



The Thermal Flyer

the Arizona Hang Glider Association membership newsletter

October 2001

by Dan Schroeder, President

a note from our President

What a great showing of pilots for the Verdy Valley days! It was a site not seen on top of Mingus for several years. Most everyone participated in the contest and best of all it was a lot of fun. There was an abundance of lift, plenty of other pilots to sniff it out for you and high altitudes offering free air conditioning. A special club thanks to the Costello family, Paul, Marshall, and several others who helped organize the meet along with the clearing out of a nice landing area. (I just want to know who turned off the wind machine when I came into land?) This is what makes for great memories. As for my favorite memory, it's got to be when Tim's wife sang "The Drivers Song", a blues song no doubt. As for Sunday, it was blown out all afternoon, but for the "hangover" ones who stuck around long enough, it offered one of the best glass off's in 14 years. The winds calmed down at about 4:00 p.m. and the launch window opened at 4:30. Lift was everywhere and the entire range was soreable for the next two hours. Something worth remembering, afternoons that are blown out are often a sign of a great glass off to come.

We also have some more club news regarding Mingus Mt. and our new relationship with sky divers. Paul Yunker took the time to get in touch with Dan Bachler, the man behind the Cottonwood sky diving operation. Dan B. is well aware of our presence there and has a very safety conscious attitude toward our sharing the same airspace. He has shared landing zones with HG pilots in the past and is well aware

of our habits and needs. He gave me some facts to share with the club regarding their operation and what a typical day is like. The drop time window is usually between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.. Weekends are actually the slow time for his business. The maximum altitude they exit from is 13,500 ft. MSL.. and is usually within a quarter mile radius of the landing area. He even scans launch on weekends to check for gliders and ensures us that he does a circular pattern to look for gliders below, prior to any jumps. (He know's he has more control over safety than we do.) For novice jumpers the opening altitude is between 8,500 ft. MSL. and 9,000 ft. MSL.. For advanced sky divers, it is no lower than 6,000 MSL.. It sounds safer than some may have thought, but remember, anything we can do to futher reduce the odds of an incident will be in the best interest of all. As for sharing their LZ, it wasn't mentioned it at this time. He was however, very openminded throughout the conversation and offered to discuss it again in the future. see page 5



Dan Schroeder AHGA President

by Jerry Dalen, Past President

Parting Thoughts

Well they say time flies when you're having fun, and they're not kidding. Time has literally been flying since I became the president of our noble organization. It doesn't seem like yesterday when I accepted the job of AHGA president, but it sure doesn't feel like two years have elapsed.

I have to think there are a couple of reasons for this. First of all, this has been a very productive period for our club. We continue to have a great working relationship with the City of Phoenix Parks and Rec. Dept., Arizona Public Service, and the Verde District Rangers. These three groups are instrumental in our success as a club in keeping and maintaining our flying sites, and as your present site director, I will still be involved in communications with these fine people. This relatively stress free tenure has had it's benefits, but I think the real reason the past two years have gone by so quickly is the purchase of my Wills Wing

Falcon. I don't have the luxury of being able to leave town every weekend due to job responsibilities, therefore I was doing about eighty to ninety percent of my flying at Shaw Butte. I really enjoy the Butte for several reasons, but setting up a "relatively" high performance glider (RamAir) in one hundred degree plus temps, then sinking out and having to spend another half hour tearing down was starting to take it's toll on my fun meter. The Falcon changed all that. Ten minute set ups and teardowns. Light easy launching and incredibly easy handling and landing characteristics rejuvenated my love for the Butte. I still flew the RamAir a few times this season, but the Falcon rules! I also have a newfound respect for X/C on a Falcon, and I still have a smile on my face after every landing.

On a more somber note, I believe we have learned to be thankful for our flying sites this past month. The incredibly vicious acts see page 3



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AHGA