April 1997 Volume 3, Issue 2



Ivanpah - Spring Buggy Heaven

by Morrie and Kelci Williams

The Spring Break Buggy Blast was held at Ivanpah Dry Lake on March 12th - 18th, 1997. Situated next to the newly named booming town of Primm, NV, Ivanpah is about 40 miles southwest of Las Vegas. This was one of the most enjoyable trips we've made to this haven for wind powered vehicle enthusiasts. Good friends along with cheap rooms, board, and booze and, best of all, wind every day (although one day the wind didn't come up until nearly sundown), combined to put this trip at the top of the pleasure scale.



The back of the pack (some of them at least)

Photo by Morrie Williams

This was the third year that Fran and Fritz Gramkowski hosted this event, and each year it gets bigger and better. There was no "official" count of the number of buggies, but at least one person claimed that there were more than 60 buggies on the lakebed.

The Northwest was well represented by Dave and Carol Lord, Mike Eason, Erv Crosby, Steve Irby, Jon and Charlotte Ellis, Kurt and Linda Anderson, Brett Kilekas and his Mom, Morgan Zimmerman, Gordon Wensley, Thora Hoban, Cal Yuen, Rob McDaniel and friend, Richard Ridgeway and friend, and Morrie and Kelci Williams.

Corey Jensen, Karen Gustavson, Steve Bateman, George Cameron, and Larry Navarro came over from their respective sections of California.

A large Northeast contingent included Fran and Fritz Gramkowski, Ray and Jeanne Merry, Dave and Patti Town, John and Eileen Tavolacci, Dave and Sherrie Arnold, John Smith, and Robert Cembalest.

In addition, we were joined by Dean Jordan and Freeman Register from Florida; Jeff Howard, Christen, and another friend from Oklahoma; Bruce Kenkel and Donald Murphy from Nebraska; Gary Williams from Missouri; Keith Anderson from Texas; Scott Dyer from Las Vegas; wanderers Ken "Smokey" Wilms and Walter Blasdell; and one international buggier from Ireland, John Rowley.

A big thanks to Scott Dyer for all he did to help us - especially for arranging for the porta-potti.

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We arrived in Las Vegas on Saturday morning, picked up our rental car, and headed for Scott Dyer's kite shop, BFK Sports - Las Vegas. This shop has a surprisingly good selection of kites in a small space. Scott is always great about taking care of his customers, so when you're in the area, stop in and see him, or if you need something, give him a call.

After we left the shop, we stopped by the local Albertson's grocery store and stocked up on all of the food, drink and other supplies we needed for the following week. This stop was well worth it since the selection and price of goods was so much better than what the Stateline convenience store has to offer.

Off we went to Buffalo Bill's in Primm, Nevada. We arrived too early to check-in, so we decided to grab a bite to eat. After lunch, we picked up our room keys and unloaded the car. Then off to the lakebed.

There were only five other buggiers on the lakebed and the wind was low. We unpacked our buggies, inflated the tires, and assembled them in the warm 75° sun. By the time we were done, it was time to load things back into the trunk and head in for dinner and bed -getting up at 4:00am is exhausting.

On Sunday, we were out on the lake by about 10:00am and the wind was already blowing at about 12 mph. This was going to be a gooood day! And sure enough, it was. The winds increased and were blowing at 10 - 18 mph all day. Fantastic.

The wind was low and the temperature was high on Monday morning when we arrived at 9:00am. But by noontime, both were up and we were off and buggying. It got even better by about 1:00pm when the winds steadied to between 9 - 12 mph. More people were arriving every day and there were now about 30 of us.

Upper 80° temperatures and low winds meant drinking lots of water and searching out shady spots on Tuesday morning. The arrival of the porta-potti took a load off of many of our minds (and other parts). By 2:00 the wind was up and it was another great day of buggying in the sun.

Ray and Jeanne Merry headed off with part of the group for a field trip to El Mirage dry lake on Wednesday and they met up with some others who were just coming in via that direction. They indicated that the wind was great and everyone put in a full day of riding the lakebed and pucker bumps.

The wind wasn't quite as good for those of us who

stayed at Ivanpah. There was no wind until noon, 6 - 10 mph from then until 4:00 pm, and 10 - 16 mph after that. Not really too bad.

On Thursday, the wind was blowing 8 - 11 mph by 10:00 am and increased to about 15 mph later in the day. Another great day of buggying our brains out.

The wind gods were postponed on Friday, so it was time to catch up with friends, take pictures, and hold kite stake buggy races. Just as we were thinking about packing it in, the wind picked up and off several of us went to buggy into the sunset. It was a beautiful evening and those who stayed had a wonderful time zooming around in the near dark.

Circuit races were held on Saturday. Five races were run and the best three out of five scores were used for the final results. Jeff Howard came in first, Fritz Gramkowski second, Steve Bateman third, John Smith fourth, Dave Arnold fifth, and Dean Jordan sixth. Fran announced set starting times for each of the races and it was up to each contestant to show up at the specified times. This method seemed to be both well liked and accepted by those involved.

On Sunday it was time for the 50 mile endurance race. Buggiers had to complete 20 laps around a 2.5 mile course. Although everyone was tightly grouped at the beginning of the race, after the first few laps the pack thinned out and there were several individual competitions for position. Twenty laps (or fifty miles) was a loooong way! After about the first ten laps, the pilots began to loose track of how many rounds were left. It seemed as though the race would go on forever.

Twenty-two people started the race and seventeen finished - very impressive! Many of those who started, didn't intend to finish the race, but once they had gone a certain number of laps, they didn't want to give up. The top four were John Tavolacci in first place, Steve Bateman second (by a hair), Morrie Williams third, and John Smith fourth. None of the top three racers stopped or changed kites and this seemed to be one of the keys to their success.

What a way to finish off an unbelieveable week of buggying. But it was time for us to pack things up in preparation for our trip home early the next morning. We can't wait until next time.

Speaking about next time, the dates for 1998 have already been set for March 11th -17th. Races will be held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. More about this outting in furure issues.

Buggy Adventure Down Under

by Karen Gustavson

Last November I packed-up my kites and buggy gear and headed off for what was being called the Son of Outback Buggy Safari '96 or SoOBS. The plan was to buggy on Australia's third largest lake, Lake Gairdner, in South Australia. After hearing accounts of the original Outback Buggy Safari held the previous year, I knew this would be a wild trip.

After a fifteen hour flight and a quick plane change in Sydney, reaching Melbourne was a welcome relief. I made the most of the short time I had to explore the city, and have to admit to filling a sink twice on that first day, obviously my first time in the southern hemisphere, to watch the water drain in reverse. I did manage to squeeze in some sightseeing between these important experiments.

The following afternoon Gary Lyons and Anne Marie Parry arrived and we were off in their Kite Factory van for the Madd Hatter's Kite Party in Bairnsdale, South Victoria. Shortly after arriving at Glenda and Bruce Nixon's house, we were off to a pub to meet-up with more kiters. This ritual was often repeated, pubs and Aussie's are a fine combination. The Kite Party was the site of that year's Australian Grand National Stunt Kite Competition, along with numerous other events, including a fun new event, single-line ballet.

All too quickly we were on the road again. Two days later we arrived in Adelaide, after traveling via one of the world's magnificent drives, "The Great Ocean Road". The scenery was spectacular. We stopped at the Coorong, a stretch of buggyable beach that extends 160 km along Australia's windblown west coast.

After an overnight stop in Adelaide, Anne Marie and I packed up the van, and jumped in for the final seven hour drive to Mt. Ive Station, which was to be our base while buggying at Lake Gairdner. As we headed north along the coast, we passed through large flocks of pink galahs, Australian cockatoos, and frequently roadside ponds were covered with black swans. We skirted the west end of the Flanders Ranges and made a final ice-cream stop in Iron Knob.

A final 2 hours on dirt track and we arrived at Mt. Ive Station in the heart of the Gawler Ranges, arguably the earth's oldest land. Mt. Ive is a working sheep station and the homestead of Joan and Mervyn Andrew. We were greeted by Joan and quickly seated in her kitchen for coffee and stories. Shortly we heard

cars returning, and over dinner preparations we met those who had been out enjoying a fine day of buggying.



Brenton buggies back toward camp. Photo by Karen Gustavson.

The following morning Anne Marie and I were eager to travel the final 30 km to Lake Gairdner. The track passed through very red land, we kept a open eye for the frequent kangaroos and emus. As we topped the last rise the vast white expanse of Lake Gairdner was startling and the place was unimaginably huge. Spread out past the horizon was the 4,351 sq.km of dry flat salt we had come to buggy. A short walk out onto the salt confirmed impressions, this was a strange and wonderful place. We jumped on our buggies and set off for a better look at things. I picked a medium- sized quad and was scooting about while my mind tried to un-boggle. Capillary action brought water to the salt's surface, the resulting spray of wet salt covered us, and our tires made a nice crunching sound as we criss-crossed the area near camp. Wind speed and direction varied rapidly, and amid so much white space this could be a bit disorienting, but I enjoyed getting to use all of the kites I'd packed along. Traction on the salt surface was quite good and future speed records may well come from Lake Gairdner.

While our days were full of buggying, our nights were well spent too. Chris Dearden brought the necessary knowledge and supplies and taught us to build marvelous hot air balloons. We truly enjoyed launching these flaming creations into the night sky. The balloons often drifted quite a distance before

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catching on fire or running out of fuel and crashing into the brush. When the downed balloons were located, they were quickly re-fueled and sent off again.

Our final day at the lake was wind filled and quite exciting. We had all been a bit conservative the first days while learning the area, but on this final day we had the highest winds of our trip and small groups set off to explore in all directions. Twice light showers passed over, the rain making a remarkable sizzle when hitting that much salt. This was a magical day of following the wind shifts and exploring the areas of the lake that opened up.



I catch a tandem ride with Brenton.

Photo by Allison Robin.

After farewells at Mt. Ive the following morning, as we bounded down the dirt track back toward Iron Knob, Anne Marie and I marveled at how accessible Lake Gairdner really is - the road was in great condition and with a simple map Mt. Ive had been easy to locate. Just as we decided that anyone interested in buggying Lake Gairdner could easily make arrangements to come via Adelaide, we noticed a problem. We were going to run out of gas well before regaining paved road or ice cream.



Allison Robin heads out with a Prism kite. Photo by Karen

"We are blessed with a little buggy paradise here in South Australia, and any time someone wants to come from overseas, we'll be happy to use that as an excuse to go buggy," offers Gary Lyons of The Kite Factory (238 Unley Rd., Adelaide ph.61-8-271-8155, kite.factory@Ace.net). Gary is also planning another Safari to Lake Gairdner for March 1998. This will be a great chance to attend the Adelaide Kite Festival and then head for the Coorong and Lake Gairdner. Also rumored are possible millennium happenings.

The Adelaide Kite Flier's Association site at http://www.on.net/clients/akfa has a section on buggying at Lake Gairdner.

Remember Memorial Day at Alvord

by Morrie Williams

Once again the NWBPA will be sponsoring the Spring Buggy Blitz at Alvord Dry Lake in southeastern Oregon on Memorial Day weekend. For those of you who haven't had the chance to buggy on a dry lakebed, this is a great opportunity.

For the few, the brave, the Buggy Kichi, the lake provides up to 128 square miles of buggyable surface. And, for the adventuresome, the eastern shore has some world class pucker bumps.

Alvord is about a 10 to 12 hour drive from the Seattle area. It's a long way, but it's about the closest dry lake to our area as compared to El Mirage or Ivanpah in California. Located about 20 miles north of Fields, Oregon, it is in the middle of nowhere.

If you come, plan to bring everything you need for camping on the lake or make reservations at the four room motel in Fields, OR (Fields Station, 541-495-2275). You won't find any casino/hotels like at Ivanpah or any good sized towns nearby like at El Mirage. This is roughing it!

Please Note:

The status of the lakebed is questionable at this time of year - there could be water on it thereby making it unbuggyable. I will contact the folks at Fields Station the weekend before Memorial Day to get an update and will post the status on rec.kites by May 19th. For those of you who don't have access to the net, call me at 425-788-6355 for the latest information.

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Directions to Alvord

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)

**See Note in next column

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) **See Note Below

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

**Note: Burns is the last place to get gas before you get to Fields, so it is a good idea to fill up here - especially if you are driving at night. There is a 24 hour gas station just before you reach the Burns city limits.

This is also the last area to catch some shut-eye, since there are no road shoulders and few places to pull over once you leave Burns.

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 western 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 not camped near Carl's place, we will leave directions at his mailbox or on the playa below his 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.

New Kites

by Morrie Williams

This year opens with some new offerings in the quadline foil arena.

Sky Tiger has come out with three new kites, a Hiaspect 10, a standard 12, and a Hi-aspect 15. These are all higher wind kites.

Kelci and I had the opportunity to fly the Hi-10 and Hi-15 and felt that they were much less "squirrelly" in high winds than other low aspect kites such as the Quad 25 and QuadTrac 1.5. We liked them so well, that we bought one of each while we were at Ivanpah in March.

Peter Lynn has come out with a new quad-line Peel. This is not the quad line Paua, but a lower aspect kite designed to be more forgiving, easier to manufacture, and more competitively priced.

We didn't get a chance to fly this kite, but others have said it is a very nice flying kite and much more forgiving than the standard Peel and Paua.

WSIKF and World Cup Williams

by Morrie Williams

This year's World Cup of Sport Kiting will be held in Long Beach, WA, September 22nd-28th, 1997. This festival is being broadened to include other aspects of kiting including single line events, kids fun, demonstrations, and buggying. Wind and tide allowing, there will be buggy competitions held including circuit, pursuit, and a downwind distance races.

Since WSIKF is the month before (August 18th-24th, 1997), we will use that opportunity to test the format planed for World Cup. We usually "try" to have both circuit and pursuit racing, but tides and wind conditions normally conspire against us.

Last year during the WSIKF festival, Dave Lord and Dave Christenson drove north to Ocean Park and buggied downwind to the main festival area. They had such a great time that we thought a downwind distance race might be just the ticket for this years festivals.

Depending on wind and tide conditions, we will try to run the distance races on Monday. But if that doesn't work out, we'll try again on Tuesday and, if necessary, on Wednesday. After that we'll give up until next time.

Westport Happenings

by Dave Lord

April has been a very good month for Buggying at Washaway Beach. The beach has continued to stay in excellent shape and the winds have been good. Three of the last four Sundays have been as good as it gets here. Nearly straight onshore winds of 12-14 mph allowed long runs clear to the end of Washaway Beach.

Last weekend, April 26 & 27, the Northwest Buggy Pilots had a fun fly here. Some of the attendees were Morrie and Kelci Williams, Dave and Susie Christenson, David and Jeannette Jam, Stu and T.J. Murphy, Steve and Judy Millspaugh, Warren Weston, Brett Kalekas, Doug Beanblossom, John Matteson, Mark Davis, Sharon Torres and two new guys, Jonathan Spence and Shannon Barry.

Saturday was a mediocre day with winds of 10 mph that started from offshore and gradually moved around until it was coming from the South. Mostly diagonal runs but fun anyway. Some of the die-hards even went out after dinner for an hour or so of good

buggying. Sunday was a super day with long runs parallel to the water all day. Winds of 12 to 15 mph were great for a wide variety of kites.

The Skytiger Hi-30 seemed to be the most ideal kite for the strong buggier. Buggy speeds in excess 25 mph were typical and with the Hi-30, 30 mph+ was typical. All in all a fun and exhausting day. Since it was so good, no one wanted to stop and rest.

This summer the Corps of Engineers are going to dredge off the tip of the Long Beach peninsula and dump the spoils in the channel on the north side of Willapa Bay. This is being done to halt the erosion at Washaway and along the highway just south. Hopefully the beach at the south end of our buggy area will get larger. We will just have to wait and see.

I am already counting the days until we head for Alvord Dry lake.

Dave Lord --- The Ancient One Check out my web page for information on Kites, Kite Technology, Kite Buggying, and Land Yachting. http://www.techline.com/~lord

Letter from the President

Looking ahead at this years buggy season, we have a lot of places to go during a fairly short period of time. In May we go to Alvord Dry Lake in Oregon. In June we go to Long Beach, WA. In July we go to Washaway Beach, WA. August means Long Beach, WA for WSIKF and then Alvord Dry Lake in Oregon. September we're back in Long Beach, WA for the World Cup of Sport Kiting.

Suddenly the season is almost over and it's time to get ready for another winter in the cabin. Is it a sign of aging that time seems to go so fast that there is never enough of it to do everything you want to do?

In 1998 the Kite Trade Association will hold it's annual convention in San Diego, California. After the convention, there will be a get together at El Mirage Dry Lake for Buggy Boogie Thang 3. This should be the second or third week of January.

The Spring Break Buggy Blast will be held March 11-17 at Ivanpah Dry Lake near Primm, Nevada.

It may seem like these two events are a long time away, but before we know it the summer will be gone.

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It's time to schedule vacation time for next year, so don't miss out on some GREAT buggy events.

Starting with the next issue of the newsletter, we hope to feature articles by buggy builders for those of you who would like to try your hand at building your own buggy. The plan is to start with Ken Serack and his PVC buggy followed by Dave Patterson. If you have any suggestions for builders who we could feature, drop me a line or give me a call.

Remember that we always need articles for the newsletter. The cutoff date for submissions for the next newsletter is June 15, 1997.

OUTLAW BUGGIER

by Mad Max (a.k.a. Max Jackson)

As we went through Aberdeen the rain stopped and the sun began to shine. It looked like a great start to our kite flying and buggying adventure at Ocean Shores. Little did I know that our trip would be darkened by the great Grandma Bust.

We hit the beach at about 11:30 AM, just after low tide. Lots of hard sand, a good wind, and plenty of room - what fun we're going to have! After two nice runs, I encouraged grandma to give it a try. With some hesitation, she said she would. She flew the four meter quad for a while and then got into the buggy. After launching the kite, down the beach she went. I jumped into the car to follow her and by the time I caught up with her, the police were there explaining to her the non-motorized vehicle law.

The officer had a funny look on his face, not expecting a grandma to be the perpetrator. I offered bail money, if she wished to protest further. You know, it's just too hard to replace a wife, a grandma, and an outlaw buggier.

P.S. We are going to Grayland to fly and buggy in two weeks, in case anyone would like to alert the authorities!!

Pin Update

The design for the pin is still being hammered out. We are working on a font style and colors and once they have been decided upon, we should be able to start getting bids for production. Sorry for the delay, but you know how it is when you get five heads instead of one - you get five opinions too.

State Parks Status

by Kelci Williams

In April I contacted Alan Wolslegal of the Washington State Parks Department to find out the status of the proposal to open some additional Washington State beaches to wind-powered vehicle use.

He indicated that his department had submitted a request to the Head of Operations to allow sand sailers to use the beaches in Ocean Park, Long Beach and Grayland which are closed to vehicle traffic during part of the year. Their proposal did not include the beach in the Ocean City area (which had been discussed at a meeting in November, 1996) for various reasons.

Mr. Wolslegal said that he hoped that the request would be included on the docket of the next meeting which is scheduled for May 30, 1997. If not, it should be discussed at the July 13th meeting. Sometime after it has been decided upon, we should be notified.

Keep your fingers crossed. I'll let you know as soon as we hear something. In the meantime, we can still get a permit and use Washaway beach in Grayland.

Classifieds

Force Ten 4.4 meter quadline kite: includes handles, bag, instructions, upper body harness & video. Is in great shape - \$220

Neil Trelenberg 11451 6th Ave Richmond, B.C. V7E-3E1 CANADA (604)274-7530 neilbrg@deepcove.com

We have parts odds and ends from when we were building our own buggies. Wheels, rear axles, front forks, down tubes and other miscellaneous parts. Contact us.

Fritz & Fran Gramkowski High Fly Kite Co. frang@voicenet.com (609)429-6260 or (609)429-0142 FAX

- Force10 4.4 m (48sq ft.) quadline kite \$200 OBO
- Quadtrac 6m quadline kite \$250
- Quadtrac 9m quadline kite \$325

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Mark your calendars for these events:

May 24-26 - Spring Buggy Blitz, Alvord Dry Lake (near Fields), Or.

June 14-15 - Buggy Experiments, World Kite Museum, Long Beach, Wa. (this is still up in the air)

July 11-13 - Summer Buggy Blitz, Washaway Beach, Grayland, Wa.

For more information about any of these events, contact *Morrie or Kelci Williams* at: 425-788-6355 or morrie@eskimo.com.



BOOBS Banter

by Kelci Williams

BOOBS were bustin' out all over at the Spring Break Buggy Blast at Ivanpah Dry Lake in March. Joining the unofficial ranks of the unbridled were Patti Town, Jeanne Merry, Sherri Arnold, Eileen Tavolacci, Carol Lord, Linda Anderson, Thora Hoban, and Karen Gustavson.

Don't be left hanging - be a BOOBS supporter too!!

NWBPA Membership Application NWBPA, c/o Kelci Williams, Treas., 18030 NE 155th Pl., Woodinville, WA, 98072				
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