

Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

December 2007

Annual Gala January 19th

The annual bunfight – sorry gala – will take place at the Pyramid Marriott, on the north side of I-25. The pay bar opens at 6:30 p.m. and dinner will begin about 7:30 p.m. The menu will be much as last year, with a choice of prime rib, fancy salmon or a vegetarian mystery tour, plus the usual salad and desert. Cost is \$35 a person.

Speaker yet to confirm: with a little luck, it should be hilarious. Less of a laugh will be the presentation of the multitude of club awards to the skilled, the worthy, the brave and the foolhardy.

Master of ceremonies, the skilled Renny Rozzoni.

Please, please respond whether you intend to come or not. It saves a lot of calling around by the poor duo in charge. Call Geoff Aiken(695-9518) or Bob Hudson (507-6332), select your menu, and please do it soon!

President's Notes *By Bob Hudson*

Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, and the most joyous holiday to all our Albuquerque Soaring Club family. I hope wherever you end up "landing" this holiday that you take some time to reflect on the goodness that has been bestowed upon you and that you say a little prayer for the men and women who are standing guard around the world so that we can be with our families. I personally know what it is like to be far away from home during this time of celebration and it was always comforting to know that someone, somewhere, had me in their thoughts.

And while we are on the subject of the holidays, what better present can we give to a friend or loved one than the gift of flight. Get on over to Sundance and buy a gift certificate for a glider ride from one of our own club members, Rick, and give someone the thrill of their life. A Sundance gift certificate makes a great stocking stuffer. If you can't make it out to Moriarty before Christmas, give Sundance a call and Rick will accommodate you. Call Sundance at 832-2222. (By the way this is an unsolicited "ad". Rick has done so much for

our club and a ride would make a great gift while not hurting Rick either. I am going out today and buy one myself.)

Don't forget to renew your SSA membership if you want to say in the Society. You can do it on-line (see our website for instructions) or fill out the mailing that you should get shortly. Remember you can not compete or get badges unless you are a member.

While we are on the subject of the SSA, if you intend to help the ASC with the OLC, and you all should, then go to the SSA website and make a donation to the OLC, donations are as little as seven dollars. This money helps to defray the cost of maintaining the contest.

(Do you get the feeling I am just taking care of end of year business? Well, I am.)

Once again I have a Das Krankenhaus (thanks Bob Anderson for correcting my German last month) announcement. John Farris is having both knees replaced on the 13th of December. Keep John in your thoughts as he prepares for the Summer Olympics. John assures me he

will be up and about in time for the Gala...what's your excuse?

There is serious business requiring immediate action concerning the Annual Gala. If you were lucky enough to get an award last year, please get it back pronto to Pat McKnight (293 3106) so that he can get the trophies engraved with this year's illustrious names.

Speaking of the Gala, it is time to let me, or Geoff Aiken know if you intend to attend. That is what the RSVP request means. We are trying to get Albuquerque Astronaut Mike Mullane to come and be with us, after all the shuttle is the largest glider ever built. (Remember it is only the shuttle pilots and Howard Banks who have ever flown a glider supersonic. If you don't know the story, ask Howard.)

The Gala is at the Marriot Pyramid and the cost for the meal is \$35 a person (menu in the works as we talk). The date is 19 January 2008 and the cocktails will flow at 6:30 p.m. Give Geoff (695-9518) or me a (507-6332) call with your RSVP. See full details in the announcement in this issue.

As you know the SSA is holding their Convention here in Albuquerque. To pull this off we will need some volunteers so don't be surprised if you get a call asking for your help. To avoid that call, beat me to it and call me first and tell me you want to help.

Lastly, we will have our Annual Club meeting on the 15th of December, 10 a.m., at the Club House. This is the meeting where we elect our leadership for next year, so it is important you are there. At 11:30, or following the meeting we will have a "Celebration of Life" for Al Santilli at which time we are going to spread his ashes over our airport from the Spirit of Santilli. Members of Al's family will be there to witness our love for Al. (I need some folks with good cameras to help me document this event.)

Well, I had better sign off, but before I do, I want you all to know how much I have enjoyed being your President this last year. Hanging with the ASC is one of the brightest spots in my life. I love going to the air patch and being with such fine aviators (I have hung with some pretty fine aviators in my forty

years of flying.) Be that as it may, I have one request, if you are going to fly on Christmas Eve keep an eye out for the "sled" as I have some pretty high expectations this year and I don't want a mid air with the Fat Man to cause me to miss out on some neat stuff.

As always, Fly Safe! Your Prez, Bob

Beware Ground Rush *Howard Banks*

Far too often we hear of yet another glider pilot found dead in his glider, which is usually discovered upside down on some barren mountain side. The reason for the crash is often left as a mystery. The pilot was often very experienced and the weather was not unusual. Even the logger that is typically present these days doesn't give enough information to make a judgement.

We just had another case like this in Colorado.

One theory often heard is that the pilot was flying too slowly close to the mountain or ridge and a strong thermal ran up the slope, hit the inside wing and tipped the glider inverted too fast for the pilot to react. It is plausible. Your editor was tipped past vertical on a ridge in Pennsylvania in his -20 one time, but had the airspeed and room to recover. But re-reading a 2003 issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* produced another, persuasive, explanation in a short note accompanying an article on Alpine soaring. In the note, John Hoskins, a noted British gliding safety expert and an accident investigator for the British Gliding Association, writes about a phenomenon that can occur when flying low in mountains or along ridges. Since that is where Moriarty pilots often fly, it seems worth reviewing Hoskins' thoughts.

He is talking about the danger point, when you are low on the mountain, looking for lift or working some weak lift along a windward facing slope, trying to stay up and avoid a long retrieve. "Beware your changing apparent horizon", he warns. You typically have a horizon when you are facing away from the ridge but you often don't have one on the half of the circle when you are facing the ridge. The tendency in these circumstances is to ease the nose up as you approach the rising ground. Note the factors at work here. You will be flying downwind as you approach the ridge,

and so appear to be flying faster than when flying away from the ground. The ground is rushing up at you, sometimes awful fast.

An understandable next reaction could easily be to tighten the circle a lot to stay away from the high-rising ground. In other words, increase the bank angle. That increases stall speed. And all this happens at a time when you have just pulled the nose up because it looked as though you were going towards the rising ground much too fast. Sounds like a clear recipe for a stall spin.

The arithmetic is also pretty illuminating. Suppose there is a 15 knot wind (modest enough by local standards). And suppose that you are making 30 degree circles at around 45 knots to stay in weak lift. That is around a 700 foot diameter circle, and in the 30 seconds it takes to make a complete 360 degrees the wind will have moved the center of your circle over 750 feet nearer to the rising ground. If you are flying a bit more aggressively, in a 45 deg, 45 knot circle of about 500 feet diameter, this 15 knot wind will still shift your center point over 500 feet towards the mountain. Doesn't take many circles to be facing ground rush!

Hoskins suggests that we can check our performance by finding some relatively weak lift coming off the upwind side of a long sloping ridge, such as can be found on the Manzano range or the foothills around Santa Fe. At a comfortable distance, check your thermaling technique and especially your speed control by noting whether, in order to stay in the lift, you are constantly having to adjust your circle because you not maintaining a constant airspeed. Typically, he warns, even at some seemingly safe distance from the rising ground you may be pulling up and slowing down as you approach the rising ground.

Oh, and he also says that when you are low in proximity of rising ground you should constantly check your airspeed. Some things to practice next Spring!

The Twin Astir

As you may recall, we voted to sell the Twin Aster because it has seen so little use. The

board came up with a figure of \$45,000 with the trailer, but not the EDS oxygen system or the one man rigging tool. By holding on to the above mentioned items, the effective worth of the Twin Aster is now at about \$46,500, or perhaps a bit more depending on how you value the O2 system and the rigging tool.

As you are aware, Brian, (Mr. ASC IT), placed an add in the "For Sale" section of Wings and Wheels. Perhaps that should read the "For Sail" section, but I digress.

The add had not been on the internet more than a day or so when the calls started rolling in. First taker was Nick Kennedy from To-hell-you-ride which you may know as Telluride. In any case Nick will have taken delivery by the time you read this.

There were a number of other calls and emails from folks who got a bit irate when they discovered it had already been sold. One succinct internet note asked "are you flexible on your asking price?" That, as you might imagine led to an even more succinct response which was of course; no.

I've had some member feed back in which I was told we asked too little for the Twin, (Robert Mudd thought we were asking too much), so I checked around with some folks including the man who is very much in touch with such things, Fidel Ramos. Fidel, George Applebay's ace fiberglass man has a knowledgeable finger on the pulse of the going prices for used gliders. Fidel said that we were asking the correct amount.

I suspect the issues which allowed us to get our asking price are these; the G103's have a real useful load problem, (don't super-size me please), additionally there are not that many other two place gliders in this country within the price range of our Twin Aster.

So, there you have it. The Twin Aster is history and we are a bit better off financially. Now that we have a few bucks in the bank we need to look at what we can do to improve our club facility which is, I'm sure you will agree in a sorry state of dis-repair.

ASC Operations Schedule

Date	OPS 1	OPS 2	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Dec 22 Saturday	PALA A	CARRIS M		STOGNER M
Dec 23 Sunday	McKNIGHT P	BUENAFE C		TICHY T
Dec 29 Saturday	PHILLIPS C	ANDREOTTI R		WADSWORTH H
Dec 30 Sunday	ANDERSON R	HUDSON R	TAYLOR K	WRIGHT R
Jan 5 Saturday	BUENAFE C	FRAUNFELTER E	WIER J	HAWKINS T
Jan 6 Sunday	BLOCH J	HARMONY D		HILL W
Jan 12 Saturday	CATES J	WILSON B	COLLINS A	ROESKE S
Jan 13 Sunday	STEWART W	CHEVALIER J		STOGNER M
Jan 19 Saturday	CUMIFORD Jr. J	VANIS A	DAFFER J	WILLAN V
Jan 20 Sunday	BOYCE J	RESOR B		WILLAN V
Jan 26 Saturday	BIELEK K	AIKEN G		THOMAS R
Jan 27 Sunday	MORRISON L	BRIGGS P		TICHY T
Feb 2 Saturday	MARTINEZ J	HUSS J		WADSWORTH H
Feb 3 Sunday	PALA A	BREWER V		WRIGHT R
Feb 9 Saturday	STOLL F	KOENIG C		HAWKINS T
Feb 10 Sunday	BROTHERS L	ABEYTA B		HILL W
Feb 16 Saturday	HARE J	HAWKINS M		ROESKE S
Feb 17 Sunday	KAWAL D	MAXON S		STOGNER M
Feb 23 Saturday	EKDAHL C	SENER W		THOMAS R