

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Houston Woman Sets World Aviation Record

Houston, Texas, February 12, 2010

Val Paget was presented with an award for her World Record flight at the Soaring Society of America convention. Her flight, of 269 miles was homologated by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, the international organization that awards all aviation world records. The President of the National Aeronautic Association came to the convention to present the award.

Flying a glider, or sailplane as it is also called, Val Paget flew a record 289 miles in a motorless aircraft. This flight was made from the Soaring Club of Houston's airport that is located between Waller and Magnolia, Texas. Before the flight Val set a declared course into her flight recorded. Her first turnpoint was north to Madisonville; she made a turn there and headed south to an airport south of US 59, dodging thunderstorms as she flew. Then she turned north. After a final turn north of College Station, she headed back to the home gliderport. This meant that her final leg of the flight was into a 20 Kt headwind. Headwind in a powerless glider is especially challenging. As the sun moved lower on the horizon, it becomes increasingly difficult to find the thermal lift gliders need to stay aloft. This flight took 7 hours. When she landed just before sunset, a group of cheering members of The Soaring Club of Houston greeted her.

Initially, Val's glider was towed aloft behind a powered aircraft to 2,000 feet above the ground before she released the tow rope. Gliders stay aloft using columns of rising air in which pilots bank their craft in tight circles to climb. Flights of this length require the skillful use of thermal lift to "power" the aircraft to the declared destination and back.

Val Paget flies a single place glider. Gliders, such as the one used for this flight, are made of advanced composite materials and use highly refined aerodynamics for maximum performance and minimum drag. The glider converts one foot of altitude into 33 feet of forward progress, a slope barely detectible by human senses. Her single place glider weights 425 lbs and has a wing-span of 45', making it too long-winged to fit into most general aviation hangers. It has a speed range between 35 and 110 mph.

Soaring pilots use sensitive instruments including global positioning systems (GPS) to efficiently climb in thermals and navigate around the day's course. GPS flight recorders sample altitude, location and speed every few seconds. Val carried one of these instruments to create a digital file, called a flight trace. After the flight, his/her Official Observer submitted the flight trace to the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) that certifies all national aviation records. This flight was homologated by the Soaring Society of America, NAA, and the FAI. The international aviation that certifies all aviation records, including those by Lindbergh and Steve faucet. With the acceptance of her record, Val Paget has joined the ranks of world aviation record-holders.

Val is a retired Spring High School English teacher. She started soaring after her youngest child left for college. Over the years, she has given rides to a number of her students at Spring High School. Val has 7 US soaring records and has 1,100 hours flying these beautiful silent aircraft. She also flies power airplanes and helped restore a 1946 Taylorcraft single engine airplane. Her husband said, "I enjoy helping Val haul our glider all over the country to soar. I know she will keep me busy because her next goal is a straight out flight of over 350 miles. Since she would run into the Dallas airspace if she flew from here, we will have to head west to find a good place for such a flight.

For additional information about Val's soaring, read her feature story in *Drive magazine* <http://www.drive.subaru.com/Sum09.htm>

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Note to Editor: You can contact Val Paget at 832-654-3300, soar@valpaget.com to schedule an interview.