



April
2002

Fly-In Fun

(by Lauren Tjaden)

I chewed on the end of my pencil, mulling over the best way to accomplish my assigned task of writing an entertaining and informative piece about aerotowing. It could prove to be a difficult mission for me. I *do* know a bridle from a carabiner (though barely), and I've towed a fair amount, but anyone asking me for advice would be more foolish than the man who visited Montana in December without a jacket. I'm too inexperienced and unskilled to offer counsel. I thought about harassing Sunny and Chad for suggestions, but then I remembered the classic writer's advice: Write what you know.

I decided I'd do a better job discussing some other subject relevant to hang gliding; one that I understood better.

Unfortunately, besides lacking knowledge about aerotowing, I also lack knowledge about various sites. Ditto on flying skills.

I bit off my pencil eraser and spit it on the desk. I had to have knowledge about *some* subject related to hang gliding. Then it hit me. I know about parties. I know how to have fun. In fact, I'm *really* good at fun. And Fly-Ins *are* parties, aren't they? At last, I'd found my subject.

Tracy (of Tom and Tracy) told me she'd been to the Pulpit Fly-In. She said most of the time it's impossible to fly the site itself because of the conditions. Normally, pilots launch at other, more suitable sites, and then meet back at the Pulpit to camp and swap stories. When pressed for details, she explained that

folks play guitars and quaff beer around a bonfire. This sounded alright, but I was after more dirt.

When I pumped Steve Padgett for information, he shook his head. "Oh, Hyner brings back bad memories." He closed his eyes and winced. "I remember ugly women. The ugliest women that you've ever seen." He added, "They're not too bad as men."

Christy Huddle disagreed. "C_____ was stunning as a woman. Such creamy shoulders. No definition to them. Any girl would be jealous of him, particularly in that green satin gown. The color was perfect for his skin tone."

I felt as confused as Alice must have when she stumbled down the rabbit

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Pre-Flight

(Ralph Sickinger)



Ahhh, Spring! When the days get warmer, flowers start to bloom, and a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of... FLYING! Of course, while everyone else is out flying and having fun, I'm stuck inside on a Saturday afternoon trying to put a newsletter together. *< sigh >* But, the hard work and long hours are all worthwhile, because I know I have hundreds of faithful readers out there, anxiously waiting for the next edition of "Skyline" to hit their mailboxes. *(I don't really believe that, but it's what I keep telling myself while I'm working on the newsletter.)*

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Taking Flight To The Public

(by Cragin Shelton)

March was public relations month for the Capital Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association. Two events gave us the chance to bring the best face of free flight to the public. The first was a moderate regional event. The next was a massive activity with national exposure.

Vienna Wireless Society Winterfest

We opened up with a display at the Vienna Wireless Society (<http://www.viennawireless.org/>) Winterfest hamfest. On Sunday, March 3, the amateur radio club held it's annual electronics swap and sales meet at the Northern Virginia Community College Annandale campus. Jim Richey, a member of the hamfest program committee, knew about hang glider pilots' use of ham ra-

dio. Jim invited us to provide a promotional display, hoping to add some color to the day. He also wanted to highlight a ham use many of their members were not aware of.

Cragin Shelton set up in the lobby of the community center about 7:30 a.m. with posters, photos, maps, magazines, handouts and flyers. Ralph Sickinger arrived shortly after 8:00 with notebook computer in tow. Dan Tomlinson pulled himself out of a sickbed to drop off a television and VCR. Dan took his flu home, leaving Craig and Ralph to spread the good word about our sport. An earlier plan to set up a glider was thwarted by rain threat and uncertainty over space. The location was perfect, directly opposite the registration table.

Bright glider photos and the continu-

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hole, but after more questioning, their conversation made sense. They were gossiping about the famed Hyner "drag races", which features pilots competing in two categories, heels and flats. These races are judged not only on speed, but on style. For instance, how the pilot struts and holds his bag is of utmost importance. Apparently Danny favors purple sequins. And Fred is stuck competing in the flats division, because he has difficulty finding size thirteen heels.

My mind was already overwhelmed with images of excess body hair and lace when Steve told me the situation usually deteriorated further. "Naked fire jumping" is another preferred midnight game. I personally think that this falls into the category of ten percent more than you want to know, so I'll leave particulars about this event to your imagination.

The fourth of July celebration includes fireworks, and sometimes battle re-enactments. Apparently one year some Canadians made the mistake of camping across from the Hyner group. As the evening progressed, the pilots, overcome with patriotic fervor, began to fire their Roman candles and rockets at the Canadians. The Canadians happily leapt into the battle and fired back. However, no deaths were reported.

Hyner also offers an opportunity to garner landing tips from experts. A panel sits on top of a bus, holding up

numbers to show the points awarded for each landing. Pilots can be awarded either a six or a nine (the club is cheap, therefore, the judges only have one number and have to flip it one way or the other to show their preferences).

I was pretty impressed, but Chad Elchin laughed and said the Hyner action was nothing compared to that offered at their Ridgely Airpark by Easton, Maryland, because last year they added water sports to the agenda. He mentioned frog hunting, kite surfing, and even canoeing. However, when pressured, Chad admitted that these sports had been added as a last minute surprise only due to torrential rains. Further, the rain wrecked the bonfire, so the naked fire jump was eliminated (though this *could* be considered a bonus).

I thought I might have trouble filling a page with Fly-In activities, but it turns out hang glider pilots are truly weird. The list goes on forever. I heard tales about a man who dresses as the Statue Of Liberty, about a game called "spoons" that involves electricity, and even about a woman named Doreen who does a special trick with a flash camera.

So it turns out that Fly-Ins offer loads of adventure, even for those of us who are marginal in the air (or for those that choose not to fly). I can't wait to see you at one of the many upcoming affairs. Unless, of course, you're wearing a silk gown and have hairy, ugly legs.

Prez-Sez

(Joe Brauch)



The Daylight is back!

I know I had a good day flying made all that much more enjoyable by having a nice long evening of sunshine. I have brushed off the cobwebs of last winter and dove into the spring air at Fishers. It looks like many people are back into the swing of the season. I have heard many flights made at Woodstock and Jacks. Everyone keep safe and remember those basics of good strong launch and when it's all over, a hard flare to absorb all that energy that would otherwise go towards a whack.

I visited with Emma Jane at the High Rock LZ. She is doing well. The recovery was not proceeding as well as planned but that was due mostly to some inattentive doctors. She got an infection and ended up having additional surgery to fix work already done. The original doctor was upset with the follow up care Emma Jane was receiving in Hagerstown. Other than that she was up and about and has some recovering to do but her spirits are great and she misses all the Hang glider pilots stopping by. Randy and Harry are holding up well also. Emma did mention that the local community does not know what has happened to the Hang gliders. I am working on a plaque to put at the Rock and an article for their local paper.

Logo Contest

The official CHGPA (Chugpa) Logo Contest is still on! If you would like to submit entries and have not already done so please email or call me to let me know. If you need more time or a still working on one let me know that also and I can hold the contest over another month. Otherwise, we will be judging the entries already received and declare a winner soon.

Finally, I would like to thank the guys from Dukes of Windsoar (Danny and Ed) and Highland Aeorsports (Chad and Sunny) for coming out to our last meeting. They shared information on Paraglider towing, Powered Paragliders and procedures and safety for Aerotowing. Everyone is open so go fly!

~joe

Capitol Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association

CHGPA represents hang glider and paraglider pilots from the Washington, DC mid-Atlantic region. We are committed to the safety, growth and solidarity of hang gliding and paragliding.

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Web Master: Mark Cavanaugh webdev@chgpa.org

www.chgpa.org

USHGA Chapter #33
15914B Shady Grove Rd.
#L-197
Gaithersburg, MD
20877-1315
Telephone: 202.393.2854

Thinkin' About...

(Chris McKee)



Tree Rescue/Survival Kit

It is suggested that you carry ropes, saws, etc in your car if you regularly fly sites that are heavily wooded. If you have an extra pocket in your harness, it would be advisable for you carry gear that would assist in recovery if you ever end up in the trees. Some recommended items that could be carried are:

- 100' - 150' lengths of climbing rope (Rope should be 3X the height you expect to be rescued from)
- Locking carabiner
- Folding saw (to cut through limbs)
- Pocket knife
- Hook knife (to cut through hang straps)
- Flashlight
- Whistle
- Power Bars, snacks, etc
- Extra water or juice boxes
- Space Blanket

Preferably, the treed pilot should wait for assistance before attempting to extract his or herself from the tree. Using the climbing rope and carabiner hooked into your harness allows for an assistant to lower you to the ground. Alternately, you can use your reserve parachute as a "rope" to lower you down or to climb down yourself. Your reserve also makes an excellent tent/sleeping bag in a pinch. If you are serious risk of falling, it is best to secure yourself to the tree with your rope and wait until you are recovered. Just some things to think about...

How To Survive The Kite-Eating Tree

As the 2002 Resident Tree Expert, I thought I would use my monthly column to give enlightenment on how NOT to have a bad tree experience.

RULE # 1 - DON'T GO NEAR TREES, IF YOU CAN POSSIBLY AVOID IT. They eat lift and they cause rotors and general turbulence.

RULE # 2 - If you CAN'T avoid a tree, make sure you hit it good and HARD. Fly right at it, and get some speed up. Most tree injuries happen when you fall out, or lightly catch a wing-tip.

RULE # 3 - If you're going over a line of trees and you see you won't make it, try and land in the top, rather than over the other side.

RULE # 4 - As you enter the foliage, keep your legs together (for OBVIOUS reasons!) and your knees drawn up. Protect your face as soon as you touch substantial stuff, grab a big handful and HOLD ON TIGHT! Don't let go until you are sure that the glider won't fall out.

RULE # 5 - YELL FOR HELP!

FLY SAFE!



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Right now, I'm trying to figure out what to do with the newsletter. I want to do new things with it, and make it better; I want the newsletter to serve the club membership, but I don't know exactly what that means. That's where you come in. I need to hear from you. I want to know what you like or don't like about Skyline; what to keep, what to change, and what you want more of. Please email your comments directly to me at: skyline@chgpa.org. breathless, her chest heaving, she just stood there fascinated; she couldn't help but stare, as he slowly began to remove

In the meantime, this issue has some new things, that I hope you'll like: first, we have a new banner, that better reflects our club's bi-lingual nature. Second, the newsletter is now available in

two different electronic forms. You can still get the html version at

<http://go-get.com/skyline>

OR... you can get a PDF version at

<http://skyline.sickinger.net>

Check it out, and tell me what you think!

So, getting back to my original thought; Spring also means America's favorite pastime has started up again. That's right, it's baseball season! Right now I'm listening to the O's game, and they're losing. Again. But you know, as I sit here listening to the game, I'm thinking about the different kinds of games that we Americans seem to enjoy. It occurs to me that most of our popular sports either involve hitting something, or throwing and catching stuff. *(There's some weenie European*

sports that only involve kicking, but we won't go there...) Hang Gliding is no different; some of the best fun I've had comes from throwing people off of the Pulpit ramp. It's kind of like throwing paper airplanes off a balcony, only on a much larger scale. On any given weekend you can go out to the mountains and hear something like this:

"So, how fast do you think the wind is blowing?"

"I'd say 20-25..."

"Are you kidding?! 15... tops!"

"No way! You're out of your mind!"

"Well, let's see; we can throw Brian off, and see if the wind blows him back..."

"Hmmm... Ok, sounds like a good plan."

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CHGPA Photo Album



An expert aviator soars at Jack's Mountain
(Photo by Ralph Sickinger)

The Skyline can use your pictures!

You can either email them to skyline@chgpa.org

Or you can send photos to:
Ralph Sickinger
15735 Erwin Ct, Bowie, MD 20716

Send a self-addressed stamped envelope, if you want the picture back.

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ously running **Learn to Fly** video from USHGA attracted plenty of attention. One visitor saw the signs and exclaimed, "Oh, y'all are them paraglider fellas that use ham radios illegally." "Not at all!" we responded, and we showed him on one poster the list of 60 CHGPA members with our amateur radio call signs. This highlighted one of our major reasons for being there: to publicize that we do, in fact, take an active role in promoting ham radio, encouraging and assisting our members to become licensed ham operators.

Which, in turn, leads to how Ralph spent his day at the Winterfest. He had his notebook computer running the Technician License practice test software he had written only a few months earlier. The program garnered a lot of interest among the hams, and Ralph found himself discussing and demonstrating it all day. One visitor, Toby, told us he was a co-worker of Dave Proctor's and he had watched flying at the Pulpit and even enjoyed a tandem hang gliding lesson at Highland Aerosports. Toby was very interested in using the program as part of the regular exam preparation classes offered by his ham club in

Frederick. Ralph arranged to get the latest version of the program to Toby. Ralph's program is available for download at:

<http://sickinger.net/ham>

A common question was, "Where do you fly?" Our display included state highway maps with flying sites listed and marked across Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The lists even gave the preferred wind directions for each site, to help the hams find us on flying days.

The hamfest wound down mid-afternoon. Our purpose was not so much to recruit new potential pilots, as to educate the

amateur radio community on our association with them, and thank them for the support they give us. We felt that we had met our goals, especially when a ham from eastern Maryland asked if we might be able to give a similar demonstration at his club's hamfest in June on the Eastern Shore. Jim Richey suggested we bring the posters and video to a regular meeting of Vienna Wireless, so the many club members who had been tied up running the show could see our presentation. Finally, there is a good chance they will ask us to return next year - and we will be sure to set up a glider next year.

Smithsonian Kite Festival

The hamfest was a relatively small venue, with a few hundred visitors. However, On Saturday, March 23rd, we were able to show off hang gliding to thousands of folks at the annual Smithsonian Kite Festival. For the third year in a row we set up two gliders on the Washington Monument grounds, at the edge of the kite competition field. With Joe Gregor in training for a March 24 marathon, Brian Vant-Hull had taken the job of club coordinator for the event this year. He and Chris McKee arrived



Brian Vant-Hull and Chris McKee man the booth at the Smithsonian Kite Festival

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The New CHGPA Web Site : Room to Grow and Improve!

(by Mark Cavanaugh)

Did you know that Scott Lindsay has provided web hosting for the CHGA and the MHGA at absolutely **zero** cost, ever since the unveiling of the joint CHGA/MHGA website in March of 1997? We've got a great presence on the web as a result of Scott's efforts, and we've all directly benefitted. His generosity deserves a heartfelt thank-you from both clubs!

But you know what they say: "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch!".

With the rename of CHGA (now CHGPA) last year, the Board realized that it would be a good idea to register chgpa.org before some other organization grabbed it. At the same time, many desired capabilities for the web site were identified: SQL databases; CHGPA email addresses; methods for collaborative maintenance of the site; better security for members-only pages; more reliable FTP access; it's a pretty long list.

And guess what? These sorts of features are what web hosting companies are in the business of providing, but certainly NOT for free. No-one felt that it would be fair to ask Scott to provide free hosting **and** the new features that we need.

So, we decided to go "legit"; the club signed up for a web hosting plan with AffordableHost.com at \$15/month, and thus www.chgpa.org has joined the Web. We chose AffordableHost for several reasons, chief among them being that they offer a 10% discount for non-profits, and I was able to talk them into providing their "Option 5" plan at the "Option 4" price.

Now that chgpa.org is "live", these addresses are available for your use:

president@chgpa.org
vp_treasurer@chgpa.org
secretary@chgpa.org
flight_director@chgpa.org
datlarge@chgpa.org
skyline@chgpa.org

info@chgpa.org
webdev@chgpa.org

Joe Brauch
 Cragin Shelton
 Nigel Dewdney
 Chris McKee
 Matthew Graham
 Skyline Editor
 (Ralph Sickinger)
 General Information
 Web Development
 (Mark Cavanaugh)

Thus far things have been pretty busy just getting everything moved to the new site (there's an understatement!). But once that's settled down, you will begin to see new content that takes advantage of the new features available to us.

You'll also see a new logo on the chgpa.org homepage which reflects both hang-gliding and paragliding. You **do** know that the club is sponsoring a contest for a new logo, right? So come on you artsy-types, create a design and submit it! Your logo could grace our homepage and provide lifelong fame!

Cheers,

~mark

www.chgpa.org

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"Way cool! I've never seen a Falcon fly inverted before! I guess maybe it IS blowing a little stronger than I thought... Oh well! You win some and you lose some. Who else can we throw off?"

"How about some hang-2s? It's always fun to watch them thrash around after you let go of 'em."

"Yeah... I know, let's throw Paul off; he'll fly in **anything!**"

"Hey! He likes it! Maybe it's calming down some. Who else can we get?"

"I know - Karen! I'll make some excuse about being a gentleman and letting ladies go first - the women always fall for that kind of stuff - and then we'll see what it's **really** like up there."

...
 "So, how's she doing?"

"She's lookin' pretty good; she hasn't crashed, she hasn't puked, and she hasn't fallen out of the sky yet; I'd say conditions are pretty close to perfect."

"All right! Time to do some flying ourselves! So, how'd we do today?"

"I beat you, 4-3. Sorry, better luck next time!"

"Yeah, you just wait until **next** weekend..."



Lauren Tjaden throws (pushes?) Carlos Weill off of the Pulpit
 (Photo by Ralph Sickinger)

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early in the morning to set up gliders, tables, and handouts. Due to confusion over location at the festival there was no electrical power, so they were unable to set up the VCR for hang gliding videos.

Other club members trickled in as the day progressed. Joe and Janet Gregor were able to spend most of the day at the festival, and Mark and Sheila Gardner brought future pilot and hang driver Bridget down, all bundled against the wind in her stroller. Mike Balk was accompanied by Julia, who became one of the most enthusiastic hosts at the display. Joe Brauch added to the staff, as did Craig Shelton. Ralph Sickinger brought a fresh supply of his custom flyers on local hang gliding. Mark Cavanaugh arrived all sleek and helmeted for his bicycle ride from home.

The attendance at the festival was visibly down from previous years. We assume that it was a combination of a cold and windy forecast for the day, along with tourist and kite club uncertainty about

spending a day in D.C. post 9/11. Even with the smaller crowds, CHGPA members stayed busy talking with visitors all day. We gave out our entire supply of Hang Gliding magazines, all but ten Paragliding Magazines, and all 300 of Ralph's flyers. Under rules of the festival

...hang gliding has a better safety record than self-declared expert skiers on black diamond slopes.

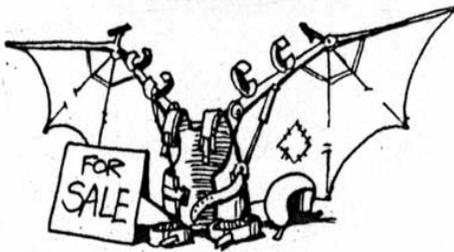
we had to be careful to avoid soliciting, either for club membership or for the local flight schools. Even so, as we educated visitors about the sports of hang gliding and paragliding we were able to provide contact information about both CHGPA and Maryland Hang Gliding Association, as well as all four regional schools.

Our gliders were popular backdrops for photographs. The most notable was a young lady, maybe five years old, costumed as small green decorated Christ-

mas tree. Her mom photographed her standing under Brian's glider, white flying helmet slung jauntily under one arm.

Even though the crowds were smaller this year, our glider display staff was nearly overwhelmed. We could have used several more club members, especially paraglider pilots, to hand out our giveaways and answer questions. We all spent the entire day talking with visitors. Many expressed an apparent real interest in trying out the sport, often looking at a spouse or SO ("significant other", for those of you who have not kept up with modern Newspeak) for encouragement, as we related the wonders of free flight. We had quite a few inquiries about paragliding, and the differences between the two types of flight. The many hang glider pilots present did our best to describe both activities, and we would refer to Mike Balk as our only biwingual pilot present, even though his P2 rating is fairly dormant. One skydiver talked about his sport of controlled falling and we did our best to convince him it is lot more

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To place or change an ad, send e-mail to: skyline@chgpa.org

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fun to stay up there floating around.

Just as at the hamfest, "Where do you fly?" was a recurring question. We used the maps marked with flying sites over three states to good effect. Many of the visitors said they would try to find us out in the mountains some weekend. We found a good answer to safety questions, by explaining that with modern gliders, training methods, and USHGA ratings, hang gliding for participants at all skill levels has a better safety record than self-declared expert winter skiers on black diamond (expert) slopes. This is a modification of the statistics reported by USHGA, but seemed to strike the right level of understanding among the questioners. One of our goals at this festival was letting the general public know that the crazy and dangerous reputation as an extreme sport that hang gliding earned in its formative years thirty years ago has been replaced by its status as a legitimate adventure sport today.

As in past years, all pilots who took part were very pleased with the day. We are not sure if we sparked any new students into the sport, but we think a few seeds of interest were sewn. Joe Gregor tells us that the Smithsonian Kite Festival staff has been pleased with our participation each year. We should look for increased visibility for our sport at the festival in coming years.



Joe Gregor's Hang Gliding Information Display
(Photo by Ralph Sickinger)

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Smithsburg training hill is closed for the season.
It will re-open in Fall, after the crops have been harvested.

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Richard Hays	410.527.0975	Baltimore, MD
John Middleton	703.533.1965	Arlington, VA
Steve Wendt	540.432.6557	Manquin, VA



Next CHGPA meetings will be held:
 April 24, 2002
 May 22, 2002

Meetings are held downstairs at: Lasick's Beef House

Directions: 0.8 mile inside the beltway on Route 1 South, just past the Super 8 Motel (College Park exit off I-495).

Note: If coming from points north on I-95, at the Capital Beltway stay right at the split and then take the immediate left exit to Route 1 South, College Park.

Lasick's Beef House
 9128 Baltimore Blvd.
 College Park MD 20740
 (301) 441-2040

