

# The Thermal Flyer

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## From your interim editor

Jerry Dalen  
AHGA Flight Director

What can I say? This has not been the best of months for the Arizona contingent. Early in the month we got the sad news that Linda Hodgson's battle with brain cancer was over. Then our editor in chief, Kim Shipek is involved in a crash landing at the Houser Road tow zone. Kim's medical status is day to day, so to try and take some of the load off her, I'll be filling in as your TF editor. Don't expect much, as I am nowhere near Kim's level on desktop publishing. I just hope to put something out for all of you to keep up to date on the happenings of our club.

### Where we are now

Ok, let's take a deep breath and try to make some sense of the current situation. I know Kim wanted this issue to be a tribute to Linda, but obviously that will have to come at a later date. By the time this edition of the Thermal Flyer gets out, Linda's memorial service will have already taken place.

Kim is out of flying for a while. For how long we don't know, but probably for the season. She has a lot of healing to do. That leaves us/me/you to pick up where she left off.

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## Aerotowing in the Valley

Ed Root

**Submitted by: Ed Root, USHGA Basic Instructor, Certified Aerotow Vehicle Pilot, ASC Ultralight Basic Flight Instructor, (AHGA #533)**

If the idea of setting up your glider once, getting as many flights as you'd like, tearing down only at the end of the day, and extending your flying season sounds appealing, then you should check out the state's premier aerotowing operation at the expansive, unobstructed Grand Valley airport located southwest of Chandler. Since the fall of 2000 "Sky Masters School of Hang Gliding" has been offering aerotowing right here in the valley. Offering aerotows from 1,000 to 7,000 feet. An aerotow to 5,000ft can take as little as 10 minutes!

Aerotowing is a safe, consistent way to get to altitude and enjoy flying in the Arizona sun. One great advantage of aerotowing is not having to "chase the wind" or "wait for the wind" as with most foot-launch sites. If the wind switches 180-degrees, we simply launch from the other end of the runway. If there is no wind, or the wind is cross, no problem – launching from the ground-launch-vehicle (GLV, also referred to as the "dolly") safely precludes the need to launch directly into the wind. When conditions are favorable, foot-launched aerotow is also an option.

Here's how the process works: Under the supervision of a trained technician, the glider is placed on the dolly with the pitch adjusted to the proper angle-of-attack. The pilot hooks into the glider and attaches the primary and secondary releases to the towline. The pilot then lays prone, suspended from the glider as if already in flight,

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