



Sacramento County Sheriff's Air Squadron Newsletter

SERVING THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY SHERIFF SINCE 1941

OCTOBER MEETING

SSD Air Operations:

Support role during Presidential visit to Mather Airport

Special Report by Ron Richey

As we all know, **President Biden** and his entourage visited Sacramento not long ago to view the damage of the **Caldor Fire** up around the Lake Tahoe area.

Learning that **Air Force One** was coming into Mather rather than Travis, I wondered what role our Air Ops crew played in the presidential visit. **Sergeant Matt Burton**, head of **Air Operations for the Sheriff's Office**, filled me in with some of the details.

Prior to the arrival of **Air Force One**, Matt had to put up a helicopter carrying a Secret Service agent to recon the approach path and surrounding neighborhoods to make sure no 'bad guys' were lying in wait for the arriving president. The same process was conducted by patrol cars on the ground.



The **Air Ops hangar** was the major staging area for all the various law enforcement agencies and their counterparts being briefed about their assigned duties. After the big 747 lands and taxis to taxiway Foxtrot, (the same taxiway we use when arriving for annual **Review of the Fleet**), the jet stops on the large open space just south of the Air Ops hangar -- surrounded by lots of black SUV's, which arrived earlier on an Air Force C-17.



President Biden was not on the ground long before boarding a Blackhawk helicopter with call sign....**Army One**, with three **Osprey Special Ops aircraft** in formation to tour the fire damage areas. Upon returning, the president held a press conference in the hangar next to Air Ops.

Continued on Ron's Page 2 column

Speaker: Ken Dwelle, President Flyers Sustainable Energy



Squadron Headquarters Sacramento Executive Airport October 20, 5:30 pm

Ken leads a vibrant renewal energy company focusing on solar photovoltaics, methane digesters, ethanol production and biodiesel.

His tie-in to aviation includes 10 years as a U.S. Air Force officer and fighter pilot (including F-117 stealth and F-16 aircraft) and 4 years as a United Airlines commercial airline pilot.

Ken is Tom Dwelle's son. Tom spoke to the Squadron several years ago about his Reno Air Racing experiences. Ken has a well-tuned Sea Fury in his stable of aircraft.

AROUND THE SQUADRON



By Ron Richey

(Presidential visit story continued from Page 1)

Matt said he could not believe the security; the hangar was surrounded by big semi-trucks and trailers to prevent any type of line of sight on the president, snipers and sharpshooters were present on various building roofs, Secret Service people everywhere. The Secret Service even had an agent over at the Tracon facility so they could see who might be out flying in the restricted airspace.

President Biden was on the ground for about three hours, but how many hundreds of hours in planning and coordination went into putting the brief stop in Sacramento together?

When not hosting the president, Matt and his crew have been coordinating the backup law enforcement officers from all over California helping out the fire crews by patrolling the damaged and evacuated residential and commercial areas. Our Sheriff's Office 'donated' eight patrol cars and officers for the Caldor Fire.

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(Ron's "Around the Squadron" begins next column.)

While **Commander Ken Lux**, **Tim Pinkney** and **Tom Jones** were hanging out with aviation legend **Clay Lacy** in his decked out motorhome, **Mike Traud** was spending his 42nd year attending the **Reno Air Races** and his 13th year as a pylon judge. Mike was assigned **Pylon Outer 4**, which he said was so far north of show center, a Canadian passport would have come in handy.



Air Squad members said despite the high winds and smoke which canceled several race heats over the weekend, they all enjoyed the experience of being around accomplished pilots and go fast flying machines.

Ever been to the **Clovis Fest**, down near Fresno? Every year the town of Clovis closes off over twelve city blocks for a community street fair that includes street vendors of every description, music, car shows, food booths, local artisans making items you had to have.....until you actually got it home and wondered why you bought it.

One of the local favorites is the early morning launch of multiple hot air balloons. **Kelly** and **Jana Couch** invited me down to join them in launching their massive balloon.

I flew my Bonanza down to KFAT (Fresno) with two other folks aboard who volunteered to join the balloon

ground crew. We arrived late Friday afternoon for an Oh-Dark-Thirty launch Saturday morning.



I sat through one of the pre-flight pilot briefings and was impressed by how thorough the briefer was. He covered the local rules and regulations, current and forecasted weather and winds, the FAR's that applied, the local airspace and tower frequencies and the paperwork each pilot had to have on board, because an FAA ramp check is very common for balloon operations.



It takes six people about an hour to get Kelly's 120 foot high (like a 12 story building), 105 thousand cubic foot balloon with two 28 million btu burners assembled and ready for flight. Kelly says he burns around 30 gallons of propane per hour from the two fuel tanks he has in the basket.

After the group launch and cruising around town for an hour or so, balloon pilot Kelly picks the downtown Clovis post office parking lot as his landing site. Needless to say, that brought out quite a few spectators.

Around the Squadron, continued

The ground crew had to work around all the closed off streets to get to the balloon towering over all the surrounding homes and buildings. It takes the same number of people and about the same amount of time to deflate, disassemble and pack up the balloon for transport back to the fair grounds for the traditional after flight tailgate parties.



To say hot air ballooning is a lot of work.....would be quite an understatement, however, I enjoyed the adventure and experience of being around hot air balloonists.

At our September Cal Fire meeting, Sheriff's liaison **Lt. Shelly Hodgkins** presented **Commander Ken Lux** with a

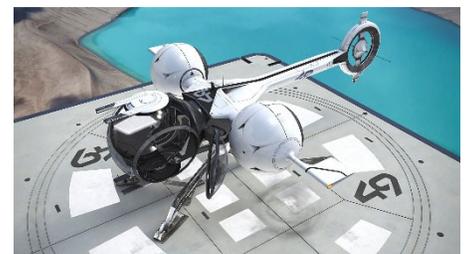
\$5,000 check from **Sheriff Jones**. The funds, from SSD's confiscated funds account, will go toward our Squadron foundation for community outreach.



Tom Jones and Aerospace Museum of California staff really pulled out all the stops to host last month's dinner. Exhibits on display included the world's largest rigid wing kite – the Makani M600 energy kite. This aircraft was designed to harness wind energy to create renewal electricity.



Another museum exhibit of interest to members was the \$8 million helo movie prop from the Tom Cruise 2013 Si-Fi movie, **Oblivion**. Known as the **Bubble Ship** and operated by Cruise's main character, Jack 49, the prop was inspired by the Bell 47 helicopter. Bubble Ship is 25-feet long and weighs in at 4,500 lbs – mostly aluminum. Looks like **Chuck Asbury** is getting ready to get on board and protect the planet!





Cal Fire tour: A first class event!

Safety Brief:

Aircraft tugs



By Bill Cox, CFII

Granted, as general aviation pilots and aircraft owners we do not move very large planes – however, some general tips on aircraft tug safety can help eliminate unfortunate accidents.

Today, general aircraft tugs are really powered towbars. Most sold these days are electric, but remote controlled tugs are entering the market. And gasoline tugs are still being used at many hangars.



While this is not an exhaustive list, it is a good jumping-off point for establishing good practices and safety checklists.

1. **Train.** Safe use of any equipment involves training. Before you have anyone use your aircraft tug to move your plane, make sure they know how to use the tug.
2. **Inspect:** Aircraft tugs and towbars should always be inspected prior to use – to make sure they are in working order. Any hazards should be identified; low tire pressure, loose cables, slack drive belt, etc.
3. **Check lighting.** A well outfitted tug will include a light to allow easy attachment to nose gear. Towing in the dark adds extra requirements for attention to spacing.

4. **Secure towbar to aircraft.** Make sure the towbar is properly connected to the landing gear before moving.
5. **Turn off engines.** This may seem obvious, but there have been accidents when twin-engine aircraft are towed with an engine running.
6. **Position a wing/tail walker if needed.** If distances are tight, using a hangar neighbor to assist in checking for enough room to clear any nearby objects is a great idea.
7. **Go slow.** Taking your time and going at a steady speed will allow you to keep an eye out for problems, allow you to control maneuverability and make sure there are no issues when going forwards or backward.
8. **Avoid extreme turns.** If you must take a sharp turn, make sure you have enough clearance to do so.
9. **Park the plane securely.** Once the tug is disconnected, set the airplane brakes and/or place wheel chocks to ensure the plane does not move.

Aircraft tugs are great help for our bodies not to become strained before a flight – and help us at the end of a journey park the aircraft with minimal physical stress.

The old adage is correct – that one needs to have the right tool for any job. And aircraft tugs follow the same rule. There are a host of tug types and manufacturers these days. Choose your equipment wisely and follow these good safety principals.





Commander's Column:

Fall is here

Hello Air Squadron!

It's hard to believe we are closing in on the end of the year. There are two meetings remaining – this month's annual BBQ dinner – and next month's annual banquet.

I am happy to announce that our annual banquet is scheduled for November 17th at the McClellan Club Ballroom. World champion aerobatic aviator Sean D. Tucker will be our guest speaker.

It will be an exciting evening with special guests including Sheriff Jones.

I am also excited about our ongoing partnership with the Sheriff's Office. **Vice Commander, Doug Hunting**, and I are working on the Squadron's Foundation and community partnership with the Sheriff's Office.

Here is just one upcoming example of our SSD partnership...

I met with our Sheriff's liaison **Lt. Shelly Hodgkins** and **Squadron member Tom Jones**. Our goal is to plan a holiday toy airlift as our first community three-way partnership event between the Air Squadron, Sheriff's Office and Aerospace Museum.



Lt. Hodgkins manages a number of programs including Sheriff's Explorer Post and the SAL Youth Leadership Council. In addition she manages the Youth Services Unit, which includes Sheriff's Activities League and a variety of program under that umbrella; including SHOCK, Lunchtime with YSU plus a variety of mentoring programs and community events.

Shelly is clearly a Squadron supporter and we look forward to working with her on outreach activities.

The holiday toy airlift plan is for Squadron members to collect donations and toys and then fly the toys to the Sheriff's Mather hangar for distribution through SSO programs.



We are also looking at mentoring programs, taking kids flying, day programs, summer camps. In addition we will look at providing STEM career opportunities, providing guidance on how youth can achieve a sustainable and rewarding career in aviation or other STEM related careers. All the while focusing on positive outreach for at-risk youth in underserved communities.

If you are interested in making a financial donation or donating a flight to deliver toys to the Sheriff's Mather hangar, please contact our **Treasurer Joe Williams** jjw@surewest.net.

Let's fly.

Ken Lux, Commander