

thermals

the rvhga newsletter

Vol 1 - Issue 1

July/August 1985

SITE ALERT

Landowner relations are important for keeping our flying sites. Send any information about landowner restrictions and/or requests to the Editor so that we can spread the word around in this column. Pilots using the following sites need to be aware of some recent changes:

BIG WALKER - There is a new (solid) launch ramp at Big Walker. This is the good news. The bad news is that the Atwell's sold the landing field. The landing field was closed temporarily while getting permission from the new owner. The field is open again, but you must sign a waiver before you use it. Contact Randy Newberry (P.O. Box 65 / Bland, VA 24315 / (703) 688-3703) to sign a waiver before flying there. **CAUTION:** The new owner is concerned about hang gliders scaring the livestock being kept in the field. That means try not to upset the critters!

SHAWSVILLE (Training Hill) - There has been a recent change of landowners, the new owner is none other than Madison Marye (one of our State Senators). He has given tentative permission for us to continue to use the site, but said that he's "going to check out his liability with his lawyers". That could mean bad news. Any new info will be made available, and in the meantime, be sure you have signed waivers from any students you take out to use the site.

the MEETING

The long overdue Business meeting of the RVHGA was finally held July 20. The main order of business was electing the new officers: President-David Aker, V.P.-Bo Frazier, Secretary-Richard Cobb, and Treasurer-Berta Graham. Two more pilots, Larry Hinton and John Lane, were added to the club roster, along with Debbie Myers, a new non-flying member. Congratulations and welcome. Other business was presentation of awards and discussion of site maintenance needs (both elsewhere in this letter). The meeting adjourned to the FEAST in W.W.'s backyard, and anyone who wanted got stuffed on the excellent food. Swimming in W.W.'s pool, a slide show by Richard Cobb, and the generation of numerous thermals by those present rounded out the evening's activities.

THERMALS HOTLINE

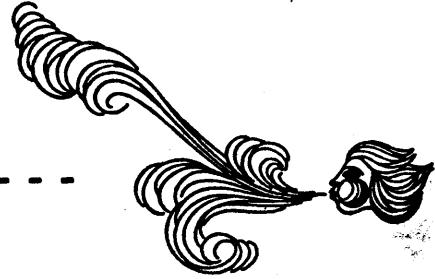
News for THERMALS can be left at one of the following phone numbers:

989-1737 (Roanoke-John/Berta Graham)
345-7518 (Roanoke-W.W. Richards)
961-2878 (Blacksburg-Richard Cobb)

Artwork, stories, and other mail-in contributions should be sent to:

Richard Cobb
304 E Washington St
Blacksburg, VA 24060

THE EDITOR THERMALS . . .



Welcome to the first issue of the Roanoke Valley Hang Gliding Association's newsletter. Its main purposes are to promote Hang Gliding and provide information to hang glider pilots and friends in the southwest Virginia area. We've read in Hang Gliding Magazine about the decline of hang gliding in the U.S. And we've heard a lot of reasons, so I won't go into those. But it doesn't take many trips out to the launch sites to realize that there aren't many new faces. Because there aren't many of us, we're pretty thinly spread out. If we don't go flying nearly every weekend, we don't see other pilots, don't talk with them, and start to lose touch with hang gliding. One by one, many of us become involved in other things and stop flying. I think we should use this newsletter to establish a stronger sense of community among all hang glider pilots in the area.

I believe that as the only Hang Gliding organization in this part of Virginia, the RVHGA carries a responsibility to do all that it can to promote unity and community among all area pilots. So I propose that this newsletter be sent to ALL local pilots, not just paid-up RVHGA members. There aren't that many pilots in the area who are not RVHGA members; it would only cost some extra postage. The benefits could be many: We would continue to reach ex-members who have drifted away and forgotten about flying. Maybe the newsletter would remind them of the joy of flying and bring some of them back out. We would be sure that any vital site information (closings, landowner requests, etc) would reach as many pilots as possible. (If one uninformed, unaffiliated pilot lands in a closed field - it will reflect on all of us as far as the landowner is concerned). And by making our activities known, we may encourage unaffiliated pilots to come fly with us and eventually become members. But this needs your agreement and help, particularly in finding those pilots who are not current members, so that they can be put on the mailing list.

By the title, it says that this is the RVHGA newsletter. That means it is YOUR newsletter, and that it needs YOU to make it work. I am only the editor. Editors do not make news, editors edit. An editor without news is out of a job. If you think that this newsletter is a good idea, it is up to YOU to put something into it. Anything that promotes hang gliding or is of interest to hang glider pilots and/or the membership of the RVHGA should be sent in. Stories of good flights (or even bad flights - if you want to talk about them), techniques, cartoons, artwork, safety items, site information, poetry, competition, awards, ratings, gossip, a good quote that you overhear (I hope Randy's still talking to me after this one), gliders for sale, and most anything else you can think of, are needed. I will also be looking into starting a newsletter exchange program with other nearby hang gliding clubs, to exchange information, news, and camaraderie.

Thanks for reading through a large Thermal. Once again, this newsletter cannot exist without your help. Therefore: a) go flying b) get good flights with lots of lift c) report it d) go out and do it again. Also, supply input in any form - suggestions, complaints and contributions are all welcome and needed. -- Ed.

HIGH FLIGHT

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds
of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-
silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the
tumbling mirth of sun-split clouds
- and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled
and soared and swung
high in the sunlit silence.
Hov'ring there, I've chased the
shouting wind along and flung my
eager craft through footless halls
of air.
Up, up the long, delirious, burning
blue I've topped the windswept
heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle
flew. And, while with silent,
lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sancity of
space, put out my hand, and touched
the face of God.

John Gillespie Magee, Jr

(The author was an American pilot in
the RAF in WWII, where he was killed
in combat).

AWARDS

The following awards were given or
acknowledged at the recent RVHGA
meeting:

-BO FRAZIER ended up with a 3rd
place tie in the 1985 Region 9
Finals.

-CORBY OVERSTREET secured a 2nd
place tie in the 1984 Region 9
Finals.

-RANDY NEWBERRY won a Red Tail
Soaring award. This is an RVHGA
award, given for achieving an hour
or more of continuous flight at the
Bonsack site. Randy made the goal
just a few weeks before the meeting.

Congratulations to all for some
excellent flying!

INSTRUCTOR SEMINAR

Plans are being made for a USHGA
Instructor Seminar, to be held some
time in August. This is your chance
to get certified and do your part to
help get new pilots into the sport.
If you plan to attend, please con-
tact W.W. (345-7518) and let him
know as soon as possible, so that
the dates can be set. At present
the program will include guest
speakers on METEOROLOGY and PARACHUTE
REPACKING (see below)

PARACHUTE REPACKING SEMINAR

How long has it been since you've
repacked your parachute? You don't
remember? Well, here's your chance!
Tinker Hillman, a PROFESSIONAL
RIGGER from the former NRV Parachute
Center has agreed to conduct a
repacking seminar, in conjunction
with the Instructor Certification
Seminar Series. You do not have to
be attending the Instructor seminar
to attend the Repacking Session, so
everyone should try to make this one
if at all possible. There will be a
nominal fee, but well worth it for
the peace of mind a freshly packed
'chute will bring.

THERMALS is the Newsletter of the
ROANOKE VALLEY HANG GLIDING
ASSOCIATION
of Roanoke, Va.

PRESIDENT.....David Aker
VICE-PRESIDENT.....Bo Frazier
SECRETARY/EDITOR.....Richard Cobb
TREASURER.....Berta Graham
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE...W.W. Richards
Corby Overstreet

NO BULL?

(Ed Note: I came across the following at the local airport. I haven't personally verified it, but also have no reason to doubt it.)

"This is an actual and true copy of a letter written in pencil on file in the claim agent's office of the A & Y Air Transport Service, Bristol, Va. This letter was written in all seriousness, with no thought of being amusing, by Simon Green, RFD, Bear Creek, Va:"

Dec 29, 1940

Mr Faulkner
A&Y Air Transport Service
Bristol, Va

Dear Sir,

On Christmas Eve, your Aero-Transport on a fairy flight lit on my farm and rund over my bull. He air not ded but mout as well be and I want your inchuance boss to repote him ded and pade for. He mash out both his seeds leafing mighty little of his bag. Hit tared out a pease of his skin a foot squar bitween his peker and nabul. He air totally unqualified to be a bul and air mained up to bad to be a steer and he air to dam tuf far beef so I want you to repot him ded and pade for.

Yours and so fofe,
Simon Green

P.S. He were a red bul but he stands around looking mighty dam blew these days.

YOOSHGA NEEDS YOU!

According to Glider Rider, Hang Gliding is the "only Part 103 (ultra light aviation) success story". It wouldn't be so without the USHGA's rating, training, and certification programs and insurance. We need it. It needs us. Pay your dues and do your part to support our National Organization.

SITE MAINTENANCE

If you've been doing any flying lately, you didn't have to be at the recent meeting to know that some site maintenance is needed. Summer is well along, which means green things have been growing. One of the places they've been growing very well is the launch on ROANOKE MTN. Not having to worry about dragging your control bar through the bushes on a light wind launch is a good enough reason to get a little sweaty behind a machete. The Ramp at 12 O'CLOCK is getting shaky, and needs to be braced before it decides to launch itself down the side. And anyone who has hopscotched down the ramp on MASON'S KNOB knows that some new plywood is needed there. These three sites in particular need work soon, so be looking for some Work Parties to come along shortly.

THE GOSSIP THERMAL

This Column is for and about the pilots and friends of the RVHGA. Any contributions should be called in on one of the THERMALS HOTLINE numbers.

In the beginning of July, GLENN and ELAINE CRAIG became the proud parents of a new future pilot, NATALIE GAYLE. Weighing in at 7 lb 9 oz, Natalie would be an excellent choice for a flying partner if you were going to try for a cross country tandem record.

JIM ROBERTSON and AMY SHURTLEFF became Jim and Amy Robertson as of the 24th of June. Rumor has it that there was a Big Party for the occasion.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

While watching some buzzards scratching just above launch:
"If the buzzards are flying, it's soarable. It's easy to burn a buzzard"

- Randy Newberry