

The Comets' Tale

*The Official
Newsletter of the*



November 2007

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Board of Directors

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Instructor Pilots

Emery Balasa Steve Billings Andrew Carlson Bob Root Ron Scott

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, 15 November, 2007, 7:30 PM at the
Oak View Community Center



**Coming
Up!**

**15—19 November
Comets Only
Float Fly at Lake Casitas**

**Thursday, 20 December
2007**

Comets' annual Christmas
meeting, party and potluck.
Check with Marilyn Nash
about what to bring

1st Sunday of each Month
First Sunday At the Airport
Static displays, Young
Eagle Rides
Santa Paula Airport

November Rambling

The Comet's Float Fly in October was a big success. There were 63 people who paid to fly, the weather was great, and everyone seemed to have a good time. Picture 1 shows some of the crowd near the shoreline. With the water as low as it is there was a lot of room for the many campers who like to camp between the shore and our runway.

It's a beautiful setting, and several people commented to me on how much they enjoy attending our Float Flys.

We need to thank all the club members who helped out. This includes the event director, the cooks who put together a great lunch every day, the people setting up and running the great raffle, all





those assisting with registration and frequency control, and the line people who put on boots and launched and retrieved the models all day every day.

I especially would like to thank T.J. Moran and George Lanquist for bringing out their boats to retrieve models that didn't make it back to shore. T.J. is retrieving my Cloud Cruiser after the engine quit in picture 2.

In addition we should thank all the folks who paid to come fly with us. Last but not least we should thank who ever was in charge of the weather. The weather was great until about 3 pm both days.

One of the most impressive models flown was a 10 ft. Clipper flying boat. My grandson Ben is assisting with the launching in picture 3. This model looked very real during takeoff. I think it weighed about 30 pounds and was powered by four .52 cu. in. size engines. The takeoff was slow and graceful. After a nice flight the model bounced on



landing pretty hard. It is shown in picture 4 as it taxis back to the shore. It is actually sitting pretty low in the water. Even though it looked great as it came in, when Ben picked it up, water was gushing out of a large hole in the bottom. The bottom looked like it was made of 1/8 in. or less balsa covered with 3/4 oz. fiberglass cloth. The water apparently tore this hole in the bottom during landing. It is amazing that the model taxied in while it was so full of water. The owner dried it out and repaired it overnight. When he tried to fly it on Sunday he had engine trouble and wasn't able to get everything working.

Many interesting models show up at our Float Fly. The twin engine original in picture 5 looked great and flew well.





Two pilots enjoyed flying together and their planes are shown in picture 6. I think they were a father and son team.

Picture 7 is a nice Piper Pacer which I have seen before. Lots of different models from scale to Ugly Sticks to a Quickie pylon racer had floats added to allow operation off the water.



A nice Ugly Stick is shown in picture 8.



There were many successful electric models including a couple of small PBY Catalina flying boats and the electric Sea Wind shown in picture 9. These models are available almost ready to fly and seem to work well.



A full scale amphibian is shown in picture 10. I guess I would consider it a free flight since no one was able to control it, but the fuel is cheap (garbage).

Last year club member Lynn Breedlove was flying a beautiful yellow and purple trim Quaker on floats. He has been famous for almost a year for the spectacular landing he made with this plane. He was able to land it in not one, but both retrieval boats parked next to each other. Actually I guess parts landed in each boat. Anyway, being the good modeler he is he has rebuilt it and it looks and flies as well as ever as shown in picture 11.

Bob Root



October 2007 minutes Comets Meeting

Thursday 18 October, 2007

Called to order at 07:32pm by **Pres. John Dugan**

John Dugan called on **Ron Scott** to share his experience while traveling the western states this past summer. **Ron** summarized his trip by stating that he was welcome at virtually all the flying sites he visited. He spent time in Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada. He encouraged all of us to consider similar trips and get out and see how other AMA clubs and fields operate

T.J. Moran requested that his email mailing list be updated by all in attendance

Ron Scott announced that the Condors are hosting a War Bird Fly-in (fun fly) on 10 November

September Minutes – It was pointed out that the proposed renewal notice form did not have an entry for phone number. The form will be updated. It was also noted that **George Lanquist** was listed in error as a member of the nominating committee. The correct listing is **George Boston**. Other members of the nominating committee are **Dale Nash** and **Mike Ambarian**. So far, they have nominations of **Sandy Brown** for Secretary and **Ron Scott** for President.

Treasurers Report – accepted

Membership – 92

Visitors – **Marina Gabriels** accompanied her husband, member **Leo Gabriels**. Welcome **Marina**

Safety – **Dennis Fingold** had no new business to report

Field Marshall – **Bud Scolari** was not in attendance

Park Liaison – **Ken Marsh** was not in attendance

Old Business:

Road repairs (paving) from Campground “O” to the entrance gate at our field should be completed in the next 3-4 weeks

Float Fly – All is a go. Flying on Friday is set aside for club members only. Safety rules will be printed and distributed to all pilots as they register on Saturday morning

New Business:

Pot Luck Christmas dinner is set for the evening of 20 December. There will be a short business meeting followed by dinner at 7:30pm



The November club member only float fly is set for the 15th through the 19th. All are encouraged to attend

The Lake Cachuma float fly is scheduled to for 27 – 28 October.

Model of the Month – Three contestants, **Joe Horswell**, **Steve Billings** and **Leo Gabriels** brought planes. **Joe** won for his entry of the “Autogyro” marketed by Don Swartz. It was constructed from foam, basswood, and plywood. The kit includes the motor (electric). Building instructions are poor to non-existent and it was difficult to put together. **Joe** has yet to fly the model; however, he hears that it is a good flyer. Good luck **Joe!**

Drawing held

Meeting adjourned at 8:17pm

Thanks to **George Boston** for taking the minutes and writing them for me.

Ron Golding

RENEWAL NOTICE 2008
Ventura County Comets
Dues Payable on or before January 1, 2008

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

AMA Number _____

Telephone Number _____

Email address _____

R/C Frequency Channel _____

Type of Membership: Senior _____ Spouse _____ Junior _____ Lifetime _____

Membership Renewal Fee: Senior \$50, Spouse \$25, Junior 17 yrs. and younger \$10
Please include a copy of your 2008 AMA membership card



Random Thots :-) I went to the Air Museum of Santa Paula's Wine and Wings fund raiser last month and bid on a small electric helicopter in the silent auction. Unfortunately, I won the thing. I got a great price and good support from Vern Morseman of Ventura Hobbies. He donated the ready to fly model for the auction.

Now, I need to learn to fly the thing. After almost forty years of fixed-wing flying, I'm starting over. My wife, bless her, got me the Hangar One Flight Simulator program to run on my computer and I'm doing all my initial training there. So far, the helicopter hasn't been out of the box. I'm planning on trying to get to where I can hover the simulator and then fly the helicopter, in hopes of saving a few dollars on crash kits for the real thing.

I've tried flying a couple of helicopters in the past and the resulting not-quite-controlled dashes across the airport ramp or hangar floors almost convince me it wasn't worth it. I even got a short ride once, years ago in a Bell 47 and got to handle some of the controls in that.

I'm here to tell you, the full scale machine is easier, and by a country mile. That model just wants to take off in any one of 360 different directions, and this while the nose wants to point in any other of 360 different directions. All this happens of course, while I'm trying to keep a constant altitude, and that's not stable either.

It's not hopeless. I think. I believe I'm seeing just a glimmer of an idea how to keep this virtual model over the virtual runway but the path is littered with screen shots of little yellow helicopters on their sides and backs.

I think I have a chance, just a chance that I can learn to control this thing reasonably well. All I have to do is unlearn three decades plus of experience. We'll see.

Fight Gravity!

Jerry 'kid' Deanda

Cheaper Small-Parts Storage

Here is a suggestion for easy storage of small screws and bits. All you need is an ice cube tray. The advantage of this idea is that ice cube trays can be bought at low prices unlike professional parts organizers.

Efficient, Glow-plug Igniter Cleaner

Oil residue can prevent glow igniters from working properly. If you carry yours in your pocket, even the lint in there can cause your igniter to malfunction. A good way to clean igniters is with alcohol and an old electric toothbrush. A clean tip on the igniter will allow more current to reach the glow-plug element for more reliable starting.

Clear Canopy Polish

Here is a good canopy polish tip, use toothpaste on the canopy. Smear a liberal amount of toothpaste on the canopy and use toilet tissue to buff the canopy to a glossy finish that will not scratch at all. Then use alcohol cleaner to remove any residue left by the toothpaste. It works very well!

-From Jim's R/C

Antennas

With all of the technological advances in transmitters and receivers, we spend more time learning how to use the new features to improve our flying enjoyment. It is easy to forget that these complex signals must be sent from the transmitter to the receiver in the aircraft, and it is the antennas of each that are most important in maintaining a strong signal.

Metal-whip transmitter antennas can take a beating and should be inspected regularly. Inspection before each flying session is not a bad idea. Things have a way of happening during transport to and from the field, and back at the hangar.

Extend the antenna fully and give it a mild shake. Look for slop between the sections as this can cause an intermittent connection. If any section slides back (collapses) without force, replace the antenna. Also check that the antenna is tightly screwed into the base. Sometimes the threaded inserts break loose.

Never use metal gadgets to attach the frequency flag. Clean with tissue and alcohol, and lubricate with WD-40. If a section breaks, it can be soldered together with brass tubing while you wait for a replacement. Receiver antennas must be handled gently. Do not pull on the connection at the receiver body. The antenna should be routed at least 2-inches clear of other electronic parts. When bundling the receiver in foam, be sure the antenna comes out one end and the servo/battery wires out the other. Never attach the receiver antenna with a metal clip. Route it through plastic tubing, or tape it in place. If a portion of antenna breaks off, an extension can be spliced on and covered with shrink tubing. The actual standard wavelength is about 4 meters, but most manufacturers of radios used in the US use $\frac{1}{4}$ wave antennas at approximately 3 feet (about 41 total inches is better,) and some Park Flyer, single-conversion receivers are less. A few inches in length is not critical.

The new 2.4 GHz radio systems will improve the reliability of antennas because they are only a few inches long, but existing radios have a lot of life in them. In any case, the gold standard for determining a good radio signal is a range check with the engine running. Take the few minutes of time to check your antennas. →

From the Aero R/C Club, Lennon, Michigan