

New Construction at Air Sailing

by Ty White

Originally published in *Westwind* 2002



The finished clubhouse

The Air Sailing Capital Campaign 2000 was inspired by a \$100,000 donation from Bob and Barbara McKay intended for capital improvements to make Air Sailing a more family friendly place. To this end, we raised more than \$200,000 in additional funds to pay for new buildings and infrastructure to provide some basic creature comforts for pilots and crew staying at the airport. We also planned new support facilities for the very successful summer soaring camps and contests held at Air Sailing. Construction for this phase of our long range plan was mostly completed just in time for the summer soaring season.



The Clubhouse great room

The largest and most obvious new structure at Air Sailing is the Clubhouse, built on the site of the old cinderblock bathhouse. The Clubhouse faces east across the pad toward the main north-south runway. Inside, half the space is devoted to a great room which is used for informal gatherings, lunch, post-flight

discussion, classroom, pilots' meetings, banquets and naps. The wraparound covered porch, high ceiling and double-paned windows keep the Clubhouse cool on even the hottest summer days. The porch itself has become a favored spot for a preflight lunch or a postflight drink. In addition to the great room, the Clubhouse also contains a flight planning office, large mens' and womens' restrooms and two individual shower rooms to replace the demolished bathhouse. It is truly a wonderful experience to walk out of a dusty hot afternoon into the quiet cool of this lovely new building.



April 18th 2002

West of the Clubhouse at the edge of the current travel trailer area, we've constructed a new Bathhouse that essentially duplicates the restroom and shower facilities of the Clubhouse. The Bathhouse also contains a laundry room with washer and dryer. We've seen a big increase in the number of travel trailers onsite and we intend for the new Bathhouse to anchor a westward expansion of the area devoted to trailer parking. The second Bathhouse is really needed now during camps and contests, but we also wanted to build for the future and realized a real cost savings by constructing both buildings at the same time. Because the Clubhouse and Bathhouse are both public buildings, they were built to satisfy all county codes and are both completely accessible by pilots, crew and family members in wheelchairs.



May 5th

A less obvious, but very important improvement has been a reworking of our onsite power generation system. We are many years away from receiving commercial power at Air Sailing. Power for pumping well water and for lights and other appliances is supplied by a diesel generator which charges a bank of high capacity batteries. The batteries supply 110 volt power onsite 24 hours a day. As part of the current construction, we built an annex to the current hangar to house the batteries and associated electronics and power distribution system. This power system now supplies the hangar and new buildings. Our intent is to eventually provide power hookups for travel trailers throughout the camper parking area.

The design and construction of the new Air Sailing buildings was carried out by Air Sailing member Rick Walters, a licensed contractor in Minden. Rick allowed the use of both skilled and unskilled volunteer labor to reduce the total cost of the project. Steve Smith served as coordinator of the volunteer pool, which in the end provided more than 80 person-days of labor to the project. More than 25 different volunteers donated significant labor, with six members providing more than five days each. Many Air Sailing members donated vacation days to work on the new buildings, some on bone-chilling snowy days in April, as well as on bodacious soaring days in May and June. We were very lucky that Rick was interested in the project. As an Air Sailing member and a participant in past camps, Rick had a very clear understanding of what we wanted and what was feasible at the gliderport, and the pride he took in his work is reflected in the quality of the buildings. He also kept us unskilled laborers on track when Steve wasn't available.



Steve Smith, exhibiting obvious dedication.

We are delighted with how the buildings have turned out. We're still finishing up details and figuring out the best way to maintain the new facilities. This first summer has been a learning experience as we see just how members and their families best utilize the new space. We hope everyone will come visit, see what we have done and take the time to fly with us at Air Sailing.