

NWBPA News

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Join Us at the Spring Buggy Blitz

by Mike Eason

NorthWest Buggy Pilots Association Plans Memorial Day Weekend Trek to the Alvord Desert

If you have never bugged the wide open spaces of a desert dry lake, like El Mirage in California or Ivanpah in Nevada, here's an ideal chance to experience true "aoxomoxoa" without having to travel quite such long distances. Ever since last November when John Podmajeski, George Cameron, Vic and Linda Eshpeter, and I met at Alvord Desert (dry lake) we've been talking about doing a NWBPA group "thang" there. The trek is "on" for memorial day weekend, May 24 - 28, 1996! Some of us who were at Buggy Boogie Thang II or the Spring Buggy Blast have spread the word to many other buggiers outside of our region so we may see a sizable gathering of "buggy ninnies" as Brian Johnson coined the term for us. I think that Brian will even be there to try out buggy fever!

Alvord Desert is located in extreme southeastern Oregon, just north of a little town called Fields sitting near the Nevada border north of Denio, Nevada. The closest facilities, gas, store, cafe, and rooms are located in Fields which is about 13 miles south of the lake bed. More motels are available in Denio, about 18 miles south of Fields. Many of us will be camping and RV'ing right on the edge of the lake. There is a fresh water spring at one location on the edge of the playa and a hot springs complete with outdoor tubs at short distance away.

The playa, or dry hard pack area is about eight miles wide and sixteen miles long during the dry months from June through November. Due to an unusually heavy snowfall last winter in the Steens Mountains, towering to over 9600 feet just to the west, and some very warm weather during April almost half of the northern end of the playa now has some water standing. But the people at the Fields Store told me

today (5/8/96) that all of the southern end of the playa was dry and hard and that, with a little more warm weather, the rest would dry up quickly. The elevation of the dry lake is 4045 feet.

Five mile tacks, 15 mile reaching runs at over 40 MPH, disappearing over the horizon, warm winds, sun, 100 miles per day! Way too cool, dudes! Better be there!

aoxomoxoa,
Mike

(See Page 3 for directions to Alvord Dry Lake)

Sunset Beach Opener

by Morrie and Kelci Williams

The last weekend of the month was rapidly approaching and the April showers were not letting up. The forecasters predicted more rain and cold temperatures for our upcoming buggy weekend. But it had been six weeks since our last outing, so it was off to the beach "come hell or high water" (literally).

The Puffin Festival was being held at Cannon Beach on April 27th and 28th, and we thought, for a quick minute, about going there. But parking is difficult (especially for a big rig like ours) and there is no room on the beach for bugging. So the choice was simple - Sunset Beach would be the spot. Located between Seaside and Astoria in Oregon, this beach is wide and hard and is one of the best buggy beaches we have found so far.

We contacted our unofficial area representatives, Kurt and Linda Anderson, owners of Kites Northwest in Seaside, Oregon, for a report on the condition of the beach since the winter storms had blasted through. It had been a very harsh and wet winter, but the beach was well packed and wide, Kurt responded. And there were lots of little Portuguese man-of-wars washed up by the tides so no running around bare-footed. With the worst of the weather behind them, Kurt and Linda were ready to get out and play too.

Sunset Beach (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Friday night we enjoyed a good dinner and tantalizing conversation with Jan and Terry Yuncker from Ocean Kites in Long Beach, WA. After a good nights sleep at the campground, we awoke on Saturday morning (the 27th), to beautiful blue skies and temperatures in the 60's.

We read this as a good omen for the buggy day to come. The winds were a little light, around 10 to 12 mph, so large kites were the order of the day. We got off to an early start and as the tide went out, our fellow buggies began arriving. The group eventually included: Stu and TJ Murphy; Dave and Carol Lord; Dave and Susie Christensen; Kurt, Linda and Konrad Anderson (and friends); Gail and Alice McDonald, Ken (aka Smokey) and Mary Wilms; Harold (Max) Facticeau (?); and Phil Thompson. (Sorry if we missed anyone - next time be sure to come over and sign our book.) A few landsailers set up camp next to us too.

Lots of new toys were being played with for the first time - it was like the day after Christmas. Stu broke in his new Peter Lynn folding buggy and judging by the smile across his face, it must have been a success. Kurt, Gail, and Smokey were flying new Quadrifoil Competition kites and letting everyone have a try. They seem to be great for going upwind but do require an experienced flier. Carol even tried out the new buggy that Dave got for her at El Mirage last January. And I (Kelci) hooked up and flew with my new windsurfer harness - a Speed Seat by Da Kine - it was great!

Everyone had a wonderful time, riding up and down, weaving in and out, and playing touch and go with fellow buggies and landsailers. It got a little hairy now and then but there were no major mishaps and a good time was had by all.

As the sun started dropping and the tide rolled back in, Kurt and Linda capped the day off by hosting a barbecue on the beach with hot dogs and hamburgers. It was a great, unexpected treat that was really appreciated and enjoyed. Thanks again for a perfect end to a perfect day!

The gods weren't quite as generous to us on Sunday. The winds were only about 5 to 8 mph. We did the usual - sat around and talked about past glories - while waiting for the tide to go out and (we hoped) the wind to pick up. By about noon, I (Morrie) decided not to wait any more and pulled out our 10.8 m Peel. It was slow going at first, but once I started rolling, the speed

kept increasing. After a few runs up and down the beach, I was clocking 25 to 30 mph. - not bad for a light wind day. That was about it for bugging that day. The clouds were rolling in and the four hour drive home was looming over us.

It was a fantastic weekend with good friends and lots of fun. There are more adventures coming up soon. Come join us next time - you won't regret it!

Spring Break Buggy Blast

by Steve Millsbaugh

The Spring Break Buggy Blast for '96 gave me my first opportunity to buggy without continually thinking about turning, and it was FUN! The dry lake is a totally different experience from bugging at the beach, and I look forward to doing it again. One thing I wasn't quite prepared for was the effect of the surface on the equipment. Two days (really a few hours) of bugging, and I need new tires. Maybe the fact that I occasionally found myself sliding sideways had something to do with it.

Judy and I flew into Las Vegas on Sunday, and got out to Ivanpah on Monday. It was a rush to drive out the long access road and see the kites in the distance—plenty of them, zipping all about the place. I'll leave it to others to provide any sort of list of participants, but it was great to meet some new folks from all around the country, and share some serious running time with our friends in the NWBPA.

Judy and I had been in Las Vegas last Thanksgiving to meet some family members from L.A., and had gone out to Roach Lake with the buggy, but had only sat around and done the story swapping routine due to lack of wind the one day we made it out there. This trip to Ivanpah was much more satisfying, as our Lynn folding buggy finally got some prolonged use.

I haven't gotten around to installing my speedometer yet, so I'm not sure how fast I went, but I sure got the adrenaline pumping a few times. And I wasn't nearly as fast as some of the more experienced pilots. I'm sure others will give you some numbers to consider, but take my word for the fact that this was the real deal! If you're reading this newsletter, you probably

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Spring Break (continued)

(Continued from page 2)

are into bugging, so take my advice and make the trip to do it on a dry lake whenever you get the chance—you'll be glad you did. I sure am!

I only got two days of bugging in, as we had to return to Seattle on Wednesday. It looked like it was raining as we left, but I understand it got good again for the rest of the week. Thanks to Fran and Fritz Gramkowski for organizing the event, and thanks to Morrie and Kelci Williams, Dave Lord, and Steve Irby for their generosity in sharing equipment (and the occasional beer) with us.

Directions to Alvord Dry Lake

by Mike Eason

When John and I drove down last November we were on the road for eleven hours including stops for gas and food. We went by way of Springfield, Bend, and Burns. I recently visited a very handy web site that Morrie found, <http://www3.mapquest.com/>, and downloaded directions that are computer generated to be the shortest routes to Fields.

Directions from Everett, WA to Alvord via Fields, OR:
Distance: 624.5 miles (603.6 miles from Seattle)

Beginning at Everett, WA

- Go Southwest on I-5 for 10.6 miles to I-405
- Go South on I-405 for 18.5 miles to I-90
- Go East on I-90 for 99.4 miles to I-82 (East of Ellensburg, WA)
- Go Southeast on I-82 for 137.1 miles to Oregon
- Go Southeast on US 395 for 13.7 miles to I-84 (Hermiston, OR - watch out for cop!)
- Go East on I-84 for 21.1 miles to US 395 (Pendleton, OR)
- Go South on US 395 for 194.4 miles to State Rte 78 (Burns, OR)
- Go East on State Rte 78 for 1.5 miles to State Rte 205
- Go South on State Rte 205 for 110.2 miles to Fields, OR
- Go North on County Rd for 18 miles to Alvord Desert

Directions from Portland, OR to Alvord via Fields, OR:
Distance: 429.1 miles

Beginning at Portland, OR

- Go East on I-84 for 3.0 miles to I-205
- Go South on I-205 for 2.1 miles to US 26
- Go Southeast on US 26 for 111.6 miles to US 97 (Madras, OR)
- Go South on US 97 for 41 miles to US 20 (Bend, OR)
- Go East on US 20 for 141.7 miles to State Rte 78 (Burns, OR)
- Go East on State Rte 78 for 1.5 miles to State Rte 205
- Go South on State Rte 205 for 110.2 miles to Fields, OR
- Go North on County Rd for 18 miles to Alvord Desert

Directions from San Francisco, CA
to Alvord via Fields, OR

Distance: 520.5 miles

Beginning at San Francisco, CA

- Go Northeast on I-80 for 203.3 miles to Nevada (Reno, NV)
- Go Northeast on I-80 for 177.4 miles to US 95 (Winnemucca, NV)
- Go North on US 95 for 32.2 miles to State Rte 140
- Go Northwest on State Rte 140 for 68.9 miles to Oregon (Denio, NV)
- Go North on local road for 20.7 miles to Fields, OR
- Go North on County Rd for 18 miles to Alvord Desert

There are three good access points along the west side of the dry lake, all within about a five mile stretch of road centering at the access at the steel-drum mailbox of Carl Thomas. This access is best for RVs and vehicles without high ground clearance. If we are somewhere else we will leave directions at the mailbox or on the playa below Carl's house. Just follow his driveway past the house and straight onto the clay, unless it looks wet. Some of us will be there as early as Friday morning to check things out.

The Last Word

For a last minute update on the condition of the Dry Lake, contact Morrie Williams at:

home phone: (206) 788-6355 or
e-mail: morrie@eskimo.com

Letter from the President

by Morrie Williams

Getting away from the gray, wet, winter weather of Seattle was just what the doctor ordered. In January,, it was a first-time trip to El Mirage Dry Lake in California, and then to Ivanpah,CA/NV in March.

El Mirage was fantastic - loved those pucker bumps. And, whoa that wind. It was hard to find a kite small enough. My wife (Kelci) and I both had a great time and want to thank Corey Jensen for organizing the event along with everyone who helped make this journey a success.

Ivanpah was wonderful as usual. The weather and wind cooperated every day but one. I put on over 160 mi. (time for new tires) and hit speeds in excess of 45 mph.. Fran and Fritz Gramkowski and Scott Dyer deserve kudos for putting together this always anticipated outing. Looking forward to next year.

As the buggy season gets into full swing, I want you to know about some of the things happening with our club.

AKA sanction requests have been filed and the insurance certificates have been received. These requests cover the Spring Buggy Blitz at Alvord Dry Lake on Memorial Day weekend, our monthly fun fly at Wash-away Beach in Grayland, the Summer Buggy Blitz at Wash-away Beach in Grayland on the Fourth of July weekend, and the Fall Buggy Blitz at Alvord Dry Lake on Labor Day weekend.

We have produced a demo tape for the State Parks Commission to be used at their meeting for discussion of additional buggying areas. There are 4 additional areas which have been proposed as buggy sites. We'll keep everyone posted as to the status of these proposals.

Don't forget these upcoming events:

May 25-27 - Alvord Dry Lake, Fields, OR

June 7-9 - Ocean Shores, WA

July 4-7 - Wash-away Beach, Grayland, WA

August 18-24 - WSIKF, Long Beach, WA

August 31-September 2 - Alvord Dry Lake, Fields,OR

That's it for now, hope to see everyone out buggying!



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