



### What Dave and Tom Did This Summer

(by Tom McGowan)

After a very successful trip to the Quest Air/FlyTec Meet in Florida in April, Dave and I decided to take our chances in Big Spring, Texas. The local legend was that a pilot flew 287 miles there back in 1987, and with the World Record Encampment pilots flying over Big Spring on their way to set distance records, Big Spring sounded like the ticket for some great flying. There isn't an airpark there (or any local pilots it seemed), so

David Glover arranged for tugs to come from other parts of the country (as far away as Quest). In all, we had 6 tugs and 1 trike for 30 pilots. Just as importantly, Bruce Engen earned a lifetime of good karma for volunteering at the meet, including retrieval driving for us. We couldn't have done it without his help.

### Bruce Engen earned a lifetime of good karma for volunteering at the meet

Dave and I got started the big drive at 1:00 Thursday afternoon and arrived in Abilene, Texas (about 100 miles from Big Spring) around 10:00 Friday night. The meet started

*(See SUMMER on page 2)*

Ralph Sickinger

### Pre-Flight



Fall is almost over, but ya know, it's been a really nice month. I've gotten some really good flying in, and the fall colors were absolutely fantastic! I saw my first bald eagle, and attended some great parties too! Now we're deep in to November, and Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Before the holiday season starts, I want to take a moment to give thanks...

I am thankful for the friends that I have within the hang gliding community; you have all added so much to my life in the past year, through difficult times and fun times.

I am thankful for my health, which allows me to continue to enjoy life, doing all of the things that I love to do.

*(See PRE-FLIGHT on page 7)*

### USHGA Presents Awards

(excerpted from USHGA press release)

ORLANDO—Amidst all their work during the long weekend of meetings, the USHGA Board of Directors made sure to recognize the valuable work of others in the organization.

Several outstanding individuals and groups were singled out as recipients of USHGA's Annual Awards.

Joe Gregor, of the Capital Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association, was honored with an **USHGA Exceptional Service Citation**. This award is given to a member in recognition of outstanding contributions to the Association over the last year. Joe has helped keep all hang glider and paraglider pilots in the air through his exceptional work on the FAA's Sport Pilot NRPM (Notice of Proposed Rule Making). Joe helped draft USHGA's response to the Federal Aviation Administration's proposed Sport Pilot (SP) and Light Sport Aircraft (LSA) rules, helping to preserve and protect the rights of

USHGA members to fly our gliders. Joe has endured endless bureaucratic meetings and read—and responded to—reams of paperwork. In short, he has done what few could—he effectively worked the political and bureaucratic processes.

Three pilots were singled out for USHGA Board Commendations for the outstanding contributions to the promotion of safe, enjoyable flight, and for their volunteer work with their local clubs and the national association. Those pilots receiving the **USHGA Commendation** are:

**Matthew Graham** of the Capital Hang Gliding Association. Matthew is a direct-at-large on the CHGA leadership roster, and as such, promotes the sport to the general public, and helps bring new pilots into the fold.

USHGA Awards are presented annually at the Fall Board of Directors meeting. To find award criteria and nomination information, visit [www.ushga.org](http://www.ushga.org).



(SUMMER, continued from page 1)

on Sunday, but we had heard that tugs were available if we wanted to have a practice day. Saturday turned out very much like the rest of the week. Beau-

angle to the east and north. It sure looked like an easy 100 mile day, but we had to fight our way into a quartering headwind for 22 miles to the first turnpoint. That took several

## I beamed out in a 1,200 up thermal and started the long struggle to the first turnpoint with Dave.

tiful cummies, strong lift, and moderate winds aloft from the SE. I flew for 2 ½ hours doing an 11 mile out and back into the strong wind. Lift was 600 up and base was 8k agl, or 11,000 msl. Remembering the hours in the air in Florida, Dave took a shorter flight so he would be fresh for the meet.

The meet was held at an old Air Force base covering a couple of thousand acres. It was essentially unused, except for the prisons, one of which was ½ mile downwind of our hangar. Oh, did I mention that David Glover had arranged for us to set up in a hangar, so we not only stayed out of the sun, but we had an air conditioned pilot lounge to hang out in.

Sunday, Day 1: A 76 mile tri-

low saves and 2 ½ hours, but I made it! The downwind leg to the second turnpoint went more quickly, but I still managed to get low and blown downwind of the course line. After 3 ½ hours I was beat, and the last leg was straight up wind. It proved to be too much for me. However, I did get 64 miles and 4 hours of airtime.

Monday, Day 2: Another triangle, 71 miles to the south and west. This was a tough task, straight in to a 15 mph headwind. I beamed out in a 1,200 up thermal and started the long struggle to the first turnpoint with Dave. Unlike the day before, we pretty much stayed together on this flight, especially on the first leg. After gliding and drifting back while

(See SUMMER on page 4)

Joe Brauch

## Prez-Sez



Happy Fall!

I guess no news is good news on the flying front, although a few more flyable days this month would always be nice. I met a couple that just got back from Point of the Mountain. (*I think that is what it is called*) They were reminiscing about top landing, brain-dead launching and soaring, and choosing when to fly and land. The only complaints they had were setting up camp out of the wind and the long drive to Utah. They did have perfect “calm” wind launches from the Pulpit, and from what I could see from launch, flawless landings. I would love to have enough time to do what they were doing. I know they are having fun. I am glad that we were there at “our” site to make it available for visiting pilots. Although they just sledded they still logged another safe flight in another new site.

It is hard to be an east-coast pilot. I hear stories from west-coast pilots and dream of endless days of soaring perfect ridges in cloudless skies above beautiful valleys. Then, I remember that I am an east-coast pilot. What we do here is requires a little more “heart” than those “easy” conditions out west. It takes quite a bit of effort to become an east-coast hang glider mountain pilot.

It starts with those training hill flights. It is 90 degrees and the cow pies are about as fragrant as the knee hanger harness. (*Which is usually a little too tight around the crotch.*) After what seems like endless ground-skimming flights we get that one flight that gently lifts us to maybe 50 feet off the ground and we are hooked. We have heaved a heavier than air contraption of aluminum and Dacron down a steep hill and got the thing to carry us skyward. Following

### Capital Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association

CHGPA represents hang glider and paraglider pilots from the Washington, DC mid-Atlantic region. We are committed to the safety, growth and solidarity of hang gliding and paragliding.

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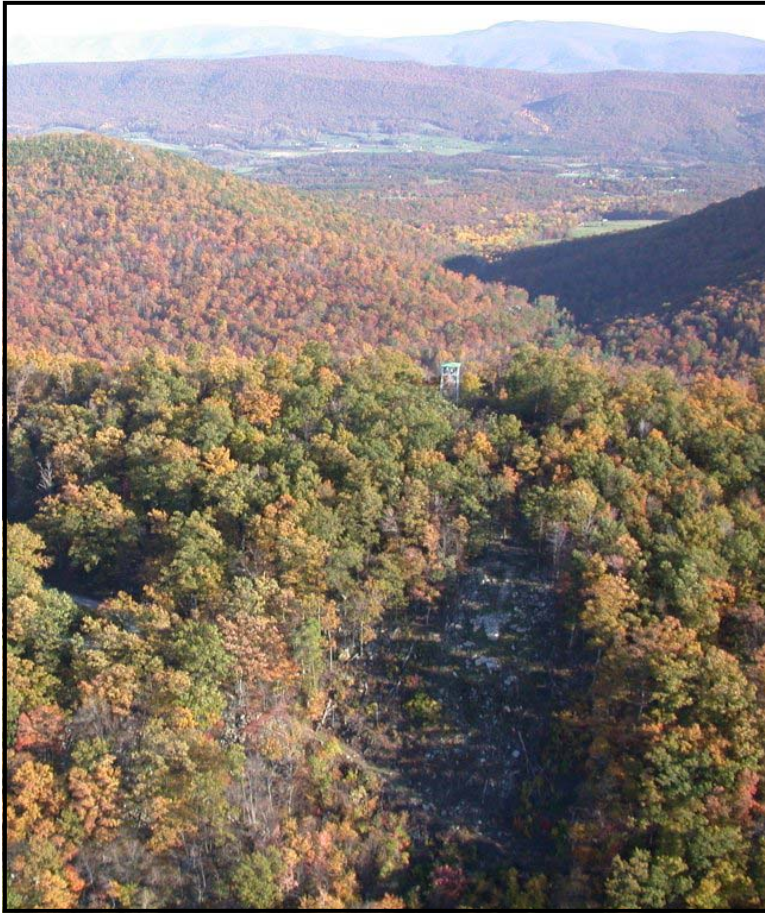
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Aerial view of Woodstock Launch  
(Photo by Ralph Sickinger)

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many more flights from the bunny hills we get launch and landing techniques that will carry us confidently up to larger hills. Our time spent here enduring gusty thermally days and playing in light, swithchy winds has boosted our skills to allow us to fly in more varied conditions. Although we bend a few down tubes, we can take that 30 degree cross and make a good flight from the top of the hill to a perfect no step landing directly into the wind.


Then we get our first “high” flight. If we thought we were hooked before the ground dropped away 500 feet below our toes, we would now spend every avail-

able day trying to do it again. Now our skills of taking off and landing in those changing conditions have paid off in effortless launches and hour long soaring flights. We soon need to bring water to quench our thirst for more airtime while we are wagging our tongues in the smooth glass off at the end of the day. Next, we learn what a thermal can do to brighten our day. Yes, a few more skills needed to be perfected but in those marginal sled days came experience. Soon enough we

were turning every little bit of lift just to see if it was a thermal. Now we got it. East-coast mountain pilot skills have held us in the air just long enough for us to think...this is a perfect ridge and a beautiful valley.

Thanks Orville and Wilbur!

Happy Thanksgiving,

~ Joe 

*(SUMMER, continued from page 2)*

thermaling a number of times, Dave and I could still look down on the airport. We had to change tactics and take more chances if we were going to make the first turnpoint. We both took turns getting low, and I used a dust/cotton plant devil at 1,500 agl to get up just short of first turnpoint. The only thing keeping us going was the thought of a downwind leg and easy miles. Dave hit the turnpoint first and started downwind. I made it a few minutes later while I climbed to base at 8k agl. Only 4 hours to do the first 25 miles!

The day was fading fast, and we had only completed the first leg of the triangle. However, there is nothing like doing a pair of 15 miles glides from 8000' agl to make up time. We both hit the second turnpoint in about an hour, but Dave was low and landed a couple of miles past it. I arrived 5 minutes after him and climbed out under a nice cummy, but started getting rained on while still climbing at 400' up. In a brief moment of good judgment I left the thermal and headed upwind to goal. Looking back ½ an hour later, I saw a huge cell, dumping rain, and a gust front. Meanwhile, heading to goal, I thought I had no chance, but small cummies kept forming and I tried to following lift bands into the wind. I actually had made 6 miles toward goal and was still 3,000 agl when David Glover got on the radio and said that we had done the wrong task! That explained why we hadn't seen any other gliders. What a waste. I told Dave he was bursting my bubble; I had assumed Dave and I were in the lead gaggle for the past 6 hours!

Anyway, I picked out three alternate

LZs a couple of miles in the distance: two dry lakes, and beyond them and over the interstate - a cow pasture. As I got closer I discovered that not all lakes in Texas in August were dry. In fact, both looked wet and I realized the pasture was my best bet (it was also closer to goal). However, the lower I got, the stronger the headwind. When I got down the 1000 agl, I realized that I needed to stuff the bar to make any progress (did I mention I was now directly over the interstate?). I made the field with 100 yards to spare. I landed in a 25 mph wind, probably associated with the gust front of the storm 10 miles behind me. Still, a good day. 62.6 miles of the triangle. Dave Glover later gave us credit for the day. It seemed Dave Proctor and I were the only ones smart enough to kill time in the air conditioned airport terminal while waiting for the launch window to open when the change in the task was announced.

Tuesday, Day 3: 76 Mile triangle. First, it looked like rain, then it rained, then most comp pilots launched and headed out in the rain. Dave was smart enough to not fly. I launched and started climbing (while in the rain) and watched a nice cell dump heavy rain on the course line. Fortunately, about that time, I remembered that I had really planned to spend my afternoon watching a movie playing in town, so I landed at the airport to catch the afternoon matinee. The other pilots who decided to try the task went on to have a nice day, although it rained quite a bit on course and no one made goal.

Wednesday, Day 4: 44 mile out and back. First, it looked like rain, then

it sprinkled, so of course Dave and I put our gliders out in the launch line. Then a funny thing happened: it poured and a big gust front came through. Earlier, Dave and I thought how smart we were to be the first in line to launch, way down past the hangar. We now got to carry our gliders back in a downpour with 30



mph winds. It would have been worse for me, but I stayed relatively dry in my glider's control frame while Bruce got soaked holding my nose wires. Well, I did run out to help Claire with her glider, but I made her get in the rain and took the control frame again. However, it didn't seem to give me bad karma as the rain quickly stopped, it got sunny and actually looked pretty good. A few minutes later, the trike dropped me off 5 miles out on course in a thermal. However, after the rain it was a tough day. It be-

came overcast late in the day, but no real rain. After 3 ½ hours, I actually made goal!

Thursday, Day 5: 150 mile straight line task. The big day, a downwind straight line task of 150 miles, the longest task ever in a hang gliding meet. We would fly slightly cross wind, but we could make some time



now with a crossing tail wind. Nevertheless, I flew too slowly and just about everyone in the comp passed me. Still, it was the most fun day of the meet for both Dave and me. As I was approaching a small, shallow lake or tailing pond, I notice a something making whipping up quite a bit of water at a narrow end of the lake right below me. I looked for a boat or jet ski but couldn't see anything that would cause so much disturbance on the water. Then, I saw it was a dust devil moving across the lake. It formed a perfect circle fill-

ing the narrow end of the lake and was strong enough to whip the water along the shores. I felt lucky to be at base while watching this so that I could head out before I found out how strong the lift would be over that dust devil. Although I didn't make goal, I made 103 miles, my personal record. As I broke down by the road, I noticed something hanging on the fence post. I walked over to take a closer look, and realized it was a coyote carcass. Then I looked down the fence row and counted 26 carcasses (but I admit I didn't follow the fence into the bush to see if there were more farther down). Needless to say, I broke down quickly and called for Bruce. I had a funny feeling Bruce might arrive to find me hanging from one of the posts.

Dave also had a personal best of 93 miles and 7 hours in the air. We were both shut down by a line of storms over to our west. The storms were far enough away that they were not a problem, but their shadows effectively killed the thermals we needed to keep going. No one made goal that day, but several rigid wings were close.

Friday, Day 6, 74 miles triangle. This was a tough day. Lift was a little weaker, and the first leg was into a quartering head wind again. Both Dave and I bombed trying to make the first turnpoint, despite climbing in what Dave identified as a junk yard, dirty oil smelling thermal. Still, I had 16.5 miles and 2 ½ hours, so it beat going to the movies.

Saturday, Day 7, 63 miles triangle. The last day, and the lowest cloud-base – beginning 3,500' agl but later

getting close the 6,000'. The first leg was pretty much 90 degrees cross wind. Lift was light, but improved during the day. Approaching the first turnpoint, cummies were popping and lift was good. However, 12 miles straight up wind to the second turnpoint in the center of a small town would be tough. I spent an hour going the first 3 miles (and felt good about the progress given the strong head wind), but decided I needed to try some long glides if I ever was going to make it. Sure enough, I got low after another 5 miles, but got up from below 1,000 feet to base and tried for the turnpoint 4 miles away. 0.4 miles out from the turnpoint and 500 agl, I chickened out and turned away from the center of town to land in a vacant lot. 3:45 hours and 38 miles.

Overall, Big Spring was incredible. I had over 28 hours and 350 XC miles in 8 days of flying. I set personal records for open distance, miles done in a triangle, and my out and back record. Dave had 21 hours and 200 miles. Bruce Engen was great. He picked us up each day almost always before we could finish breaking down (on the 100 mile day, I had finished breaking down, but was still talking on my cell phone bragging to anyone I could reach). Aerotowing in desert conditions was more challenging than here, but as long as you look out for dust devils on the runway, it wasn't too bad. The lift was very strong, but not as turbulent as Sandia. LZs were everywhere. These competitions are fun, but I would still like to arrive a little earlier to try for a long distance flight on a practice day. Will I go back? – you bet. And Bruce, Dave and I owe you big time, thanks again!

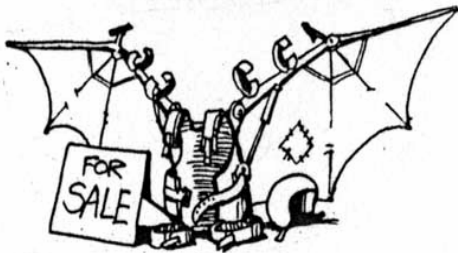




# CHGPA Photo Album



View from Woodstock Launch - Amazing Fall colors! (Photo by Ralph Sickinger)



## Wing Things

### Airwave K5 148

Fair condition. Still flies good. Black undersurface, yellow leading edge. Spare nose cone. \$300 OBO  
Mike Chevalier: 301.270.0445

### Talon 150

Almost new, only 5 hours. \$3995. see it at: <http://www.buffam.com/talon.html>  
Bill Buffam: 610.344.0704

### Falcon 140

Red, White and Blue, bought in Jan 2002, test flown, and used in only five training hill launches. Ideal for beginner pilot. (includes two spare down tubes)

#### Harness

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Charly Insider helmet

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### Falcon 170

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*(PRE-FLIGHT, continued from page 1)*

I am thankful for the opportunities that I have had this year to contribute to the hang gliding community. Between the newsletter, the logo contest, hang gliding photographs and my website, t-shirts, and the CHGPA calendar, I've been pretty busy. But, it's kept me involved with flying even when the weather wasn't conducive to getting actual air-time, and it's been incredibly rewarding as well.

I am thankful for the many pilots who graciously volunteer *their* time to improve life for the rest of us: Joe Gregor, trying to re-open High Rock; Matthew Graham, doing his best to garner publicity for our sport anywhere that he can; Ric Niehaus, Pete Lehmann, and Larry Huffman, helping a bunch of newbies learn how to go X-C; Brian Vant-Hull, arranging and organizing the annual parachute re-pack; Chris McKee, organizing the Pulpit Fly-In; the entire Highland Aerosports team, arranging any number of special flying opportunities (*demo days and the X-C clinic, among others*); Lauren Tjaden, providing entertainment and comic relief; and so many pilots that have offered rides, wire-crewed on launch, provided safety checks and advice, and otherwise helped me get off the ground and into the air.

Most of all, I'm thankful for the gift of flight, and the fact that I am able to take part in one of the most amazing pursuits available to man, while enjoying some of the most incredible scenery this side of heaven.

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The 2002 Mountain Landing contest is almost at an end, and I'm ashamed to have to admit that my record is only 6-5, which works out to about 55%. (*Although, too be fair, my record is 9-5 if you include February.*) And that's in a Falcon. *< sigh >* Yeah, that's pretty pathetic. On the positive side, by participating in the contest I've maintained an awareness of my skill level (*or lack thereof*), and so I've kept reviewing my landings pretty critically. As a result, my more recent landings **have** gotten better, but there is still room to improve. Personally, I think the landing contest is a great idea; I hope that it will run again next year, and that we'll see more participation from our pilots in the club.



*It's God's sport; for who else could build such a stadium?*



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Congratulations to Joe Gregor and Matthew Graham, who were recognized by the United States Hang Gliding Association for their incredible contributions to our sport!

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On that note, I'm off to Michigan, to spend the Thanksgiving holiday with my family. I hope you all enjoy your holiday as well - see you when I get back!





**Capital Hang Gliding and  
Paragliding Association**

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Gaithersburg, MD 20877-1315

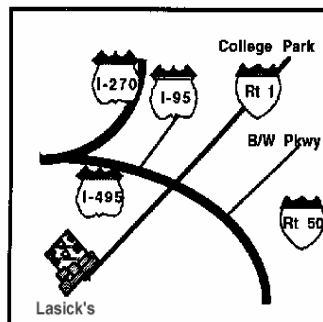
**Next CHGPA meeting will be held:  
November 20, 2002\*  
No meeting in December - Happy Holidays!**

**\*This is the 3rd Wednesday in November,  
as the normal meeting night is right  
before Thanksgiving.**

Meetings are held downstairs at: Lasick's Beef House

Directions: 0.8 mile inside the beltway on Route 1 South, just past the Super 8 Motel (College Park exit off I-495).

Note: If coming from points north on I-95, at the Capital Beltway stay right at the split and then take the immediate left exit to Route 1 South, College Park.



Lasick's Beef House  
9128 Baltimore Blvd.  
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(301) 441-2040



*Pulpit Ramp at Dusk—Photo by Susanna Clapsaddle*