



VHGA NEWS!

The Vermont Hang Gliding Association Quarterly Newsletter
Fall 2004

A word from the Pres.

By Rob Jacobs, VHGA President

Another season has come and gone, sad but true, This year we've seen some pilots really stretching their legs, making the coast, while others (like me) seem never to make that epic flight. That time will come! We have had virtually no accidents of any consequence this season within our club, or at any of our flying sites. Our training, mentoring, policies, and just plain good ol' common sense appear to be paying off. We are now one of the safest USHGA chapters in the country. Please keep it up!

You will find a ballot for the purchase of the launch at West Rutland in this issue of the newsletter. Our good friend Peter Kelly, who lives in proximity to the mountain, has helped the club by working with the landowner to hammer out this deal, while I get the fun part of dealing with the state, conservation folks, and riffling through applications, etc to make the purchase. We now have a price, and can move forward with approval from our members, so please fill out the ballot and get it in the mail.

Now that we have this goal, it's a good time for YOU to help the club financially. When sending in your ballot, please consider making a donation to the Rutland fund. If we can make this purchase without raiding our cash reserve, all the better. Currently, we've collected about \$1800 for this, from only 22 members and there are over 140 in our club, so *please* write a check to the VHGA to help us preserve this valuable site for generations to come.

A list of the current donors appears in this newsletter and my heartfelt thanks and appreciation go out to all of them, and to Peter for his help in moving this purchase along.

Our annual Awards dinner will be held sometime in late February or early March, I hope to see all your smiling faces there. I'll make an announcement as the date approaches and, YES, there are new beach club jackets to distribute!

Thanks to all who attended our end of season bash at Morningside on October 9th. It was the best one so far and Sandy and I are already in the planning stages for next year.

We are also running a fun comp in Florida (Wallaby Ranch) called 'Surflyvor' in April of 2005. All pilots are welcome to sign up when the time comes. It's a real live comp, with real live prizes, fun with a 'Camp Rob' twist.

I wish to thank our other officers and friends, Niece Miller-Massoni, Don Massoni, Jake Pierce, Jon Szarek, Dave Morris and Greg Hanlon. I'd also like to thank our Apostles who make our late and early season Ascutney flying possible, also Marilyn Nichols, Rhett Radford, and our regional director Gary Trudeau. Finally a special thanks to Jeff Nicolay, Phil Haynes, Steve Prepost, and Chris Larson at Morningside for helping us with our meetings at the park, and of course, our gatherings.

Don't forget to repack your chute!
Fly safe.

West Rutland Fund Donors

Arndt, Steve
Arrison, John
Bohlukos, Robert
Cavagnaro, Dennis
Hanlon, Greg
Hoopes, Tim
Jacobs, Robert S.
Lindner, Dan
MacMonagle, Daniel
Minardi, Lee
Neumayer, Robert
O'Neil, James
Ritter, Werner
Roarick, Marshall
Sargent, Sean
Stanish, Allen
Trudeau, Gary B.
Van Nopper, David
Vangel, Philip
Vaughn, Mark
Winiecki, Ken
Zopf, Hans
Insert your name here!

Apostle List for 2004-2005

The following people have keys to the Ascutney State Park during the off season. The state of Vermont allows the Vermont Hang Gliding Association to use the park when one of the following people accompanies pilots *and* the road is clear of snow.

John Arrison	802-263-9405	Tom Lanning	978-486-3568
Jeff Benard	603-382-5551	Jake Pierce	802-484-8930
Dennis Cavagnaro	603-529-2010	John Szarek	603-560-5900
Greg Hanlon	603-353-9933	Mark Vaughn	508-877-8545

Report from the Fringe: The 2004 Camp Rob Halloween Party



What kind of lunatic builds a full scale pirate ship in the woods?



By Rodger Furey

My three-year-old daughter was hiding beneath the picnic table, suspiciously eying the pirate who guarded the entrance to Camp Rob. A ghoulish latex mask concealed his face and an earlier attempt at determining the individual's identity had proven unsuccessful. A would-be method actor, apparently. "It's just someone having some fun.", my wife tried to explain to my daughter, but I could see the child was buying none of it, her eyes wide as she tried to process all that she saw. A pirate ship, with forty foot masts and rigging and sails snapping in the night wind. A roaring campfire, just this side of an inferno. And pirates, lots of pirates wandering about, feigning sword play and greeting each other with the customary pirate "Argh!". What a bunch of hams. A pink pimp on stilts sauntered by and I looked at my daughter and wondered how much therapy she was going to need after this night.

The theme of the 2004 Halloween party was Pirates of the Caribbean, which led to the ambitious decision to build a full scale pirate ship on the 250. Rob and company had begun ship construction weeks in advance and the finished product, complete with strategically placed lighting, and hanging corpses was worthy of a stage production.

Like previous Camp Rob affairs, there was plenty of fire, food, music and mayhem, and once again we were subjected to a scavenger hunt through the woods - dozens of the not-so-sober, huffing and puffing up to the 450 and stumbling through the darkness. A race in search of little green glow-sticks, the point of which I can only presume was to satisfy the twisted, malicious sense of humor of our hosts. Small payment for what was probably the best Camp Rob party yet. The night concluded with an impressive fireworks display that went on continuously for twenty minutes. Fortunately, no one had to dive for cover this year, and traffic was stopped on Rt. 12 to see the show. Rob and Sandy Jacobs, Dave Gancarz, Aric Paulson and Steve Prepost are to be congratulated for a fantastic event. I'm almost afraid to think of what is in store for us next year.



Tales from Texas

By Tom Lanning

This year's nationals were held on a huge decommissioned air force base in Big Spring, Texas. Like most things in Texas, the airfield and hangers are oversized. A flight from one end of the runway to the other qualifies as an XC flight. The runways are so wide Bob Bailey actually towed me "across" the runway one day. A single hanger held all the gliders entered in the competition, setup. I had many firsts during the meet. I had my first tow from a paved runway and discovered it is nice. I had my first downwind whack on pavement at goal and discovered that is not nice. I got stranded in a retrieve

vehicle at sunset after it broke down in a mud-filled ditch. I dove into the top of a dust devil that covered at least a 1/4 acre and was lifting dust 3000 feet into the air. I rode that 1200 fpm 1/4 acre dust devil yelping like a cowboy all the way to cloud base at 10,000 feet. I landed one mile short of goal after flying the other 88 miles in front of many other pilots. I got a friendly tutorial on cotton farming from a proud 70-year-old farmer. I was attacked by exotic plants. I made the top 10 on two different days and finished 13th for the meet, my highest placing so far. The adventures are too numerous to list! I can easily say the people of Big Spring and surrounding communities treated us better than

anywhere else I have flown. The town greeted us with a dinner on the opening night, businesses offered us discounts, people at the local stores and restaurants would routinely ask how the flying was going, and farmers and ranchers couldn't seem to give away enough beer and ice tea. Speaking of friendly, the view of the potential LZs from cloud base would make any New England XC pilot drool. Cotton fields bigger than most counties around here blanketed the ground as far as the eye could see. I highly recommend going to the meet if they have one next year. I know I will.

Dear VHGA Member,

We now have the opportunity to purchase our very own launch at our West Rutland flying site. After a couple years of going back and forth, we now have a firm price of \$10,000 for a 10 acre lot atop 'Jakes Mountain' which includes our ramp, set up area, and property in front of launch. With a right of way from the current road to the property.

The club is in a financial position to make the purchase, cover the cost of surveying, and legal fees. We have yet to secure a "permanent" landing area, but negotiations for this continue.

As ownership of the launch seems a step in the right direction to preserve this important site as "our own", the officers need a clear consensus from the majority of the membership to proceed with the purchase and costs associated with it's acquisition. The estimated total cost will be \$15,000 to \$18,000.

Before we hire a surveyor, council and make the purchase, we need you as a member to give a simply "yes" or "no" to move forward, allocate the funds, and make this happen.

Please fill out the ballot below, and return it to me BEFORE December 10th.

-----cut here

I _____ (print name) am a full paid member of the VHGA for 2004 and I choose the following.

YES – lets make this purchase () check here

NO – I do not want the club to make this purchase () check here

Signature _____

Please mail this immediately to:

Rob Jacobs, President
Vermont Hang Gliding Assoc
20 Killdeer Drive
Manchester, NH 03104

V.H.G.A. meeting minutes

The general membership had a meeting on 10/09/04. This is a really brief summary.

Treasurer's Report:

- ❖ As of October 1, 2004 the membership consisted of 141 paid members, compared to 166 paid members at the end of 2003.
- ❖ YTD, the club has collected \$5,220 in membership revenue. The annual spring dinner brought in \$672, for total revenue of \$5,892. Expenses as of 10/1/04 were \$4,443, balance of \$1,449.
- ❖ YTD, 20 pilots have contributed to the Rutland Fund in the amount of \$1,612. The largest donation was \$500 given by Gary Trudeau.

Ascutney:

- ❖ The bike race went well and the organizers are very grateful to all volunteers.
- ❖ The new landowners mowed the landing field off the south launch.
- ❖ The club voted to allocated \$50.00 for a gift to be given to the new landowners. Jon Szarek will get and deliver the gift.

West Rutland:

- ❖ A new windsock has been installed
- ❖ There have been some problems this year with the gate being left open and members not having keys when they needed them. To resolve these problems the club will put a programmable combination lock on the gate. The combination will be given to each club member when they pay their yearly dues. The combination will be changed each year. Mark Vaughn will donate the lock.

Burke:

- ❖ Soccer field and field below upper Burke base lodge are approved landing zones.
- ❖ Do not land near the kennels or on private property on Kirby Ridge Road.

Mt. Washington:

- ❖ Pilots must be through the gate by 11:00AM and can launch anytime after that. After Labor Day pilots can go up at anytime of day. The road closes with the first snow.

- ❖ There are two launches, which have badly eroded. Launch is to the southeast
- ❖ Mt. Washington is a H-4, P-4 site ONLY.
- ❖ At the spring VHGA meeting there will be a vote on tandem flying off Mt. Washington.

New Business:

- ❖ Peter Kelley has negotiated a purchase price for West Rutland, 10 acres for \$10,000. The club membership will be asked to vote on the purchase with a ballot to be included in the next newsletter. Motion was made and approved to have a special ballot to allocate and approve use of club funds to purchase launch. Peter is investigating the landing zone, which will be a separate transaction.
- ❖ Jon Szarek and Greg Hanlon will replace Tim Donovan and Kathleen McKenna as Ascutney Apostles.

Officer Election for 2005

Rob Jacobs – President
Greg Hanlon - Vice President
Niece Massoni - Treasurer
Don Massoni - Secretary
Jon Szarek will serve as Flight Director

Regional Director Report:

Gary Trudeau, regional director

- ❖ Accidents: There have been more deaths in the USHGA this year than in the last 4-5 years combined. Please be careful. It has been a bad flying season across the country. Avoid flying in marginal conditions.
- ❖ Board Meeting: The powered vote is on hold. There are problems with the articles of incorporation and an independent lawyer is being consulted. The name change vote will be handled in stages. A Poll will be taken then voted on.
- ❖ The VHGA club would like to thank Gary for all of his work this year.
- ❖ The next USHGA fall meeting will be in Rochester, NY.