



# FLIGHT LINE

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The publication of the Wings Of Rogallo Northern California Hang Gliding Association  
Volume-112, Number 8 September 2004

Speed Gliding

Hike n Huck

Sailplanes

Candy Drop

Aerobatics

Frisbee Catch

RC Demos

Falconry

Hot Air Balloons

**Volunteers still needed. Check**  
**[http://www.flywor.org/events/silent\\_airshow.html](http://www.flywor.org/events/silent_airshow.html) for a**  
**list of spots available.**



Cover photo: Day 1 of Speed Gliding Competition by Lijian Liu

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## *Comps*

*Speed gliding competition runs  
from Friday to Sunday 8am to  
9am*

*Hike n Huck is on Saturday  
8:30am, expect the 1st group down  
about 9:30*

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**Editors Turn:**

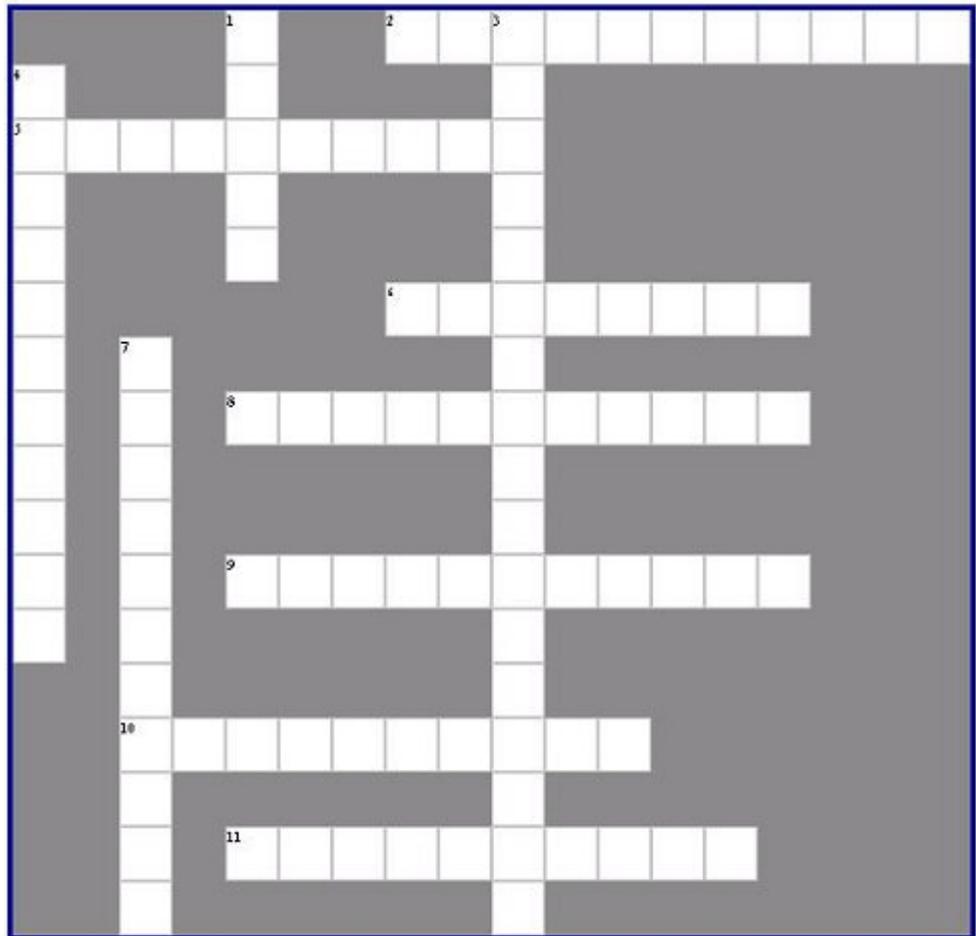
The Silent Air Show is upon us. There has been a tremendous effort by all involved and hopefully this issue will get out before it starts.

I went along to the Coyote Lake Timber Ridge site earlier this month with a number of other excited pilots. There's an article on page 4, but I have to say that this is a beautiful site within easy access of the South and East bay. Gene and Jim have been wonderful ambassadors for us and I can't wait until everyone gets to look at the views from the upper ridge.

One of our members keeps getting pictures published in the USHGA mag, well done Mike.

The dynamic duo have been << >> battling it out in the Owens with what looks like Wayne being pipped at the post by a man wearing an all too small harness.

There were a couple of paragliding accidents at Ed Levin, both serious enough to warrant that we need to be careful out there. One was entirely unavoidable and happened to a VERY experienced pilot that had a dusty rip through his pre-flight. I'll leave the details to the Flight Directors report in next months issue. Finally There is an article on page 5 and 6 that is controversial to say the least. I would suggest that if you're at all queasy about death that you DON'T read it.



**Across**

- 2. Event used to find top dog (11)
- 5. People that help for free flight (10)
- 6. keener eyes than ours will be there (8)
- 8. Beautiful new site in South Bay (6,5)
- 9. OK so you can sell T-Shirts (11)
- 10. Second best place to be at the Silent Air Show (2,3,5)
- 11. Best place to be at the Silent Air Show (2,2,3,3)

**Down**

- 1. it's not raining men!
- 3. and it's all in the name of fun and (8,9)
- 4. The wind will not be blowing (4,3,4)
- 7. What would you remember this with (11)

## August 2004 Minutes

month. Site fees were paid this month.

<< >>

New Members/Guests None

### Membership Services - Carmela Moreno

#### Great Flights

Steve Delayo - flew 102 miles from Reno, out I-80, and landed near Lovelock. Also reached 6100 at Diablo and flew to Byron.  
Mark Mullholland - Flew 85 miles on the first day of the Nationals, hit a pole on approach and was unable to fly the rest of the meet. Also flew his Falcon at Mission on Sunday.  
Paul Gazis - has had 3 good weekends at Hull.  
Wayne Michelson - Flew 122 miles in the Owens - got trashed near Boundary Peak.

410 people have renewed their membership for 2004, another 22 this past month.

#### Flight Directors Report - Pat Denevan

A pilot was rotored in a Funston, and suffered a cracked vertebra and a concussion. A student pilot suffered a broken humerus on the 40 hill at Hollister. His glider apparently hit a thermal, turned and cartwheeled in. At Ed Levin, a pilot landed in a prone position at the edge of the LZ.

#### Ed Levin Site Committee Report - Steve Pittman

The issue of emergency phones has not been resolved with the Parks administration.

#### Mission Peak Site Committee Report - Steve Rodrigues

Pilots are reminded to lock the drive up log in the inner (key lock) box. Say hi to Neil Spargur, the new ranger.

#### Mt. Diablo Site Committee Report - Steve Delayo

It has been inverted most of the time this past month. The rangers have not approved clearing of the SE launch.

#### Site Acquisition - Jim Woodward

Several PG pilots plan to fly from the upper ridge on Sunday August 28th. Motor access to this launch is not permitted at present.

### Silent Airshow - Mark Mullholland

Mark distributed posters promoting the airshow and has others available for posting. Eric Froelich explained how members could use e-vite to let their friends know about the event. There is a link to an e-vite on the Silent Airshow page at the WOR website. There will be a variety of gliders, aerobatics, sailplanes, hot air balloons, candy drops, RC gliders, a spot landing contest, frisbee catching dogs, a falconer, etc. More acts are needed. Also volunteers are needed to run the gate, among other things.

Old Business None.

#### New Business

Pat Denevan announced an instructor certification program on the 25th -27th of September.

Paul Clayton announced that the soaring forecast has been discontinued due to low usage.

25 people attended. Prizes were raffled.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

### Presidents Report - Phyl Hamby

Bob Ortiz died of leukemia this past month. A memorial was held in his honor. Bob was a retired Marine colonel. Windsocks for Ed Levin have been ordered. A new windsock is in the Ed Levin LZ. It is not calibrated to indicate windspeed, as past windsocks have been.

### Vice Presidents Report - Wayne Michelson

Nothing to report.

### Treasurers Report - Don Herrick

Expenses exceeded income for the past

## Upcoming Events.

### Sep 22nd WOR Meeting

September 19th Silent Air Show contact Mark Mulholland [silentairshow@hotmail.com](mailto:silentairshow@hotmail.com)

November 19-21, 2004 Tandem Clinic in the San Francisco Bay Area with Advanced Paragliding. Comprehensive tandem clinic for all tandem pilots and aspiring tandem pilots T1-, T-2 and T-3. Must register by October 15 Contact Juan Laos, Tandem Administrator at [juan@advancedparagliding.com](mailto:juan@advancedparagliding.com) (925)-377-8810

January 22-February 5, 2005 Come Fly Tapalpa, Mexico with Juan Laos and Advanced Paragliding. This will be our 6th consecutive year guiding tours to this area which boasts some of the best flying in Mexico. This is the site of the 2002 and 2004 PWC and is Mexico flying at its finest, without the crowds. Wide open launches, wide open LZ's long mountain ridges and escarpments for cross country flying with easy retrieves. We will be flying Tapalpa, San Marcos, San Juan Cosala, and Guadalupe.

All are within approximately 1 hour of our first class lodging in the historic mountain town of Tapalpa. We will have four USHGA instructors on the tour for personalized Thermalling and Cross Country Instruction. Just show up at the Guadalajara Airport and we take care of the rest. The tour fills up fast so reserve early. Hanggliders welcome. \$1800. Contact [Juan@advancedparagliding.com](mailto:Juan@advancedparagliding.com) (925)-377-8810

March 25-27 2005 IP Clinic in the San Francisco Bay Area. Juan Laos, IP Administrator and Advanced Paragliding will be hosting an Instructor Training and Certification and Recertification Clinic in the San Francisco Bay Area. Open to aspiring Instructors and Basic Instructors looking for recertification. Registration must be received no later than February 15, 2005 Contact [Juan@advancedparagliding.com](mailto:Juan@advancedparagliding.com) (925)-377-8810

**Weeds cleared from road through LZ**

When you see them, please thank the twenty WOR members below for spending their Sunday morning clearing weeds from the road through the Ed Levin landing zone. The road is now roughly twice as wide between the entrance gate and the ditch, which is important for the Silent Airshow.

Some time after November 1, we will be calling another work party to clear weeds from the stretch of road uphill from the ditch to the Minnis Road gate.

The following WOR members participated in the work party: Phyl Hamby, Wayne Michelsen, Don Herrick, Mark Mulholland, Stan Boehm, Bruce Bousfield, Rick Dumlao, Ben Dunn, Matt Epperson, Terry Epperson, Eric Froehlich, Rob Johnson, Duane Kubischta, Jeff Leung, Astrid Mueller, Al Norman, George Pierson, Dean Rowland, Jerry Schimke, and Joe Spinney.

Steve Pittman  
Chairman, Ed Levin Site Committee

**Site acquisition team inspects Coyote Lake launce site**

The possibility of flying from Timber Ridge behind Coyote Lake in looking much better after meeting with Patrick Condgon, the Director of the Santa Clara Open Space Authority. He invited us on August 23, to inspect the ridge behind Coyote Lake for launch sites to use our landing area on the south entrance end of Coyote Lake. This is the LZ approved by the Santa Clara County Park Department and the Board of Supervisors last year.

A group of ten hanggliders and paragliders joined him on August 23 to inspect Timber Ridge for launch sites. We found one launch site with an elevation drop of about 900 feet and a glide ratio of about 4.4 to 1.

The elevation of the site << >> is 1820 feet.

He has given approval for the ten of us to test fly the site before the end of October on two different days.

He is waiting the Open Space Authority legal council to approve our insurance policy.

The picture is the launch site looking towards the LZ. The LZ is the first open space next to the road with the one oak tree in the middle of the field. Juan is flying his para-kite to test the winds on launch.

Gene Pfeiffer

Juan flies a parafoil kite at the launch to test the wind.



I've been waiting to publish this article. It is graphical and will be disturbing for some. I would recommend that if you do not want to read about birds eating corpses you turn to page 7. If not then I hope you're amazed as I was about the variation in cultures around the world and our ability to see it through non judgemental eyes. - Ed

### SKY BURIAL - By Mark Bernier

I finished my contract in Beijing, and for the last month, I have slowly been working my way across South China. When I reached the restricted Tibet (China) border, I found I needed a permit -- with a guide. Rather than pay the \$150 (or so), I hitchhiked from the Yunnan province to Lhasa (about 7 days with some remote lakeside/snow mountain camping). Incredibly beautiful views.

I do not have my paragliding equipment with me, apart from a digital camera and GPS. It has made me sick to see daily cloud streets and beautiful cumis forming across the mountain ranges and valleys everywhere I go. I have taken pictures for future expeditions. ;-)

### SO, HERE IS THE STORY OF THE "SKY BURIAL"

About 3 weeks ago, on top of yet another 4200 meter (13,860ft) "holy mountain" (Emei Shan), I met a Greek guy who said he saw a "sky burial" in Tibet. Wide eyed, he said "you will not see anything like that in 10 lives!"

This made me curious. When I finally arrived in Lhasa dirty and tired, I did a little investigation and found out how I could see this. I rented a Land Cruiser and got a small group together from the travelers hotel:

- 1 Japanese girl
- 1 New York guy
- 1 French/Brazilian guy (National Geography photographer)
- 1 Chinese guy
- and me

We left in the evening for a Tibetan village hidden deep in the caverns with an awesome hot spring setup (14,540ft). Early in the morning, we headed to a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. We arrived at the monastery at about 8am. Three of the five of us raced up the hill so we could see the complete ceremony (15 minute fast walk at 15,180ft elevation). Two of the group (the Chinese and Japanese) were suffering from the altitude and last minute doubts that they really wanted to see this.

**NOTE:** I will give details of the ceremony later. Here I will explain the purpose of the "sky burial". This is important, as the ceremony is very very secret because taken out of context, it appears to be a satanic gruesome ritual. Foreigners are very lucky if they have the opportunity to see this.

The ground is too hard in parts of Nepal, India, and Tibet. This makes burying a body not practical. Also, there isn't much wood because of the elevation, so cremation is not practical either. So, the thinking is that by giving back to life (and the sky), there is possibly a chance for a better life (reincarnation). Thus, the bodies are fed to the vultures who take the (already 7 day soulless) body to the skies. My understanding is that "sky burials" migrated from the Northern parts of India.

When I arrived at the top << >> of the hill (about a 10-15 minute walk above the Tibetan monastery), 4 corpses were already laid out over a flat circle of rocks (one woman and three men). It was difficult to tell their age. I walked on the side of where the monks were which was unfortunately downwind from the bodies. One of the bodies was obviously overdue for some kind of burial. This was the only time I smelled anything, and it was also the only time that made me second guess myself about being there. Even now, I feel a little queasy when I walk past a meat shop/market and I smell raw meat.

After I moved to the other side of the circle, I never smelled anything. I am sure that the big concrete alter with burning incense alter helped.



Image obscured on purpose and was not taken by Mark

The reason I am writing this, is because watching 100 - 200 vultures (at any given time during the ceremony) was incredible! Birds with 7 foot wingspans (maybe some with 9 foot wingspans) were flying in over my head about 10-15 feet. They sounded like high speed gliders coming in for landing. WhOAooooosh WhOAooooosh WhOAooooosh. Then at the last second, they would flap to a stalled landing almost with the sound of turning helicopter blades WHOMP WHOMP WHOMP

Then all of the vultures just stood waiting patiently for the Tibetan monks' signal to go ahead..

Interestingly, there was not one vulture in the sky until the older monks began carving up the bodies. Suddenly, huge vultures starting appearing in the sky out of no where (they did not circle, but heading directly for the feeding). I watched as the vultures would spiral down and sometimes stall themselves to lose altitude.

The monks just treated this as an everyday job. The bodies were tossed around with meat cleavers and then cut up in butcher like style. Most muscle or fat external to the skeleton was removed and tossed around the circle (about 20 feet in diameter). I think the flesh was tossed around to make it easier for the vultures, as probably only about 8-10

....From page 5

vultures could fit on a body (and they would start fighting.)

The body carving was a bit unreal and maybe the most "disgusting" part to watch according to all "foreigners". I took up smoking cigarettes during the ceremony just in case there was any smell.

FINALLY, the monks stepped away from the now much thinner bodies, and it was incredible to watch at least a hundred vultures rushing -- almost like a skipping hop to the bodies.

This part was not too bad, because the bodies were completely covered by vultures until later when the skeletons started appearing outside the circle. This lasted for about 15 minutes. You could tell when the job was almost done, because the vultures started fighting amongst themselves. It was interesting to watch vultures outside the circle spreading their huge wings wide, putting one foot up and then then circle each other like a war dance, until one of them gave up the morsel of meat between them. Normally these war dances would last about 3 seconds.

Size does matter with vultures, as their wings were an obvious display of who was the "biggest dog" and triumphant. I really didn't seen any violence in these stand offs either. They were mostly just shows. I remember one vulture flying in from above and immediately showing his wingspan when he landed. It seemed impossible to see a bird with maybe a 1 to 2 ft larger wingspan than the other birds.

AFTER ABOUT 15 MINUTES, the vultures had done their job of reducing the bodies to white-pinkish skeletons. The monks shooed them away and then roughly took the bones and a couple of full skeletons and tossed them to the side (as if it was just a job. One monk even sat a full skeleton up on a 2ft stump. They then cut the bones up into smaller pieces and pounded them with 15-20lb rocks which were tied to long sticks.

The pulverized bones were mixed with some kind of flour and then tossed in the center for a second feeding to follow a few minutes later. During this phase, two more stinking bodies arrived. One was an old woman with braided hair.

The other was a man, but it was hard to tell the age. They were stripped of their clothes and the process began all over.

AGAIN, as soon as the carving began on the second batch of bodies, vultures showed up in the sky. This time the sky was full. It never stopped being incredible to watch the vultures fly in with their necks crooked into their chests and feet lowering and raising to regulate their landing speed.

Towards the end of the second feeding, about 10 vultures had caught a huge thermal out in the valley. Like paragliders/hanglider pilots, this was an obvious signal for about 50+ birds to start launching. Like a gang, 10 -15 birds started running/flapping their way off of the sloping hill. WHooOMP- WHooOMP-WHooOMP WHooOMP-WHooOMP-WHooOMP-WHooOMP It was fascinating to watch, as they all headed straight for the thermal and then circled in an uneven circle to cloud base.

MEANWHILE BACK AT THE FEEDING, the vultures weren't the only birds to get involved in the feeding. Many smaller birds stood by and waited their turns. Big crows with bright yellow or fire orange beaks walked around taking smallest morsels. BUT ALSO finch like birds got involved in the final cleanup. I was shocked to see this. I always thought crows and finches just ate insects.

AFTERWARDS, believe it or not, we all headed for some lunch at the monastery as we hadn't had breakfast. None of us seemed to be bothered to badly. It was more like we were grateful to be allowed to see such a ceremony. In fact, the National Geographic photographer was thanking me over and over again for organizing the trip. He said this was the most incredible thing he had ever seen. And YES, he took pictures which was an extremely risky thing to do. The Tibetan Monks can become very violent if they see any photography at these secret ceremonies.

I have to say being a paraglider pilot probably gave me more much appreciation for watching the vultures than the rest of the group. It was just incredible and unbelievable to watch 100's of birds this size swooshing over my head and then flocking and/or feeding less 15 feet from me.

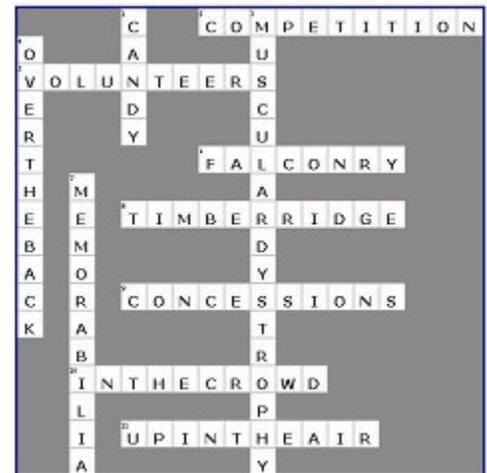
I apologize if the above story disturbed anyone. << >>

I have written this very quickly, but is difficult to give a complete account of the "Sky Burial". But the information was probably more than sufficient for most. Interestingly, the people who do this type of burial, think that our way of burying someone in a box is illogical. I took a survey afterwards, and everyone in the group seemed to have been affected somewhat about what is the best way for a "burial."

BTW, has anyone signed up to go to fly with the vultures and Jug in Nepal?

Someone sent this to me for submission and it seemed appropriate to put it here.

*The object of Life's Journey is not to arrive at the grave safely in a well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, caked with dust, trailing smoke, on empty and totally worn out, shouting, "Yeeeeeeoooooww, what a ride!"*  
- Unknown



**Classifieds:**

Classifieds are taken from the classified section of the WOR web site for the 30 days prior to publication (whatever will fit). Non web submissions can be e-mailed to [editor@wingsofrogallo.org](mailto:editor@wingsofrogallo.org) Classifieds are free, however non WOR member donations are encouraged through the Wings Of Rogallo web site donation page at [www.wingsofrogallo.org/documents/donations.html](http://www.wingsofrogallo.org/documents/donations.html)

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**Plumbing**

**WW Ultra Sport 166.** Excellent condition. 30 hours total, only a few sled rides since MSS super tune-up (teardown and inspection). Yellow LE/orange/red. Weight is 70 + lbs. Selling due to back surgery, need a lighter weight wing for ground handling. Includes wheels and extra downtubes. \$2150. Jim 925 697 9759 [jlowell917@comcast.net](mailto:jlowell917@comcast.net)

...  
**WWXC 132 NEW SAIL!** 3 hours. white l.e. new mylar, blue a.s.,white xc,new wires, new luff lines,new keel.folding base bar,new pads on everything.new xc bag & good bag. new finnister wheels. new vg rope. brand new shape,crispy sail. \$1800.00 obo flys straight, lands well, handles great. julie hyde 530-283-3046 [juliehyde@merlincorp.com](mailto:juliehyde@merlincorp.com)

**Welding Equipment**

**K2 145** for sale \$400 good condition, new leading edge cloth, side wires have approx. 20 hrs, spare downtube. Lands easy, handles great. 916-780-0925 call any time, Roseville. [peterkoistinen@comcast.net](mailto:peterkoistinen@comcast.net)

**Icaro Stratos C** (AIR Atos C with an Icaro sail). 300 hours. This glider is the glider I have been flying in comps. It has the new Atos V rib settings, extended keel, V-tail, new stronger control wires and enlarged spoilers (for better handling). There are only 3 other Atos C/Stratos C gliders in the country with the performance of this glider, I helped update two of them and Ron Gleason has the 4th. You would have to buy a new Atos V or VX to get better performance. This glider has the weak link down tubes. If you bend one, they can be replaced for \$5 vs \$65+ for a standard down tube. I am asking \$5000. I can install the Atos competition aluminum spoilers for \$500 more. Located in San Jose, CA. Email me [vince@flyatos.com](mailto:vince@flyatos.com) or call 408-887-7838. Vince Endter

**Moyes Sonic 165** Great novice/intermediate double surface glider. Good condition, one owner with about 60 hours on the wing. For Sale for \$1600 and includes two spare downtubes. Call 408 834-5515 Eric

**195 Falcon I.** Asking \$1300 Bought used from Mission Soaring in March 2003. Added about 40h to it. Glider in great shape and ready to fly. Blue/grey/white sail colors. Never crashed it, always flown with wheels, stored indoors in dry room and generally treated with respect. Can demo at Funston on weekdays and Ed Levin on weekends. Moving up to a double-surface glider.[focs13@hotmail.com](mailto:focs13@hotmail.com)

**Falcon 170,** \$1300 This 170 is about 3 years old: green blue and white, and in great shape. I had Mission Soaring take off the sail and do a complete check and correction of any issues in 2004. If you are starting hang gliding, this is probably what you are learning on and will be fun for many years. You can never go wrong with a Falcon 1. Contact: Mark Dawson at [mark@ethnography.com](mailto:mark@ethnography.com).

**WWXC 1342** bright yellow sail white l.e., magenta a.s., black xc. 250 hours. folding basebar, extra down tube, good bag, finnister wheels. new pads. excellent condition, flys very sweet, handles with two fingers in smooth conditions. no turns. \$1200.00 .. and

**Wills Wing XC 155** (hook in weight of 170-280lbs) I am selling all of my hang gliding equipment as one package. This is all you need to fly cross country. I have been to 13,500' in this glider and flown 25 miles or more several times. You should be a hang III or IV and need to prove it to me. The package is: with regular and XC bags, quick-folding crossbar and fared downtubes, extra fared downtube and manual; High Energy Harness (and storage bag) for person of 6'4" and 180lbs with a chest-mounted conical parachute (connected to the harness with a paraswivel), detachable xc back pack and is wired with an antenna and ready for a handheld ham radio; Reflex open-face helmet (size large), that has a boom mic and ear piece wired into it; Lindsey/Rudthingy LR3 energy compensation vario and altimeter and bar mits. This is a great bargain, don't miss out on this opportunity! Send your emails to: [Hangfour@hotmail.com](mailto:Hangfour@hotmail.com)

**167 Saturn** w/harness and chute. It is in great condition, only 5 hours on it, and is a great double surface glider for a novice/intermediate pilot. Has the VG option, and comes with a spare downtube High Energy pod harness, with a LARA gold chute, for a pilot around 5'11" 195lbs High Energy knee hanger harness Various other odds and ends. Asking for \$2800 for the lot, or best offer. Contact Dan at [dan.tessier@gmail.com](mailto:dan.tessier@gmail.com), or 408-499-4267

**Tools**

**wills wing z-5** harness brand new. beautiful colors. custom fit to 5'7"-5'9" women's fit. \$500.00 obo julie hyde [juliehyde@merlincorp.com](mailto:juliehyde@merlincorp.com) 530-283-3046

**Wanted**

**Aircotec Top Navigator** Variometer. John (505) 237-1646

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**Editors note:**

when you put an advert on the BBS please put contact information with it. There are ads that have no e-mail or phone number associated with them. Also a 2 page posting will not get into the flightline

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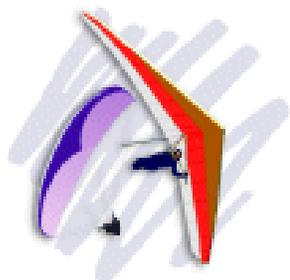
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# *Wings of Rogallo*

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To: