

What Soaring Means to Me Taylor L Rodina

There are no words to describe the feeling of soaring through the air in peace and quiet. Everyone must try it! I was so excited to take my first flight and so thankful that I had a caring and very knowledgeable instructor. I absolutely loved the feeling of flying and hopefully will be able to continue. However, if you ask me what soaring is, I would reply “TEAMWORK”.

A person who is even in a single place glider must rely on others. A glider pilot would have to depend on a tow pilot, a wing runner, mechanic, inspector, instructor, glider retriever, and so many others. Moreover, it is nice to have a field that is in good condition, fuel for a tow plane, and good batteries for the radios. How about having a shelter where people can rest for a while, converse about their flights, and meet regarding the maintenance of everything? Putting all of this teamwork together leads to a glider club.

I am honored to be a member of Chicago Glider Club. There, it is not just about flying gliders, it is about helping each other out and coming together for the love of soaring. When I first came there with my mom and brother, we were greeted warmly by all the members. Everybody was contributing. Members were painting, mowing, inspecting, and soaring. From attending the safety meeting to listening in on financial planning, I learned how much time and effort it took to keep a glider club going and how everyone came together to contribute. When I'm at the glider club, I help out by being a wing runner and a glider retriever. We also assisted in setting up tables and chairs for the meetings and other glider club events. I also contribute during my glider club's charity rides day, where not only does the public experience and learn about soaring, but all the money given for rides is donated to someone in need. During this event, I volunteered in retrieving gliders. It felt good to share my passion of soaring with the surrounding community and know that my time and effort helped a local child with cancer.

In the future, I would like to obtain my glider license and work in the aviation field. Currently, I am torn between being an airline pilot or an air traffic controller. However, I know that I would be thrilled to keep soaring. I understand that I have much more to learn and much more to experience since I have only had 10 flights totaling 3.1 hours. I have learned a bit about the aerodynamics of flight, flying tow, stalls, steep turns, slow flight, and the interesting aspect of thermals. Each time I prepare for my lesson or am up in the air contemplating my next move, I feel that I am gaining valuable experiences that will help me to become a better glider pilot and assist me in the decision making process. I look forward to continuing my studies in soaring and being a team player at the Chicago Glider Club and the ChicagoLand Glider Council.