

Nomination
of

Jan Driessen

for the

Paul Schweizer
Lifetime Service Award

Submitted for Consideration to the



WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has devoted more than 30 continuous years of service to the soaring community as a tow pilot, commercial ride pilot, flight instructor, glider port general manager and mentor, and

WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has accumulated over 13,000 flight hours in multiple categories of aircraft, and

WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has accumulated nearly 30,000 flights and in excess of 10,000 hours in gliders alone, including receipt of Diamond badge 517 issued in 1982, and

WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has provided 485 endorsements from private glider through flight instructor-glider check rides, and over 750 solo glider endorsements, and

WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has served as General Manager of Soar Truckee Inc./ Truckee Tahoe Soaring Association for more than ten years, and

WHEREAS, Jan Driessen has served as a role model for all persons he encountered, especially youth pilots for whom he is a beloved mentor,

NOW, THEREFORE, be it known that Jan Driessen is being nominated by his colleagues and friends in the soaring community to receive the

SSA Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award.

FURTHERMORE, we ask the SSA to present this award forthwith.

Signed this date May 22, 2020

Nominated by:

Dave Ravetti, SSA# 849437



Nomination Co-signed by:

CarolAnn Garratt, SSA# 587440



Richard Pearl, SSA# 870916



Franklin Burbank, SSA# 23330



Knut Kjenslie, SSA# 178535



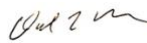
Richard Owen, SSA# 17382



Pablo Saso-Perkins, SSA# 669578



Dale Bush, SSA# 97756



Karol Hines, SSA# 122467





Jan Driessen
SSA# 190225

Jan Driessen, Biography

Early Years

- Jan started soaring in his home country of Holland at the age of 18 in 1954.
- He was a fighter jet pilot in the Dutch Air Force and trained with the Canadian Air Force. When he immigrated to California, he was a helicopter pilot in the Los Angeles area.
- He moved to Northern California, when working for Bank of America in the 1970s and was an active glider pilot receiving the silver badge in 1972, the gold in 1977 and the diamond badge, # 517, in 1982. He was known to support and promote loans for gliders. He often said at that time that a glider loan had never been in default.
- While working for BofA and living near Montague, CA, in 1979, he worked with the FBO to initiate tow service for himself and in his Libelle as well as other glider pilots. He promoted soaring and started working on his CFG which he received in 1980. He continued soaring and instructing at Montague until the FBO was sold in 1996 and BofA transferred him elsewhere. While there he improved the community aspect of the FBO and got more people interested in soaring (as you will read in the owner's attached letter).

Later Years/Current

- In 1995 Jan started soaring at Soar Truckee, California, and then worked as an instructor, tow plane pilot and ultimately as General Manager until 2017. During his time there, besides growing the glider community by working closely with the local clubs, he grew the "line-kids" operation by providing summer jobs in exchange for glider instruction to get more young people active in aviation. Many of these youngsters went on to become military and civilian professional pilots (as you will read in two of the line-crew letters, attached).
- Not content to soar and instruct only during the summer months in California, Jan looked for other places to promote soaring. For 3 years he gave rides in Durango, CO and for 13 years he taught and gave rides at Turf Soaring in Arizona.
- In 2006, he applied to Seminole Lake Gliderport in Florida and was accepted as a glider instructor and later as Chief Instructor. He continues teaching there now.
- During his career, Jan has:
 - o Over 13,000 total flight hours
 - o Over 10,000 glider flight hours in over 29,950 glider flights
 - o 485 glider endorsements from private through CFG and over 750 solo endorsements
 - oand he is still an active instructor at age 84!!

Included with this nomination are letters of endorsement from people who have known and worked with Jan. They have documented their memories of Jan's time and contribution to soaring over the past 40 years. The words of an FBO where Jan worked says it all: "Jan's contribution to the sport is tremendous, and today at 84 he is still at it, and can't stop doing what he loves. I can't think of anyone that deserves this award more than Jan."

List of Endorsements included with this Nomination

MONTAGUE, CALIFORNIA

1979 - Terry Weathers, Montague FBO owner and manager, CFGF, DPE

1980 - Dale Bush, Competition Glider Pilot

TRUCKEE, CALIFORNIA

1995 - Richard Pearl, President Soar Truckee, CFGF

1995 - Mike Johnson, Soar Truckee Manager, CFGF, DPE

1996 - Gregory "Shifty" Peairs, President Truckee-Tahoe Soaring Assn.

1996 - Doug Lent, Soar Truckee Manager, CFGF

2000 - Joe Silvestri, Soar Truckee Manager, Chief Tow Pilot, CFGF

2001 - Don Brown, Soar Truckee Tow Pilot, CFGF

2002 - Jesse Jones, Line-crew and student of Jan's

2002 - Joe Jones, Line-crew and student of Jan's

2011 - David Ravetti, Past President Silverado Soaring Club

2015 - Pablo Saso-Perkins, CFGF, former student of Jan's

SEMINOLE LAKE, FLORIDA

2006 - Knut Kjenslie, former owner Seminole Lake, DPE

2006 - Rich Owens, Region 5 Director, VP of Seminole Lake

2006 - Franklin Burbank, DPE

2010 - Carol Ann Garratt, glider pilot and Jan's student

Terry Weathers

On January 1st 1979 my wife Jean and I bought Montague Aviation, a simple, full service fixed base operation at the Montague-Yreka Airport, Rohrer Field (105) in northern California. Within the first month we were introduced to the world of soaring, with several glider pilots bringing their gliders to Montague where we found ourselves providing tow service and weekend hospitality. Among the first of these was Jan Driessen, owner of a Libelle sailplane. Jan was then manager of the Bank of America branch in Tulelake, CA.

Jan was not only an avid glider pilot, but also enthusiastic about promoting soaring in general. He looked at the scraggly grass in front of the pilot lounge and asked if we had a lawnmower. He transformed that patch into a beautiful lawn. When we had barbecues he would take over cooking chicken, carefully turning the meat to perfection.

Jan had a commercial glider rating then, but promptly started working on his CFIG when it became apparent that we had need of glider training. I had a CFII at this time, but no glider experience. The push to get glider qualified was a delightful experience for me. My records show that I recommended Jan for his CFIG flight test that he passed March 4th 1980 with the late John Tamplin, FAA Inspector out of Sacramento GADO. They used the same Schweizer 2-33 that Jan flew just this past March at Montague.

In 1980 we acquired a winch to launch gliders at Montague. Jan was an enthusiastic participant and CFIG for the many years that the winch ran. Over the years Jan gave many hours of dual instruction at Montague and countless glider rides.

Over time I learned that Jan had learned to fly primary gliders in Holland as a young man. He joined the Dutch Air Force and flew the Gloster Meteor jet fighter. He emigrated to the United States and resided in Los Angeles where he flew helicopters and worked for Bank of America. Somewhere in the early 1980's Jan was transferred to manage the BofA branch in Yreka, Ca. and really became a fixture at Montague.

An interesting note is that Jan became well known as a good source of financing the purchase of a glider. Jan once mentioned to me that at that time he had never had a glider loan default on him. We sold the Montague Aviation operation in March of 1996 and the new owners ceased sailplane operations there. It was around that time that Jan was transferred from Yreka to another BofA branch in California.

I did not know Paul Schweitzer well, having only met him at numerous SSA conventions, but did get to know him a bit when he and his wife visited our little Montague operation in the mid 1980's. Paul was a fine gentlemen and avid proponent of soaring. I feel confident that he would agree with me that Jan Driessen is the perfect candidate for the Paul Schweitzer Lifetime Service Award.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Weathers
Retired CFII, CFIG
DPE ASEL/Glider

Dale Bush

I first met Jan Driessen in 1980 at Rohrer Field airport in Montague California. I was living in Bend Oregon and began hearing rumors of a new soaring site in the Shasta Valley of Northern California. Jan had convinced the resident FBO (Terry Weathers) to put a tow hook on one of his rental aircraft and soaring in the Shasta Valley was born. Jan was the spark plug for that operation for many years. He was a local banker in Yreka at the time and would spend his idle time contacting glider pilots encouraging them to come fly in Montague.

Through his efforts, Montague became a bustling glider venue complete with weekend barbecues and old aviation movies. He started teaching glider students and quickly became an excellent instructor. He was transferred to Bank of America in Orland, California, and when the bank began centralizing decision making, he quit and became a professional glider instructor. Jan financed four aircraft for me with just a hand shake and a couple of signatures. He was probably the principal glider loan broker in the U.S. for many years.

Jan logged every flight he has ever flown and every lesson he has ever given. Others have enumerated the amazing volume of his contribution to our sport. The sheer amount alone should qualify him for this award, but equally important is knowing that all those flights and all of those lessons were done with cheerful optimism and genuine concern for our sport and his students.

I am certain that Paul Schweizer would be proud to see Jan Driessen's name on his lifetime service award.

Dale Bush
SSA #97756

This is a clip from Dale's post about Jan on an aviation bulletin board in 2016.

"I learned yesterday that Jan Driessen flew his 25,000th glider flight at Seminole Lake glider port in Florida. Jan (pronounced Yon) and also known as CP or Chili Pepper, pioneered soaring in the late 70's in the Montague, Shasta Valley area. He presently has a permanent residence near Weed California but is usually in Florida for the winter and Truckee in the summer. Jan logs all of his time in aircraft to the minute and has amassed 11,000 glider hours, most of which has been instruction. No spring chicken, he immigrated as a boy from the Netherlands near the end of WW 2 and flew the Gloster Meteor for the Canadian Airforce. Somehow, he got to the U.S. and became a banker. Jan financed many gliders over the years. He has soloed and recommended literally hundreds of glider pilots. We tend to recognize record and competition achievements in this sport when, in fact, the greatest contributors are often the teachers. Bravo! Chili Pepper."

Richard Pearl

I started flying at Truckee in the mid-1980's but more intensely in the early 1990's. Later on, I became President of Soar Truckee, Inc., and that's where I REALLY learned about Jan.

The president's actual role is serving as Chair of the Board of Directors; management of the operation was and is done by the General Manager. Of all the great GM's we had, Jan was, in my opinion, the absolute best. He did everything: tow pilot, ride pilot, instructor, plus he oversaw the office...no small matter because we were a commercial glider operation serving the general public, private glider pilots, and aviation students. Jan was everywhere, making sure the operation ran smoothly and safely, cajoling "A" type personalities where necessary, providing support where necessary.

Jan was first on duty in the morning (making coffee and cleaning the bathrooms), and the last to leave at night. I frequently had to force him to take time off. He was indefatigable! His only recognition of advancing age was an occasional short nap in the afternoon on the office couch. He and I would stay in touch throughout the winter off-season as we planned for the new season. It was always: "Hello, Mr. President", to which I would respond: "Hello, General"! He was a fabulous partner and instrumental in making sure the operational bar was high.

We had a documentary flight film crew - Flight Chops - come to Truckee to do a video, and Jan was the instructor/pilot for several sequences about soaring. Their flight team couldn't say enough about Jan, both on-camera and off.

I think Jan's most satisfying moments were when he was working with the Youth Line Crew. He just loved the kids, and they responded to his affection and tutoring by succeeding in getting their solo and flight ratings, and just maturing as young adults. Many of "Jan's Kids" went on to military and professional aviation schools and he was enormously proud of his Wall of Honor...pictures of the Line Crew program members in their military garb and civilian flight uniforms that adorned the Flight Office.

Jan is, first and foremost, a pilot's pilot. His legacy is the incredible number of people – of all ages – who took to the air under his guidance: 485 of his students received their certifications from private to CFGI, plus many more solo-only endorsements. Altogether, Jan has 29,600 total flights and 13,000+ total flight hours. In the April 2020 edition of Soaring magazine alone, there are eight pictures of Jan congratulating solo or flight rated pilots!

The man is a living legend and continues giving rides and instruction to this day. Jan has to be exactly what the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award was created for.

Richard Pearl
CFGI
SSA # 870916

Mike Johnson

I had the pleasure of working with Jan Driessen from 1995-2017 as a fellow instructor and tow pilot at Soar Truckee in Truckee, CA. He remains the consummate and professional instructor that he has always been.

He has shared his experience and expertise with many students and pilots (12,980 hours in gliders, 29,600+ flights, 480+ graduated students at all levels). I had an easy time of it when I tested his students as they were always well prepared.

I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Jan Driessen.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Johnson
CFIA, CFIG, CFII, MEI, ATP
DPE ASEL, IA, Glider

Gregory R. “Shifty” Peairs

Jan Driessen is a glider pilot’s glider pilot.

From his first glider flight at the age of 18 in Holland in 1954 to amassing just over 13,000 hours total flight time and just under 30,000 flights in sailplanes, soaring has been his life. He lives and breathes soaring. He has also accumulated over 10,000 hours instructing new glider pilots, 13 years at Turf Sailing in Arizona, multiple years at Seminole Lakes Glider Port outside of Orlando, FL and last but not least over 25 years at Truckee-Tahoe Soaring Association nee Soar Truckee. He received his Diamond Badge in 1982. That he still flies 5-6 times a day (rides and instruction) despite just turning 84 is truly amazing.

I first met Jan in August 1996 while still on active duty as a Naval Aviator at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. The Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) had sponsored a weekend of activities in the Lake Tahoe region with the main event being a formal dinner for the staff referred to as a “Dining Out”. Also included during that weekend were discounted indoctrination rides in one of Soar Truckee’s gliders. The pilot who took me and several other Navy folks up was Jan Driessen. I was so impressed, not only with the glider performance (felt like I was flying a F/A-18) but how much Jan loved and lived the sport.

As a result, two of us decided to come back to Truckee from Fallon on successive weekends to obtain our commercial glider license. After I retired, I moved to Truckee in 1999. Since then, I have spent a good amount of time at Soar Truckee engaging in this amazing category of flying, flying for my own pleasure as well as volunteering to give glider rides to the public. For several years through 2017, Jan acted as General Manager of TTSA and in that position maintained Soar Truckee as one of the premier glider ports in the country as well as being a dynamic and passionate organization.

Throughout those years I got to see Jan in action whether it was flying his ASW-20, taking people up for rides or instructing. While at Soar Truckee, he spent innumerable hours mentoring teenagers with the goal of getting them interested in aviation and working towards their glider license. Several of his proteges went on to be Naval Aviators, Air Force Test Pilots and Commercial pilots. I believe that all occurred largely due to Jan’s tutelage at Soar Truckee.

Jan’s involvement with Naval Aviation that started on that Sunday in August of 1996 has continued to this day at TTSA. The offshoot of that relationship is this year TTSA is planning on hosting the 2nd Annual U.S. Naval Aviation Soaring Camp. As last year, planned attendees will include several former TOPGUN instructors, two former TOPGUN Commanding Officers as well as two former Commanding Officers of the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Team (Blue Angels). None of this would have occurred if it were not for Jan Driessen.

Jan Driessen is true legend in the soaring community and is richly deserving of this prestigious award.

Gregory R. “Shifty” Peairs CDR USN (Ret) CDR USN (Ret)
President Truckee-Tahoe Soaring Association

Doug Lent

I started flying at Truckee in 1991 as a member of Silverado Soaring. Les Sebald was the manager at the time and he allowed me to help on the line and around the premises in trade for a tow or two. Back then, pilots helped each other assemble gliders and move them to the line; we helped each other hook up. The area between tie down cables was so narrow that there was no room for one glider to get past another, so we had to coordinate how gliders were assembled and moved.

It was several years later that Jan arrived on the scene. I was staging my glider getting ready for a tow. As I climbed into my glider, I looked up to see a gent holding the tow rope attachment. I didn't know who he was, but he told me to get in the glider and he would hook me up. He had the look about him that made me think he just might know what he was doing.

I soon learned that the hookup guy was Jan. He and I hit it off right away. He was a no-nonsense guy who wanted things done the right way. I found out that Jan was a former Dutch fighter pilot, and much more. At some point he had a helicopter rating and ferried some of Hollywood's stars around. Red Skelton was one in particular.

Jan was an outstanding pilot in both tow planes and gliders, and an excellent instructor.... one of the best I've ever seen. I asked him about his flight experience and discovered he had filled more than twenty logbooks up to that time. I'm sure he has many more now, as that was a long time ago.

After Les, there was a progression of managers: Mike Johnson, Joe Silvestri, me and then Jan. Somewhere along the line the "line kids" program started, but their training was sporadic at best as we were usually shorthanded. Like all our general managers, we towed, gave rides (very few in those days) helped on the line, instructed.... ran back to the office to answer phone messages, cleaned the bathrooms and everything else.

When Jan took over, he really improved the line crew situation and the overall operation. He was adamant about getting them in the air and he would make himself available early, late and in between to make sure the kids got the training they had coming to them. Jan was a real workhorse to say the least. He took very few days off and was always willing to help in any way needed.

Doug Lent
Commercial ASEL
CFIG

Joe Silvestri

Working alongside Jan for nearly 20 years and watching him work as a CFIG showed me how the job should be done. As far as I am concerned, Jan is the best flight instructor I have ever seen or will see. He truly cares about his students and is meticulous in making sure his students are aware of everything a glider pilot should know, down to the minutest detail. He has a knack of making difficult subjects and the science of soaring understandable. I was always sure that when Jan signed off a student to solo or for a check ride, that student was well-prepared.

Even though at the time I met Jan he was not looking for any pilots, he cordially invited my wife and me to come to Truckee to the glider port to join them any Saturday evening for a barbecue. We did, and within a few weeks he called me on the phone and offered me a position as tow pilot/flight instructor with Soar Truckee. I ended up working side by side with Jan over the next 18 years watching him work and I can honestly say if not for him I would not have been the flight instructor (I hope) I turned out to be.

In addition to working together at Soar Truckee, Jan and I worked together in Durango, Co. for three seasons at the operation owned by LaVerne St. Claire, another excellent sailplane pilot. Durango was exclusively a ride operation and Jan and I were the principal ride pilots. It was an extremely busy operation and it was not unusual for us to give 20 rides between us on a good day. I don't think I ever saw a customer get out of Jan's glider after a ride without wearing an ear to ear grin. With us flying 100% of the rides, Durango had a perfect safety record in those years, largely because of Jan's insistence always on Safety First.

Over the years, Jan and I worked together at Truckee, CA, Durango, CO and Seminole Lake, FL. Jan is a consummate professional in his attitude towards turning out pilots who maintain the high standards that he demands and he, if anyone, deserves this award for his lifetime of service in and to soaring. Jan Driessen is truly one of a kind!

Joe Silvestri
CFIG, CFII
Ground Instructor Instrument, Advanced

Donald Brown

I first met Jan in the summer of 2001 when I went to Truckee Tahoe Airport to fly a glider with Doug Lent. Jan was the most experienced glider pilot at Soar Truckee at that time and as I later discovered possibly the most experienced glider pilot I would ever meet. I was 56 at the time, and Jan was in his 60's. I was drawn to the glider port at Truckee and began donating my time as a 'tow dog'. Over the next 19 years or so I got to know Jan as a friend, a mentor, and a boss. I have been a tow pilot at Soar Truckee/Truckee Tahoe Soaring Association since the summer of 2004. Many of my tows were made with Jan instructing from the other end of the tow rope.

I watched Jan instruct the young men and women who helped support Soar Truckee and Truckee Tahoe Soaring Association as line staff. Many of them went on to become professional pilots and all of them loved flying with Jan. With the ideas of the then president Richard Pearl and the teaching skill of Jan the youth programs grew and helped Truckee Tahoe Soaring Association prosper.

Jan was a stabilizing force in the management of Soar Truckee/Truckee Tahoe Soaring Association and we were fortunate to have a person of Jan's capability working with us there. Jan was an integral part of the fabric of the soaring community that he participated in. He is an incredible person, an exceptional pilot and instructor, and I am honored to have him as a friend.

Don Brown
ASEL
CFIG

Jesse Jones

I am pleased to support the nomination of my mentor and flight instructor, Jan Driessen, for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award.

As a young boy and son of an airline pilot, I fell in love with aviation by going to airshows and building models. However, it was learning to fly gliders and working on the line crew at Soar Truckee that cemented my desire to be a professional pilot.

I met Jan at the age of 14 when I took my first glider ride and was “hooked”. My identical twin brother, Joe, and I started working on the line crew that summer and continued through the first year of college. Jan was inspirational as a boss and a flight instructor. He had a positive attitude whether he was cleaning the toilets, mowing the grass, or flying in the best soaring conditions. While teaching us these aspects of the job we learned these skills but ultimately how to become hard working and respectful men.

Jan provided a majority of our instruction and did it “free of charge” out of the kindness of his heart. We soloed at 14, earned our Private Pilot Certificates at 17, and Commercial and CFGI at 18. His trust in us allowed us to use these ratings to fly commercial glider rides, EAA Young Eagle flights, as tow pilots and instruct students in the gliders. The experience, knowledge, and hard work ethic I learned from Jan helped shape me into the professional pilot I am today. I flew private jets at Clay Lacy Aviation for 15 years and am currently in my third year as a First Officer at Southwest Airlines. For these reasons I believe there is no one more deserving of this award than Jan Driessen.

Sincerely,

Jesse Jones
ATP: LearJet, G-200, G-V, B737
CFGI, CFI, CFII, MEI

Joe Jones

It gives me great honor to contribute to the nomination of Jan Driessen for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award. He is an outstanding aviation professional and person.

As a young boy and throughout my high school years, it was his mentorship, attention to detail, and positive attitude that I can attribute to helping me and many other young aviation hopefuls to achieve successes in aviation. I first met Jan while working as a line boy at the Soar Truckee glider port. He donated his time to give my twin brother Jesse and me glider instruction and mentorship. We were able to solo at 14 and then become glider instructors and tow pilots. His day to day strong work ethic approach helped to create many lasting positive habits and life lessons to draw on in future challenging and difficult training environments.

I continued on to fly F/A-18s in the Navy, completing multiple aircraft carrier deployments to support counterterrorism in Afghanistan, flew the Navy B737 in the reserves and have been with Delta Air Lines as a First Officer now for over 5 years. I can attribute my success in aviation and many in life, to his devotion and direction in my younger years.

Please accept my strongest possible nomination for Jan Driessen for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award.

Sincerely,

Joseph Jones
ATP: DC-9, B737
CFIG, CFI, CFII, MEI

David N. Ravetti

Jan Driessen was the chief glider flight instructor at Soar Truckee when I arrived in the summer of 2011 to obtain a commercial add-on rating. I had flown gliders for forty years, thirty-five years as a CFIA, and found Jan to be a very personable and mild mannered individual. After the first flight with Jan, I was extremely impressed with both his flying and instructional abilities. I could tell right off that he was an instructor's instructor. During my training, I flew with the other instructors under his command. These seasoned instructors shared his burning desire for excellence and safety.

It was impressive to watch Jan direct the youth working the ground team at Soar Truckee, and to watch the instruction he gave them every morning. He was very dedicated to the youth program and very proud of his "Wall of Fame" at the Soar Truckee office (his students who had gone on to professional aviation careers). Over the years, it was gratifying to watch these "kids" become professional pilots.

Safety was always first and foremost in his mind. Soaring in the Sierras is considered the most treacherous flying in the country. As such, Jan encouraged cross country pilots to head back to Truckee by 3 PM.

With Jan's encouragement, I pursued collecting my SSA glider badges. Other pilots watching my progress joined in their own pursuit of SSA badges with Jan's encouragement and assistance.

In my opinion, there is no other glider pilot more worthy of the Paul Schweitzer Lifetime Service Award than Jan Driessen.

Respectfully Submitted,

David N. Ravetti
ATP, Commercial Glider
CFII, MEI
SSA # 849437

Pablo Saso-Perkins

In 2015 I drove out to the Gliderport at Truckee seeking a job helping out wherever I could. When I arrived, I was greeted and directed to speak with Jan Driessen. Jan had me fill out a bit of an application gave me a little talk and then sent me on my way. The very next day I got a call asking me to come back to the port.

The second day I was there Jan took me on an extended tour of the area showing me everything from the gliders we use to the hill you don't want to crash into on approach. This is the day my life changed! He gave me the job not knowing what to expect from me, he didn't know how passionate I was about aviation, but he soon learned.

A few days of watering the plants and cleaning the airplanes, he took me for my first lesson saying: "let's see if you even like this". I already knew I would love it. As we got into the air, I told Jan that I had about 20 years' experience flying on the computer, and to my surprise he let me take the controls while still on tow. Sure, I may have been a little sloppy, but this was it...it was the real deal.

Next it was my job to show Jan that I really wanted this. Fast forward a year and I received my private pilot's license for gliders with Jan's recommendation. He then proceeded to tell me that I could earn more glider certificates, a commercial and instructor rating. To this day I feel that this was part of his job to tell me those things, though I didn't really feel that he would think I would take it so seriously.

In the off season I studied. My third season he recommended me for my commercial license. Again, my life was really changing because of this. A year later he did the same thing for my instructor rating. I have un-officially adopted Jan as my grandfather. We stay in contact often. One thing I was hoping for was for Jan to teach my children how to fly, but I have no children. In a way, he will teach them if I ever have any, via his teachings to me. To sum things up, Jan Driessen had a major impact on my life. I really took a 180 turn for the better after meeting him, and I will forever be grateful for the time I got to spend with him.

Pablo Saso-Perkins
CFIG
SSA # 3829098

Knut Kjenslie

Please accept this memo for my nomination of Mr. Jan Driessen for The Paul Schweitzer Lifetime Service Award. I have known Jan for 14 years and highly recommend him for this prestigious award.

I have known Jan since he came to me with an interest in working for me at Seminole Lake Gliderport in 2006. He came to me as a very experienced glider instructor with an impressive resume. I had trained and used many glider instructors over the years, but never taken on one with his experience. He wasn't only a high time pilot with tremendous amount of glider instructor time, he was also very good and enthusiastic about it. Over the years I had seen and used many good instructors, but they all got burned out. Jan is the only one I have seen that kept the enthusiasm alive. As a DPE, giving check rides and overseeing the training, I found all his students to be well prepared for the check ride. He prepared them to become safe and knowledgeable pilots.

Another thing I saw, was that he made them excited about the sport of soaring. He has trained and added hundreds of new glider pilots to the sport and has been a great promoter of our sport over the years. Jan's contribution to the sport is tremendous, and today at 84 he is still at it, and can't stop doing what he loves. I can't think of anyone that deserves this award more than Jan.

Respectfully submitted

Knut Kjenslie
Former Owner Seminole Lake Gliderport
Former DPE
SSA # 178535

Rich Owen

It is with great honor that we would like to add our comments for the upcoming submission of an award for Jan Driessen. Jan has contributed greatly, not only to our commercial soaring operation at Seminole-Lake Gliderport, but to the soaring community as a whole. Jan arrived at Seminole-Lake more than 14 years ago to work as a flight instructor for the November thru April months. This is typically the off season for the rest of the US soaring community but for us it is the high season. During this time, he would fly more than our full-time instructor and could be seen helping other instructors and private ships launching. Jan's professionalism, enthusiasm and personality were some of the key points for his students to recommend Seminole-Lake for friends seeking a glider rating. Jan has flown over 10,000 hours in gliders which must be a record in the industry! As an instructor, there is no equal in my mind. I have listened to his ground school lessons with many students while in the office and always seemed to learn something new. Even when faced with a difficult student, Jan never gave up and pursued each challenge with patience and a calm demeanor.

While in the office between students, his infectious personality instantly calmed visitors going for scenic rides or parents of young students. His enthusiasm for the sport of soaring encouraged many first-time visitors to pursue a glider rating. Whether he was in the cockpit or on the ground, Jan typified the professional pilot that we all strive to be. Jan Driessen is more than deserving of this award.

Sincerely,
Richard P. Owen

Vice President, Seminole Flying & Soaring
SSA Region 5 Director
SSA #17382

Franklin Burbank

Jan Driessen is truly a living legend in our beautiful sport of soaring! I can't think of anyone more deserving of any recognition that we can give.

He took his first glider flight in 1954 in a primary glider.

I first met Jan while visiting Seminole Lake Gliderport with my father who was conducting a check ride for one of Jan's applicants. He and my father grew very close over the years and my father always looked forward to flying with a student of Jan's.

In 2014 I had the privilege of managing Seminole Lake and working with Jan on a daily basis. I then discovered just how strong his passion for soaring burns within. He would treat every passenger ride like it was the most important flight of the day. His students also loved to work with Jan as he pours as much knowledge into them as they can take.

As a DPE I always look forward to flying with one of his students on their check ride. They are consistently some of the best prepared applicants that I get to fly with. I have lost track of how many applicants Jan has sent to me over the years. However, it is safe to say between my father and myself Jan has sent us hundreds of applicants over the years.

Last time I chatted with Jan he told me that he is closing in on 13,000 hours in gliders and 30,000 flights! That is truly an amazing accomplishment in its own respect. Just think how many people he has introduced to our great sport of soaring.

Regards,

Franklin Burbank

DPE

Bermuda High Soaring

SSA # 23330

CarolAnn Garratt

I had been introduced to soaring in Namibia by my then German boyfriend. I fell in love with it and upon returning to Florida in 2010, went to Seminole Lake Gliderport to take lessons to get my add-on glider rating. I was already a power pilot.

Jan Driessen was my instructor the majority of the time and he did all the ground instruction. He was very knowledgeable, motivational and prepared me well. I passed the check-ride with Knut Kjenslie.

As I had flown cross countries in Namibia, I knew that I wanted to learn how to fly long distances. I took one cross country course at Seminole Lake and a second at Air Sailing near Reno, NV. This was in 2016 and that summer my nephew from Idaho, who was 15 and wanted to become a pilot, had been accepted by Jan as a line boy at Soar Truckee. I took care of him in the camping area and he worked every day learning the operation and was trained by Jan almost every day in a glider and/or ground school. After three weeks, my nephew soloed. His is one of many hundreds of pictures in the SSA magazine of a newly soloed student pilot with Jan as his instructor. My nephew lost his dad when he was five years old. He has had other mentors, but he really looked up to Jan and learned a lot from him during that short summer. Fifteen is a difficult age and Jan did a tremendous job with him and all the other line kids.

While I was there, Jan was my Official Observer for my 5-hour flight and numerous distance attempts. He is a big supporter of the badge system and encourages participation.

Every winter I do my BFR with Jan at Seminole Lake Gliderport in March. He's usually busy with other students, but always fits me in. As it's normally my first flight of the season, I'm not that smooth. But Jan gently talks me through the maneuvers and reminds me of things I might otherwise have forgotten.

Knowing Jan from both Seminole Lake Gliderport and Soar Truckee, I highly recommend him for this award.

CarolAnn Garratt
Private Glider Pilot
SSA # 587440

PHOTO GALLERY

Montague, California



Jan preparing a private pilot for a checkout in a Grob 103 at Montague (circa 1980)



Solo ritual, Montague (circa 1980)



Jan ready to launch in CP (Chili Pepper)

Peoria, Arizona



Pat Burkett earns glider add on at
Turf Soaring (Arizona)

Truckee, California



Andrew Garratt soloed



Thomas Greenhill soloed



Preston Parrish soloed



Anders Edwards earns
Private Glider add-on



Soar Truckee "Wall of Fame"



Pablo Saso-Perkins soloed



Truckee "Line Crew Kids" earn Private Glider – Noy Anisman, Stefan Arnone, Blake Sortor

More activities at Truckee....



Rick Hammer – Commercial



David White – Commercial



Pablo - Commercial



Solo tradition at Truckee



Rigging 2-33 with Blake Sorter



Friday night poker game-Soar Truckee
Poker night, did Jan win a lot?



Reunion – Joe and Jesse Jones with Jan and Doug at Truckee and showing off their new rides

Chris Bowen – line crew and student – next stop, Air Force Academy



Just a few of the many, many students and activities at Seminole Lakes in Florida....



Recent solos and signoffs at Seminole Lake, Gerardo Sanchez, Felix Grusso, Trey Gillet



Ethan Simmons earns Private



Michael Scarito earns Commercial



Jan connected with many long time soaring friends at the Seniors

Fun times at Durango – Jan and Joe gave a lot of glider rides

