

June 2006



e-WESTWIND



Gavin Wills and Friends – Minden to Ely Cross Country June 4th 2006

A MAJOR FEATURE ISSUE ON MINDEN - STATUS, ISSUES, VIEWPOINTS and FLYING!!

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Pacific Soaring Council, Inc., a non-profit, 501(c)3 corporation, is to initiate, sponsor, promote and carry out plans, policies and activities that will further the education and development of soaring pilots. Specifically, activities will promote and teach the safety of flight; meteorology; training in the physiology of flight, and the skills of cross country and high altitude soaring. Other activities will be directed towards the development of competition pilots and the organization and support of contests at the local, regional, national and international levels of soaring. PASCO is the acronym for the Council. WestWind is the monthly publication of PASCO. Material may be reprinted without permission. The present board will remain in office until November 2005. Current dues are \$25 annually from the month after receipt of payment.

Pacific Soaring Council, Inc

President, (interim)

Karol Hines

4800 Sky Mountain Cir.
Reno, NV 89523
775-747-0569
415-845-3002 (cell)
KaroLL@sbcglobal.net

Vice President,

Mike Mayo
1880 Channing Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94303-3013
650-857-0522
echofive@sbcglobal.net

Secretary

Marc Ramsey
659 Valle Vista Ave
Oakland, CA 94610-1921
510-893-0869
marc@ranlog.com

Treasurer,

Hans Van Weersch
PO Box 61406, Sunnyvale CA 94088
408-578-7890 h, +1 408 474 6238 w
+1 408 568 2198 cell
weersch@yahoo.com

Directors

Jim Alton

2413 Cuenca Dr., San Ramon, CA 94583-2150
925-355-9289 h, 925-824-6053 w,
jim.alton@sbc.com

Yuliy Gerchikov

895-3 Quince ave
Santa Clara CA 95051
408-557-8762
gerchikov@narod.ru

Committee Chairs

Awards:

6430 Estates Dr. Oakland, CA 94611
415-667-9142, 211 Main/3/103
donovan_c@sbcglobal.net

Cindy Donovan

Membership/Address Change

41600 Marigold Drive
Fremont, CA 94539-4716
510-490-6765 tylerwhite@earthlink.net

Ty White

Communications & Newsletter;

1580 Sunshine Valley Rd.
Moss Beach, CA 94038
peter.deane@sbcglobal.net

Peter Deane

Competition Secretary;

1121 Oro Way
Gardnerville, NV 89460
sr@sagedb.minden.nv.us
775 265 3386

Rick Walters

Sawyer Award:

darryl_ramm@yahoo.com

Darryl Ramm

FAA Liaison

2618 Tahoe Drive Livermore,
CA 94550-6624
925-447-5620 Rolfpete@aol.com

Rolf Peterson

Web Site;

bcaway@yahoo.com
gerchikov@narod.ru

Brian Choate
Yuliy Gerchikov

SSA Region 11 Directors

Karol Hines

4800 Sky Mountain Cir.
Reno, NV 89523
775-747-0569
415-845-3002 (cell)
KaroLL@sbcglobal.net

John A. Volkober

35 Wendy Court
Novato, CA 94945
(415) 250-3738
javolkober@worldnet.att.net

SSA GOVERNORS

Northern California;

VACANT

Nevada Governor

5660 Tannerwood Dr.
Reno, NV 89511
775-849-8209 cranest@hotmail.com

Stu Crane

Hawaii Governor

266 Poipu Drive,
Honolulu, HI 96825,
(808) 395-9502 h

Elmer Udd,

PASCO Board Meetings; Every 1st Tuesday of the month 7pm,
 Contact Karol Hines (karoll@sbcglobal.net) for location and directions.
Members welcome; please tell us you're coming.

REGION 11 GLIDER OPERATIONS

Air Sailing, Inc. Airport	Palomino Valley, NV	775-475-0255
Central California Soaring Club	Avenal Gliderport, 600 LaNeva Blvd Avenal CA 93204,	559-386-9552
Ely Soaring	Dan Callaghan P.O.BOX 151296, Ely, NV 89315	775-720-1020 http://www.elysoaring.com
Las Vegas Soaring Center	Jean Airport, lvsoar@vegasnet.net	702-874-1010
Mt. Diablo Soaring, Inc.	Rolf Peterson, Flt. Instructor rolfpete@aol.com	925-447-5620
Northern California Soaring Ass'n (NCSA)	Byron Airport, Byron, CA.	925-516-7503
Owens Valley Soaring,	Westridge Rd., Rt 2, Bishop, CA 93514	619-387-2673
Hollister Gliding Club,	Hollister Airport – Hollister California, info@soarhollister.com	831-636-3799, 831-636-7705
Soar Minden	Minden-Tahoe Airport, P.O. Box 1764, Minden, NV 89423,	800-345-7627 775-782-7627
Soar Truckee, Inc.,	Truckee Airport, P.O. Box 2657 CA 96160,	530-587-6702
Williams Soaring Center	Williams GliderPort 2668 Husted Road, Williams, CA 95987	530-473-5600 http://www.williamsssoaring.com/

REGION 11 CLUBS & ASSOCIATIONS

Air Sailing, Inc. Airport	Palomino Valley, NV	Ty White	510-490-6765
Bay Area Soaring Associates (BASA) -	Hollister Airport, Hollister, CA;	Miguel Flores,	831-801-2363
Central California Soaring Club	Avenal Gliderport, Avenal, CA.	Mario Crosina,	559-251-7933.
Great Basin Soaring, Inc.	2312 Prometheus Court Henderson, NV89074	Terry Van Noy	(702) 433-9677
Las Vegas Valley Soaring Association	Jean Airport, NV, P.O.Box 19902, Jean, NV 89019,		702-874-1420
Minden Soaring Club	P.O. Box 361, Minden, NV 89423 www.mindensoaringclub.org	Leo Montejo	
Mount Shasta Soaring Center	Siskiyou County Airport, Montague, CA	Gary Kemp,	530-934-2484
Nevada Soaring Association (NSA) -	Air Sailing Gliderport, NV.	Vern Frye	775-825-1125
Northern California Soaring Association (NCSA)	Byron Airport, Byron, CA.	Mike Schneider	925-426-1412
Silverado Soaring Association	739 Pepper Dr. San Bruno, CA 94066;	Paul Wapensky WapenskyPJ@mfr.usmc.mil	650-873-4341
Valley Soaring Association (VSA) -	Williams Glider Port 2668 Husted Road, Williams, CA	Peter Kelly	707-448-6422

WORLD WIDE WEB ADDRESSES - REGION 11

Soaring Society of America
Pacific Soaring Council
Air Sailing Inc.
Jim and Jackie Payne - FAI Badge Page
Bay Area Soaring Associates
Central California Soaring Club
LAS VEGAS SOARING CENTER
Minden Soaring Club
Mount Shasta Soaring Center
Northern California Soaring Assoc.
RENO SOARING FORECAST
Silverado Soaring, Inc.
SOAR HOLLISTER
Williams Soaring Center
Valley Soaring Association

<http://www.ssa.org>
<http://www.pacificsoaring.org>
<http://www.airsailing.org>
<http://home.aol.com/JPAviation>
<http://www.flybasa.org>
<http://www.soaravenal.com>
<http://www.lasvegassoaring.com>
<http://www.mindensoaringclub.org>
<http://www.craggyaero.com/mssc/>
<http://www.norcalsoaring.org/>
<http://nimbo.wrh.noaa.gov/Reno/rnosafno.htm>
<http://www.silveradosoaring.org/>
<http://www.soarhollister.com/>
<http://www.williamssoaring.com/>
<http://www.sonic.net/~pjkelly/vsa.html>

Editorial

This is a bumper issue with a big emphasis on information and various perspectives on the situation at Minden, our most famous soaring site. A big thanks to Guy Acheson for stepping forward to pull all the various Minden 'Movers & Shakers' together to contribute material for this edition. I have done no editing or modification to the texts supplied.

I have also included the minutes from the last two PASCO board meetings - please review these so you can understand what the board is working towards- we can't work in a vacuum and need your input and feedback.

PASCO is much more than the folks who spend their volunteer time on the board – after all there are only a few of us- the power of PASCO as an organization lies in its membership. We have many members who contribute very strongly to the community in many capacities- but these members are in a dramatic minority considering our 400+ membership. Many choose to focus their efforts on their local site- and this is tremendously important, But PASCO exists to help and support regional activities over and above those of local sites. Even a small amount of time donated or a small role played helps a great deal- many hands make light work; without the critical mass of volunteer effort the organization becomes overloaded and ineffective. This said, our first job on the board is to figure out what PASCO can do and how we can do it- this gives all our members a context within which to contribute- and this is what we are doing. Our scope this year is one of consolidation, establishing the new board and making our current events successful. We intend to have a plan of action (three-year-plan) ready by the banquet and AGM in November. One key current activity is to understand and communicate the issues relevant to our soaring sites- Minden in particular has suffered from so much innuendo, rumor, heated discussion and misconceptions that we decided to dedicate most of this

issue to a detailed Minden update. More sites will be highlighted in future editions.

In order to facilitate easy communications with and between PASCO board members and any PASCO members, I have started a 'yahoo group' specifically for Region 11 soaring discussion that is not specifically focused on any specific soaring site (almost all our sites have their own forums). The group is 'http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Region_11'. Please feel free to sign on to the group and contribute to the discussions and topics- your considered contribution is most welcome.

We are still looking for regional directors to replace John Volkober and Karol Hines. We need some nominations soon. PASCO has decided to re-imburse up to \$1000 per regional director for required travel to the 2 board meetings each year, one of which is held at the SSA Convention. So there's little or no financial burden involved on being a Region 11 director. How about it? If you regularly attend the Convention you can get a subsidized trip!

The PASCO Egg continues to generate a lot of rivalry from the local sites- Ramy Yanetz recently retrieved it flying from Hollister to Williams to take it from the 'big hats', only to have it snatched from Hollister by Yuliy Gerchikov, flying from Byron! Some great flights from these guys!

Lastly, our existing PASCO members are not doing enough to encourage new pilots at their home sites to become members- we are not reaching the new blood and in speaking to our FBO's getting new students doesn't seem to be a huge problem. So when that new club member goes solo, or wants to join your club, don't forget to tell them about PASCO – better still print out a copy of Westwind and hand it to them – all the joining information is in the front.

REGION 11 EVENT CALENDAR 2006

Date	Events	Location	Contact	Phone	URL
Feb 25th	8th PASCO X-C Seminars	UC Berkeley Physics Building	Carl Herold	775-230-0527	
Every other Sat. Mar 11 to Oct 9	VSA Race Series	Williams Soaring Center	Noelle Mayes	530-473-5600	www.williamssoaring.com
Apr 7-16	BASA Wavecamp	Minden, NV	Hans Van Weersch		
Apr 8th	RESCO Spring Safety Seminars	Caltech Campus, Pasadena	Cindy Brinkner		cindyb@caracolesoaring.com
May 5-7	Doc Mayes' Memorial	Williams Soaring Center	Noelle Mayes	530-473-5600	www.williamssoaring.com
May 13	Opening season Soar Truckee	Soar Truckee, CA		530 587 6702	www.soartruckee.com
May 15-19	Airsailing Thermaling Camp	AirSailing, NV			www.airsoaring.org
May 18-21	32nd Avenal Spring Contest	Avenal, CA	Mario Crosina	559-251-7933	Mario.Crosina@comcast.net
May 21-26	AirSailing Cross-Country Camp	AirSailing NV	David Prather		www.airsoaring.org
June 26 - 30	A,B,C & Bronze Badge Camp.	Soar Truckee		530 587 6702	www.soartruckee.com
June 26-30	Region 11 Championships (Std, 15m, Ely Nv	Ely Nv	Carl Herold	-	www.elysoaring.com
July 4-13	USA 15-Meter Nationals	Montague CA	Gary Kemp		www.ssa.org
July 4th	Truckee Glider Races	Soar Truckee	Sergio Colacevich	530 587 6702	www.soartruckee.com
Jul 15	Truckee Soaring Bash by BASA, NCSA,	Soar Truckee	Hans Van Weersch		www.soartruckee.com
Jul 15-23	BASA Parowan Safari		Hans Van Weersch		weersch@yahoo.com
July 24 - 29	Sports Class Contest	AirSailing, NV	Tim Taylor	435-713-4952	ttaylor@cc.usu.edu
Aug 19 - 20	Gerlach Dash	AirSailing, NV	Scott Monson	775-972-9479	scottmonsen@aol.com
Oct 14	Race Day 15 & Oktoberfest	Williams Soaring Center	Noelle Mayes	530-473-5600	www.williamssoaring.com
15-Oct	Closing season Soar Truckee				
Nov 4th	PASCO Annual Seminars and Awards Banquet	Western Aviation Museum, Oakland	Mike Mayo	650-857-0522	echofive@sbcglobal.net

Pasco Board Meeting Minutes (May/June 2006)

PASCO BOARD MEETING MINUTES - MAY 2, 2006

Called to order at 7:46. Board members and officers attending: Karol Hines, Yuliy Gerchikov, Marc Ramsey, Hans Van Weersch, Jim Alton, Leo Montejo.

Committee chairs: Peter Deane, Darryl Ramm. Guest: Guy Acheson.

Minutes from last meeting summarized and approved unanimously.

Nomination of Peter Deane to board approved unanimously.

Membership and Treasurers Report: 403 members currently. 39 new members last 12 months, 89% in CA,

10% in NV. 205 members subscribe to electronic version of Westwind. 1/3 of members come from NCSA and BASA block memberships. \$15880 in checking account, \$290 in savings, \$7500 scholarship fund untouched. Membership dues in May \$225, along with \$100 donation. Westwind ads have not been billed, as of yet. Board voted on and approved report unanimously.

Public Relations: Ginny Farnsworth has agreed to continue putting together new glider pilot and air show promotional packages. ACTION ITEMS: Karol will dig up committee chair descriptions and send to board. Board members to suggest to Karol possible committee chairs.

FAA Liaison: ACTION ITEM: Karol to contact Rolf Peterson to confirm he's willing to continue as Liaison.

Sawyer Award: Darryl suggests not requiring registration to participate, all OLC participants who are members of PASCO could be automatically entered. Will put

together proposal, discuss with past winners, then present to board.

PASCO League: Jim stated there will be no PASCO League this year. Site race series, OLC, etc., reduces interest in League. Darryl suggests PASCO help promote local events.

ACTION ITEM: Jim to put together an article for June (if possible) Westwind on cross-country activities and race series at various sites, including site contact info for new cross-country pilots.

Safety Committee: Karol asks whether it is important for PASCO to have a focus on safety. Board agreed that the Safety Committee should be re-instated. Suggest that the Safety chair should publicize site specific safety issues, and organize the annual Safety Seminar. Solicit safety articles from various sites.

ACTION ITEM: Karol to come up with names, would appreciate suggestions.

Communications Committee: Westwind to go out every three months, March, June, September, December. Peter started Yahoo Region11 Group as a communication channel. Yuliy agreed to assist Peter in keeping the web site up to date and look into new technology that could streamline this process.

Competition Secretary: ACTION ITEM: Karol will contact Rick Walters to see if he wishes to continue in this position.

NEW BUSINESS

OLC Contribution: SSA needs to pay a fee to OLC for US pilot participation. For \$200 contribution PASCO will get a rotating banner advert on SSA OLC page. Board unanimously approved \$200 contribution to SSA OLC Committee.

Hollister: Peter stated glider operations moved back to concrete ramp. Airport is preparing master plan with separate area for gliders. Might be losing off-field landing site at Panoche Valley.

Minden: Guy suggests that PASCO hold a soaring seminar there in the Fall. Will discuss further with Karol.

PASCO Bylaws: Will postpone discussion to next meeting.

PASCO Purpose: ACTION ITEM: Karol will send out presentations that Peter put together a few years ago for Board Members to review in preparation for discussion at the next Board meeting.

Banquet: Western Aerospace Museum has been booked for Saturday November 4. Mike to take lead in

organizing the banquet and Safety Seminar. Karol will work with Mike on catering.

Site Champions: Peter asks that we try to revive concept.

Region 11 Director: Need nominations. Karol suggests PASCO could help subsidize \$1000/year travel costs. Board voted on and approved allocating up to \$1000/year per director for travel costs.

Next PASCO Meeting: Tuesday, June 6, 7:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned: 10:09 PM.

PASCO BOARD MEETING MINUTES - JUNE 6, 2006.
Reporting: Marc Ramsey, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:20. Board members and officers attending: Karol Hines, Peter Deane, Mike Mayo, Marc Ramsey, and Jim Alton. A motion to approve last month's minutes was passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports were available from the treasurer, awards committee, contest committee, Sawyer committee, or FAA Liaison.

PR Committee: Ginny Farnsworth is putting together a new pilot package for distribution to local soaring sites. Karol is making up description of PR committee chair role and responsibilities.

Safety Committee: No headway on finding someone to chair committee. Karol suggest we need to have a safety committee, but she has yet to come up with names. Dave Penning suggested due to Wings involvement.

Communications Committee: Westwind will be published by June 22. May need new publisher volunteer. Work towards keeping up to date information on the web site, including contest info, etc. Web site needs to be configured for easier updates. Jim's work load prevents him from putting together article with site contact info Karol asked for a rough outline of Jim's Ideas. Mike mentioned Avenal orientation that went out on NCSA email reflector. Karol asks for any info that might be helpful. Peter has lots of photos from the Avenal contest. Karol will contact Ginny to ask if she will provide a short Avenal contest blurb to accompany the pictures.

NEW BUSINESS

Peter mentioned Region 9 conflict with Luke AFB over MOA. SSA has guidelines for dealing with similar problems. It's up to the local people to get in touch with the SSA. We need update on Lemoore MOA, perhaps from Rolf.

Discussion of Gavin Wills's event: Carson Valley Vanguard Committee has booked him for August 9(?). This is intended to be public awareness meeting, promoting importance of Minden to local community. Suggest PASCO sponsor talk similar to one Gavin gave a few years ago at Stanford. Discussed whether to have event at Minden, Air Sailing, Truckee or in Reno, decided on Truckee. Wills' available dates, at Minden June 10 to July 22, Vacation July 23rd to the August 10th, back in Minden Aug 10th through 18th. Wills' also likely to be at Ely for Grand Prix week of July 4th. Event will be at Truckee.

John Volkober is resigning as SSA director, so two SSA director candidates are now needed.

REDESIGNING PASCO PRESENTATION

Need new blood, not reaching out. Peter will be writing editorial on subject for next WW. Karol says we're turning inwards. This is PASCO's 40th anniversary year. PASCO needs to change with the times. We need a new vision statement. Need to keep in touch with what's going on in general aviation. PASCO should ensure the crowning of regional champions each year. We need to re-emphasize Regional promotion of the sport. Scholarship fund is redundant, as most sites now have their own, we need to find something else to do with this money.

Safety Officer: very important, organizes safety seminar. Should also have periodic column in WW. Should identify people at each site to track local safety issues. We need to define Safety Officer role and responsibilities.

PASCO Local Site Champions: role and responsibility:

1. Interface with safety officer on safety issues at site.
2. Promote their site by providing info for WW and the website
3. Promote PASCO and regional involvement to new and current pilots

SSA Directors: should provide articles for publication twice a year, discussing SSA board meeting.

Karol suggest coming up with a three year plan. Go over bylaws next month, and change them as needed.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:25

ACTION ITEMS

1. Everyone: need to find a publishing volunteer to arrange for copying and distribution of Westwind.
2. Mike: call Dave Cunningham and ask if he will be Safety Officer.
3. Karol: contact Rolf concerning Lemoore MOA.
4. Peter: Contact Gavin Wills again for his available dates.

5. Karol: update Redesigning PASCO slides and distribute.

6. Everyone: need to find PR/Marketing chair, who could also be a board member.

7. Find site champions for each site by next meeting.

Mike: Truckee and Hawaii

Karol: Air Sailing, Minden, Montague

Hans: Hollister

Marc: Williams

Yuliy: Byron

Peter: Ely, Avenal

Rick Indrebo Representing the USA in World Champs in Sweden

Region 11 has been fortunate to be represented on the US Soaring Team for many years. Ray Gimmey has been a team member starting in 1981, and Rick Walters has been a member 3 times: in 1993, 1995 and 2001. Rick participated in the pre-World competition in Sweden last year in preparation for this year's Championships, and was all set to go to Sweden to participate in the World Soaring Championships that begin on June 5th as a member of the US team for the 18 meter class. Unfortunately, last minute family issues have forced Rick Walters to cancel his plans and resign from the team this year, a decision that shows great integrity and sportsmanship.



Asleep or concentrating?
Rick Walters in his Ventus 2

This is obviously a big disappointment for Rick Walters, but fortunately for the US Soaring Team, Region 11 has another Rick to go in his place. Because of his performance in the 18 Meter Nationals last year, Rick Indrebo was the first alternate for the US Soaring Team. Luckily, Rick (I) was able to make last minute plans and will be going to Sweden to represent the US. This is a very recent development for an event which requires significant time and financial planning. Also lucky for

Rick (I), Jim Indrebo's new ASG 29 is still in Germany and will be delivered to Rick in Sweden for him to fly in the competition.



Needless to say, it is a great honor to be chosen to compete in The World Gliding Championships. The Crazy Creek regulars and all of us in Region 11 are very proud of Rick, and would like to support him in this wonderful opportunity to expand his horizons and compete at an international level.



Jim and Rick Indrebo, two tough competitors wound up in First and Second place.

Father and Son- Jim and Rick Indrebo at Avenal

The funds will help defray some of the expenses of the trip and the competition. Contributions are not tax deductible, but will definitely increase your Karma in finding great soaring in your future. Because of the late date of this opportunity to join the US team, checks should be made out to and mailed directly to Rick Indrebo at PO Box 79 , Middletown , CA , 95461 . Or Look for the donation box at Williams Soaring Center

The 29th FAI World Gliding Championships will be held at Ekeby Airfield in Eskilstuna , Sweden from May 28th – June 18th 2006. On these web sites you will find useful information about the

Pilot Profile - Rick Indrebo - 18-Meter Class

Growing up in a soaring family, forty eight year old Rick Indrebo has accumulated about 6000 hours in gliders having soloed on his 14th birthday in a SGS 2-33A. Rick has been at the gliderport since he can remember, first as a line boy and then as an instructor after his dad, Jim Indrebo, started the Calistoga Soaring Center in California 's wine country in 1968. The soaring operation moved to Middletown in 1989 and became Crazy Creek Soaring where Rick still pitches in as an instructor and tow pilot when he is not working for American Airlines which he has done since 1999. While this is Rick's first World Gliding Championship, he has competed in nine US nationals and is known a very strong competitor having won the 2004 18-Meter Nationals. Rick will be flying an ASG-29 in Sweden backed up by his crew Jerry McCormick and Dad Jim Indrebo. Rick says, "I love to compete because even after as long as I have been doing this there is always something new to learn and there are always more great people to meet."

The Torch... By JJ Sinclair

Very few pilots hold the distinction of being declared a **BLACK ACE**.

This title is awarded to only those distinguished airmen who have been responsible for the destruction of Five of Their Own Aircraft. I am a Black Ace, having been the first one on the scene of the following carnage: RF-4, F-111, ASW-20, DG-300 and Nimbus-3. Let me tell you about my fourth victory, the DG-300. We were flying a Regional Contest at Little Field, Texas. The second day of the contest was weak and we scratched our way around two tumpoints and then about 6 O'clock in the evening, we were trying to make it back to the finish line. I was with a gaggle that was working a two knot thermal when I decided "there must be something better than this around". I headed for some smoke that was rising from a field just a little right of course line. I often work rice stubble fires in the Sacramento Valley and three knots or better can be found - if you can stand the smell. As I got closer it became clear that I didn't have enough altitude to get to the fire. I certainly didn't want to end up landing in a field that was burning. At about 500 feet and one field short of the fire, I reluctantly decided I would have to land. I was over a circular wheat field and the smoke drift showed no real wind. My field had been harvested and I could clearly see deep ruts in the ground where the circular sprinkler wheels had been rolling in mud. I was quite concerned with the ruts because I didn't want to roll across them on landing. I set up my final approach with the sprinklers behind me and aimed between the ruts. I must have unconsciously tried to follow an imaginary center line of my circular runway.

My runway was curving to the right, and following it meant I was slightly banked to the right. I touched down with my right wing tip about a foot lower than the left, but that was enough, the wing caught in wheat stubble and we (me and the ASW20) ground looped to the right just after touch down. I heard the sound a fuselage makes as it fails under a compression load. I sat motionless for a moment, not wanting to look. Finally I opened the canopy and saw my stabilizer and rudder laid over about forty-five degrees. The fuselage had snapped about half way back.

Use of Mode C Transponders

Reno, Nevada

The potential conflict between gliders and commercial air traffic near Reno has increased with the growth of commercial jet traffic into Reno-Tahoe Airport (RNO) during the past few years. PASCO emphasizes that glider pilots operating in the Reno area must be alert for all air traffic arriving and departing RNO.

Transponder signals are received by Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems (TCAS) on board commercial aircraft as well as by Air Traffic Control (ATC) Radar. By Air Traffic Control (ATC) Letter of Agreement, gliders in the Reno area can transmit the 0440 transponder code in the blind, without establishing radio contact with Reno Approach Control.

PASCO recommends that gliders operating cross country, within 50 NM of Reno-Tahoe Airport, install and use a Mode C altitude encoding transponder.

A new page has been added to the Minden Soaring Club Web site: <http://www.mindensoaringclub.org/>. Look under the WELCOME page for a new section for those soaring out of Truckee, Minden, or Air Sailing. Please study this material on safe soaring within the Reno ATC area.

Just before landing I was able to get a quick call out to my wife Patricia and I knew she was on her way. Totally dejected, I sat in the middle of my field and tried to figure out why this had happened. It really started in the two knot thermal. I should have stayed there. My run for the smoke left me with no options and no time to plan my landing when my smoke idea didn't work out. Patience my son. To add insult to injury I was now treated to the sight of the gaggle sailing over my field on their way home. They were fortunate I didn't have a gun. Pat arrived in about an hour. She has been crewing for me quite some time now and she knew from the look on my face that we were out of the contest. Pat drove into the field as I directed her around the ruts. I opened the trailer and started pulling tape off the elevator. About then I thought I smelled something. I asked Pat and she smelled something too. Then I saw a wisp of smoke coming from under our Van. Kneeling down I saw burning wheat stubble under the catalytic converter (the

muffler). As I stood up I saw a trail of fires we had left as we drove onto the field. What to do? What can we do? We must move the Van very shortly or it will bum up where it sits!

Just then a farmer and his son stopped on the county road and shouted GET OUT OF THAT FIELD, IT'S ON FIRE. I shouted back "Can you help us with this sailplane?" As the farmer drove his pickup onto the field, I closed the trailer and told Pat to drive out using the same path we used coming in. The farmer had some rope and I quickly made a loop and slipped it in the tow hook. His son grabbed the wing tip and I took off my belt and used it to pull up on the broken fuselage. Holding the fuselage in one hand and supporting the elevator with the other, We started to move. It was a little caravan – the Van, Trailer, Pickup and Sailplane all in row. I shouted to Pat DRIVE THROUGH THE FIRE IF YOU HAVE TO, BUT STAY OUT OF THE RUTS. The farmer didn't like that "drive through the fire" business. He turned and drove right across one of the ruts. His pickup made it OK, but then the main wheel of my glider dropped into the rut. He pulled and the rope broke! Pat didn't like that "drive through the fire" business either. The flames completely blocked our tracks (because we had lit them on our way in). She saw, the farmer turn away and she turned too. Her right front wheel dropped into a rut and the Van didn't have the traction to keep going. I shouted BACK UP! The wheels spun, but the Van didn't budge! Smoke started coming from under the Van as yet another fire was lit. About this time, My sweet wife Patricia stepped out of the Van and screamed F*** THE SAILPLANE, RUN FOR YOUR LIFE (F*** being a four letter word that means Patricia is no longer concerned with the well being of my sailplane).

I laid the elevator down, jumped in the Van, straightened the wheels and was able to get across the rut. Meanwhile, the farmer had tied the rope and together we lifted and shoved the ship out of the rut as his son drove the pickup. Our little caravan then proceeded to the edge of the burning field without further incident. The farmer told us not to worry about the field we had lit, saying "we burn 'em anyway, but generally we get out of 'em first," When Dick Johnson heard about this, he started calling Pat "The Torch" and the name stuck. I never got your name, but Thank You, West Texas Farmer, and Thank You Torch.

JJ Sinclair, Black Ace

Doc Mayes Memorial Event Results (Williams)

Congratulations to **Ray Gimmey**, who won both the **Lee Peterson**, and the **Doc Mayes** trophies this year. Attached are the final results of the contest. The Peterson Trophy was for best single flight during those three days. Doc Mayes for the best 2 days

Pilot	ID	Glider	Handicap	Fri. Raw Distance	Fri. Net (SM)	Sat. Raw Distance	Sat. Net (SM)	Sun. Raw Distance	Sun. Net (SM)	Best Day	Best 2Days
Ray Gimmey	7V	ASW27	0.88	210.00	184.80	236.70	208.30	274.10	241.21	241.21	449.51
Colacevich, SergiO	C2	Discus A	0.939		0.00	226.00	212.21	245.00	230.06	230.06	442.27
Peter Kelly	PK	ASH 26E	0.868	256.00	222.21	249.00	216.13	231.00	200.51	222.21	438.34
Richard Parker	7HV	Discus CS	0.939	158.00	148.36	70.50	66.20			148.36	305.90
Richard Parker	AN	Libelle	1.013					146.00	147.90		
Jim Darke	1B	ASW20B	0.903	163.10	147.28	159.80	144.30			147.28	291.58
Bob Ireland	LU	LS6B	0.899	108.00	97.09		0.00	166.00	149.23	149.23	246.32
Jim Herd	PW	DG 800B	0.85	277.00	235.45		0.00			235.45	235.45
JJ Sinclair	JJ	Genesis II	0.939	145.00	136.16	58.00	54.46			136.16	190.62
Luke Ashcraft	C1	LS4	0.95	152.00	144.40		0.00			144.40	144.40

Avenal Spring Contest Photo Extravaganza and Results- May 2006!

A wide variety of weather conditions at Avenal this year, and another very enjoyable event. Below are the photos various folks took of the contest days. Diane Gawthrop, Roy Norman, and Harold Gallagher all contributed to this collection. We hope you enjoy all of them. They show how much fun everyone had and how beautiful the weather was for all three days. More can be found on the Avenal Website at www.soaravenal.com



Bob Engellener points out a glider to KC and Dwight Kroll



Aerial View - Avenal Contest Saturday, May 20th, 2006



Alex Caldwell happy to be competing today



Alex Caldwell talks about his flight



Steve Smith pondering his luck ... or skill.



Ginny Farnsworth and Peter Deane share a laugh



Mario describing the day's task



The oldest (81) and youngest (16) pilots flying today



Tom Hubbard is one of our yearly competitors



Everyone is in a good mood today.



The grid is building, and so are the cumulus.



A good study in pre-race concentration



Well, at least they all look happy!!



Russ Holtz came in second on the first contest day.

CCSC Spring 06
 Aerial Callit
 Cumulative Summary
 Standard Class Class

Cumulative Score			May 21, 06			May 20, 06			May 19, 06			May 18, 06		
Rank	Points	ID	No Contest			Turn	Area:	02:00	Incld	Assign:	02:00	Turn	Area:	02:30
Rank	Points	ID	SSM#	Name	Glider	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	
1	1745	0X	0	Rogers, Walt	Discus 2A	0	374	2	371	1	1000			
2	1683	C2	0	Colacovich, Sergio	Discus A	0	277	1	571	3	815			
3	1558	99	0	Griffing, Charles	ASW-24	0	657	1	49	2	858			
4	1168	10W	0	Berron, Marc	LS-4, LS-4a	0	559	2	61	4	548			
5	882	5F	0	Farnsworth, Virginia	Regatus 101B	0	412	3	371	6	99			
6	590	03	0	Roberts, Lecky	ASW-24	0	17	7	25	4	548			
7	387	2T	0	Deane, Peter	LS-8	0	387	4	0	7	0			
8	108	VW	0	Ribbard, Tom	Discus 2B	0	0	8	108	7	0			
9	0	BC	0	Clerx, Ben	ASW-28	0	0	8	0	7	0			

15 Meter Class Class

Cumulative Score			May 21, 06			May 20, 06			May 19, 06			May 18, 06		
Rank	Points	ID	No Contest			Turn	Area:	02:00	Incld	Assign:	02:00	Turn	Area:	02:30
Rank	Points	ID	SSM#	Name	Glider	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	
1	2164	89	0	Indrebo, Jim	ASW-27	0	709	1	717	5	738			
2	2054	9	0	Indrebo, Rick	ASW-27	0	344	7	728	1	982			
3	1946	CM	0	Crosina, Merlo	Ventus 2Ax	0	570	3	444	3	932			
4	1776	DP	0	Bolter, Russell	T-65 Vega	0	245	9	567	4	964			
5	1444	6X	0	Leffler, Al	Ventus 2A	0	628	2	99	6	717			
6	1223	NF	0	Swatch, Steve	LS-6	0	350	6	778	10	95			
7	1189	96S	0	Patton, Bruce	HP-18	0	278	8	0	4	911			
8	805	VW	0	Van Wyk, Don	Ventus 2Ax	0	182	11	27	7	595			
9	768	5K	0	Alton, Jim	LAK-17	0	493	4	87	9	188			
10	709	VH-	0	Hutchinson, Vern	Ventus B	0	188	10	0	8	521			
11	542	KV	0	Kilbourne, Ben	Ventus B	0	422	5	57	11	63			

Open Class Class

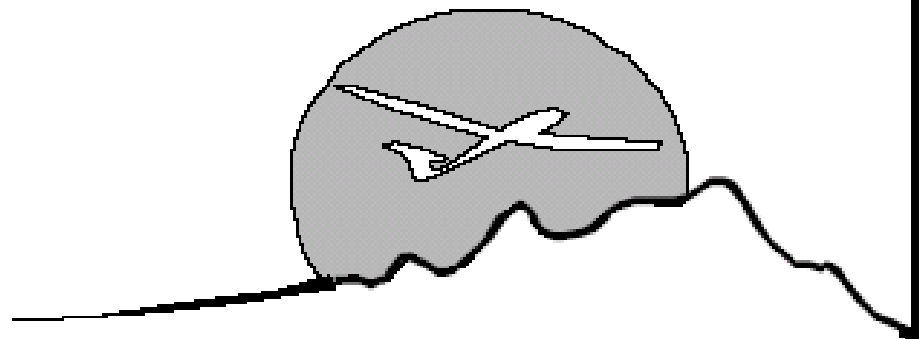
Cumulative Score			May 21, 06			May 20, 06			May 19, 06			May 18, 06		
Rank	Points	ID	No Contest			Turn	Area:	02:00	Incld	Assign:	02:00	Turn	Area:	02:30
Rank	Points	ID	SSM#	Name	Glider	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	
1	1700	VB	0	Gautierop, Bill	ASH-26E	0	0	1	425	1	275	1	1000	
2	0	IB	0	Caldwell, Alex	Mimbus 3	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	

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Minden-Tahoe Airport: Gateway to the Great Basin By Guy Acheson

Logbook entries, Minden-Tahoe Airport, 2005.
May 13, 401 km. June 4, 516 km. June 11, 670 km.
June 19, 404 km. July 6, 857 km. July 7, 508 km. July 8,
466 km. July 16, 827 km. July 23, 726 km.
Logbook entry, Minden-Tahoe Airport, 2006. April 15,
wave to 27,000 feet.

I couldn't fly much in 2005 due to family issues so I feel disappointed by my logbook entries. My single flight at Minden for 2006 was just a ho-hum flight because of the wave window that couldn't be raised for some reason. Such is the typical soaring for this average soaring pilot at Minden.

This issue of Westwind has a focus on Minden-Tahoe Airport. I learned to fly sailplanes at Minden in 1991. I have flown at many places all over the United States and Europe. No matter where I have been, everyone knows of Minden and expresses a desire to make the pilgrimage to one of soaring's most recognized places. Just about every day I fly at Minden there are several pilots in the Soar Minden office from a foreign country. The reputation is well deserved and you should be flying at Minden more often.

Those of us in northern California and Nevada are blessed with many excellent soaring sites. But we have far fewer sites than ten years ago and several of our current favorites are under attack. Urban encroachment, increasing property values, burned out soaring FBO owners, airport development, and decreasing volunteerism by soaring pilots has been taking its toll. Every one of us can name a couple of soaring sites that are no more.

I want this issue of Westwind to celebrate the place we call Minden. I want to introduce the airport and airspace to pilots who have not been there and re-introduce Minden to the pilots who have not visited for some time. The airport is under pressure to develop in a way that is not supporting soaring and pilots have been choosing not to fly at Minden as often as in the past. I want to explain how Minden used to be, how it is today, and what could happen in the future if the soaring community decides to support soaring at Minden.

I have asked many people to contribute articles for this project. They represent a very diverse group of people with widely ranging views of soaring's future at Minden, but they all are passionate about what Minden means for

soaring. Fred LaSor is chief instructor at the only soaring FBO on the airport, Soar Minden. Leo Montejo is the president of the Minden Soaring Club. John "Bumper" Morgan is the president of the Minden Airport Association. Jim Herd is one of many local pilots who chose to move to Minden because of the soaring. Kenny Price is the chief instructor at Williams Soaring. Bob Semans is a world renowned soaring pilot with many records to his name. Nathan Wheelchel is a very serious LAK 17 pilot with NVR LAND for a custom license plate. Some of these people have very different opinions on the airport's problems but they are all united in their desire to not only save soaring at



Minden but to make Minden a truly world class soaring facility.

The members of PASCO, indeed all soaring pilots, need to pay attention and make a decision about actively supporting our soaring sites. Your favorite place could be next.

The History:

The following article, Our History, was written by Pete Williams in 2004. Pete was a Naval Aviator and avid motor glider pilot who passed away in 2005. This article is also posted on the Minden-Tahoe Airport website, www.mindentahoeairport.com.

"The Minden-Tahoe Airport (MEV), formerly the Douglas County Airport and Tahoe-Douglas Airport got its start as The Carson Valley Airport in March 1942 when the U.S. Army Engineers surveyed the site for the Civil Aeronautics Authority. The airport was one of 345 federally funded military bases and landing fields constructed in the United States between 1939 to late 1943.

As things turned out, the field was never developed as a military airbase like Stead was at Reno. However, it was used to train U.S. Army Air Force pilots using flight training school groups under contract to the government. The training consisted of up to 150 students at a time in what was called secondary flight training. The students stayed at the Minden Inn during the training. Between September 1943 and January 1944, the Army Air Forces War Service Training Detachment operated a flight school at the airport.

Glider pilots began flying out of MEV in 1964 and by 1969 the airfield was being used regularly as a glider wave camp with as many as 70 aero tows a day during the 2-3 week spring and fall wave sessions. Douglas County Airport was rapidly gaining a reputation of being one of the best locations in the USA for glider high altitude wave flights, long distance and speed record flight attempts. By 1977, two soaring fixed base operators had located on the field offering glider training, rental, aero tows and support of soaring badge and record flight attempts. Today Minden-Tahoe Airport remains a non-towered county airport and is home base to approximately 250 aircraft including 80 gliders. Annual aircraft movements are estimated at 80,000 with half of these as glider/tow plane operations and motor gliders. From April to October many visiting soaring pilots base their gliders at MEV so it is possible that during a summer day there can be as many as 100 glider related movements.

Douglas County's initial obligations for the operation and maintenance of the airport was under the AP-4 Resolution of the Development of Landing Areas National Defense Program. The AP-4 Resolution was adopted by the Douglas County Commissioners on 12 April 1943 and expired September 11, 1969. However, since the County remains a recipient of federal grant funds under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) it is obligated, like any other airport under grant fund assurances, to operate for the use and benefit of the public and to make it available to all types, kinds, and classes of aeronautical activity as well as by the general public."

Recent History:

Over time the soaring community staked out the closed runway 03 (runway 21 west of the runway intersections) as the combined tie-down, parking, and camping area. From my appearance on the airport in 1990 until 2001 this area of the airport was a fairly convenient and happy place that taught me the soaring culture and provided the mentors we all need to grow and develop.

In 2001 the land immediately adjacent to the soaring tie-downs on closed runway 03 was leased. In 2001 the airport removed the tie-down cables from the edge of the

runway and eliminated all tie-downs and camping on the edge of the runway. This area was repaved and designated as Taxiway C. Soar Minden was given a lease on the sides of closed runway 21, on the east side of the airport, to provide tie-down spaces to compensate for the losses on runway 03. These changes



immediately broke the sense of community one expects at any soaring site. Sailplanes had to find tie-downs scattered about the very large ramp space with the power planes or on the east side. This and the banishment of camping among the planes meant that it was less likely other pilots would be around when you wanted to rig or de-rig. It meant that there was no natural gathering place for pilots in the morning or evenings. It meant that the linepersons in golf carts had to drive all around the complete ramp space and both sides of the airport to attend to pilots and pilots did not have easy access to help from the linepersons.

From 2001 to 2005 there were many changes in the airport physical structure and rules. These included the repaving (technically called capping) of runway 34 which did include a paved staging area on the side of runway 30 (previously we staged on the dirt). The runway work included the installation of new lights and signs. These new signs on the runways and taxiways were of the style and size one would expect at a large commercial airport servicing jets. They were so tall and close to the edge of the pavement that they presented a hazard to the long wings of gliders that often extended beyond the edge of the pavement during ground handling and landings. Camping was eliminated from the airport. For a time, staging and launching of gliders from the runway intersections was banned. Glider trailers were no longer allowed to be tied down with their planes in the aircraft tie-down spaces. All trailers were restricted to a trailer-only area on the edge of the ramp in front of Soar Minden. Rigging of gliders in front of these parked trailers was prohibited because it would block a taxiway

for aircraft going to and from this ramp area. The airport rules were updated and included the authorization of the airport manager to banish any pilot or business that broke any rule. Crossing of runways on foot was prohibited. The use of runway 21 for landing was prohibited in the new rules. Vehicles (including bicycles) could only cross runways if the operator had attended a class and was issued a driving permit as well as carrying a 3'x3' red and white checkered flag. There was a massive construction of new hangars on the west side, virtually all of which are very large and designed for jets and other large aircraft. Most disappointing were the loss of Tom Stowers' soaring FBO, High Country Soaring, and the full service glider repair business of Larry Mansberger.

By 2004 we had reached the low point in airport relations. An October 6, 2004 article in the local paper, The Record Courier, conveys the situation pretty well.

"Tom Stowers, owner of Minden-based glider business, High Country soaring, closed his doors in August after 22 years. He feels airport management is trying to push the soaring community out to make way for larger aircraft.

'I want to be plain about it. I couldn't tolerate the management anymore', he said. 'It isn't the fun aviation airport it used to be. Minden-Tahoe used to have at least 90 gliders at any given time, but the tie-down rates have been raised, forcing people to go elsewhere. Airport management's decision to ban glider launches from the runway's intersection and relocate the glider facilities to the east side of the airport were two developments discouraging glider pilots and businesses', Stowers said. 'I don't want to work in the dirt', he said. 'And I won't have the facilities to operate from there.'

A 37 year soaring veteran, Stowers once had an international clientele including celebrities like Cliff Robertson. 'Because of the hassles involved with flying here, they no longer come', he said. 'It's a sad note', Stowers said. 'This airport used to be a great facility. There is room for everyone but they don't want you out there.' Of the three businesses catering to glider, only one is left. Mansberger Aircraft, a fiberglass repair station, left earlier this year, but Tony Sabino, owner of glider operation, Soar Minden, said he is staying.

'I'm so deep in debt, I have to keep working', he said. 'A lot of people are relying on me and I am not going to let them down. After part of the airport was leased, 70 to 80 gliders along one part of the runway were crammed onto a smaller part of the airport. The pilot's motor homes, which are part of the glider lifestyle, were banned about



five years ago following a suicide incident.' Sabino said. 'Soaring is a social sport', he said. 'Pilots drive their motor homes, pulling their glider behind. After a day of soaring, they get together for a barbecue. That fabric has been shattered at Minden-Tahoe', he said. 'Braswell (the airport manager) leased land historically used not only by local pilots but by our seasonal overflow guests.'

'Leasing some of the land isn't the problem', Sabino wrote in a letter to county manager Dan Holler. 'Leasing all the land without concern about displacing the entire glider community and then not holding those land speculators to their contractual obligation (to build on the site) has caused some very big problems, as well as loss of revenue for the county.'

(Dan) Holler said, 'If someone from the glider community wanted to lease that property, they could have done so. Tie-downs exist in other areas and the county continues to make improvements that will ultimately benefit gliders. Infrastructure improvements, like water and sewer for the airport's east side are included in the Douglas County Master Plan and engineering work for a ramp is scheduled for next year', Holler said. 'We're also planning an expanded tie-down and staging area, a substantial investment for the gliders', he said. 'It's adjacent to the glider operation area. We anticipate heavy glider use in that area.' "

The local glider community pushed back. Meetings, confrontations, formation of new organizations on the airport, changes in leadership of existing organizations, friendships broken and new alliances made. Some changes in the airport situation were made. Glider trailers are now allowed to be kept with your plane in the aircraft tie-down area. You can now rig your plane in front of your trailer in the trailer-only area in front of Soar Minden. Staging and launching of gliders at the

intersection is a normal activity. Soar Minden tried to make the east side

more attractive by improving the runway 21 tie-down spots, maintaining a large water tank on the east side for ballast water, and the airport placed gravel between runway 21 and the staging area on runway 30 to make aircraft movements a little more civilized. Runway 30R, the dirt tow plane landing strip was regraded.

How and why did this occur? Actually, it is all consistent with the airport master plan that has existed since 1985. It calls for development of MEV for commercial purposes while preserving soaring and small general aviation use. It recognized conflicts with such a diverse mix of aircraft and outlined developing the east side for soaring and small general aviation. The actual development of the airport is limited by funding and this is where things get interesting. The voters of Douglas County passed two laws that greatly influenced past, current, and future development. The voters specified that no general funds could go to airport projects. The major sources of money are federal funds and airport user fees. The federal money is by far the largest source but it is strictly limited to non-revenue producing enhancements such as actual runways, taxiways, and aviation aids. Airport user fees are for all practical purposes money from hangar leases. Hangar development has progressed because developers were required to complete grading and infrastructure development as part of building their projects. A big source of conflict on the airport is the lack of hangars for small aircraft. The general aviation community feels their needs have been ignored to the benefit of larger aircraft facilities. The airport merely says that the large projects have the money and the projects are consistent with the airport master plan. Soaring has virtually no development money so essentially no progress has been made to develop the east side. The airport claims it does not have money to install water, electricity, sewer, and paving because the voters specified no general funds can be used. The soaring community, and the small general aviation community, find the airport is squeezing them out because the balance between large plane development and small plane/soaring development has been lost. Another fly in the ointment concerns a threat to the airport receiving federal money.

The voters passed an aircraft weight limit of 30,000 pounds in the 1980's. The FAA was happy because that was consistent with the runway strength. After the main runway was repaved there was an assessment of the runway strength. That engineering report said the runway could handle 110,000 pounds. Now the FAA says the weight limit must be increased to 110,000 pounds or they will cut off funding. The current airport

users resist increasing the weight limit because it would truly allow large passenger and freight aircraft to use the airport. So there is a real "gunfight in the OK corral" situation with the voters of Douglas County and majority airport users on one side vs. the Douglas County Commissioners, developers, and the FAA. Nevada is on a two year election cycle. The County Commissioners have asked the FAA to defer any action until after the weight ordinance can go before the voters in 2008.

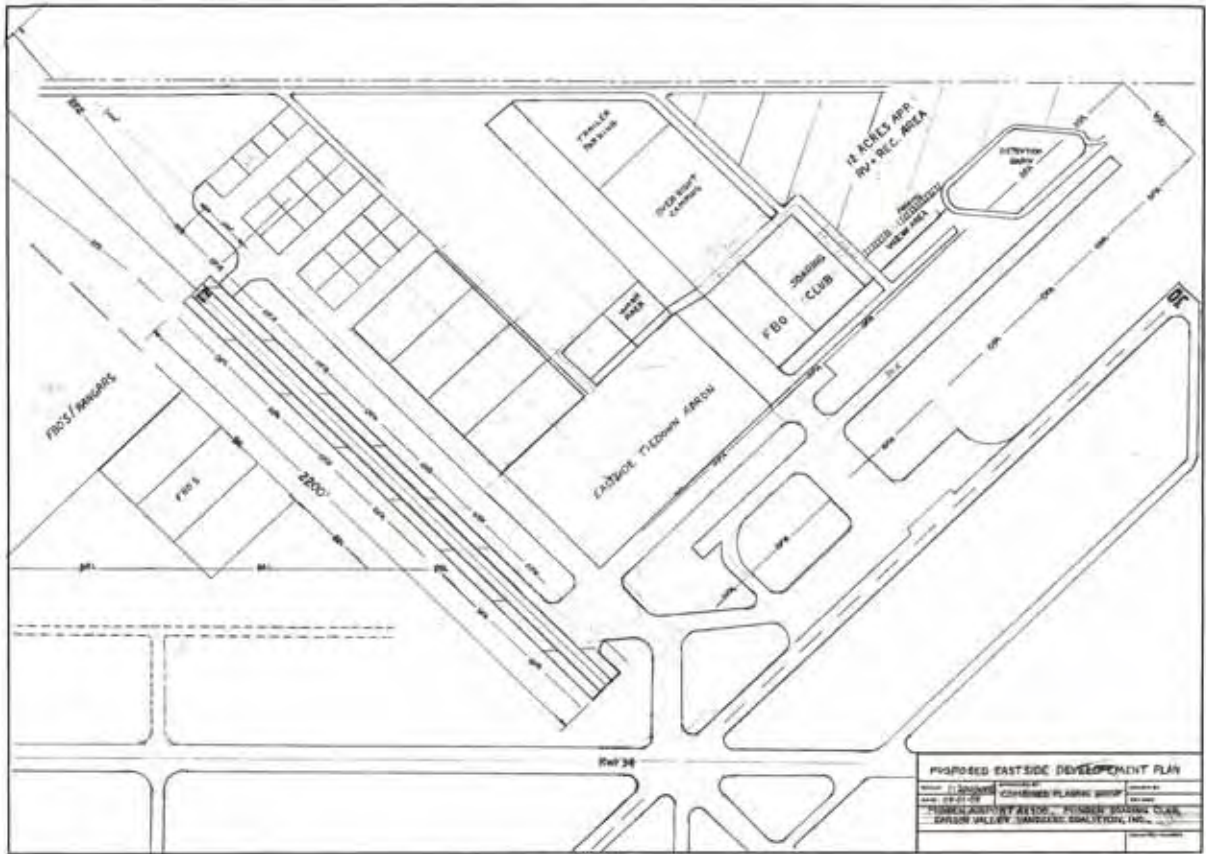
The proposal for developing the east side for soaring is very inviting. The airport master plan was not specific what that would be and there is active discussion about what development would look like. The Minden Airport Association (MAA), Minden Soaring Club (MSC), and Carson Valley Vanguard Coalition (mainly community people living around the airport) have developed a proposal that is included as figure 2. It envisions runway 21 being reopened as a landing only runway that is no longer connected to runways 30 or 34. It has abundant glider tie-downs with camping, buildings for FBO's and soaring clubs, a park area and a glider viewing area all right next to our staging areas and runway 30. If built it would be a world class facility, the envy of glider pilots around the world, and a superb venue for large soaring competitions.

So the big question is who pays for this. After all, the county says they can't use any of their general funds. The FAA may fund improvements to runway 21 as well as associated taxiways and ramps. But without water, electricity, and sewer there is virtually no chance that FBO's, soaring clubs, or private individuals will spend money to build hangars, buildings, or pavement.

There is motivation for Douglas County to find creative sources of funding. Runway incursions, which were greatly exacerbated by recent airport changes, are a big concern for the airport although the actual safety record is very good. Soaring operations are inherent sources of runway conflicts because of the time it takes to taxi, stage, launch, and recover gliders. People must walk upon the runways to accomplish these actions. Bigger, faster airplanes are more sensitive to potential runway incursions. Another motivator with larger community support is soaring's input to the tourist industry in Douglas County. The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) did an economic impact study of the airport and found that although soaring operations provide only a modest direct monetary input to the airport, the tourist dollars that are spent in Douglas County by visiting pilots and their families are very significant. Total annual soaring revenue is estimated at \$12.5 million which is about half of the total revenue attributed to the airport. Currently the County's two major sources of income are gambling revenues and tourist dollars. The majority of soaring pilots at Minden are tourists. We eat meals, buy

gas, stay in motels and hotels, rent gliders, buy lessons, go fishing, mountain bike, shop, go to Tahoe, gamble, and we bring our families. Quite a few pilots stay for

weeks at a time. Pilots come from all over the world to fly at Minden and they always stay for multiple days and weeks.



That’s the story so far. The airport is a far happier place than three years ago but there is still great tension between users and the airport management about how the airport rules are enforced. People are organizing and learning to work within the Douglas County political system. The various groups on the airport are coming to some agreement on how an east side development should look. Even with all the new large hangars there has not been an influx of large planes. Many of the large hangars sit empty and many are occupied with small planes. The County Commissioners seem to be giving us more attention, but then they ARE politicians. Soaring is a very green sport and tends to fit with the high-tech outdoorsy image that Douglas County and Lake Tahoe like to project for tourism. And the UNR study gives real teeth to how important soaring is to the overall economy of Douglas County.

letters to the County Commissioners and County Manager. Tell them that you drive a long way to get to Minden-Tahoe Airport. Tell them that you spend many days and weeks at a time when you come. Tell them that you spend money. Tell them that you bring your family and friends and they spend money. Tell them that you find it more difficult to fly at Minden and are considering other places to fly and spend money. Tell them that you, your friends, and pilots around the world, care about what is happening at the airport.”

In researching for this story I ended every interview with this question, “What can a soaring pilot who doesn’t live and vote in Douglas County do to influence this problem?” When there was an answer it was, “Write

I end this story by reminding you that there would not be this story, there would not be the huge expenditure of energy, emotion, and time on these matters if it were not a fact that soaring out of Minden-Tahoe airport is some of the best in the world. You can fly just about every day of the year. The FBO, Soar Minden, is open 365 days a year, has a large fleet to rent, and multiple tow planes at your service. Records; international, national, state, and personal, are broken and remade every year flying out of Minden. The locals are friendly, the weather is spectacular, and the beer is very cold. Members of

PASCO, show you care. Write a letter and come fly with us.

Names and addresses for the Douglas County Commissioners and County Manager can be found on the Minden Soaring Club website, www.mindensoaringclub.com.

Attention Glider Pilots... **Welcome to Minden!**

By Leo Montejo



When Guy Acheson accepted to lead this issue of PASCO's Westwind devoted to Minden, he suggested that I touch upon why pilots who only rarely visit this site should even care about it. Minden Soaring Club's members are non-locals in a very large majority, and although many of them rarely visit Minden, I would say most of them are proud to be able to be part of a unique and exclusive group of pilots from all over the world that have flown there. But I was still at a loss as to what I could write about. Writing one more time about how great this site is, or how many records have been flown from there seemed banal. Any soaring pilot knows about Minden's conditions.

But Guy's request was not about this at all anyway. Why should anybody not only care, but also wish to become involved in helping to preserve the site, is what his concern is all about. I began to diligently make a list of reasons, until somebody suggested that these were probably the reasons that led me to become involved with the club. Finally I had hit upon what the article should be about - that is, why I chose to become part of a group of concerned people that wishes to preserve Minden as the top soaring site in North America.

I flew into Minden the first time with Marti Hellman on his Stemme. After a motor climb to Yosemite, he turned the

engine off over El Capitan, we thermalled up to cloud base, toured the park, and headed North for lunch. I remember well looking down over the airfield for the first time: Very big runways, a desert like setting, Lake Tahoe to the West, but most unique, gliders everywhere on the ramp. I believe it was a hot day in May, and we landed uneventfully. We had a small bite for lunch, and motored up to another treat, wave, this time just above Lake Tahoe. We climbed to 17,000, and headed back to Hayward. The return was uneventful, but Marti did have to relight once to make it back safely.

I returned to Minden as quickly as possible. Although I had flown gliders in the past, I had only done so in Europe, and this time, I wanted to own one. I met Jim Herd on the ramp on my second trip, as he was tinkering with his DG 800 motor glider. Tom Vayda was also there with recently arrived one, and I spent much time chatting with them on the ramp about his flight that day, about his glider, any issues he had with it, and how he had set up a users group for this glider in the US. Jim was incredibly helpful and friendly, and was perhaps the person who steered me the most to DG. I had dinner with Oliver, the then DG dealer at the field that evening, and I was off to a new adventure.

The next day, I had to begin to get my US license squared away for flying gliders. I had not flown a glider in a while, having devoted recent years to power planes and helicopters, and I showed up at Soar Minden. Tony Sabino greeted me with his usual "we'll get you flying in no time." My instructor was Mike Moore, and sure enough, after my first solo, a couple of days later, I was already climbing as well as he was over the Pine Nuts. Mike has never ceased to be a constructive critic of my flying to this day.

My glider finally arrived some eight months later. Dennis from Soar Minden went down to Southern California to help me pick it up and tow it to Minden. Paperwork for the FAA was handled directly on the field by Dave Monte, and Oliver Dyer Bennet rigged it with me the first time. We then went out and flew it. I remember that both of us learned that day how easily the DG-1000 will enter and go out of a spin if one does not watch one's airspeed while turning... Louis Scheel, our club secretary, helped me to install the Borgelt-Volkslogger-WinPilot combination. He also fixed a few minor things on the glider to make it Minden-compatible. Jerry Plaszowiecki, WinPilot's creator also flies at the field, and gave me tips on how to better use his software. He later incorporated suggestions that I made into it. Bob Semans shared with me procedures on how to fly the Whites.

To get to know the area better, what better way than with my new two-seater. I must have flown that first summer with some of the best pilots in the world in my back seat: Carl Herold, Geoff Lyons, Mike Harbison, Al MacDonald,

Bob Trumbly, Jim Herd, and others. From each I learned the many techniques of flying Minden.

My DG required some minor changes as recommended by the factory, and Larry Mansberger (who has recently left the field) did these in an expert fashion. Annuals are handled easily even to this day by other FBO's on or off the field. (Tom Stowers will still work on your glider in his new shop out of Gardnerville).

I began to become involved with MSC when Jim Herd invited me to give a talk on oxygen and high altitude considerations. But my first real dealing with it came when I received a phone call from Al telling me of draconian changes that were being proposed with regards to airport rules.

By now, Minden had become part of my life, and all of the above mentioned, an extended family. Every person that I had met there had been eager to help me get into the air, and I was not about to let them down. So on a cold early Spring morning, I drove in from the Bay Area, and the now defunct gang-of-five, marched into the airport's office to meet with Jim Braswell. Whether we made a convincing presentation, or whether Jim conceded certain changes to the proposed rules for other reasons, I don't know. But what I do know, is that after that my involvement with the club became ever more important.

Leading the club has not been simple. I do not live in Minden, and I hold a full time job as a physician. Of course, we do not always agree on the proper road to take to defend our rights, but one thing that all of us have in common is the passion to do so. Our goal is identical. Save Minden as the best soaring spot in North America. I have tried to make this the theme of the club's website.

So how about you, the pilot who only comes to Minden once or twice a year? You will be greeted in the same way that I was when I first landed with Marti, or spoke with Jim about motor gliders. You will be towed professionally by Soar Minden, you can rent a glider, or receive instruction from one of Tony's top instructors. You will be able to retrieve by his group if you land out. You will celebrate a great flight at the end of the day with other pilots at the Tail dragger restaurant. And you will have done so because as a group we have been united and active in maintaining gliding alive at KMEV.

And only then you will realize that you must become part of the group that will fight to keep this for yourself, and for your children. If you have any doubt about what I mean by this, check out the Glide Loop on the MSC website where my twin two year-olds are sitting on my glider (Spring Weekend in Minden). See their expression, and see why I am involved in preserving the site. I'm doing it for them too.

What does the future store for us? I believe the East Side development will save gliding at Minden for my kids to be able to soar there when they grow up. A new campground needs to be built. Water, electricity, a clubhouse, and all glider activity concentrated on that part of the airport will allow us to grow in a healthy way. We also need to be responsible citizens and share airspace with other planes, as is done at most sites in the world. We need to build a solid relationship with the community, with the city commissioners, and even with our airport administrator. And we need to do so proactively.

Remembering JFK at his inaugural address, ask not what Minden and MSC can do for you, but rather what you can do for glider rights at our airport.

Leo Montejo
President, MSC

What's Going On at Minden? **By James Herd**

Minden is one of Region 11's jewels. It is more than a "local soaring site", and frankly, it is more than a "regional soaring site." But, I am sure you will agree that it is in the best interests of all of us to maintain Minden-Tahoe Airport (KMEV) as a full service soaring destination, to grow the vitality of our sport. You have all heard rumors about (and even experienced) a significant recent decline in soaring services at Minden. It is my purpose here to do nothing more than update you on some of the major recent happenings surrounding KMEV. There is a lot to report, so bear with me.

In many ways Minden airport is an extreme case of what is happening across the country, but issues here seem magnified. I wonder if the following mantra might come true? "As goes Minden, so goes our other soaring airports!" Or is it, "As goes Hollister, so goes Minden?" Hmmm. So see what you make of the list below.

1. Over the past 8 years or more, airport management has supported extensive growth, favoring power/jet traffic and much more formality in the airport rules. This, at the expense of soaring's best interests. There has been an insidious and relentless implementation of the "jet growth" vision, despite only modest and preliminary evidence of a jet "takeover."
2. High Country Soaring and Mansburger Aircraft both departed the airport about a year ago. You can ask them the reason why, but basically it was a result of not feeling welcome and not receiving the necessary cooperation needed from airport management to continue successfully.
3. Soar Minden seems to have suffered a significant decline in business. Again, you can ask them for details, but the ramp is decidedly quieter.

4. The airport bar and grill has new management and seems to be thriving very nicely with considerable off-airport patrons. Good beers, too!
5. County management, at the top levels, has begun to recognize the decline of soaring and is responding with a willingness to support our needs. You see, Douglas County is facing a loss of significant revenue due to the decline in gaming brought about by Indian gaming in California. Incredibly, the 4 large casinos at Stateline used to provide over 50% of the total revenue of Douglas County! The County has identified tourism as a major strategy for replacing this lost revenue and soaring is viewed as a highly desirable form of tourism. The County also needs the glider takeoffs and landings because FAA funding is tied to these movements.
6. There is no formally organized game plan to support, preserve, and grow soaring in the short to medium term. As a result, concerned individuals are taking their own action and the County officials are somewhat confused about who is leading and what are the true wishes of the aviation community at Minden.
7. Minden Soaring Club is a 501c3 tax deductible organization and is therefore not legally permitted to act "politically". It isn't clear exactly what this means, but MSC has been pretty quiet.
8. Minden Airport Association is a new advocacy group of all kinds of folks interested in KMEV. It was formed when pilots of all types began to realize that they needed a voice or they would be over-run. Specifically, major motivators were: the 5 year wait for a T hanger, new and highly restrictive operational rules, and a loss of the old "enthusiast character" of the place. Since formation over a year ago, MAA has achieved the roll back of some of the oppressive new operating rules and fire regulation for hangers. They have also been promoting the re-opening of runway 21 as a safety improvement for wave day, although the runway remains closed at this date.
9. Another organization is relevant here. Carson Valley Vanguard Coalition (CVVC) is an "airport watch group" dedicated to maintain the rural character of the airport. These are mostly non-pilot residents who have seen what can happen to the local environment when an airport gets to grow dramatically, like San Jose, Reid-Hillview, or Orange County. Almost all of these folks are strongly supportive of soaring, but against uncontrolled growth of large jet traffic.
10. There is an Airport Advisory Committee (AAP) which meets about six times a year. It is an advisory body to the County Commissioners and has produced no notable results in the past few years. Their basic position has been to support the airport management towards growth and such projects as a control tower and a precision instrument approach.
11. Minden-Tahoe Airport has a weight ordinance limiting landing aircraft to 30,000 pounds single wheel and 50,000 pounds for multiple wheels. This has existed since the 1980's and was a voter initiative to prevent unbridled growth and commercial jets. There is a strong movement to eliminate or radically increase this weight limit to make KMEV more attractive to larger jets and avoid getting hassled by the FAA for "discrimination". A new engineering study says the runway could handle up to 110,000 pounds and THAT is a small jet liner. The FAA, jet developers, jet businesses, and many of the County leaders have supported a weight limit increase. However, the Commissioners recently agreed to defer sending any new weight ordinance to the voters for two years to allow the political process to run its course. They know a weight increase would not be supported by the majority of voters.
12. Minden-Tahoe Airport has a comprehensive and formal Airport Master Plan (100 pages), as do most airports. The existing plan is over ten years old. It has many provisions that would not be seen as supportive to soaring and most of that plan has been ignored so far. A new Master Plan is underway. The first phase was to collect a ton of input from all interested parties during the fall and get them to listen sympathetically to each other's viewpoint. Now we are waiting for FAA funding to proceed with the rigorous process required to try to reach consensus. It will continue as an open public process throughout this year.
13. The County hired an airport planning company called Dunkelberg to lead us all through the Master Planning process. They have offered a series of new airport layouts, but these were just to get folks talking, they did not recommend any particular plan yet. Interestingly, Dunkelberg encouraged the idea of a separate and parallel runway, 34 Right, to avoid crossed runways. They also concluded that action to save soaring is an immediate top priority.
14. Officially, there is no growth space left available on the west side of the field, and no services or utilities on the east side. This, despite huge open areas on the west side! Some of the open space is leased for major jet developments that exist only on paper so far (for 5 years now).
15. A plan to move all soaring operations to the east side has been documented and submitted to the County. This is a long term plan with no implementation details nor money identified.
16. An alternative plan has been documented and submitted which focuses on major short to medium term improvements for soaring on the west side. This, also, is sitting on the shelf so far. All of this will be taken up by the process of the new Master Plan.

So, in summary, there are major threats to soaring at KMEV, and 2006 is likely to be a tipping point. The threats originate largely outside of the County and they have been winning the battle until recently, mostly because we haven't been fighting back. Some of the local pilots and non-pilots (even County officials!) have

now woken up and are actively defending against the outsiders. It is noteworthy that the airport is owned by the residents of Douglas County, and the vast majority of the “owners” want soaring to feel welcome and thrive! Also, the Minden area retains all the unbeatable advantages that attracted many of us soaring folks over the years, both natural and man-made attractions. What has been missing recently is a welcoming environment for soaring pilots, both the practical operational aspects and the warm/fuzzy greeting you expect when you arrive. Several of us are working on this , so stay tuned. I am pretty confident the pendulum has started to swing the other way.

The Minden Airport Association

By John “Bumper” Morgan

Like so many others who visit or live in the Carson Valley, spectacular soaring conditions and scenery were the first draw. A hangar at Minden-Tahoe airport (MEV), then a small “vacation” house, and we were soon giving up our CA home where we’d planned to retire.

My MEV experience started in early '98 when camping was still allowed on closed Rwy 21, though this was soon to come to an end. Airport planning decisions had previously been made to allow developers to gobble up the remaining large chunks of infrastructure served Westside land. This done, the squeeze was on for soaring and small general aviation (GA). Airport businesses felt the pinch too, with some leaving and others refusing to locate to what they perceived as an unfriendly environment. The fact that small GA accounted for almost all the flight operations and customer base at MEV seemed to make little difference.

How did we arrive here? I think a part of the answer has been the bickering that's gone on between the soaring and power communities, MEV users and businesses, and between some members of these groups and airport management. With no cohesive voice or representation, the fragmented user groups were easy for management to ignore. And while soaring accounted for the majority of airport operations, many of the gliders and pilots were from elsewhere, not based at MEV. Minden Soaring Club (MSC) represented the soaring community, which helped, however soaring was still losing ground.

Soaring and power pilots have traditionally shared MEV.



And since we share most of the same concerns, why not come together to support each other in supporting and protecting our airport? This was the reason Minden Airport Association (MAA) was founded, to bring soaring pilots, power pilots, and those who care about our airport, together in strength to represent the interests of airport users with airport and County management, and also to enhance safety, promote our airport with the community and as a social group too.

There is no question that soaring is the “endangered species” at MEV. And so, since it's inception less than two years ago, protecting and growing soaring has been MAA's primary focus. To that end, MAA's board of directors partnered with the boards of MSC and Carson Valley Vanguard Coalition (CVVC – a community group concerned with unbridled, “jet center” airport growth). We included representatives from airport businesses (Soar Minden and NIFTI) to find solutions to stop the soaring decline. This ad hoc group, known as the Combined Planning Group (CPG), utilized previous plans by members of MSC, further refining them to arrive at the “eastside plan”. The eastside plan is but a starting point and is intended to be further shaped during the upcoming Airport Master Plan process.

For soaring to flourish at MEV, space must be allocated for glider tie-downs and camping - - and preferably these areas should be next to each other. This area must also have easy access to the glider staging area on Rwy 30, and it should have basic amenities, power, water, electricity and sewer. To be attractive to users, it should also have amenities like a shaded viewing area, lawn, RV hook-ups, MSC club house, glider related FBO's, businesses and more. Perhaps most importantly, runway 21 has to be reopened to accommodate landing during wave conditions. Some of this is going to take years to accomplish, no question, but the important first steps have been taken, and that's to reserve the contiguous space on the eastside for this growth to occur.

In a meeting yesterday, 8 June, County officials agreed to start construction of a temporary glider tie-down area of asphalt road grindings sealed with emulsion and a 100' wide connecting road to the Rwy 30 staging area. Projected completion should be by the end of this October. This tie-down area is important for several reasons. County wants to demonstrate to us, MAA and the soaring community, that they are willing to take proactive steps to protect and enhance soaring. This additional glider space will allow the relocation of gliders and trailers that are currently parked alongside the closed Rwy 21. This is to be an interim measure, with the stated future goal of reopening Runway 21. This is to be done with the understanding (between MAA and County) that moving these “obstacles” from the closed Rwy 21 will enhance safety should any pilot, power or glider, elect to use the closed runway to ensure the safety of his flight.

MAA is a non-profit 401c3 corporation. Since MAA is not tax-exempt, it can be and is politically active, lobbying with airport management, County and FAA to keep MEV an enthusiast's airport, primarily for soaring and small GA. We need your support and help, for more info or to join MAA, please contact me at the email below.

John Morgan
Email: bumperm@att.net
MAA president
Minden Airport Advisory Committee (representing the soaring community)

Minden: From a Soaring Widow's Perspective **By Jennifer Ware**

Don't come to Minden for a shopping mall – because there isn't one. But you have all that where you live anyway, don't you? Although I first came to Minden on soaring visits, the soaring attraction quickly became overwhelmed by all the other reasons to visit – and eventually reside here!

The beauty of the Carson Valley and the proximity to Lake Tahoe make this place heaven for me. It has everything I like to do: mountain biking, kayaking, quadding, hiking and snow skiing are on the top of my list. But, if you are not in the air and you are perhaps a bit less "out-doorsy", there are many other things to do as well, all within one hour of the airport.

The area is chock full of old west attractions including Virginia City, Carson City, and the quaint town of Genoa (with it's own winery). There is a railroad museum and there are more old west antique shops than I can count. The ghost town of Bodie is well worth the 90 minute drive south.

Several nice day spas and hot springs are in the area and there is also a community pool. Wally's Hot Springs is just 10 minutes from the airport. Markleeville and Grover Hot Springs are about 30 minutes away.

If you haven't worn yourself out during the day, casino nightlife abounds at South Lake Tahoe, Reno, and in the Minden/Carson City area. Take your pick of comedy shows, major production shows, headliners, cabaret lounge acts, and of course, gambling. Minden also has some really nice movie theaters – clean, comfortable and rarely crowded. Ah yes, the lack of crowds and the lack of pressures that always seem to hang in the air of big cities! And, there are a few places in town to catch a nice dinner and listen to some live music.

There are really too many options to include everything, so check out these web sites for a more complete run down:



<http://www.visitcarsonvalley.org>
<http://www.visitcarsoncity.com>
<http://www.virtualtahoe.com/playground/index.html>

Oh, and if you really MUST shop, South Lake Tahoe has a small cluster of Outlet Shops and there IS a mall in Reno about 40 minutes to the north!

I would sum it all up like this: In the Carson Valley you have one foot in civilization and modern life, and the other foot is firmly planted in a playground of some of the most stunning nature on the planet!

Minden-Tahoe a Premier Soaring Destination? (by Nathan Welch)

The Great Basin, which covers a vast area between the Sierra Mountain Range and Utah's Wassatch range, up to Idaho and down to Las Vegas, has some of the best thermal soaring in the world. People come to fly the Great Basin from all corners of the Earth in search to experience the powerful thermals, extreme altitudes and the opportunities it affords to fly hundreds of miles on the power of the sun and thermals alone.

Minden Nevada is uniquely positioned at the western edge of the Great Basin where it is nestled into the shadows of the mighty Sierra looming majestic as it holds back 69 trillion gallons of crystal clear Lake-Tahoe water; a destination spot that belies the existence of the harsh dusty desert that lies just over the ridge – its tall pines whispering in the winds, the lake lapping softly against the white sandy beaches, sailboats heeled over in the wind. It's a thing of beauty, calm and comfortable.

For the soaring pilot the Sierra offers more than its majesty, beauty and comfort, it offers the mighty Sierra Wave; a meteorological phenomenon that lifts man and

machine to great heights creating lines of lift that extend down the ridge line. This lift is created by the wave like action of the high winds careening off the sides of the Sierra range and soaring pilots essentially “surf” the wave, one that can extend to 40,000 feet or more. This phenomenon predominately occurs in the winter months making this a year around area to fly in the big air of the Great Basin.

And here sits Minden-Tahoe Airport (KMEV), in the right place for catching the wave and in a great place to explore the Great Basin. It has the potential of being a gleaming jewel, an oasis in the middle of the desert, the flower that also brings the bees of commerce, but it suffers from neglect and attrition; its dusty and faded shingle hanging precariously by a single nailed, threatening to fall off completely at any moment.

Through the efforts of many people working with the county, the city, the airport management, and community at large through various organizations and publications, there is a push to straighten the shingle, slap on a new coat of paint, and create that oasis in the desert, but the vision of that oasis differs depending on who’s doing the talking.

Enter the East Side Plan (ESP), an ambitious plan to move all of soaring to the east side of the airport. On the face of it the ESP seems like a good idea for a number of different reasons depending on your viewpoint and your motivations. For the soaring community it would mean more room which would better handle a very large number of gliders, like for a national contest for instance, a more suitable camping area could be developed and the area could be tailored to soaring activities. There are also safety factors. A completely separate runway could provide relatively unencumbered soaring operations by keep those operations of the powered runway traffic completely, and there would be no crossing any runway when exiting to the tie down area, as it currently happens. These safety factors are also important when one considers the push by some developers to introduce more Jet traffic to the airport by creating a Jet Center and supporting infrastructure. The inclusion large scale Jet traffic at KMEV is debatable and many in the community are waking up to the possibility and don’t want their small town airport turned into a large Jet hub. This is a whole different can of worms which will not be elaborated here.

The issues concerning Jets are complex and won’t be resolved any time soon, and the ESP, if it comes to pass, won’t be implemented any time soon either; it could take years before any appreciable progress is made where there would be enough infrastructure to support all soaring operations on the East side of the airport.

There has been some talk of moving soaring operations to the East side with minimal infrastructure. A camping

area could be cleared in the desert and a water tank erected to serve the basic needs of soaring pilots, it was reasoned. For this soaring pilot this is not a reasonable solution. The east side is still a raw desert with no protection from the elements, and the elements can be particularly fierce. Predictable strong winds pick up dirt, sand and rock to blast the finish on any aircraft standing in its way. There are a plethora of critters, like mice and snakes, which like to escape the harsh elements by jumping into nice and cozy gliders and trailers. And if that weren’t enough, the east side is a considerable distance from many airport facilities, like the local soaring FBO, and the airport bar and grill, where some pilots like to go to grab a bite to eat before flying, or after flying to enjoy a frosty adult beverage and yap about their flights that day. To get there glider pilots would have to drive a considerable distance around the airport and this just isn’t acceptable, especially for some pilots whose only transportation is a motor home. The inconvenience and discomfort factor are way too high too for most pilots and some will simply stop coming to fly at Minden-Tahoe.

While the ESP vision has many supporters, it seems myopic to put all one’s eggs in that basket and wait years for it to hatch without addressing the needs of the soaring pilot today and in the inevitable years that span between vision and implementation.

Enter the West Side Plan, which hasn’t really been fully developed into a concrete plan per se, it is more of a talking point to begin dialog about addressing the current problems that plague the soaring community at KMEV today. For starters these problems include; unrealistic ideas of pushing soaring to the east side without the proper infrastructure already in place, an inconvenient and desolate camping area, lack of proper tie cables in the transient tie down area, no dedicated spot or spots to put water ballast in the gliders, lack of a common non-commercial area to congregate, get weather information, meet other pilots and get out of the elements, to name a few of the more important ones.

The first point I’ve already covered, the second point – inconvenient and desolate camping area – affect those who travel to KMEV to fly and want to camp at the airport, either tent or RV camping. The current camping area is simply a dusty, rock surfaced field with a few posts and ropes delineating the camping spots. In addition, this area is considerable distance from the transient glider tie down area, so for those of us who bring RVs means a lot of walking pre and post flying.

It used to be that we could camp right next to where we tied our gliders down, and this scenario had huge benefits for the transient soaring pilot, especially the RV enabled soaring pilot, but for all transient pilots really. It’s not just the convenience of having supporting equipment and supplies immediately available, but it brought all those transient pilots together in one place

and it was a lot easier to find someone to help rig the wings onto the glider. It was a common area for like minded pilots and there were always impromptu barbeques and gatherings where people would simply enjoy each other's company. It was an informal club of sorts, one where everyone helped out each other. The new camping area for pilots, away from the glider tie down area, was a huge blow not to just convenience, but to the transient pilot community atmosphere in total. I can understand some of the motivation to changing the camping arrangements, especially for non-pilots who have no business being on the airport proper, but to lump glider pilots with numerous reasons to be on the aircraft side of the fence with non-pilot campers was a huge mistake.

There are possible solutions to reinstating a small scale on-airport camping for transient glider pilots only, and to make it someplace enjoyable and convenient to visit. The current transient glider area is actually an ideal location because it is placed right where all the action is; the restaurant and local FBO anyway. It would be relatively inexpensive to prepare spots along this area for camping and setup, and by introducing a water source, a covered picnic table, a patch of grass and a shade tree in each spot would be well worth the investment and could make glider camping at KMEV something to look forward to instead of something to dread.

The transient area needs a better tie down arrangement, if I recall there was only one cable for wing tie downs and nothing for the tail. One has to drive their own stakes to manage the tail and to tie down the trailer – everything at KMEV must be tied down securely because of the significant winds that blow through there on a regular basis.

There needs to be a dedicated ballast station or stations. Currently we share the wash rack to fill our gliders, and if there is anyone washing their plane that means waiting until they are done. In addition, it's a very long walk pushing your glider from the transient tie down area to the wash rack to ballast up, and another long – and now heavy - walk from there to the line. There is a water spout at the local FBO, but it has never been identified as a community water source. If transient camping were re-enabled, and water was plumbed to each spot, that would be most convenient because each transient spot would have access to water. A ballast only station could be rigged off the same water source in the same general area to ease the problems of ballasting the gliders for those not camping or that tie their gliders down on the tarmac as a matter of course, typically local pilots.

Finally, one of the biggest complaints I've heard from visiting pilots is that there is no non-commercial, club-like meeting place where visiting pilots can connect with fellow pilots, get a weather briefing, get out of the

elements, etc. The local soaring club, or rather some members therein, want to hold out and build a grand clubhouse on the East Side, and so they don't want to put the time, money and energy into anything in the interim. Seeing that the East side is quite some way off, there are many pilots, including myself, that would like to see a small, inexpensive, simple and unassuming structure – like a construction office or single wide mobile home type of a structure, that could be fixed up and placed near the common area, near the transient tie down area would be an ideal location.

KMEV cannot claim to be a Premier Soaring Destination, it is a hot, unsheltered, uncomfortable and inconvenient pit of an airport, although it wouldn't take that much to turn that around and make it a Premier Soaring Destination. The soaring pilot's needs are not that great but their needs are different than any other airport user, especially for the visiting transient pilot. There need not be any extravagant supporting infrastructure for the recreational soaring pilot to be able to have a good time - just some forethought about necessary conveniences that affect the soaring pilot and a few simple facilities, for instance; keeping the necessary facilities together in easy access of each other to better support the soaring activities in general; ballast stations; a simple community structure; adequate glider and trailer tie down cables and setup area, and some simple glider-camping with basic creature comforts like water, a place to sit, some shade and a little patch of grass go a very long way from making a miserable experience turn into an enjoyable one.

KMEV seems to be in a death spiral in terms of cultivating a soaring community and if some measures aren't taken today, not years from now, to attract pilots back to KMEV and the Minden-Tahoe area it may irreversibly languish as pilots seek out far more friendly and comfortable places to engage in their favorite past time: Soaring freely, silently on long slender wings using the power of the wind and the sun alone, and communing with other glider pilots to share in the joys and challenges that soaring engineless aircraft bring.

Nathan Whelchel
Soaring Enthusiast

Welcome to Soar Minden, The World's Greatest Soaring Site!

By Fred LaSor

If you're a private glider pilot wanting to fly out of Minden, your introduction to the field will probably come when you arrive with your trailer in tow. Drive in on Airport Road off of US 395 and you'll come face-to-face



Fred LaSor

with the Soar Minden office after about one mile. We can direct you to a private tie-down, available either from us (\$36/mo or \$8/day), or from the county. There are cables to tie to, but you'll need your own rope and wing boards. If you arrive after hours and want to drive around the field to our tie-downs on the old runway 21, you'll have to drive through a gate with a padlock. The padlock combination is 7777. If you need to get through one of the electronic gates type 777 into the keypad.

Soar Minden will be happy to give you a site briefing before you start flying so you can find your way around the airport and around the valley. Basically, powered traffic will stay to the west and southwest of the airport, while gliders will stay to the east and northeast. This is an uncontrolled airport, so don't be surprised if a Cessna passes you just as you're setting up for the pattern. In order to stay safe here you'll want to be looking out for other aircraft, and if you have a radio, please listen in on 122.800 when you're taking off or landing so you'll know who else is sharing your airspace.

Speaking of aircraft frequencies, Minden's CTAF is 122.800. Carson City is 123.000. South Lake Tahoe is 122.950. These are all on the current sectional. Minden's AWOS is 119.325. If you want to talk to other gliders in the air, or call Soar Minden to request a wave window be opened, please use 123.300.

Minden has two active runways; 12/30 and 16/34. If you tie down on our leasehold on the old runway 21 you'll probably want to launch on 34 from the intersection. If you're filled with water you might want a longer takeoff roll, which will probably mean starting on the tarmac near the end of 30.

We'll also point out where the tow pilot will usually fly, where to find the local thermals, and emergency procedures in the event of a premature termination of tow. And while we're at it, we'll show you the landing pattern we use; 45 degree entry over Starbuck's, IP over the end of runway 21, base starting over the westernmost green circular field. If you're comfortable

turning off the runway on rollout, we'll suggest you do so to clear the runway for other traffic. And if you see someone else using the same runway, we'll point out that you can land safely on the dirt runway to the east of 30 (30 Right) or on the grass infield just west of the runway.

We'd be happy to fill your oxygen tank early. If you call for oxygen at noon, when the line staff are launching everyone else you might have a bit of a wait. If we can fill your tank by 9:00 A.M. we'll try to get it done within the next 30 minutes. We'd like to be able to help you assemble your glider and have a lineperson tow it out with one of our golf carts, but they'll be busy helping a lot of other folks so this might not be possible. We don't bill for this service, but if you want to show your appreciation to the lineperson they will gladly accept. We regret that we can no longer loan our golf carts for you to pull your



Mike Moore, tow pilot

own glider out. The airport now requires everyone driving on the airport take a class, pass a written exam, and carry an airport waiver card.

Your tow pilot will ask for your name when you hook up. Please give him the name that will be billed as his tow sheet will be used for making up the invoices. Our computer recognizes last names, not Scott, Stan, or Boomer. Our billing clerk has been known to snap pencils with bare fingers when handed a tow sheet showing only first names. And if you let our front desk know the tail number of the glider you'll be flying, that will make things all that much easier.

Speaking of payment, tows cost \$33 for the first 1000 feet and \$15 per thousand after that. Some of you who have flown with us previously will recognize that our tow prices are higher than last year. This reflects higher fuel costs and other increases we are forced to absorb. We're happy to accept payment in cash or personal check. Credit card payment incurs a service charge.

Soar Minden will arrange a wave briefing and/or oxygen briefing if you plan to fly in wave or above 10,000 feet MSL. And if you want cross country instruction, we'll be

glad to arrange it, to recommend courses and turn points for your flight, and to rent you a data logger or to act as an official observer. If you want us to act as an official observer please arrange it in advance. We need to have your declaration before, not after the fact. If you will use your own data logger please make sure we have the software to download it so we may keep custody of the file. Don't send us the file a month later with a note saying "remember me? I want you to act as official observer for that flight".

If you plan to make a long cross country flight you'll probably be flying into Reno airspace for part of the flight. Reno is Class C with a ceiling of 8,400' MSL. You need to communicate with Reno Approach on 122.900 from 20 NM to the south and you'll need a transponder with Mode C between the ceiling and 10,000'. Above 10,000' the glider waiver applies and you should not need a transponder. Remember that Reno approach will

bring airline traffic right over Minden and Carson City and that airliners rely on TCAS to alert them of traffic by reading your transponder. If you are not transponder equipped they won't know you are there, so keep your eyes open.

Some of the world's best flying occurs on the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada range, only one mile west of Soar Minden. When the wave is working we can almost guarantee a diamond altitude gain and there are outstanding opportunities for cross country above 15,000'. We'd be happy to arrange a dual wave flight to demonstrate how to tow in rotor, how to use rotor to climb into wave, how to use wave, and how to get back down.

Even if you fly your own glider you might consider renting one of our ships for a wave flight. The thermal shock of descending from minus 30 degrees to plus 50 degrees is pretty hard on gel coat. And a Grob 103 is a more stable platform than a discus or an ASW-27. Again, talk to us in advance about badge processing. It would be a shame to make a good diamond altitude flight but not to get credit because of a poor quality notch or some other problem.

Oh, and if you find when you return to the field that the wind is moving along at 20 knots right out of the west, we will have pointed out in our general briefing that landing on runway 21, or its parallel taxiway, is probably your best choice even though it is officially closed. You are the PIC and should choose the safe option for your return to the field.

Land out at Carson City or Rosachi? No problem. Call us on a cell phone and we'll try to have a tow plane on its way to you in a few minutes. Aero retrieves are priced at \$155 an hour on the tach. A good deal unless you enjoy disassembling your bird.



When you're done at the day's end, drop by the office. There are frequently a bunch of world-class glider pilots (to hear them describe themselves) holding out on the back deck about their exploits. We have soda machines on the deck and occasionally other beverages in the refrigerator.

We'd be happy to have you come fly at Minden, to enjoy the world's best soaring and to enjoy a great bunch of people. Give us a call at 800-345-7627 if you have any questions or want to reserve one of our planes or instructors.

Fly Minden! ..and take advantage of... The Minden Standard Courses. By Bob Semans

What are they?

The Minden Standard Courses are a set of 17 pre-defined and well described courses for the use of soaring pilots who fly from Minden-Tahoe Airport. Course distances range from 100 km to 1000 km and meet the FAI prescribed course definitions for triangle, out & return and 3 turn point badge and record attempts. Twelve of the courses use photogenic way points for those pilots using cameras for documentation ... or even for pilots who, though they use GPS FR documentation, like to see the way points easily. The remaining five are "GPS Only" courses for pilots who don't mind rounding a "point in space."

In addition to the basic data needed for flight declarations, other helpful information is provided including course leg and total course distance, a listing of airports along the course, a description of how the course might typically be flown and weather peculiarities and high traffic areas that may be encountered. For both local and visiting pilots, use of these courses can save time and avoid errors in the process of course

design and selection of a task suitable for the day's weather.

Where did they come from?

The design of each of these courses has evolved over time ... in some cases over a period of more than twenty-five years. As the courses were flown by many pilots, with a variety of weather conditions (Cu and blue), based on their experiences the way points were shifted to take best advantage of frequently encountered good lift areas, such as long ridge lines and convergence areas. Turn points at airports in the valleys were abandoned in favor of more easily reached good turn points on high ground --- this yielded dividends in both distance and speed achieved. These courses can now be considered "well tuned."

Who uses them?

The primary users are pilots who are trying for badges and records, and many, many of these have succeeded. Countless badge legs, a dozen or more National Records and a great many more Nevada State Records have been won using these courses. (The sole exception is the 1000 km triangle course, where more feedback would be very welcome. Yes, that course has been flown ... and even completed.)

A less frequent user is the pilot who does, or aspires to, fly competition. Pilots who frequently fly pre-declared tasks will improve their competitive soaring skills more quickly than those who just fly where the weather looks best. This is even more effective practice if they engage one or two other pilots in "match racing" by starting at nearly the same time and altitude and doing good post flight debriefing and analysis to see where the better decisions were made. For these pilots, the day's task may quickly be selected from the several courses to suit the expected weather ... or NOT suit, if they want more of a challenge.

What's new about them?

The 2006 update of the Minden Standard Courses will be released shortly. It includes the correction of all the calculated distances according to the latest FAI distance formula (available for execution or downloading from: http://www.fai.org/distance_calculation/). The new distances vary only slightly from those from the previous formula, but by enough to force selection of a new Start Point for the 1000 km 3 Turn Point course (a.k.a., the million-meter dash) to achieve the required minimum distance with a landing back at Minden.

Also, the true course for each course leg has been added. Finally, a new course has been added ... a 100 km triangle, GPS Only course. Similar to previous 100 km record courses, this course was the one used by Marta Najfeld to set a Feminine 15 Meter World Speed

Record last July. The soaring equivalent to the Olympic 50 meter sprint – a pilot should never be out of gliding distance to Minden – this is a useful course for anyone to practice use of a declared task and to polish their efficient turn point rounding technique. As Marta did, several circuits can be made during a single flight, making for lots of good practice.

Where can I find them?

The full set of courses are available on the Minden Soaring Club, Inc. web site:

www.mindensoaringclub.com Also, a hard copy is available at the Soar Minden office ... just ask for the Standard Courses binder.

So, for badges, records, match racing or for your private "personal best," go for the Minden Standard Courses.

Bob Semans 5-31-2006

A Short Comment on the Closing of Gliderports (Kenny Price)

Hummingbird Haven, Skysailing, Calistoga, Lagoon Valley, High Country Soaring, Crazy Creek Soaring, Turf Soaring. To many pilots, the names of these glider ports bring back fond memories, but unfortunately they are no longer in business.

I had an interesting discussion with a fellow glider pilot on the subject of glider ports that have closed or are in the process of closing. He commented to me that our gliderport must be very happy because now we will reap the benefits of more business due to the demise of glider ports closing their doors.

After giving his comment a lot of thought, I then began to realize more how this affects the entire glider community whether they are pilots who frequented these glider ports or not.

Generally, glider ports are not "around the corner" for most people to drive to. There are several on the west coast alone that some drive for several hours just to have the privilege to fly either their own sailplane, rent a sailplane, receive instruction, take a ride, or . . . just hang out! Gliderports disappearing are making this venture more difficult than ever.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to nurture new pilots into the sport in every way possible. One of my tools for this is other glider ports. As a new pilot becomes more proficient, flying in new territory is important in many ways. When the doors of a gliderport close, so do the doors of a pilot's opportunities to improve skills, confidence and great flying experiences as well.

Having to find other resources for their flying often means having to travel farther. This also means spending more time and money to get there. On tight budgets, and with gas prices being where they are, could mean the difference from being able to afford to fly or not.

Gliderports are more than a place to go and fly. For some, they are a way of life, a second family and a home away from home. The impact of a gliderport

closing affects everybody in a different way, but does affect everybody. The thought that our gliderport would be better off now that others have closed their doors could not be further from the truth.



Join the Excitement!

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The fun just got funner!**

Silverado Soaring has added a DG 505 to the fleet.

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For additional information contact our membership director:

Paul Wapensky, (650) 873-4341,

WapenskyPJ@mfr.usmc.mil or

Ray Sanford, (530) 671-4800,

RNCSAN4D@COMCAST.NET

Membership requirements are private pilot certificate for power or glider, checkout with an approved instructor, and initiation fee of \$300. Pilots using gliders for cross-country and the DG 505 must meet certain requirements

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

THE 2006 PASCO BANQUET AND AWARDS

Western Aerospace Museum, Oakland, Saturday November 4.

Seminars 9am-5pm, Cocktails 6-7pm, Dinner and AGM, Awards, 7-10pm

2006 PASCO Sawyer Award

- Revolving Cumulative X-C Flight trophy
- Based on OLC distance
 - Must upload flight logs weekly!
- Handicap:
 - New pilots up to 4x
 - Mountain vs. lowlands
 - Glider performance
- Flights in Region 11
 - Northern California, Nevada, Hawaii only
- Register with PASCO before October 22nd



Contact Darryl Ramm (this year's organizer) with questions - darryl_ramm@yahoo.com

See: www.pacificsoaring.org/awards/sawyer.html for details!!

See OLC: www.onlinecontest.org

Also see www.abqsoaring.org/misc_files/USA-OLCTutorial.pdf

ALERT!! NEW MINDEN WEBCAM AVAILABLE !!

**Through the kind auspices of Jim and Jennifer Herd.
Thankyou!!**

<http://home.earthlink.net/~ferware/KMEVCam/KMEVSoaringCam.html>

Username = GliderPilot (case sensitive)

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*For more information contact;
Ty White
510-490-6765 h;
408-616-8379 w
tylerwhite@earthlink.net*

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Peter Deane,
WestWind Editor*


PASCOC
Pacific Soaring Council
41600 Margold Drive
Fremont, CA 94539

