

2006 Newsletter #1

M O U N T A I N E E R H A N G G L I D I N G A S S O C I A T I O N

2005 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Jim Rowan reports: The *Mountaineer Hang Gliding Association* held their annual (and only one of the year) meeting at the LaVale Library on December 10th, 2005. Typical of a year when the flying conditions weren't favorable, there weren't many new or old faces to be seen at the meeting. In attendance were: Rich, Christy, JR, Homer, Will, and Marvin. JR presented the Treasurer's Report at meeting (synopsis is provided below). The following topics were discussed and/or voted upon:

- We will continue having the Labor Day fly-in, but we decided not to reserve the Seneca Shadows campsite for Memorial Day weekend given the low turn outs we've had over the last few years and in the interest of saving some money.
- We decided to charge \$15 (instead of \$10) per USHGA calendar so the club can realize a little more profit from calendar sales.
- There will be no more dues freebies for the President, Secretary/Treasurer, or Webmaster. While this was a nice benefit for those that do most of the club administrative work, we decided that the experiment wasn't worth continuing.
- It was decided that in addition to a calendar and \$100, we'd also provide a ham for Carl Miltenberger and family for Christmas.

RENEWAL TIME IS HERE!!!

Don't be a slouch
Support the Mountaineers
by renewing your membership.
It is easy. Don't procrastinate.

- Complete the form on p3
- Write a check
- Stick it in an envelope
- Mail it to JR
- Then go flying

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FROM THE PREZ

As your new Prez, one of my few duties is to put together this newsletter. Just in case you've been wondering what took so long, I'll lay out a few lame excuses:

Let's see ... First I had to wait for some material (thanks Christy, JR) ... and I guess it took awhile for JR to 'cook the books' :) While I was waiting, I did some traveling, and of course, I did

a bunch of flying instead of the newsletter ... I figured I needed to preserve the Mountaineer tradition :)

Anyway, I want y'all to know that I hold the Mountaineer club in the highest regard, and I consider it a distinct honor and a privilege to serve as Prez in such a renowned & prestigious society.

Seriously Guys & Gals - I am

really looking forward to a great flying season with y'all in 2006!



Oh yeah, I almost forgot ...

Renew Your Membership!

TREASURER'S REPORT - 2005

By Jim, Rowan, Treasurer

2005 Expenses		2005 Income	
High Pt. site insurance	\$250.00	Dues	\$990.00
Landowner donations	\$300.00	Parachute pack	\$90.00
Calendars	\$204.38	Calendar sales (approx.)	\$150.00
Christmas hams for landowners	\$91.78	Interest from checking account	<u>\$1.79</u>
Campground fee	\$318.00		
Web hosting fee (for 5 yrs.)	<u>\$75.00</u>	Total	\$1231.79
Total	\$1239.16	Checking account balance (12/8/05)	\$2342.89

C A N D I D S H O T S



The Pose



Still Drinking Jimmy's Tecate



Two Gooberitos



Proof of a Belly Whack

Photos (and captions) courtesy of JR

Mountaineer Hang Gliding Association

Membership Application

(Dues: \$40.00 single, \$60.00 family)

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone#: Home _____
Work _____
Cell _____

E-mail: _____

USHGA # _____ Expiration Date _____ Rating _____

Instructor _____ Observer _____ Ham call sign _____

Glider: _____

Make check payable to M.H.G.A.

Send to: Mountaineer HGA
C/O Jim Rowan
13818 Florida Ave
Cresaptown, MD 21502

CHRISTY HUDDLE'S POST-RETIREMENT ROAD TRIP *(as told by her ... in third person)*

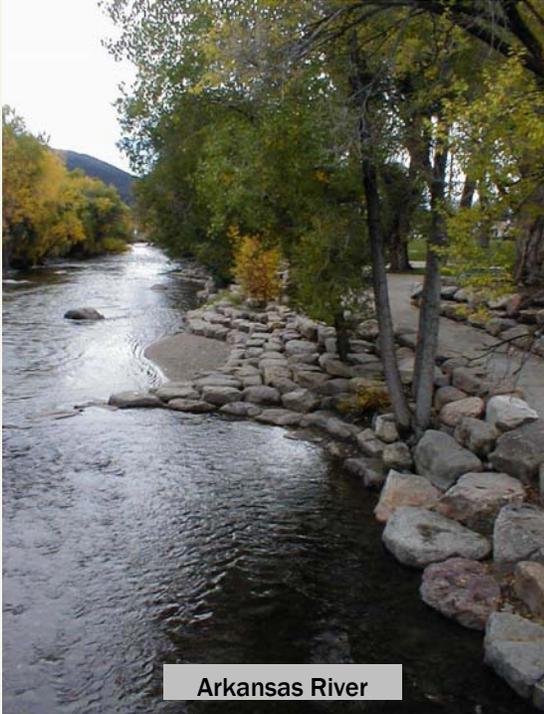
... beginning 4 days after her last day at work (so that her ex-colleague would have to get used to her not being there to answer questions *they should have asked 6 months ago*) ... and ending 5 weeks later.

After 18 long years of working for Montgomery County, Maryland, Christy decided to call it quits (retire) and the first thing she did was load up the truck with her Airwave K2 (thinking she'd be leaving it out west somewhere) and her paraglider.



After 2 nights on the road, and one night at the home of a roommate from college, she arrived in Salida, Colorado...





Arkansas River

A side trip was taken to the Great Sand Dune Wilderness south of Salida.

which had a lovely river running through it and, even better, provided the first (and unfortunately only) good hang gliding to be had on the entire trip. Most pilots got to at least 14,400, giving us great views over the high mountains. My landing was good despite the 8K+ elevation of the LZ. It turned out to be Mike's last good flight of the season - before the snow moved in.



Villa Grove launch



Salida Mike
(former prez of the Mountaineers)





Taken from the truck, east of Gunnison, Colorado

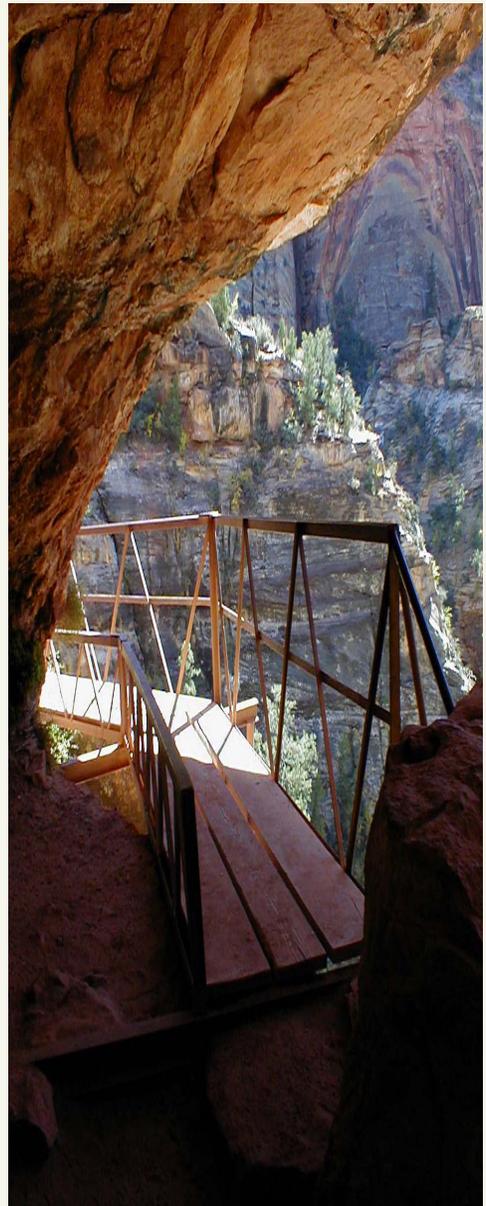


This is a picture of the hang gliding launch on Jean Mountain (south of Las Vegas) in Nevada. Christy was hoping to fly here, but the wind was blowing 35 mph, and crossed, so all she got was a lot of dirt in the glider. Lunch after the attempt was fun: hot chicken wings and lots of pilot stories with the locals.

Editor's note—this is where 'Spark taught himself to fly hang gliders in '76

After 6 nights in Salida, she continued west on Highway 50, then dropping south towards Zion National Park in Utah. She took a short hike in the Park and met a couple from Montgomery County, Maryland. Then continued on to Las Vegas where she was planning to meet up with one of Sparks' friends for a day of flying – with any luck.

Along the trail in Zion



After spending a night with the Stebbins family in Palmdale, California, Christy joined them the following morning for a walk on the hill behind their house. Daughter Jillian is training to be a maharani....

George Stebbins' claim to fame, besides being a good pilot, is that he was instrumental in getting me started (well, re-started) in hang gliding back in 1988. Both he and his wife are HG pilots. She is also a rocket scientist.

From Palmdale, Christy drove to Ojai where she spent a couple of nights (because the weather sucked) before moving on to Santa Barbara.



The hill shown here is in Elings Park, a large chunk of land surrounded by million dollar homes and with a view of the ocean. A wealthy man who used to fly kites here when it was a dump, bought the land and donated it to the City of Santa Barbara, with the condition it be used for free flight. What's really cool is that the school vans carry the paraglider pilots back up the hill. We all should be so lucky.

The first day out, Christy got 16 flights. A great day, marred only by a face plant on her second launch (the glider got ahead of her when she failed to provide adequate brake), which gave Christy a fat lip - the Southern California Botox look. Sorry, no pictures of that. After 2 days of lessons, Christy took the P2 test and passed with flying colors. The instructor took several of the new P2 pilots to the Alternator (mountain) launch for a first high flight. Christy wasn't thrilled with the idea of launching her old Quantum figuring she'd never pull it up in time to get off the short launch. Later, finding out that the new paragliders are easier to pull up, she said, 'What the heck' and bought one. In any case, it was blowing over the back, so no flying that day. Christy wasn't too disappointed that she didn't get in a high flight, which would have been her 5th.

Skippy, a Santa Barbara pilot, invited Christy to tag along on the club trip to Big Sur. Christy had 'met' Skippy via the FIFI list serve, which helps women pilots connect around the country.



Christy had heard that the landing field is often fogged in, which turned out to be the case this time. Some intrepid pilots still flew, including the paraglider shown and Skippy's significant other Tony (on his Falcon). The next day was also fogged in, so Tony and Skippy ended up carrying the Falcon down from the hill you can see below launch.



A storm in Alaska brought in some big surf - too big for the surfers to enjoy safely.

The second fogged in day at Big Sur. At least the accommodations were comfortable.



Q: Is that a launch potato?

This is **not** proof that Christy is a launch potato! And no, that's not her date.

Taking a break from Santa Barbara, Christy headed south to San Diego to visit her nephew John, and Mario, an old college friend. She stopped off at the Wild Animal Park (part of the San Diego Zoo) in Escondido.



The park was worth the price of admission (\$28.50). Christy made a point of visiting the California condors, kept in an aviary unfortunately, as it looked like it might have been a good day for soaring.

Christy got in her second hang gliding flight of the trip with the help of some local pilots, flying Horse, a site located to the east of San Diego. It was the first time Christy had the base tube ripped from her hands, but she grabbed it back and flew for another half hour, ending with a not so great landing. This was followed by a steak dinner at the home of one of the pilots and then the Halloween costume contest in the gay Hillcrest neighborhood, where her friend Mario lives.

After a second stay in Santa Barbara, Christy spent a night in San Bernardino and her last flight at the local hang gliding site (just a sled), before starting home.

The next day she drove through the Hopi and Navajo reservations in Northern Arizona where the natural scenery was spectacular.



Christy had hoped to pick up her new LitespeedS in LA before heading back east, but it was delayed on its trip from Australia. Just as well, since the flying wasn't that great and it reduced the road trip wear and tear on the glider.



Christy made a surprise visit on some friends in Durango and then drove up Rt. 550 to Montrose.

Two pictures while driving along on Rt. 550. Note the death grip on the steering wheel.



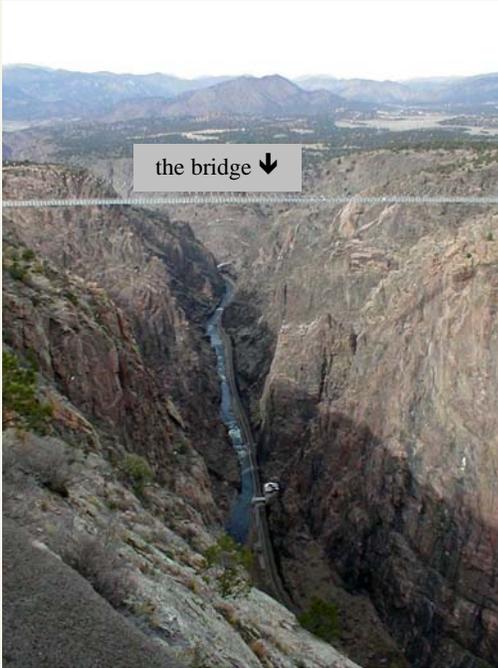
Christy is a little more relaxed when the drop off is on the other side. The state saves a lot of money by not putting in guard rails. Another benefit: drivers rarely exceed the posted speed limit.

Colorado is a very scenic state, but some of the views are marred by pollution. The yellow and rust stains on the rocks in this stream are from the silver mining in the area.



After another couple of nights in Salida, Christy leaves for the long drive home, starting with the scenic drive by the Arkansas River. Occasionally rocks fall onto cars, killing their occupants.

Christy took a detour to drive across the Royal Gorge Bridge, a place popular with base jumpers and bungee jumpers (during the one time of the year they're allowed - in September).



The next day she stopped at the halfway point - Kinsley, Kansas - for breakfast, before continuing on Highway 50 to Jefferson City, Missouri.



The smells from the feed lots in eastern Colorado and western Kansas were pretty bad. After suffering through several, Christy made sure she could still enjoy beef, by having a hamburger for dinner. She spent the night in Dodge City.



Christy's last night was spent at a rest stop north of Morgantown, WV in the back of her truck at the rest stop. She slept like a log, having driven 16 hours. She arrived in Harpers Ferry just after noon on Sunday, November 13th.



Trip statistics:
Oct 4 to Nov 13
7,057 miles
24.39 mpg

AIR TIMES — BY JIM ROWAN

10/14/05; High Pt; NW 5 – 10 (25+) mph; A very dynamic day for JR and Marvin. They arrived at launch to find reasonable conditions. While they set up, the winds kept getting stronger and bordered on being blown-out before backing off to almost nothing. Later, JR launched his Sport 2 in weak, straight-in winds and got above launch without much effort boat-ing around a few hundred over. Dark, over-developed clouds moved in from the west and when lift became more widespread and abundant, JR got spooked and headed for the LZ. His landing was uneventful, but Marvin ended up tearing down on top after the winds at launch increased significantly, then died off again, and finally ramped back up to 25+ mph.

10/17/05; Woodstock; WNW 10 – 15+ mph; JR traveled southeast on a strong day to fly with Homer, Adam, Hubbell, and assorted Capheads. It was a little strong earlier, but backed off as the day progressed. JR was off first followed by Hubbell, Adam, Homer, Steve K, and others. The ridge was working, the bald eagles were out, and gains to 5000' msl were not uncommon. Later in the day, everyone flew out in the valley where light lift was abundant. JR, Homer, and Adam ended up in the Bridge Field LZ at the end of the day. Hubbell flew to his cousin's house to claim a \$500 prize.

10/30/05; High Pt; WNW 5 – 10 mph; Adam, JR, and Gardinator all get to launch and soar after JR, Marvin, and Gardinator spent the preceding day sitting on the hill in blown-out conditions. There was an inversion around 3000', but below that the lift was good. Adam ended up going OTB where he chose to land at the Cumberland Airport. In typical Winchester-knucklehead fashion, Adam got a bit of lift while setting up his approach over airport and eeked out a few extra minutes scratching low over an active runway. Gardinator and JR boated over the ridge for about 1.5 hours with sailplanes and then landed in the main LZ.

11/7/05; High Pt; W 5 -10 mph; JR and Adam fly on a Monday that started out somewhat sunny, but ended up cloudy by the end of the day. JR launched first and was almost scraped off the ridge early on before catching something in front of and below the NW Cliffs. He climbed just enough to dive onto the W Face arriving there just below Fairgrounds launch. After several passes he finally got above the ridge and things got easier. Adam dove off launch and briefly worked something in front of the NW Cliffs, but rather than diving for the W Face, he chose to head back towards launch. He ended up in the LZ shortly thereafter. JR got an hour and a half and to 3130' at one point, but high cirrus moved in and shut things down.

11/11/05; High Pt; WNW 10 – 15+ mph; JR and Larryboy surprisingly had to scratch to get up near launch, but eventually they started finding reasonable lift to 3500', JR lead the way to Zirks leaving a trail of sink for Larryboy to follow. They made Zirks arriving with about 500' over that launch. The plan was to get high enough to fly out to Barton's LZ, but Larryboy wasn't able to get up enough on the ridge to make a serious attempt. He ended up landing in the main Zirk's LZ. JR got to 2650' and 2750' on different occasions and tried heading upwind towards Barton's, but after initially making reasonable progress as far as Charlie's house, he'd plummet – like hitting a wall of wind. JR ended up joining Larryboy in the main LZ shortly after Lesa arrived.

11/20/05; Fairgrounds; SSW 3 – 5 mph; JR (Sport 2), Marvin (Falcon), and Ben (PG) get sleds or extended sleds on a light and very cross day with JR taking the spot money.

1/1/06; High Pt; SW 3 – 8 mph; For the third year in a row, New Year's Day provided soarable conditions. JR and Larryboy (with Lesagirl) stopped at Fairgrounds launch on the way up where it was blowing almost straight in at 10 mph. JR wanted to fly there, but Larryboy felt that High Pt would be a better choice. They headed on up and hurried to get set up due to the forecast for the winds to go south by the end of day. Homer and Adam also showed up to give it a shot. JR dove off first at 12:30 PM and flew directly to the W Face arriving there about 100' over the Fairgrounds launch. It was marginally ridge-lift soarable on the W Face, but as JR continued northward, he blundered into a nice fat thermal (4 – 500 fpm) that got him to 3380' drifting over Ridgeley and underneath a tattered line of cu's with solid layer of stratus above. He was having radio problems, so he flew back upwind to launch and yelled down that the W Face was the only place that was working. JR then dove back there hoping to tank up on more altitude, but only found marginal ridge-lift. Larryboy launched soon thereafter and got about a half hour low over the W Face followed by Adam with about 20 minutes, but everyone was soon scraped off the ridge as the wind became even more southerly. Homer was the last one off the hill and had to settle for an extended sled, but the flowing champagne in the LZ helped to ease his pain.

FIND US ON THE WEB AT
[HTTP://WWW.MOUNTAINEERFLYERS.ORG](http://www.mountaineerflyers.org)

MOUNTAINEER HANG GLIDING ASSOCIATION



There's no Time like Air Time