THE LEADING EDGE
The Newsletter of the M.I.T. Soaring Association, Inc.
April 1997

Contents

Dues are due May 15

Mark Tuttle

Club members will find a dues statement enclosed with this newsletter. The amount of dues you owe for the 97-98 soaring season is next to your name in the column labeled "current balance." Please send a check for this amount payable to MITSA before May 15 to Steve Glow, 1 Lakeshore Dr, Sterling, MA 01564. If your dues are not paid on May 15, then your flying privileges will be suspended until your dues are paid.

Some members have a positive value in the "previous balance" column, which probably represents some unpaid tow fees.

Most new members have a negative value in the "prorated credit" column. These new members are receiving credit for their overpayment of dues last year. The dues period runs from April 1 of one year through March 31 of the next year. New members were asked to pay a full year's dues when they joined for the sake of simplicity at the field, but now they are receiving credit for the fraction of the year before they joined. For example, if you joined in January 97 and you paid $330 for twelve months of professional dues, then today you are receiving a credit of $247.50 for the nine months April 96 through December 96 before you joined.

Jim Emken is looking for ship captains for the coming year. This job entails looking after one of the gliders, organizing the cleaning and waxing of the glider on a regular basis, and letting Jim know if there is a problem that needs to be taken care of. Jim needs five volunteers for ship captains, and volunteers to help the captains throughout the year. If you are willing to help, please let Jim know.

News briefs

Mark Tuttle

Annual meeting: The annual meeting was held at the Papa Razzi restaurant in Wellesley on February 23. The crowd numbered about fifty, so it was a very social occasion, and everyone had plenty to eat. The party was organized by Carl Johnson, and he did a fine job.

New board: The business part of the meeting consisted of our new vice president introducing the new board of directors. In the club's only contested election in recent memory, the contest between Al Gold and Eric Hostage for the position of director of operations ended with the position going to Al. The next board consists of Phil Gaisford (president), Carl Johnson (vice president), Steve Glow (treasurer), Rob Playter (secretary), Joe Kwasnik (membership), Al Gold (operations), Jim Emken (maintenance), and Bruce Easom (logistics).

Invited speaker: The speaker this year was Margaret Rappaport. Margaret received her primary training from Doris Grove, she holds glider and airplane ratings (both sea and land), she is working on a helicopter rating, and she is a highly experienced psychiatrist and psychologist. The title of Margaret's talk was "Fit to Fly." She talked about the construction of a personal checklist for whether you are emotionally and physically fit to fly, but spent most of her time talking about ways to modify your behavior so that you remain fit to fly, since you can cease to be fit to fly long before you are explicitly aware of your unfitness. Topics included diet, sleep, relaxation techniques, and even time-management tips for reducing stress from work. In a dramatic example, Margaret led the group through one relaxation exercise, and the atmosphere in the room was noticeably more mellow after the exercise. She also handed out an audio tape she made to help people learn to relax, and a number of people have commented to me on how effective the tape is. If you missed the meeting, I encourage you to hear Margaret speak at one of the local Aviation Safety seminars in the area.

Trophy winners: One highlight of each annual meeting is the awarding of the trophies. The Nicki Velforth trophy is given to the "best student of the year," and this year it went to Steve Glow. The "paddle" is awarded to the "most enthusiastic new member," and this year it went to Jim Emken. The Alan trophy is traditionally given for the best triangle, and this year it was awarded to Mark Koepper for his 300K badge flight (both of them, that is). The Tommy Thompson trophy is traditionally given to a person the club expects to give something back to soaring and is traditionally given to a person who seems to be working on an instructor certificate, and this year it went to Ian Clark for his long, quiet work for the club. The Draper trophy for best flight in a MITSA glider went to Joe Kwasnik and Terry Wong for their Sugarbush wave flight to 13,000 feet. The Francis trophy for the best 100K triangle was not awarded this year.

Special recognition was given to Ken Rosenberg for the years of dependable and indispensable instruction he has given to the club. In its current state, the club simply could not survive without his help. Unlike other award winners, Ken gets to take his home with him: Ken was given a Camel-back water container for use in the glider.

Door prize: In a most creative and unusual move, Carl Johnson organized a door-prize contest to guess the L/D ratio of a Styrofoam glider from the 1.5M class. Guesses ranged from 6:1 to 60:1, but the winner was Mary Kathryn Kwasnik who guessed in the neighborhood of 20:1. She is destined to be a future student of Walter Hollister in the aero department at MIT — in about 15 years. This was a memorable party, and Carl deserves a great round of thanks.

John Good: John Wren reports that John Good did a better-than-1000K flight a few days ago at the end of March from Pennsylvania to Alabama. Although a lot of it was done on the ridge, even after going to thermals, he never got above 5,000 feet. Amazing!

Spencer Webb: Spencer was a member of the club just before I joined. I see him at Lawrence Airport most weekends, and he says: "Hi everyone! I am alive and well and hope you are, too. I'm studying for my instrument rating now. Keep 'em flyin'!" Spencer can be reached at home (603 898-1321) or via email (webb@ultranet.com).

Eric Hostage: Eric has a job in the big league. He was just hired as a First Officer for Business Express flying a Saab 340. He has been busy with flight training at Flight Safety International at LaGuardia, and passed the check ride in the flight simulator on Sunday, March 9. Eric is waiting now to learn where he will be based.

Karl Hjerberg: Karl was a member of the club a few years ago, and he wrote to the club a few months about about his latest project:

"For a short period of time in 1991/92 I was an active member of MITSA shortly after your move to Sterling where I also was practicing helicopters. After a sudden lay off from a composite company in Stowe I was forced to relocate and my choice came to be Florida where I have been building Seawinds the last couple of years.

"A good friend of mine is now Airport Manager at Zephyrhills Municipal Airport; we used to work for a flying school at Worcester airport. Zephyrhills is now working on a project to lay out a grass-strip (FAA approved) within the airport and it might be so in a relative near future that 'there will be a lift of a ban of nonmotorized airplanes operating from the airport' (local ordinance; reason unknown!).

"As I am very interested to assist interested people in the area to try to establish a well functioning gliderport I take the opportunity to contact MITSA in the matter to see if there might be an interest for MITSA to take part in the project and at the same time find a great reason to widen the winter activities and get more use of your fleet of gliders.

"There is an alternative to the above if the local restrictions for gliders in the airport still will be in effect after the grass-strip is there; I am personally in that case also very interested to place a motor-glider in the field and will therefore widen the matter to this alternative and see if this alternative also could be interesting for MITSA?"

Karl can be contacted at 11487 Linden Drive, Spring Hill, FL 34608; (352) 683-0828.

Boston Gliders: Gliders are returning to Plymouth. A flyer from Hank Krejci says: "Soaring at Plymouth has taken many forms over the years and, along with many of you, I have fond memories from way back. In starting Boston Gliders, I would like to do my part in restoring those fun times. You too can help. Initially we will be providing tows, rides, and limited instruction and rental on winter weekends. Please let me know what you'd like to see at Plymouth as we grow. The airport community room is available and, if there is sufficient interest, we can get together as a group some evening for coffee and discussion." Contact Boston Gliders, 49 Welles Rd, Lincoln, MA 01773; phone (617) 259-0059; fax (617) 259-0626; email hank@gliders.com; web page http://www.gliders.com/boston.html.

North Central Airways Soaring Center: "North Central Airport in Lincoln, Rhode Island, has returned to soaring with the formation of the 'All New' North Central Airways Soaring Center. The airport offers two large paved runways and several excellent grass strips. Aerotows are available seven days per week. Please fly in anytime.

"North Central Airways has designed a variety of packages including an Introductory Sailplane Three-Flight Course; Beginner Sailplane Training Course; Private Pilot-Glider Course; Commercial License Course; and Power Pilot Transition Course. North Central Airways now has available for rental and training perhaps the nicest Schweizer 2-33A glider in the northeast, with all new paint, glass, interior including upholstered interior sidewalls, mahogany instrument panel, etc. An important selling feature is that the glider is available to customers on a reservation basis. Which means, when you reserve the glider, it is available to to you at exactly the time reserved. No more waiting all day to get your turn. The company plans to add a high-performance sailplane in the near future. Full and part time glider instructors are needed."

Contact Peter Belli at (401) 333-1212 for details.

The accidental cross-country pilot

Stephen Glow

I like to set goals for myself, it gives me something to focus on and a way to rate my progress. Last summer I set the goals of going solo and getting my private license and, thanks to a lot of help from our instructors and many early mornings at the field, I managed to achieve those goals. This summer I have a couple of new soaring goals; the first is to learn to stay in the air during those marginal soaring days rather then fall out of the sky like a rock as I've been doing. The second is to do my first cross-country flight, perhaps a 50K triangle.

Sunday, March 24, was one of those marginal early spring soaring days. A cold front had just pushed through the night before, and the thick overcast of Saturday had given way to a clear cold and windy day. Worcester ATIS gave the temperature as -3C (27F), with winds from 290 degrees at 17 knots gusting to 25.

Despite the cold there was already a good turnout at the field when I arrived that morning. Mike Wells, Ken Gassett, and Jim Tsillas were helping Ken Rosenberg pre-flight 117BB while Andrew Watson, Jakov Kucan, and I started to go over the 1-34. Even Bob Fletcher was on hand assembling his ASW-24 and as far as I know making the first appearance of a fiberglass ship for '97. Surely spring was here at last.

While pre-flighting the 1-34, someone made the suggestion that we replace the worn tape which covered the gaps around the wing roots. Once we had the old tape off we decided to remove the turtle deck and take a look inside for ice or mouse nests. Looking over the wing pins and mounting hardware, I made the comment that we should de-rig this plane some warm spring day just to make sure everything was working smoothly in case of a landout. I had no idea at the time how close I would come to getting that wish.

Several cold hours later we were on the line launching gliders. It was one of those fickle soaring days where the length of the flights varied wildly with the level of pilot skill. It was definitely soarable, that point was made clear as we watched Bob Fletcher vanish on the horizon making his way north to New Hampshire.

When my turn to launch finally came, I was determined to have a decent flight. The word on the field was that the lift was pretty broken up by the wind down low, but above 3,000 feet it got a little smoother. I decided to take a 3,500 foot tow. The tow itself was uneventful, and I released in weak lift which I managed to work for another 300 feet before I lost it. After searching for the lost lift for a while without success I decided I had enough height to try for a cloud that didn't seem too far away.

Sink... Sink... Sink... Sink... That cloud doesn't seem much closer, maybe I misjudged the distance. Sink... Sink... Ah, there's some lift. I try to work it. Sometimes it's strong, sometimes weak, sometimes sink, I'm having trouble centering it. I'm down to about 3,000 feet of altitude, but I'm holding on. I'm still no closer to that stupid cloud, don't think I'll be trying for it again.

Sink... Lift... Sink... Lift... Sink... Sink... Lift... Sink... Sink... Sink... Damn, I know it's around here somewhere. What's my altitude? 3,200 feet and falling. Hunt around a little bit, no luck. I think I'll press on a bit, see if I can find something else.

There are spots of lift, but it's hard to center them, things are pretty broken up. I'm slowly loosing my altitude. I'm under 3,000 feet now, getting closer to 2,500. I better start heading back to the airfield and see if I can find anything closer to home. Where is that airfield anyway? I didn't notice quite how far out I'd gotten. Well, I may not be able to see it, but I know where it is.

There's a lot of sink here. The 1-34 has a speed-to-fly ring around the electronic vario, and I hope it's correct, because I'm using it. I'm pushing on at around 80 mph, and covering ground but loosing altitude. I still can't see the airport, and am down to around 2,000 feet.

I'm spending most of my time in strong sink (naturally), but occasionally I hear the electronic vario start beeping at lift. It's very tempting to stop and try to thermal, but I haven't been having much luck and I don't want to risk the altitude. The vario's beeping again, this time it's been doing it for a few seconds, it's too good to ignore, maybe I can pull myself out. I pull up into a tight right hand turn. Nothing.

I put myself back into a flat, 80 mph glide for where I knew the airport must be.

This looks bad, I may have to land out. I mean seriously, I may have to LAND OUT! I had taken John Wren's cross-country class over a year ago, and the topic of outlandings was one of the major focus areas, but at the time, sitting in a classroom sipping a coke, it hadn't seemed quite so ominous.

OK relax, keep heading for the airport but look for fields. There's one that looks plenty big. How many S's were there? Let's see, SIZE - that's fine, STOCK - nothing grazing in that, SHAPE - pretty much rectangular, it won't be totally an upwind landing but it's not too bad, SLOPE - looks flat to me, SURFACE - oh there's the rub, looks like it was plowed over in fall and it's bound to be rough and muddy. I really don't want to land there, not in this cold! The wind chill must be -10! OK, worst case I land there, but I have height to press on a bit further. Where is that damn airport!

The radio cracked... Richard Gammon's voice came over as he announced a glider launch. From behind a row of trees ahead of me, the tow plane emerged with the Blanik in tow. The airport! I can make that!

The muddy field was left far behind in my mind as I continued on to the airport. I was confident now that I would be able to make it, but I knew I couldn't make a normal pattern. I decided to make a right hand pattern rather then waste any altitude crossing over the field.

My anxiety over landing out was quickly turning into embarrassment and a reluctance to call out my landing pattern. Up to this point I was the only one who knew about my poor judgment, and now I was about to announce it to the world. Oh well, deep breath, "Sterling traffic; glider 660 entering RIGHT HAND pattern for 34, repeat, RIGHT HAND pattern for runway 34 grass." I shoved my radio back into my shoulder strap. I heard an annoyed pilot respond, something about being more specific, but it was too late, I was busy starting my landing checks and didn't want to mess with the radio any more.

Lets see, Undercarriage - down and locked. Speed to fly - keep it around 70. Trim - set. Airbrakes - quickly cracked open and closed, they work. Look - I know there's at least one plane out there somewhere, but I don't see anything in the pattern. Land. I make a 45 degree turn directly onto base, I've got plenty of height now, around 500 feet. A steep turn onto final, pull the airbrakes and push the stick forward to keep the speed on. Flare, and a short rollout.

I exhale for the first time in about five minutes, lay my head back on the headrest and close my eyes. That was exciting.

Stormfront soaring

Richard Dix

Richard is now in El Paso, and can be contacted by email at dixrichard@email.averydennison.com. —Editor

March 1, 1997 — Refusing to submit to a washout, last weekend, on a cold, dark stormy day, I decided to take a ride down to the field just to hang out and talk with the perpetual airport crowd. When I got there I found some other club members hanging around. I looked up and saw boiling clouds as a series of fronts pushed through. But it cold, and gusty, and to my untrained eye, about as far from a good soaring day as possible. But every so often the sun would break through and encourage me to fly. So, after sitting for an hour, I saddled up a 2-33 and hooked it up for tow. We took off and quickly climbed to 2,000 feet AGL, and found myself in 1,000 feet of lift. Subtracting the tow plane's 500 feet up, I did quick arithmetic and pulled the tow release. The lift developed into a wild ride! For the next fifty minutes I found myself battered about in that cockpit until I pulled the air brakes out of exhaustion and headed down, never having climbed above 3,300 feet AGL, the cloud base.

The flying was more physical than any I have ever done before. I climbed at one time from 1,300 feet AGL to 3,300 feet AGL in under a minute and a half! The variometer was pinned at a solid 1,000 fpm up! Shortly after, I was once again in 1,000 fpm up, and hit a wind shear so bad the variometer was reading 1,000 fpm down instantly. But I wasn't paying much attention, I had slammed my head on the canopy frame, and was cussing up a storm to match the one I caught in. But I was flying, and it was incredible! I was flying in and around the violently forming base of the clouds. It rained, and even snowed on me briefly! I never lost sight of the ground, but it was like flying in a fog. Occasionally the sun would peek through and warm me, but then the clouds would slam shut with an almost audible crash. The slow grace of clouds forming was transformed into an almost violent display of nature. The turbulence was so bad that the plane was flipped on its side past vertical. I looked up, and there was the airport! I never left the vicinity of the airport, and never had to thermal to stay in lift. All I had to do was watch a cloud forming, and look for tell-tale fingers of condensation pointing towards the earth from the cloud base, and fly into it. And also remember to hold on, because when you hit that zone, you would be flung upwards with a pinned vario!

Unfortunately, the storm continued its slow march across he desert, leaving the airport, and me behind. I pulled the airbrakes and headed for the field, where the winds had shifted around with the storm's departure. Glider ground got on the radio and advised me of the wind shift, I aborted downwind, pulled a 180, and headed in on a normal landing pattern. I pulled off the 7,500 feet runway at the Club hanger, staggered around the ground due to demonic mix of adrenaline, stiffness, cold, and soreness, and smiled. The ear-to-ear variety. I turned and watched the storm boil off east into the desert, leaving behind a beautiful sunset. I had flown that storm, and now it was like an old friend leaving. I turned my eyes to the west, and still do, looking for that next weather front, and the next wild ride.

Special thanks to John Hardy, the tow pilot who encouraged me to "get up in it!" and Dave, Soaring King of the El Paso Soaring Society, who launched me!

Crew needed: Bob Fletcher is looking for a crew for the Standard Class Nationals. The contest is in Cordele, Georgia, in early June. He says, "I will be leaving the Boston area June 5 and returning June 20. The only requirements are the ability to drive and read a map. This is an ideal way to learn lots about the sport in a short time." You can contact Bob at work (508-787-1000 x215), at home (508-337-8650) or by email (fletcher@orion-gps.com).

"The (f)e-mail of the PCs is more deadly than the bail!"

This terrible pun was the title of a message from Peter Neumann (neumann@csl.sri.com) in the RISKS Digest reporting on a woman convicted of perjury and falsification of evidence for sending an email message ("I have terminated Adelyn per your request.") from her former boss's personal computer to the company president. She had previously used the email message to win a $100,000 settlement from the company, but the sentencing judge said she could not use the settlement to pay her bail while her conviction is being appealed.

Minutes of the Board of Directors

Carl Johnson

These minutes have been heavily edited by Mark Tuttle for publication in the newsletter. —Editor

November 21, 1996

The meeting of the Board of Directors was held at 7:30 PM at Carl Johnson's house in Newton. Bruce Easom, Phil Gaisford, Carl Johnson, Joe Kwasnik, Mark Tuttle, and Terry Wong were present. Guenther Eichhorn and Steve Moysey were absent. Ian Clark was also present.

The meeting opened with a discussion of training and safety-related issues. Since these topics are the responsibility of the chief instructor, and since Steve Moysey was absent, no final decisions were made.

The board discussed whether the use of parachutes should become a standard part of the training syllabus, and the differing opinions among club members. Some pragmatic problems are that the chair-style parachutes presently owned by the club are inappropriate for the Blanik seats, which are designed for backpack-style parachutes, and they cost 800 to 1,000 dollars each; and the club does not have a good record of caring for the existing parachutes.

The board discussed a standard training syllabus for the club. The board agreed that it is up to the chief instructor to make a recommendation to the board. The board also agreed to suggest the use of the Knauff syllabus, since a considerable investment has already been made in this area.

Mark Tuttle made a motion to nominate Steve Moysey to continue as the chief instructor. The motion was seconded and unanimously agreed upon by the board.

The board discussed potential instructors within the club membership. The requirement for cross-country experience prior to becoming a qualified MITSA instructor was mentioned as a possible stumbling block to getting certain members to become club instructors. The reasons for this rule were discussed, but some board members felt that local pattern flying, unusual attitudes, and other basic instruction could be taught perfectly well by instructors lacking cross-country sailplane experience.

The board discussed the possibility of using instructors from other clubs to instruct at MITSA over the winter and early spring months. There are differing opinions in the club about whether outside instructors should be used. It was agreed that the chief instructor should decide upon this issue, although the board felt it would be permissible for non-members to instruct if they are FAA certified and have a good track record, are MITSA qualified (as defined by the chief instructor), and agree to teach according to the MITSA syllabus (as recommended by the chief instructor and approved by the board).

The board then moved on to a discussion of the purchase of a new clubhouse trailer. Joe then summarized the types of trailers that could be purchased from the Wayside trailer company. The price range considered included options ranging from a very rough unfinished trailer to a nicely appointed trailer. The size of the trailers in this price range is generally 10x40 feet, enough for two small offices and a large central training area. The board then discussed the possible strategies for connecting the trailer to an electrical service. In the meantime, the board approved a budget for acquiring a trailer. Joe agreed to identify a specific trailer within this price range and also agreed to provide an opportunity for other board or general members to view the trailer prior to purchase.

Ian then discussed the status of the club golf carts. Thanks to his efforts, they are both currently running, but he mentioned that they benefit from use and should be run every weekend. He also recommended again that the club purchase a new golf cart. Ian also mentioned the importance of waxing the gliders, preferably before winter.

The board then discussed candidates for next year's board of directors, focusing on potential candidates for the open positions of treasurer, operations, maintenance, and secretary. Mark agreed to contact the possible candidates to see who might be interested.

The final discussion of the evening centered around finding a location for the annual membership meeting. It was agreed that each board member should look for potential locations, preferably restaurants with appropriate meeting facilities. The board also discussed possible candidates for speakers at the meeting.

March 13, 1997

The meeting of the newly-elected Board of Directors was held at 7:30 PM at Phil Gaisford's house in Billerica. Jim Emken, Phil Gaisford, Steve Glow, Al Gold, Carl Johnson, and Joe Kwasnik were present. Bruce Easom and Rob Playter were absent. Mark Tuttle was also present.

Phil Gaisford opened the meeting by welcoming the new board members, and by noting that because of Jim Emken's recent maintenance efforts, he is already well up to speed on being a board member.

Mark Tuttle summarized the current MITSA finances, and indicated that he had nearly wrapped up his efforts to transfer the treasurer's responsibilities to Steve Glow. Mark agreed to send out the dues notices, and Steve agreed to file the required forms with the IRS and the attorney general's office. With this, Steve officially assumed the job of club treasurer.

Steve and Phil next signed revised signature cards for the club checking account.

Mark indicated that the Sterling airport still considers him to be the official MITSA contact person. Joe Kwasnik agreed to contact the airport and let them know that he is the official contact.

Al Gold said he would meet with Terry Wong in order to take over the responsibilities of director of operations. Mark said that he believed that Terry had been maintaining a spreadsheet of the glider logs which Al might want to use. Mark also recommended a meeting of duty officers in order to agree upon and standardize their responsibilities. Al agreed to set up a beer and pizza meeting (duly noted).

Al mentioned that he thought Bert Speranza may have maintained a DO responsibility sheet. Mark wondered about the old MITSA operations and safety book, also known as the red book, which he recalled had been maintained by John Wren. Joe said that he might have a copy, and that he would make it available to Al.

Jim Emken then spoke about maintenance issues. Topics discussed included: As of the board meeting, the 1-26 fuselage had been painted by Tom Avery, and Jim was waiting to hear about the status of the wings; Jim mentioned that he would get the original glider maintenance logs from Guenter Eichhorn; Rich Gammon is buying oil for the towplane; Jim said he would like to get a review of the basic responsibilities of director of maintenance; Al suggested that Jim should assign glider chiefs for each of the gliders, responsible for the preventive maintenance of that glider; Mark indicated that the paint on one of the Blaniks is chalking badly and probably needs treatment before waxing; Jim said that Tom Avery found nothing wrong with the ailerons on the L-33, a concern expressed by some board members after the last wind storm which damaged 118; Phil suggested that Jim should chat with Ian Clark, who is the current towplane chief; Possible new locations for towplane maintenance were discussed since Tom Avery is leaving; Fitchburg was mentioned as a good candidate for the new location, and Jim agreed to speak with Ian about this issue; The board agreed that Jim does not need to get board pre-approval for necessary and customary towplane repairs; and Mark thought that the new glider registration stickers were due in the mail, and might be already in the MITSA office.

The board discussed moving the MITSA office from the current location to a trailer. The board considered whether it made sense to make a deal with the airport to rent the hangar Tom Avery is vacating, but the consensus was that this would not be worthwhile. The board discussed the possibility of relocating the club to another airport, especially if the club could own the airport. Joe and Carl agreed to accelerate the effort to purchase a trailer, now that the winter months are ending.

The board next discussed the possible allocation of funds for upgrading the club gliders. The purchase of radios for the gliders was discussed first. After discussion, the board could not agree upon the need for radios so this possibility was tabled. The purchase of audio varios was next discussed. After discussion, there was general agreement that audio varios both enhanced safety and were affordable. Carl agreed to get pricing for new audio varios for the Blaniks.

The board wrapped up the meeting with two points: Phil and Mark agreed to work on getting license plates for the glider trailers; and Jim discussed the status of the golf carts, and the board approved the purchase of a battery charger.

The MITSA Board of Directors

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Club web page:
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For more information about MITSA, you can contact the club by email, visit our web page, or contact Joe Kwasnik, our director of membership listed above.

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Important Commisar goes to visit large collective farm. They organize a banquet in his honor. While chowing down on the stew, he almost chokes on something. He pulls it out. It's a piece of tire. Stunned silence. Then the head farmer offers a toast: "Only fifty years since the Revolution, and already the tractor replaces the horse!"