



VHGA NEWS!

The Vermont Hang Gliding Association Quarterly Newsletter
Winter 2004

...and some rambling from the new guy

By Rob Jacobs, VHGA president

Here I sit in this opulent mansion, surrounded by servants, Air Force One parked out back, and the secret service guarding my every move. *Yeah right!* I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to John Arrison, Dennis Cavagnaro and Tom Lanning for leaving office. (just kidding) They did, and continue to do, a great job in steering our small club in a positive direction. I only hope that I can live up to the tasks ahead and do as well as they did. Many thanks guys!

During my first week or two in office I've arranged most of our paperwork for the coming year and it all looks good. The VHGA was the third club, out of 66 chapters, to submit their 2004 chapter paperwork to USHGA. I just live for paperwork!

The VHGA can't live on dues alone! We need volunteers for various chores to keep our sites up to par. I ask that every member give at least a day or two and volunteer for site work, trail work, ramp work, and other various events and work parties that are coordinated by our site directors. Four hours from every member would add up to over six hundred man-hours, yet we only get ten to fifteen volunteers each year. *Please* step forward or I *will* hunt you down!



Our Illustrious new president.
Well, close enough...

Try to get your VHGA waiver and dues in early, preferably long before the 2004 season starts.

(ed. Form included with newsletter and online at www.vhga.org)

You can also help the VHGA by adding a donation to the club. All these funds will help us when it comes time to make a land purchase or lease. A self addressed, stamped envelope is also a big help, when paying your dues, for the return of your membership card and helmet sticker!

NEW GUY page 4

A few parting word from our ex-president...

By John Arrison

I would like to thank the membership very much for the recognition and the cash gift voted on at the October meeting. I would like to donate the cash gift back to the club for use in the purchase of the West Rutland launch. The VHGA has been very fortunate over its 25-year history to have had many dedicated volunteers serving as officers and doing the work that needs to be done. The election of Rob Jacobs and Greg Hanlon marks a real changing of the guard. Previously the president and vice president positions have been filled by one of the (I hate to use this word) *old*, original long time members. Change is good and I'm sure the new slate of officers will put new energy and effort into the club.

West Rutland Update:

I wish I could say things were moving faster but they are not. I've searched the land records at the West Rutland town office and determined that the road to launch is indeed the right of way that Jake Schweiger owns. That is good. All of Jake's land is classified as *current use*, which saves him big bucks on his taxes. However he can not subdivide anything less than twentyfour acres without paying a penalty. Also, any structure on the property requires a two acre exclusion. Therefore we are proposing the purchase of twenty-six acres with use of the right of way. Owning twenty-six acres will allow the VHGA to keep the *current use* classification, which will save us many dollars in taxes. The extra two acres will give us a buffer if anyone ever makes a stink over the camp at launch. Rick Sharpe has been in contact with Jake's attorney to get the wheels turning. A survey and all the necessary permits will need to be done for the subdivision. I really really hope that this will all be accomplished by spring.

THE V.H.G.A. ANNUAL XC DINNER EXTRAVAGANZA!

Where: T.R. Brennans at 1037 Hanover Street in Manchester, NH.

When: Saturday, March 6th at 6:30 PM.

Directions to T.R. Brennans:

From points south

I 93 N
Take Candia Rd. **Exit 6** toward Hanover St.
Turn left onto Hanover St.
Go approx. 0.25 miles.

From points north

I 93 S
Take Hanover St. **Exit 6** toward Candia Rd.
Turn right onto Hanover St.
Go approx. 0.25 miles.

RSVP - Rob Jacobs Mailways1@aol.com 603-629-6449 at home, 603-669-5252 at work.

Camp Rob

Halloweenie report!

By Rodger Furey

Gandalf stood on the picnic table, a butt hanging from the corner of his mouth. He was dressed in a long grey cloak and a tall pointy hat a couple sizes too big for his head. A thin tendril of smoke crept up the side of his face and a faint odor of licorice hung in the air. Gandalf was trying to get the attention of a group of people milling around the campfire while a red-headed elf enforcer worked the crowd, directing their attention toward the butt-toting wizard. There was going to be a scavenger hunt and all were going to participate - if you knew what was good for you. It was the annual Camp Rob Halloweenie party and Rob Jacobs (Gandalf) and his lovely wife (Sandy, the killer elf) had pulled out all the stops.

You knew that this party was going to be something special upon arrival at the Morningside two-fifty. Camp Rob was gone, or more accurately it was hidden, hidden behind a towering structure of stone. Twenty foot high walls of wood and fabric painted like the sides of an ancient fortress surrounded the camp on three sides. Inside, the mood was enhanced with hanging lights dotting the area while the customary white man's campfire blasted untold BTU's into the otherwise comfortable night air and a boom-box with surround-sound speakers assaulted the ear with our host's unfortunate taste in music. Like most Camp Rob special events the grill was working overtime and the nearby picnic table was soon overflowing with piles of food.

A significant number of people arrived in costume. Trailer trash seemed to be the fashion trend of the night with a few individuals donning the attire of the core audience of the Montel Williams and Jerry Springer show. Bumping and grinding to the music, speaking with a thick southern twang, and carrying on with such unbridled enthusiasm that at times it was as alarming as it was uproarious.

Out of the darkness a towering figure emerged sporting a hockey mask and waving a chainsaw like a weapon. Was it the ghost of Jason or Mike Meyers out for bloody vengeance or was it just ol' Jeff Nicoley looking to collect some camping fees?

An uber-geek, with black nerd glasses and looking like Chris Hager having a bad hair day, put on the performance of the night. Raving in true geek fashion with such poise and conviction that it begged the question as to which was the true Chris Hager, hang gliding Chris or this manifestation from Revenge of the Nerds?

The scariest costume of the night has to go to Tom Lanning, dressed as a punk rocker who had just performed fellatio on an electrical outlet.

It's become difficult to recall what we ever did before Camp Rob. Partially because Camp Rob parties have become such a Morningside fixture and partially because it is often hard to remember much of anything after a night at Camp Rob. If you missed the latest event consider yourself unfortunate and make a point of attending next years Halloweenie Bash. You won't be disappointed....unless it rains.

PK's Excellent Adventure

By Peter Kelley

In late October I had to go to Puerto Rico on business so I took advantage of the trip to get a little airtime. Our own Bob and Keishya of Team Spirit Hangliding and Paragliding have a very nice operation to get you into some tropical flying without the hassle.

On the first day they took me to Arecibo, a 450 foot E-NE semi-cliff site that looks out over fields towards the ocean. The broken cliffs and ridges and bumps stretched several miles inland and were very soarable in light wind mixed with mellow thermal blobs. I flew a WW Fusion 141, courtesy of Team Spirit. Thanks to Bob for carrying the glider up to launch for me in the 80+ degree heat and humidity. I could sure use some of that heat lately! I had an enjoyable soaring flight with a few locals until a thunder cell from the inland rainforests started to threaten. After we landed, all the local pilots gathered for beers in a nearby locale. I'm not sure which was more fun, the flying or the party afterwards. The locals were really friendly. Kids, girlfriends, wives and pilots, everyone is welcome.

The next day we headed to Cubuy, the premiere site on the island. 1440 feet of lush green ridge. Getting to launch is an adventure. A winding narrow road up the back of the mountain through mountain villages perched at the edge of the rainforest, complete with goats, cattle and

children. Keishya and I flew and I quickly found myself at cloudbase. I tried driving upwind several times without much success and ended up back on the ridge. Keishya radioed me to head downwind to an LZ she'd shown me earlier. Soaring quietly downwind over these gorgeous, lush spines and ridges was great and much smoother than beating upwind. 10 miles or so later I set down in a nice RC field, hovering in for a landing into a seabreeze that had worked it's way inland. Later that afternoon Keishya took me straight up the mountain instead of around the back. A ride that was more frightening than any hang gliding flight. It cut the time to launch from thirty minutes to just ten but I think it also cut my life expectancy in half. Seriously though, I loved it. I took a mellow flight in a big Falcon while Bob trained a paraglider on the ridge. The scenery is awesome at this place, waterfalls descending from towering cliffs, and a multitude of flowers and tropical plants everywhere. I wanted to get a closer look at the rainforest from the air but October is not the right time of year to get near it.

I enjoyed the hang gliding portion of the trip more than the four star hotel I was staying at. I would recommend a flying trip to Puerto Rico to anyone. There are various lodging facilities available and beautiful beaches with perfect water to relax in before and after flying. Thank you Bob and Keishya!

Keishya says:

Team Spirit Hangliding and Paragliding, now in our seventh year on beautiful Puerto Rico. Glider rentals and flying tours for anyone with a H2 or P2 rating and higher. H2 and P2 intensive courses are available and, of course, tandems with Bobby! There are tons of adventures on the island and in the ocean for non-flyable days. We also have lots of housing options to offer at local spots of all price ranges. Next year we will have housing available in a big place with a swimming pool just a few steps away from the beach. Come on down!

You can contact us at tshg@coqui.net or 787-850-0508 or our website at www.Mailways.net/teamspirit

*The next VHGA club meeting will be at
6:30 pm Saturday, May 29th at Morningside
Flight Park in North Charlestown, NH.*

November XC, a dream?

By Tom Lanning

4:30 pm, Friday afternoon and the local forecast for the weekend was gloomy. A check of the Orlando weather forecast showed diminishing winds and drying conditions behind the front Mark Vaughn and Rob Jacobs had sat through at Wallaby Ranch the previous two days. I know, from past experience, that Florida flying can be pretty good in November but it is not as common as in the spring due to stronger and more frequent weather changes. After a couple clicks on the Southwest Airlines web site, a hasty packing job and an unexpected meeting with Mike Williams at the boarding gate, I arrived in Orlando before midnight.

Mark, Mike, Rob, Jim Colella, and the freshly-minted local, Steve Prepost, greeted me at Wallaby Ranch the following morning. I quickly claimed a Wills Wing Talon for the weekend and was ready to play. The winds were light from the ENE so we decided to head towards a small airport NW of Wallaby on the other side of the Great Swamp. Dry high pressure was in control of the region so there were only a few clouds marking the weak lift. Mike headed out first and was rewarded with a painful-to-watch glide to the deck. It was obvious to the rest of us that there wasn't going to be a lot of time or distance to find the next thermal since the top of climb was only 3800 MSL. Gibbo, Sugarman, and Jim headed out next. It looked like Mike was going to get some company but they eventually found some light lift to keep them in the game. Mark and I were not overwhelmed with the performance of the others and decided to try another track a little further north. We found some weak and broken lift that was dancing all over the place and slowly climbed and drifted

towards Route 33. Mark decided to head north along Route 33 towards Quest, I decided to head west to our goal. Although the lift was never strong, it did become more frequent. I detoured around the southern tip of the swamp since I did not have enough faith in the day to attempt a direct crossing. When I heard Gibbo, Jim, and Sugarman planning to land at the Zephyrhills airport I realized that would be the best chance for a ride back to Wallaby. A quick check with the flight computer showed that I only needed another 800 feet before I could attempt a glide to the airport. A few friendly buzzards directed me to my next climb and I soon had the airport on glide.

Everyone knew Sunday was going to be a good day. High pressure was moving off the east coast, the winds were coming around to the SE and some moisture was returning to the area. We arranged for a retrieve and decided to go wherever the wind would take us. No records would be set that day with the light winds, low cloud base, and short daylight hours. But it was November, we were lounging in the warm shade of our favorite Florida flight park, our gliders ready to go and cummies filling the sky. We already had our reward! Mark, Jim, Steve, and I were soon bouncing under clouds on our way NW. Cloudbase was 4000 MSL, climbs were reasonable, and the wind was from the SE around 8mph. Mark and Jim almost managed to deck it when they dove into some blue but Mark found a trashy climb and Jim managed to backtrack and find the source of the thermal that Steve and I were sharing. Mark was entertaining doubts about continuing on as we approached Quest Air and asked if anyone was interested in returning to Wallaby. Steve was having

none of that and urged me to continue on. A simple "lets go!" was all the prompting I needed! Moments later, after missing the thermal I was in, Steve had a change of heart and turned tail for the ranch. Mark was also having a difficult time making up his mind and went on a long glide to catch me when he noticed that I had continued on. Unfortunately he missed my thermal and landed around 29 miles out. Meanwhile Jim, who had gotten separated from the pack, was laying on the speed to catch up. He struggled in the same area that decked Mark and eventually landed in the same field with Mark. After watching Mark, Jim, and Steve, it became obvious that life was good up high and getting low was no fun. I worked at staying as high as possible, even if that meant going off my course line to the Ocala airport. Each subsequent glide was getting longer and I was arriving lower before finding the next climb. I knew it was only a matter of time before I would hit the ground before finding the next thermal. I wanted to make the Ocala airport but I had to turn around, four miles short of my goal, to find a place to land. I avoided the pastures filled with expensive thoroughbred horses and ended the day in a peanut field sixty-four miles from the ranch.

Monday morning I found myself at work, gazing out the window at the cold, gray November sky wondering, "Did I really go XC the past two days or was it all a dream?"



SurFLYvor, A themed competition based on the popular reality show **Survivor**. Hosted by our very own, Rob Jacobs at Wallaby Ranch, March 24th through March 27th. All VHGA members are welcome to attend this fun flying event. It will be a *Camp Rob* style event with both daytime flying, and nighttime activities. It's sure to be one for the books!

Read more about it at www.surFLYvor.com

Y.H.G.A. XC Challenge Results, 2003

□ Hang glider open class

1 st	Dennis Cavagnaro	100.0 miles
2 nd	Greg Hanlon	92.7 miles
3 rd	Tim Hoopes	91.1 miles

□ Hang glider 25-50 mile class

1 st	Dan MacMonagle	77.2 miles
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□ Hang glider 0-25 mile class

1 st	Sontra Yim	14.8 miles
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□ Hang glider tandem class

1 st	Gary Trudeau	7.8 miles
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□ Paraglider 0-25 mile class

1 st	Matt Gaskin	10.9 miles
2 nd	Niece Miller	10.5 miles
3 rd	Kathleen McKenna	9.0 miles

□ Paraglider open class

1 st	Dave Morris	30.5 miles
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Our conduct at our flying sites is a direct reflection of who we are. Please conduct set-up, break-down, and all flying related activities in a fun, positive manner when interacting with the public. Be sure to not to leave any trash at our flying sites and do your best to promote the best sport on the planet as a fun and rewarding experience.

Special thanks to Greg Hanlon (our VP) for taking the reigns of the Region Eight competition to be held this spring. A *giant* thanks to Rodger Furey for getting the 2003 XC championship trophies made up, and his continuing efforts with our newsletter. An *immense* thanks to Don and Niece for keeping the club focused and the bills paid. *Major* thanks to Jeff Nicolay at Morningside for giving us space to hold our meetings. And a *world* of thanks to Dave Morris - for just being Dave! If I've left anyone out, corner and embarrass me. But please don't file down my sidewires!

Apostle List for 2004

Please contact one of the following people before heading to Mt. Ascutney during the off season.

John Arrison	802-674-2549
Jeff Benard	603-382-5551
Dennis Cavagnaro	603-529-2010
Tim Donovan	603-542-2277
Tom Lanning	978-486-3568
Kathleen McKenna	781-369-6282
Jake Pierce	802-408-8930
Mark Vaughn	508-877-8545

V.H.G.A meeting minutes

The general membership had a meeting on 10/11/03. This is a really brief summary.

- ❖ This year's membership totaled 143 pilots. 100 Hang gliding pilots, 39 Paragliding pilots, 4 Bilingual pilots

Ascutney:

- ❖ A proposal to use Ascutney Ski area as a launch to accommodate Paragliders was presented to the area owners. The owner's reaction was favorable but he wanted to get input from his insurance company before making a decision. We expect a decision in early spring and Niece Miller will be the club's contact for this project.

W. Rutland:

- ❖ New material to cover the ramp has been purchased but has yet to be installed. \$200 was approved for ramp repair if necessary.
- ❖ John Arrison will continue to act as agent for the club concerning the purchase of the Rutland launch. The club officers will make the final decision on the form of the Rutland purchase proposal. The club members will be informed before any agreement is finalized.

Burke:

- ❖ Niece Miller volunteered to serve as interim site director. She will be responsible for getting a new windsock and installing in the spring of 2004.

Mt. Washington:

- ❖ The club needs a site director.

Regional Director Report:

Gary Trudeau, regional director

- ❖ Ballot questions concerning towing and powered harnesses passed by a large majority.
- ❖ FAA wants better enforcement of rules and procedures such as tandem paperwork.
- ❖ Light aircraft used for towing will be required to meet specific A.S.T.M. standards and the old fleet of towing vehicles will have 36 months to comply.
- ❖ The Ascutney presentation material developed by Niece Miller and Dave Morris was presented to the USHGA Site Committee. It was well received and will become the national standard for members to follow when trying to open new sites.

Additional details at www.ushga.org

Annual cross-country competition:

- ❖ There was a discussion about changing the rules to account for different types of gliders. It was determined that the competition rules would remain unchanged.

V.H.G.A. Elections for 2004:

President..... Rob Jacobs
 Vice President..... Greg Hanlon
 Secretary..... Donald Massoni
 Treasurer..... Niece Miller
 Site Director..... Dave Morris

The club would like to acknowledge the excellent work done over the last five years by the outgoing president, John Arrison and vice president, Dennis Cavagnaro. A motion was passed to allocate funds for an appropriate gift.