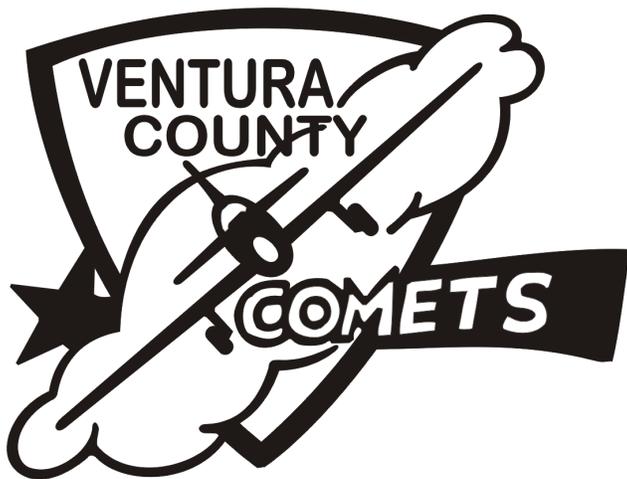


# The Comets Tail



**February  
2016**

|                      |                  |                |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| President            | Dave Fishman     | (805) 340-0192 |
| Vice Presedient      | Dale Nash        | (805) 532-1433 |
| Secretary            | Alastair Brennan | (805) 388-0180 |
| Treasurer            | TJ Moran         | (805) 646-6084 |
| Field Marshal/Safety | George Lanquist  | (805) 646-5365 |
| Park Liason          | John Dugan       | (805) 646-6898 |
| Webmaster            | Don Sorenson     | (805) 968-4288 |

Comets Web Site: [VCComets.com](http://VCComets.com)

Comet's Tale Editor: Alastair Brennan, [jet\\_a@yahoo.com](mailto:jet_a@yahoo.com)

Board of Directors

Dave Fishman, Dale Nash, TJ Moran, George Languist,  
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Instructor Pilots:

Steve Billings, Alastair Brennan. Andrew Carlson, Dave Fishman,  
George Lanquist, Bob Root, Ron Scott, Steve Steinmetz

The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura Count  
Comets, AMA Chartered Club #173 and is published monthly at the Comets' Tale  
Lair, in Camarillo, CA.

*Editorial contributions are welcome.*

**Next Meeting:**  
**Thursday, February 18, 2016 7:30 PM**  
**At the Oak View Community Center**

**Upcoming Events:**

Mar12-13: RCX show @  
O.C. Fairgrounds



**Pres Sez:**

Hey Gang,

I hope everybody had a good January.

Some of us have asked about ordering Comets T-shirts and zippered sweatshirts, so I visited the silk-screener that we used last time and got some prices. T-shirts will cost \$12 and sweatshirts will cost \$24. This year we will have an option to buy a heavier-weight sweatshirt for \$30. The heavier-weight sweatshirt is a bit heavier for sure, but it looks almost identical in style to the light-weight version that we got before. I will bring a sample of the heavy-weight sweatshirt to the meeting on February 18th. The colors available for your new t-shirt or sweat-shirt will be the same as last time we ordered, light blue, or light slate grey. Our Comets logo will be big on the back of the shirt and sweatshirt and a small logo on the front. If you would like to provide your own shirt or sweatshirt and have the silk-screener print the Comets logo on it, you can do that for \$5.

## Take Off and Grow program (T.A.G.)

TAG is a grant program put on by the AMA to help us “grow our club.” With club officers approval, I applied for the TAG grant. The AMA decides which club will be awarded the grant by April 1st. (I know, who’s the fool) Whether we are awarded the grant or not, we will work on growing our club. How will we grow our club, you ask? One idea is to visit local clubs, schools, and scouting groups. During these visits we will bring RC aircraft to display (and if safe to do so, give flying demos), answer questions and invite interested groups out to the Comets field for introductory lessons.

Another idea to get the club some exposure is to enter the City of Ojai, Fourth of July Parade. We’re thinking a flatbed trailer with all kinds of aircraft on it or hanging off of it. We are open for ideas. Does anybody know anyone with an antique tractor that will tow our trailer through the parade? (Just a thought)

Here’s a quick update to the FAA and the s.U.A.S. (small unmanned aircraft system) requirements. The AMA is still working with the FAA. FAA registration deadline is February 19th. Remember, you only have to register yourself, not your planes, then put the FAA # on your planes. The FAA # can be inside your aircraft, as long as you can get to it without tools.

Here is the newest update from the AMA website, dated February, 5th:

Rep. Bill Shuster, who chairs the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, introduced a new draft of the FAA reauthorization bill. This bill is critical to preserving our voluntary, community-based approach to the model aviation community across the country”

While we are carefully reviewing the bill’s language, it is important to note that the Committee recognized the community-based approach under the “Special Rule for Model Aircraft.” The language in that section follows very similarly to Section 336 of the 2012 FAA reauthorization bill. We were also pleased to see that the new language recognizes the important role that model aircraft play in STEM education.

However, there are still some changes to the bill that could further strengthen and clarify the Special Rule for Model Aircraft. In the weeks ahead, we will be working closely with Chairman Shuster and the Committee on our suggested improvements.

We will keep you updated on this important bill and AMA’s ongoing work to protect our hobby.

As always, thank you for your support of AMA.

I’ll see you at the field,

-Dave

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## Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Dave at 7:29.

No guests, yet one new member was in attendance.

The minutes were approved as was the Treasurer’s report. The Treasurer reported that a few members signed up at the meeting. 45 people have paid up.

There was a quick mention of the last month’s AMA show...

We spoke of the Santa Barbara club again and reported that a few members went to the S.B. club and brought back a few table and lawn tractor with trailer.

There was mention of modifying the shed to fit the tractor in it. This is up for discussion.

The January meeting was missing the Safety Officer and Park Liaison therefore no report from either.

The Camarillo Condor club was mentioned and they are only flying one day a week. There is a meeting Scheduled July 31 to negotiate the terms.

In new business President Dave is to look into club logo wear. Details to follow.

Pres Dave also brought up the AMA "TAG" (Take off and Grow) program and plans to submit a proposal to the AMA. There is a thousand bucks up for grabs in our district

George , Ron and Dave are to start a club promotion committee

For model of the month Dennis brought a Great Planes "Revolver", 8-9 lb. .95 4-stroke power.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29.

-Alastair



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### **Randumb Thots :-)**

After last month's craziness regarding biplane jets, the fastest biplane, all that...I kept wondering about biplanes, and I wondered if there was ever a jet biplane that carried people, and in the process I actually found proof that there were committed crack users in the Soviet Union in the 70s. To wit, they built a jet-powered crop duster. I don't know exactly what happened to prompt this other than that somebody decided to build a 'modern' ag plane for the huge collective farms running at that time. I'm sure some fine aero engineers were consulted and ignored.



*PZL M-15 Belphegor*

I tried to rationalize this... did they have lots of kerosene and not much avgas, like now? Let's face it, a jet makes NO sense at low altitudes and low speeds, and that's all ag-planes ever do, but if you're lacking a decent 450 - 1000 horsepower turboprop, a jet might make some kind of twisted sense.

So, they got busy and built a test-bed using the front end of the legacy ag plane, an AN-2 with a fram-ey tail section and a jet engine installed behind, big inlets peeking around both sides of the nose. They called it the flying test bed. Again, ignoring what that thing must have tried to teach them, they got to work and designed this big biplane that you see in the photo.

Using an Ivchenko-Progress IA-25 turboprop, they designed the PZL M-15 Belphegor. The engine was actually the least bad decision of this thing. It's the same thing that powers the hugely successful L-39 Albatross trainer/light attack jet. It makes about 3200 to 3800 lbs of thrust, depending on which source you read, which would be very roughly equivalent to 3500 horsepower, plenty of juice for a big biplane. Not at all efficient, but plenty of power. I could not find any numbers about fuel consumption for this engine, but the Belphegor could only fly 250 miles between fuel stops.

Anyway, the thing's engine was mounted high above the cockpit to keep it up out of the debris on the ground. The fuselage behind the cockpit had seats for a couple of mechanics and those big gawky hoppers between the wings held, ahem, 377 gallons... each.

Structures were mostly metal, with parts of the lower wings made of "laminare" (fiberglass?) to resist corrosion from the chemicals that were being sprayed.

Production started in 1976 with plans to big 3000 of these behemoths, but they turned out to be pretty finicky airplanes compared to the AN-2 flying tractors they replaced, and they stopped in 1981 after building 175. I'm surprised it went on that long.



*AN-2 Flying Tractor*

I cannot find a pilot report or any accident reports, so there is still a lot of mystery around this project. Only a couple survive, in museums of course. Hey, how about a restoration project?

So there you have it... as far as anybody seems to know, the only biplane designed from the start for jet power, and in fact, the only ag plane to be jet powered, roaring off to the Dustbin Of History.

By the way, Belphegor is the name a mythical, hideous demon who convinces people that their dumb invention will make them rich. True story.

-Jerry

# Event Calendar

Thank you to Ron Scott

Note: ? dates need confirming

- February 21 Fun Fly/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus - [http:// www.flycfc.com/](http://www.flycfc.com/)
- March 12 -13 RCX – Model Airplane Expo @ Orange County Fairgrounds - [www.rcx.com](http://www.rcx.com)  
12 Heli Fun Fly - Valley Flyers Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
19 Electric Fly (indoor) @ Simi Valley Rec Center 5005 LA Ave. Evening times vary  
20 T-28 Races/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus <http://webefier.com/drupal/>  
27 Mini IMAC – Condors Field
- April 3 Simi Valley Flyers – Fun Fly, BBQ, & Swap Meet [www.simivalleyflyers.com](http://www.simivalleyflyers.com)  
?4-6 Warbirds over LasVegas–William Bennett Field <http://www.lvrcc.org/>  
9 Pizza Fun Fly & Swap Meet – Apollo Field - Valley Flyers [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
16 Electric Fly (indoor) @ Simi Valley Rec Center 5005 LA Ave. @ 7:30 PM  
17 Warbird Day/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus  
?23-24 Float Fly @ Lake Casitas – Camping, BBQ & Big Raffel - Ventura County Comets  
23-24 SC Scale Masters Event at Hemet Model Masters [www.rcflightdeck.com/club.cfm?id=29](http://www.rcflightdeck.com/club.cfm?id=29)  
29-May 1 Chino Planes of Fame Full Scale Airshow – [www.pvmac.com](http://www.pvmac.com)
- May 7 International Drone Day - <http://www.internationaldroneday.com> - Las Vegas  
14 L A Jets Spring Fly-in – Valley Flyers [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
15 4 rounds of Combat/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus  
21 Electric Fly (indoor) @ Simi Valley Rec Center 5005 LA Ave. @ 7:30 PM  
21 Electric Fun-Fly & Glowpower < .15". + BBQ @ Comets Field – Lake Casitas  
?21-22 Float Fly – Visalia Russell Pond – for directions - [www.CVRCSoaring.com](http://www.CVRCSoaring.com)  
26-29 Memorial Day weekend – Giant Scale Fly-in – Castle Airport (near Merced)  
Central CA Model Flyers. Contact Scott at [scottmalta@comcast.net](mailto:scottmalta@comcast.net) or 209-617-5789
- June 10-12 Q40/Q500 Pylon racing – Valley Flyers [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
12 War Bird Day – Condors Field  
?14 IMAC flying competition @ Riverside - [www.mini-iac.com](http://www.mini-iac.com)  
18 Electric Fly (indoor) @ Simi Valley Rec Center 5005 LA Ave. @ 7:30 PM  
19 Simi Valley Flyers - Fun Fly, BBQ, & Swap Meet  
18 Quaker Fun Fly & Balloon drop - Comets Field - Lake Casitas  
25-26 Western States All Electric Fun Fly – Apollo Field - [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com) for details.  
26 Poker Fly/Club Mtg. & Swap meet – Camarillo Flying Circus
- July 4 1st Annual Independence Day - Fun Fly – Simi Valley Flyers [www.simivalleyflyers.com](http://www.simivalleyflyers.com)  
9 Swap Meet & Fun Fly - Valley Flyers Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
?16 Swap Meet San Diego – Don Madison  
16 L A Jets – Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)  
17 Fun Fly/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus  
24 Warbird day, BBQ & Swap Meet @ Comets Field Lake Casitas \$10 Entry fee includes lunch

- August
- 29-31 Tri-Valley R/C Modelers Giant Scale Fly-in, Santa Maria ([www.trivalleymodelers.com](http://www.trivalleymodelers.com))
  - 6 All Scale Event – Valley Flyers - [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ?2-3 Glider – Slope racing @ Grass Mountain [www.socalsloperacing.com](http://www.socalsloperacing.com)
  - 7 Simi Valley Flyers - Fun Fly, BBQ, & Swap Meet
  - ?8-9 Pattern Contest at Miramar, San Diego (Bill Wallace; [bwallace@bandag.com](mailto:bwallace@bandag.com))
  - 13-14 Central Coast IMAC [www.trivalleyrcmodelers.com](http://www.trivalleyrcmodelers.com)
  - ?15-16 Camarillo Air Show
  - 20 Fun Fly & Swap Meet - Valley Flyers Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - 21 War Bird Day/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus
- September
- ?1 Swap Meet & Dawn Patrol Contest @ Hemet Model Masters – [www.hemetmodelmasters.org](http://www.hemetmodelmasters.org)
  - 18 T-28 Races/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus
  - 18 Fun Fly – Valley Flyers [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ?18-19 Float Fly @ Lake Castiac Lower Lake– Canyon Crosswinds [www.canyoncrosswinds.com](http://www.canyoncrosswinds.com)
  - 23-25 Float Fly @ Lake Mc Swane near Merced... Reservations – 209-354-2954
  - 25 Try & Fly - Valley Flyers [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ?24-25 Lake Hemet Float fly – Hemet Model Masters – [www.hemetmodelmasters.org](http://www.hemetmodelmasters.org)
  - 30-Oct 2 Glider Festival @ Visalia, CA ( [www.CVRCSoaring.com](http://www.CVRCSoaring.com) )
- October
- 1 All Electric Fun Fly - Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ?3-5 Tucson Aerobatic Shootout - [www.desertaircraft.com](http://www.desertaircraft.com)
  - 6-9 Q 40 Pylon Racing - Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ? 6-9 Quickie 500 Pylon races – San Gabriel RC League – Whittier Narrows Rec.
  - 9 Simi Valley Flyers - Fun Fly, BBQ, & Swap Meet
  - 11 Try & Fly- Public open house - Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - ?11-12 Pattern Contest at Sacramento (SAM; Frank Capone; [crcfrank@sbcglobal.net](mailto:crcfrank@sbcglobal.net))
  - 13-16 Giant Scale Air Races - Rabbit dry lake (Unlimited planes @ 250 + MPH) [www.usrainfo.org](http://www.usrainfo.org)
  - 16 Combat – 4 rounds/Club Mtg. – Camarillo Flying Circus
  - ?22-23 Float Fly @ Comets - Lake Casitas – Camping, BBQ & Big Raffel
  - ?23-25 Float Fly @ Visalia – Russell Pond for directions check [www.CVRCSoaring.com](http://www.CVRCSoaring.com)
- November
- 5 Swap Meet & Fun Fly -Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - 13-15 Float Fly, @ London Bridge, Windsor Beach Park, Lake Havasu, Az. [www.deserthawksrc.org](http://www.deserthawksrc.org)
  - 12-13 “Wings Over Prado” Scale event - @ Prado Air Park, Chino [www.pvmac.com](http://www.pvmac.com)
  - 12 LA Jets - Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - 20 War Bird Day – Camarillo Flying Circus
  - 19-20 Float Fly @ Comets – Club members only
  - ?22-24 West Coast all Electric RC Event – Fly-in @ Prado Airpark, Chino, CA [www.pvmac.com](http://www.pvmac.com)
- December
- 4 Toys-for-Tots Fly-in – Valley Flyers – Apollo Field [www.valleyflyers.com](http://www.valleyflyers.com)
  - 11 Holiday party – Simi Valley Flyers
  - TBD Camarillo Flying Circus Christmas party
  - 15 VC Comets Christmas party

Did we already talk about this? Stick your FAA ID on your plane somewhere. The rules are:

1) The ID can be stuck to the outside of the airframe - the easy way

or

2) The ID must be visible once you remove a hatch or wing or canopy, etc., but you **must not** need tools to remove the hatch, wing, canopy, etc. In other words if you need a screwdriver or pick-axe to remove something, the position of your FAA ID is no good and you can't put it there.



SO WHAT!?

Q: What is the penalty for failing to register?

A: Failure to register an aircraft may result in regulatory and criminal sanctions. The FAA may assess civil penalties up to \$27,500. Criminal penalties include fines of up to \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for up to three years.



- Enough already, ID yer stuff!

Hold on...one more - **Send Treasurer-TJ your ID so he can record it in the club roster.** [tj\\_moran@roadrunner.com](mailto:tj_moran@roadrunner.com)

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Lastly - **Have you renewed your membership?** The locks get changed March 31. This means you have a month and a half to get the dues in.