

WINDSOCK

The Valley Soaring Association Journal

Editor: Tom Jue

VSA web site: <http://www.valleysoaring.net/>

August 2006



Doc Mayes Memorial Event on Sat, May 6, 2006

Relaxing during the evening after the day's flying. Composite photo by Tom Jue

FEATURES



Do I Continue to Rent or Should I Buy?

by Marvin McCormick

Page 4



Following Gary's Lead, Not a Good Idea!

by JJ Sinclair

Page 16



Should You Own a Sailplane?

by Cindy Donovan

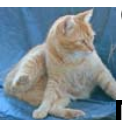
Page 5



Dad Blew Up His Wings at Montague

by Thomas W Kemp

Page 17



Going From 4 to 3

by Heather Erisey

Page 7



The Mad Pilot

by Gary E. Kemp

Page 19



VSA Honors Gary Kemp, Have Sailplane, Will Travel

by Tom Jue

Page 9



Memorable Moments with Gary Kemp

by John Seaborn

Page 23

JOIN VSA! WE WANT YOU !

The VSA membership due for the rest of this year is only \$10 and \$20 thereafter. Take advantage of this!

PAYPAL eMail your **\$10** with your name, address and phone for 2006 dues to: tkjesq-VSA@yahoo.com

US MAIL Write your check for **\$10**, payable to **VSA**. Mail it with your address, phone and email address to:

VSA, c/o Williams Soaring, 2668 Husted Rd, Williams, CA 95987

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Here at the Valley Soaring Association (VSA) we promote the sport of soaring. We fly primarily in the Sacramento Valley and provide a social framework focused at Williams Gliderport.

The VSA is here for individuals to share knowledge, enthusiasm, and first-hand accounts of soaring flights. Whether you are an experienced cross-country glider pilot or a person completely new to the sport, the VSA aims to include you, and everyone else who is interested in gliding and soaring.

Have you ever been driving home after a day at the airport or a day spent flying above your favorite locale and had a desire to communicate your thoughts and experiences with other people involved in soaring?

The Valley Soaring Association is an ideal environment to share soaring adventures – we talk about it almost as much as we fly. The VSA is literally an open forum, be it on the web pages, hangar flying, or enjoying a BBQ together.

Or perhaps your goal is to venture away from the airport on a cross-country flight, but you don't know how to get started with real cross-country flying? Members of the Valley Soaring Association include experienced cross-country mentors who can help you find a tiny thermal far, far away from the comfort of your home gliderport.

Special thanks to Tom Jue for putting this issue of the Windsock together. As you can see, we have lots of quality people who are already out here enjoying the benefits of being a part of the VSA. Come on out and join us!

Take care, and hope to share a story or a thermal with you real soon.

Sincerely,

VSA President,

Luke Ashcraft

VSA Officers



President
Luke Ashcraft



Vice President
Vacant



Treasurer
Cindy Donovan



Newsletter Editor
Tom Jue

VSA Administrators



Williams Soaring Center
Noelle & Rex Mayes



Web Master
Peter Kelly



Contributing Editor
Marvin McCormick



Mascot
Brutus

WILLIAMS SOARING CENTER

2006 Calendar of Events at Williams, CA

9/02	Race Day 12, may be cancelled due to Montague Expedition
9/16	Race Day 13
9/30	Race Day 14
10/14	Race Day 15 and the Oktoberfest
12/24	Close at Noon
12/25	Closed all day

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Letters to the Editor

We would like to hear from you, regarding our articles and stories from this issue of VSA Windsock. If you have topics you want us to cover or wish to submit an article, let us know. Email me at tkjesq-VSA@yahoo.com.

Selected feedback will be printed in the next issue under "Letters to the Editor," so be sure to include your name, city and state in your email to me.

Kenny's Corner

Kenny Price will have a special column starting with the next issue answering student's questions.

If you are new to soaring and have complex questions, be sure to send them in. You can see which questions are answered in the next issue of VSA Windsock. Title your subject line as "Kenny's Corner" and email your questions to tkjesq-VSA@yahoo.com.

JJ's Corner

JJ Sinclair will be a regular contributor. Look forward to seeing him in the next issue of VSA Windsock.

Special Thanks

A lot of people worked behind the scenes to make this issue of VSA Windsock a very special one. Special thanks to: Diana Bishey, Jim Darke, Cindy Donovan, Heather Erisey, Peter Kelly, Gary Kemp, Gary E. Kemp, Thomas W. Kemp, Noelle Mayes, Rex Mayes, Marvin McCormick, Kurt Pelto, Kenny Price, Marc Ramsey, John Seaborn, JJ Sinclair, and Tyler White. If I left your name out, the next drink's on me! What did Jim Darke do? He designed the VSA Windsock logo!

Next Issue

The next quarterly issue is scheduled to be released in November 2006.

Don't miss it!

Do I Continue to Rent? Or Should I Buy?

BY MARVIN MCCORMICK

I have often asked myself that very question. At what point is it better to buy a glider than to rent? Recently I sat down with Rex Mayes and discussed this very subject.

Monetary Commitment

As far as a monetary commitment goes, the old rule of 100 hours per year was the standard. If one flew less than 100 hours per year, it was less money out of pocket to rent than it was to buy. After all, not only do you have the initial purchase price of a glider, let's not forget about glider insurance, trailer storage, and the annual inspection, to name a few of the additional reasons the checkbook will get opened.

Insurance can range anywhere from \$800 to \$2,000 per year depending on your glider. Trailer storage at Williams is \$600 per year (\$300 if you primarily fly out of Williams), and then another \$300 for your annual inspection.

And then, there are those unforeseen expenses just like in owning a car. Now compare that to spending \$45 to \$70 per hour in rental rates, well, one has to do the math to figure out their own personal situation.

Time Commitment to Owning a Sailplane

One area I hadn't given much thought to, until discussing the subject with Rex however, was the commitment of time that will be involved with owning a glider. It is something most pilots don't give a second thought to prior to purchasing.

No longer should one expect to just run up to the gliderport, jump in the cockpit and fly a few hours, and then scoot on home. No, no, no. It's not that easy. Owning a glider will usually mean spending the entire day at the airport. The glider will not be assembled as a rental will be when you arrive at the gliderport.

You will have to get it out of the box, find someone to help put the wings on, and then assemble it for flight. Then when you are finished flying for the

day, you will have to disassemble the bird and put it away.

Chances of Cross Country Soaring is Greater

A positive note to this commitment of time however is that one will be more likely to soar cross country in their own ship versus a rental ship, because of the knowledge that there is not another pilot waiting on the ground for you to land so they can have their turn at flying the glider.

Williams Soaring Associates

There is a middle ground between renting and owning. That is the Williams Soaring Associates. A private pilot's rating is a prerequisite, and each pilot's skill level must be pre-qualified in order to join. One must also have their own renter pilot insurance policy.



There are three levels of membership, Bronze, Silver, and Gold. The cost of membership ranges from \$1,000 to \$5,000 plus \$100 to \$150 per month.

The membership includes access to any of the gliders in

the fleet, which currently consists of a Duo Discus, LS3, LS6, Discus CS, and a Pegasus.

Tows are not included in the membership. The various levels have different benefits but all include the ability to reserve the gliders in advance.

The glider will be assembled and ready to fly upon your arrival at the gliderport. See Rex for further details if you might be interested in this program.

More Than a Financial Commitment

To sum it up, making the decision to buy a glider is not only a financial commitment, but a commitment of time as well. There are many gliders sitting in trailers at Williams that are infrequently flown. Family and job commitments change and that has a trickledown effect on our recreational pleasures as well. Soaring is more than just a hobby. It is a lifestyle.

SHOULD YOU OWN A SAILPLANE?

BY CINDY DONOVAN



This is a question only you can answer. Here are some points to consider before making the dream a reality: the tangibles (cost), the positive intangibles (risk reduction, availability, and your flying goals) and the not-so-positive intangibles (maintenance and more maintenance).

The Tangibles

The costs of ownership are very real and ongoing (whether you fly it or not). It's much easier to enjoy a sailplane that isn't a threat to next month's solvency. So, do the math for the plane of your dreams, check in with your bank account and your significant other, then adjust if necessary to turn the dream into a supportable reality!

Libelle Based Example		
Capital Investment		Comments
Airframe	\$15,000	
Trailer	\$1,000	Highly variable. This is very low.
Instruments	\$3,000	Temptation to upgrade is powerful and continuous!
Tow vehicle	-----	Include the delta to convert your car/truck to a towing vehicle.
Total investment:	\$19,000	
Annual Cost		Comments
Cost of capital*	\$950	Assuming an interest rate of 5% (e.g. cost of the loan or the forgone income from the invested amount.)
Annual inspection	\$200	
Repair allocation*	\$380	Normal wear and tear. Allow 2% per year. Varies extremely by year. E.g. tires, wax, polish, ADs, etc.
Insurance*	\$650	Fee primarily based on the plane's value.
Storage	\$600	Roughly \$50 per month. Varies by gliderport.
Property Tax*	\$150	Based on assessed value of the plane and local property tax rates.
GelCoat Trust Fund*	\$800	Assuming \$8000 per refinish and a finish life of 10 years (check on the history of ship's like the one you propose to buy!)
Total Annual Cost:	\$3,730	
Cost per flying hour:	\$75	Total annual cost based on your flying hours per year. I average 50 hours.

The table above lists costs that are obvious (annual inspections), the "gotcha's" (gel coat expense) and some that remain hidden (all that money you could have made in the stock market!) Many of the costs (marked by an

*) are in direct proportion to the purchase price of the plane you are considering. Please note that a Libelle example is a "low ball" of the typical price when you walk down the row of private trailers.



Cindy Donovan On-tow

Doc Mayes Memorial held on May 14, 2005. Cindy taking off in her Libelle. Photo by Tom Jue

Still interested?

Now for the positive intangibles that I use to justify paying a premium for my flying time:

- Knowledge: I like to know where my plane has been, who flew it and what happened to it on the last flight.
- Consistency: I know my plane's quirks and messages. When I fly my Libelle, I know that it pulls to the left on rollout, I know its stall characteristics, and I know what the true (versus the book) L:D ratio.
- Convenience: Using the same ship for every flight ensures consistency on all sorts of "fit" issues. I.e. weight and balance, parachute, how I secure my water, where I stow my landout kit, etc.
- Availability: I know that a plane will be available to me on that great flying day.
- Optimization: If you are seriously into racing or record setting, you may enjoy optimizing the ship's characteristics to support your goals. E.g. special tapes, weight and balance, maintaining a slick surface, etc.

Still interested?

Here are the intangibles that aren't so much fun (depending on your definition of fun).

- Airplane repair, assembly and general preparation. An estimate of 1-2 hours on the ground for each hour of flight is typical. The more hours you fly, the better the ratio. But there is assembly/disassembly time regardless of how short

the flight! This is the real reason the private pilots arrive first and leave last.

- Trailer repair. Just go out to the trailer line anytime the spring migration starts. Tail lights, blown fuses, rotted flooring, sun rotted tires, etc. The list is endless.
- Tow vehicle configuration and maintenance.
- Truckin' down the road. Sounds good in the country western songs, but for those who haven't driven anything longer than the family sedan, there is a whole new learning curve!
- Finding crew. The FBO is your friend, but he/she sure isn't obligated to bring that trailer to you when you land out.
- Paperwork (admittedly small). Another layer of insurance, taxes, licenses, and notifications (radio, trailer, ADs, etc.) to manage throughout the year.

All that said, I truly enjoy owning my own ship. But it is a personal decision, and there are many factors that will determine what is truly right for you.

About the author: Cindy's first flying lessons were at Lagoon Valley Soaring in 1990. Two years and 100 instructor hours later, she received her private pilot's license.

With two additional years of flying the "junior" and the "mini-ASK", she opted to purchase a 201B Libelle. Her motivation was her belief that knowledge of a specific ship and consistency (same configuration/ship/habits for each flight) would enhance her safety. Her selection of the Libelle was keyed to 4 attributes: affordability, ease of assembly (only 4 connection points), promised docility in the air and it was the prettiest ship on the field (and in her opinion, still is!).

Outside of flying hours, Cindy is an innovative, pragmatic and experienced information systems disaster recovery analyst who works with corporate and institutional clients to identify, articulate and economically resolve system exposures that put their reputation at risk. As an IT consultant her clients included Charles Schwab & Co., Wells Fargo and NTT.

GOING FROM 4 TO 3

By: Heather Erisey



Amidst the VSA Congregation

Fireball licks his paw, surrounded by his pals (left to right) JJ Sinclair (left), Key Dismukes, Bob Ireland and John Kahrs as former VSA President Phil Henry (center at top) delivers his sermon. March 5, 2005. Photo by Tom Jue

On May 24, 2006 after the flying was done for the day, our favorite airport cat Fireball (a.k.a. Bob) experienced a traumatic accident. One of our pilots spotted a significant blood trail leading into the shop, as he was pulling away in his motor home. The trail was very concerning, so he got out of his vehicle and went into the shop to inform Rex. Rex found Fireball hiding in a dark corner of the shop by the paint booth in definite pain. When Rex pulled him out, there were significant open injuries to his hind leg. Ben and Nick happened to be down with their Dad at the time, and immediately took off for the house to inform Noelle they would need to take Fireball to the Vet.

Trip to the Veterinarian Hospital

Noelle called me on her way and informed me of what had happened. I asked her if she wanted my help, and after a definite yes, I had her come by my house in Colusa. I pulled Fireball out of the crate they had him in, and I confirmed to Noelle this was serious and she needed to get him some help ASAP. I asked Noelle if she would like me to come along, and after another definite yes, I jumped in the car and off we went. In route to our destination (a destination we

hadn't confirmed yet, we just headed NW.) I paged the doctor that I worked for, hoping she was on-call, and could meet us at the Hospital I intern at. Unfortunately, she didn't get my pages, and Fireball was deteriorating fast, so our only option was the emergency clinic located in Chico.

We arrived there after a very safe one hour drive, with one very critical cat, two very worried boys, an exhausted Noelle (she got the privilege of driving her suburban that for the time being served us as an ambulance.), and myself that had no shoes (because I just jumped in the car in a hurry).

Hypovolemic Shock

The initial diagnosis of Fireball was of course the obvious open injuries to the leg, but the most concerning was the amount of blood loss. Fireball was in what you call hypovolemic shock. This condition is caused by the body losing too much blood. His blood pressure was dangerously low, and his color was a shade more than white. He had probably a 5 inch in diameter hole in the side of his hind leg, exposing the muscles, and the femur which was broken in half. From the looks of the injuries the doctor said that it was picture perfect fan belt injury. We concurred that Fireball was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He was admitted to the intensive care unit at Chico Emergency Clinic, and was being treated for the hypovolemic shock and for pain. We had all decided that we need to make sure he had the strength to make it through the night before we made any further decisions.

Femur Fracture in Three Places

The four of us tucked Fireball in, and headed back for Williams. Noelle and I had discussed that in the morning I would pick Fireball up and transfer him to Milbradt Veterinary Hospital where I work in Gridley. It would be then where we would decide what we would do. Noelle and Rex are very generous pet owners and gave me the green light for treatment within reason. When I arrived to pick up Fireball the next morning, he had made a 100% turn around. We arrived at Milbradt a short time later, where more extensive diagnostics were performed. X-rays



Fireball Leaps With Only 3 Legs!
Larry Ostheimer and his son Tyler Brassett watches as Fireball, now fully recovered, leaps off the bench with all three! July 29, 2006. Photo by Tom Jue.

confirmed a definite femur fracture, but all the internal organs looked great. We decided surgery was a must. His femur was broken in 3 places and the leg muscles were severely damaged.

Going from 4 to 3

One of the biggest risks with open injuries is infection. We could tell that there was a huge amount of infection already setting in. The most important thing to Fireball was to remove all of the infected tissue to prevent a systemic infection that could potentially cause him his life. The surgical plan was to try to plate the broken bones, and remove all that infected tissue. The limb did not look to be salvageable, but the surgeon was going to give it her best shot. Once Fireball went into surgery, it was decided that there was not enough bone or muscle left to keep the limb, and the infection was so great, that in order to save Fireball’s life, the leg had to be amputated.

Road to Recovery – Almost

He spent 5 days in the intensive care unit at Milbradt Veterinary Hospital, where he was very well taken care of. I brought him back to the airport a week later and he seemed to be doing very well, resting in Rex and Noelle’s home. He was managing very well with only three legs, and moving around pretty good considering. About 4 days after being home, I noticed when I went to give him his medication that his body temperature was extremely elevated. I took his temperature, and it was 105. The first sign of infection is an elevated temperature, and 105 is pretty high. I paged the doctor and she said to bring him in

right away. So Fireball and I headed back to Gridley, where he underwent a second surgery to remove the rest of his remaining leg muscle that had now become infected also. He stayed at the hospital for a few more days, and then returned back to the airport. After the second surgery he felt much better, and was back outside moving around enjoying the sunshine.

Fully Recovered – Watch Out Field Mice!

Fireball has gotten used to only having 3 legs, and has now resumed his nature of hunting. He now visits the tules along the rice field next to the runway often. He has also resumed to the habit of bringing us his prized possessions.

Fireball is extremely, extremely lucky to be alive. Most cats would have never survived the trauma and pain that he did. He is an extremely strong cat, and fought very hard for his life.

Fireball can usually be found lounging around the picnic tables, office or shop. He is always up for companionship. He is a very special cat to all of us at Williams Soaring Center, and Rex and Noelle spent a significant amount of money to save him. Most owners would have said he wasn’t worth it, but not the Mayes! After all he is a one of a kind cat!

Rex, Noelle and staff would like to thank everyone that donated to the Fireball fund. All of your donations were greatly, greatly appreciated!!!



About the author: Heather Erisey is in the veterinarian field. She is also on the staff of WSC. Photo by Tom Jue