

Branches

2015: 1 March, 2015

Newsletter of the



Calendar:

- * BOD Meeting Mar. 14
- * BOD Meeting Apr. 11
- * Valley Fest May 1-3
- * BOD Meeting May 16
- * Mayhem May 23
- * Team Challenge Aug. 16-22

2015 Board of Directors

Here's our Board of Directors for 2015 listed with their offices and committee responsibilities. Their contact information is available on our website at www.tennesseetreetoppers.org.

In their first significant action of 2015, the BOD has directed the Bylaws Committee to publish a general membership referendum regarding the question of paraglider pilot membership in the TTT. Please find this ballot and associated articles in this issue of *Branches*.

You're welcome to attend the meetings. We want to know what you think. Besides, there's regularly work to be done, and you're welcome to some of that too.

Rob Dallas, president

James Anderson, vice president

Lucas Ridley, secretary

Michael Bradford, treasurer

Eric Garden

Tim Cocker, historian

Buddy Cutts, membership, website

Tom Dwelley

Erik Grabowski

Ollie Gregory, competition

Clark Harlow, maintenance/
grounds

Bryson Harper, social

Rick Jacob, safety, PG liaison

Dan Shell, bylaws

Marco Weber

**PARTY AT HENSON'S
WITH THE
TENNESSEE TREE TOPPERS**

**MAYHEM
MAY 23, 2015**



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Bylaws Referendum

In this issue of *Branches*, you'll find a TTT Bylaws Referendum regarding the admittance of paraglider pilots to our ranks. This issue has been debated by the BOD for a while, and now they've directed the Bylaws Committee to present the decision to you. You may read some of the opinions here. Other arguments have been presented on TTTFlyMail and the TTT Facebook page, both of which you'll find linked from

the TTT website at www.tennesseetreetoppers.org.

Once you've formed your opinion, please vote using the included ballot or the online SurveyMonkey ballot, for which you'll receive an invitation if we have your email address.

If you're withholding judgement, you may want to wait until after our roundtable discussion immediately

preceding the Mayhem party. Final ballots will be collected and tallied immediately following the roundtable discussion. We should have the results by the time the Band (Tree Topper Phillip Dabney and the Birmingham Blue Devils) takes their first break.

Whatever your method or opinion, please vote. This is an important decision for our club, and your voice matters!

Tweaking the TTT Team Challenge *by Ollie Gregory,*

Competition Committee Chair

Team Challenge is evolving! We are going to have a Free Flight Team Challenge (TC) this year. We will combine paragliding and hang gliding in the 2015 event. As always, the emphasis will be on having fun while learning as much as possible in a week of flying and hanging out with some of the most knowledgeable mentors in the sport of Free Flight. The TC has moved to August this year with expectations of warmer days and stronger thermals so pilots can try for their personal bests!

The Team Challenge starts Sunday, August 16th and runs through Saturday, August 22nd. We will continue our classic format with an A team leader mentoring the B and C level pilots on his team in the art of XC flying. In our more evolved format, the ideal team will be a team of four, with two A pilots to help their C or B pilots get as much out of a week of flying as possible.

Our format challenges each level of pilot skill while keeping the teams flying together and retrieve reasonable. All teams will help with task committee and safety committee responsibilities so everyone will know the latest developments and become as involved as possible. To keep things lively, we expect to have one open distance day, if the weather permits, so pilots can go for their personal bests.

Our rule guru, Eric Carden, has created a well thought out formula to score teams as a whole rather than as individuals. Paragliding teams will compete against hang gliding teams and mixed para/hangie teams will be encouraged as well. We can all learn from each other! This format pushes A pilots to focus even more on helping out the B and C pilot for the best team

score. We expect Mike Barber, Dennis Pagen, and many highly experienced XC and competition level mentors will be helping us with the team teaching format and evening lecture series. Many of the best in hang gliding and paragliding will be doing their best to help us have the best week of free flight education possible.

Free flying is encouraged before and after the competition launch times! We hope to have the sky filled with paragliders and hang gliders! We encourage everyone to come out to watch the flying and enjoy our evening

meals and seminars. If we have a rain day, we will be in seminar mode all day, so bring your notebooks.

The Henson Gap site is a very pleasant wooded park like area with lots of nice campsites and great amenities. The famous TTT radial ramp is there for the best launch experience imaginable for hang gliders and the paragliding launch is only a couple hundred yards away. The same arrangement of near by launches is on the opposite side of the Sequatchie Valley at our Whitwell sites. See the FRP on the Tree Topper website for details.

FOOD! Bargain onsite breakfasts, lunches and dinners are available so no one will need to miss out on any of the great talks and seminars. Nightly seminars with formal talks

and informal debriefings led by Mike Barber and other experienced competition level pilots will keep us learning after every flying day. If brains seem likely to explode from all the information, pilots can hike, bike, visit local parks or check out Chattanooga for a wide variety of pastimes.

We'll wrap it all up with a fun TTT awards party with a live Band. Sign up is quick and easy at www.tennesseetreetoppers.org. We expect to fill up, so sign up (and pay) to hold your spot now!

TTT @ Valley Fest 2015 *by Dan Shell,*

PR Committee Chair

The TTT presence at Valley Fest last year was a huge success, so the PR Committee is making plans to do it all again. This year the Dunlap Spring celebration will be May 2 and 3, with the setup party in afternoon and evening of Mayday, Friday, May 1. The BOD has already agreed to award bounties for flights into the "Valley Fest LZ" (Pine St & Wagner St.) in downtown Dunlap.

Following last year's successful format, we'll award \$50.00 for the first five landings and an additional \$50.00 for the closest spot landing. Of course, we'll still have grilled hot burgers (maybe better) and ice cold beverages in the special LZ pilot hospitality area. Let us know if you're coming early to help with setup, as a little extra hospitality may be in order.

Join us for the annual Spring fling in the *Hang Gliding Capital of the East* for good music, fun, flying, and maybe even a few extra bucks.



Jeff Laughrey on approach to the Valley Fest LZ.

TTT Membership Applications *by Buddy Cutts,*

Membership Committee Chair

Members, please be mindful when filling out your membership applications to be certain the information is legible. I know a lot of times you are wanting to fly and in a hurry, but the information on the application is how we keep you up to date with the TTT and how we contact you for important issues that you need to vote on! It is also a legal document/ waiver and should contain emergency contact information. Hopefully, we will never need the emergency information, but in the event we do it needs to be accurate! You can always submit an updated app at any time, or send an email to the Web Master and I will update the info asap!

Thank You!

BOD Minutes. January 10, 2015.

Meeting called to order at 9:10 AM CST

BOD Members Present: James Anderson, Michael Bradford, Eric Carden (via telecon), Tim Cocker, Buddy Cutts, Rob Dallas (via telecon), Eric Grabowski, Ollie Gregory, Clark Harlow, Bryson Harper, Rick Jacob, Lucas Ridley, Dan Shell, Marco Weber, Kenny Sandifer (Late).

BOD Members Absent: None.

Member Present: Tom Dwelley, James Dean

Guests Present: Sharon Tubbs

James Anderson expressed our thanks to the club members (Michael Bradford, Dan Shell) who delivered the TTT Christmas favorite neighbor gifts. Thanks to Sharon for the warm clubhouse.

Officer Elections:

President Nominations: Rob Dallas & James Anderson. Rob Dallas was elected.

Vice President Nominations: James Anderson,

Buddy Cutts. James Anderson elected.

Treasurer Nominations: Michael Bradford. Michael elected.

Secretary Nominations: Lucas Ridley. Lucas elected.

Committee Nominations: All those present who served last year are willing to continue.

Social Committee: Bryson Harper.

Awards Committee: Marco Weber.

Committee Reports:

Competition: Ollie asked for volunteers for TC prep & organization. Eric Carden, Lucas Ridley, Bryson Harper, Erik Grabowski, Tom Dwelley, Dan Shell & Marco Weber all volunteered to form the 2015 Comp Committee.

Membership: Buddy reported that we currently show 137 members on our website.

Safety, PG: Rick Jacob reported on new PG NE slope launch at Whitwell. Might be ok for HG too.

Treasurer: Michael reported that all is well with our TTT finances. As of Jan 10 after all property taxes and a Preservation Trust payment made and per the bylaws a \$6,000 deposit made to to the TTT LZ fund, there is \$4,074.50 in Checking & PayPal combined. The TTT LZ fund now stands at \$70,416.65.

Bylaws, Social, and PR: Dan Shell spoke about ValleyFest 2015 and how successful the 4th of July float was this past year. He needs a wide screen TV, tables, chairs etc. for our 2015 presence.

History/Archives: Tim reported that the USHPA HG/PG magazine is collecting historic/folkloric photos for an upcoming article.

The "BOD Confidential" discussion group on Yahoo was discussed for the benefit of our new BOD members.

Kenny Sandifer arrived and announced that his plans for the coming year will make it difficult to serve on the BOD so he is choosing to submit his resignation now. Ollie nominated Tom Dwelley (present and willing) to take Kenny's place. Seconded and passed.

Maintenance: Clark reported on various activities accomplished, planned and in progress. Asked if there is one item he would like to get done this year it would be to raise the weather station anemometer for more accuracy. Work party discussed.

December Meeting Minutes were read aloud by Rob and accepted as is.

Old Business:

Whitwell LZ discussed. Rick reported on discussion within the Whitwell City Council about a possible dedicated PG landing field. Lucas volunteered to attend the next meeting.

LZ vandalism discussed. An action item was taken by the Maintenance committee.

Scooter Tow: TTT friend and SPP member Tom Phillips has been working to refurb the club's scooter tow rig. Discussion.

TTT & PG courtship discussed. The TTT bylaws currently do not allow PG members to join. Should the status quo continue this year or should the bylaws be amended to allow PG pilots to join the TTT? Some pros and cons were discussed. The PGs belong to the Southern Paraglider Pilots Club (SPP) are flying in the Sequatchie Valley from sites that are not owned by nor regulated by the TTT. We currently have

Continued p. 6. See BOD Minutes.

TTT 2015 Bylaws Referendum

by Dan Shell, Bylaws Committee Chair

Several years ago there were early experiments paragliding (PG) in the Sequatchie Valley with launches from the Henson Gap ramp. It was quickly obvious to the experts that the typical hang gliding cliff launches in our area aren't really ideal for PG. Their exploration and experimentation didn't end there, and it wasn't long before the Southern Para Pilots (SPP) paragliding club opened a satisfactory launch overlooking Ketner Cove near Powell's Crossroads. Though aviation was accomplished there by the SPP successfully for a few seasons, it was eventually lost through sale of the property. During this time, one of our own pioneer pilots, long-standing Tree Topper, and BOD member Rick Jacob began his own experiments, leading to a PG rating and increasing airtime under boneless wings. Rick's interest led to the development of more secure PG launches on properties adjacent to TTT launches at Henson and Whitwell. By all accounts, these work very well and are within reach of LZs owned and/or regulated by the TTT.

At this time, successful PG operations next door were (and are) regulated by the SPP, while TTT and SPP share facilities and launch access under a reciprocal agreement. The SPP welcomes TTT members to use their adjacent launches if and when preferable. The TTT, in turn, welcomes the SPP members to use our facilities, including parking, pavilion, bathhouse, clubhouse, and LZ.

Not long after we began to see the stringwings overhead (they sink pretty good!) in our neighborhood, PG pilots began to express an interest in TTT membership and site regulation. In August of 2013, several PG pilots attended the TTT BOD meeting with an appeal for admission to membership. Of course, the issue was debated, perhaps a bit warmly, which anyone accustomed to our meetings will recognize is par for the

course. Pros and cons were exchanged in an eventually circular conversation.

The advantages are immediately obvious. Increased membership always means increased revenue for the TTT, better funding our significant budget and savings for a Whitwell LZ. PG pilots are numerous and tend to be younger. Willing and able young muscle can sure make a difference in a work party. Less obvious advantages are related to relative youth and frequency of flights. They tend to fly more than HG pilots, offering a greater buzz of activity about the place generally and increasing the probability of



finding a timely wire crew. They're always willing to help.

Important questions were also raised quickly. What would be the nature of TTT's role in regulation of members flying adjacent sites we do not own? How would this change TTT membership composition and what effect would this have on priorities and decisions? Could paragliding concerns override hang gliding concerns? As a committee member summarized, "They could buy an LZ in which we couldn't land."

The argument had sustained several revolutions when we finally tabled the motion

with the notion that, though the shotgun wedding was unsuccessful, a longer courtship could lead somewhere.

That somewhere could be here. In one of their first actions of 2015, the new TTT BOD directed the Bylaws Committee to draft a revision to include paraglider pilots in its membership and paragliding activities in its mission. They approved the draft in the February meeting and directed the committee to present it to you. The draft is presented in this issue of *Branches* with a ballot for your convenience. As you'll read in the Bylaws, the Bylaws may only be revised with *your* approval.

The advantages are still obvious. Questions remain. Some may be imponderable. Treasurer Michael Bradford and former BOD members Kathy Lee and Channing Kilgore offer their concerns for your consideration in the facing and following op. ed. pages.

Please consider this important question carefully. You can read more discussion on TTTFlyMail and Facebook, both of which are linked from our website. If you're confident of your opinion, unlikely to be dissuaded from it, and ready to vote, use the enclosed ballot. If we have your email address on file, you have already been sent an invitation to vote online. You'll also find the proposed change and a printable ballot at our website: www.tennesseetreetoppers.org. If you'd like to talk it over and hear some more opinions before making up your mind, you may prefer to attend the pre-party roundtable discussion at Mayhem. We'll pass the ballot box immediately following the discussion for one last opportunity to let your voice be heard. Then stick around for the party. We'll try to have an announcement of the results when the Band takes a break.

However you choose to accomplish it, please contribute your voice through your vote so that we may confidently execute the genuine will of an advised and considered membership!

Comments on Bylaws Referendum by Channing Kilgore

I've read the emails from those who wish to have the paragliders included in the club, no strings attached (almost a pun)! Some of the below is wash, rinse, repeat, but it does come from a slightly different angle on each, so pardon me being redundant by saying things over and over! :)

First let me say what this is NOT about for those who are expressing concerns about paras potentially joining the club. No one on either side of the debate is biased against any certain type of wing anyone chooses to fly nor is there any concern territorially if they fly in the same areas as the HGs do or if we all land in the same fields. I look forward to flying with all.

No one is making claims about who has been here longer, done more for the club, could do more the club, etc.. Every Tree Topper has contributed what they can with the resources, time, and abilities they have, which we all acknowledge and of which we are very appreciative.

What the concerns are about:

Land issues

The PGs own no land. The TTT owns land. Where are PGs going to get their land and who is going to pay for it?! Regarding the up keep of the land, again, there is no land the PGs own. This is part of the issue. Right now they fly from neighboring adjacent property. But is the land they are currently using going to continually be available? Can that be guaranteed? Or if it's sold to them, who pays for it? Who can guarantee it will be sold to them? If it's not sold to them, then the land next to both HG sites may become unavailable to them. Then there is no guarantee of 'extra help' around the club or on our current LZs. Why? Because no PG is going to just come to spend time at the clubhouse if no flying is available next door and they have their own launch/lz elsewhere they must tend to. So the only possible up keep PGs can and will help with is if they can keep the land they currently have by leasing or buying it. We can't argue to include them so we can have more help around the place because that is no present guarantee due to their land situation. The argument for including paras brings more help, finances, work, camaraderie, etc only works under the assumption that they can acquire the land next to both of the HG sites. This is not a given unless there is something cooking that's a guaranteed deal for acquiring this land the rest of us need to know about. (Such as how, when, where, what are the terms of the deal/potential deal? Are there any connections with or seeking to involve the TTT? If something is even potentially brewing, why has this not been made known to the membership at large?)

Assets, especially Launch/LZ fund

Again, since PGs don't own any land, how will they secure land they need to launch and possibly land in if it's not the land they are currently leasing? Who is going to financially foot the bill? What about future acquirement of a new HG launch and/or LZ? How is this going to be decided? Will PG interests get to vote down the buying of a HG only good site because they can't also use it and are then giving money to the TTT? Will the BOD only decide on this issue of how launch/lz assets are used? Or will the club membership get to weigh in? What if the club decides to include the PGs as full members, can we at least get everyone to agree on a few things?

Buy your PG land before joining the club or commit to buying the land, both launch and/or landing field, with money raised APART FROM any TTT funds already in existence or designated. If they can buy the leased land they are using now, then no need to buy an LZ anywhere. But if they can't secure the leased land, then they ought to commit to buying their own launch and lz completely apart from TTT money.

No future disruption from PGs to TTT buying a HG only launch site if one comes available. This is not to say we don't want to find a site that can use both PG and HG. But if a good launch and/or LZ comes open for HGs, then the HG progression shouldn't be stopped because PGs can't launch from it.

TTT BOD should always by default be comprised of simple majority of ACTIVE HG pilots of at least an 8 HG member majority of the 15 possible BOD members. If there is not even a potential issue of any of the assets being misused or redirected anytime ever in the future via majority PG membership/BOD vote, then there shouldn't be an issue of concern with always maintaining a default HG majority on the BOD.

Some final concerns:

I'd like to propose that no issue be voted on one way or the other as regarding their inclusion into TTT until PGs own their own land from their own funds. We need to see how this is going to work out before we put the whole TTT club, assets, and membership on the line in any shape or form.

In relation to the BODs January decision to ask membership to move forward to include PGs only or not in the TTT and then the details will be worked out, I believe this is exactly the opposite approach that needs to be done. The membership needs to know the details of how all of this will work BEFORE we can make an informed decision and vote. We don't need to "pass the bill so we can then see what's in (or going to be put in!) the bill."

BOD Minutes *(cont. from p. 3)*

a reciprocal agreement to allow SPP PGs to use our facilities but our launches are not generally considered safe for PG. Should the TTT take over management of the PG sites? Should the SPP PGs be charged to use our facilities? There are fears that eventually PG pilots could outnumber HG pilots and take over the TTT and raid our bank accounts. Ollie made a motion to form a "Courtship Committee" called the "Sequatchie Valley Free Flight Committee" to make recommendations to the BOD. Seconded & passed. Rob volunteered to chair the committee. Eric Carden, Ollie, Eric Grabowski, Bryson, Lucas, & Dan volunteered to be on the committee.

Michael made a motion to amend the bylaws to add the words "and Paragliding" to the Bylaws where necessary thus making it possible for PG pilots to join the TTT. Seconded. This will require a membership referendum. The motion passed.

Ollie made a motion to revise the bylaws to clarify the requirement for USHPA membership to initially join the TTT. This requires a membership referendum. Discussion Seconded & passed. It became clear upon bylaws review that this is already a requirement; therefore no action is required on this motion. Never mind.

Buddy brought up the old issue of what is the definition of BOD "attendance" (does one have to be physically present at the meeting or can teleconference attendance count) and how that presence counts toward a BOD quorum. Discussion. Ollie made a motion to count BOD members in attendance via teleconference as present and have their vote count toward a quorum. Motion seconded. Passed.

New Business:

Proposed purchase by the Club of a wide screen monitor and DVD player? There is a clear need: Team Challenge presentations and launch/landing videos could be used during BOD meetings, Valley Fest TTT presence, etc.

Next Meeting: Saturday February 14th 2015, same bat time & place. Come prepared to make your Committee budget requests.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 CST.

Rob Dallas

Comments on Bylaws Referendum *by Kathy Lee*

Hello all Tree Toppers!

I have served on the Board of Directors (BOD) for the Tennessee Tree Toppers (TTT) for about 23 years. I was elected to the BOD a year after my husband Steve was elected back in the early '90s. For any of you who do not know us, Steve and I have lived up by the ramp since 1989. We love the hang gliding club and the community. We enjoyed all the years of donating time and money to the club. The flying is just the icing on the cake and what bonds us all together in this club. We both still fly and love flying with everyone and any wing.

About a year and a half ago Steve and I accepted the responsibility of caregivers for his mother. She was in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's and required a lot of time and attention, so Steve and I asked to be relieved of BOD service. So, it was no surprise to us that we were not re-elected to the BOD for 2015, for which we were grateful.

There is a serious matter at hand to which I'd like to draw your attention.

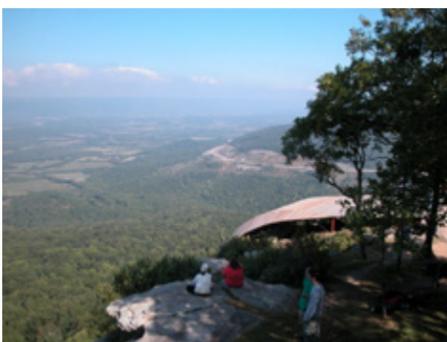


Photo by Miller Stroud.

It is the matter of voting in paragliding (PG) pilots to join our club. The present BOD has approved a referendum to change our current bylaws to allow paraglider pilots to join our hang gliding club. I am against this for reasons you'll find

listed below. As you read these reasons, please keep in mind that STEVE & KATHY LEE love all forms of flying and ALL WHO FLY ANYTHING.

1. The TTT owns no paragliding launches.
2. The PG pilots cannot launch from any TTT site safely and consistently.
3. The TTT was founded in 1977 and was built and has acquired all their assets by hang glider pilots.
4. The TTT is financially healthy and stable.
5. Paraglider pilots outnumber hang glider pilots. If you were voting on an issue, where would your best interest lie?
6. Why do the paraglider pilots want to join the TTT? The dues are higher and they can't even use our sites.

7. Disapproval of the referendum (no to PG in TTT) does NOT deprive anyone of airtime, or anything, for that matter (except TTT membership).

8. How will the TTT govern and regulate paragliding sites we do not own?

9. If something happens to paragliding launches adjacent to TTT property in the future, where does that leave the paragliding TTT members? What will happen if they have the majority of votes?

10. If the paraglider pilots are members of the TTT flying from non-regulated, non TTT owned sites, what is the TTT legal liability in the event of PG accidents.

The paragliding arrived next door when a land owner who owns property adjacent to the TTT made paragliding launches on his properties at Henson Gap and Whitwell. When the PG pilots arrived, the TTT welcomed them with open arms, allowing them use of all TTT amenities such as campgrounds, parking, bathhouse, clubhouse, and the LZ. They belong to the Southern Para Pilots PG club, paying dues which I think are less than ours.

This is not an ego trip or a superior/inferior wing performance issue. Neither is it an issue of who controls the club's direction, as no one in the club has more rights than anyone else. Personally, I am not in conflict and harbor no ill feelings over these new launches or the person who organized them. Quite the opposite. I love that person and I love the new activity with the paras. This is not a personality conflict. For me, it's all about the assets and regulating these sites that WE DO NOT OWN. The unknowns are what I am concerned about and no one can answer these, but the way the club is run right now promises a known and solid future. Why risk that now with so many unknowns?

As dues paying club members, everyone has the same equal voting rights, camping rights, and flying rights. You own this club. You own all the assets. You are the TTT. The BOD works for you! Silence is acceptance and if you do not vote or voice your opinion, it is the same as accepting whatever happens. So please, I beg you to voice your opinion and vote, whether for or against it. Whatever your decision, PLEASE VOTE!!! If your membership isn't current, please renew your membership and vote.

You can get more involved with this issue by going to www.tennesseetreetoppers.org, clicking on the FaceBook and/or TTTFlyMail page and reading and/or contributing to the ongoing debate. The BOD meets at 9:00 AM CT on the second Saturday of every month and members are always welcome. Most of all, please come and fly! Thank you for reading this.

Kathy Lee

Mayhem *by Bryson Harper.*

Social Committee Chair

The 2015 version of the Tennessee Tree Toppers' annual party is sure to be a blast. Come one, come all to hear the discussion surrounding the potential evolution of the club. An open forum will precede the party, with a chance to hear and provide opinions surrounding the proposed bylaws changes to include paraglider pilots in the free flight club that we all love so much.

The Blue Devils will then keep the party hot as the festivities continue. If you haven't heard this band yet, you've been missing out. Barbecue, with pot luck galore, to fill the growling stomachs of all the hungry pilots. Friends and family are invited and encouraged to attend. What better way to spend your Memorial Day weekend than with flying, food and great music?

Spread the word, and we'll see you on the mountain!



Lining up for launch at Whitwell during Team Challenge.

Photo by Miller Stroud.

Miller Stroud's view of the valley from 7975! Photo by Miller Stroud.



Comments on Bylaws Referendum *by Michael Bradford*

I can't find a relevant difference between good hang glider pilots, good paraglider pilots and good pilots who swing both ways.

I have considered the positions which oppose that theory. I've thought through the scenarios described wherein paraglider pilots obtain democratic advantage in numbers (*theory answers: 'so what, why not?'*) and performance advantages (*theory answers: 'tell me how, and why, to stop that.'*) and "our property" (*theory answers: 'the meaning of "our" is the crux of the biscuit.'*). This is not a proposed merger, or an arranged marriage where equity in land, or a dowry is at issue. It's simply about who we are. I don't think anything is being kept from the membership. But if you think the board should seek to preserve or regulate paraglider launches, I think you will need to vote yes. Egg < > Chicken.

The Bylaws referendum strips the question to the bone and lets us answer from our hearts who "we" are. TTT's sweat and treasure will

follow your heart. Remember, only hang glider pilots are voting this time. Our club is poised in the decade ahead to double down on the beautiful legacy our founders and generations have provided, to build and further protect it, for countless generations ahead.



by Harry Martin

I still can't find a **relevant** difference between good hang glider pilots, good paraglider pilots and good pilots who swing both ways.

And relevant, in my opinion, would be any issue which allows any member, or group of members to infringe the rights of another, or the responsibilities we all share. Everything we need to assure against that is in the Bylaws, with or without this revision. Hang gliding and paragliding have common history, common challenges, a common national association and common airspace. We have parallel self regulated competency programs and we're known to often drink from the same kegs and spigots. I can't find a **relevant** difference between good hang glider pilots, good paraglider pilots and good pilots who swing both ways.

By now I don't need my theory to tip the scales of my vote. In two years of getting to know the SPP pilots and others from around the world who have been transiting, and migrating to the Sequatchie valley region, I can't find a **relevant** difference between good hang glider pilots, good paraglider pilots and good pilots who swing both ways.

It just looks comfortable. I suppose at some point I must have laid me down to sleep in my pod one night, rolled over upright and awoke the next morning as one who swings both ways.

And now, I can't find **any** difference **at all** between good hang glider pilots, good paraglider pilots and good pilots who swing both ways.

If I needed more reasons to justify my affirmative vote, there are many. My only apprehensions revolve around not what might be lost by voting yes, but what we discard if we choose to hang apart.

If you are on the fence for this referendum, I'd think you in the minority. Regardless, please come to the Mayhem roundtable meeting on May 23, 2015 at Henson Gap.



Kelly Keener prepares to launch as Wes Johnson aerially awaits. Photo by Michael Bradford.

Tennessee Tree Topper Bylaws 2015 Proposed Revision

Article I: Name and Purpose

Section 1

The name of the organization is the Tennessee Tree Toppers, Inc. (TTT).

Section 2

The primary purposes of the TTT are to excel in the study and the sport of hang gliding ***and paragliding**, to promote organization and camaraderie between all members, to promote family fly-ins and competition for the flying of hang gliders **and paragliders**, to select pilots for national and international competition, to own launch and landing sites, and to promote safe and mature flying practices as outlined by USHPA Part 100 and FAR Part 103.

Article II: Membership

Section 1

The membership of the TTT consists of the individuals whose dues have been collected and applications have been approved by the board of directors (BOD). All privileges and benefits associated with full membership proceed unrestricted unless otherwise specified by the BOD as provided in Article II, Section 2 of these bylaws. Current USHPA or HPAC membership is required for flight privileges.

Section 2

A membership may be suspended or revoked for violation of a rule of the TTT or for conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the TTT. Such action will require a unanimous minus one vote of the members of the BOD present at a scheduled meeting after notification of the charges and the time and place for their review by the BOD has been delivered to the member in question at least seven days prior.

Section 3

Membership classification

Life	\$1000
5 Year	\$400
Annual	\$100
Family	\$50 (per additional member)
3 day pass	\$25
1 day tandem	\$5



Alex Laughrey on the training hill with Soren Braddock for a kiting lesson in the Henson LZ. Photos by Jeff Laughrey.



Members retain full membership privileges. "Family" members receive one newsletter per household. Tandem members receive no newsletter and have no voting privileges. Members will receive the newsletter at no additional charge. All voting members will be rated USHPA Novice, HPAC equivalent, or above.

Section 4

Twenty or more voting members in good standing may petition the BOD in writing and call for a general membership referendum on any issue.

Article III: Board of Directors

Section 1

The affairs and business of the TTT will be governed by a board consisting of fifteen directors, nominated in October and elected by the membership from ballots received before the December meeting. TTT membership is required of nominations to the BOD. Upon election, BOD members must maintain current membership. Membership expiration during the BOD member's term of office will be considered tantamount to resignation. The BOD will assume office at the January meeting. The term of office is one year and the directors may be re-elected. Not more than two employees of any one hang gliding *and/or paragliding* related business will be eligible for service on the BOD. The BOD may elect honorary directors for the purpose of recognition and/or special expertise. The sole function of an honorary director is consultation. Honorary directors have no voting privileges on the BOD.

Section 2

The BOD will meet at least six times a year. The BOD may be convened by the president with adequate notification of each director or by the secretary at the written request of four directors.

Section 3

Nine directors, including at least two members of the executive board, will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings.

Section 4

The third consecutive absence of a BOD member from a BOD meeting will be considered tantamount to submission of resignation from the BOD. Any vacancy on the BOD will be filled by vote of the remaining directors at the earliest possible scheduled meeting and the term of office will be for the remainder of that year.

Section 5

Each member of the BOD will serve without compensation or reward, except as provided in these bylaws.

Article IV: BOD Election of Executive Committee

Section 1

An executive committee elected by the BOD will be comprised of the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The executive committee will function for and have authority of the BOD between meetings of the BOD.

Section 2

The president will preside at all meetings, appoint all committee chairs and, with the approval of the BOD, sign and execute all contracts in the name of the TTT.

Section 3

The vice president will be vested with all the powers of the president and will perform the duties of the president in case of the absence or incapacity of the president.

Section 4

The secretary will keep minutes for all meetings, notify BOD members of meetings, maintain all TTT records, and perform such duties designated by the BOD as incidental to the office.

Section 5

The treasurer will manage all receipts and deposits of all TTT monies, make disbursements authorized in budgets approved by the BOD, prepare monthly financial reports and operating expense statements, and perform such duties as may be incidental to the office.

Article V: Committees

Section 1

Committees may be formed by the president as necessary.

Section 2

Any policies, procedures, or rules recommended by committees and approved by the BOD will be published via the newsletter, posting on club bulletin boards, *the TTT website*, and/or upon request.

TTT Bylaws Referendum

If you've heard and read enough opinions and feel you have enough information to adequately form your own, feel free to use the ballot below to register it. Please complete all fields for ballot validation and check a "Yes" or "No" oval to cast your vote. Voting may also be accomplished via the SurveyMonkey ballot, for which you'll receive an invitation if we have your email address. Of course, you may also wait until the physical ballot collection immediately following the roundtable discussion before the Mayhem party. If your membership will expire before Mayhem, please also submit a completed membership application (reverse) with dues. An announcement of the results should be available by the time the Band takes their first break!

USHPA Number _____

Emergency Contact Name _____

Emergency Contact Number _____

Email Address _____

- Yes, I approve the proposed 2015 Bylaws revision, which would allow paraglider pilots membership in the TTT.
- No, I disapprove the proposed 2015 Bylaws revision and paraglider pilot membership in the TTT.

Mail to:



Bylaws Referendum

PO Box 1286

Dunlap, Tennessee 37327

Photo Credits: Page 1- Miller Stroud. Page 2- Winston Pickett. Page 4- Josiah Stephens.

Article VI: Removal from office

A director may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the remaining directors at a regularly scheduled meeting. The candidate for removal must receive advance notification of the vote for removal. Copies of letters, petitions, and/or other documents submitted to the BOD representing grounds for removal of a director will be forwarded to that director before the vote for removal.

Article VII: Finance

Section 1

The fiscal year will be from January 1 to December 31.

Section 2

No TTT property with a value exceeding \$1000.00 will be sold without unanimous approval of the BOD or majority of the general membership.

Section 3

Half of the annual revenue remaining after the operational budget is met will be allocated to the landing field fund.

Article VIII: Amendments

The bylaws may be amended by membership referendum only. Any bylaws revision referendum will be published (posted) at least thirty days before the deadline for submission of votes. Member presence will not be required for voting on any bylaws revision referendum.

Respectfully submitted,

2015 Bylaws Committee:

Dan Shell

Michael Bradford

Clark Harlow

Rick Jacob

Kathy Lee

Marco Weber

** Bold and italics indicates added wording in this revision.*



TTT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*****All fields marked with ** are required *****

You have two options to submit this form:

1. Complete this form and submit it (with payment) directly to a TTT Board Member and have them sign as your witness. Your membership will become effective immediately. -OR-
2. Complete this form, have any adult sign as a witness, and mail it with payment to: Tennessee Tree Toppers P.O. Box 1286 Dunlap, TN 37327. Your membership will become effective when the TTT has received and processed your application and payment.

Name** : _____ Address** : _____

City** : _____ State** : _____ Zip** : _____ Country** : _____

Your Phone #** : _____

Your Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Emergency Contact Phone: _____

Authority of Medical Directive: _____ And Phone # _____

USHPA #** : _____ USHPA Rating** : _____ USHPA Expiration Date** : _____

Membership Type (check one)**:

- Life \$1000 5-Year \$400 Annual \$100 Family \$50 (per additional member) 3-Day \$25 1-Day Tandem \$5

In consideration for being permitted to use the facilities and equipment of the Tennessee Tree Toppers, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the TTT, and to engage in the sport of hang gliding, solo and/or tandem instruction, and other related activities, (hereinafter collectively referred to as Hang Gliding Activities), I hereby agree as follows:

Initial Here** I (print name)** _____ hereby RELEASE AND DISCHARGE the United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association and any of its members, the cities of Dunlap, TN and Whitwell, TN, any owners of land where Hang Gliding Activities are conducted, the TTT Board of Directors, TTT members, and TTT designees (hereinafter collectively referred to as Released Parties), from any and all liability, claims, demands or causes of action that I may hereafter have for injuries and damages arising out of my participation in Hang Gliding Activities including, but not limited to, losses CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES.

Initial Here** I further agree that I will not sue or make claim against the Released Parties for damages or other losses sustained as a result of my participation in Hang Gliding Activities.

Initial Here** I also agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD THE RELEASED PARTIES HARMLESS from all claims, judgments and costs, including attorneys' fees incurred in connection with any action brought as a result of my participation in the Tennessee Tree Toppers Membership Application and/or Hang Gliding Activities.

Initial Here** I understand and acknowledge that Hang Gliding Activities have inherent dangers that no amount of care, caution, instruction or experience can eliminate and I EXPRESSLY AND VOLUNTARILY ASSUME ALL RISKS OF DEATH OR PERSONAL INJURY SUSTAINED WHILE PARTICIPATING IN HANG GLIDING ACTIVITIES, WHETHER OR NOT CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES.

Initial Here** I have been advised and recognize that my Hang Gliding Activities are not covered by any personal accident or general liability insurance policy issued to the Released Parties.

Initial Here** I hereby expressly recognize and accept that this Agreement-Release of Liability is contract pursuant to which *I have released any and all claims* against the Released Parties resulting from my participation in Hang Gliding Activities, including any claims caused by the negligence of the Released Parties. I further agree to abide by all of the TTT rules and Flight Regulatory Program (FRP) and to report any non compliance of these regulations to a TTT official. I have received a copy of the TTT Bylaws, Site Guide, and Flight Regulations defined in the FRP. I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT - RELEASE OF LIABILITY IN ITS ENTIRETY OR HAVE HAD IT READ TO ME, FULLY UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ALL OF ITS CONTENTS, AND SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Your Signature** : _____ Your Printed Name** : _____ Date** : _____

Witness Signature** : _____ Witness Printed Name** : _____ Date** : _____

Witness Address** : _____