

# Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

December 2008

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## President's Notes

*By Bob Hudson*

"I am dreaming of a white Christmas, just like the..." [Oh there he goes again.] This is the time of year that I really relish and I think I am finally getting into the spirit. This is that time of year that friends sneak into the club hangar and put presents inside Colleen's and my plane, it could happen. Yeah, I know I am dreaming, but this time of year brings out the kid in me. It is my way of compensating for the memories of a Christmas thirty six years ago that don't hold such pleasant memories, but enough; we are here to bask in the glory of the season. It doesn't matter what your personal belief system is, you must admit this time of year usually brings out the best in people. It is to that end that I want to bestow on each and every one of you my best wishes for a most joyous holiday season.

We have had our annual Club meeting and with it the election of a new Board (see report below). It might not be obvious but your Board is responsible for keeping the ship of state (our organization) upright and moving forward. I hope that my leadership as your President, along with the other Board members and our volunteer officers, has provided you with a means in which you could further your aviation quests in a safe and progressive manner. I am proud to have been associated with our Board. I have watched and participated with them as they have taken on difficult issues (such as the removal of a club member) and the not so difficult issues (like where we should hold our meetings so that we can get a good meal). Each time we have approached an issue, we have, in my opinion, always acted in the best interest of our membership. The bottom line it has been fun and an honor to serve the Albuquerque Soaring Club.

Speaking about the Board, the Board has taken on the task, actually it was Stan (our Chief Instructor) who did the "grunt" work, of defining what is Cross Country. What brought

this on is that we state in our Ops manual that a Club Instructor needs to sign pilots off before they can take Club aircraft cross country. Well, that begged the question as to what constitutes cross country. Well in this newsletter you will see a short definition of what we feel is a definition of cross country. Keep in mind that weather, equipment and mental agility can quickly redefine what "your" cross country might be. Bottom line this is a guide to be used for planning purposes.

Talk about serving, we will be serving each of you (dinner), once again, at our annual Gala. In this issue of the Towlines there will be more information on the event, but I want to stress that it is important to get back to us/me your RSVP, so that we can actively plan and so I don't have to make 140 phone calls, not that I don't like talking to you. (By the way, if I have to call, it will be at 3 am and once again note: RSVP means please respond either way, yes or no). Besides the usual fun (the awards) and the fellowship, our own Master of Ceremonies will give us a presentation on the life and times of Dick Johnson, very interesting. So plan on joining us on the evening of the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> of January.

Kudos, goes out to Cliff Goldman who earned his glider add on rating. Now that he has his "ticket" I don't know who will open the club house each Saturday morning as Cliff was usually the first one out there...good on ya Cliff! While we are congratulating people, let's congratulate Terry Buss for returning back to the club. You should see Terry, soon, back in the seat of one of our tow planes.

Remember, there is plenty of good soaring to be had, so get out and fly, but fly safe! Oh, and have a spectacular Christmas and a great New Year!!! (Just like last year, if you are looking for a perfect Christmas present for that perfect someone, wander on down to Sundance

and purchase a gift certificate...if nothing else you will get them out of your hair for an hour.)

Your Prez, Bob Hudson

Annual Gala Dinner  
January 24<sup>th</sup>  
At the Marriott Pyramid  
Cash bar opens at 6:30pm  
Dinner served at 8 pm  
\$35 a head

There will be a choice of Prime Rib, gussied up Salmon, or a vegetarian mystery tour, accompanied by a salad and desert with all the trimmings. Speaker(s) yet to be assigned by El Prez, but there will be a presentation on the life and soaring of Dick Johnson, a review of the 2008 soaring season by the numbers and, of course, presentation of the awards. Please respond, yes or no, to Bob Hudson.

**Club annual meeting**

A highly successful occasion at the club house on December 13, 2008, with a very large turnout – perhaps it was the offer of a superb pancakes and sausage breakfast cooked with panache by Connie Buenafe, Terry Phillips and Mary Hawkins, perhaps it was the agenda. Whatever, it worked.

The following were elected, appointed and were made to volunteer for 2009, all by acclaim.

**Elections:** The two changes from last year result from the resignation of Brian Morrison who was loudly applauded for his financial management over the past three years.

President	Bob Hudson
Vice president	Connie Buenafe
Treasurer	Mary Hawkins
Secretary	Paul Briggs
Directors at large	Billy Hill & Mark Mocho

**Appointees**

Operations officer	Diana Roberts
Maintenance	Robert Mudd
Chief tow pilot	Tim Hawkins
Chief instructor	Stan Roeske
Chief safety officer	Billy Hill

**Volunteers**

Web page	Brian Resor
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Towlines	Howard Banks
Parachutes	Paul Briggs
Club House MX	JD Huss
Tow scheduler	John Farris
Accountant	Erika Zahne

**Crosswind runway:** The meeting opened with an enlightening and positive presentation by Jane Lucero, the Airport Development Administrator with NM State government based in Santa Fe. She made it clear that the cross wind runway is not a lost cause and that progress is in fact being made towards its implementation. She also said that the State aviation people are supportive and that the project is on their priority list.

The land swaps required to get land where the new runway will go are more or less complete; what remains is for the FAA to publish those swaps in the Federal Register to allow for any objections to be filed. This process should be completed by May 2009.

In the meantime, the FAA requirement that the existing runway be improved as a condition of getting a second runway is moving ahead. It will, she said, most likely require milling the surface and a new overlay. Core samples to decide the exact treatment were taken in early December. This work on 26-08 should take about three weeks and could happen in 2009. That would leave the way open for the new N-S runway to be installed in 2010 or 2011.

One of the things that would help this move as fast as possible would be, she explained, for pilots at Moriarty to write to the State aviation people to make clear that the lack of a cross wind runway is a safety issue. This should not be a form letter but something in each plot's own words. Two options here: email to: [Jane.Lucero@State.nm.us](mailto:Jane.Lucero@State.nm.us), or via snail mail to: Jane Lucero, State Aviation Administrator, 1550 Pachero St (PO Box 1149), Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149.

**Club finances:** Outgoing treasurer Brian Morrison reports that the club nominally has around \$66,000 in cash, though \$35,000 of that results from the sale of the Twin Astir. Thanks to Brian's careful parsimony, the recent \$21,000 hit from an engine rebuild for a Pawnee, plus the usual maintenance bills will be absorbed. Nevertheless, he warned, in real

operating terms the club remains broke. He therefore recommended that the club's tow fees remain at present levels.

**Cross country:** The board had earlier asked Stan Roeske to develop a broader definition of cross country as it applies to use of club gliders. As used in the ASC By-Laws and Operations and Procedures Manual(s), the Term "cross-country soaring flight" is defined as any flight during which the glider is beyond *safe* gliding distance of the launch airport (in most cases, Moriarty Municipal airport, 0 E 0). In this context, we define the following:

"*Safe* gliding distance" for the **Schweizer 2-33 and 1-26** is a return distance to OE0 of less than **2 statute miles for every 1000 ft of altitude** above pattern altitude (7200 ft. MSL), and *never* downwind of the airport. This represents approximately 1/2 the published best L/D of the gliders.

"*Safe* gliding distance" for the **Grob G103 and Glasflugel Libelle** is a return distance to OE0 of less than **3.5 statute miles for every 1000 ft of altitude** above pattern altitude (7200 ft. MSL); and, if downwind of the airport, appropriately less, based on the winds aloft. This represents approximately 1/2 the published best L/D of the gliders. Examples (assuming NO headwind component on return to OE0):

Location	Altitude, MSL 2-33 or 1-26	Altitude, MSL G103 or Libelle
Downtown Moriarty (2 sm)	8,200	7800
Stanley (11 sm)	12,500	10,000
Edgewood (12 sm)	13,000	10,500
Chilili (14 sm)	14,000	11,000
Estancia (16 sm)	15,000	11,500
South Mountain(18 sm)	16,500	12,000
Clines Corner (20 sm)	17,000	12,500
Galisteo (28 sm)	>18k – not legal	15,000
Sandia No. Peak (29 sm)	>18k – not legal	15,500
Mountainair (35 sm)	>18k – not legal	17,000

Distance is to the nearest mile, altitude to the nearest 500 ft.)

**Warning:** Meeting the above guidelines **do NOT guarantee** that an individual will not land out. The above only provides a working definition of an "intentional cross-country flight" which is prohibited by the club without specific training and instructor endorsements. The Estancia valley is known for strong "sink" as well as strong "lift" and the individual pilot will be wise to consider more conservative personal limits for "local" flights.

**Libelle check out:** Stan's next task is to develop a better set of criteria for the instructor community to use when deciding which pilots are qualified to fly the club's Libelle and when that should happen. Details will follow shortly.

**Parachutes and new retrieve kit:** Paul Briggs explained that there are far too many cases where the club's provision of parachutes for members is being abused. One case involved a chute where the ripcord had been pulled, but the opened chute was just stuffed unannounced into the cupboard. In another case, the casing was wet (with what?) and nobody said a word. We were lucky there was not in this instance damage to the canopy. There will be more to say on this at the safety meeting in March.

Paul has also created a large and very comprehensive retrieve kit, to be taken by the kind soul(s) who are coerced to retrieve a club member who has landed out. It includes a comprehensive fist aid kit, warm blankets and a whole lot more very useful items. Check lists will be on the bag, located in the parachute cupboard in the club room. Familiarize yourself with what the bag contains and what it is all intended to help with.

**1-26/Peewee (world class) nationals:** They will be held at Moriarty in June 2009. CD will be our very own Mitch Hudson and contest manager will be El Prez Bob Hudson, who will be looking for help. One thing that will be arranged this time is that the contest launch will be moved a bit later in the day to permit local pilots to take an early tow.

## **Two Demons of Aviation: Haste and Impatience**

*By Billy Hill*

It's a given that a very high percentage of aviation accidents and incidents are attributed to pilot error. Within that category, haste and impatience is most certainly a subset.

For example; fuel starvation. Now who would ever associate a lack of motion lotion, (that's av-gas to the uninitiated), with a glider accident? Well, let's say the tow pilot is making one tow too many and at fifty feet the engine quits. If you have not played a hand of "what if?" prior to departure, you may be caught off guard when the tow plane starts an unexpected descent from fifty feet back to terra firma. What about wagging the wings, you ask? If the tow plane runs out of petrol at fifty feet, I can gar-ron-tee you that said pilot will be (a) taken by surprise because he/she let the airplane run out of gas in the first place, and (b) too busy trying to keep from having his own accident to worry about yours.

Sure, the above may be an extreme example of piss-poor-planning, but it's certainly not out of the realm of possibility which is why you want to play that hand of "what-if" before the takeoff roll starts. The "what if" questions are those related to the actions you will take should a problem arise that requires a conditioned response to an external stimulus, that is, a wing waggle from the tow pilot, or a rope break.

Did you notice I did not use the words "immediate action" in regard to what should be considered an emergency situation?

There are very few emergency situations which require immediate action on your part. Far more often than not, you should take the time to "wind your watch" before responding to a given situation. Those situations requiring immediate action on your part should be those covered by repetitive training which has made them a conditioned reflex. (More on "winding your watch" at a later time since I'm at least two tangents away from the title of this missive.)

If you plan to do more than down hill slides, you should take the time to examine thoroughly the pending weather in order to determine the type of soaring conditions you might encounter. Next, the pre-flight. As I've mentioned in previous articles, I know of a pilot who was killed in his Genesis glider because he was interrupted during the pre-flight phase. Before you start the pre-flight, clear your mind of distractions and focus on the task at hand. It might mean the difference between an enjoyable day and a harrowing experience. If you are too distracted by non-flying related issues, then don't fly! Save it for another day when you are not likely to be a hazard to your self and others.

I prefer to perform my preflight and pre-departure check list when I reach the glider tie-down area. This may also includes a control check along with a test of the tow release. Once you are staged for departure, all checks should have been done as part of your pre-departure check list. If you take the time to do all the above thoroughly, you will not allow your self to be rushed.

If your objective is to fly cross-country, your planning should have begun at least a day in advance. Showing up at the airport mid-day and expecting to rush right out and fling your self into the air with great abandon can be a recipe for disaster.

All we need to do is think of how often being in a hurry has led to error, incident, or accident during our normal ground-bound lives. If you don't have the time to do it right the first time, when will you? Yes Virginia, haste does make waste.