

Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

January/February 2007

Annual Safety Down Day
24 March at 9am
Following this two hour meeting, we will host our annual Club House Spring Cleaning and Repair day followed by a Bar-B-Que at the airport.

From the President *By Bob Hudson*

Wow, what a busy start for the New Year. The first thing on everybody's mind has been the weather. Normally we would be well on our way to capturing our fourth OLC title, but ol' Al Gore has got us locked in the clutches of Global Warming. As cold as it has been and as much snow as we have had, we all know it is about to change and if the gods of Kitty Hawk (home to the flight that brought us tow planes) are true, we will be chalking up kilometers very soon. In preparation for that day, it is now time to get those airplanes ready, cleaned and waxed. After my trip to the national convention, and there will be more about that later, it was made clear that the rest of the world is watching Moriarty and the Albuquerque Soaring Club.

And speaking about getting those airplanes ready, our own Howard Banks is about to make his annual trek to sunny Florida (wait a minute, isn't this the same guy who left us, and all this snow, to go to the South Pacific recently?). There is no justice. Anyway, back to the point, Howard is heading down to participate in the Seniors. We wish him the best and hope he brings us back some more "bling".

Well, things are starting to "heat" up, no pun intended, at the Club House. We have a couple of pilots nearing solo and a couple who are approaching their private license. Everybody

else is just chomping at the bit to see some of that world famous lift we are known for.

One of the recent events we successfully "executed" was the annual Gala. We had sixty-two in attendance and the feedback I received was "a good time was had by all." We didn't have a guest speaker but spent more time on fellowship and the presentation of awards. The meals were superb, and the warmth of aviation camaraderie could be felt throughout the house.

Notably missing from our group was Al Santilli, who most of you know fell shoveling snow and broke his wrist. I just got off the phone with Jimmy Weir who is helping to keep an eye on Al and he says he is doing fine. He just has his third cast put on so it won't be long now before he climbs back into old Alpha Sierra and takes to the enchanted skies.

Last month I told you about some of the financial decisions that were made at the 16 December Membership meeting. Well, it has been pointed out to me that I forgot some items. First, was that we raised membership dues \$5 for both regular and associate members. Second we raise the rental cost for club aircraft. The 2/33 and 1/26 are now \$15 per hour for non-owner members and \$21 (for both ships) for aircraft owner members. The twin Astir is now \$26 per hour for non-owners (\$32 per hour for owners). The Grob is \$24 per hour for non-owners (\$30 per hour for owners). Lastly the Labelle rents for \$20 per hour (owners) and \$26 per hour (non-owners). There I think I have you all up to date, now go out and fly, but fly safe.

The SSA Convention *By Bob Hudson*

On the eighth of February, I took a trek to Memphis to attend the annual convention. It is interesting to note that we have usually great participation at the convention, but because I

chose to go, the regular ASC crowd decided not to go. (Are they trying to tell me something?) Actually, George and Kathy Taylor, George Applebay, Steve Hill, Chip Garner, Kathy Fosha, and Mitch Hudson were there. Arrival in Memphis was uneventful except it was really cold. I rushed to the hotel to find out that my room wasn't ready, so I walked over to the Convention Hall only to find out that the heat was off in the big hall and boy did that make it cold. Reasonable people could only take a short time in the Hall and then they would have to go get warm. My first reaction was excitement about being at my first Convention, followed by disappointment because the place was empty.

I strolled around and looked at a couple of planes and then noticed the Southwest Soaring Museum booth, I rushed over to find it manned by Steve Hill. We exchanged small talk and I dropped off some of Rick's (Sundance) brochures.

The booths were setup in a serpentine manner which made it nearly impossible to get around and see displays. In fact, it was only the last day when I forced myself to take a disciplined approach, that I was able to see them all. It was a shame because a couple of vendors had very little attention because of their location. (We will not use this setup for the Convention here in ABQ.)

There was a cool collection of antique sail planes that I enjoyed wandering through. However, folks who have been at multiple conventions said the antique collection was a turnoff...I guess over saturation.

That night I went downtown with Reb Burns (a FedEx pilot, a member of the Memphis Soaring Club and the person responsible for the convention speakers), his wife and several of the Air Force Academy team to have Memphis Bar-B-Que. I then retired back to my room for "a long winter's nap" only to be awoken by wayward ASC member Mitch Hudson around midnight. He drove in from San Antonio where he is attending Navigators School at historic Randolph Air Force Base.

The next morning we hit the convention early, and thank god the heat was on. Mitch went to help the Juniors with their display and mission to sell t-shirts and calendars. I went around

and tried to schmooze with the crowd and learn what I could in preparation for our convention. While I was at it I attended the luncheon ("Emphasis on Clubs"), where I picked up a couple of good ideas, mostly on dealing with our Moriarty City Fathers.

I also attended the briefing given by the AOPA on changes to general aviation. This is a briefing that should have been given by SSA officials, but we don't have anyone in place. (I write more about the AOPA below.)

The last briefing of the day was the SSA General Meeting. Unfortunately, the time was spent introducing people and very little business took place. There was a question and answer period but the only questions allowed had to be presented on 3-by-5 cards, which were made available to very few people. Result: there were only three questions and none proved to be of any substance. The head of the Reorganization Task Force, Dave Pixton, was introduced and it was stressed that if you had any suggestions they were to be forwarded to him through the state governors (see below). The folks around me were upset with that and wondered why the filter?

The meeting finished up with a lecture on the history of the SSA. This could have been interesting but it was just a briefing with no visual aids (pictures, maps, etc.) and a lot of people lost interest and bailed out of the meeting.

That evening a banquet was held honoring the glider pilots from World War II. (You remember that war, it was in all the papers.) Following dinner they showed the movie "Silent Wings".

The next day, was more of the same stuff - briefings, displays and fellowship. Mitch and I did get an opportunity to sit down and talk about the Albuquerque convention with Gaynell, the lady at SSA who is in charge of conventions. We were told that an MOU (a memorandum of understanding) will be presented to us so that task and responsibilities can be worked out. I told her that I wanted to be in the loop on the theme and logo. This was conveyed back to the powers that be as meaning that I wanted to head that up. So consequently the day after I got back they

wanted to know where my theme and logo (for poster) were. So we are off to a good start.

Well Mike Abernathy came through with a theme and I was quickly able to design a logo. The theme for the Albuquerque Convention will be "Welcome to Cross Country, Country!"

Saturday night was the Convention Banquet. The Governor of Tennessee made a point to welcome us and to say that he is a glider pilot, himself, and owns a Stemme. The keynote speaker was Fred Smith, CEO of FedEx. Following his presentation the annual awards were given out, with ASC receiving three. We received the first place award in the OLC League competition. We also received the SSA's award for our first place finish in the OLC League and the SSA's Award for the most kilometers flown in the US part of the OLC. The three awards put my luggage over the 50 pound limit and cost me a \$25 fine...the things I do for our club!

The bottom line: The convention was very poorly attended. The number of vendors was extremely low and only a few airplanes were on exhibit. I learned a lot and now know what we need to do to show the world our mettle. I had several people come up to me (vendors and members) who said that they are glad we are the host club for next year and that they are looking forward to coming to see us. Great, another challenge. Get ready for your assignments.

AOPA

By Bob Hudson

One of the meetings I attended at the recent SSA Convention in Memphis was the AOPA briefing on changes to General Aviation. First of all if you are not a member of the AOPA, you might want to rethink that position. The SSA is a non-profit organization and as such they are prohibited by legislation from lobby activities. I have to admit that I was ignorant of this and naively assumed the SSA was fighting for us. This is where the AOPA comes in. Membership in the Airplane Owners and Pilots Association is a nominal investment when you consider the effect of not having representation for our sport. (For owners it also brings a small discount on insurance with Costello.)

So, why am I raving? Every five years, the FAA is reassessed under the FAA Reorganization Act. It is approaching that time, which means with a new congress we will see changes that will greatly affect us. A little background. The 2006 FAA budget was \$14.2 billion, which explains how J.D. was able to buy a new car. Seventy-seven percent of that \$14.2B comes from excise taxes (airline tickets, security fees, fuel taxes, etc.). The remainder, or 23%, comes from the government's general fund. This congress wants that 23%, or \$3.27B, to be borne by general aviation and that means you.

So where would this money come from? Well, if the airlines have their way, it would come from non-commercial aviation entities. This means at least a 400% increase in taxes on fuel - think tow planes. There could be landing fees and fees based on use of the air traffic control system. Talk to the tower at Santa Fe...ka ching! Ask to open the wave window...ka ching! Check the status of a MOA...ka ching! How about a weather briefing or a check of the NOTAMS...ka ching!

Let's look at landing fees by itself. If putting your aircraft down on the concrete is going to cost you, then we will have folks intentionally landing out. Now landing out is basically an emergency procedure and you are betting your aircraft and your body against a landing fee.

So what do we do about it? This is where the AOPA comes in. Now I am not a shill for the AOPA, but I am a member...in fact I have been named as the AOPA liaison to the Moriarty Airport, but that is not why I am pushing membership. The need to have someone speaking for us in Washington is critical and I think the AOPA is the answer. There are other avenues, like the EAA (of which I am also a member), that will be fighting for us, but to help assure our voice we must get active. For more information go to www.aopa.org. Let me know your thoughts.

What's going on with our SSA?

By Bob Hudson

If you have been living under a bridge then you probably haven't heard that there was a little problem down in Hobbs. It seems that

we the general membership were very helpful in paying alimony for six wives and helping to make a down payment on a home in Hobbs for our former finance officer - and all we got for it was a magazine.

Humor aside, our past CFO decided to not pay income tax to the state or the federal government for our employees. This left the Society in arrears to these government entities by over \$264,000. Additionally, The CFO is also under investigation for embezzling over \$170,000. Now I have an Art degree, so I'm not the most experienced in financial matters, but it looks like to me that there is at least a \$94,000 discrepancy between these two figures that hasn't been explained. I can only assume that budgets were submitted that showed that the Society was able to meet all obligations and yet we were off, with no corrective action, by huge amounts.

The quick fix was to fire the Executive Director, a couple of years late I might add, and to have the CFO arrested. (He appears back in court on the 16th of March.) Next, it was determined that the Society would not hire an Executive Director, to oversee the operation, until after the long-range planning committee has had a look at redesigning the Society. A quick look at this year's financials, which are based on maintaining the membership base, shows a potential surplus of \$57,000, which means the Society can't afford a Director, so the Society will be forced to just be a magazine and t-shirt provider. I worry that this will drive the Society, which I believe is needed to advance our sport, out of existence.

The bottom line is that we, as a Society, are not in a good position to move forward, or to remain stagnant. To dig out of this mess we need to provide solid advice to the Review Task Force. Let's be proactive and help to bring us back from the dead.

This Task Force has a wide remit which requires it to examine every aspect of the SSA and to propose a new structure, from location, staffing, by-laws, to relationships with such as the FAI. Chairman of this task force is, as noted, Dave Pixton (a noted contest pilot, instructor and tow pilot from back east who has flown his Ventus 2 at Moriarty). Pixton has called for input from the members, as to

what they think are the three best things the SSA does and the three worst. For some strange reason, the board has required that these submissions (50 words for each item, max!) should be forwarded through the State Governor. That's H Banks, for his sins, so email at HBSoar@Comcast.net.

ASC annual awards

The following were presented at the club's annual Gala, with Pat McKnight somehow managing to get them all in order.

Aero-Tek Award –

For longest flight from Moriarty
Bill Hill 6/11/06 958.28 km

Kim Harmon X-C Trophy –

For longest 6 flights from Moriarty (Gold Class)

- 1- Bill Hill 4872.18 total
- 2- Howard Banks 3390.39
- 3- Mark Mocho 3198.07

ASC Classic X-C Trophy - For longest 6 flights from Moriarty (Silver Class)

- 1- Jeff Bloch 639.23
- 2- Dave Braddi 482.11
- 3- Mike Carris

ASC Best Speed –

For fastest speed on a flight of over 300 km from Moriarty

James Garner, 491.71 km 168.2 km/h

1-26'er Award - For accomplishments in a Schweizer 1-26

Robert Woods

Most Aerotows - For the tow pilot with the most launches in 2006

Mike Stogner 80 tows

Most Instruction - For the instructor who tormented the most students

Jim Wier 42 flights

Harland Ross Award - For excellence in soaring

James Garner, Winner 2006 Standard Class National Championships

Paul Callies Award - For advancement of soaring

Rick Kohler- Sundance Aviation

Paul Scates Award - For exceptional service to the ASC

Laurie Carlton- For Accounting and Bookkeeping for 12 years

ASC Safety Award - For promoting a safe environment and attitude

Bob Hudson

Ain't Soaring Fun Award - For the pilot who had the most entertaining adventure related to the dark side of the sport.

Howard Banks

OLC High Point Award - To the pilot who contributed the most points (handicapped) to the National Championship winners- Albuquerque Soaring (Third consecutive title) (Open to any pilot submitting flights for Albuquerque Soaring
Bill Hill 19,195.12 km 17,523.2 points Discus 2

Personal Limitations *By Billy Hill*

Do you, for example, know what the DEMONSTRATED max cross wind component is on the G 103? Well actually there isn't one. In the hand book it says the APPROVED cross wind component is..... No I'm not going to make it that easy for you, go look it up in the POH.

Tow Pilots, do you know what the maximum, (in the USA), demonstrated cross wind component is for the Pawnee? Hint, you won't find it in any of the paper work we have on hand as there is no such number to be found. The Aussies have come up with a figure of twelve knots at ninety degrees. I guess it would be safe to say that the same value would apply north of the equator as well, hmm?

This begs the question, what is your personal cross wind component limit? That, dear friends, is a function of your currency, competency and proficiency in the aircraft in question. Your personal cross wind component limit should, for starters, not exceed that found in the POH of the aircraft in which you are about to commit aviation.

If you have not flown for a while – with the weather as it has been lately, who has? – your ability to handle said flying machine is a function of the above mentioned, that is currency, competency and proficiency.

Were common sense to prevail, none of us would go flying if we thought safety was being compromised by pitting ourselves against conditions which might readily exceed our abilities.....were common sense to prevail.

Hell, for that matter if common sense in conjunction with good judgment were the

watch words with everyone who flew, the Feds would be out of business.

As we well know, pilots are prone to let their egos write a check that their abilities are unable to cover. Hence we have accidents.

As regards cross winds, the WAG system of estimating the direction and velocity is only useful in that it should inspire us to wander up to Sundance and avail ourselves of the DIGIWIX equipment in order to determine the direction and velocity of the wind. Additionally the DIGIWIX will give us the gust factor as well as the actual cross wind component.

This brings us back to the common sense/good judgment issue. At this point the question we should ask ourselves is, do the cross wind conditions exceed our CURRENT capabilities? Now is the time to listen to that little voice in our heads or to that feeling in the pit of our stomachs, either of which may be attempting to wave a little red flag in front of our faces.

The problem now becomes to we interpret that flag as a warning, or do we charge after it like an enraged bull?

Should you choose option A and you are feeling the need for a bit of assistance, you might want to consider asking a CFI to ride with you. Whilst accosting said CFI you might consider couching the question in a manner which will allow your prospective mentor the option to back out if he/she is feeling a bit apprehensive about flying under the prevailing conditions. Although you may believe we CFI's walk on water, currency, competency and proficiency are issues with us as well. As an aside, it is also alleged that the Federal Government has certified us because we exercise a modicum of common sense and good judgment.

Should you choose option B and charge ahead, well, what can I say? Good luck? Chances are, (and most assuredly CHANCE is the operative word), you will make a successful takeoff. But before you do, consider the following; Should you have an accident and should it be proven you have exceeded the cross wind component of the aircraft being flown, the insurance company in all likelihood will not honor the insurance claim. Secondly, should that accident happen you might expect to be cited for violation of FAR 91.13. Don't

remember what that one is? Consider the question as part of FAR 61.56.

Remember: Takeoffs are optional. Landings are mandatory. See you at the airport.

Last flight Notification *By Bob Hudson*

It is with a heavy heart that I inform our membership that we lost two former club members, Lou Frank and "Doc" Wiley. Bob

Carlton has posted a nice "article" on Lou Frank on our Club website. If you go on line, you can read a great article, in the obits section of the Review Journal, on Willard Charles "Doc" Wiley. Both of these members were exemplary members of our Club and the SSA. Both were instructors with the club and "Doc" Wiley was a member of the Soaring Hall of Fame. J.D. Huss is ensuring that both of these fine aviators will be remembered on our Club plaque that honors our departed wingmen.

2007 Moriarty Operations Schedule

Date	OPS 1	OPS 2	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Mar 3 Saturday	HUDSON R	PHILLIPS C	BUEHRE K	HILL W
Mar 4 Sunday	BLOCH J	WILSON B		TICHY T
Mar 10 Saturday	HARMONY D	CATES J	COLLINS A	STOGNER M
Mar 11 Sunday	DAVISON B	MARTINEZ J		CARLTON R
Mar 17 Saturday	BRIGGS P	HUSS J	MORRISON B	WRIGHT R
Mar 18 Sunday	AIKEN G	MORRISON L		HILL W
Mar 24 Saturday	BIELEK K	MOCHO M	DAFFER J	
Mar 25 Sunday	BOYCE J	BUENAFE C		THOMAS R
Mar 31 Saturday	CUMIFORD Jr. J	STEWART W	ROESKE S	TICHY T
Apr 1 Sunday	PALA A	BROTHERS L		WADSWORTH H
Apr 7 Saturday	OKANDAN M	STOLL F		WRIGHT R
Apr 8 Sunday	EKDAHL C	HARE J	TAYLOR K	DAFFER J
Apr 14 Saturday	KAWAL D	NEWMAN P	WIER J	HILL W
Apr 15 Sunday	ANDERSON R	HEERMANN A		ROESKE S
Apr 21 Saturday	BANKS H	CARRIS M	BUEHRE K	THOMAS R
Apr 22 Sunday	McKNIGHT P	GUILLORY S		TICHY T
Apr 28 Saturday	PHILLIPS C	HARMONY D	COLLINS A	WADSWORTH H
Apr 29 Sunday	RESOR B	HUDSON R		WIER J
May 5 Saturday	BLOCH J	WILSON B	DAFFER J	WRIGHT R
May 6 Sunday	MARTINEZ J	CATES J		DAFFER J