



Northern California  
Aerobatic Club

CHAPTER 38

#### ♦CHAPTER OFFICERS

**Darren Pleasance,**  
President

650.212.1806 H  
415.318.5145 W  
president@iac38.org

**Ben Freelove,**

Vice-President  
vicepres@iac38.org

**Anil Kumar, Secretary**

secretary@iac38.org

**Howard Kirker, Treasurer**

510.651.6514 H  
treasurer@iac38.org

#### ♦DIRECTORS

**Che Barnes**

Chebarnes@yahoo.com

**Marilyn Dash**

marilyndash@comcast.net

**Andrew Connolly**

CONNOLA2@airproducts.com

**Gordon Sorensen**

916.548.2079 H  
916.645.6242 W  
twotterdriver@hotmail.com

**Angie Niles**

Bricket@comcast.net

**Peter Jensen**

pittss2b@hotmail.com

#### ♦DIRECTORS EMERITUS

**Dr. Richard Rihn**

510.938.4236 H  
rihnairco@aol.com

**Jeanette Goodman**

209.478.5462

**Tom Myers**

650.328.2141 H  
650.473.0200 x108 W  
tom.myers@stanfordalumni.org

#### ♦WEBMASTER

**Brett Goldsmith**

brett.e.goldsmith@gmail.com

#### ♦YOUNG EAGLES

Need a Volunteer

#### ♦NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**Che Barnes**

editor@iac38.org

# THE ACRONAUT

Volume 7 - Number 4

## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



This month's picture was taken by member Patrick Huey at the California Capital Airshow in Sacramento. Are you doing anything acro related this month? Take a picture, tell us about it, send it to [editor@IAC38.org](mailto:editor@IAC38.org). Yours might be the next picture of the month.

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## Prez' Post

*Darren Pleasance*

Greetings Chapter 38ers:

By now you've all heard about the amazing turn of events we had in the month of March with regard to our aerobatic boxes. We now have 3 (yes three) aerobatic boxes at our disposal between Tracy, New Jerusalem, and Calaveras County. We'll start using them as of April so I hope this is the start of another burst of momentum for the Chapter as we create opportunities for more critiquing as well as just good ol' hangin' out opportunities. On the Calaveras front,

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 2006 Member Dues

GOOD NEWS: Tracy Box Renewed

BAD NEWS: 42 members haven't !

Have you?

Please use the form on the last page or go to [iac38.org](http://iac38.org) and you can link to Paypal (use the 'About IAC 38' tab), to renew or start your membership for 2006. Just \$25/year, or \$30/year for a family. Please provide all requested info/updates on the form. Thanks!



in particular, I flew up last Sunday to personally say hi to Kathy Zancanella, the airport manager, and we couldn't have a more supportive person for our activities. She is thrilled to have us stage out of her airport, has offered to provide a BBQ every time we have a formal critiquing session there, and has arranged for us to get a nice write up in the local press describing to the community who we are and what we do and bringing to life the positive aspects of our sport and our contributions to the community (fuel sales, soft drink sales, Young Eagles support, Airport Day support, and good old entertainment). As I left my brief meeting with Kathy last weekend, I took the opportunity to fulfill her request for a low pass, and then christened the area (above 1500 AGL) with a 4-pt roll and hammer head before heading for home. For the first time in a long time, all is well on the aerobatic box front.

On other big topics, we now have a new Web Master for our Chapter. After something in the neighborhood of a decade of outstanding support from Cris Flint, Brett Goldsmith has stepped in to take over the leadership for our website. As Cris has steadily moved away from aerobatics into other areas of interest, he's graciously continued to maintain our site and

preserve our domain (even paying for this out of his own pocket). For his years of support, both as Chapter President and as long-time web master, I'd like to thank Cris for being such a great supporter of the Chapter. Looking forward, we've been trying to find someone willing to step in and take our existing site and update and upgrade it to help it become an even more valuable tool for our members. Fortunately, Brett stepped forward last month and volunteered (un-coerced I might add) to take over the Web Master role. In his short time on the job, Brett has already updated several key areas, including adding our new Chapter Logo to the home page. Over the coming months, we'll be working with Brett to add the full year's calendar, perhaps make it easy for people to update their profiles, and continue to add more pictures of our Chapter members in action. Please thank Brett for volunteering for this important role the next time you see him.

On the membership front, we've added almost 10 new members to the Chapter since the beginning of the year which is a record as far as I know. It's great to see so many folks expressing interest in our sport and Chapter 38 in particular and, like most things, their enthusiasm adds to the great energy we've already got making the club that much better. To all our new members, I hope you'll find ways to attend our monthly Chapter meetings, come to our various critique sessions (whether you have a plane or not), join in to our many fly-outs during the year, and of course, participate in our annual Paso Robles contest either as a competitor, a volunteer, or both. If you haven't already, please let me, or any one on the Board, know why you've joined and what we can do to make the club worth the steep \$25 annual membership we charge.

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## Flying High

Darrin Silver - [www.FlyingHighComics.com](http://www.FlyingHighComics.com)

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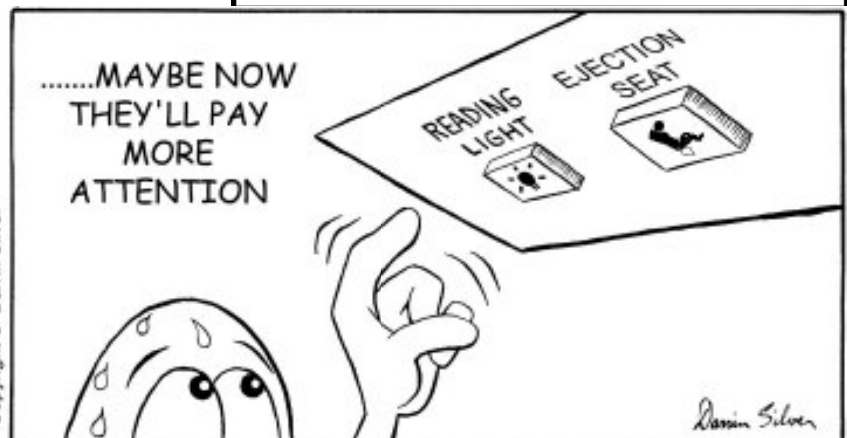


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## Editor's Column

*Che Barnes*

Special thanks to our contributors this month. They are what make this newsletter possible.

As usual, Darren Pleasance has given a great synopsis on club events and issues. He has also given a blow by blow account of the impressive effort he and other members have put forth in obtaining our new aerobatic waivers.

Patrick Huey gives a great report of the Capital City Airshow. His article serves as an example of what helps this newsletter out. If you are participating in anything aviation related, take some pictures and send me a report! Anyone can contribute.

Marilyn gives some inside gouge on what is going on in our community in her latest "Heard it on the Ramp" edition. She



has also done a very touching article about Nick Nil-meyer, eloquently putting into words the sense of loss that we all feel. Thanks, Marilyn.

Sal Webber has done an excellent job of distilling the calendar information into a user friendly format. We'll try to keep that updated as accurately as possible. Oh, and don't forget to read

about the upcoming fundraiser for Todd Whitmer's AWAC participation.

I hear it rained 22 days in March. April is going to be different!

- Che

## Heard it on the Ramp

*Marilyn Dash*

Heard it on the Ramp....

The beginning of the Aerobatic Season is always exciting. What category will Darren fly, how about Howard Kirker – will he finally move up? How many new faces will join us this year? This should be a very interesting year.

The first contest of the year came and went. Apparently California Pilots are allergic to flying in snow! Good call! The first ever Stead Mini Fest went off – with several hitches and ouches along the way. They still haven't posted any results – so, don't think you missed seeing them. It was a valiant effort by Tim Brill and Jim Nahom. I'm sure their next contest will run even smoother.

March also brought us the first Capital City Airshow at Mather AFB in Sacramento. The Blue Angels were spectacular. I believe that was their best performance – by far. Unfortunately, the logistics were so bad, we didn't get a chance to see much of the earlier show – we did enjoy Julie Clark, the Warhog and several Warbird Flybys prior to watching the Blues.

Good News

The incredible news about our plethora of Aerobatic Boxes is the best thing to happen to our chapter since... well, since forever! We now have three Boxes to choose from each weekend. There is no reason for us not to whoop Chapter 36's butt this year! ;-)

Look for more information in this newsletter and on-line through our website and email list for additional information about practice weekends.

Good News/Bad News

I just heard that Bill Stein will no longer be flying with the Red Barons. Apparently, a "new rule" (I HATE NEW RULES) has come out that will not allow the Red Barons Pilots to fly for anyone else. So, Bill can either fly for the Barons or fly for Bill Stein Airshows – but not both, which he has done the last few years. The bad news is – we won't get to see Bill fly for the Barons anymore. The GOOD news is we get to see Bill Stein fly that flashy Edge 540 in Airshows instead.

I can live with that!

April Events

April brings us the Riverside Airshow, Sun'n'Fun and the March AFB Airfest with the Thunderbirds. Riverside will have John Collver, Rob Harrison, Ed Hamill and our own Sean D. Tucker performing. If I wasn't going to be in NYC that weekend, I would probably head down to Riverside – weather permitting, of course.

Speaking of weather – what the heck is going on? We had sunshine in January and rain all month in March? Someone start doing their sunshine dance and let's get some spring

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## Tail of Two Waivers

Darren Pleasance

Once upon a time, there were two airports. One was a mature, multi-runway facility located in a fast growing region of California known as "Tracy", the other, a mere 20 year old, single runway landing strip located near a remote and sleepy town called "Calaveras". Both airports were quite attractive, sporting nice dark, blacktop runways with great facilities and abundant fuel. Both airports also had dreams of having aerobatic airplanes flying in the skies above them and parents (let's call them "Airport Managers") who were equally sup-

portive of their little airport's lofty dreams. Yet, these two airports followed dramatically different paths that we'll describe in the coming pages. One had a fairy tale, Cinderella story with a fast track path to achieving its dreams of having its own "aerobatic box", the other suffered a much different fate, a more treacherous journey fraught with fear and uncertainty and littered with the loss of countless hours of painstaking work. While both airports were ultimately able to prevail and achieve their dreams of having aerobatic aircraft frolick-

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IAC Chapter 38 meeting last month, with Ben Freelove discussing the intricacies of spins

*(Heard it on the Ramp, continued from page 3)*

weather!

### Judges' School

We did have a great turnout – AGAIN for Judges' School. And this year – we should see some more Judges! We had a virtual study session that should have forced everyone to get their test into the IAC pronto!

The goal is for us to use the next critiquing sessions as a practical judges school add-on. For the first time since I've been attending contests, we were unable to have a full 5 judges at a contest last year. We are in need of new judges – and if we are to see our sport grow, we should take the responsibility and become a judge. And that means you!

Well, after a long, wet winter – I'm ready for some formation fun and aerobatic sessions. Who's with me!?

I'll see you on the ramp....

Marilyn

*(Pez's Post, continued from page 2)*

Lastly, a special thanks to Ben Freelove for his outstanding presentation at last month's Chapter meeting. We had standing room only as Ben described his experiences in advanced spins in the Pitts, complete with in-cockpit video. It was definitely among the most interesting Chapter meetings we've had (almost as good as my Alaska presentation...). We'll continue to work hard to bring a variety of compelling topics to each meeting that you'll find to fun and educational. This month, we're planning to host another "Flying the Maneuvers" session which is a perennial topic for anyone looking to capture tips and tricks for flying common aerobatic maneuvers at their best.. Just in time for the contest season...

I hope to see you all at our next Chapter meeting on Sunday, April 9th at 2:00 pm. (NOTE, still the early time to allow folks to fly home), at Attitude Aviation in Livermore.

Blue Skies,

- Darren

## In Memory of Nick Nilmeyer

Marilyn Dash

It was April 2001. I had just landed my trusty Cherokee, Daisy, at Delano for the Fun Fest. This was my first ever Aerobatic Contest and I was here to see the Aerobatic Pilots in action.

Minutes later, I was sitting in a lawn chair near the fence and watching the beautiful airplanes land. I had never seen so many beautiful planes in one place. When their props stopped, two young men would jump to their feet and run over to help the pilots push their airplanes to a nearby tie-down.

That was my first introduction to Nick Nilmeyer. He was one of those young men who had so much energy and was so helpful. I never forgot that day. It became the baseline for the level of volunteerism I have seen in the IAC since.

Nick and David Nilmeyer had recently purchased Norm DeWitt's Christen Eagle. I had talked with Norm about buying it – and Norm wisely chose the Nilmeyer offer over mine. Nick flew the heck out of it. The story was he was an 18 year old high school senior who came from a flying family. He was one of those Fence Kids who would wash and wax and fuel airplanes for a ride. He was never afraid of hard work, at least when it came to flying.

From that day five years ago, I have seen Nick grow up. Not just to a fine young man, but to a very talented pilot who didn't waste his natural ability, he cultivated it. He was trained by some of the best in the world and he was going places.

I remember the day he first brought his brand new Extra to Club Metz. The first thing Wayne Handley told him to do was inverted flat spins. Wayne wanted to make sure that he protégé wasn't going to just flail around in the sky, he was going to learn how to do it right, and safely.

I also remember the day when Nick had loaned his beloved Extra to the Red Bull Air Races in Reno and Klaus splayed the gear and got the prop. Nick still had a smile on his face and just shrugged it off as part of the deal. He was disappointed, of course – but never lost his sense of humor.

Again at Delano, he and Bill Stein came in to fly Unlimited for the first time. Big time Air Show Pilots – but they were here at our little contest flying Unlimited. And Nick totally ROCKED in his 4-minute free. It was probably one of the most exciting flights I'd ever seen.

And the day when Nick showed up to Paso under a questionable ceiling. All you could hear is the roar of his engine – and then he was short final. Some people thought he was crazy – I thought he was just Nick.

All of these stories came flooding back to me yesterday when I heard the news that the Aerobatic Community had lost one of our Stars of Tomorrow.

I will always remember the amazing amount of support that he had from two generations of family. His mom and dad and sister Courtney would be at nearly every event. His mom about to burst with pride and anxiety watching her beloved son fly.

And his grandparents and aunts and uncles and cousins, they all were there. Grandfather Brian and Uncle Justin even started competing shortly after Nick did. I remember one particular contest at Delano where they had two RVs and tents and tons of food. They fed everybody, cheered for everybody and everybody fell in love with them. They were a staple at nearly every contest. I even called them "The Nomadic Nilmeyers" in an article I wrote for Sport Aerobatics years ago.

I was initially slightly jealous of the amazing support that Nick had. But, I realized that they weren't there just for Nick, they were there for all of us. He brought his own cheering section, and they didn't stop cheering after he landed.

Since September of last year, six months, the Aviation Community has lost some amazing people. We lost Marta Meyer in September and Art Vance and Bear Smith in October. Then, Lance Teren in December and Eric Beard in January. Most of them freak accidents that will forever be unexplained.

Each time the statistics go up, many of us think about our own mortality. Some may think about quitting, some may actually turn in their membership cards. What we should do is

*(Continued on page 7)*



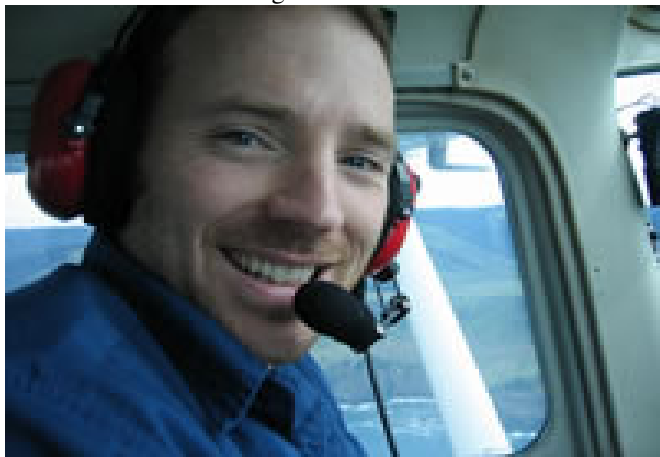
## New Members

*Che Barnes*

### Kevin Cordes

Kevin just started flying aerobatics and has 2.2 hrs logged; 1.2 in Citabria and 1 in Decathlon. He works as an engineer for a small medical device company in El Dorado Hills, CA. He is also a year and 4 months into building an RV-8.

He is about half way through his slow build wings and ordered the fuse and finishing kit in December. He was build-



ing in his garage then landed a hangar at Elk Grove (which is getting shutdown in July unless lawyers are able to stop it). He also has a 1968 Cessna 150. Welcome to the club, Kevin!

### Douglas Lovell

Doug is from the East Coast. Fishkill, NY to be precise. He has personally met at least one of our members, Dave Watson, who moved out this way last year. He is most active with Chapter 52, the 52 Bombers of which he has written



some newsletters. Chapter 52 attracts members from South-eastern New York, Western Connecticut, New Jersey, and Eastern Pennsylvania. They sponsor the Kathy Jaffe volunteer award in memory of Kathy, who was the epicenter of their chapter for many years, was well loved, and was lost to a crossover spin. They encourage the volunteer spirit and advocate spin training for all.

Doug's plane is a beautiful Pitts S1T kit built by David Pogue in Mesa, AZ. Based out of Poughkeepsie Dutchess County Airport (POU), Doug made it to five contests last year, placing one first, two thirds, and two fourths in Sportsman. He is moving-up to Intermediate this year.

Doug joined to support our newsletter, which he says is top notch. Hats off to Peter Jensen for earning that compliment.

### Cory Lovell

Cory is from Orangevale, CA. Cory first took flying lessons at 15 years old, got his student license at 16, then his private license on his 17th birthday. Right on. Since then, he has accumulated 1300 hours, of which 350 are as a flight instructor.



Cory currently owns a G1000 C-182, and is a part owner of a Pitts S-2C. He has just started getting into aerobatics and says that he is completely hooked.

### Rick Davidson

Rick is from Oconomowoc, WI. I believe I heard that he has been doing some flying down in King City and the Sean D. Tucker school. I am hoping to get some more info next issue.



# Capital Airshow Report

Patrick Huey

The inaugural California Capital Airshow took to the skies over Mather Field in Rancho Cordova on March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately many folks on Saturday watched it from their cars as traffic snarls and parking issues forced waits of up to 3 hours on Highway 50. By Sunday the waits seemed shorter unless you were trying to get a hot dog or a beer. But the flying was excellent and the weather could not have been more accommodating.



The highlights of this years show included standard military and civilian static displays including two FA-18F Super-Hornets manned by a few of my old students. (I taught new aviators at NAS Lemoore, CA for 3 years). As a new member of IAC, I watched the

civilian performers with a keen eye and was impressed Julie Clark in her T-34. Having flown that aircraft it was great to see it put through its paces. Tim Decker followed in his Pitts, Michael Hunter in the Laser 230 and Nikolay Timofeev finished up in his SU-26 with an absolutely jaw-dropping performance. From the military side, the A-10 Thunderbolt stole the show with a series of mock bombing runs including simulated pyrotechnics. Nothing like fire and smoke to get a crowd going.

Finally the Blue Angels took the stage in their first appearance of the season. Only a week ago they passed their safe for flight check and it was interesting to see them so early in the year. I'm incredibly biased because my good friend Tony Walley is flying in the #2 spot this year, but I thought the team looked great. A few maintenance issues forced one of the solo jets to land early, which meant dead spots in the show and the diamond was not as tight as I've seen. But then, I usually watch these guys in September.

Overall it was an entertaining show once the airplanes were flying. But getting there and home was quite a hassle. I'll be happy when the Blues come to town and fly in my back yard. I'll be there...will you?

Fly Safe,

- Patrick

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remember the ones that have passed, learn from them, treasure the time we had with them. We should continue our quest for the perfect sequence, but do it safely.

I will never forget Nick Nilmeyer. I will never forget any of them. They have all touched us in some way – some more than others. We can honor their passing by working harder, smarter, and safer.

Godspeed, Nick. Our Star of Tomorrow was extinguished much too early.

Marilyn

(Tale of Two Waivers, continued from page 4)

ing in the skies over their airport, it's worth revisiting, and remembering the journeys that each took in the hopes that future generations of airports, and airport managers (and Chapter Presidents) will benefit from their experiences.

## STORY #1, THE TRACY AIRPORT

The Tracy Airport had actually achieved it's dream many years ago (~20 years to be specific) of having its own aerobatic box. And over those years hundreds of pilots took to the skies above Tracy and partook in the excitement of looping and rolling above the beautiful gravel pits below. Unfortunately, during these 20 years, other folks began to appreciate the magic of being close to an airport and began buying homes as close to the airport as they possibly could. While perfectly understandable to those of us who love airports and the machines that use them, surprisingly a few of these same people discovered, much to their dismay, that airplanes make noise, and airports have airplanes, and therefore living near an airport means living near noise. Strangely, no one seemed to have predicted this outcome in advance so eventually these poor folks began to realize that they had located in a place less appealing than first thought, and that the intruding airport and flying machines that inhabit it must be dealt with.

As such, in the Winter of 2004, the local Giant that oversaw the Tracy Airport (let's call him "FAA"), and who was typically tasked with promoting aviation and helping to foster safety, elected to eliminate the aerobatic box that our Tracy airport had enjoyed for so long. Although many folks who

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## AWAC Fundraiser for Todd Whitmer

*Vicky Benzing/Che Barnes*

Vicky Benzing is organizing a fundraising event for Todd Whitmer to attend the AWAC in Poland in August. This fundraising event will be in conjunction with the monthly Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association meeting which occurs the first Saturday of every month. Hence the PMLAA will be helping with the logistics for the event.

The event is scheduled for June 3rd, 2006 beginning at noon

small donation for the BBQ (to go to the Advanced team/Todd). RSVP's can be sent to Vicky's email: [vkflyer@aol.com](mailto:vkflyer@aol.com).

Official sunset for that day is 8:42 pm. The schedule should allow for those that flew in to get home before it gets dark. Anyone who would like to stay and party is welcome. There are hotels in town or Vicky can find rooms with some of the local PMLAA members (again, let her know).

There is a restaurant on the field for breakfast the next morning and they are planning to ask them to set up something for lunches on the day of the event.

They are also planning to have a raffle and possibly a silent auction.



**Todd in Flight**

at the Pine Mountain Lake airport (E45). Vicky would like to invite all of the members of Chapter 38 to attend. It should be a good time.

Here is our proposed schedule of events:

12:00-3:00 pm Arrivals, rides, static display  
3:00-5:00 pm Field closes, skydiving exhibition, aerobatic exhibition, fly-by's  
5:00-7:00 pm Field opens, BBQ on Vicky's ramp/hangar  
7:00-8:00 pm PMLAA meeting (everyone invited to attend) and presentation by Vicki Cruse (our own IAC president!)

Vicky was able to secure a waiver from the Fresno FSDO for a box at the end of runway 27 to hold an aerobatic exhibition and will be asking some of our local pilots (including Todd) to show off their skills. Wayne Handley has agreed to be the air boss.

For those that would like to stay for the BBQ, please RSVP so that Vicky can plan for the food. They will be asking for a

*(Tale of Two Waivers, Continued from page 7)*

supported the Airport and it's aerobatic box came to its defense, FAA would not entertain discussions for finding a way to renew Tracy's aerobatic box. In fact, Tracy's ombudsman (let's call him "Darren") tried for nearly six months just to get FAA to speak to him on behalf of Tracy. Given FAA's lack of responsiveness, Darren also reached out to the local Airport Commission in search of support and guidance. Fortunately, the Airport Commission was extremely supportive and constructive in helping Darren navigate what would become a 2-year journey.

When Darren finally got a meeting with FAA in the late summer of 2004, he was told that there was no possible way for an aerobatic box to be permitted next to the Tracy Airport because of the "proximity of houses" which, of course contained the same occupants who had just months/years earlier chosen on their own to move next to the Tracy Airport. At the end of this first meeting, Darren was gently given guidance that he should look for other airports or locations seeking to fulfill their dreams of having an aerobatic box above them.

Fortunately for Darren and Tracy, both of whom were on the verge of giving up hope, two superheroes appeared (let's call them "Angie" and "Don") to help. Angie, a stunning young lady and clever as a fox, started by reengaging with FAA in a dialog around exactly why our airport, Tracy, was not being allowed to achieve her dreams. This dialog went on via email over many months, with Angie listening intently to FAA's words of wisdom and logic, and, like an enthusiastic school girl, asking good follow-up questions when certain things that FAA said didn't seem consistent with prior words of wisdom, or seemed downright counter to what she knew to be true in the Good Book (let's call this the "FARs"). As such, over a six month process, Angie not only became an expert in all the Chapter and Versus of the FARs related to aerobatic boxes, but also found herself with a story, written by FAA himself,

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that seemed to make no sense and seemed full of gaps and contradictions. Although a scientist by trade, Angie had read enough stories in her lifetime to know that they should follow a certain logic and should at least "make sense" (even Green Eggs and Ham makes sense...), yet this story from FAA seemed to make sense at all. Hhmmm...

Meanwhile, our other super hero Don, a strapping young man with a muscular build and chiseled jaw, was aggressively scouring the world looking for other airports sharing the dream of having their own aerobatic box. In addition, Don was also out talking to the many folks who lived and worked with Tracy and who maintained the beautiful floor of Tracy's venerable aerobatic box (let's call them "Gravel Pit Operators"). As Don went from one Gravel Pit Operator to another sharing Tracy's tragic story, it became abundantly clear that those who were in fact the closest to the flying machines operating in the aerobatic box were actually quite supportive of having the box there. Again, this merely confirmed Angie's growing sense that FAA's story just didn't make sense.

In the mean time, our ombudsman, Darren, was continuing to talk to anyone who would listen to his story of the plight of Tracy. Darren spoke several times to the Tracy Airport Commission and the Tracy Airport Manager. Darren also spoke to the Wizard in the land of Oz (aka, IAC in Oshkosh), and received terrific support and guidance, yet no direct remedy for the actual problem. Darren also kept reassuring the local towns people (let's call them "Chapter 38 members") that he was optimistic they would see their box again, though secretly in the back of his mind he wondered how to prepare them for the likely reality that their beloved Tracy box would never be seen again.

However, in the summer of 2005, a warm breeze began to blow and Darren managed to get FAA to agree to see him in person once more to hear Tracy's case again. Both Don and Darren showed up early one morning on a clear August day to meet with FAA, armed with a presentation of pictures and facts and an attitude of collaboration and compromise. As they started their meeting, they were met with the kind and welcoming salutation that apparently was quite frequently heard around FAA's castle - "Hi, I'm in charge of FAA, and while I wish I could stay to talk, I'm too busy so I'm simply

here to say 'no'. Have a nice day". With such a welcoming start to the meeting, Don and Darren proceeded to wield their powerful magic and influence, at times even resorting to logic and fairness in their attempts to win FAA over. All to no avail. After over an hour of sparing, Don and Darren were kindly asked to leave, with words of inspiration along the lines of "you can fly aerobatics at Tracy after I sell my house and don't live near the Tracy Airport anymore" and other similarly inspirational suggestions.



**Darren's Laser**

Following Don and Darren's audience with FAA, Darren reached back out to the IAC to seek counsel and guidance. One of the Wizard's many apprentices, we'll call "Bill" (aka Finnagin), listened intently as Darren told the story of his meeting with FAA. Upon hearing the story, Bill quickly came to the conclusion that an injustice was being done and offered to speak with FAA's father at his far off kingdom known as Washington, or D.C. to those who live there.

In parallel to Bill's efforts, an unexpected, yet pleasant surprise befell the team of Darren, Angie and Don when a mysterious figure emerged, hidden in the shadows (let's call him/her "Deep Throat"), and whispering "take it to the Region, take it to the Region". While Deep didn't want his/her presence revealed, Darren and Angie continued to communicate with Deep fairly regularly to get encouragement and advice. Every time all hope appeared to be gone, Deep would engage with more advice - "FAA has launched a Customer Service initiative, make sure they know you know", and "don't give up, changes are in the works". All very cryptic, yet motivating nonetheless in those darkest hours.

One morning in November 2005, Darren received an email from FAA again, but this time, it was one of information and even had a hint of collaboration and sincerity in its tone. In summary, the email said: "your waiver application for Tracy is being evaluated and has been reassigned to a new inspector". Wow! What did this mean? Were Darren, Angie, and Don being redirected yet again with the hopes that they'd get worn down, or zig when they should have zagged and thereby lose the trail? At first they didn't know. Then several weeks later, Darren received another email from FAA saying, in summary "Darren, we have reviewed your application and have several areas of concern and questions that need to be addressed, please provide your responses to the attached memo". Again, "Wow", this was beginning to look strangely like a dialog and opportunity for discussion. But was it a trap....

Cautiously, Darren responded to FAA's email, addressing each and every point that FAA raised. And legitimate points

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they were, with questions around how they would avoid interference with other aircraft operating at Tracy airport and how they could increase the distance between the aerobatic activities and the many aviation enthusiasts who had intentionally purchased homes across the street from the airport. Overall, reasonable questions with legitimate answers.



**Keeping our hard earned waivers is a team effort**

After this initial exchange of emails in late 2005, FAA went quiet. Darren, Don, and Angie weren't sure if FAA has simply swallowed up their responses whole, never to be heard from again, or whether perhaps FAA actually slowed down, like most other entities, around the holidays. We hoped it was the later.

January 2006 was equally as silent, though the strangest thing happened. Darren received an email pointing to a link on the website of a local Tracy newspaper. Upon clicking on the link, Darren was directed to an article alerting the local Tracy community to the pending application with FAA for the resumption of aerobatic activities. Interestingly, there were a number of local neighbors to the airport who were interviewed, and while some individuals were concerned about the noise, most actually thought it was great that Tracy's dream of having an aerobatic box again might come true. Then it hap-

pened again. Two weeks later, another article appeared, this one with quotes from Darren and a fairly accurate representation of what aerobatics is, and a broad range of very supportive quotes from the local neighborhood. Somehow, Tracy's efforts to get an aerobatic box back was being played out in the local press, and it seemed to be helping.

And then, it happened... Darren arrived back at his estate one February afternoon to find a thin, flimsy brown envelope with an FAA return address in the upper left corner. Given the slimness of the envelope, Darren was quite sure it was yet another denial for Tracy. Slowly, Darren opened the letter, expecting the worse. Yet, what should he find, but a crisp, white, fully signed, original waiver, exactly as Chapter 38 had proposed, and with a two year duration, to boot. Hallelujah!

And so it was, through perseverance, a lot of help, a consistent dose of logic, and a little luck, that Tracy reattained her dream of having an aerobatic box in the skies above her airport.

## STORY #2, THE CALAVERAS AIRPORT

Just like the Tracy Airport, Calaveras County Airport shared a similar dream of having an aerobatic box in the skies above her airport. Although she had once had an aerobatic box to help the likes of Rocky Hill and Herb Ross back in the day, her aerobatic box had long since been abandoned and closed down.

However, in early February of 2006, our main character, Darren, was notified by Chapter member Buck, that Calaveras County Airport might be an interesting place for a box. Several days later, Darren spoke to Rocky, who had once used the airport for airshow practice and Rocky encouraged Darren to reapply for the waiver. The next day, Andrew "can you spare a tooth" Connolly contacted Calaveras's Airport Manager, Kathy, who expressed extreme enthusiasm for renewing the box. The next day, Darren completed the waiver application and mailed into the FAA (a nearby cousin of FAA in Tracy's story). Four days later, Darren received a letter from the FAA saying the Calaveras County Waiver had been approved.

And Darren and Chapter 38 lived happily ever after.

## MORAL OF THE STORIES:

Our aerobatic boxes are something we should all work hard to preserve. It took countless hours and years of persistence to get the Tracy box back so let's do what we can to ensure future generations of Chapter 38 members convenient access to great aerobatic boxes. Although getting the Calaveras waiver approved was somewhat easier than Tracy (huge understatement), it is no less fragile in these times we live in with ever increasing concerns about noise and ever increasing numbers of people moving closer and closer to our airports. Let's all

*(Continued on page 13)*

# IAC Chapter 38 Season Event Calendar

Sal Webber

- April**
- 1 Copperstate Aerobatic Championships Cont'**  
Location: Coolidge Municipal Airport (P08) AZ  
Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 69, All Classes flown
- 5-6 Sunrise Aviation Training Camp**  
Location: Borrego Springs Airport (L08) CA  
Subject: Receive critiquing and coaching from Sunrise aviation and Ch36
- 7-9 Borrego Minifest competition**  
Location: Borrego Springs Airport (L08) CA  
Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 36, Primary and Sportsman flown
- 9 IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting, 2-4 pm**  
Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
Subject: Club updates.
- 16 Chapter Critique Session**  
Location: Tracy  
Details : Lead in practice sessions to LA Gold Cup at Tracy and "Press" invitational day to show who we are and what we do.
- 22 Calaveras Fly-In**  
Location: Calaveras County.  
Details : To support the airport and local community where we have our most recently acquired box.
- 30 Chapter Critique Session**  
Location: Calaveras County  
Details : Lead in practice sessions to the LA Gold Cup.
- May**
- 4-6 LA Gold Cup**  
Location: Apple Valley Airport (APV) CA  
Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 49, all classes flown.
- 14 IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting, 2-4 pm**  
Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
Subject: Club updates, Box Update, critiquing day schedule
- 21 Chapter Critique Session**  
Location: Tracy  
Details: Lead in practice session to the big one, "El PASO"
- 26-27 Rocky Mountain Aerobatic Challenge**  
Location: Sterling Municipal Airport (STK) CO  
Subject: contest is sponsored by Chapter 12 All Classes flown.
- June**
- 3 Chapter Critique Session**  
Location: Calaveras County  
Details: Lead in practice sessions to the big one, "El PASO"
- 3 AWAC Fundraiser for Todd Whitmer**  
Location: Pine Mountain Lake Airport (E45)
- 8-10 2006 Apple Cup**  
Location: Ephrata Airport (EPH) WA  
Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 67 All Classes flown.
- 11-12 Chapter Critique Session & IAC Chapter 38 Monthly Meeting, 2-4 pm**  
Location: Tracy  
Subject: Final practice for the total domination of our own contest, Cub updates. Last minute planning for Paso
- 15-17 Northern California Aerobatic Championship**  
Location: Paso Robles Airport (PRB) CA  
Subject: This contest is sponsored by Chapter 38 in beautiful Paso Robles, CA. Centrally located for both Northern and Southern pilots Paso has a lot to offer everyone. All Classes flown.



**July**

- 9 2-4 pm: IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting**  
 Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
 Subject: Post Paso Party!!!

**August**

- 13 2-4 pm: IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting**  
 Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
 Subject: Club updates
- 24-25 Beaver State Regional**  
 Location: Pendleton Airport (PDT) OR  
 Subject: This contest is sponsored by Chapter 77 All classes flown.
- 26-27 Aspen Leaf Acro Challenge**  
 Location: Sterling Municipal Airport (STK) CO  
 Subject: This contest is sponsored by Chapter 12 All classes flown.
- 30 Happiness is Delano**  
 Location: Delano Airport (DLO) CA  
 Subject: This contest is sponsored by Chapter 49 in scenic Delano, CA. All classes flown.

**September**

- 1-2 Happiness is Delano continued.** Competition, all classes flown
- 10 2-4 pm: IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting**  
 Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
 Subject: Club updates
- 24-29 IAC National Aerobatic Championship**  
 Location: Grayson County Airport (GYI) TX  
 Subject: This contest is sponsored by the IAC All Categories flown

**October**

- 8 2-4 pm: IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting**  
 Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
 Subject: Club updates
- 12-14 Borrego Springs Akrofest**  
 Location: Borrego Springs Airport (L08) CA  
 Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 36 All categories flown

**November**

- 3-5 Tequila Cup**  
 Location: Marana Airport, (AVQ) Tucson, AZ  
 Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 62 All classes flown
- 12 2-4 pm: IAC Chapter 38 Monthly meeting**  
 Location: Attitude Aviation, Livermore Airport (LVK)  
 Subject: Club updates

**December**

- 1-2 Arizona State Aerobatic Championship**  
 Location: Coolidge Municipal Airport (P08) AZ  
 Subject: Contest is sponsored by Chapter 69 , All classes flown

*(Tale of Two Waivers, Continued from page 10)*

work together to use the boxes to help improve our skills and have a lot of fun, but let's also work hard to be good neighbors, abide by the rules, contribute to the local communities and use our best judgement for flying as safely, quietly and legally as we possibly can.

Many thanks to Angie and Don, and the many other dedicated individuals who contributed to helping us get our aerobatic boxes back!

#### ADDENDUM:

Earlier this week, Darren received a phone call from FAA regarding the recent renewal application for the aerobatic box at New Jerusalem airport. The voicemail was from one of the individuals involved in the original Tracy discussions. The message indicated a typo on the application Darren had sent in, and said it had to be fixed before the waiver could be processed. Darren responded by email that same day asking if an updated electronic copy of the waiver application would be sufficient to remedy the problem, or whether he needed to resend the entire corrected application in. Darren was informed within hours that simply emailing the updated application would be fine. The individual's supervisor then emailed a day later to check that I had received the recent outreach and to ensure everything was OK. It was more than OK, it was GREAT. Clearly, a new day has dawned and perhaps we were entering an era of a helpful and friendly FAA. Let's keep our fingers crossed... - Darren

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### Links

#### Aerobatics Area Preserved, Rules Refined Interpretation

[http://www.avweb.com/newswire/12\\_12a/briefs/191805-1.html](http://www.avweb.com/newswire/12_12a/briefs/191805-1.html)

#### Borrego Mini-Fest

<http://www.iac36.org/>

#### Online Renewal

<http://www.iac38.org/>

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## IAC Chapter 38 Membership Application/Renewal Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail 1: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail 2: \_\_\_\_\_

IAC #: \_\_\_\_\_

EAA #: \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate #: \_\_\_\_\_

EAA Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge: ☐ Regional ☐ NationalCompetition: ☐ None ☐ Basic ☐ Sportsman ☐ Intermediate ☐ Advanced ☐ Unlimited

Aircraft: \_\_\_\_\_

N #: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred By: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: ☐ Single Membership (\$25/year) ☐ Family Membership (\$30/year)

Send with check, made payable to "International Aerobatic Club Chapter 38", to:  
**Howard Kirker, IAC38 Treasurer - 2279 Ocaso Camino - Fremont, CA 94539**



**Che Barnes**  
 Editor, IAC 38  
 2233 Leavenworth St.  
 San Francisco, CA 94133



**Chapter Meeting:**  
**Sunday April 9th, 2006, 2 pm**  
**Attitude Aviation**  
**Livermore Airport**