

# Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

November 2007

## Annual Membership Meeting December 15th

We will host our Annual Meeting at the Club House on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December, at 10:00am. Please try to be there as I will brief on the state of the Club (good news) and we will hold **elections of new officers** (bad news). Let's have a great turn out.

## Annual Gala January 19th

The annual 2008 Gala is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of January (Saturday night), once again at the Marriott Pyramid in Albuquerque. Stop what you are doing and get that on your calendar right now. And when your President asks for RSVPs, remember that means tell him you are either going or not going. We need to know so that we aren't spending all our time chasing you down!

### President's Notes *By Bob Hudson*

**Our future:** On his fourteen birthday, Kevin Bielek, threw his instructor (Stan Roeske) out of the airplane and flung his young body into the air. Great job Kevin, you are an aviator. You might not have touched the face of God (High Flight) yet, Kevin, but I am sure you made him smile.

**Der Krankenhaus:** Our club house is beginning to look like an Aid Station from the Crimean War. Renny had brain surgery (he has already been cleared back to flight), Billy had ankle surgery, Howard is down with face paralysis (no jokes, just Bell's palsy), and Andrew has been on crutches for what seems like ages. Come on guys, this isn't a hospital ward...well maybe it is. Please guys get well. *[The news on Renny is excellent, a total cure. Billy has flown the Twin Disaster. And Banks is quiet. What more do you want? – Ed.]*

### Outcome of special general meeting

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, we held an ASC General Membership meeting to address two issues put forth by the ASC Board. These two issues, as reported in August, dealt with the ASC's requirement to maintain membership in the SSA. The second issue involved how the ASC was to liquidate assets in the advent that the ASC should "fold". Both issues passed by unanimous vote (there was a quorum present).

The new wording which will be incorporated into the Club's set of Bylaws will now be changed to read:

*The Albuquerque Soaring Club has a long relationship with the Soaring Society of America (SSA). Members are encouraged, but not required, to become members. At the time of joining the ASC, prospective members will be asked if they desire to join the SSA. They will be told of the benefits (badges, competition, magazine, etc.). If they elect to join, then the person assisting the new member will provide an SSA membership application to be filled out and sent in by the individual.*

Note: The effect of this change will also be that those existing members who wish to remain SSA members will have to ensure that their membership is maintained by dealing with the SSA directly. The second change will now read:

*Dissolution of the club will be in accordance with applicable laws. Three members shall be appointed by the Board as trustees and they shall liquidate sufficient assets as soon as practicable to pay all existing debts and liabilities. These three trustees shall propose the disposal of any remaining assets (equipment, funds, etc.) to an acceptable aviation related non-profit organization, subject to Board approval.*

After the vote, the following letter was sent to the SSA:

"The Albuquerque Soaring Club (ASC) voted, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, to drop the requirement for ASC members to maintain

membership in the SSA. The ASC has been a long time member of the SSA and recognizes the value of SSA membership, however we will no longer be handling the renewal process for club members as we feel this is the responsibility of the SSA. In the past, clubs were rewarded for conducting the annual renewal process, but recent SSA financial mismanagement forced the SSA to pull back that incentive and therefore it is no longer a value for the club to manage the SSA's renewal process. Couple this with the fact that a large number of ASC members have threatened to quit the ASC if SSA membership continues to be a requirement for club membership and you can understand why the club has been forced to take this action. The SSA will continue to offer SSA membership to new members and will facilitate their enrollment, but it is up to the SSA to handle the renewal process. We further understand that this action will change the status of the ASC from being a Chapter Member to non-Chapter Member."

The SSA is presently in the renewal of membership period, so expect to see a renewal application in your mail. Since your membership will lapse on December 31 if you do nothing – and if Hobbs fails to send you a notice (you have been warned) – the time to act is now. The club will no longer automatically renew your membership so therefore you will not see a renewal charge in your monthly bill.

If you expect to compete for SSA/FAI badges, or compete in SSA contests, then you need to maintain membership in the SSA. It has not been determined if you need SSA membership to post to the OLC. For an answer to that question, watch this space.

*[Please, if you do intend to remain a member of SSA in 2008, do be proactive in assuring that your SSA membership is renewed in a timely manner. Do not simply sit back and wait for SSA to NOT send the renewal form in time. Probably all of us have a membership expiration of 12/31/2007. – Ed brr.]*

**A visitation from Al:** One recent quiet evening I had a most enjoyable time...I spent the evening with Al. Well, you are probably thinking your Prez has stepped over the side again, but you would be wrong. Let me start at the beginning. Jimmy Weir has been acting as the go-between for the estate of Al Santilli, the

ASC and Al's family. He has been combing through Al's possessions and rescuing things that the family doesn't want and things that might have historic value for the Club and the Southwest Museum. A large portion of these items have found their way to the Hudson's guest bedroom where I hope to help establish a proper memorial to Al, for use at the Museum. Well, two weekends ago I was pulling Ops when I was approached by Jimmy and he said he had a new box of stuff for me. (Previously, Jimmy brought over all of Al's military Uniforms (Army, Air Force and Civil Air Patrol. I have his diamond badges and several embroidered shirts that reflect awards and honors Al had received.) And so, I poured myself a nice scotch and placed the box on my bed and jumped in to explore some more of Al's world.

First of all on top of everything in the box was the American Flag that honored Al at his funeral. (Someday I will bore you with my dissertation on the flag, and what it means to me. Needless to say it was an honor to be given guardianship of this reminder of Al's service to his country.) I put the flag up, for safe keeping until I can get a flag box before placing it in our clubhouse. I then began my "walk" with Al.

At first glance I found several books. I picked up the first one and it turned out to be the Standard Mathematical Tables, the 1972 version, you know you probably have one on your bedside table. Al had covered the book in a home made paper cover. This book is 700 pages of mathematical formulas and every so often Al had written notes. One note that was so Al (found on the inside cover) was "Important note: NEW Int'l physical units completely omit "Dynes" for force: favoring Newton = "N". (Written as it appeared in the book.) There is more but I got the impression if Dr. Samuel M. Selby, Ph.D, Sc.D, was here he was about to be sat down in front of the chalk board and get a lesson he would never forget. Imagine replacing Dynes with Newton, what were those academics thinking? (By the way, Al felt a need to write the price of the book on his homemade book cover- \$6.25 plus .25 (tax) for \$6.50. While thumbing through the book (which was all Greek to me-I have an Art Degree) a ham operator's card fell out of the book and that's when I found out the Al was a ham, call sign W5QPW. This made me proud to think that some guy, possibly a

missionary, in the jungles of Borneo had to sit and listen for several hours on how a wet bulb predicts fog and the dew point. (This subject was outlined by a brown newspaper article that Al had left inside the book.)

Next I picked up a folder that held personal notes from Al. One of these notes was his "diary" of flight examinations he gave in 1999. This was a fascinating read as Al performed 17 examinations and he recorded what his fee was per flight (he didn't charge Bill Stewart, but he charged John Clay Lorenz \$100. Most of the rest of the folks he charged \$70, but he let Connie Buenafe get by for \$55. What's your secret Connie?) He then recorded the number of hours he performed ground eval and flight eval. He ground evaluated Connie for 4.9 hours, Bill Stewart for 5 hours and Mike Abernathy for 4.8 hours. (That was old-easy-Al, me I was in the seat for over 9 hours.)

In the box were certificates for courses Al attended and programs from events in which Al was recognized, such as when he received the Warren E. Eaton Memorial Trophy, presented in 1999. The "Eaton" trophy is the highest award the SSA gives out. It is given to the person who has made an outstanding contribution to the art, sport or science of soaring flight. Included in the magic box was a program that recognized Al's induction in the United States Soaring Hall of Fame in 1979.

There was more but I had to stop and lift my still untasted scotch and silently thank Al for all he has done for Soaring and the Albuquerque Soaring Club. For those of you who didn't have the pleasure of calling Al your friend, you missed an opportunity to sit next to greatness. Now go out there and fly safe and enjoy the holidays. Your President, Bob

### **Safe piloting is not forgotten**

*By Alicide Santilli*

*This article is reprinted without Al's permission, but I bet I have his blessing. These words are still as valid as when Al first penned them in September 2000. What you can't see is that it was written on his old manual typewriter and is covered with correction tape-remember correction tape? - your Prez.*

Different folks- different strokes, but ALL changes, and some need to be refreshed sooner

than others. It's a question of time. Do you consider your piloting skills to be PERPETUAL or NATURALLY DETERIORATING or even PERISHING? What does YOUR situational awareness tell you?

Consider all the required knowledge, skill, proficiency and experience you've acquired. It has to be continually practiced, maintained and accumulated to merely stay abreast of flying's increasing demands. Are all your attributes PERPETUAL? No way! Could something important have PERISHED? Maybe, if it hasn't been called up in "ages". YOU be the judge and DO something about it.

PROGRESSIVE DETERIORATION IS TO BE THE INEVITABLE FATE OF ALL OUR EFFORTS. In aviation, even a score of 100% on a knowledge test is valid for only two years. Flight reviews are 24 months. CFIs and student certificates expire in two years. Tow pilots must stay current within twelve months. Recent flight experience is within 90 days for certificated pilots to carry passengers, while students need 90 day continuing solo endorsements. Eligibility to take practical tests requires three training flights within the previous 60 days. Depending on the complexity of the pilot rating, there is a perplexing variety of other time interval requirements.

All these time intervals mark the stage of ability beyond which continuation is legally unacceptable. Within each of those time frames it should be realized that those piloting functions requiring the greatest skill, proficiency and reliability are generally those functions which deteriorate faster. Could one of yours have already started going downhill sooner than you realized? It's possible.

In ASC, one of the most demanding pilot functions is keeping crosswind operations within safe limits. If each individual pilot remains aware of constantly changing conditions and realizes when his or her personal proficiency at that time is no longer adequate, it would be wiser and safer to "scrub" the impending flight. There are other adverse flying scenarios that call for sudden spurts of action which may not be matched by the ability available at that moment. No one has perfect skill recall, but everyone can improve on situational awareness.

## The 2007 OLC Contest

The results are in – and now we are on to 2008. Some of our pilots (notably Jim Cumiford, Brian Resor, Mark Mocho – and Billy himself) are already following Billy's exhortation (below). Now it is up to the rest of us to get with the program and log some flights!

### Never let up! *By W.G Hill*

I suspect there has been quite a lot of chest thumping, back-slapping and gloating going on at Warner Springs. As we all know, Garrett Willet has made good on his boast to beat the ASC and he has done it in accordance with the OLC rules such as they are which is to say, *no rules what so ever*. What I find interesting is that we lost the contest with more points on the board than we had when we won the previous three years.

We are all somewhat upset at the manner in which W/S recruited pilots to fly at sites other than W/S. Some of us are even more than just a little upset.....right Mark? Currently we have put in a request for a change in the rules which will force participants to at least fly a portion of their flights from the airport where they are filing their claims.

It's difficult to compete against pilots who are flying out of the Ely's of the world and making 1000KM flights when the best we are able to put up are flights in the 700 to 800KM range and only on a few occasions because of the weather.

It's safe to say that this past soaring season was less than stellar. We had a late start and a wet summer with lower than usual cloud bases. The upside of that equation is that we consistently flew with twelve, thirteen and sometimes fourteen thousand foot cloud bases and went as far and as fast as we had on previous years under higher cloud bases. We are learning to make do with less than optimal conditions. This should make us more competitive during the 2008 season.

We have had more participants flying for the ASC, and from the Moriarty airport I might add, and that has certainly helped get our point score up from previous years. It also looks as though we will be adding more cross country pilots to our team and some of us will be

flying with newer, faster equipment. Actually right up to the end, we were in the lead, and had we had the good weather as W/S experienced, we would have won. The last weekend of the contest was what made it for W/S and lost it for ASC. On the whole, I think we can still hold our heads up and look each other in the eye.

Does this mean that in light of Garrett's boast of coming to Albuquerque to take the trophy from us that I'll be a good sport and email Garrett to tell him what a great job he and his group did? Sure, when the snap beans in Hell start frosting over!

So, how did W/S get the jump on us? Well, their soaring season starts in late winter or early spring when they start running up and down the ridges out of Southern CA.

What can we do to give us a better start on the season? We can look to the mountain wave and run up and down our own ridges, (on the back side of course.) I think in previous years we have relied on the start of the thermal season to get us up and running but there is still a month or so of not-too-cold weather that will allow us to wave fly without seriously cold soaking our gliders and then there is also the club equipment. For example, we have the Twin Aster which is sitting in the trailer gathering dust when it could be flown in wave. This winter and into early spring, we should be conducting ground school classes for those who would like to improve their cross country efficiency. We should take another look at the Mentor program.

Mark Mocho made the statement that second place is really the first loser. I'm more inclined to look at the '07 OLC contest as both a wake up call and a learning experience. In the past we thought ourselves untouchable by virtue of the excellent soaring conditions we have at Moriarty, but Mother Nature made our task somewhat more difficult this year. Tennis star Rod Laver once said, "The time your game is most vulnerable is when you are ahead. Never let up." I think that should be our motto for the 2008 OLC year.

*[An OLC "trophy" exists only in our minds. So far there has never been an actual trophy given by the SSA for OLC accomplishments, only simple certificates. That shouldn't keep us from chasing it, though! – Ed. brr]*