



MDPA news

May, 2006 Concord, CA 925-685-7073 Volume 33 Issue 5

Meeting Notice

Date: June 16th
Place: MDPA Clubhouse
Dinner: 6:30PM
Program: 7:00PM
Board Meeting: TBD
Next Meeting: June 16th

This is why we live in Contra Costa County



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MAY

We had one great month at MDPA. First, we had a fantastic Saturday breakfast at the clubhouse. Next we had one great dinner thanks to Greg from PSA and Maureen (used to be PSA.) The food was excellent, the clubhouse was decorated to perfection and the Margaritas flowed. Like last month we had a large (fifty or so) turn out for this almost Cinco de Mayo dinner. Lastly, MDPA went to Baja for our annual trip to La Paz. We stopped in Imperial, San Felipe, Mulehe, Loretto, La Paz and Alfonsina. The Lanstras were our host and they did a great job as usual, thank you Bill and Sue!! Just a side note, avgas is about \$3.00 in Mexico !! Are we getting screwed or what? On a boat trip we took to snorkel we saw maybe 20



MDPA Mailing Address

PO Box 273073
Concord, CA 94520

MDPA Officers**President:**

Vince Siebern 415- 897-0861
president@mdpa.org

VP Activities:

Patrick Miller 925-685-3354
activities@mdpa.org

VP Programs:

Paul Hunter 925 938-7720
programs@mdpa.org

VP Communications:

Dave Evans 925-300-6437
communications@mdpa.org

Treasurer/Membership:

John Levy 925-937-3444
treasurer@mdpa.org
membership@mdpa.org

Facilities Manager

Russ Roe
925-228-0138
facilities@mdpa.org

Secretary:

Maureen Bell
925-381-7679
secretary@mdpa.org

Director at Large:

Bob Belshe 925-376-7677
atlargo@mdpa.org

Past President:

Richard Roberts 925-939-0173
pastpres@mdpa.org

Aviation Advisory Committee

Russ Roe 925-228-0138

Safety/Maintenance:

Stewart Bowers 925-254-0804

Web / Newsletters :

Patrick Miller 925-685-3354
Dave Evans 925-300-6437
Steve Kennedy 925-370-0828
webmaster@mdpa.org

Articles and photographs for the
newsletter should be e-mailed to
newsletter@mdpa.org

pilot whales up close to the boat and all kinds of dolphins (they were wave surfing from our wake). I hooked a very large fish that got away after what seemed to be a very long fight and we both drew blood. Somehow the fishing pole took a nick out of my leg fighting the beast (it must have weighed fifty pounds.) At Loretto we saw a swordfish that was eight feet long, the man that landed it had caught five swordfish in three days!! Next time we will have to try fishing in Loretto to see if some of his luck can rub off on us.

So what's next? Fishing in Canada the last weekend of July. If you are interested in going let me know. I would sign up early because the fishing boats are filling up fast. I expect we will come back with full limits of salmon from this trip, I can taste those salmon steaks now. This is a great chance to meet other MDPA members and learn who they are. You can attend all the dinners and meet members but one trip and you will really know who you traveled with. If you can't tell I really like the trips.

This month's dinner is barbecued tri-tips with all the fixings. Richard and Kathy are hosting the dinner. Mark your calendars so you don't forget to attend this summer barbecue at MDPA. Oh, we will start to raffle off a folding motorbike and a small airplane just made for grand kids. Attend the dinner to get your tickets and find out who our benefactor is!!

Keep the blue side up
Vince

Join MDPA!

MDPA membership has many benefits, including discounts on tie-downs, fuel and services.

Dues are \$120 and should be sent to:

MDPA
PO BOX 273073
Concord, CA 94520

JUNE'S BBQ – AN ALL AMERICAN TRITIP DINNER IN HONOR OF FLAG DAY, COWBOYS AND REALLY GOOD FOOD!

- Delicious barbecued tritip roasts, finished by Pat Miller's Patented Process.
- Lots of greens, with appropriate dressings, so you can call it a complete meal.
- Crusty French bread.
- A HUGE pot of Kathy's Famous Ranch Beans. If you've never had 'um, they're a meal all by themselves. We've never been able to make enough for this event, we always run out! This year is the year!
- Real French Fries made right in front of your eyes! Pat has a dream of the perfect French fry; share with him that dream!
- All American Ice Cream with toppings for dessert.

Whoa, what a meal, this is serious food for serious eaters! We're not foolin' around! No one goes home hungry! See you there!

We departed from KCCR on May 25 for Imperial County as the first stage of our journey into MX. John Levy, his wife Beverly, Bill and Suzy Landstra's traveled in the Levy's Piper Apache. Vince Siebern, his wife Deanne and John Verhoek in their Cessna 182 RG.

After an uneventful flight to Imperial County we checked into the Best Western located at the airport. The temperature at IC was a paltry 104 degrees F; density altitude was pushing 4000ft at 45 ft. below sea level. On our descent into IC it was getting quite warm in the airplane. The consequent perspiration caused my left hearing aid to get flooded in my headset and go dead. Oh horsepucky!

For dinner we had to walk into town, which we were told was only a few blocks away, however they forgot to tell us that the blocks were a mile long. The dinner was good and we returned to the hotel well after dark. At the hotel I tried to dry out my hearing aid with the hotel hair dryer, set on low. I did not want to melt the thing, however even at the low setting I blew my hearing aid all over the place and caught it in time before it disappeared in the wash basin drain. Result? It started to come alive somewhat.

The next morning we departed for San Felipe, MX port of entry to check in with the local authorities and fuel up. Fuel at Imperial County was at \$ 4.67 a gallon. We had more than enough range to reach San Felipe where the fuel was more than a dollar less.



There was quite a bit of traffic in and around the pattern so #1 eyeball became very important. The formalities were minimal and shortly thereafter we were on our way to Mulege, Hotel Serenidad where we arrived around 14.00 hours. For you who have not been there; the runway is wide and long and consists of hard packed dirt. The hotel is at the runway end. There is a small very Spartan army post on the opposite side of the runway. The MX GI laundry and skivvies was hanging on the fence to dry. There is also a sign "Take off at South".

After checking in we immediately checked out the pool side bar and had some bebidas to cool off and have some snacks.



Afterwards we did some exploring along side the river and the beach to get used to the sights, sounds and smells. There are some smells that one eventually could get used to. People throw a lot of their trash and disposables along the road in spite of numerous signs asking not to spoil the natural environment. Our EPA folks would be in their glory and have a field day.

At night we took a one hour leisurely walk to the town to have dinner. The food was good but I was unable to identify the dressing of my shrimp salad. Strange but edible. We took a ride back with Mario Andretti our cab driver.



On Saturday after breakfast we left for La Paz. John Levy left a few minutes later and was catching up with us. Even though we were continually calling out position reports we never saw each other. Fortunately John had decided to fly at a different altitude than us to stay as he quoted "To stay away from the noisy and expensive sounds." We were able to do so for our entire journey out and back.

After having checked in with the federales at La Paz Aeropuerto (a process required at every major airport) we took a

cab to the Landstra residence in downtown La Paz. The two story residence is built in the traditional Mexican style with thick walls and allowing for a natural draft between all the rooms through out the home by way of big windows and large doors. Ventilation is augmented by way of the ceiling fans if needed. The patio outside the kitchen is very pleasant as well as the pool area. The pool area also has a small guest house.

We all had the run of the house and the bar. We really appreciate and thank the Landstra's for their hospitality and generosity.

That night we went to a genuine local open air Mexican restaurant where a friend of the Landstra's and his wife and their baby girl joined us. The food was excellent and the total tab I believe was less than \$ 60.00. John Levy's treat. Thank you John. John was so enamored with the baby that I think he was ready to adopt her. Sorry John, nice try but no cigar!

The following morning we drove for an hour to an exclusive resort for breakfast which again was very commendable. My ride to the resort was with the Landstra friend who is the security manager and also the local Mexican FAA representative of the nearby airport (Punta Pescadero). After breakfast John Levy and I got back in the gentleman's Jeep Cherokee expecting to be driven back to La Paz. Surprise; at least to me, we ended up at the airport. No facilities but a hard surface runway. Bill's Maule was tied down next to a Citation jet and a Pilatus turbo prop. We were flying back. John asked me to flip for the



copilot seat, I told him I would be very happy in the backseat and off we went. Bill flew us over the resort and some dream estates and properties along the beach before returning to La Paz.

The return from our leisurely breakfast had made us very late for our appointment with the folks who were going to take us out on the water for sightseeing and snorkeling. Lo and behold, they were still waiting for us at the beach. A small boat with an oversized outboard, loaded with soft drinks, beer and snacks and fishing poles over the side. We roared off for a bumpy ride to a nearby island. We did have a strike and it must have been a sizable fish because Vince worked up a sweat to haul it in but the line broke. So much for that.

On our way out we ran into a pod of pilot whales that was diving and snorting around our boat. What a sight! Our skipper went into the water to see if he could capture some images underwater with John Levy's underwater camera.

Then we were followed by a school of dolphins. At one time five of them abreast surfed behind us in the wake of our boat while in the distance we saw sting rays looking like big pizzas jumping out of the water. We slowed down in a number of areas to look at grottos and unique rock formations before finally arriving at our snorkeling destination, a beach close to a colony of seals.

I had never snorkeled before so for safety reasons I donned a life jacket. Properly equipped I jumped in the water and promptly filled my breathing tube with water. Out of the corner of my eye spotted the anchor line under water and made a grab for it and surfaced snorting and spitting. I did get the hang of it somewhat and was really amazed at the colorful flora and fauna under the water. I decided to get out of the water and get some more practice in shallower water or in a pool. So a short while later they kind of hauled me up into the boat like beached whale. Vince claimed to have spotted the largest lobster he had ever seen hidden partly under a rock. Wise sage Vince decided not to tempt fate and kept a safe distance.

At another gorgeous beach we stopped for a while where I practiced some more snorkeling and got the hang of it. I think most of us without saying anything disappeared between the rocks to take care of some pressing needs after having been bounced around for three hours. I am sure we all demonstratively cleaned our hands in case some body had been watching. We returned to our dock after about 5 hours + without mishap but we managed to run out of gas about half a mile from the dock.

We had dinner at a beach restaurant and watched the Sunday night cruisers along the Malecon or beach boulevard. It was like a mini Hot August night but very orderly.

The following morning we departed La Paz for Loreto to stay at the Oasis and to do some serious souvenir hunting and shopping. The Oasis is a nice place to stay with excellent amenities. They serve a drink called the sharkbite. You only need one. The size of the glass looks like a birdbath, probably for a seagull.

Loreto is a tourist shopper's paradise and has a number of historical sites. The Posada de las Flores hotel is a point of interest. As you

stand in the lobby and look at the ceiling about 30ft above, you'll find that you are looking up through the glass bottom of the hotel swimming pool. Different to say the least.

Loreto was the last stop for the Levy's. They returned to KCCR the following day. The rest of us opted to make one more overnight stop and



went to Alfonsina 70nm south of San Felipe.

Alfonsina is a beach front community of about 80 strange looking homes. The community was started by Americans who came in with campers; camp trailers etc. And over time started building their home around the vehicles they came in. There is no electricity or fresh water so everybody has to be self sufficient one way or the other. Many weird structures are build to suit the individual owners comfort level. Most of the structures have solar units to produce electricity and to charge storage batteries and converters to change the 28V DC to 115V AC. All appliances are efficient low power purpose designed units. Some places have wind generators and others small gas driven generators.

For toilet flushing they use salt water, for showers they get somewhat brackish water from a community well, for cooking they have to haul in the water in 5 gallon containers from a reverse osmosis facility located on the estate of a very rich Mexican for \$ 2.00 a jug or drive or fly out to the nearest village. The houses are built between the beach front and the 2000ft hard packed sand runway. During full moon causing a higher tide tends to partially flood the runway or make it quite soggy and unusable for a short period of time. So needless to say the houses, garages and makeshift workshops, parking and tie down places are on somewhat higher ground. At the end of the runway is a very basic 14 room 2 story 50's style hotel, and I mean basic. Adjoining the hotel structure is the cantina and eating area. The food and drink were the best we had in Mexico. If you are used to and expect luxury this may not be the place for you, but if you like to do a little bumming around you have found your niche.



On Wednesday morning it was going home time. We flew back to San Felipe to check out with the federales and to load up on cheap fuel. From there to Mexicali to check in with US customs and from there home to KCCR where we arrived at 15.00 hours.

The end of a successful and delightful journey.

Some observations:

The well-equipped Cessna 182RG we flew was for our purpose the perfect traveling machine with excellent range, good speed, economy and comfort. The only thing that I had some trouble with was looking

over the top of the panel. I am not a midget but I needed a pillow and also had to slide the seat full forward to accommodate my vision comfort level. The engine ran flawless.

During the trip I kept track of our position with my \$ 5.00 handheld GPS and compared the numbers with the nav. gear in the airplane and it matched that in accuracy. I enjoyed sitting in the front office and minding the store from time to time when Vince was occupied with some other duties.

I enjoyed becoming acquainted and friends with people I had seen a number of times before and in

passing only knew by sight and occasionally said “hi” to. Besides flying we have many things or principles of thought in common.

When Bill Landstra has a dish he really likes he becomes very pensive and quiet. He appears to intensely concentrate on savoring his food in the way he enjoys flying, playing hand ball or going to the gym. My hearing aid is healing itself and is waking up. Good deal!

To all the principals of this story: “Thank you very much for the great time.”

Johan Verhoek.

Make Your Reservations Now
For Campbell River, BC
July 26 - 31, 2006
by Vince Siebern



We'll depart Concord Thursday morning and travel to Corvallis or Eugene for brunch then on to Victoria BC arriving about 3PM. After clearing customs, we'll file a flight plan to Campbell River BC and depart. We should arrive about 40 minutes later.

Campbell River Airport (CYBL) has a Unicom and a very long and wide runway. Park on the grass because parking on the concrete costs a lot more! Victoria to Campbell is an easy flight: just keep the land on your left and the water on the right and you will run into the Campbell River. We can rent cars at the airport and the rental rates are very reasonable.

Accommodations

The Anchor Inn (800-663-7227) is a large hotel with pool, hot tub good dining and I would recommend it as your first choice. Rooms there are about \$130.00 Canadian. The Campbell River Lodge (800- 663-7212) is smaller but right on the river and a popular hotel. The Best Western Austrian Chalet (800-667-7207) is a Best Western and has a pool. If you need more hotels drop me an e-mail at president@mdpa.org and I will send you all kinds of other hotels.

Fishing Guides and Charters

West Coast Charters (250-286-1530)

Coast Island Fishing Adventures (250-923-5831)

Blue Orca Charter (250-898-4494)

Ocean Bounty (877-285-2007)

Mid Island Fishing Charters (250-923-2236)

These are not cheap (\$100 per hour per boat and a five hour minimum) but they provide all the gear and they are the only way to get to the salmon. The boats usually hold 4 so it is just \$25.00 per hour. I have one boat reserved and am trying to get two more reserved. That would be enough for 9 to 12 people. This way the first twelve will have a reserved boat after that you have to get your own boat. If you think you might want to come contact me right away so we can firm up these reservations. PLEASE NOTICE THAT THIS IS CANADIAN MONEY AND THE DOLLAR IS ABOUT 20% MORE SO IT IS NOT AS EXPENSIVE AS IT SEEMS.

If that doesn't work call Tyee Marine at 250-287-2641 or River Sportsman 250-286-1017 and ask them to recommend someone. Ask any of these charter guides if they know anyone else.

Last but not least check the web site for the Campbell River area. You can also Google Campbell River fishing and get guide and boat references.

For planning, a great web site for flying in Canada is the Pacific Flying Club. In addition, aviation weather information in Canada can be found at NavCanada.

The bottom line is let me know immediately if you want to come on this trip. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Vince.

Computer Korner

This month I want to share with you a great new FREE flight planning tool I found from Seattle Avionics. www.seattleavionics.com. They have software available for download called "Voyager". The basic free version of the software allows you to plan a flight, get weather updates, download airport information, and file your flight plan. Their goal is to have more downloads than the AOPA flight planner. The neat thing about this, is that you can then add (they mean "BUY" for a fee) additional modules. The modules will allow you to interface GPS data and XM Radio weather to give you a complete "Glass Cockpit" on a laptop computer. They not only have some really cool graphics, but they have training videos that can be downloaded for free that show all the neat stuff you can do with it. As a registered user of the FREE Voyager software, you can also download a FULLY FUNCTIONAL version of the upgraded software on a free trial basis for a period of time. Check it out, and see what you think. Will it replace the AOPA flight planner? You be the judge. Let us know here at the newsletter team, and we'll publish your review of the software.

Steve



Tel: (925) 676-2100 → Fax: (925) 676-5580 → Unicom: 122.95

Discover the Difference in Concord

Stop by and see the cool new planes online at Sterling!

Upcoming Schedule of Events
Plan your trips and RSVP NOW!!!

- June 17: **(Local)** Fried Chicken @ Los Banos. We might have good weather finally. Meet at 11:30 am in Los Banos then across the road to Ryan's for the best fried chicken around in a family style setting.
- July 27: **(Overnight)** Campbell River: July 27 Thursday, return Sunday or Monday See web site for details (and article in this newsletter). Please RSVP ASAP to Vince Siebern, president@mdpa.org if you want to go. Guides and boats are disappearing fast.
- July 22: **(Local)** Harris Ranch Brunch. Fly down and meet at Harris Ranch at 11:30 am. Beef, beef and more beef.
- August 19: **(Local)** Redding Chinese Lunch, meet at Peter Chu's Skyroom on the airport at Redding Municipal Airport at 11:30. Great food and a good flight.
- August 26: **(Day)** Chili Cookoff Pollack Pines Day Trip. Fly in to Pollack Pines Airport to attend this day long chili extravaganza from 12 pm to 4 pm. Or if you want to complete, cooking begins at 9 am. At least one MDPA entry is planned (Pat Miller).
- Sept 16: **(Local)** Half Moon Bay: Flyin to Half Moon Bay and park at the far south end of the field at 11:30 am. Then a short walk across the creek to Princeton-by-the-Sea for a great lunch at one of the many restaurants there.
- Sept 23: **(Overnight)** Ashland Or, Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Plan to fly to Medford Oregon for an overnight stay. Transportation will be provided from our hotel to the Festival in Ashland to see the Merry Wives of Windsor performed on the outdoor Elizabethan stage beginning at 8 pm. Tickets are \$57.50 per person. If you are interested in this outing please contact Pat Miller immediately so we can book our reservations at a group rate no later than June 30. After that you will be on your own to make reservations.
- Oct: **(Overnight)** Solder Meadows NV. A repeat of a very popular flight in to a historic working cattle ranch in NW Nevada. Land on the ranch's private airstrip and enjoy a weekend of relaxation featuring the local hot springs. More details as to date as we finalize this trip. RSVP now if you are interested.
- Oct 21: **(Local)** Watsonville, A scenic flight down the coast to meet at 11:30 at Zuniga's Mexican Restaurant on the field for lunch. A great day trip with good food.
- Nov 11 : **(Overnight)** Surprise Valley Hotsprings, Cedarville, CA. Fly in to Cedarville then courtesy car to the resort where each room has its own private outdoor hot tub fed by natural mineral water from the local hot springs. Messages are available and recommended. Relax in rural elegance. Rooms are limited (only 10) so
RSVPs encouraged now so we can make firm reservations
- Nov 18: **(Local)** Flyout to lunch, location TBD depending on weather. Put this date on your calendar now.

Pacific States Aviation



www.pacificstatesaviation.com

Unicom 122.95

(925) 685-4400

Mt. Diablo Pilots Association
PO Box 273073
Concord, CA 94520

Blue Skies and Tailwinds to:

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First Class Mail
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