



# DOWNWIND CHASE

Official Newsletter of the Pacific Coast Aeronauts

◆ APRIL 2024 ◆

## Dues are Due

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Or Print membership form  
and send by mail

## View from the Board

by April Turner, Board Mtg Secretary

## Chomping at the bit for Spring!

Northern California has again had a wet winter. While it looked like Spring may have sprung in March, we are heading into another couple of storms at the end of the month, with fresh snow in the Sierras and another drenching in the valleys. Flying season just can't come fast enough!

When we finally do get some flyable weather, we'll have opportunities to delight children playing soccer, and irritate suburbanites by landing in cul-de-sacs. For those of us lucky enough to fly further afield, we will be accompanied in the wild by many other outdoor enthusiasts including hikers, mountain bikers and, yes, horseback riders.

Even with most manufacturers having a "quiet" setting

on the burner, flying around horses has often been tricky. Don't land in their pasture, don't fly low over the barn, don't descend too fast above them. So many don't's!

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## IMPORTANT INFO!

### CLUB MEETINGS

HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF ODD-NUMBERED MONTHS PLUS DECEMBER.

### NEXT CLUB MEETING:

**3RD MEETING  
OF 2024  
Wed. May 8  
@ 7PM PST**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BoD) MEETINGS

HELD QUARTERLY, 3RD THURSDAY

@ 7:30PM (AND AS NEEDED)

**NEXT ONE IS APRIL 18, 2024**

### MEMBERS ARE INVITED

### TO ATTEND ALL VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Current club members receive an email with a link to attend meetings for free. Dates are subject to change; in such rare cases, members are notified via email.

Please see last page for officers, committee chairs, contacts and additional club information.

## CONTACT US

Email newsletter contributions to:

PCA: [pca@pcaballoons.org](mailto:pca@pcaballoons.org)

PCA Mailing Address:  
14938 Camden Ave., Suite 76  
San Jose, CA 95124

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:  
20th of each month**

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Horses are prey animals whose fight or flight instinct generally has them running through fence lines. Their instincts are rooted in the terrestrial, where they instinctively fear big cats or even bears. Like so many people, horses do not look up!

A horse's eyes are far apart, granting panoramic awareness, but at the cost of depth perception. Horses possess monocular vision on each side, glimpsing the world independently, one side at a time. A smaller realm directly in front is their only binocular field, honed to see best where the grass rises and the earth dips. A flying machine is completely beyond the realm of even Olympic horses *who have been flown* to competitions - well tranquilized, of course!

So as our world is becoming more crowded, how can we better share space with these vision impaired creatures and their flighty, flaky owners? As a horseman and pilot, I am painfully aware that we are challenged by regulations for open space. Farm fields are becoming shopping malls, and park space is



tightening access to save the ecology. At least in Northern California there is a good likelihood for us to be in the same space. When summer starts to heat up, we are also likely to be in that space at the same time of day to take advantage of the cool morning.

As we are scouting new, or just dry places to fly, it can be helpful to take notice of riding stables, equestrian parks or even any horse associations. Riders, like the general public, know very little about hot air balloons. Unlike the public, they are riding a \$50,000+ investment that will damage itself at the slightest whim. While the attitudes of horse owners have historically been challenging, they are having to change their thinking for the very same reasons we are. There is simply less available space, and horses are having to share trails like never before. Now is the time to reach out to any equestrian groups active in the areas where you fly. You might be surprised how open they are to learning, and to finding ways to peacefully coexist.

Some of the riding groups I've spoken with have sent photos for me to share with you. It's a beautiful start to our shared future.

Soft Landings!

April Turner, Aurora Australis



Open to teens ages 13-17, the BFA Youth Program hosts 3-5 camps throughout the USA. Camps are on a first come, first serve basis and space is limited. **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY.**

If you know a teen who is interested in balloon camp, you think they might be interested – Nominate them for a PCA scholarship.

For more information you can scan the QR code to the left otherwise you can email for more information. [hsballooncampmel@gmail.com](mailto:hsballooncampmel@gmail.com)



# Escape to Nevada!

By Melanee Scarborough

What does a California hot air balloon enthusiast do when the weather in California doesn't want you to do anything with hot air balloons? You go to Nevada of course and visit friends (Karalyn Mumm and Will Vavra). Leaving Joe and Blu behind I hit the road solo with a plan to be working on balloon camp stuff through the weekend.



We did, but I also got a glow show and two flight days. Friday night, we traveled to a local church where we had 3 balloons and a basket/burner combo to delight the eager crowds of 200 or so teenagers



and their families. All of which are prime camp age. After being delayed a bit due to wind. We successfully were able to stand 3 balloons and perform dueling banjos. While still standing, teens and



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their families were encouraged to walk up to the baskets and ask questions, learn about hot air balloons and many took cards advertising balloon camp.

Saturday morning's flight plan was a change a little when south blowing winds would make for a very short flight. So, we drove north some in order to be able to get more airtime. Let me remind you I do not care to fly. Have I flown? – Yes, but it is not my favorite thing to do, and I am quite comfortable running ground operations.



The look of shock and joy on Karalyn's face when she turned to me and asked, "do you wanna fly with me?" would have been a great photo op. Her eyes lit up and a big grin followed as she radioed over to Will "guess who's gonna fly with me?" I climbed in, knees slightly shaky, palms beginning to sweat, heart pounding, deep breathing followed as we prepared to take off.

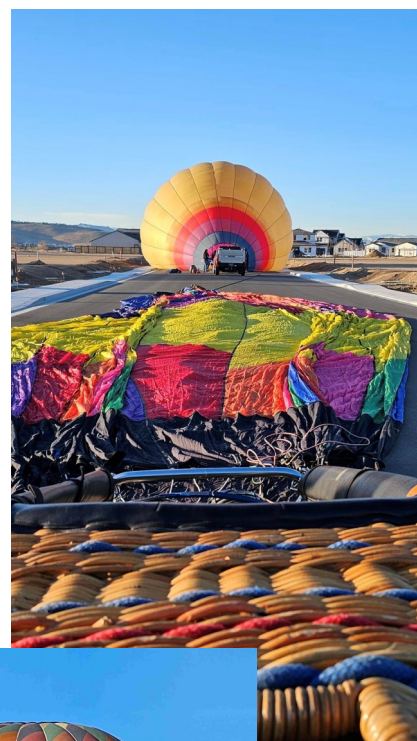
The brisk 24-degree morning was not any warmer under those burners which usually can make you warm in a blink. But the view of watching Citrus in the Sky with the snow-covered mountains and Reno in the distance was breathtaking. You know I hear a lot from the pilots in Reno that they are so lucky to live there to fly and being in the air for the first time there, I can see why.

Nervous yes, but trusting the pilot I was flying with, and playing over and over in my head

"breathe, breathe," helped keep me moderately occupied. When we landed, I climbed out and we did a tether for about an hour and half for all the little children that came out to see us.

Sunday, I was a part of the ground crew as one of our camper purchased a new to her system and took it out for the first time.

Overall, I had a great weekend – sore – because months of no balloon play makes the muscles forget what they are supposed to do. But was a great getaway with be with friends, remember why I love this sport and chalk up another hour of airtime LOL.





## View from the Editor

Greetings from South Dakota.

Spring has arrived like a lion with high winds and snow. The daffodils and tulips are up, but some were frozen in the snow and subfreezing weather. With luck we'll be in the air soon. As long as the rain doesn't turn everything to mud.

I have been watching the progress of the Reskinning of Hangar 1 at Moffett Field. So beautiful to see it almost restored. Bummer is we'll never be able to see balloons in it again. To watch the progress there's a FB page: Moffett Field which is showing it's progress which is where I found these photos.

Hope everyone will be having wonderful spring flights soon.

Soft Landings! Jeanne



## Coming Next Month

What do you do when you want a hopper? You Build it!



You pack up your crew, travel half way across the country to a special place to build it!

First comes the fabric selection, then the building begins. Trial and error happens, but as the days pass, the dream comes to it's conclusion!

FULL DETAILS in  
MAY ISSUE!



# Pacific Coast Aeronauts

## March 6, 2024 General Meeting

Submitted by Jeanne Anson, Gen. Meeting Secretary

**Call Meeting** Order by President Melanee Scarborough at 7:05

**Attendees:** Chuck Weiscoph, Jeanne Anson, Dave Wakefield, Tom Sharpee, April Turner, Melanee Scarborough, Larry Simburger, Linda Walton arrived later in the meeting

1. **Minutes: in Newsletter approved**
2. **Treasurers Report:** \$ None treasurer absent.
3. **Balloon Camp, Sierra Tahoe**—Jeanne will check with Great Grandsons
  - a. **Melanee** has some in the pipeline to write an essay ... why do you want to attend balloon camp.
  - b. 25 in the camp.
4. **Safety Seminars**
  - a. Indianola Iowa Safety Seminar: Accident Reports: Discussion of Lockhart. TX and AZ skydiver balloon accident.
  - b. Oregon Safety Seminar: Later this month
5. **Flying Reports:**
  - a. There were a couple flights in Brandon while we were in Indianola. One was a Long jump – 75 miles. The second flight pretty much stayed in Brandon the whole flight. What a difference a few hours can make.
  - b. Alan Sanderson was in Singapore for a Rally. And he'll be in CA later this spring to do annuals.
6. **Future Rallies**
  - a. Hot air for Hope in Carson NV, weekend of May 17
  - b. Dave will be doing events in the Beltway
  - c. Elko and Montague are the same weekend as they were last year.  
Elko will have a Youth Program
  - d. Fathers day in Ceres 7 balloons
  - e. Columbia Fly-In – Friday night Tether ride Father's day.
7. **Medical** -International Out of country needs medical cert.
  - a. Check box on Application for LTA Tr
  - b. British Medical is Class 2
  - c. Dave Wakefield still unable get Class 2.
8. Larry Simburger Western Region BFA Rep and wanted to introduce himself to us in the PCA.
  - a. Introduction to share BFA News and info.
  - b. Discussion about the Balloon Accident with Sky Divers in AZ.
  - c. BFA has several programs to increase membership.
  - d. WAS (Oregon Balloon Club) to expand their footprint with Sally Loflin as President
  - e. DPEs in CA- None in No. CAL, None in Washington.
  - f. Scott Wooge, Kay West will travel to do Check Rides, expenses to be paid by applicant.
  - g. Oregon DPE is John Loflin
  - h. Drone – Drone scanner will show all drones! Discussion of problems with Drones at rallies.
9. Meeting adjourned by President Melanee Scarborough at 8:20PM



# PACIFIC COAST AERONAUTS CLUB CONTACTS

## 2024 PCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CLUB OFFICERS

Names & Email Addresses	Board Term Expires at End of Year	2024 Officers
Patrick Moore <a href="mailto:pcamoore587@gmail.com">pcamoore587@gmail.com</a>	2024	Chair of BoD
Melanee Scarborough <a href="mailto:pcamelanee@gmail.com">pcamelanee@gmail.com</a>	2024	President
Tom Sharpee <a href="mailto:tomsharpee@gmail.com">tomsharpee@gmail.com</a>	Volunteer	Vice President
Linda Walton <a href="mailto:pca.lindaw@gmail.com">pca.lindaw@gmail.com</a>	2024	Treasurer
Suzanne Seiler <a href="mailto:pca.suzseiler@gmail.com">pca.suzseiler@gmail.com</a>	2025	
Jeanne Anson <a href="mailto:ansonlta2@gmail.com">ansonlta2@gmail.com</a>	2025	
April Turner <a href="mailto:pca.april@gmail.com">pca.april@gmail.com</a>	2024	
Dave Wakefield <a href="mailto:pca.dwake@gmail.com">pca.dwake@gmail.com</a>	2025	

## 2024 PCA COMMITTEES

Committee	Chairperson	Members
Newsletter	Jeanne Anson	<i>And All Members!</i>
Membership Dev. Outreach	Melanee Scarborough	TBD
Membership Dev. Communications	Dave Wakefield	TBD
Education & Training	Pat Moore April Turner	TBD
<b>Calendar Based Events</b>	<b>Not Committees</b>	<b>Start Dates</b>
<b>BFA Youth Program</b>	<b>Melanee Scarborough</b>	<b>February</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>Linda W April</b>	<b>Undetermined—July?</b>
<b>WHAMOBASS</b>	<b>Melanee Scarborough</b>	<b>May</b>
<b>Christmas Party</b>	<b>Jana Couch</b>	<b>October</b>



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## Balloon Aircraft and Equipment

*Right-click on picture captions for more details*



**Raven S-55A**



**2001 Cameron 'Shoe 90**



**TBW AX-8B—Racer**