

The Alameda Aero Club Newsletter

January 2006

President's Corner

Two New Year's Resolutions for 2006

1. Be Courteous With Your Weekend Reservations

Many of us, myself included, never fly on weekends. Why? I have the luxury of being able to fly during the middle of the week when our airplanes are readily available. I leave the weekends open for those who have no choice in the matter.

Thus, it's particularly irritating when you run down to OAK in good weather on a weekend and see airplanes on the ground. A recent example had a fellow reserving an airplane for all of a Saturday. He flew the airplane, alright, but was back by mid-morning. On return, he did the right thing which was to cancel his reservation for the rest of the day. The problem with this is that other members could have taken the airplane had they known it was going to be available later in the day.

There have been complaints and grumbling about members who reserve airplanes early and often for large blocks of time on the weekends. They thus deny other members access. At the last Board of Directors meeting, we pondered what we could do about this. Suggestions included limiting the number of weekend reservations a member can make, making certain major offenders go through Board members for weekend reservations, and so on.

We reached no decision largely because the last thing the Board wants to do is become "reservation police." And, when you get down to it, a club like ours simply has to trust its members. We trust you to fly well, use good judgment, be careful with club airplanes, and be courteous to your fellow members.

So please, unless you are taking a long cross-country, limit the hours you reserve the airplane. Let other members have a shot at it. And please, don't "preemptively book" just because you might consider flying on that particular weekend. Think of your fellow pilots.

2. Fly More

I recently checked my hours for 2005 and they're pathetic. Over the past year, I've limped along barely

keeping my currency. No night flying, let alone instrument work. It's been several years since I've filed a flight plan, worked out time-enroute problems, dealt with winds aloft forecasts, and all the business of "real" flying.

While some take wonderful cross-country flights, I know most of us limit our flying to staying legal and taking visitors up for Bay tours. It's too easy to get into the habit of not flying. Anything can serve as an excuse. *It's hazy:* "If I go up, I won't be able to see much. So why bother?" *Or it's clear:* "There must be some pretty formidable winds up there, I bet I'll just get pounded by turbulence if I go up. So why bother?" Excuses, we've all got them, but that's all they are. .

So, in 2006, I'll try to do more flying, why don't we all?

Steve Bevitt, President

A Modest Proposal, Dammit

Al Burri, one of the ex-military founding fathers of the club, could be cantankerous, but he made you toe the line. He didn't hesitate to chew you out if you did wrong. I was on the receiving end a couple of times (walking away from the plane with the door left open, putting the oil funnel on the ground). I didn't make the same mistake twice.

Lately, I've been wishing Al were around to kick butt again, but in his absence, let me briefly rant.

I've noticed an alarming sloppiness lately, and I'm not talking about dress. Seat belts left unbuckled, props in the 6-12 position, yoke locks not installed. Twice in pre-flight I've discovered fuel caps sitting beside the opening, just hoping I'd take off so fuel could be sucked out. Not infrequently the previous pilot didn't bother to fill out a fresh flight log with "begin" time, plane number and rate for the next pilot. All of this comes under the rubric of "attention to detail" -- or lack thereof. Sloppiness on the ground can spread to sloppiness in the air, and that scares me.

It'd be nice if we made a practice of alerting pilots to their minor mistakes. I know I'd truly appreciate it if someone emailed me after a flight to tell me I'd forgotten, for example, to chain the tail or install the yoke lock. (Take this as an invitation to do so). So let's all pay a bit more attention out there.

Gary Wren

In Appreciation

As a former Board member and club President who has – I confess – become preoccupied and, well, inexcusably lazy, I appreciate more and more the efforts of those volunteers who keep our club running. Many obviously deserve our thanks (Steve, Ginny, etc.), but there's one member in particular who has toiled quietly in the shadows for many years: our newsletter editor, Jay Smith. He's worked above and beyond the call of duty for a long time. Years ago, for example, I had the crazy idea of posting a Task Sheet with all the dirty, mundane jobs that needed doing around the clubhouse (vacuuming, washing windows, cleaning planes, etc.). After a while I noticed that the most frequent--and almost the only--name on the list in the "Done" column was Jay's. Quietly, without fanfare, he just plugged away. You could always count on him when something needed doing. You still can. Thanks, Jay.

Gary Wren

Doug Johnson's Copilot

*[Those new to the Alameda Aero Club may not know of Doug Johnson. Doug died a few months ago. He had a long history with the club, served on the board, helped keep us flying and is missed by many. Doug's account of this mission is on the club website: <http://www.alameda-aero.com>. Click on **General articles**, then on **My Last Mission**.*

Jay Smith, Newsletter Editor.]

It might be of interest to know that Doug Johnson's co-pilot (my brother) Victor S. Rutkowski, was captured and later murdered by Nazis in the town of Lindlar, Germany.

In April [2005] something unique happened in that town. A monument was dedicated in Vic's memory by the people of Lindlar. A beautiful ceremony was observed. The ceremony was attended by the Mayor of Lindlar and many townspeople. A children's choir and a local band played. I was able to speak. A representative of the U.S. State Department attended. Later in a school auditorium a large gathering heard the story of my brother while his picture was shown on a large screen.

I am intrigued that my brother's name will be known in that town long after his murderers are gone. I understand that someone in Lindlar periodically places

fresh flowers at the monument.

I'm sure that Doug would have been pleased to know this.

Dick Rutkowski, via Steve Bevitt



The Newsletter Editor's father, B-29 flight engineer of the 20th Air Force, 73rd Wing and the 498th Bomb Group, in 1945.

Events, Airshows

17th Annual Airport Open House, Clarksburg, CA, January 21, 2006.

For More Information Contact: 916-744-1447

San Gabriel Valley 99's Annual Poker Run, Cable Airport (CCB), Upland, CA, January 21, 2006. The poker run will take pilots to 5 airports in a 100 mile area and meet at last airport for lunch and prizes.

For More Information Contact: Loreen Wynja, 951-369-5149.