

FLIGHT LINE

THE PUBLICATION OF THE WINGS OF ROGALLO
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HANG GLIDER ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 100, NUMBER 09, SEPTEMBER 2000



The Owens

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The Editor's Turn

Well, it's that aggravating time of year when the days are growing shorter, the thermals are growing weaker, and the season is coming to an end. Worst of all, your editor missed most of the season because of travel. Admittedly it was airline travel, but somehow, sitting crammed in the back row of a Boeing 747 Model 400 for nine hours (right next to the toilets) is not quite as much fun as a trip to the Owens.

Speaking of the Owens, check out Eric Carlson's story of his trip to Big Air Country in this issue of the FLIGHT LINE. It sounds a heck of a lot better than the back row of a Boeing 747 Model 400 listening to toilets flush!

So how about all the rest of you? How was your season? Where did you all fly? What was it like? Where did you fly to? And how about a few stories for the FLIGHT LINE. If I don't get enough material, I'm going to have to describe the lines outside the rest facilities on a Boeing 747 Model 400. And we don't want that.

There's plenty of other news this month, but I don't have the slightest idea what it is, except that John Wilde has proposed a change to the WOR by-laws. The details are posted in this issue of FLIGHT LINE.

Tres Amigos... in the Owens

by Eric Carlson

I could hear the wind whisper my name, telling me it was time to head out again.

The horses were trailered and the lights were shut down. We were long overdue. We were headin' outa' town..

Got a fever they call thermaling

up.
just enough money to put gas in the truck.

Sometimes you make it up, sometimes you hit dirt
gimme another hang check so I don't get hurt

Like a cowboy from the past
I'll fly that glider fast.

Be young, wild, and free.
Just like Texas in 1880.

That poem is actually an aging country song by Rodney Foster called, Texas in 1880. The original song is about the rodeo circuit. I think us glider folk have a few things in common with those boys. I appears as though they are a restless bunch as well. They also like travel, excitement, camaraderie and maybe even the element of danger. But coined phrases really don't mean much to those who stick with it. There's something else. Sometimes you can find it the shadows of some desert restaurant after closing time. There are two people with baseball caps sitting in the back corner. His face has layer of salt around the temples. Her cheekbones are a little rosy from surburn. It's hard to tell whose legs are whose because they're wrapped together. When you look at the eyes you can't tell if he made eight all day or if he just flew for 8 hours and landed somewhere in Nevada. He looks up as we walk in. I can hear that voice in his head, telling him it's time to head out again. Sometimes I hear a little voice too, and before I know it I'm checking weather web-sites and calling friends who fly the circuit. That's na' Pashun!!.

Well that's exactly what happened to me last July and I could hear that little song in the back of my head. It was time to go. We soon ended up in the direction of the Owens Valley. Oh, who is we you ask... sorry? That consisted of myself Eric Carlson, Harry Mr.

Sunny Weather Burcher, and last but not least...Eric Froehlic, aka Frontlicker. We spent the first weekend in Tahoe. HB and EF spent some time in Nevada at McClellan and Slide Mtn. with not a whole lot of great stories to brag about. I was stuck playing in a lacrosse tournament and was not able to partake in the stinky sinky Eric and Harry were experiencing. A little piece of advice, I highly recommend not playing five games of any contact sport before going on a flying trip to the Owens Valley. Otherwise, the comfortable mobility we take for granted everyday may be significantly compromised. As luck would have it, the tournament, Slide Mtn., and where we were staying were all centrally located.

We left Tahoe Monday morning and arrived in Bishop around 3:30pm. The charts Harry Burcher had so accurately read were calling for upper-level SE winds 15 to 25mph. We pulled into town it was cranking out of the NW at twenty miles an hour and gusting to thirty. A large area to the northwest and south were significantly overdeveloped. Furthermore, the air was hazy with smoke from a 60,000 acre fire on the Sequoia National Forest. Confused about the weather and late as usual we opted not to attempt flying. So we headed for food, the campsite, and the local internet cafe. Well the computer store is next to the coffee house and to keep this letter as short as all humanly possible so Paul Gazis doesn't edit me out of the newsletter again... we'll just call the two places the Internet Cafe. Anyway, the charts showed the same thing as they did earlier in the morning when we left the library in Incline Village. Harry thought the NW wind might be a coastal influence or some weak trough. I can't remember now. None the less, this confirmed Walt's/Horseshoe as our destination for tomorrow. No longer hungry for food or knowledge but

fostering a significant amount of Fununda Cheese (Pronounced: fa-mund-a), we headed back to the campsite for showers(separately) and some sleep...well me anyway. Unfortunately, the city-slickness in Harry and Eric didn't allow them to sleep through the rain, the ducks, or the wind. There might have been a little thunder as well.

I awoke the next day eager and refreshed. Unfortunately, I was quickly stifled by the two designated super lolly-gagers of the new millennium. Somebody, please beat me with both hands with your broken downtube. Now I love them both (in a brotherly way of course), but they're what curdles my fununda. So after coffee, breakfast, toe nail clipping, panty washing, fuel, coffee, getting our gear together, checking our game plan, and a gaggle of other garbage...WE FINALLY LEFT TO WN...YEHAAWW!!!! Ok, I might have helped with the gag part of lollying. Nobody's perfect. Since we didn't have a driver we took two cars so we could leave one in Lone Pine in case somebody sank out. It turned out to be a good idea. Now for Hang 3s the east side of the Sierra's will affect you when you look at them for the first time with the eyes of a hang glider pilot. The can be extremely foreboding. The valley floor is about 4000'. The top of Mt. Whitney is 14,495'. This makes the Owens Valley the deepest Valley in the continental United States. The east side of Owens Valley is basically a wall of granite. It starts from the valley floor and in some points goes almost straight up with deep valleys and spines breaking up the benign monotony of the spectacle. As we drove south I interpreted points of interest that were pointed out to me last year when a few of us were able to fly from town of Independence to Bishop. My first XC expedition. Last year, everybody had 2m

radios complimented by a lovely driver equipped with a mobile unit. Somebody also knew the land features and was able to explain them in great detail. Basically, we were flying with our instructor. But that was not to be the case this year. This is an important point I will get into later. Anyway, as the east side of the mountains passed by, they began to play out into different flying scenarios. The conversation was beginning to wane. The amount of sophomoric banter commonly found at Dunlap, CA began to fall away like the leaves in the fall.

It was replaced by a renewed focus on the conditions. Ok, things got quiet. By the time we had stashed my vehicle and were between Lone Pine and Walt's point. The air between us had drastically changed. We were much more acutely aware of the situation as it was unfolding. We should have prepared better. The hill was rising fast. Weather indicators were developing. Cumulus clouds were definitely pushing south-east. They were also noticeably tilted over. It would have been nice to have somebody with significant Owens experience to tell us how significant the amount of lean in the clouds was going to affect our flying. It started to get cooler as we climbed...

Actually it was the AC. For some reason somebody put in a CD that sounded like music played at a gothic funeral. I immediately put in a request to have it removed but noticed somebody's hand was already moving in that direction. At 9000' and looking east you can see the north end of the salt flats and what I think was Hwy. 395. Looking up you could see military jets on maneuvers at altitude. Right above us were three eagles skying out!! We stood at launch. Steady cycles coming right up the face. We walked over to the southern spine. On the south side of spine colder air

was blowing up the far side. With a southeast wind and different temperature air mixing I figured there might be some rotor near the top of the ridge. I decided it might be a good idea to go left after launch. By the time we got back to the vehicle parked next to the beautiful blue Honey Hut the thermals had increase in strength. Eric started setting up.

I still wasn't sure I was going to fly. I decided to walk back down the road to the left side of the horseshoe. The thermal frequency and strength was noticeably different than what I had prepared myself for. Having still not made a solid decision about my safety. I walked by Walt's plaque and drew my hand across it. Lay some of that good stuff on me, buttha. I still don't have any idea who he was, but I thought it might be a good idea. I went back to the vehicle where Harry was hanging out... glider still on top of the truck. What do you think?, I said. Well it's SE for sure. Look at the drift and the tilt. You could hear thermals starting to thunder up the mountain side. They were blowing through a stand of short needle pinyon pine growing above the road. It sounded like they were ripping the trees out of the ground. The eagles were back and circling above us again. I took my eyes off them for a minute to talk to Harry. Eric was almost done with his glider set-up. I looked up again. You could barely see the birds now. I took my glider off the vehicle.

I set up my glider very carefully. Preflight was more than a hack job. My radio was working great. Watered up, bundled up for snow, I walked out to launch again. I decided to launch first. We had spent some time taking some pictures with Eric's gear. The pictures Eric took ended up being of professional quality. Something I doubt I will ever be able to duplicate. So, while he was finishing

up the lolly part of his gassing I put my harness, helmet, and gloves on. I entered a zone...

I pick up my HPAT 158 just as some tourists pull up. I call Harry to give me a hand. He walks me over towards the plaque. My heart is pounding. The tourists are almost immediately asking self-explanatory questions. My right wing goes way way up. Harry and his sandals are starting to become inadequate. Eric comes over. I balance my wing. I get a hang check. I take a deep breath and try to get the big picture. It all feels good. I experience a few more cycles. Strong, solid thermals are blowing up the face like somebody is constantly pulling a heavy chain over the top of the mountain. It's lpm...crap, are we launching too late. If I sink out the valley floor is going to really suck. We really should have launched around 10:00am like were advised.

Balance... CLEAR! I get safely away from the hill and WHAMM!! A thermal hits my right wing and throws me in a big left turn back towards the hill. I pull in my control bar hard right. I'm below launch by the time I'm heading the in direction I want. Before I know it, the bumpy air has propelled me significantly about launch. I am on the left side of launch. I make some passes. I get plenty high before I start doing 360's. My vario is doing 800 to 1000fpm and occasionally pegging and 1000fpm. I look down at the altimeter and I am already at 12,000'. I am flying a little tense. Time is a blur for the rest of the flight. I'm pass 14,100' or 14, 200'.

To the west, the Sierras are dark with overdevelopment. Rain and virga are making a strong presence. The crest is broken cumulus... my first cloud street. The valley is clear as a bell. I get a radio check, throw on the VG,

and tell them I'm heading north. Quickly realizing that I have just committed myself to the east side of the Sierra's. I get to the first spine and the lift is right were I thought it would be. The SE is playing out nicely. I get above and a little north of the spine and fly west towards the top. I think I'm around 12 or 11,000'. As I fly into the mountains I am gradually climbing. When I turn around and flew towards the valley I am not losing any altitude. I use this step method until I hit a solid thermal where I can make 360's back up to 13,000 and 14,000' on a pretty regular basis

I continued to get back up every time. So I just flew downwind to the next spine. There was the lift again. I finally looked up to get a view and some pictures. There was Mt Whitney. I snapped a couple pictures around 12,000' and one at 14'000 looking north up the valley. Mt Whitney was kind of my goal. In 1932, my grandfather left Bakersfield with six good friends and a team of mules to climb Mt. Whitney a couple days after graduating from high school. They succeeded and I have pictures of the trip on my wall at home. Being at altitude made me realize what an amazing trip that must have been. He passed away last October. So here's to you Grampa' Frank. I wish you could have seen the pictures.

I flew on. Flying over hiking trails snaking up solid peaks of granite. Mouth watering mountain lakes beggin' me to lash them with a sinking flyline and an feathered insect imitation. At one point my thermaling seemed to be going very smoothly at 14,000'. So I decided to see if I could crack 15,000'. The weather looking north looked clear. I tried getting a good look at the sky above me to see what cloud was generating the lift I was in. The cloud seemed light in color and a comfortable distance away

in altitude. What I didn't realize was the rest of the cloud stretched pretty far south. All I had to do was look down at the shadow. But I had been spending time taking in the sights. I passed 15,000' flying flat and heading east. At that point I looked south to see the crest of the Sierra's now completely covered in shadow by large cumulus clouds. I immediately turned north towards sunlight and stuffed the bar. I fly along at a 20 to 30 degree angle in an attempt to continuously slip and make progress out of the cloud suck. My glider starts to roll and PIO past my comfort level while my vario decides to peg. I fly this way until I am in sink and away from the cloud suck. I look down and read 15,400. That being over, I continuously stayed above timber line the remainder of the trip along the Sierras. I passed the town of Independence. I started having trouble staying at a comfortable altitude by the time I reached the lava fields.

I was not going to make it over to Hwy 395 for an easy retrieve unless I got up again. The cloud street was weakening. I left the Sierra's at around 9000' looking for a place to land next to something green, landable, and road accessible. Not a great combination at my location. So instead, I popped a nice big blue thermal up to 11,500' before heading for the highway. When I finally got over Hwy 395 I was at 7450'. I was above and between two hollow volcanic caps which appeared to have produced the lava fields I had just conquered. I roped another thermal and twirled it back to 11,000'. As I was 360ing and thinking about making it to Bishop. I noticed something big, dark, and nasty over town. I headed north past Big Pine. As I passed Big Pine I knew I wasn't going to make Bishop with that much development right over town. Heading north on a glide and flying flat my vario

pegged...again! I could not figure out where the lift was coming from. There were no large clouds above me. At first I thought it was the gust front being generated by the Cumulus Nimbus over Bishop. I realized later it could have been a convergence related to the northwest wind we witnessed the night before. Anyway, it was time to land... so I thought. The amount of lift would not let down. It was now close to 4pm. I started doing some high banked slipping turns to no avail.

I was not losing any altitude. I spent close to 20 minutes at 11,000' flying in multiple directions. I decided to turn around and fly south. I found some weaker lift, and diving turn, after diving turn, after diving turn was still managing 200fpm up. I finally got into sink my vario would register and noticed somebody had pulled over and was watching me from the road. I almost puked on him so I hope it was a good show. I picked a green field right next to the highway. I had to reb my final approach twice as I kept hitting lift. After finally, getting underneath I turned on final and felt a layer of hot humid air hanging over my field. I could now see puddles through the long grass. I tried to extend my glide to a more inviting patch and almost hit a fence. I cleared the fence by about 10 feet, entered ground effect, rounded out, and flared late. I ended my flight on one knee 45 to 48 miles away from where I launched. I did not get a chance to talk to either Eric or Harry much while flying. I will say they landed and I believe had to hike NE to get to my vehicle in Inopine. I'll let them tell their own stories.

Here's some advice and my interpretation of the flight. We could have made it to Bishop if we had launched earlier. Stay away from thunderheads as their influence is usually turbulent and extends

miles around the main column. Get down if it looks like it is starting to overdevelop. Just remember you can be easily 10,000' AGL and that may take some time. Don't lolly-gag. Have everything ready to go, except the coffee, before you get up in the morning. That includes your driver arrangements. Have a rock solid understanding of the weather ant 500mb and at 800mb. Don't know what I'm talking about? Then you have some work to do. Otherwise, befriend a meteorologist and teach him how to hang glide. Don't even think about sucking up to Harry Burdner. I found him first. Don't even think about XC in the Owens Valley without radios. That means for everybody involved. I suggest a good mobile unit for the vehicles and a competent driver. Don't depend on somebody else for your safety. That's your responsibility. I suggest a back-up plan as well. For instance, if your communications break down have a common phone number to call for messages (i.e. home, the campsite, voice mail). Don't listen to Eric Froehlic's music under any circumstances. I highly recommend flying with somebody who you know for sure has ample experience flying in the Owens Valley. If you aren't having fun, then you aren't being safe. Leave your freakin' ego at home. Touch the plaque. Show some respect while you are there to the locals, the locals who are gone, and most of all Mother Nature. If you don't, then as they say on the rodeo circuit...Y'ur gunna' git ur' shit chucked in the weeds!

Comments welcome by anybody with something worth saying. I'd like to hear what you think.

Proposed Bylaw Change

by John W ilke

I am proposing that the membership vote to make the following change to the WOR bylaws. If accepted by the Executive committee, debate will take place at the September meeting, and a vote will be taken at the October meeting. The objective is to add one member to the Executive committee, with the title of Membership Director. The purpose is to relieve some of the workload on the Treasurer, who is currently responsible for both Treasury and membership activities.

Proposed changes are as follows.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section 1. (Change to add) Membership Director.

Section 2. (Change description of Treasurer to read)

Treasurer - The Treasurer shall manage the receipt and deposit of WOR funds, make disbursements authorized in budgets approved by executive board, prepare all required financial reports. The Treasurer will perform other duties as delegated by the President and make oral reports on WOR financial status at each meeting.

Section 2. (Add the following)

Membership Director - Accept applications for membership, keep records of membership applications, expirations, renewals, and currency of site waivers and USHGA membership. The Membership Director will transfer to the Treasurer, all funds derived from registration, stickers, donations, etc., and perform other duties as delegated by the President, also make oral reports on WOR membership status at each meeting.

Submitted to the Executive Committee on Sept 5, 2000 by John Wilde. (VP WOR)

August Meeting Minutes

by Paul Clayton

NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS

Dave Robinson - from Denver.

GREAT FLIGHTS

Steve Rodrigues - flew tandem from Mt. Tam.

Pat Denevan - Flew Marina on an ATOS

Mike Gomes - Received HIII rating, and flew Funston for 2 hrs.

Mark Mullholland - ridged raced with Mark Lilledahl at Funston

Rick Dumlao - Reached 10000 ft at Hill Mt.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Mark Mullholland

There is a Sonoma Wings fly-in this weekend. Mark has obtained software for scoring X-C contests using GPS records. A trip to the Owens valley is planned for Labor Day weekend. A fly-in is tentatively scheduled for September.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - John Wilde

John recently returned from a 7000 mile road trip, during which he visited Kitty Hawk.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Don Jones

Thanks to Carmela Moreno for her help with the member database and club accounts. Don presented a Hang III sticker to Mike Gomes.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Various members

A parachute deployment occurred at Hill Mt. Details are sketchy, but apparently "maneuvers" of some kind may have been involved. Pilots flying

nearby reported no extraordinary turbulence.

ED LEVIN SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Steve Pittman

A plan for construction of a new walkover has been submitted to the parks dept. There will be a work party to install the new walkover sometime this winter.

MISSION PEAL SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Steve Rodrigues

A supply of sign-in sheets is in the lockbox. The windsock in the LZ needs work.

M T. DIABLO SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - None

COMPETITION COMMITTEE REPORT - Mark Mullholland

The X-C contest is ongoing and some good flights have been submitted. Enter your flights. The US team won the recent speed gliding competition in Greece. Several people suffered minor injuries, mostly from attempting launches in light to no wind.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Pat Denevan reported that the AC is working at Dunlap. He also solicited helpers to run a promotional booth at upcoming public events, in exchange for lessons.

Bob Ormiston suggested that the club try to get a hang glider display placed in one of the Bay Area airports.

Mark Mullholland said that the September meeting may be held at his house, and reminded the membership that the Funston air races are coming up soon.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

WINGS FOR SALE



Wings for Sale

(Ad policy: ads run for 6 months, then are cancelled automatically unless they are renewed. Ads are free to WOR members)

Rigid Wings

Boeing 747 Model 400, Great performance at a great price. Excellent tandem wing. Plenty of toilets. Call British Airways used aircraft sales at (800) AIRWAYS
www.british-airways.com/used/

Millennium, lots of upgrades, good condition, excellent performance and handling. The best rigid wing for the stick pilot. Photo at: <http://www.sirius.com/~mlbco/mill2.jpg>, \$7000 doo, Call Rick Cavalero at (650) 961-5735, rickcav@earthlink.net

Flexwings

Aeros Stealth 2 151 (late 1998), matrix cloth, climbs great, very fast, billboard glider, white IE, red and blue undersurface, must sell (ordered new Stealth). Comes with additional sail and 2 extra dtubes. \$2900 doo. Call Reto at (916) 804-4063, reto_s@yahoo.com

Fusion 150. Black/Blue, Less than 50 hours airtime. \$3,500. Call Steve at (415) 385-0423, swerthei@us.oracle.com

HP-AT 145. Approx 150 hours (or less). Good condition. Orange-light green-white. 6 hours airtime since last super pre-flight and flying wire change. Spare dtubes. \$800 doo. Call Weegie (510) 649-8181, weegie@lightroom.com

HP-AT 158. Orange/Red, Approximately 400 hours airtime. \$800. Call Steve at (415) 385-0423, swerthei@us.oracle.com.

HP AT 158. Great shape, new side wires, spare dtubes. Photo <http://www.sirius.com/~mlbco/class.htm> \$1000. Contact Rick at rickcav@earthlink.net, (650) 961-7825 ext 345.

HP-2. Blue/Turquoise, Good condition, Approximately 300 hours airtime. \$400. Call Steve at (415) 385-0423, swerthei@us.oracle.com

Moyes XS 169 Good condition. Blue and yellow under surface. \$550 Call Bruno (925) 837-4261, Brunoj@worldnet.att.net

Moyes XtraLite 164. Mylar sail. Good condition. Blue and yellow undersurface. \$1,150. Call Bruno, (925) 837-4261, Brunoj@worldnet.att.net

Wills Wing Spectrum 144. Excellent condition Includes UV bag, ladder rack, straps, etc. Great beginner/intermediate glider. \$2250, Call Roger at (408) 882-0382 (w) (408) 224-1815 (h) rohang3@aol.com

Wills Wing Supersport 163. Major price reduction worth \$2,200 plus only want \$1700 original owner Excellent shape Lots of life left in it. Many extras Call Tom (408)747-0414.

Paragliders

FreeX Spear (L), violet/white. Approx. 150 hours. Still covered by FreeX 300 hours guarantee. One of the most responsive DHV 2 gliders around. \$900 doo. Call Steve Thorpe (408) 435 2600 ext. 506 (w), (408) 260 7029 (h), thorpes@arklogic.com

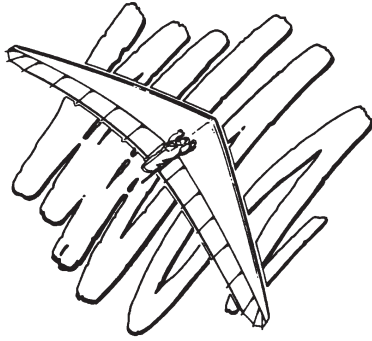
Equipment

Apco Top Secura Harness with kevlar backplate and CO2 air-bag protection. \$200 doo. Call Steve Thorpe (408) 435 2600 ext. 506 (w), (408) 260 7029 (h), thorpes@arklogic.com

CG 1000 harness for 5' 5" - 5' 8", \$200. 22-gore High Energy reserve, bridles for both hang and paragliding, \$200. Call (510) 787-6867 Cage2usa@aol.com

Tangent flight computer, \$500, Call Reto at (916) 804-4063, reto_s@yahoo.com

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*Wings of
Rogallo*

FLIGHT LINE

VOL. 100 NO. 09 SEPTEMBER 2000

Legend has it that the next Wings of Rogallo Meeting will be held
Tuesday September 19 at Mark Mulholland's Place
To find out where it will really be held, check
the Wings of Rogallo WWW Page
<http://www.wingsofrogallo.org/meetings.html>