependent on help from others. But you have tasted two hours of total freedom, soaring with birds and other pilots, silently sailing the sky from cloud to cloud a mile above those poor earthbound creatures that know not that experience. Nothing can wipe the grin off your face or replace the memory.

**That is soaring to me.**



Hütter 17

## Some days the sun shines



David Cole

Southern Ontario fun in SZD-55

## Some days not so much



Kerry Kirby

Friday the 17th of April. Waves less than 1 foot. High tide at 2 (grid time). Best fishing time at 11:00 pm