



SERVING THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY SHERIFF SINCE 1941

# Sacramento County Sheriff's Air Squadron Newsletter

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

## Aviation security:

### Not just for the airlines

Last year's helicopter break-in at KSAC was a reminder that safety and security of airports and aircraft is important.

A new AOPA online course is a great way to review TSA security awareness guidelines. This 35-minute course offers practical guidance to limit opportunities for criminals or potential terrorists seeking access to our airplanes and airports.

Here is a list of highlights from the course:

1. Airman certificates are cross-checked against federal no-fly and watch lists.
2. FAA now issues tamper-proof licenses and certificates for pilots and other FAA-certified personnel.
3. TSA requires all charter aircraft over 12,500 lbs. to comply with pilot background checks, as well as manifest and passenger ID review.

4. Airport Watch Program signage is now required at all non-commercial airports.
5. TSA has created a toll-free telephone number for reporting suspicious aviation incidents.
6. U.S. Treasury Department now screens all aircraft sales transactions for suspicious activities.
7. General aviation border crossings must comply with new U.S. Customs requirements.

The idea is that these mandatory and voluntary government and industry initiatives will lead to enhanced security and harden general aviation against security threats. Here's the course web link:

<https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/online-learning/online-courses/general-aviation-security>

**Dale Terry, Newsletter Editor**

### Sean McLaughlin

Transportation Security Specialist,  
US Department of Homeland Security,  
Transportation Security Administration

KSAC Squadron Headquarters

March 20th, 5:30 pm



Sean manages KSMF's Explosives program and subordinate Explosive Specialists for TSA. He has served as a subject matter expert on issues involving explosives, improvised explosive devices (IED), and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

He spent 6 years in the US Air Force and supervised USAF explosive operations in Afghanistan.

# Commander's Column:



## Reaching out to our community

Being an active participant in our Squadron should include reaching out to our community. Having others see our outreach shows our group to be present, reliable, and caring.

This year we are planning several flying activities that will give everyone a great opportunity to invite aviation interested friends to participate. When we host these events, it can keep on our radar potential members. It can introduce us to new faces, give us a chance to network and strengthen our Squadron spirit.

I see our group as a professional organization. As such, **I want to encourage all members to dress in correct Squadron uniform at our meetings.** When you are out socially, wear your Squadron lapel pin or neckless jewelry. This is a great way to say that we are professionals and allow our friends to learn about our group.

Let's make 2024 as a year where we really get involved in Squadron activities. Engaging others on social

media allows us to reach out to others online. Tell our Squadron story. It only takes as much time as you want it to. And, point others to our web site.



One opportunity to show our Squadron spirit is to compete in community events. In May, the **Hayward Air Rally** is a great aviation and navigation challenge that I want our group to participate in. Held on May 17-18, the contestants fly a course originating in Hayward and returning to Livermore. There is a safety briefing, followed by rally events and then an evening banquet at the Livermore Hilton Garden Inn.

I would love to have three Squadron teams participate this year. If you are not a pilot, then you can still be involved as a ride-along navigator. For more info, use this link:  
<http://www.hwdairrally.org>.

Volunteering your time to improving our Squadron not only helps our group, but also gives you a chance to make/reinforce connections. Becoming involved on one of our committees allows you to choose an activity that aligns with your interests. The bottom line – get involved!

Our scholarship committee is a wonderful way to help community youth launch into the world of professional aviation. Your involvement will be something you'll remember for a long time as you meet these energetic youngsters.



Our Squadron loves working with the Aerospace Museum of California. Helping as a museum volunteer is a terrific way to meet other aviation interested people.

## Proper use of honorary badges and ID cards

I want to review with all members, and especially our newer members the proper use of the honorary badge, SSO ID card, and associated Squadron insignia.

The California Penal Code permits identification of an honorary peace officer. Here's the rule – identification can only be used with permission of the issuing authority and cannot be used to influence the actions of law enforcement officers or others.

Our ID card, honorary badge and Squadron logo do not represent any form of an official credential. Rather, these items indicate acceptance into our Sheriff affiliate group and in the case of the honorary badge, a mark of distinction in having passed the PC832 course.

**Shawn Britton, Commander**

# Gone West:

## Bob Lessman



Long time Squadron member and Reserve Command Pilot Robert (Bob) Lessman, age 86, passed away in August 2023.

Bob will be long remembered for his open house and hangar hosting Squadron annual BBQ's. His "Toy Box" hangar offered opportunities to view his many projects and beloved North American T-66/SNJ aircraft, known as the "pilot maker" because of its important role in preparing pilots for combat.



Bob flew his T-6 in the Vultures Row Formation Team. The team flew demonstrations at many airshow sites, including Oshkosh AirVenture.

Stan Stewart remembers that back in July 2010 he and some Beechcraft formation buddies were flying together and stopped for fuel in Yankton, South Dakota (KYKN) on the way to Oshkosh. As he was getting fuel three T-6s made a formation pass and then also landed for fuel. One of the T-6s was flown by Bob Lessman. Talk about a small world!



That's Bob at far left in picture above.

Bob was a member of the Thunderbolts Capitol Auto Club, the oldest continuously meeting "Hot Rod" club in the nation. Racing on dirt tracks in Northern California, the disconnected exhaust sounded like thunder.



Bob drove a fully restored Pearl White 1932 Ford and participated in the club for over 45 years.

In 2000 Bob and 40 other NorCal pilots ran into difficulty with the FAA over proper qualifications for Airman's Medical Certificates, which eventually led to loss of his medical. However, Bob never lost his love of aviation and maintained his Squadron support since his membership began in 1994.



In 2015, then member and Sheriff's Air Operations pilot, Randy Winn, presented Bob with an award for his support of the Sheriff and offering his T-6 for rides to local youth.



Bob served our Squadron as Quartermaster for many years and administered our group's SSO Honorary Badge Program for those members completing PC832 training. In 2016, he received special recognition for his outstanding service to the Squadron.

A one-of-a-kind personality, Bob Lessman will be missed.

## Safety Brief: Checklists



By Hunter Jefferson, CFII

### Checklists! Do you use them? You're supposed to!

It has been drilled into everyone's processes from preflight to shut down since the beginning of manned flight and certainly in the airline industry.

Aircraft have become more and more complex, so the need to follow a checklist has become ever more certain. Following a crash of Northwest Flight 255 in Detroit in August of 1987, the NTSB concluded that the flight crew did not perform the checklist procedures in the manner prescribed in the company's "Airplane Flying Handbook."



This was not solely the contributing factor of the crash, however the NTSB found that checklist design and method of presenting checklists produce better performance by the user. The NTSB report also found that between 1983-



1986, there were 21 multi engine airplane accidents caused by the improper use of a checklist. Of the 21 accidents, 5 did not even use the checklist at all!

Traditionally, checklists were designed to be carried out from beginning to end all at one. However, as checklists became longer and longer, segmented checklists were created. According to AOPA, a common practice to help not losing your place, is to make a few announcements out loud, even if you are alone. I know I personally do this in the helicopter when I don't have the crew onboard, and it may be odd, but it helps me in my "flow" when starting up.

According to the FAA, there are two ways of using a checklist. For example, while performing a preflight, you may opt to carry the checklist with you as you examine each point on the checklist in order. The other option is to perform the preflight, then reference the checklist afterwards and make sure you covered each point. Whatever option you choose, be consistent and avoid distractions. Checklists ensure the safety and efficiency of every flight.

There are times when some checklists must be memorized, and some don't. During true emergencies, there are usually a small number of actions that must be performed during memory.

While flying helicopters, if you have an engine failure in cruise flight, it has been drilled into our heads to lower collective, right pedal, aft cyclic to enter an

autorotation in a Bell Helicopter. This process takes about a second and a half and is the difference between life and death. There is no time to reference a checklist.

In a single engine airplane, engine failure, you must fly the airplane, aim somewhere, then if time and altitude permit, troubleshoot the problem. These are memorized checklists. Alternatively, an alternator failure in flight, you have the time to pull out the checklist!

All well-trained pilots do a preflight check. Even if you have completed the same steps many times in your mind, the value of completing a rigorous review prior to flight cannot be over emphasized.

Checklists ensure that every step is performed and in the correct order.

So, enjoy the nice weather, go flying, and use those checklists!



# Around the Squadron:

## Pickney honored



On February 1, Aerospace Museum of California's Annual Volunteers Recognition Dinner, museum director, **Tom Jones**, presented **Tim Pinkney** with a cloth patch representing his 1,200 volunteer hours over the last three years. In fact, over the last four years, Tim has volunteered 1,485 hours, just short of receiving his 1,500-hour patch.

Tim served on the Museum's board of directors for 10 years helping raise money to build the **Hardie Setzer** main museum building. This building was named after a past long-time Squadron member.

Tim also flew in Hardie's twin twice when Hardie was 88 years old! (Tim ALWAYS kept his hand on his lap inches away from the right seat yoke... just in case.)

When the need to change the Museum's Executive Director in 2017, the then museum president, **Ken Lux**, asked Tim to step in as a temporary director and Tom Jones to serve as deputy director. This interim 4-month transition allowed Ken to undertake a full-time replacement search.

This year, Tim is celebrating his 25th year Silver Anniversary of having a close relationship with AMC.

Tim also celebrated his 75th birthday at the museum last year.

## KMCC to open tower

This May, the existing, but now dormant, KMCC control tower will open with federal, rather than contract personnel. No word yet on how the airspace around Sacramento will be carved up to accommodate 4 airport control towers – KSMF, KSAC, KMHR and KMCC.

On another KMCC note, beginning March 1, McClellan Jet Services, the airport's FBO will be undergoing an extensive remodel. The FBO's operations will be moved to a temporary trailer.



**Ken Lux's**, KMCC based Luxe Aviation will also be relocated during FBO's remodel. Ken's company, which specializes in managing, selling, acquiring, and leasing aircraft, expects to also operate out of modular offices through October during the remodel.

KMCC has been growing in popularity with Squadron members recently due to the FBO's competitive fuel pricing (\$5.08 vs. \$6.05 per gallon for 100LL avgas at KSAC and \$7.23 at KSMF). The privately owned public use airport is part of McClellan Business Park – a diverse mix of aviation companies including government operations by US Coast Guard and CalFire. CalFire bases their Global Supertanker B747 supertanker at McClellan.

## Formation clinic moves

**Stan Stewart** reports that his Spring formation flying clinic will be relocated to Visalia (KVIS) during the KMCC remodel. KVIS will offer some nice facilities for Stan's training. The field hosts a restaurant and hotel which is walking distance from aircraft parking. The 150' wide runway gives plenty of concrete space. Typically, 20-30 aircraft attend Stan's clinics.

The beginner/refreshers clinic will be held on March 22-24 – with the advanced clinic to be held May 2-5. These events are open to any low wing airplane that can cruise at 115-120 knots with extra power to stay in formation position.

More info is available at [www.b2osh.org](http://www.b2osh.org).

## Ron Richey update



**Ron Richey** underwent a 5 ½ hour CT back surgery on February 5<sup>th</sup>. He reports that he is healing up well and

that the leg and back pain is much, much better. He will be wearing a back brace for the next month and using a walker. Ron will be staying in the US through May, then head back to his new digs in Mexico.

## Andrew Bates buys RV-6A



**Andrew Bates** is smiling these days after joining **Lisa Simpson** in ownership of a Vans RV-6A.

RV-6A aircraft are well known among experimental airplane owners as a reliable two-seat homebuilt. The Van's aircraft family of kit aircraft are so popular that they amount to one-third of the USA's experimental aircraft fleet.