



The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

www.outerbankschamber.com

P.O. Box 1757 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

(252)441-8144, Voice

(252)441-0338, Fax

e-mail: chamber@outer-banks.com

April 27, 2011

National Aviation Hall of Fame
Harry B. Combs Research Center
Re: Combs Gates Award
P.O. Box 31096
Dayton, OH 45437

Dear Review Committee:

We encourage the recognition of the First Flight Foundation as a recipient of the 2011 Combs Gates Award for SOARING 100.

Beginning in 2003, the First Flight Foundation embarked upon an impressive trilogy of major events: the First Flight Centennial (2003) celebrating the 1903 powered flight; the restoration of the monument in the Wright Brothers National Memorial in 2008; and the upcoming centennial celebration, Soaring 100, recognizing Orville Wright's world record glider flight of 9 minutes 45 seconds scheduled October 21-24, 2011. As demonstrated by these major milestones, we believe that the foundation operates by the highest of standards for educating the public and promoting the enduring legacy of the Wright Brothers.

Orville Wright's 1911 glider flight set a world record that stood for 10 years. Aviation enthusiasts in the fields of sailplanes, hang gliding, and paragliding consider this event equivalent to the 1903 powered flight, however, this event, its impact, and aviation relevance is virtually unknown to the general public. The story will be told through Soaring 100.

Soaring 100 blends the thrill of aviation and education for all ages and across generations. The weekend celebration includes historical symposiums with international participation, youth activities, aviation story-telling, hang gliding and sailplane/glider and historical exhibits, and of course, flight. Perhaps the most poignant event is the test flights of the 1911 glider replicas being built in the manner of the Wrights, through study, research, and design including trial and error.

We applaud Soaring 100 for the collaboration of Jockey's Ridge State Park and the Wright Brothers National Memorial, a member of the National Park Service. We are both impressed and humbled by the participation and contributions of the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum and NASA.

We affirm the event's significance and legacy exemplified by the event's aviation partners united to present the celebration with the First Flight Foundation as the lead organizer: The Soaring Society of America; United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association; National Soaring Museum; Vintage Sailplane Association; First Flight Society; NASA; Academy of Model Aeronautics; Foundation for Free Flight; and The Rogallo Foundation.

We are proud to have the First Flight Foundation as a member of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce and their Executive Director, Lola Hilton as a Chamber Ambassador. We are privileged to promote and assist with Soaring 100. The National Aviation Hall of Fame and the Combs Gates Award will be well represented by the First Flight Foundation and SOARING 100 in telling another chapter of the Wright Brothers legacy. Thank you for your support and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin A. Mann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robin A. Mann, Chair
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors