

October 25, 2021

Jay McDaniel, Chair
The Soaring Society of America Awards Committee

Dear Jay,

Attached is the Women Soaring Pilots Association 's (WSPA) nomination of Frauke Jung Elber for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award. Frauke has been a member of the SSA for fifty years. She has made substantial efforts towards advancing the SSA's stated mission "to foster and promote soaring on a national and international level" for well over three decades.

This nomination packet documents Frauke's significant and continuous contributions to the local, national and international soaring community. WSPA believes there is no more deserving candidate for this Lifetime Service Award. SSA members who are knowledgeable of Frauke's exceptional contributions to soaring will be sending you letters of support for the attached nomination.

WSPA requests that Frauke Elber be selected by the SSA Awards Committee and recommended to the SSA Board of Directors for presentation of the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award at the SSA 2022 Reno Convention.

Sincerely,



Catherine Williams
WSPA President
SSA #881540



October 25, 2021

To: Jay M. McDaniel
Soaring Society of America Awards Committee
Soaringjay@gmail.com

From: Catherine Williams
Women Soaring Pilots Association President
president@womensoaring.org

Re: SSA Paul Schweizer Lifetime Soaring Service Award Nomination

Attn: SSA Awards Committee

***Submission to nominate Frauke Jung Elber
for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service
Award.***



Frauke Elber has made an exceptional and continuing contribution to the soaring community for well over three decades.

To this day she continues to make significant and substantial efforts towards advancing the SSA's stated mission: "to foster and promote soaring on a national and international level."

She has recently been recognized for her contributions. Frauke received the 2004 SSA Exceptional Service Award and has a place on the National Soaring Museum's "American Women in Soaring Wall of Fame"

She remains a long-time member of the Soaring Society of America (50 years), The National Soaring Museum (over 40 years), the Tidewater Soaring Society (51 years) and the Women's Soaring Pilots Association (35 years). During all those years, she has consistently volunteered to support and promote the sport of soaring.

Born and raised in Germany, immigrating to the USA in the late 1960's, and learning English along the way, Frauke is a talented researcher and writer. She uses her writing to promote soaring and soaring networking across countries. She has reached so many with her newsletters edited for the Tidewater Soaring Society, Flypaper, (1980- 2004) and the Women's Soaring Pilots Association, Hangar Soaring (20 years and counting). She wrote the "Club News" column for Soaring Magazine for 8 years. She has written articles for National and international publications.

She develops and maintains national and international contacts. She has been the driving force for recruiting WSPA members from outside the US and assisting WSPA to become the first women's international organization. She and Wolf hosted the 1999 WSPA seminar at TSS. She helped coordinate the 3 WSPA seminars held outside the US (in Italy, Slovenia, and Canada). She currently is actively assisting the German WSPA members who will host the 2022 WSPA seminar in Germany. She has consistently displayed a deep and long-lasting love for soaring and the people in the soaring community.

Frauke is a constant and familiar face as an attendee and volunteer at SSA conventions, WSPA seminars and National Soaring Museum events. Always working where she is needed, Frauke is often seen at the podium as a presenter. She has made numerous presentations that introduce soaring to the public.

From 1980 until 2013, she regularly volunteered at countless soaring competitions on the local, national, and international level.

Frauke is the role model for those who quietly and continuously support the advancement of soaring. She has put her service to the soaring community ahead of advancing her personal notoriety and soaring achievements. She has always answered the call when volunteers are needed. She continues to actively participate and contribute to soaring on a local, national, and international level.

Her name is immediately and fondly recognized by soaring organization administrators and the many soaring greats who offered information and support of her most worthy nomination.

A unique personality: Frauke is outgoing, congenial, approachable, ever cheerful, always willing to help, supportive, constructive, instructive, dependable and knowledgeable.

A true generous spirit, she has for over 30 years shared her love and knowledge of soaring and soaring history with all who are interested; giving special attention to supporting soaring competitions and recruiting, retaining, and documenting women and youth in soaring.

Clearly, Frauke Elber has willingly given tremendous and consistent contributions to the national and international soaring community. She is highly deserving of the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award!

Life history

Frauke Jung was born on January 29, 1941, in Essen, Germany when WWII was well underway in her homeland. Rebuilding and studying after the war, she earned her degree in Chemistry from National Science College, Landau, Germany in 1961. She worked at the German Aeronautical Research Lab in material research from 1961-1968. She met Wolf Elber in 1968 and they married in 1969. Their son, Dirk, was born later that year. Dirk would later become a member of the New Castle, VA soaring club, earning his private glider rating at the age of sixteen. In 1970 the family moved to Newport News, VA where Dr. Wolf Elber worked for NASA at Langley. Frauke cared for Wolf, their son, Dirk, and their home while expanding her knowledge of English with self-study and volunteering at Dirk's schools (1974-2003). They traveled extensively. In 2015 she published a book, [The Man in the Dark Suit](#), about her uncle who died on a German submarine during WW2. She used his diaries for information and format. Wolf passed away in Jan 2019. Frauke continues to reside in Newport News, Virginia where she actively pursues continued learning by participating in online classes.

Personal soaring history

Frauke's interest in flying began as a young girl reading of Hanna Reitsch's flying exploits as a famous WW2 test pilot and accomplished soaring pilot.

She took her first glider flight in April 1962 and earned her glider license in November 1962.

From 1962-1969, Frauke flew at her club in Germany with visits to France, Finland, and England, flying the Ka7, Ka8, Roenlerche, Doppelraab, Kranich 3, Bergfalke, L-Spatz, LO100, Slingsby T21. When he expressed interest in soaring, Frauke Jung gave Wolf Elber his first glider flight in 1968.



1962 Delphin Glider: Posing for the camera in experimental glider she never got to fly

Frauke joined Tidewater Soaring Society (TSS) in 1970 and the SSA in 1971. Family trips to Germany, France, England, and Australia began the development of her international soaring contacts

Frauke and Wolf owned a Schleicher Ka 8 for 27 years. Over the years they owned a Libelle 301, ASW20, and 1-26. She also flew dual in ASK13, ASK21, Janus, Grob Acro, Grob 103, Duo Discus, and DG1000.

She held the first Virginia feminine altitude record and completed the silver distance and altitude legs.

Her last glider flight was in Australia in 2011

Frauke's 2019 unpublished memoirs, *I Remember... The Bridge to Far*, includes three chapters that describe her first glider flight, first solo flight, and first cross-country flight.

She remains active and has been involved in the soaring community for now over 60 years.

Ongoing contributions to the soaring community

Editor of the WSPA newsletter, *Hangar Soaring*, since 2001, which is published quarterly. She regularly researches and writes about accomplished women soaring pilots in history

Assisting with the coordination of the 2022 WSPA seminar in Germany

Coordinating the nomination of Sarah Arnold for the Pelagia Majewska medal, the highest international woman's recognition.



Continuing her decades of service staffing the WSPA seminar sale table and WSPA SSA Convention booth

Continuing her decades of active outreach to recruit, support, include, and retain WSPA members from outside the US

Local and National Soaring contributions; honors

Tidewater Soaring Association (TSS) member since 1970

- Awarded honorary membership in 2019; TSS named their main hangar "The Elber Hangar", to honor Frauke's and Wolf's years of contributions. The Elbers loaned their 1-26 to TSS at a time when the club could not replace one that was lost. Frauke edited and published TSS's newsletter ("Flypaper") from 1980-2004.

Soaring Society of America member since 1971

- Contributed the "club news" column in *Soaring Magazine* for 8 years; received the **SSA Exceptional Service Award** in 2004 for writing the column and supporting soaring clubs.

SSA Convention

- Featured speaker at SSA conventions
 - 2006 - Arlington, TX, "History of the Women's International, European and now World Championships"
 - 2008 - Albuquerque, NM, "Tidewater Soaring's Club Cinderella Story"
 - 2018 - Reno, NV, "History of Women's International Competition"
- Staffed the WSPA convention booth from 2001 to the present.



WSPA Convention booths include Bertha Ryan and the ever-present Frauke

Soaring Competition

- Frauke volunteered as ground support staff (and crew for Wolf when he was competing) at many regional and national competitions over decades, including the 1980 Standard Class Nationals at Elmira and the 1982 15 Meter Nationals at Elmira.



Frauke and Glenn Maxwell help Charlie Spratt at an early 80's contest gate



- Frauke was contest support staff for nearly every Region 4S contest at New Castle, VA from the early 1980's to 2013

National Soaring Museum: Member for over 40 years; American Women in Soaring, Wall of Fame - plaque with Frauke's picture was added to the wall in 2020. In 2016 she gave a presentation at the NSM introducing accomplished female soaring pilots in history.



As noted here by the NSM: "Frauke is firmly established as an authority on women soaring pilots, worldwide."

Women Soaring Pilots Association (WSPA): Member since organization was founded in 1986.

- Editor of newsletter, **Hangar Soaring**, 2001 through the present, creates and distributes the newsletter to the WSPA membership four times a year. She hosted 1999 WSPA seminar at TSS; she has attended 22 of the 43 seminars, including the last seminar in 2021; she organizes raffles, donates, and solicits donations that financially benefit WSPA, organizes the WSPA seminar Limerick contest, staffs the sale table at seminars and helps everywhere, even serving as proxy board member whenever requested by a board member.



Frauke with the International participants of the 2004 WSPA Seminar at Harris Hill



Chilhowee 2012 Seminar attendees with Frauke

- In 2012, Frauke initiated a fund drive to support Sarah Arnold's first participation in a women's world championship by originally putting down \$750 in a challenge. When this challenge was met within a few days, she decided to continue this fund drive which grew to \$17000. To enable the donors to deduct their donations from taxes, she asked WSPA to take the fund drive under its umbrella. WSPA agreed to.
- Frauke helped organize and publicize a WSPA project to collect donations and financially support the 2020 USA Women's World Gliding Championship (WWGC) team; \$16,000 was collected and donated to Sarah Arnold, Kathy Foscha and Sylvia Grandstand in support of their trip to Australia to compete in the 2020 WWGC.

Soaring presentations for the public:

- 1980,1981,1982 – Frauke organized three National Soaring Weeks at NASA Langley with exhibits and daily lunchtime lectures; brought in nationally known pilots to speak, including AJ Smith; was presented an SSA service award by Floyd Sweet for these well received events
- Presented to a local CAP Chapter, a community college in California, retirement community residents (several presentations), and a five week-long course at the Christopher Newport University's Lifelong Learning Society

International soaring contributions; networking

- Frauke was present at 5 world competitions: 1983- worked finish gate at Hobbs; 2015- worked as official interpreter for 2nd Women's Worlds at Klix, Germany; assisted where needed at 3 other World competitions; established many contacts and friendships with well-known men and women soaring pilots at these events.



Frauke Elber
Interpreter

- She was a driving force behind the nominations of Doris Grove, (2008) and Gill Van den Broeck (Belgium, 2011), and Ritz Van Luy (Holland, 2015) for the Pelagia Majewska Medal (the highest international honor for women soaring pilots)
- Currently organizing the effort to nominate Sarah Arnold for the Pelagia Majewska medal
- Contributed articles published in *Segelfliegen* (Germany), *Gliding International* (New Zealand), and *Soaring New Zealand* (no longer published); received a reader's award for an article in the *Aviatrix online magazine*; wrote English subtitles for the German film *Babajaga-Hexen im Aufwind (Babajaga, Witches in Updraft)* which is available on You tube
- Researched for, wrote, and published many articles in WSPA's Hangar Soaring newsletter featuring historically accomplished women soaring pilots from around the world; located Russian pilot, Olga Klepikova, who set a 1938 world distance record which was not broken until Dick Johnson flew further in 1951 (see *Hangar Soaring* and *Soaring Magazine*, Nov 2001; see *Hangar Soaring* archives on the WSPA website, womensoaring.org). The lengths that Frauke would go to in order to retrieve and revive stories about long forgotten, yet famous women soaring pilot accomplishments are illustrated in the following short write up.

International Merry-go-Around **By Frauke Elber**

I am often asked, “how do you find some of the stories that are published in Hangar Soaring?” The answer: “often it is tedious detective work. Often it is sheer good luck.”

Take for instance the story of the Russian pilot, Olga Klepikova, which appeared simultaneously in the November 2001 Hangar Soaring and November 2001 SOARING magazine.

When I became editor of Hangar Soaring in 2001, I decided to give the publication a more international flavor. I still had contacts in the “Old Country” and I was going to make use of it. Very deep down in my memory (that of my brain not the computer), I remembered having heard about a spectacular flight in the thirties flown by a Russian woman pilot, and that the flight had stirred up some controversy. Now at the helm of Hangar Soaring, I was determined to find out more about it, hoping that some of my older contacts in Europe would have any first-hand knowledge of the story. Therefore, I wrote to Fred Weinholtz, an old friend in Germany who was a teenager when the flight in question took place. I asked if he knew who the pilot was and if he knew any details of the flight. His answer was negative, but he provided me with the address of a couple living in the former East Germany, that could maybe help me with my quest. The couple were Winfried and Irmgard Morgner and they turned out to be the mother lode of information. Both had studied engineering in Moscow, both were glider pilots, Irmgard a champion pilot and...both personally knew the Russian woman pilot Olga Klepikova who had flown the record flight and were still in contact with her. Incredibly, Olga, now in her late eighties was still alive and living in Kiev, the capital of the newly independent state of Ukraine. They were in possession of a letter Olga had written to them describing the then world record flight in details. Graciously, they were willing to share the letter with me. The problem was it was written in Russian. The Morgners translated the letter for me into German. I translated it into English, and it is now documented in the above-mentioned publications.

The story doesn't end here. I sent the two articles to Olga, via another woman glider pilot, Ukrainian champion Valentina Toporova who had frequent contact with Olga. Again, language problems got in the way. Valentina knows a bit of German but no English (we met in 2005 at the Women's World Championships). What I had sent in English to Ukraine had now to be translated back into Russian in order for Olga to know what it was all about.

Olga had been all but forgotten in her home country and somewhere in that global merry-go-around the articles I sent to Kiev made their way to the local newspaper. Suddenly the editors at the paper were alerted to the famous but forgotten woman pilot in their midst and the paper was determined to correct that and published a multi-page article about Olga in the Kiev newspaper.

The next turn in the merry-go-around: I was in Germany in summer 2002 and met the Morgners at Stendal airport near Berlin at a women's soaring camp. There I learned that my search for a story brought Olga Klepikova back into the memory of the international glider community. I got a Xerox copy of the newspaper article from Kiev but since it is written in Russian, I can't read it. (I had it translated by someone at the NATO school in Norfolk, VA)

At the 2005 Women's World Championships, in which Valentina Toporova was sponsored by the Morgner's home club to make her participation financially possible, all pilots, crews and officials sent Olga a greeting card. Later that year, a German delegation, including Irmgard and Winfried followed the invitation of the Kiev Club and they met Olga, a lively, opinionated octogenarian. (I got a film of that meeting).

In summer 2010, I received a note that Olga Klepikova at the age of ninety-five had passed away. Olga's passing did not stop this international carousel. This year, 2011, I received an e-mail from Winfried Morgner with an attached photo of Olga's gravestone. The gravestone, made from black, polished granite, shows a likeness of Olga, her dates of birth and death and an epitaph. I can't read the latter one, because it is in Russian. A white fence surrounding the grave site caused a lot of disturbing reflections on the gravestone. I did not want to ask if the picture could be taken again without the reflections. Therefore, I set down and painstakingly tried to improve the image in a photo editing

program. I also asked permission via the Morgners to use it in Hangar Soaring, attaching my now edited version to the e-mail. Unknown to me at that point was that Winfried had already asked Olga's daughter if they could take the picture again and she was contemplating taking the white fence that surrounds the grave down to get a better picture.

Now, in the last turn of the saga my edited picture made it to Kiev, and Olga's family decided that even a new photo would not come out any better. Since the Russian inscription on the gravestone is hard to read in its entirety, Valentina sent the full text in Russian to the Morgners who in turn sent it in German to me and here it is now in English.

Olga Wasiljewa Klepikova
10.10. 1915-27.07. 2010
Test Pilot
Soaring World Record Holder
We love you and we are proud of you
You will live in our thoughts for ever

Finally, the merry-go-around grinded to a hold.

I am happy and proud that 10 years ago I unearthed the story and thus contributed to Olga finally getting the recognition she deserved in the soaring world.

PS one of Olga's two daughters lives in Arizona and is or was a professor at The University of Arizona. An e-mail I sent her remained unanswered.

- She wrote in 2011 the forward for Naomi, the Aviatrix by Nick Thomas. A book, written by Naomi's son, which used information from Naomi Heron-Maxwell's diary and letters. Naomi was a mostly unknown, 1930s parachutist, glider pilot, WWII veteran and first female UK Silver Badge recipient; Frauke mentioned in her forward the problem of male discouragement faced by female pilots including Naomi, Doris Grove, and herself.

Forward

This book is the remarkable story of an early, forgotten woman pilot. She little talked about her flying career to her family. She never wrote a book herself or her place in aviation history. It was her son Nick Thomas who set his mother a monument by putting her diary notes in the context of time.

It is remarkable that Naomi Heron-Maxwell was able to make a career in aviation in the early 30es first by being part of an exhibition parachute team where women were considered daredevils and draws for larger, paying crowds. Then becoming a German trained glider pilot at a time when the political system pushed women out of aviation. Naomi became the first woman Silver Badge holder in the UK, an achievement that was not duplicated in the US until 1947 when Virginia Bennis (Schweizer) became the first American woman achieving that honor.

During World War II, when military aviation for a short time opened up for women as transfer/ferry pilots, Naomi followed the call, only – as so many others – being forgotten after the war.

She had to overcome almost insurmountable odds to make a living in aviation as this field of occupation stayed a male domain for more than 150 years with arguments against women aviators like “it is unknown what effect the change in air pressure has on female organs” to “Women will never be as successful in aviation as men. They don’t have the right nerves” (source: Die Schwestern des Ikarus, ISBN 3-89445-329x, ©Zeppelinmuseum Friedrichshafen GmbH, 2004).

Even in our enlightened time women had to overcome male prejudice. When Doris Grove, a US and World Record holding glider pilot and the first woman to fly past the 1000km mark in a glider, approached a flight instructor in the mid 70es with the request for instructions she was rebuked with “I don’t teach women to fly”. Or, in my own case, the chief flight instructor at the glider port in Germany insisted of grounding all menstruating women pilots.

We, the post war generations wished more of the early women aviators had written down their memoirs and thoughts to show the history of women aviation in the context where we are today and to encourage young women to follow their dreams.

Frauke Elber, Editor, Women’s Soaring Pilots Association

- Significantly responsible for recruiting and retaining WSPA's international women soaring pilot members from 10 countries; largely responsible for making WSPA the first women's international soaring organization; established contacts with prospective hosts for the three WSPA seminars held outside the US (in Canada, Italy and Slovenia).



Slovenia 2009 Seminar group photo



Italy 2016 Seminar group photo

- WSPA was awarded an exceptional service award in 2017 for its longevity and international outreach.



- Frauke is currently working with German women soaring pilots in preparation for the 2022 WSPA seminar to be offered in Germany.

From: WSPA Treasurer treasurer@womensoaring.org
Subject: Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award
Date: October 27, 2021 at 10:13 PM
To: Soaringjay@gmail.com



Jay McDaniel
SSA Awards Committee Chair

I support and recommend that Frauke Elber be selected for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award.

I have known Frauke for the many years that I have been a member of the WSPA. We attended quite a few of the WSPA Seminars in different parts of the country and abroad. Frauke was always to be counted on for help in carrying out the day to day aspects of the WSPA Seminar.

She is also at the origin of the fact that WSPA is now an international organization. Frauke traveled to several European competition sites and clubs, meeting women soaring pilots in Europe and fostering their interest in joining their American counterparts.

She has carried the task of recording and bringing to light women history in soaring. She included this history in our publication, Hangar Soaring. This newsletter of WSPA is the result of the assiduous work of Frauke. We are proud of the result.

I hope that the SSA Awards Committee will join us in recognizing the contribution that Frauke made to our progress as a soaring group.

Sincerely,

Margarett Roy

SSA#634166
WSPA Treasurer
treasurer@womensoaring.org

October 29, 2021

Jay McDaniel, Chair

SSA Awards Committee

Subject: Support for the nomination of Frauke Elber for the Schweizer Life Time Service Award.

Dear Jay,

I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Frauke. She has tirelessly and patiently without any interest of recognition contributed a major part of her working life to the promotion of an under represented group in our sport, the women of soaring.

Her more than half century of steady promotion and encouragement have touched many women's lives through WSPA both in the US and internationally.

Our sport is the better for the work of Frauke Elber.

Thanks for your consideration of this nomination.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl Striedieck', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Karl Striedieck

SSA 721212



October29, 2021
Fairbanks, AK

Dr. Ute Kaden
WSPA Board Member
CFIG/CFI
Maj, CAP Alaska Wing
Ute.Kaden@gmail.com
Cell.: 907-750-3399

Jay M. McDaniel
Soaring Society of America Awards Committee

Re.: Letter of Support for the nomination of *Frauke Jung Elber* for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award

I am pleased to support the nomination of Frauke Jung Elber for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award.

Frauke promotes soaring since more than 50 years and is an exceptional role model for the youth. She has been a driving force and a hard worker for WSPA and other soaring organizations. She is currently the editor of the WSPA "Hangar Soaring" newsletter and wrote frequent columns "Club News" for the Soaring Magazine. Her research and writing skills help publicizing soaring and archive soaring history. She volunteers in soaring events and is a familiar face at SSA conventions and international events. She is also an accomplished glider pilot. She took her first glider flight in April 1962 and earned her glider license in November 1962. She held the first Virginia feminine altitude record and completed the silver distance. I am honored to having met Frauke at various WSPA meetings and glider events. She truly inspires soaring pilots around the world!

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Ute Kaden', is written below the word 'Sincerely'.

From: Sarah Arnold info@chilhowee.com
Subject: Frauke Elber Nomination - Schweizer Lifetime Service Award
Date: November 1, 2021 at 1:59 PM
To: Jay McDaniel soaringjay@gmail.com
Cc: Cathy Williams clsoar2@gmail.com



Hi Jay,

I would like to add my support to Frauke Elber's nomination for the Schweizer Lifetime Service Award. She has contributed much to soaring through her efforts with WSPA (newsletter editor for many years, fundraiser, supporter of annual seminars), and her local club. Frauke has been a huge personal support to me from the day I first met her during my first SSA convention in Atlanta. I could think of no one who would deserve this award more than her.

Sarah Arnold
SSA #20301

November 1, 2021

Jay McDaniel, Chair
The Soaring Society of America Awards Committee

Dear Jay,

I wish to express my support for the nomination of Frauke Elber for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award. I first met Frauke in person when she attended the 1993 Women's Seminar hosted by a group of clubs in Colorado. Seeing her love for soaring and her enthusiasm in helping and encouraging the pilots attending the Seminar, it was clear that Frauke was committed to fostering the sport of soaring in every way possible.

I know Frauke has been a major supporter of her own club, the Tidewater Soaring Society, but I am more familiar with the huge contributions she has made to the Women's Soaring Pilots Association. She has been the *Hangar Soaring* newsletter editor for many years. This is a critical function within the WSPA organization as it keeps our international membership connected and informed. Frauke has also attended nearly every WSPA Seminar, helping with many tasks throughout those soaring weeks. She also helps run the WSPA booth at SSA Conventions, encouraging women soaring pilots to join WSPA, connect with other women pilots, and achieve their soaring goals. She has, in many ways, become one of the "faces" of WSPA for many SSA members.

I hope you will consider Frauke Elbert for the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award for her countless contributions to foster our sport.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Palmer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Alice Palmer
WSPA Scholarship Chair
SSA #272558