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**RECENT & UPCOMING EVENTS**

**The Man Show** – On Jan 31 radio station WPDH sponsored an even called “The MAN Show” at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center in Poughkeepsie. Greg Black, Tom Galvin, Richard Behrends, Wayne Neckles, Sue Sparrow, Dave Lewis, Cathy Lewis, and Jim Donavan all spent time chatting with attendees about the thrill of hang gliding. A lot of interest was sparked by these enthusiastic representatives of our sport and we are likely to see some of the enthralled Man Show attendees on the training hill this spring. Good job helping to grow the sport, everyone who joined the fun at the Man Show!

*Hang Gliding Showcased at the Man Show*



**NASA 2010** - A NASA club meeting was held on March 6. Please refer to the email from Cathleen O’Connell dated 3/24/10 for full details. Highlights of the discussion include Membership Benefits and Dues, Club Officers for 2010, and club plans regarding site development and activities. The club’s focus in 2010 will be on making improvements to the North Knob launch access, including:

- Spreading gravel
- Installing a lockable gate
- Extending the stone wall
- Cutting down some trees
- Installing a wind sock in concrete

**Stay tuned for periodic announcements of work parties to help make these improvements happen!**

**Memorial Day Potluck BBQ and Clinics**

Clinic topics will include 1) training hill landings, 2) cross-country training, 3) radio communications, and 4) weather assessment. There is **no cost** to attend the clinic! Stay tuned for further details about the weekend events.

**NASA Logo Contest** – We need a new logo to replace the current one, which can be seen in the header of this newsletter. Criteria are: image appropriateness, design execution, and overall impact. Be creative! Submit your ideas to Greg or Cathleen, electronically or on paper. The winner will be selected by club officers during the Memorial Day gathering so the deadline for submission is May 15. Winner will receive a t-shirt emblazoned with your own design!

**FLYING SAFETY**

**Preventing injury, by Konstantin Vatrenko**

I was compelled to write a brief article on injury prevention after numerously observing some very poor glider lifting techniques by some very good pilots. As a Physician Assistant working in Sports medicine for the past nine years, I know all too well how devastating it is for an athlete to sustain a season ending injury, because a few simple preventive measures were not followed before a competitive event. It is because these techniques are simple, and somewhat “common sense” that they are often forgotten or overlooked even by the best of us.

As I was dragging my glider up the training hill in the midst of a 90 degree weather I suddenly felt dizzy, and nauseous. It took me a second to realize that I made a novice mistake, and did not properly hydrate before hitting the t-hill. Carrying that 60 pound glider, helmet, parachute and harness up and down the hill will have you loosing up to 8 cups of water an hour even in the mildest of conditions. I always tell my athletes; Drink regardless of thirst! Drinking water or water with electrolytes before, during and after and physical activity will not only improve your gliding performance, but will also prevent nasty things like headache, muscle cramps, dizziness and nausea.

When it comes to stretching, in recent years sports literature has been favoring dynamic stretching ( series of exaggerated yet controlled motions similar to the sports activity that follows), over static stretching (passively stretching a muscle to the period of mild discomfort and holding it for a period of time). As hang glider pilots we have to pay attention to our entire body, concentrating on lower back and legs. *(Article continues on next page.)*

There is not much dynamic movement involved in our sport (if everything goes right), but we have to be ready to encounter some difficulty handling glider during take off, mid air and landing. So, let's take a few minutes and warm up every possible joint in our body that has ability to move. You can make it part of a pre-flight check, and starting with your neck going down to you ankles, gently move and stretch all your joints in any comfortable way that you desire until the feeling of stiffness is decreased or disappeared all together. Take a few squats, inhaling and exhaling deeply. Picture and appreciate that right now you are activating your circulation, lubricating your joints, elongating the muscles and raising your core temperature. You are a machine getting ready for take off. To prevent low back pain and spasm in daily life, and while in a harness let's spend a minute by passively stretching our lower back and hamstrings. This is done by holding our legs together or shoulder length, taking a deep breath and on while exhaling leaning forward with your lower back, keeping your mid and upper back straight trying to touch ground with your fingers. While in a flexed forward position, relax, breath slowly, and by using your lower back try to go to flex forward the maximum position of comfort, while not bending your knees, making sure that you are not holding your breath, and every part of you is relaxed and ready to fly. Finally, to prevent nasty Achilles tendon injuries during landing impact, proceed by stretching you heel cord by keeping foot flat on the ground with leg behind the body, and gently bending the knee until we feel pulling in the heel area. Repeat on the opposite leg.

Finally, I will briefly touch upon glider lifting techniques. Something I learned firsthand, there is a good reason while the nose of the glider has to be pointed to the wind, while lifting the glider. We allow the wind to assist us with the lifting, instead of lifting against the weight of the glider, and wind pressure on the sail. I know this is common sense stuff, but I still manage to find myself struggling not using the forces. And the most common mistake I actually get to observe in others, is lifting the glider with their lower backs, this is done by novices and experienced pilots alike. To lift the glider, down tubes should be rested on the outside shoulders, back has to be straight, chest forward, one leg in front and another behind in a half squat position. Once the balance is established, simply lift with your legs. Sometimes by balancing the forces just right, I feel almost no extra weight as I start climbing that T-hill. Last week, I decided to cut corners, and while climbing the hill, did not come out of the harness, and did not turn the nose to the wind. In no time I found myself yelling for help, as the glider was tipped over by a gust of

wind, and I was trapped in a harness waiting to hear Greg's words of wisdom.

To all my friends, and fellow pilots: May the forces be with you!

*Konstantin*



### **NASA to the RESCUE !!!**

**RESCUE 1: The Gravel Truck** - You may recall that Wayne's gravel truck got stuck in the mud at Mountain Wings before a work party gathering last fall. Well it recently had to be dislodged again – this time from ice when it got stuck in Sue's driveway after delivering some material. Tom and Jorge Rodas jumped into Greg's pickup with some heavy machinery to weigh it down. After a brief pas de deux the pickup managed to pull the stubborn and susceptible larger vehicle free from its icy trap.

*Freeing the Monster Truck*



**RESCUE 2: Cathleen**

Well the 2009 Rookie of the Year flew right into the top of the tallest tree in Ellenville on March 7. Clearly it's not 2009 anymore! Diagnosis of the cause: 1000% pilot error: failure to maintain a 45° angle to the LZ at all times. She lodged in the branches of an ash tree about 90 feet up, far from any road that would have allowed easy access to rescue equipment so it took squads of rescue personnel and a number of hang gliding celebrities (including Greg, Tom, Wayne, Tyler, Sue, Sharon, & Fred) 9 hours of heroics in the snow and cold and dark to extract her from her perch. Cathleen is fine but deeply humbled (again) by her severe misjudgment.

*Yikes! That's one ugly landing, even for Cathleen!*



**RESCUE 3: "Flarabella" (Pulse 9m)**

After two weeks stuck in the tree, including one weekend where typhoon force winds whipped through the region, Cathleen's glider was still sitting pretty with no more than the small tear in the lower sail it got in the original tree landing 2 weeks before. Terry Storer, a hang glider pilot who had been an Ellenville regular some years ago, came back to town at Greg's request to spearhead the extraction. As a professional tree climber for a utility company Terry was the perfect man for the job, and with Wayne's assistance made short work of the retrieval. The glider suffered no further damage as the result of this expert extraction. Miraculous! And a testament to the skill of these 2 gentlemen.

*Ready to climb...*



*Going UP!*

*High, Terry!*



*Coming down!*

*The Rescuers Down Under: Terry and Wayne*



Recommendations are being developed for items everyone should carry in their harness against the possibility of a tree landing, to aid rescuers. Further information on this is forthcoming.

*(Newsletter continues on next page.)*

## NON-FLYING CELEBRITIES

This new feature of the newsletter turns the spotlight onto those wonderful people we often see around the flight park who contribute so much to the hang gliding community but who do not fly themselves. First up in what is hoped will be a regular series is **Diana Romero**.



*La Pequena Profesora*

This petite young lady regularly accompanies her husband Eduardo Pontón to Ellenville. Not only does she help him convey his glider to launch, she is always ready to retrieve him as soon as he lands. As Eduardo often notes, Diana's assistance and company are critical to his enjoyment of any flying day. Quoting Professor Pontón directly: "I could not make it without her!"

Did you know that Diana –

- is from Colombia
- is a lecturer in Spanish at Columbia University
- is stronger than her petite frame would lead you to believe!



*Eduardo and Diana*

**Contribute an item to the newsletter:** Members and friends of NASA are requested to send in ideas, articles, photos, web links, notices, and other content that would be of interest to the NASA community. Contact Cathleen with your suggestions.

**Thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to this issue:** [Wayne Neckles](#), [Konstantin Vatrengo](#), [Eduardo Pontón](#), [Tom Galvin](#), & [Cathleen O'Connell](#). *Did I miss anyone? Thank you all!*