

# The Comets' Tale

*The Official  
Newsletter of the*



**July 2014**

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**Board of Directors**

Alastair Brennan, George Lanquist, Dale Nash, Lynn Breedlove, TJ Moran

**Instructor Pilots**

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George Lanquist TJ Moran Steve Steinmetz Alastair Brennan

The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura County Comets, AMA Chartered Club #173 and is published monthly at the Comets' Tale Plaza, somewhere in Ventura.

*Editorial contributions are welcome.*

**Next Meeting: Thursday, 17 July**

**7:30 PM at the Oak Park Community Center**

*Prez Sez!*

Last meeting the club was in unanimous agreement for the float fly. We did have a great turnout at the float fly last time, and would like to think the October event will be the same. However the current drought conditions are hampering our efforts. We will have to keep an eye on the lake water level and decide if where the launching area will be. As club members let me know of any concerns that you may have or considerations we need to address. I think a couple of the Tuesday/Thursday group are going to scout-out the area in the next week or so.

Bob Root has agreed to be our CD and has already submitted the paperwork to the AMA. Thanks Bob!

**Remember the date October 18-19.**

Did everyone get the email from the AMA about the FAA Interpretive rule? I am following this and have spoken with Rich Hanson at the AMA to see what statements and actions the AMA are preparing in response to this potential rule change from the AMA. Mr. Hanson tells me that they are taking this very seriously and will ask for extension so that the AMA can properly research the text and assess how this will affect the modeling hobby. He also says that the (AMA will most likely prepare a statement that members can cut-and-paste to the comments web site (see the link below).

Currently comments are due July 25<sup>th</sup>. Now is your chance to voice your comments on this potential rule change. *I recommend that you review the rule and post a comment on your thoughts on the rule.*

**Coming  
Up!**



**Comets Warbird Day/  
Fun Fly/Swap Meet**  
Sunday, 27 July

**Camarillo Air Show**  
Sat. & Sun, 23 & 24  
August

**Comets Float Fly**  
Sat. & Sun., 18 & 18  
October

**First Sunday of each  
Month**  
Open House at Santa Paula  
Airport  
Free Young Eagle rides for  
kids 8-18 years old

The rule is here: [http://02b954f.netsohost.com/docs/model\\_aircraft\\_spec\\_rule.pdf](http://02b954f.netsohost.com/docs/model_aircraft_spec_rule.pdf)

AMA posted this link on their Facebook page (July 9):

<http://www.star-telegram.com/2014/07/08/5956853/fear-of-flying-faa-rule-making.html?rh=1>

Comments go to: <http://www.regulations.gov> or

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment;D=FAA-2014-0396-0001>

Back to the fun stuff, and as mentioned last month, prep that warbird and bring it to this month's Fun Fly on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The schedule also says swap meet and BBQ, so bring the stuff you don't want anymore and your appetite and stories to swap. Tell your friends from the other clubs too. There is a \$10 entry fee, which also gets you lunch.

See ya at the field,

*Alastair Brennan*

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Here's a bit more from Al:

*Me at age 13 (circa 1980) with my new Sig Kadet (It's a Mark1 - This was before Sig called them Mark1/Mark2).*

*That's Dick Hanna trying to teach me something. This is at Lake Casitas, note the absence of the two airplane catch fences and pilot stations. We could debate how I might have influenced the decision to add catch fences after I hit a fellow club member - He was standing on the edge of the runway as I was trying to land. My plane floated towards the pits and I hit him in the A.*

*Remember the colored flags we flew on the transmitters - Green and white, Purple and white, etc.? If you look close at the pict...*



*Check out the cars on the driveway:*

*1966 Renault R8*

*1978 Peugeot 504 diesel station wagon*



## MINUTES of the June 2014 MEETING

Meeting was called to order by Club V. President, Dale Nash, at:

- 7:47 pm – Club President, Alastair Brennen, was not able to attend the June meeting.

### **New Members & Guests:**

- One new member was welcomed and his name is Chris Hudspeth. The club secretary was at the field flying with Chris and he is already a good pilot. He is a nice fellow and will be a good addition to the club.

### **Treasurer`s Report: ( T.J. Moran)**

- T.J. gave the Treasurer`s Report which was displayed on the white board for everyone to see as the report was given. Generally the treasury is going up.
- Also on display for everyone`s review are the ongoing cost of the runway membrane from the being to the present.

### **Safety Officer`s Report: (George Lanquist)**

- No report this month as George Lanquist was not in attendance.

### **Park Liaison Report: (John Dugan)**

- No report this month as George Lanquist was not in attendance.

### **Reminders:**

- Secretary, Lynn Breedlove, reminded everyone that when you see someone flying at the field that you do not know or recognize to ask them if they are a member and if they are a current member of the AMA. Lynn reminded everyone to tell those who were not a member that after 2 or 3 times as a guest at the field they were required to join the club. Lynn was corrected by Dale Nash. Everyone who flies at our field has to be a member of AMA. We cannot require them to join the club but we can encourage them to join the club.

### **Misc:**

- This was the mid-year meeting and as always the club provided pizza, sub-sandwiches and drinks. It was great and everyone enjoyed it.

### **Old Business:**

- There was a short discussion about the condition of the runway. T.J. summed it up and stated that there and probably will be ongoing patching of the runway but its holding its own.

### **New Business:**

- We were advised that the Quaker fly is this weekend, Sunday the 27th.
- Warbird fly is now July 27th.
- 2014 flying and runway rules are now posted at the field.

### **Model of the Month:**

- Peter Perry presented an electric biplane – it`s a very nice plane and fully aerobatic. Peter has flown it and says it flies very well.

### **Raffle:**

- June is the semi-annual big raffle. Usually one or two extra nice prizes. T.J. won an aerobatic ARF kit and Berny Hammer won an O.S. 75 AX.

Meeting adjourned at:

- 8:05 pm

Respectfully submitted:

*Lynn Breedlove - Secretary*



### Some miscellaneous notes...

Actually I just wanted to show off that I could spell 'miscellaneous', but I got it wrong and had to count on the spell checker anyway.

OK, here's some random stuff. First, and most important, a couple of notes from Clara Lake, wife of late Comet Bob Lake... for y'all that didn't know Bob, well he was just a great guy, a great Comet and a talented modeler. Bob designed a pattern model 'way back that became very popular in the local area. It was called the Cuda, and then there was the Super Cuda. Berny Hammer can probably tell us about these models, and the Cuda Cub, too, I'll bet. Clara is a sweetie and she was the perfect match for Bob. It was a real blow to lose him a few years ago.

*"Thank you for the great pictures of the Comets flyers at the Lake. Brings back many good memories. HELLO TO ALL THE COMETS, good days of flying always."* Clara Lake

*"THANK YOU FOR THE APRIL COMETS NEWS LETTER.  
I LOVED ALL THE PICTURES OF THE PLANES AND FLYERS.  
IF I HAVE SOME MEMORABILIA OF BOB'S WOULD YOU LIKE  
ME TO SEND IT TO YOU FOR THE COMETS' TALE?"  
CLARA (GOOD FLYING)*

*Clara, I know you're reading this, and OF COURSE we'd like to see Bob's photos or whatever else you'd like to share!*

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"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it."

-Henry Ford

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I got a hyperlink from Ron Scott to a video of a guy who launched a quadcopter into a fireworks display. There is some spectacular video in this. Did you ever wonder what it would look like to be right in the middle of a fireworks show? OK, me neither, but this is pretty spectacular. (I couldn't get the hyperlink to copy, so you'll just have cut and paste)

<http://youtu.be/a9KZ3jgbbmI>

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Dianne and I have been missing a lot of flying as Lola the RV-6 is down for her annual inspection and some maintenance. The annual inspection by itself is actually not such a Big Deal on an RV-6. As light airplanes go, the RV-6 is one of the simpler ones, especially in light of the performance the airplane delivers. Most airplanes that can move and maneuver like it are more complex and expensive, which goes a long way in explaining the popularity of the design.

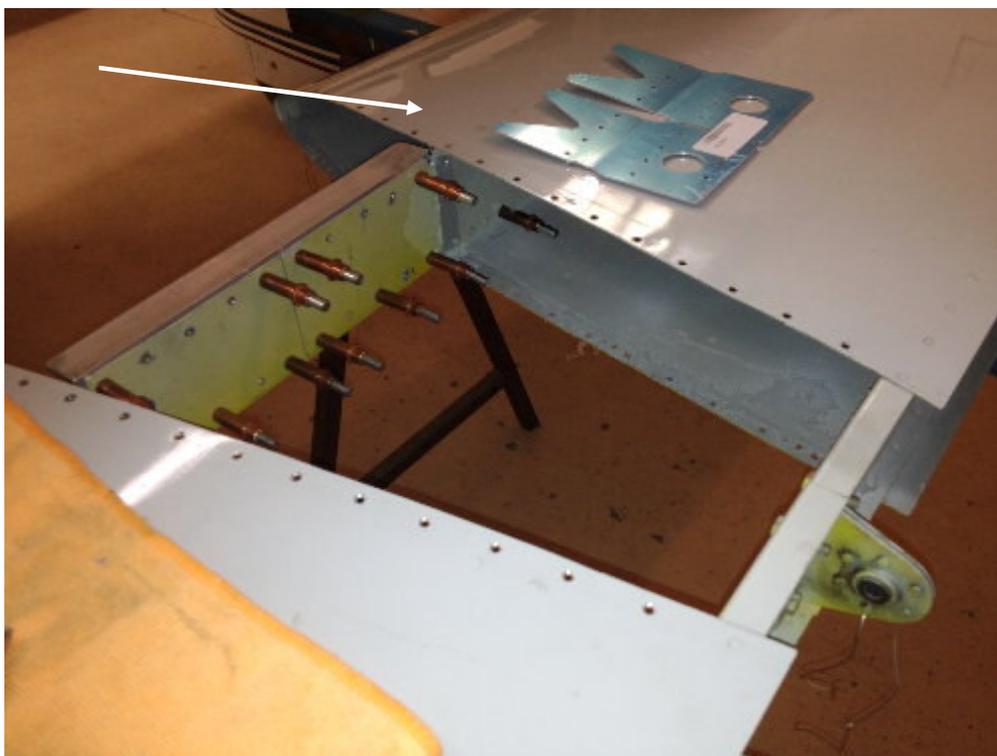
The inspection didn't turn up much that needed attention, but a Service Letter from Van's Aircraft sure did. Seems there have been some reports of cracks in the forward stabilizer spars. No accidents or incidents, but

the cracks are, well, pretty uncomfortable. The Letter says the airplane can be inspected every year for cracks and if none are found, it's good to go to the next year's inspection. If there are cracks, there is a modification kit available to repair the crack(s) and strengthen the spar. OR, the kit can be installed any time and that relieves the operator of having to do the yearly inspections. Having big objections to waiting until something breaks to fix it, we decided to go ahead and do the mod. The kit costs a handsome, um, \$15, which seems a bargain until you look at what's required to actually do the mod. The photo of Lola's stabilizer center section shows one of the four corners where you look for the cracks in the spar web. This area is easy to see even with the airplane all assembled. The arrow points to one of four barely visible, carefully smoothed and rounded notches that I've added as part of the mod. Looks like Van wants to reduce the stiffness just a bit right there and the two precut and punched doublers, still connected, are laying on top of the skin. The top and bottom spar caps are clecoed in place. The silvery, new one is the replacement part for the stab attach.

First, all the tailfeathers need to come off so enough unriveting can be done to get access to the inside of the stabilizer. In the photo, that has been done and all four inboard ribs have been removed.

Getting the tail off is not a big deal either, its all just nuts and bolts and they're all easy to reach, but there is a fair amount of sheet metal work to be done and we got an extra whammy because there was a minor problem with one bolt hole attaching the stabilizer to the fuselage and I'd promised myself that if I ever needed to take that stabilizer off, I'd fix that. Seemed like a good bet, why would you ever take the stab off? Hmm, yeah. So far, the tail is off, the unriveting is done and I've made one of the new parts needed to fix the old problem. The spar doublers provided in the kit have been trimmed and drilled... and one is goofed up, so I guess I get to make a new one of those. At least it's a simple part. Once that's done I'll be ready to start shooting and squashing rivets and we're on the way back to airworthiness. Then to fix the problem in the fuselage. That will require a bit more drilling and fabrication of another simple part. Once THAT is done, I can start putting the tail back together. There is a small skin crack in the rudder to patch, and we'll be ready to fly again. Deep breath.

Like any other airplane, car, locomotive etc, I have some projects in mind to make Lola better. Would love to add a fuse panel to get the fuses into a more convenient location because now they're in an afterthought panel below the right side instrument panel and everybody bangs their knees on it. We need to find a good place to install the canopy knife, the exhaust hanger is a bit of a kluge... and on and on. Airplanes and fun cars are like Disneyland... never finished. Not enough time, not enough time!



*Jerry 'kid' Deanda*