



# AIRFOIL

LVSC Newsletter



Las Vegas Soaring Club

March 2010

The next regular meeting of the LVSC is at 10:00AM on Saturday, April 10th, 2010!



## President's comments

Dave High  
President

### **Hello Las Vegas Soaring Club,**

First, I would like to thank everyone who has renewed or joined for 2010. Our treasury is solid and we are well prepared financially if our field washes out or we need winch repairs. To those members who join from out of state who can't come fly with us, we do appreciate your commitment to the club and hope that you can come enjoy the "fruits of your dues" so to speak at some time in 2010.

Next, I would like to talk about things that fly in the air that we (try) to control from the ground. I recently finished putting together my dream plane. I loved the Christen Eagle from the first moment I saw her. Beautify Bi-plane. A bit large for my skill set but after flying for four years I figured I knew how to handle her. I must have spent 60 hours and about \$1000.00 getting her ready to fly. It was a labor of love for me, and tolerance from my wife (since the plane sat in my living room for weeks at a time since that is the only place we have a table large enough to build a plane this size). I checked and double checked all my connections, servos and range. I **\*thought\*** I had properly checked the CG but this was my first really large plane. My initial test showed a problem with ground control and I tried to muscle it into the air. Not a good plan and I had to do minor repairs. Adding a gyro on the tail helped the ground control immensely. I also built a battery box since it was recommended rather than just velcroing my batteries to the deck of the plane. Second try, thought I was ready.

As I mentioned in my email to the club, my plane was tail heavy. Big time. The video shows it. As soon as it took off the tail dropped like a rock and it headed for the sky going straight up. Not a good situation unless you are a 3D pilot. Plus, I had ratcheted down my servo throws to keep it "calmer" in the air. Due to this, I did not have enough throw in my elevator to get the plane going in the right orientation. I was hosed from the start. The result - a very smashed plane.

What did I learn? That when you build a new plane you should probably have someone else check it out. Four eyes are better than two. I should have asked one of the others in the club who have built large planes to check my Eagle out. Ed Jennings and Marco helped with some suggestions - Ed noticed my rudder control wires were loose, Marco recommended the gyro in the tail. But I didn't ask them to check the balance and I should have. Both have built and flown large planes. The only saving grace was that the plane headed out into the desert to die. I had no control over it really, but luckily it didn't head towards any homes. What I am saying is that I should have asked for help as an inexperienced large plane flyer, and I didn't. I won't make that mistake again. Consider my story the next time you build a plane you are not familiar with. I will never get that 60 hours back and I am out some \$\$ but at least I didn't kill anyone with my mistake.

I have seen a few times at the field where a plane has been flown and the pilot has little control over it. Some have been radio glitches, others were repaired planes that got into trouble and headed towards other pilots and the pits. I had a brown out on my Stryker due to mounting the receiver too close to a CF bar and nearly hit a member when it crashed at full speed (sorry Ron). Some were pilot error or inexperience with a new plane. There have been others as I am sure you can all attest.

Some of us have informally discussed a new policy where new members will need to "prove" they can fly before being allowed to solo. Most other clubs do this for safety reasons, and some clubs will not let you fly until you buddy-box first. We were also trying to figure out if there is a way to implement a policy where "new" or "newly repaired" planes need to be checked out. Not really sure how we could implement this policy to be honest. We will discuss this plan next month at our April meeting so if you have any thoughts

on the matter, please bring them to the meeting. Our Safety Officer Marco has been putting some information together on the plan and I will email it out before the meeting, and bring copies to the field so we can discuss it.

Our hobby is inherently dangerous even though we are electric/non-powered only. We still have large things in the air that we sometimes lose control of. We have been lucky that no one has been hurt but let's think of some steps we can take to keep it that way and discuss next month.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our own Greg Clemensen for being awarded the AMA Distinguished Service Award (see the story further down in the newsletter). Greg has been a long time member of the LVSC and supporter of R/C flying in general. Be sure and congratulate him when you see him at the field.

**Next club meeting - April 10 at 9:00 AM**

Happy Flying. See you all at the field!  
Dave, President - LVSC 2010

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**Ray DiNoble**  
LSF Coordinator  
[LSF4096@yahoo.com](mailto:LSF4096@yahoo.com)



<http://www.silentflight.org>

**Receiver-to-battery switch?**

I quit using an 'on-off' switch to turn on my receivers after a faulty switch caused a crash several years ago. I simply (key word here is "simply") replaced the switch with a short connector wire from the receiver that I plug into the battery lead. Plug them together and the power is on - unplug and the power is off. Simple (that word again) and uncomplicated. The connector wire was a Futaba female connector mating to the Futaba male connector on the battery lead. The Futaba connectors are designed with a mating tang and slot such that they cannot be connected in reverse - nice feature.

Today's JR/Hitec/Airtronics connectors do NOT have this tang and slot design - you simply (that word) match the wire colors when connecting. The JR/Hitec/Airtronics MALE connectors will connect with the Futaba FEMALE connector (slotted) but the Futaba MALE connector will not connect with any other female connector due to it's 'tang'.

Why am I cautioning you about the "simply" term. Well I almost lost power to my Topaz RES last week due to the 'simple' connection. I had a Futaba male connector on my battery pack and the 'jumper' connection had a JR/Hitec female connector. Remember I already said that the JR/Hitec male connector fits into a Futaba female connector. What I didn't say - because I just didn't know this at the time was that the JR/Hitec-to-Futaba connection is not really 'tight'. Snug yes, tight no. When I checked several of my older models, I had Futaba connectors on all connections and never had a battery connection 'glitch'. When I made up the Topaz battery connection I simply (that word again) grabbed a short jumper wire I had on hand that had JR/Hitec connectors on both ends. The male end fit the receiver perfectly and the female end mated to the male Futaba battery end. I did not notice that this connection was not really 'tight'. Mr. Murphy must have been looking over my shoulder at the time!

Last Saturday I was launching and landing in rapid succession making many short flights without turning off the radio. This launching/landing, re-launching, etc. with this not too tight connection started to partially disconnect the battery/receiver causing intermittent low battery voltage to the receiver. I started to notice 'strange' spoiler behavior so I quit flying.

When I got home I noticed that the battery connection was not really tight. I tried several JR/Hitec male connectors and none were tight. I tried a Futaba male connector and it was TIGHT. I simply (that word again) replaced the JR/Hitec short wire lead with a Futaba lead and the problem went away.

I guess the moral of the story might be "Don't try to fix/replace a rather complicated system (switch) with a simple (word again) method without making sure the parts are 'really' compatible in their new job.

FYI - I have seen some guys using Deans, Sermos/PowerPole and other BIG connectors in place of switches. I wonder if they previously suffered a loose connection using simple (word again) mating connectors?

Attached photos show Futaba-to-Futaba connectors on my low-buck EZ Glider and my high-buck Topaz RES. Never too old to learn something new.

Ray



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**California Sailplane Contest.....**

There will be a mid-sized sailplane contest on Sunday April 18 in Victorville, California. It looks like about a 4 hour drive from here. Assuming a 9:00 AM first flight, the contest will probably be finished by 1:00 PM or so.

The classes to be flown are Unlimited, Two Meter, Woody and 3 channel RES. I'm going to fly RES with my blue Topaz. Several others have asked about flying in a contest away from Las Vegas. Check your calendar. If interested please get with me in the next few weeks. We can car pool or caravan.

Ray DiNoble

LVSC

( See more info from Victor Valley RV in other pages of this newsletter. Editor )

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**LVSC meeting minutes:**  
**Frank Drake - Secretary**

**The next QUARTERLY meeting is on April 10th, 2010.**

Submitted by Frank Drake, Secretary

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**From the Editor's Desk:**  
**Frank Drake**

**At the flying field.....**

**Post Mortems**

I decided to make this issue of the newsletter a safety issue. Read about Ray's experiences, Dave's and mine and with spring time coming I felt it was time again to put safety first. Winter causes complacency! You have probably heard or read by now of the beautiful Christen Eagle that Dave lost. Ultimately he found out or figured out that the plane was tail heavy from the beginning and control was totally lost. After all the hours and \$\$ spent on getting it right and then lose it is heart rendering. Others of you at the flying field may have seen my electric Vista corkscrew itself into the ground off the runway as well. Just before that I completely range checked it and made sure all the control surfaces worked properly. I

had control for a short time after launch, lost it and then got it back only to lose it again with no hope of saving the plane. It is not a pretty sight to watch a plane do what it wants no matter how you pray and move the sticks to save it. I was sure the radio was good but got my doubts again. I was using a Spektrum 2.4 Ghz too. I took it and all the pieces home to do my own post mortem. I found the problem early on. In the back of my mind I DO remember just barely tapping the rudder as I put the plane in my truck to go flying that morning. I didn't give it much thought but I should have! The servo that controls the rudder had ONE tooth broken off the smallest gear in the servo. It was ONLY one! But when I range checked the radio, they worked okay with no hint of trouble. It brought to mind my honeymoon trip in 1960.

We were driving a 1951 Chevy and in Selma, Ca. we stopped for gas. When we were done gassing the car the motor spun okay but would not start. A day later and \$86 poorer we continued on. The problem? ONE gear tooth on the fiber timing wheel was broken. The tooth space stopped just where the upper wheel would have engaged to restart the car. Once it stopped there, there was no way to restart without replacing the gear. So too that was the case in the plane. When I did the range check the space in the little gear caught the other gear enough to work even when I did a full deflection of the rudder. When I launched, it may be that the wind forces put more stress on the rudder and then caused the work of the gear to fail and also the plane.

So what is the answer for that one? When you look at the control surfaces and the push rods, think about the kind of forces we impose on the little servos. If the push rod control arm is just 3/8" and the rudder is 4", the amount of force we can place on the servo is multiplied by 5 or 6 times. Tap a surface to deflect it just a 1" or so and you have **suddenly** placed a LOT of force upon a very small and vulnerable gear. In mine the tap was hardly noticeable, TO ME! but that gear was stressed beyond it's design. For me I learned that we need to be careful NOT just at the field but getting ready to go there as well. Range checks and motor checks are only part of what we need to pay attention to. Preparation has to include the time at home when we are loading up. The time taken there to be careful MAY allow to you fly and return safely. It is such a small thing to remember but can make a big difference!

Until next month, fly safe and land happy.

Frank

**Newsletter deadline for the April issue is Apr 3rd, send submissions to: [sirdrakejr@AOL.com](mailto:sirdrakejr@AOL.com)**

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**LVSC Field Safety Officer**  
**Marco Barajas**

Frank wanted this newsletter tailored to safety. Lucky me, that's right up my alley. Fortunately for us Las Vegans, we aren't subjected to months of freezing temperatures and snow days. We're lucky enough to enjoy decent weather all year long. That being said, even though the ground hasn't frozen and we're not breaking icicles off of our noses, we should still be aware of some basic safety issues that can plague our hobby.

#### **Battery Safety- LiPo Battery Handling & Storage**

- . Keep LiPo battery packs WELL out of reach of children.
- . Do not put battery packs in pockets or bags where they can short circuit.
- . Do not store or transport or store batteries where they can come into contact with sharp or metallic objects.
- . Do not store your LiPo pack in extreme temperatures below 0C or above 50C.
- . Always store your LiPo pack in a safe and non flammable container away from flammable objects. A LiPo Sack or metal / ceramic storage container is best.
- . Always store your LiPo's partially charged. They will maintain their performance levels over time and there's no need to cycle them unless stored for periods longer than 3-6 months.
- . Ensure that batteries are fully charged before flight.

-RCHelisisite.com

#### **Aircraft Safety-**

- . Always pre-flight your aircraft before taking to the skies.
- . Dust-off all electronic equipment and check for proper function of all control surfaces.
- . Repair damaged parts prior to arriving at the field or bring your repair supplies and equipment with you.
- . NEVER fly aircraft with questionable function.

#### **Personal Safety-**

- . If you're out of practice, prepare mentally for flying. Review your skills and start off with a plane you

are comfortable with.

Have a buddy inspect your equipment at the field for unseen damage and possible equipment failure.

Get plenty of sleep the night before and come to the field refreshed.

Avoid flying by yourself. Cell coverage is limited or nonexistent at the field and your vehicle is not always visible from the highway. Let a friend or family member know when you plan on arriving at the field and when you plan to leave.

Hopefully you'll find nothing new in this article. For some, it'll be your 20<sup>th</sup> or more season. For others, it's just the first. Either way, safety should be your number 1 priority!

Fly Safe,  
Marco

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**Treasurer's Report**

Doug Bush  
Treasurer 2010

For the Treasure's report.

For January and February we have received dues for 20 members which brings total to 40 members current for 2010.

The money market account has been closed and funds placed in to our checking account.

I want let new members and remind returning members that club badges are available for \$7.00. You can look me up at the field or send a check made out to LVSC and mail it to Doug Bush 2719 chokecherry Ave. Henderson, NV 89074. Please include your name as you want it to be on the badge and address you want it mailed to.

**I will now put on my safety hat.....**

A SPRING safety tip.

Don't forget the sunscreen and hat. I did and got home with a red face. It wasn't 100+ so didn't give sunscreen a thought. **Will now.**

Doug Bush

LVSC Treasurer

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**This from Ray DiNoble:**

I just received this from Rick Pearson of Victor Valley about their April 18th glider contest. His flier is attached. So far from our club we have three guys for sure with two more probably attending. If some of the other members would want to make the drive (3 hours) but maybe not fly in the contest, we could all have a nice time seeing how a mid-size sailplane contest is run and see some of the 'hot dogs' from SoCal fly the event. At this time the plan is to leave Las Vegas about 5:00/5:30 AM, arrive in time for the pilot's meeting, fly the 3 rounds, maybe stop for lunch in Barstow if we don't grab a burger at the field and be home mid-afternoon. Think about it.

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Sent: Thursday, March 04, 2010 5:30 PM

Subject: RE: Victor Valley RC Flyers (SC)2 website flyer

Hey everybody,

It's great news that April 18th is good to go with Fresno....We're really getting geared up here in the high desert. We wouldn't want anyone to miss our event because of a conflict.

I'm arranging hot dogs and hamburgers at the field and expanding the landing zone to 8000 square feet so everyone has a shot at a clean landing. Looks now like indoor carpet will be the surface instead of my planned Sod because of a water issue with Arrowhead Lake water district. They don't want their non-potable water aerated. EGAD!!!!

Thermal conditions the last week or so have been outstanding at the field. One day I was inverted for the longest time trying to get down:-) LOL

For all of you with Garmin GPS units here is an additional coordinate for the field gate; 34:22.597N and 117:15.009W

For the rest of you, the following coordinates are published in the attached flyer which will be viewable on the (SC)2 website soon. 34:22:35.75N and 117:15:00.50W OR 34.376, -117.250

Come on all you guys a TOSS and SFVSF...Get out for some really fresh air next month and see my new field. Chris Adams, are you going to be in the area?

OH... Ray DiNoble of the Las Vegas Soaring Club is planning to attend, hopefully with some of his RC soaring friends from Vegas.

Rick - 951-240-9704

Hi Ray,

Basically Just come down HWY 15, from Las Vegas, to Main St in Hesperia. (just south of Victorville). Go east (Left) about 12 miles to where main street curves to the south right) and becomes "Lake Arrowhead Rd.". Proceed to where you see "Hesperia Lakes" on the left and go about 0.5 miles past that. You'll see the "[Victor Valley RC Flyers](#)" sign on the left. There will be a gate there. Just go through the gate about a quarter mile and you are there.

Total field length is 700 feet. However, we have decided to limit winch lines to about 500 feet. This to reduce walking distance from the winch to the landing area (about 165 feet). Two winch/retriever setups are installed.

This field is totally reversible as prevailing wind at this field is north or south depending on the day. Dual turnaround support risers are installed at both ends of the field to accommodate this.

The landing area is 100 feet long and 80 feet wide with four landing tapes spaced about 15 ft apart. The tapes are in the center of the 100 foot long pad. This arrangement allows the pad to accommodate landing from the north or south.

Round times are not finalized yet but 5 min, 8 min and 11 min rounds are probable. Ray, let me know if you have any questions at all.

Rick Ph# 951-240-9704 cell

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**Welcome this new member to the soaring club:**



**Bill Hall with his new Extra**

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**LVSC Member Receives Coveted AMA Award**

Long time Las Vegas Soaring Club member, Greg Clemensen, earned AMA's prestigious **Distinguished Service Award**.

The a wall plaque signifying the award was presented by AMA president Dave Mathewson at the 2010 Academy of Model Aviation annual convention on January 9th.

Greg joined the Las Vegas Soaring Club in January of 2003. He served the club as secretary for three years before being the 2008 administrative year. Both Greg and his father, Bob have been regular fliers on the weekends.

One of the first of many contributions to the Las Vegas Soaring Club, Greg organized the second annual All Electric Fun Fly. The following years the event which became known as SuperFly grew in popularity, attracting participants from around the world.



In November of 2005 Greg earned League of Silent Flight level I. He became an AMA Administrative Leader Member in February 2007. Greg was appointed by then AMA District X Vice President, Rich Hanson to fill the vacant Associate Vice President position. At that time there were 7 AMA clubs in Southern Nevada for which Greg was assigned to represent and report to the Vice President. That number grew to 9 as Greg helped form the Pahrump Valley Model Aviators and the first Park Pilot Club, the Vegas Aces. His Associate Vice President responsibilities increased in 2009 being assigned two clubs in Southern Utah and six in Northwest Arizona and Southern California. Greg kept his commitment to personally visit all 17 clubs during the course of the calendar year. July of last year Greg represented District X at the Executive Council Meeting in Muncie, Indiana.

**The Distinguished Service Award** is AMA's second highest award for individuals. For longtime service, voluntary in nature. Our Academy's way of thanking someone for contributions, efforts, and time spent serving and working. Executive Council approval necessary.

Greg is married to Peggy and has two step sons and two grandchildren. Greg specializes in arranging employee benefit plans, group insurance, retirement plans, and individual life & health insurance protection. He serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors. He holds the professional designation Life Underwriter Training Council Fellow.

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**Seen at the flying field.....**



**Jack Rubin with his Easy Glider**



**Mac Crockett with his new Mentor**

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