

Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

May 2008

President's Notes

By Bob Hudson

"Summertime and the living is easy...." Well the weather has finally broken and we might have a reprieve from the winds and the cold temperatures. We are starting to see some really good flights and our OLC points are beginning to add up, but we still need some ACS help. So find your way to Moriarty and "saddle up"!

Our first movie night was quite a success. About twenty of us met at Geoff Aiken's house and watched two really great flicks. The first movie was a "documentary" on the 1969 Nationals held in Marfa, Texas. The movie was called the Sun Ship Game and it was a very neat introduction to racing as conducted by some of America's best soaring pilots. These pilots were some of the giants in our sport with several Hall of Famers competing. Besides the great flying shots, the fashions worn by the contestants demonstrated why we don't ever want to go back in time.

The second movie was a documentary on the new sport of Soaring Grand Prix Racing. As you know our own Chip Garner has raced in a Grand Prix, but this one was in New Zealand. The scenery was beautiful and at the same time some of the most inhospitable terrain you would ever hope not to fly over was shown. It was obvious that you had to know what you were doing as land out opportunities were almost nonexistent. Additionally the speeds the racers were flying were as fast as you could conceivably go and still keeps the wings on. By the end of the night we hadn't even begun to delve into the bag of soaring movies brought, so it looks like we will have to have another Night at the Movies, stay tuned.

I would like to thank Andrew Vanis for providing the club with a portable awning/sun shade for the use of our Operations personnel. Additionally, I have begun to rebuild our Operations trailer and Billy Hill is arranging for us to purchase a dedicated operations

vehicle (a four person golf cart). All these additions will help to make Operations Duty a little more enjoyable. Help is on the horizon.

If you have been out to the airport lately then you would have been treated to seeing our old friend Bull Dog out of his trailer and into the air. For those not familiar with Bull Dog, it is the 1-26 owned by club member Pete Vredenburg. Bull Dog is a famous movie star appearing in the movie *The Soldier*, starring household name Ken Owen in 1970. When Bull Dog takes to the air, you can witness Pete in his all orange flying kit; just don't ask to see the underwear.

On June 14th we will have another Bar-B-Q and later in the month, after the folks get back from Parowan (the Region 9 Soaring Contest), we will have an old fashioned pancake breakfast. Until that time come on out and enjoy hour club and as always, fly safe. Bob

Flying

By Billy Hill

Flying isn't chess or football or checker! Flying isn't some *game*! Flying is life distilled down to the essence – it's the straight two hundred-proof stuff.

I have learned over the years that you can't second guess yourself although we all do it after the fact. You have to do the best you can all the time, make the best decision you can in the time you have to make it – which is always precious little – and live with the consequences regardless. That's the way flying is. Occasionally you're going to make a mistake, and "F" it up. That's inevitable. The trick is not to make a *fatal* mistake. But when you have made a mistake, the best thing is to sequester yourself and ask what lessons have you learned.

Some times there are no right answers. Some answers are better than others, but every option has unforeseen twists.

Ask your self this question. How well prepared are you? How thoroughly run was the checklist you just completed? Did you just talk the talk or did you actually walk the walk? How current are you? What's your proficiency level as compared to the flying conditions?

The bottom line then becomes; Don't let your ego write a check your abilities, and hence your ass, can't cover.

Chip arrested at Warner Springs

The news flashes that came over the internet were alarming. Chip Garner had been arrested while flying in the Region 12 contest at Warner Springs in April. It was alleged that he had dinged restricted airspace at the Mexican border.

Then there was video on the SSA site of Chip being led away from the morning pilots' meeting in handcuffs by the local Sheriff, who had told Chip sternly that "Homeland Security takes this very seriously."

Chip's biggest concerns, he now says, were the idea that he would lose all his points from the day (plus get a 100 point penalty for an airspace infringement) and would not be able to fly on the morning he was fingered by the local cop. But the video shows he was pretty shaken by the way things were happening. Who wouldn't be?

Well, it didn't take long for it to be revealed that this was a pretty sick joke by the Warner Springs types. The local Sheriff is a buddy of Brett Willat, the owner-operator of the gliding operation, and he went along, though only so far. Chip's first clue that this might not be real was that he was not formally cautioned (all that Miranda stuff), and then, after he had been walked well away from the rest of the pilots, the Sheriff asked him if he would rather fly or go downtown. "Fly!" said Chip.

What had happened was that the scoring program used in SSA sanctioned contests had thrown Chip's log file out as containing an airspace infringement (hit the border zone). That meant loss of all points for the day plus that 100 point penalty – a disaster for a seriously competitive pilot. Chip says that for some reason there was no SUA warning on his flight computer.

Fortunately for Chip, the joke was soon on the Willats and the Warner Springs gang. A more careful and detailed re-examination of Chip's flight log showed that he had not dinged the border – though by only a teeny amount. One report suggested it was a matter of feet, but in this game a miss is a miss. So Chip retained his points and went on to fly the day of the "arrest".

Even better, Chip won standard class at the contest! He was however flying as a guest, so it won't appear in the records. Why a guest? Because Chip and Mark Keene, his standard class partner in the upcoming World's in Rieti, Italy, were practicing flying as a team. This inter-pilot cooperation ("I am in a big fat thermal over here") is not permitted in US contests, but is the only way to win in international contests. Mark came third at Warner Springs.

Rieti will be held in July. Let's hope that the Carabinieri don't go for sick jokes.

Wanted:

To purchase a share of, or entire, 30:1 or better glider to fly out of Moriarty. Pilot has Glider Certificate, recent experience in Grob 103, plus over 200 hours in other non-powered flight.

Andrew Vanis: 505-304-5306

Vanis13@yahoo.com

Pesky Little Owls

Tim Hawkins

When you stop to think about it, you realize that maybe this cute, innocent-looking little couple has been the cause of wind and other problems at the airport this spring...

The ancient Greeks considered owls sacred to Athena, the goddess of wisdom and learning. This connection meant owls were considered wise and kind, hence the reference wise old owl. Sadly this perception changed during the course of history, and owls are today mainly synonymous with bad luck. Simply the sound of an owl's hoot will bring bad luck, but you can protect yourself and those close to you. Throwing salt, hot chilli peppers or vinegar into the fire ensures the owl will get a sore tongue and stop hooting. A more drastic

solution is to pull your clothes off, turn them inside out and put them back on again.

Because owls lead a relatively solitary, nocturnal existence it's considered bad luck to see one during daylight hours. Anyone who decides to look into an owl's nest will be left feeling sad and depressed - and rightly so! Even owls deserve some privacy!

An owl's bad luck isn't just restricted to their nests - they bring bad luck to our houses too. Owls landing on the roof or hooting constantly near a house indicate someone is going to die. And owls that nest in empty houses are a sure sign that the house is haunted, because they're the only creatures that can put up with the presence of ghosts. An owl that makes the mistake of flying into an Irish house must be killed immediately, because if it manages to fly out again it takes with it the house's good luck.

Owls have developed a few superstitions surrounding childbirth. An expectant mother who hears an owl hooting can be certain she will give birth to a daughter. Pregnant women must check their attics and evict all owls that might be living there to avoid the risk of miscarriage. When the time comes to give birth there should be no owls in the delivery room - if they hoot at the moment of childbirth the child will have a miserable life.

There should also be no owls flying around during funeral services, because if they hoot the deceased will rise from the dead to haunt the living.

I found several "good" superstitions concerning this unfortunate bird. Well, they're good for humans but not for owls. Their eggs were thought to prevent epilepsy and bad sight, as well as helping drunks recover their senses. Owl broth was fed to children in ancient Britain to prevent whooping cough, on the assumption that the owl did not suffer pain while making a similar sound. People who suffer from gout can be cured by eating salted owl, and any man that eats roasted owl will be obedient, and a slave to his wife.

[The piece above was taken by the assist. Ed. from a Tim and Mary Hawkins email, photos by Mary Hawkins. Thank you, both!]

Followup by Brian Resor

Below you find two photos of the resident *Athene Cunicularia Hypugaea*, or Western Burrowing Owl, taken by Mary Hawkins.

In the U.S., the burrowing owl is identified as a candidate species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Candidate species are animals and plants which may warrant official listing as threatened or endangered, but there is no conclusive data to give them this protection at the present time.

The Burrowing Owl is listed among the Nature Conservancy's "Unlucky 13," grassland birds whose populations have dangerously declined in recent years.

So, try not to get any bright ideas even if these little guys are the source of our unlucky springtime soaring frustrations!





Color images are found in the 2008 section of abqsoaring.org photos

ASC Operations Schedule

Date	OPS 1	OPS 2	Instructor	Tow Pilot
May 31 Saturday	BLOCH J	BRIGGS P	TAYLOR K	THOMAS R
Jun 1 Sunday	HUSS J	MARTINEZ J		TICHY T
Jun 7 Saturday	HARMONY D	MORRISON L	DAFFER J	WADSWORTH H
Jun 8 Sunday	BOYCE J	BREWER V		WRIGHT R
Jun 14 Saturday	AIKEN G	BIELEK K	WIER J	HAWKINS T
Jun 15 Sunday	CUMIFORD Jr. J	VANIS A		HILL W
Jun 21 Saturday	BUENAFE C	ROZZONI R		ROESKE S
Jun 22 Sunday	KOENIG C	STEWART W	COLLINS A	THOMAS R
Jun 28 Saturday	ABEYTA B	NEWMAN P	DAFFER J	TICHY T
Jun 29 Sunday	HAWKINS M	STOLL F		WADSWORTH H
Jul 5 Saturday	HARE J	BROTHERS L		WRIGHT R
Jul 6 Sunday	SENER W	KAWAL D		HAWKINS T
Jul 12 Saturday	EKDAHL C	PALA A		STOGNER M
Jul 13 Sunday	OKANDAN M	PHILLIPS C		HILL W
Jul 19 Saturday	McKNIGHT P	BANKS H		ROESKE S
Jul 20 Sunday	HUDSON R	ANDREOTTI R		STOGNER M
Jul 26 Saturday	ANDERSON R	PHILLIPS C		THOMAS R
Jul 27 Sunday	RESOR B	FRAUNFELTER E		TICHY T
Aug 2 Saturday	BLOCH J	WILSON B		WADSWORTH H
Aug 3 Sunday	CATES J	MORRISON L		WRIGHT R