



**Northern California  
Aerobatic Club  
CHAPTER 38**

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# THE ACRONAUT

Volume 7 - Number 3

## Prez' Post

*Darren Pleasance*



Spring is in the air...

...and I hope you are too.

Perhaps that's why there are so many things blossoming in our Chapter and why we've got so much energy among

the group. Our trip to the SWAN Conference in mid-February and the Judges School a few weeks ago have helped kick the year off in a great way. This month we have a FANTASTIC program planned with Ben Freelove sharing his learnings on advanced spins (complete with video) from his time as an instructor at Sean Tucker's school. Don't miss this!

In addition to Ben's spin presentation next week, the coming few months will provide us multiple opportunities to deliver on our Mission of providing our members with education, entertainment, and an opportunity to build community with fellow aerobatic enthusiasts. This will come in the form of several events including:

- 1) March Chapter meeting featuring Ben Freelove and advanced Spins (March 12)
- 2) Reno Mini-Fest (March 18)

*(Continued on page 8)*



## 2006 Membership Dues

Just a gentle reminder ..... To simplify the bookkeeping, we levy Chapter dues on a calendar-year basis, Jan 1 - Dec 31 -- so this year's payment is NOW DUE! Please use the form on the last page, or go to the Website and you can link to Paypal (use the 'About IAC 38' tab), to renew or start your membership for 2006 -- and continue to enjoy the many benefits membership provides, including Chapter meetings and events, NewJ box usage, and newsletter notification, to name a few. \$25/year, or \$30/year for a family. Please provide all requested info/updates on the form. Thanks!

## IAC38 Welcomes

- Peter Williams - San Francisco**
- Rob Marshall - El Dorado Hills**
- Don Davidson - San Francisco**
- Buck Cobb - Plymouth**

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# Editor's Column

Che Barnes

It goes without saying that Peter Jensen has done an outstanding job with this newsletter for the past three years. Hats off to him and sincere thanks. I will try to maintain the high standards that he has set. This month's newsletter is a collaborative effort in which I slowed down his work with incessant questioning.

In my limited experience I can say that the quality of the newsletter is equal to the article contributions. If you have any ideas about an article or have some new information, don't hesitate to draft it up and send it in! We want to hear about it. We are on a constant lookout for pictures as well.

Special thanks to the contributors this month. We have a great synopsis on chapter events, box status, and other issues thanks to Darren Pleasance. It looks like we are going to have a great summer. Also, Andrew Connolly has continued his safety column with Ramp Safety and has done some outstanding reporting on Calaveras County Airport. Special thanks to Darrin Silver for keeping his talented contributions coming. We also have some great pictures of the recent Judge's School and SWAN conference. Lastly, due to an extra page to fill I have shamelessly promoted Coast Guard Aviation with a article about a



Peter Jensen

Coast Guard deployment that I just returned from.

Hope you are all enjoying the beginning of spring and hope to see you at the next meeting March 12<sup>th</sup>!

## Flying High

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

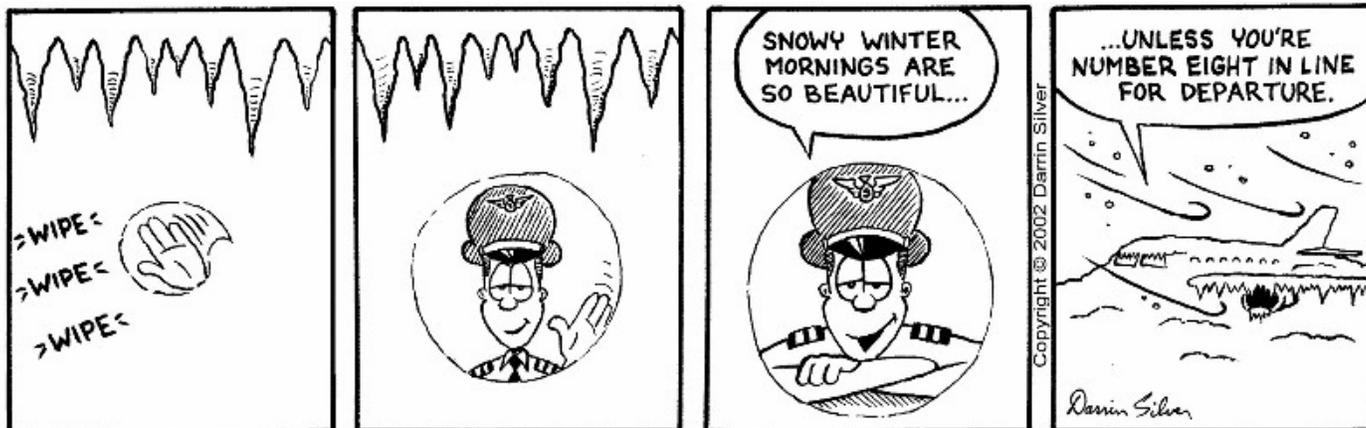
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# Safe Ramp Operations

Andrew Connolly

We all have our own pet “hobby-horse” or “soap-box” that we like to get on and rant about the one thing we find really rather particularly annoying. As I am the one writing this column, I fully intend to take the opportunity this column gives me to rant about one of mine ..... so here goes !

What really annoy’s me during contests is pilot’s who in the morning have hangered there planes and are positioning them for the days flying, often a considerable distance away, and they start there planes up and then taxi out to the staging area without using there radios or even wearing a head set. We have all seen pilot’s, no head set on, one hand on the canopy slightly cracked open taxing their plane out to where they will stage for the days contest.

As we fly mostly tail-dragger’s forward visibility is reduced at best and if you’re a Pitts or Bi-Plane driver highly restricted. By not having a radio switched on and a headset on you cannot warn other’s of your presence or have other’s warn you of there intentions or location.

As most of the field’s we fly from have just a CTAF, the frequency could possibly get congested if everyone anyone is calling on it, which could in it’s self create a safety hazard for

flight operations. I am not advocating we make a radio call for very time we taxi the plane but we could use common sense as to the need to make a call and as a minimum have the radio / headset on so you can use it if you have to or so someone else can warn you of there own position / intentions.

- Even at idle ~ 1000 rpm the prop tip speed is in the 200-220 mph range. A metal prop is unlikely to break apart if two planes collide and start dueling props ... but a wood or composite prop will break apart and is then a danger to any one within a 30+ ft radius from the flying debris.
- It takes maybe, what a minute? to turn the radio on and place your headset on ... not doing this is just plain laziness. If you wish to argue it takes you a lot longer ... maybe it’s time to stop flying.
- We are amongst the highest profile pilot’s within the GA community and we should be helping set the standard for all aspects of flight operations.

The radio in our planes is a piece of safety equipment that has the ability if actually switched on to improve the safety of

ramp operations without a great deal of effort ... My rant is done and after all what do I know I’m just a lowly Sportsman pilot.

**Safe Flying – 7PS**

Andrew



## Calavaras County Airport - The Perfect Place To Fly

Andrew Connolly



*Julio, The Calavaras Co-Pilot*

With all the activity around trying to get a waived box to practice and fly in, Buck Cobb tipped us off that he thought there was a box around Calavaras County Airport that Rocky Hill used to practice in and that it might suit our needs for a place to fly. A few quick calls to the Airport Manager, Rocky Hill and the Sacramento FSDO and things were suddenly looking very, very promising !

Myself and Peter Jensen arranged to fly out there on Saturday and meet the airport manager, go over what we were looking for in terms of usage and understand if they were still receptive to having an active box back in the area.

**Calavaras County – Maury Rasmussen Field (CPU)** is located in the foothills of the Sierra's at Lat - 38° 8' 46" / Long 120° 38' 53", about 65 NM from LVK on a heading of 045°. It's about a ½ hr flight in Pitt's time from the Bay Area. The active runway, 13 / 31 is 3600 ft long and 60 ft wide, well marked and in excellent condition. The traffic pattern for both 13 & 31 is to the East of the field ... the opposite side from the box. The airport has a certain "aircraft carrier" feel to it, with the runway sitting on top of a raised plateau ... not the ideal place to come up short or land long !

The airport has a great character and some very interesting planes tucked away. In one hanger a DeHavilland Rapide was being fully restored along side a full size Spitfire which was being built from a mix of original and new parts.

It also has a long and illustrious history of aerobatic activity. Several years ago the Calavaras Airport was used by Herb Ross as a practice location for his "Dueling Pitt's" air show act and then more recently by Rocky Hill as a practice area for his air show routines. There has been until very recently an active box at the field for many

years and it's generally believed that merely flying through his hallowed airspace is worth 5% on anyone's score and with gas at just \$ 3.55 a gallon they are almost paying us to fly there !

Kathy Zancanella, the airport manager is very pro-aerobatic's and would love to see the field being used actively again for aerobatic practice. This is good business for the airport and an added attraction for the local area community. The airport has a annual fly-in on April 22<sup>nd</sup> with EAA, the Young Eagles and plenty of interesting aircraft. This is a great opportunity for us as a club to support the local airport and local community in the area's that we fly and we will be organizing a flyout to support the fly-in.

The location of the box that was in place until recently when Rocky Hill used it is almost perfect J. It's 5000 ft square, aligned with Western edge of runway and centered on the mid-point. There is nothing but a few sheep and trees in box and no residential areas around the airport. The ground under the box would make for a very rough off airport landing but the location of the runway directly next to it makes it overall a great, safe area to fly.

We have just recently applied for a waiver with the Sacramento FSDO, which is identical to the previous waiver held by Rocky Hill but in the club's name. The airport manager is actively supporting the application with Sacramento FSDO. The location of the field is clearly far away from any built up areas and any airways so the only FAR waived is the minimum altitude requirement of 1500ft agl.

The overall use strategy we discussed with the airport man-



*Kathy Zancanella – Airport Manager*

ager and our own working basis for using the box if the waiver is approved is as follows:

- Usage would be approx once a month and a pre-planned activity.
- We would give a period of notice to the airport manager that we would be coming out that day.
- Club would provide an “*Air Boss*” to act as a central point of contact and control the flight activity’s in the box and provide a set of eye’s and ears for other in-bound / out-bound pilots.
- Club would apply for waived box for flight below 1500 ft agl and make necessary contacts with appropriate Flight Service Station before use.
- The intent is that we are not **using this on a daily or**

**weekly basis** at this time.

Since the only waived FAR is the altitude restriction, we will set up a trip sometime in March. Possibly the weekend before the Reno contest. We can fly in the box as long as we don’t go below 1,500feet.

*Andrew L Connolly*



*Calaveras County Airport - with the potential new box marked*

## Judges School Pictures

*Peter Jensen*



*Big Sunday Crowd - 15 people attended!*



*John King & Bill Stein*

# SWAN Pictures

Peter Jensen



## Reno Stead Mini Fest

March 18, 2006

Region: Southwest  
 Location: Reno Stead Airport - locator 4SD, Reno, NV  
 Hosting Chapter: IAC 118  
 Practice/Registration: Friday, March 17, 2006  
 Rain Date: Saturday, March 25, 2006  
 Categories: Primary through Intermediate Power  
 Contest Director: Tim Brill  
 Contact Information: 775-329-3366 (home); 775-232-4881 (cell); tim@aerobaticcompany.com (e-mail)  
 Contest Website: [www.aerobaticcompany.com](http://www.aerobaticcompany.com)

## AZ Copperstate Championship

Coolidge Airport, AZ  
 March 30 - April 1, 2006

Sponsored by IAC 69. The competition will be held at Coolidge Municipal Airport - locator P08. Primary through Unlimited Power categories will be flown.

### Schedule

3/30 Thursday	registration and practice
3/31 Friday	competition and awards
4/1 Saturday	competition and awards

### Fees

\$120 for registration, Friday cookout, Saturday banquet, and contest T-Shirt

### Pre-registration

<http://contest.gndloop.org/prereg.htm>

As usual, no paperwork to be filled out at the contest -- *print, sign, and fly!*

### Hotels

Blue Mist Motel	(520) 868-5875
Rancho Sonora	(800) 205-6817
Holiday Inn Casa Grande	(520) 426-3500
Days Inn of Casa Grande	(520) 426-9240
Comfort Inn Casa Grande	(520) 421-9878
Casa Grande Super 8 Motel	(520) 836-8800

### Contest Directors

George Norris  
 e-mail: [gbn@gndloop.org](mailto:gbn@gndloop.org)

### More Info

<http://contest.gndloop.org/>

(Continued from page 1)



*On the way to SWAN*

- 3) Capital City Airshow Fly-out (March 19th - to be confirmed; trying to get approval to fly in to Mather)
- 4) Borrego Mini-Fest (April 7-9)
- 5) LA Gold Cup (May 4-6)
- 6) Chapter 38 Paso Robles contest (June 15-17)

These, in addition to our regular monthly Chapter meetings and critiquing sessions (see notes on this below), should make for a really fun and active Spring for us.

To provide a bit more color and encourage you to get involved, let me expand on a few of these:

The Reno Mini-Fest will be taking place at the Stead Airport near Reno. It's a one-day event for Primary and Sportsman categories only. It's a great opportunity to start the season off in a low key way, at a venue that's sure to be perfect for aerobatics. Practice is on Friday for those who would like to, and then the briefing is at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. I'm planning to fly up so let me know if others would like to join me.

The Capital City Airshow at Mather Field near Sacramento will feature the Blue Angels and our own Rich Perkins. One of our newer Chapter Members, Patrick Huey, is an ex-F-14 and 18 back seater who has friends on the Blue Angels team this year so he's trying to get us a photo op. The remaining logistic concern I'm working on is trying to get permission to fly in and display our planes for those who can make it. I've had trouble getting responses from the organizers of the airshow so I'll just have to keep you all posted on what our options are. Please let me know if you'd like to attend the airshow.

In other news, the Chapter Box saga continues to gain momentum. No promises yet, but lots of great happenings. For one, we've discovered Calaveras County Airport (thanks Buck) which is a great location and has an airport manager



### *On the way to SWAN*

who would be thrilled to have us practice there. Rocky Hill used to use the area for his practice and he was very supportive of us pursuing a renewal of the box in our name. As such, I submitted the waiver application last week so let's keep our fingers crossed. Even without a waiver, there are no airways near by so flights above 1,500 feet should be completely legal adjacent to the airport so there's no reason not to start practicing there on a limited basis. Andrew Connolly is taking the lead on organizing our first such event.

On the Tracy front, many of you have seen the newspaper articles, which have been mostly favorable, around our attempts to renew our box there. I received another call from a different newspaper reporter last night so it's definitely a topic that's sparked interest. I'm going to try to work with the press to demonstrate to the community that we do care about being good neighbors and contributing to the Tracy community so hopefully that will help. I've also been in steady dialog with the OAK FSDO and that seems to be moving along well, though I'm still not at all certain on what the outcome will be, given our history on this effort to date. Nonetheless, this path is moving forward well.

On the New J front, I've resubmitted that waiver application. In theory, this should be a rubber stamp since nothing about the box or surrounding area has changed, but we'll have to wait and see. Sal has had some discussions with the City of Tracy recently and they are currently pursuing efforts to repair the runway with an aspiration to have it open this Spring. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

To me, the ideal outcome would be to get all of these boxes approved. If we can accomplish that, then we could alternate our usage of the boxes on any given weekend in a month, so that no single community was ever subjected to the sounds of us practicing more than perhaps a few hours a month. To me, this would be the best of all worlds for us as well as for the non-flying public.

In other news, Sal Webber has stepped in to help coordinate our Chapter Calendar so we'll be sharing that at the next Chapter meeting and then publishing it going forward so you

can pick and choose the various events you'd like to take part in.

And, lastly, I'd like to finish by noting the transition in newsletter editors that's occurring this month. As many of you know, Peter Jensen has been editing our outstanding monthly newsletter for at least 3 years now. Without a

doubt, Peter's role has been instrumental in helping us strengthen and grow our

Chapter and he's served as a role model for many other Chapters on how newsletters should be written. For many of our members who don't fly, the newsletter is often the only source of connection and value from the Chapter so without a doubt, Peter has played a crucial role in our Chapter's success. As with all volunteer roles, it eventually becomes time to move on and pursue other roles and so Peter has elected to do just that. As such, I'd like to personally and publicly thank Peter for his terrific leadership with the newsletter and contributions to the Chapter overall. Fortunately, he's not going anywhere so we'll get him roped into some other volunteer role here in no time.

So now what do we do with the newsletter? Well, fortunately, there's a new Editor in town, and he flies an orange Coast Guard helicopter and is always on call if you run out of beer while sailing off the coast and need a quick delivery. Che Barnes has graciously volunteered to step into Peter's shoes and assume the role of Chapter 38 newsletter editor. Che and Peter have worked on ensuring a smooth transition and this is Che's inaugural newsletter. As I know from my working with Peter, the key to a great newsletter is to have content to fill it, so Che and I are counting on all of you to help ensure we have great things to talk about every month. Pictures, articles, gossip, announcements, etc. are all great fodder for making a great newsletter. Please step in to help us keep the newsletter the success it's been for the past several years.

With that, let me wrap up by reminding you once more of our terrific program at this month's Chapter meeting with Ben Freelove. Let me also remind you that we're in the winter (almost Spring) months so our Chapter meeting START AT 2:00 P.M. to allow folks to fly home afterwards before dark if they need to.

I hope to see you all at Attitude Aviation in Livermore on March 12th at 2:00.

Blue Skies...

*Darren*

## Night Ship Landing

*Che Barnes*

I recently returned from an 80 day deployment as a helicopter pilot on the back of a 378 foot Coast Guard cutter. We were doing counter-drug operations off the coast of Central America. This story takes up at the beginning of the deployment. After a cross country from San Francisco along the Salinas Valley, a refueling stop in Santa Barbara, then west of LA over the ocean, we were in San Diego waiting to meet the ship.

To make a long story short, the ship experienced a delay in refueling and did not leave until nightfall. So, I found myself orbiting off the coast of San Diego in a helicopter contemplating the black water below and trying to figure out which dot down there was my new home. I was disappointed that the ship delayed us until night. The last time I landed on a ship was over 6 months prior. I was hoping to recover onto the ship in broad daylight and at least get a little day training in before making a night recovery. No dice.

We checked in with the cutter and figured out their location while trying to sound like we knew exactly what we were doing. My co-pilot was doing an great job handling ATC and the ship at the same time, I brought the helo down to about 300 feet and orbited. Looking towards San Diego's blazing city lights gave a good horizon, but when heading away the horizon was barely discernable – but at least it was there. This is a very important detail. During ship ops, if the pilot stares at the ship too long, or loses the horizon, the pilot may start to fly as if the ship is the horizon. Due to the constant motion of the ship, this makes for erratic control inputs and a not so calm experience. Vertigo and special disorientation is a constant worry, and experiencing this at 50 feet over the water makes for a bad story. Add in the unstable and squirrely characteristics of a hovering helicopter and you have an experience that no helo pilot considers a slam dunk or necessar-



***HH-65B Dolphin***

ily “fun” experience.

Anyway, I brought it down to 150 feet and tracked in on the approach – the radar altimeter was now my primary instrument. The approach was at a 45 degree starboard to port angle to the ship due to a large CIWIS anti-aircraft gun sticking up directly on the stern of the ship. The deck lights were bright, and as we passed through 75 feet they started to wash out the already dim horizon beyond. At this point, I slowed the aircraft to the edge of what is called translational lift, the point where the helicopter's stability is no longer that of a fixed wing aircraft and it starts flying like, well, ... like a helicopter. The stability is similar to a Pitts on landing rollout – every control input usually requires the pilot to take it out a split second later then correct further. As we tracked inbound, the flight mechanic called out “wheels over the nets,” then, “wheels over the deck.” This means I was in a 40 square foot area of flat landing space. Back and to the left was the CIWIS anti-aircraft gun, and forward and right was the hangar door and stacks along with a real live person serving as the landing signal officer. I was concentrating on not looking at the ship for too long as it swayed back and forth. On the deck was 24 diameter circle in which to land in order to guarantee adequate rotor clearance. The landing signal officer then directed me to “pedal turn” or yaw right to line the helo up fore and aft. Then he gave me the down command. I waited, trying to get lined up, it was like setting up a pool shot on a moving table. Finally, I bottomed out the collective and BAM, we were on, swaying to and fro with the ship as the deck hands strapped the helo to the deck as it was still running full tilt.



***USCGC MELLON***

*Che*

## Calendar of Events

<b>March</b>	12	Chapter Meeting, 2pm
	18-19	The California Capital Air Show Mather Airport, CA
	18	Reno Stead Mini Fest <i>tim@aerobaticcompany.com</i>
	30-1	Copperstate Aerobatic Champions. <i>gbn@gndloop.com</i>
<b>April</b>	7-9	Borrego Mini-Fest
	9	Chapter Meeting, 2pm
<b>May</b>	4-6	LA Gold Cup
	14	Chapter Meeting, 2pm
<b>June</b>	15-18	<b>Paso Robles Contest</b> <i>t.s.lauck@gmail.com</i>

## YAK-50 Needs To Fly More



Looking for a partner or someone who wants to fly for expenses. Beautiful Yak-50 hangared in Palo Alto. 360 hp M-14P spins the wrong way and sounds like only a radial can. Russian single-seat, retractable gear taildragger has a cockpit with a military feel and great visibility. This type won the world championships in the early 80's, now an "intermediate" acro mount that is also great for formation and dogfighting. Tumbles like nobody's business and turns heads on the ramp.

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## California Capital Airshow

March 18 - 19, 2006

Mather Airport, Rancho Cordova, CA

[www.californiacapitalairshow.com](http://www.californiacapitalairshow.com)

Right here in our backyard! IAC38 member, and owner of Attitude Aviation, Rich Perkins is among the performers! This should be an awesome show. Plan on going.

The performers and airplanes are:

- US Navy Blue Angels - F18
- Tim Decker - S2B
- Chuck Lischer - F260
- Rich Perkins - Firecat (L39)
- Nikolay Timofeev - SU26
- Julie Clark - T34

## 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     National  
**Competition:**     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 March 12th, 2006, 2 pm**  
**Attitude Aviation**  
**Livermore Airport**