



MDPA news

May, 2004 Concord, CA 925-685-7073 Volume 31 Issue 5

Meeting Notice

Date: May 21 2004
Place: MDPA Clubhouse
Dinner: 6:00P
Program: 7:00PM
Stew Bowers
Board Meeting: May 19 2004
Next Meeting: June 18 2004



The Airport advisory committee meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the airport manages office.

If you're not currently a member ...

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MDPA
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President's Message May 2004

I heard a rumor that some of you were wondering if I'd taken a vacation from MDPA events, but I'm actually alive and well – just overbooked! I missed the Soldier Meadows fly-out (John Potter will report on that), and the pancake breakfast (Dave Evans will report on that). I had family plans conflict with both events. [Just a side note, my granddaughter, Mirella (3 years old), was a kitty cat in her first dance recital and Kathy and I thoroughly enjoyed the performances! You've got to grab those times; these kids grow up way too fast.] I don't think we have any more conflicts with MDPA events anytime soon, so I should be OK going forward. From initial information, both events were fantastic. We made some money on the pancakes and the fly-out was surreal with fresh snow on the mountaintops and unbelievably good weather.

Well, what's been going on? If you've been to the clubhouse you'll see the new orange fence that we affectionately call the "Kiddy Korral". The fence effectively keeps the Young Eagles in a safe area during the Young Eagle fly-outs. Pat Peters and I put the fence up before the event on Saturday May 1st. The EAA local chapter split the cost of the fence with us so MDPA ended up contributing about \$100. Considering the elimination of potential prop accidents, that's a bargain!

Dave Evans and I went to Oakland Children's Hospital on Friday, April 16th, and visited with Arianna Jimenez, the young girl injured in the recent I-680 accident. We gave her a stuffed animal, some candy, and letters to both Arianna and her mother from the members of the club. It was a very low-key visit, with no press. Arianna's mom was very appreciative of our visit and we expressed MDPA's sorrow about the accident and what the family was going through. When we talked to Arianna, she cried, but was surprisingly resolute in recovering the use of her leg. She has since left the hospital and is undergoing extensive therapy, with the prognosis that she will recover the full use of her leg. Mrs. Jimenez again expressed how their family held no grudge against pilots for what happened. She and her daughter are very impressive individuals. I'll put a copy of the letters on the web site for those who are interested.

We continue to battle for the airport to remain here and open. There have been many meetings, a few missed opportunities and some successes. We'll have more on that elsewhere in the newsletter. One of the more important events was a meeting with AOPA representatives while they were in town. Roger Cohen, AOPA's new VP in charge of Community Affairs (read: keep airports open department) stressed how important it is to isolate DeSaulnier on this issue, but not to energize him with inflammatory rhetoric. Let's focus on facts from the high ground: pointed, dignified and successful!

And what's going on in May? Pradeep's Indian dinner, more airport conflict and the La Paz fly out. I can't wait for the dinner and the trip to La Paz, and am less enthusiastic about the fun of the airport conflict! However, it is a necessary part of our agenda for the time being. Fly safe and come to the dinner – it promises to be another wonderful evening of food and fun with fellow pilots. Remember to RSVP! Thanks to all the great folks who have helped make these events so successful!

Richard.

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**Articles and photographs for
the newsletter should be
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AOPA VISIT TO CONCORD

The AOPA Meeting for Northern California airport representatives, held at the Concord Sheraton, Saturday, April 24th proved very productive last . AOPA Vice President for Regional Affairs, Roger Cohen and California Regional Representative John Pfeifer met with almost 40 airport representatives, including myself and MDPA member Chris Rossi, ASN volunteer for Byron, in an intensive 4 hour working meeting.

Roger Cohen, who oversees all airport and volunteer affairs for AOPA is a new addition to the AOPA staff having started there in January. However, he brings 25 years of experience as a senior lobbyist for the airlines industry and is an avid supporter of General Aviation.



John Pfeifer, who now lives in Redding, is recently retired from the FAA where he was the Director of the San Francisco Airport District Office (ADO), the office responsible for building and administering airports in our area. Although John's main task is to monitor state legislative activities and represent AOPA with a number of committees and aviation trade organizations at the state level, his background in the technical aspects of airports will be a great asset to us in the fight to keep Buchanan Field open.

While the general focus of the meeting on Saturday was to introduce Roger and solicit ideas from the volunteers assembled on how to improve the volunteer program, Roger had a number of interesting things to say.

Roger believes that pilots are very good at talking to each other about the need to keep our airports open but not so good in sending this message to the general public. This is a message pilots need to take to heart.

In addition to the Saturday meeting the two visiting AOPA officials met privately with the members of the MDPA Political Outreach Committee, Richard Roberts, Gerry Alves, Russ Roe and myself to discuss the current situation at Concord. In addition, they met with Ellen Tauscher's staff and Concord city officials as well as having a 2 hour dinner meeting with Mark De Saulnier himself Friday night. After the ASN volunteer meeting on Saturday, John Pfeifer, Chris Rossi and I also visited the Friends of Concord chili feed on the East Ramp and had a productive conversation with that group as well.

Roger believes that De Saulnier can be beat, but he is concerned that attacking him publicly is the one thing that might make defeat of our cause possible. He believes that engaging him in public personal attacks will only energize him. Our job should be to isolate him politically — not make him a martyr. The one thing that De Saulnier WANTS is a visible "enemy." General aviation shouldn't give him that visible "enemy."

CCR staying open as an airport is an issue that should stand on its own merits without personalizing things. De Saulnier can't win this issue on that basis but we, as pilots, can lose it by resorting to cheap personal attacks.

Airport closures are the number one action priority at AOPA and during our meetings this past week Roger personally emphasized that AOPA will bring every resource to bear including direct local involvement to make sure the CCR remains open and vibrant.

I was much heartened by the activities of this past weekend. AOPA is a formidable ally in our fight to keep Concord open.

Dave Evans AOPA ASN Volunteer



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CCR CASEBOOK: TRACING THE TRASH

If you have been frequent visitor to the MDPA clubhouse the last few weeks, you might have wondered about a trailer full of trash that mysteriously appeared out of the blue one afternoon in our parking lot. And then, a week later, just as mysteriously, the trailer disappeared leaving the trash in a very unceremonious pile on the clubhouse pavement.

Finally, the same trailer (or one very similar to it) reappeared parked on Marsh Road, full of more trash with no license plate to point the finger at the identity of our mystery dumper.

After calling the sheriff to ticket the trailer on Marsh Road, the incident was reported to K. C. Coyle at the airport director's office, who was wondering what was going on himself. Bill Stockdale was assigned to the case and after spending an afternoon working through the pile of HVAC rubble, he headed off with a list of serial numbers of the various pieces and an old building permit. Bill contacted the manufacturer of the cast off parts and was able to determine that they came from the old Run Burger Run hamburger drive-through on Pacheco Blvd that has recently changed hands. Another phone call connected him with the new owner of the property who had coincidentally just replaced the old air conditioning with a brand new unit.

This new owner had hired a contractor to haul off the old equipment and dispose of it properly and was quite upset to find that his disposal service was parking it in pieces all over town. After a few moments further discussion a "sting" operation was planned and initiated. The building owner called the trash disposal guy and asked him to come by and pick up another load. But when he arrived, he was taken to the scene of the crime and given the choice of cleaning up the mess and disposing of it properly or having a further discuss with the county sheriff about the situation.

Needless to say, shortly thereafter an old pick up driven by one very sheepish individual arrived and the trash started to disappear. With any luck, by the time you read this it will all be gone. Gone where? Who knows but it isn't in our parking lot any more!

Many thanks from the MDPA to K. C. Coyle and especially Bill "Sherlock" Stockdale who was so cleverly able to trace the trash and get the problem cleaned up. We couldn't have done it without you!!



Sunset at the Airport

EAGLES & PANCAKES

The first joint Young Eagles, Historical Aircraft and Pancake Extravaganza (what would you call it?) was held last weekend on the 1st of May. MDPA and EAA cooperated to bring together these two activities in one location, the MDPA clubhouse. Although the turn out of Young Eagles was less than EAA normally expects due to no notice in the local news, the overall effect was to gather together pilots, kids who want to be pilots and the general public together to celebrate a common interest in airplanes and the people that fly them.



Helping with the pancake breakfast were Bill Seemann, our Chief Pancake Flipper, John Potter, Bills helper who mixed the batter and counseled potential Naval Academy candidates on the fly, Dave Evans, the egg scrambler, Pat Miller who knew where everything was and took photos for posterity and of course our event planner Stew Bowers who also made sure the sausages got cooked on Pat Peters' propane powered Super Grill (outside for fire safety).

Many EAA members organized the Young Eagles flights although there were almost as many airplanes as kids who wanted to fly. Total Young Eagles for the day were about 15 as compared to the normal 50 to 60 when they make the activities section of the Times. Hopefully we'll get a better turn out in June. And, of course, there were EAA hot dogs for those who don't appreciate the finer points of pancakes.

Conspicuously absent was our President Richard Roberts, who was called upon at the last minute to DRIVE to Tahoe to attend his grand-daughters' dance recital. But not being one to miss leaving his mark on the event, Richard had already done



his bit when he and Pat Peters put together our new day glow orange safety fence out of plastic



snow fence and rebar. It really came out nice and EAA contributed \$100 (half the price of the fence) toward the improvements.

And now, as Richard says, the bottom line. MDPA made \$115 on pancake breakfasts, and sold an MDPA T-shirt and a couple of bumper stickers to bring our income up to about \$130 or so. Not so shabby as pancake breakfasts go!!



So if you didn't make it this time make a point to come next time, have some pancakes, cook some hotdogs, fly some kids or just display your airplane to the adoring public. The next event will be on Saturday, June 5th. Stew is looking for volunteers to man the grills so if you can help, give him a call at 925-254-0804 or via email at stewbow@yahoo.com

April's Greek BBQ

Friday night's dinner was unbelievable! We had every seat filled, 75 RSVP'd and we had 75 people! Rob and Jean Goldman made an incredible dinner. They were cutting, chopping and mixing away from about 3:00 on. Bill Landstra, Frank Hoffman and Frank Siino did most of the BBQing with a cast of many at the end. Rob had come on Wednesday to get the meat marinating and it was amazingly good. I couldn't believe how much food this group ate; there were almost no leftovers. Then Jean just kept on going and got most of the kitchen clean. After dinner when the program started she said, "I'm exhausted and going home!" She really worked hard! Rob stayed to the end, however. For new members they have set a new standard! Our wine winner was Jon McWilliams. He was the good-looking guy pictured in the Contra Costa Times article about the Young Eagles! And through it all, Pat Miller was snapping away at the pics. Yes, he is the one responsible for the "interesting" pictures of me!



Then it was chocolate cake and ice cream for Bill Seemann's 90th birthday. We sang Happy Birthday, joked and ate until 7:30. It seemed that Mark DeSaulier was going to be a no show for yet another year, but to our surprise, in he came. Everyone wrote down questions, and after his position statement, he answered questions for about 35 minutes. We opened the floor up for verbal questions after that and he stayed until about 9:30 talking to folks one on one. I think it was good for our members to meet him face to face instead of getting everything through the media's filters. We still don't agree with him,

and he put a pilot's spin on everything (after all, he's been a politician for 14 years!), but most people were pleased that at least they had an opportunity to speak directly with him. The result of the evening was that he said he would include pilots in the review process. We'll see!

While that was going on, Bill Landstra was conducting the preflight planning session for both Soldier Meadows and the La Paz trips. A group of pilots were in the front room by the fireplace planning away. The neat thing was that we had a fantastic dinner, then two activities. Whether



you were planning the next trip (definitely something we want to focus on) or your interests were with the ongoing political struggle, we had it going on! Standing outside the door viewing both going on at the same time was a very gratifying time for me. This is what MDPA is and should be all about, lots of interesting activities going on to suit lots of different tastes, centered around flying! And not to worry, Bill stayed around to fill in the politicos who were also involved in the fly outs.

Then, of course, we had to clean up. The two Franks worked both ends, BBQing and cleanup. Ralph Foltz hit the dining room with a vengeance, and Suzie Landstra finished packing up the leftovers and cleaning the kitchen. Whew, what a night!

The bottom line? Preliminary numbers indicate a profit of about \$350 to \$400 (put into perspective, the equivalent of about 3 new members!). We got ready for the next two fly outs, and up to speed on what our elected officials have planned for our airport. All in all, a great evening.



And next month? A traditional Indian dinner prepared by Pradeep Panikar, the well known line service manager at PSA. Please remember to RSVP early. After dinner we will have a discussion led by Stew Bowers, on timely safety matters. See you then!



Pradeep Cooks Indian Style In May

The May membership meeting will feature a special Indian menu prepared by Celebrity Chef Pradeep Panikar (PSA's friendly Line Service Manager) beginning at 6 pm on Friday, May 21st at the MDPA clubhouse. Dinner will be \$10.00 per person and, as usual, advance reservations are requested so that we can accurately estimate the number of people attending.

Bring your family and friends to this special dinner event.

All those who RSVP before Wednesday, May 19th, will be entered in a drawing to be held at the dinner for a special Indian gift! To make reservations call Dave Evans at 925-685-0921 or send email with name and the number attending to dinners@mdpa.org

See the official menu on page 7. Pradeep says this is "Indian food for non-Indians" so don't worry about things being too spicy!

Looks like another winner – we've got over 20 reservations already!!

Soldier Meadows A Dude Ranch without horses!

By John Potter

Yep, cowboys and cowgirls, it was true, we didn't have any broncos to ride. Nevertheless, there were a few imported horses than came in from Reno and



then a motorcycle as well. There were 7 aircraft and 19 of us from MDPA. That is a pretty good crowd to invade this remote airstrip that is north of the area where the Burning Man Festival happens each year. There were other guests as well—all with faces that look like their beautiful horses—and very interesting people to talk to — cowboy types. Friday The night found about 5 guys skinny-dipping in the local hot mineral bath after dinner. Even though we had looked at the hole in the daylight and thought that all that flotsam didn't look too appetizing, after a beer or two and the fall of night it didn't seem too important. The coyotes put on a real show. It was hot enough to burn your feet on the bottom. What a great ranch dinner! Steaks to die for. The cook was a fellow from Peru, Mario, who could really put out a nice spread. Judith Estell was our delightful host

and made sure we behaved ourselves. She had been around long enough to tell a lot of Indian stories, well sorta. There was a pig that roamed as the ranch pet. Funny, the border collies were all locked up in a cage and the pig ran free? Go figure.

Three aircraft came Friday and the rest on Saturday morning. Of course the early birds were in another mineral pool a little further out watching them come in on final. Making the weekend trip were:

Bill Lanstra (leader)
John Potter and friend Larry Floyd
Bill Collins and Connie with Ken Whitham and Judy
Steve Wise and Diane backed up by Stew Bowers
Bob Lively and Karen
Bob Hawkins and Sandy along with Chris Helmes and Loretta
Wild Bill Ellis and Wei along with Valerie



Some made a trip up to the mine to search out gems (opals?) and such but most of the day was relaxing around the ranch getting ready to eat again.

Frankly, what was really nice was that there wasn't really a whole lot to do, so there was a lot of casual conversation among pretty informed people about our lives and world events. Of course, there was card playing and cribbage (without a board, no less!) and plenty of beer that we had all imported in. We missed all of the rest of you, of course, but not much. It was clear weather and the terrain was spectacular.

It was a fine trip and to a place only Bill Lanstra could find. Never felt so clean!

Membership On The Rise


As was announced earlier in the year, our goal for membership this year is to increase our membership from last year's figure of 82 to over 100.

With the addition of our newest member, Bennett Bibel, we are now at 88 members and growing. Bennett is a friend of Frank and Rachel Hoffmann, has attended a number of meetings this year already and apparently liked what he saw.

In addition to Bennett, the following individuals have joined or renewed their membership since March:

John Cicero	Bill Ludwig
Timothy Wilson	Peter Danto
Mark Spowart	Rick Mann
Darrell Cooper	Chris Helms

Welcome aboard one and all!!



MDPA May Dinner Indian Style a la Pradeep

Samosas (veggie pastry pockets)

Curry Chicken

Tandoori Chicken (baked with a ginger-garlic yogurt paste)

Palak Paneer (spinach and cheese cooked with exotic spices)

Masala Channe (chick peas cooked with cumin seeds
and tomatoes)

Raita (yogurt with tomatoes, onion and cucumber)

Dal (traditional Indian lentil soup)

Basmati Rice

Alphonso Mango Puree (served over vanilla ice cream)



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Blue Skies and Tailwinds To:

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