

SAN VALEER'S SPRING ANNUAL

This year's San Veleer's Spring Annual was impacted by weather but thanks to the persistence of our forty-eight contestants' disaster was avoided.

As I pulled onto the field on Thursday the wind was blasting the field. As evening descended the air slowed and the group happily accomplished some test flying. Friday morning, we had a great turnout and perfect flying weather. As a flyer I was even able to get in a 1/2A Texaco flight!

The Father/Son Team, Bob and Robert De Shields got right into the spirit of flying with some nice Satellites. It was great fun!

At lunch I put some hot dogs on the BBQ, which were enjoyed by all. So much so, that I plan on serving hot dogs at all my future C.D. events. Unfortunately, after lunch the wind prevented any flying until about 6:00 P.M. The group happily took advantage of the time for more test flying.

Saturday morning began breezy and by 9:00 A. M. the winds were occasionally reaching 20 MPH! Most of us used this downtime to catch up with old friends, play board games and share food. I especially enjoyed the cribbage games.

A friend and I decided to go hunting for food and found a new restaurant in Button Willow, "The Willow Ranch"! Worth the drive for a good meal. Much appreciation to Sara Menanno who provided me with several good meals! So good!

The "Beast" title goes to Terry Thorkildsen who camped in his tent through the entire ordeal braving the wind and sand like a pro! Now that's a man who wants to fly! The skill and years of experience of our flyers made the event worthwhile. Each of the contestants brought their persistence, skills, and artistry, facing the wide-open skies, Mother Nature and each other in pursuit of their passion for free flight! We had a wonderful time!

Sunday morning, we rose early to get in our best flying as high winds were expected once again by noon. The Hunter Memorial flyers were ready to go first thing in the morning and The FAI crews also had early entries and great competitions.

As this was my first time as contest director, I am especially grateful to all the help and support I received from Guy Menanno, Terry Thorkildsen, Mike Thompson and Terry Kerger. Guy and I worked out a fun way to boost participation allowing most events to be flown any day of the contest. Some events remained day specific such as the Hunter Memorial, but many events were made simpler to encourage more participation across the board. This would have been enjoyed and used more had the weather cooperated.

Despite the high winds and dust, we had a great time and reconnected with old friends. Looking forward to next time!

Rob Cobb, Contest Director

