

The Comets Tale



March 2020

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George Boston, Berny Hammer, TJ Moran,
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The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura Count Comets, AMA
Chartered Club #173 and is published every other month at the Comets' Tale Lair, in
Agoura Hills, CA.

Editorial contributions are always welcome.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, **March 19, 2020 7:00 PM**

At the Oak View Community Center



Upcomming Events:

April 18, 2020 Fun Fly, Swap
Meet and BBQ Lake Casitas

May 23, 2020 Glider Fun-Fly
Lake Casitas

Presidents Message:

Hello all. It's been a busy and challenging two months since we last talked. Flying out at the field has been good with the weather cooperating on most days. Spring is in the air, and by the time this issue of the Tale is published we will be back on Daylight Savings time. The grass is green and growing fast, along with all the weeds.

During the weekend of 15 February we had strong winds out at the field. The wind got underneath the fabric at the right end of the runway and peeled back the seam almost 2/3's its length. It tore across the right end and pulled back to the other side virtually the entire length of the tear. Pictures of the damage fabric and its removal are included in this issue of the

Tale. The Board (myself, TJ, Berny and Alastair) considered our options to get the runway back in service, and they were few. It was our opinion that the tear could not be repaired. We did not have enough spare fabric to create a new patch to go over the length of the tears, and because we have never found an adhesive that would bond the fabric pieces together, it would be a waste of time and money to try to salvage it. We got approximately 7 years of use out of the fabric, which is a lot longer than our experience with applying slurry seal to the asphalt, which only lasts around 2-3 years.

So we are back to the old asphalt surface which is pretty rough, with some major cracks that run perpendicular across the runway in three different places. We are flying off of it, but takeoffs and landings can be a little challenging.

We have been kicking around various options for getting the runway back into a usable and serviceable state. Putting down fabric again is not considered a viable option. We also considered trying to repair and seal the asphalt ourselves with purchasing the material through one of the home improvement stores, but were told by professionals in the paving business that, that was not a good idea. We have talked to a few folks that are knowledgeable of the situation and have experience with repairing asphalt surfaces, and they collectively feel the only realistic path is to repave the entire surface with a new cap of asphalt 2" thick, then perform annual maintenance using volunteer help within the Club. Applying a slurry seal would be a waste of time and money, given the poor surface condition that exists now. Our experience with doing slurry seal applications in the past is they would only last a couple of years at best, and the estimated cost would be around \$6-8K. Also, slurry seal would not eliminate the rough surface and cracks. It would only restore a small amount of oil into the surface.

We have been getting cost estimates from a number of paving companies. The rough estimates are scary. Somewhere between \$30-40K. I hope that by the end of March we have some accurate estimates of the cost, with options to choose from. Please don't go off the deep end with this bad news. I am confident that we will work through this challenging task and find a solution to get the runway back in good condition without breaking the bank. Stating the obvious, without a runway there isn't much motivation for having an RC model airplane club. We will get through this!

On a very positive note I want to thank all the members who volunteered to help out with removing the old fabric off the runway, and for busting their butts with brooms, shovels and leaf blowers cleaning off all the debris that collected under the fabric over the past 7 years. I asked for 8 volunteers and well over 20 showed up. I tried to get the names of all the helpers, but know that I missed some. If I missed listing your name I apologize, but rest assured all of us are indebted to you for your help and voluntary spirit. Thanks to:

Jim Polk, Lowell Martinson, Paul Borg, Dan Cordell, John Dugan, Bob Root, TJ, Peter Nickel, Peter Perry, Alastair Brennan, Ron Golding, Greg Nowland, James Wilberger, Javier Garcia, Dale Cundiff, Glenn Dorfman, Lynn Breedlove, Paul Ceriale, and yours truly.

Our next business meeting is set for March 19th at 7pm at the Oak View Community Center. Pizza and Subway sandwiches, with coffee and soft drinks for dinner. Don't forget that there will be a table setup for you to bring all your model airplane stuff you no longer want and are ready to pass on to a deserving member. Ron Scott published a new 2020 Calendar of Flying Events that is attached to this month's Tale. We have a lot to talk about, including the FAA Proposed Rule Change for remote identification of UAS. Our first fun fly for 2020 is set for 18 April, and the lake is hosting a customer appreciation day on the 4th of April and we will be hosting a booth promoting the Club and the sport/hobby of RC model building and flying. Please mark this date on your calendar, and I hope to see you at the meeting. On a final note if you have yet to pay your annual dues, shame on you. Please get it done!

Safe flying,

George Boston

President

Meeting Minutes-January 2020:

Prez. George called the meeting to order at 7:25 after a quick meal of pizza and sandwiches. There were 20 members present and one guest.

The meeting minutes were approved as well as the treasurer's report. The Safety Officer reported no issues and the Park Liaison had nothing to report.

A concern was brought to pay attention to the lock at the gate at the bottom of the hill by the showers. Be sure to secure it so that any lock can unlock the gate.

The soon-to-be new shed was discussed. Greg N. and T.J. will mark the areas where the shed will go. Eventually the club will need to purchase leveling/foundation blocks. These two will figure out the amount of blocks to buy. The plan is to do this in the next few weeks. The shed manufacturer, Tuff Shed, can deliver in three days.

New business:

The FAA proposal was discussed. The club leadership suggested each member write a letter to the FAA; write to the FAA and discuss how this potential new rule will impact you. In addition, write your congressional representative (Julia Brownley). President George will email the membership with further information and email addresses/links for the submittal.

Calendar of events was discussed. The membership agreed to step and repeat the previous year's events.

There was no model of the month.

There were some items brought for the "free" table.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm

Respectfully,

Alastair



Luca after his training flight. "His smile says it all!"

The following photos are visual representations of the condition of the runway and subsequent cleanup. Job well done by all !!







AMA Charter Club #173

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