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GULL WINGS NEWSLETTER

Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society (TPG)

AMA Charter Club 129

Website: www.torreypinesgulls.org

Editor – Dale Gottdank

Message from the President

Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from the President
- 2 Upcoming TPG Events
- 3 Thank you to our IHLGF 2026 Sponsors!
- 4 2026 IHLGF Recap
- 14 Club Meetings & Raffle
- 16 News from the Slope
- 18 Thank you to our 2026 Katie Martin Int'l Tribute Sponsors!
- 19 Celebrating a Very Important RC Anniversary at the Torrey Pines Gliderport
- 23 TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest Report
- 31 TPG History – Modeler of the Year
- 38 May Tow Hook Contest Report
- 39 Club Membership Update
- 41 Where We Fly – Panoramas
- 42 How We Compete
- 46 League of Silent Flight and TPG
- 48 How We Connect
- 53 Newsletter Submissions
- 54 Club Officers and Contact Information
- 55 Photo of the Month Contest
- 62 Quote of the Month



Chuck Norris

Hi everyone!

As I write this, the Katie Martin International Tribute is coming up quickly - June 6 is the big day, and I invite you to come out and join the festivities. It's a great excuse to come out to the Gliderport, see a bunch of cool Bob Martin classic models, and see probably the largest collection of Hobie Hawks anywhere. It's great fun, and a good chance to catch up with the sloper community.

My very first connection with the Gulls was at an RC slope racing (F3F) event at Torrey shortly after I moved to San Diego in 1990. I was a volunteer and helped out wherever I was needed. It eventually led to me getting more involved with the club, and that has continued through to today. So Torrey means a lot to me, and I love seeing these kinds of events happening.

Maybe I'll see you there!

Chuck

Photo above:

TPG Members gathered for an exciting session of slope combat at the Poway Slope (Bob Hirsch photo)

TPG June/July Events

| DATE | EVENT | COMMENTS |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| June 6 th | Katie Martin International Tribute. A day to remember and celebrate Bob's amazing wife Katie. Lots of Hobie Hawks (Katie's favorite) aloft. All RC soaring aircraft welcome, but be sure to bring out your classic Bob Martin planes too! | Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Fun Fly! |
| June 23 rd | Club Virtual Meeting | Zoom link: TPG Virtual Meeting Zoom Link |
| June 27 th | DLG Contest | Poway Flight Center Register on F3X Vault |
| July 4 th | Aerobatics Day – TWF/PNF – Jesters, Ahis, Shrikes; whatever turns on a dime | Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Fun Fly! |
| July 11 th | DLG Contest | Poway Flight Center Register on F3X Vault |
| July 12 th | F5J Contest | Poway Flight Center Register on F3X Vault when open |
| July 18 th | F5J Foamy Fun Fly | Poway Flight Center Register on F3X Vault |
| July 19 th | Tow Hook Contest F3L/F3RES – 2m & 1.5m | Encinitas Flight Center Register on F3X Vault |
| July 25 th | TPG Slope Combat Fiesta | Poway Slope Register on F3X Vault when open |

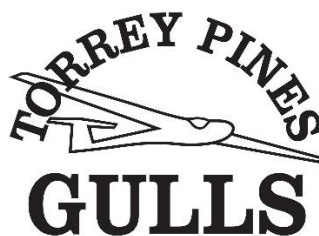


At the slope (Ray Pili photo)

Thank you again, to our IHLGF 2026 sponsors!

The 31st International Hand Launch Glider was held April 18-19. We'd like to take this opportunity to again thank our generous sponsors of this event. Click on the logos to visit their websites.

Check out the contest report from CD Mengchen Li and Co-CD Gary Fogel on the following pages, along with more of Ian Cummings' photos.



2026 IHLGF Recap – Mengchen Li, CD & Gary Fogel, Co-CD



Each year when we write this recap it quickly becomes difficult to include everything that happens at an IHLGF. There is simply too much going on. But all of that fun starts much earlier than people realize – a team of dedicated TPG volunteers starts the planning for IHLGF in Oct/Nov of the previous year and works all the way up to the time of the event. During the weeks just prior to the event there is an increasing flurry of activity – field prep, food considerations, trophies, t-shirts, marketing, sponsors, registrations, you name it. We'd like to start this year's recap by thanking all of the TPGers who help make IHLGF possible as without them there would be no need for a recap.

Our TPG President Chuck Norris served as Chairman as he has done now for the last few years. Chuck makes a great MC! Mengchen Li served as our Contest Director with assistance from Gary Fogel as Co-CD. If you didn't like the tasks, blame it on Mengchen. If you liked the tasks, blame it on Gary. Outreach for the IHLGF began early and it's always helpful for us to know which of our international and regional friends will be putting IHLGF on their calendar so that we have a solid foundation for budgeting. That effort was led by Gary Fogel and Justin Tolman. We need to get the word out about the event and our wonderful sponsors who donate amazing things that we can auction off in order to raise money for the USA F3K Team. That social media effort requires time, and Mengchen Li and Justin Tolman make it seem easy. This year we converted the stand-alone IHLGF website to a webpage within our TPG website. Doing so has many benefits going forward. Chuck Norris and Jake Olefsky helped considerably in this regard. Every event needs a budget and needs someone watching over that budget to make sure the entire event doesn't go off the rails. It requires someone to set a reasonable registration rate based on likely signups, etc.

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)

Our TPG Treasurer Don Lochhead does a super job at this and keeps everyone focused on meeting budgeted goals. We have spirited discussions during many zoom meetings about what we can and cannot do relative to budget – Don is the reason it all works out in the end fiscally. Generating sponsorship interest and donations also requires considerable effort. Someone has to reach out to hopeful sponsors, encourage their donation, receive donated materials, and prep all of that for the auction. Gary Fogel, Chuck Norris, John McNeil, Michael Gillen, and Scott McCurdy worked hard to generate those donations, make sure sponsor logos went out to social media, website, t-shirts, etc. and Don Lochhead once again ran an outstanding auction – Don makes up individual bid sheets for each item, signage thanking sponsors onsite, and serves as auctioneer. What a team!

Each year we enjoy having a different logo for the event, something unique, that goes on t-shirts, etc. Justin Tolman developed this year's artwork, Steve Condon helped get it on high quality t-shirts at a reasonable price. Justin also is the one responsible for taking the logo and arranging for trophies. It seems that the trophies are always delivered "in the nick of time." Traditionally we add two of our own TPG-esque awards. The first of these is a "middle of the pack" award which usually is a nice kit for the pilot who came all that way to, well, have an average experience. This year we gave that pilot a Dream Flight Alula arranged by Don Lochhead from the auction. We also give a "most in need of repair" award for the pilot that had the most spectacular crash during the contest. John McNeil arranges this with donations of assorted things like glues, popsicle sticks, band aids, carbon fiber, etc. as a nice kit. Thanks John!

The field looked SUPER. This was no small effort by a large number of people over a period of several months. Gophers wanted a different appearance but there was Tom Farley before each day of competition using a rake to make sure that the field was as level as it could be. Don Lochhead and many others volunteered their time and effort to mow, scrape, pick tumbleweeds, etc. over months to make sure that field was ready and appropriate for an international competition. Thank you to all of them! We also had a large clean out of our trailer at Encinitas before the event, filling it with IHLGF essentials such as tents and equipment. Ray Pili drove the trailer from Encinitas to Poway, a team of volunteers unloaded all of that and set it up on Thursday prior to the event. That team included Tom Farley, Paul Nibecker, Justin Tolman, Michael Gillen and others. Paul Nibecker also drove to Raphaels to pick up the rented chairs for our guests; Steve Condon returned them after the event.

Tom Farley, Michael Gillen, Jake Olefsky, and Paul Nibecker assisted with pilot registration. Chuck Norris and Justin Tolman assisted with scoring with John McNeil and Don Lochhead assisting with audio on the field. We made use of Tim Traver's F3X Vault for scoring as we usually do – another TPG product helping the community.

Chuck Norris was in charge of arranging for dumpsters and porta potties. Without that effort – whaddamess! Very important stuff.

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)

Photography was handled by Ian Cummings, Bob Hirsch, and Michael Gillen. Ian spent a good amount of time capturing unique images of pilots from different angles – these were shared later with everyone through RCGroups. Great job Ian! Pilot Paul Reese from Seattle also added some super photos to the RCG thread. And thank you to TPG Communications Officer Dale Gottdank for making sure the list of IHLGF sponsors is noted in the newsletter along with coverage of the event.

At each IHLGF we have lots of food needs from water to snacks, to lunches and dinners. Catering itself requires its own team and tight budget with volunteers going out to get food from a restaurant or arranging to have a food truck arrive to a wacky gated destination in Poway. This team was composed of John McNeil, Justin Tolman, Tom Farley, Paul Nibecker, Michael Gillen, and Don Lochhead. The decision to have a pizza truck return in 2026 was its own discussion for months prior to the event, requiring a search of different pizza places relative to Yelp reviews and pricing. We hope you enjoyed the pizza, because there weren't many other choices at the price we obtained. That pizza search was made by Justin Tolman and Gary Fogel.

As CD, Mengchen Li arranged for a contest jury before the event and announced them at the first pilots meeting – thank you to Ed LaCroix, Rick Jay, and Matt Nelson for serving on that jury. We're surely forgetting other parts of the organization team – and some of it is spontaneous – thank you to Kellen for using his expert tree skills to rescue a plane on Friday prior to the contest! TPG skills literally come out of the woodwork! In short, running this event in the way we currently do requires a large coordinated team working for a long time prior to and during the event. **We appreciate all their efforts and support in making this possible for the club and for our participants.** You know who you are and how much time you spent. It is appreciated! If others wish to help out next year, we welcome your efforts, as we can surely find things for you to help with; and it will be challenging for this team to continue putting in this much effort year after year without reinforcements.

The IHLGF would not be able to raise money for the USA F3K team if it weren't for our wonderful sponsors. We have many to thank for this continued support. Stream Team provided a Concept CX6. TAIR provided a TAIR Mini. Whitewings donated \$100. Dream Flight donated an Ahi and Alula. WhistlePig Toys donated \$100 and some Catbird kits. Horizon Hobby donated a RealFlight Evo Simulator and a Hobbyzone P-51D Mustang. Discount Hobby Warehouse donated a FrSky Twin X14 transmitter. Chaservo donated LV06, HV06, and DS06 servos. GliderCG donated an F3K CG scale. KST donated KST A06 servos. Hitec donated a wide assortment of servos, a charger, t-shirts, etc. The Hampton Inn provided discounted rates for hotel nights. General Atomics provided a substantial monetary donation via TPG thanks to Scott McCurdy's oversight. All these donations helped to raise \$5,500 for the USA F3K team!

Oh, wait, there was a contest too! And now you begin to see how a recap like this is so challenging...

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)



Pre-Contest photo of all participants (Ian Cummings photo)

This year we had 50 registrants representing 6 nations. Within the US we had pilots representing 8 states. Outside of California, the top 3 states with the most pilots were Washington (7), Hawaii (4), Utah (4). The contest was organized as 12 preliminary rounds with the top ten pilots carrying on to 4 flyoff rounds. Scores from the preliminaries carried over to the flyoffs as is traditional with IHLGF. This year's tasks included three rounds with 7 min windows and it felt comfortable to get in all 12 rounds.

1. Task H – 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 – Best 4 flights, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 max in any order, 10:00 window
2. Task A – Last 5:00 in 7:00 – Last flight, 5:00 Max, 7:00 window
3. Task I – Best 3 x 200s – Best 3 flights, 200s (3:20) max, 10:00 window
4. Task B2 – Last 2 x 3:00 – Last 2 flights, 3:00 max, 7:00 window
5. Task F – 3 out of 6 x 3:00 – Best 3 flights out of 6, 3:00 max, 10:00 window
6. Task L – Single Flight (6:59 max), 7:00 window
7. Task C – All Up Last Down – All up, 3 flights, 3:00 max
8. Task K – Big Ladder – 1:00, 1:30, 2:00, 2:30, 3:00 in that order
9. Task G – Best 5 x 2:00 – Best 5 flights, 2:00 Max, 10:00 window
10. Task B – Last 2 x 3:00 – Last 2 flights, 4:00 max, 10:00 window
11. Task E2 – 2020 Poker – Poker with 3 self-nominated targets, 10:00 window
12. Task N – Best flight (9:59 max), 10:00 window

The weather this year wasn't overly "Poway" and so it was possible, for instance, at the start of Saturday morning, to do well on Task H in light but steady lift. Afternoons were typically breezy. Did we use Pandora? Yup. Did we use the Mike Smith rule? Yup. Did we monitor the safety of the no-fly zone? You bet. Did participants have a lot of fun? Absolutely. At the end of the preliminaries the top ten pilots represented 5 of the 6 countries in the IHLGF, and locals Mike Smith, Jun Catacutan, and Milan Bregman.

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)

Rounds (1-10)

| # | Pilot Name | Total | Diff |
|----|--|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | 15 Roland Sommer  | 10980.92 | |
| 2 | 5 Joseph Dougherty   | 10875.12 | -105.80 |
| 3 | 28 Jon Finch   | 10863.71 | -11.41 |
| 4 | 53 ZhiGao Tang  | 10778.39 | -85.32 |
| 5 | 7 Eitan Rotbart  | 10723.91 | -54.48 |
| 6 | 31 Mike Smith   | 10595.78 | -128.13 |
| 7 | 27 Paul Reese   | 10484.56 | -111.22 |
| 8 | 43 Lex Mierop   | 10478.41 | -6.15 |
| 9 | 47 Jun Catacutan  | 10429.22 | -49.19 |
| 10 | 8 Milan Bregman   | 10386.07 | -43.15 |
















The top 10 pilots after the initial preliminary rounds. These scores carried into the flyoff

This year's flyoff tasks were much the same as last year as they are still considered by most to be the most challenging. The weather conditions became challenging as well. The first flyoff task was Huge Ladder. Not everyone made their first 3 min flight; no one made the 5 min flight and for the 7-minute requirement, the longest flight made was only a 2:03! (And these were the top pilots???) Conditions were just that difficult. The cycle improved for the second flyoff round – two flights, 5 min max, and all but two pilots nearly got the full time. After a short break, the third flyoff round was 15-minute poker. Two pilots managed to nearly get all of the max 15 minutes. Rollo Sommer had an accumulated time of 14:36 and the second most was 9:31.8. This basically secured Rollo's championship. The fourth and final flyoff round – single flight – didn't do much to change the standings. A few pilots launched at the buzzer but no one was able to make the full time. One of these pilots, Joe Dougherty, had a very low and deep save and looked like he was on his way to a 9:59. However, once up in the gaggle he started flying someone's else's plane and before he realized what was going on his plane was low again. He eventually landed out for a zero.

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)

Flyoff Overall Standings

Flyoff #1 Rounds (4)

| # | Pilot Name | Total | Diff | Completed Rounds (No Drops In Effect) | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | | | Round 13 | Round 14 | Round 15 | Round 16 |
| 1 | 15 Roland Sommer  | 14781.31 | | 897.64 | 996.49 | 1000 | 906.26 |
| 2 | 7 Eitan Rotbart  | 14196.65 | -584.66 | 909.65 | 997.32 | 652.52 | 913.25 |
| 3 | 28 Jon Finch   | 13983.32 | -213.33 | 947.90 | 988.45 | 410.82 | 772.44 |
| 4 | 31 Mike Smith   | 13566.96 | -416.36 | 632.68 | 996.15 | 342.35 | 1000 |
| 5 | 47 Jun Catacutan  | 13452.76 | -114.20 | 885.02 | 1000 | 479.29 | 659.23 |
| 6 | 27 Paul Reese   | 13005.98 | -446.78 | 550.88 | 999.16 | 136.94 | 834.44 |
| 7 | 53 ZhiGao Tang  | 12978.97 | -27.01 | 366.30 | 762.72 | 410.82 | 660.74 |
| 8 | 5 Joseph Dougherty   | 12924.80 | -54.17 | 1000 | 998.33 | 51.35 | 0.00 |
| 9 | 8 Milan Bregman   | 12871.75 | -53.05 | 366.30 | 995.65 | 410.82 | 712.91 |
| 10 | 43 Lex Mierop   | 11965.81 | -905.94 | 586.49 | 570.95 | 205.41 | 124.55 |

Final standings for 2026 IHLGF

After the flyoffs we had our trophy ceremony. Lawrence Doan earned the “middle of the pack” award. John Armstrong earned the “most in need of repair” award. The top pilot in the motorized class was Chris Bloom. It was a foregone conclusion – there was only one registrant in motorized class. (We need more of you F5K folks to sign up next time!) William Lalla earned the top junior trophy. Mike Smith earned the top eagle pilot over 60 years old. The top 10 as shown above were all given nice trophies with a hearty congratulations to the top three Jon Finch, Eitan Rotbart and Roland Sommer for third through first respectively! This was Rollo's third IHLGF championship; his first since 2019.

A few event photos are on the following pages.

Additional event photos and stories can be found on the event thread at:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4814873-IHLGF-2026-April-18-19-in-Poway-California>

We look forward to seeing you at the 32nd International Hand Launch Glider Festival in 2027!

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)



IHLGF champion Rollo Sommer launching his Concept CX6 (Ian Cummings photo)



Mengchen Li timing for ZhiGao Tang from China (Ian Cummings photo)

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)



Paul Reese getting ready for a quickturn (Ian Cummings photo)



Launching during one of the rounds (Ian Cummings photo)

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)



Poway never ceases to amaze. (Ian Cummings photo)



We are so fortunate to have this field. (Ian Cummings photo)

2026 IHLGF Recap (continued)



Top three pilots: Jon Finch (left), Rollo Sommer (center), Eitan Rotbart (right) (Ian Cummings photo)



Flyoff pilots after a hard 2 days of work. Great job to all of them! (Ian Cummings photo)

Club Meetings

The Torrey Pines Gulls hosts bi-monthly club meetings virtually via Zoom. It's easy to use Zoom, join in the fun, chat with others; and we typically have a presentation about a topic in RC soaring or something aviation related and a **chance to win a great raffle prize (see next page)**.

At our last virtual meeting, in April, we were joined by three outstanding aerospace engineering students from SDSU for a review of their structural analysis and modification of the Yellow Jacket 2M RC glider for the FAI F3L competition class. They discussed the transition from a baseline kit to an optimized platform using computer-aided design modifications, computational fluid dynamics, and finite element analysis to evaluate critical flight scenarios. They reviewed their decision-making process aimed at increasing efficiency in the performance of the Yellow Jacket and shared insights from the construction process preparation for flight testing and competition. Thank you, Daniel, Amelia and Blake!

About 30 TPG members attended the meeting and Paul Nibecker was the lucky winner of the raffle prize, an E-flite Night Radian 2.0m PNP powered RC glider.

Our next club meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 7:00pm PDT. You can be sure we'll have a fascinating presentation and as always, a time to touch base with flying buddies and friends. The Zoom link will be shared with the club via discord and Google Groups prior to each meeting. It also appears on the Upcoming TPG Events list in the Newsletter.

And speaking of our **next club meeting**, we're really looking forward to seeing our guest presenter, Aerospace Engineer **Dr. Jeffrey Sinsay**, who will be covering his activities involving eVTOL (Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing) flight; i.e., human-carrying drones, air taxis, etc.

Dr. Sinsay is Chief Engineer and Co-Founder of Aeronautic Concepts, LLC; Aerospace Engineer for U.S. Army DEVCOM Aviation & Missile Center; as well as a lecturer at Stanford University. Here's a little more about Dr. Sinsay:



Aircraft conceptual designer, specializing in rotorcraft design for U.S. Army. Experienced applying aircraft conceptual design practices in the development of aircraft system specifications, aircraft concepts and software tools for rotorcraft design including vehicle optimization and rotor aeromechanics. Routinely use CFD, comprehensive analysis and other aeromechanical software tools to calculate and analyze rotor performance, loads and stability. Hands-on experience with DoD R&D and acquisition processes; having acted as vehicle design subject matter expert in various Army and DARPA projects.

Club Meetings (continued)

...from Raffle Chairman, Michael Gillen

The Torrey Pines Gulls is happy to announce the return of raffles at the bi-monthly Club Meeting.

Because the meetings are not in-person, we will be using the F3X Vault to coordinate selling raffle tickets, with the winner drawn at the end of the Club Meeting.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT at the drawing (logged in to the meeting) **TO WIN.**

A link to the meeting has been set up on F3X Vault:
“TPG Club Virtual Meeting Via Zoom” for buying raffle tickets.

https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4407&tab=0

When you register for that event, you will have the opportunity to make a “Donation,” which will buy you raffle tickets. One \$5 donation will buy two raffle tickets; no limit.

There will be a raffle sales cutoff during the Club Meeting, which will be announced during the meeting. Typically, the cutoff will occur just before the guest speaker begins. Just before the end of the meeting, we will draw the raffle winner.

The prize for the upcoming raffle is a Dream-Flight Ahi...EPO foam aerobatic sloper kit
(needs receiver, 4 servos and battery)

Good luck!

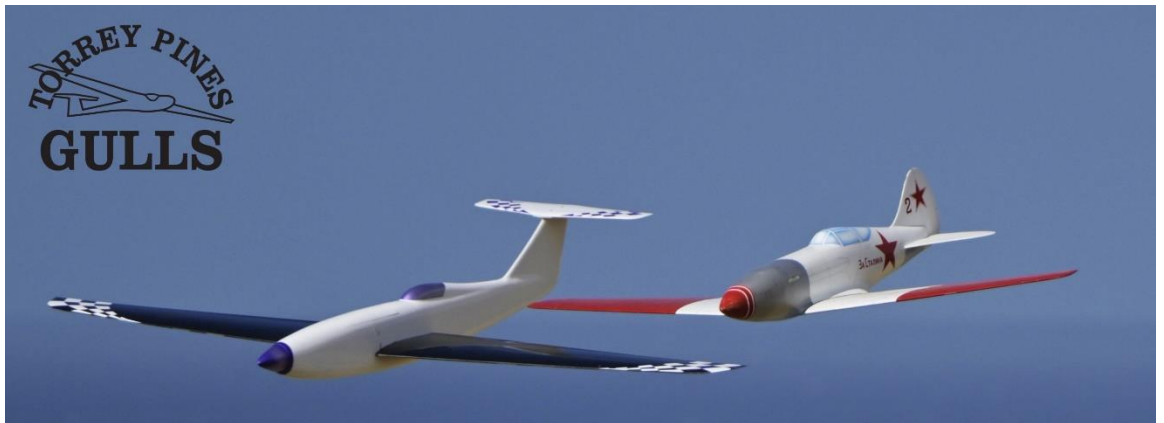


Deam-Flight Ahi – click on picture for product link

News from the Slope – Bret Locke, Slope Coordinator



Bret Locke



Onshore Slope Winds for the Duration!

Typical onshore flow has created consistent winds for ideal slope conditions at San Diego flying sites. Overcast conditions have become the norm for the morning hours; usually breaking up for sunny afternoons. The RC Landing Area at Torrey Pines Gliderport is in fair condition and providing adequate area for long soft landings. Last weekend, many TPG members provided support in manicuring the Torrey Pines Gliderport RC Pit Area. All your efforts are greatly appreciated, and we are thankful that support is ready, willing and able at a moment's notice. Many Thanks! TPG scheduled events for the slope continue into the summer of 2026.

May 2nd, the TPG-AIAA Foamboard RC Glider Contest was a great success with college students and TPG Volunteers competing. Students from UCSD and SDSU compete by designing and constructing a glider from foamboard followed by a timed flight by a TPG volunteer mentor. The first student group to complete the 10-minute flight task was the winner! Competition was fierce with only one minute separating first and second place. Check out Gary Fogel's event recap later in this newsletter.

May 9th, the Torrey Pines Gliderport Slope Foamy Fun Fly happened, with good flying conditions and great attendance.

Upcoming Events

June 6th, the 14th Annual Katie Martin International Tribute (KMIT) will be held at the Torrey Pines Gliderport. The KMIT is our club's largest sloping event, drawing participants from near and far. As usual, there will be a plethora of old school gliders; a raffle of many valuable items to raise funds for the American Heart Association in Katie's honor; and t-shirts available for purchase to commemorate this event. This is also the 52nd anniversary of the introduction of the Hobie Hawk sailplane, Katie's favorite. There will be plenty of those at the event as well soaring gracefully over the Gliderport. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

Enjoy our excellent slope soaring conditions!

Sincerely,

Bret Locke

News from the Slope (continued)

SAFETY ALERT:

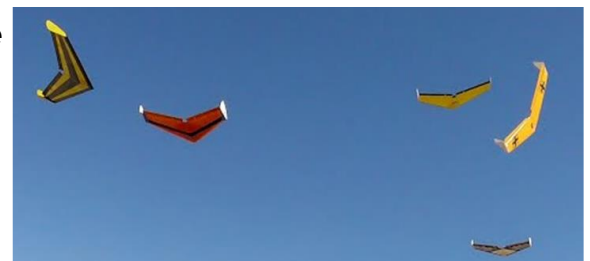
Our most effective safety practice is the Blue-Sky Rule; your depth perception cannot be trusted; Maintain Situational Awareness; and fly with a spotter if feeling overwhelmed by your plane or by paraglider traffic. In uncomfortable situations (i.e. numerous paragliders in the R/C window), landing is always a great option. If warranted, politely ask the Gliderport flight director to help clear the RC window.

TPG Gliderport Schedule for 2026

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| June 6 th | 14 th Annual Katie Martin International Tribute. A day to remember and celebrate Bob's amazing wife Katie. Lots of Hobie Hawks (Katie's favorite) aloft. All RC soaring aircraft welcome, but be sure to bring out your classic Bob Martin planes too! |
| July 4 th | Aerobatics Day – TWF/PNF – Jesters, Ahis, Shrikes; whatever turns on a dime |
| August 8 th | Fly 'n Swap Again! – A day to fly and swap meet. Clean out your garages and make room for more birds |
| September 5 th | Old School Vintage Classic Woodies Again! – Balsa BOTs, Olys, Sagittas – whatever is built-up wood |
| October 17 th | UCSD/TPG Buddy Box & Skilled Pilots Mentorship Day |
| October 18 th | Redman Rules Contest – Ribbons for 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd . For the uninitiated, Redman Rules involve beer can bowling and limbo line. |
| December 5 th | No Shopping Saturday – A week or so after Thanksgiving to get out of the house |

Also, keep an eye out for details on our next Poway Slope Combat session.

The next event of 2026 is scheduled for July 25th, 2026



Thank you to our 2026 Katie Martin Int'l Tribute Sponsors!

The 14th Annual Katie Martin International Tribute will be held on Saturday, June 6th. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our generous sponsors of this event. Click on the logos to visit their websites.

The logo for CHASERVO, featuring the word "CHASERVO" in a bold, red, italicized sans-serif font.The logo for DISCOUNT HOBBY WAREHOUSE, with "DISCOUNT" in white on a blue background, "HOBBY" in red, and "WAREHOUSE" in white on a blue background.The logo for dream-flight, featuring a stylized black and white graphic of a wing or bird in flight above the text "dream-flight" in a lowercase, italicized sans-serif font.The logo for HITEC, featuring a red swoosh above the word "HITEC" in a bold, italicized sans-serif font.The logo for MR.MPX, featuring the text "MR.MPX" in a bold, black, sans-serif font inside a yellow rounded rectangle with a black border.The logo for TORREY PINES GULLS, featuring a stylized white gull in flight above the text "TORREY PINES" in an arc and "GULLS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font below it.The logo for AMA ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS, featuring a stylized blue winged figure above the text "AMA" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font and "ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

Celebrating a Very Important RC Anniversary at the Torrey Pines Gliderport – Gary Fogel

By the early-to-mid 1950s, the Torrey Pines Gliderport was already established as a capital of soaring. The annual Pacific Coast Midwinter Soaring Championships drew manned sailplane competitors from around the nation to compete in February along the cliffs in front of thousands of spectators. All of this was only 25 years after Charles Lindbergh's first use of the lift for soaring at Torrey in February of 1930 and after the difficulties of World War II which saw the entire area converted into US Army Camp Callan for training.

The community of manned sailplane pilots included many who excelled at amateur radio. These "ham" operators would assist with communications from ground to sailplane, or between sailplanes, or for crowd control. While radio-controlled (RC) gliding had already been invented in the 1930s on the east coast, the use of RC in models was still quite new even after WWII but gained in popularity in the 1950s. And while those early attempts in the 1930s were typically (somewhat) controlled glides down hills, only few had actually soared with RC – launching and then using the updrafts to gain altitude and remain aloft just like their larger manned counterparts.

By the early-to-mid 1950s, the ham operators involved with the Associated Glider Clubs of Southern California wondered if it would be possible to install RC gear into a free flight glider and fly it off the cliffs at Torrey Pines. We aren't sure of who was the first to do this but it likely would have happened in 1954 or 1955. Others in the area were also making similar experiments at Palos Verdes; it seemed natural to also try them at Torrey.

In January 1952, Dr. Walter Good in the USA set a new FAI World Record for RC slope soaring of about 40 minutes. That may not seem much today but remember that models in the 1950s were controlled by "bang-bang" systems that deflected the rudder either full left or full right, not proportionally controlled to the stick movement as we have today. Additionally, these planes were single channel – rudder only – and thus the elevator needed to be pre-set before takeoff for level flight and then could not be changed again. (Next time you are slope soaring try not using the elevator at all and see if you last 40 minutes). This mark was soon eclipsed by Frank Bethwaite of New Zealand with the first flight over 1 hour. This achievement was rather quickly surpassed by a modeler in the United Kingdom and then a modeler in Russia. Bethwaite reclaimed the world record with a flight of 2 hours and 5 seconds in May of 1955. He then pushed it to 3 hours and 28 minutes on April 17, 1955, a mark which stood at the time that people in southern California began playing with RC gliders and began wondering how long of a flight could be made using the superior lift at Torrey Pines.

One of these gentlemen was Dr. Bob Chase. Dr. Chase and friend Virgil "Don" Cone became interested in free flight gliders in 1954 with a model airplane club in Pasadena. In the summer of 1955 this changed, and both men expressed great interest in breaking the FAI world record for RC soaring duration. Don focused on the receiver and on-board equipment while Dr. Chase focused on building the model and gathering sufficient flying experience. Through many, many tests in simulated conditions, and despite leaving Pasadena for Palo Alto, Don arrived at the solution of a 3-tube receiver in March of 1956, with a geared escapement for the rudder control

Celebrating a Very Important RC Anniversary (continued)

(a wound rubber band of sufficient length to move the control system as many times as needed in a flight). This passed a bench test of 31 hours and 25 minutes of continuous operation with the escapement having provided 2125 revolutions (or actuations of what would be a rudder).

Bob meanwhile, constructed a series of RC model gliders, test flying them at Palos Verdes at Torrey Pines, practicing several times a week, and building up his experience. Others had been flying RC gliders at Palos Verdes since at least 1953. Bob arrived at a set of five gliders, each set for different wind conditions from 3 mph to 35 mph. By summer of 1956 they were ready to make their world record attempt and they chose Torrey Pines for its wide-open spaces and copious amounts of lift.

On Saturday July 7, 1956, Dr. Chase arrived at Torrey with three of his five RC gliders. Two of these three had an 11 oz. wing loading, the other, designed for penetration in heavier wind, had a 14 oz. wing loading. The conditions of the day dictated flying the 11 oz. wing loading models. These differed considerably in their shape. One of the two flew faster, this design looked similar to an all-metal Kerns-Maxey V-tail manned sailplane “Jenny Mae” designed by Frank Kerns and Lyle Maxey flown in many competitions by Lyle Maxey of Playa Del Rey. The slower of the two had a conventional tail with polyhedral and a mock canopy for good looks. On the day of these attempts, Bob Chase flew the slower ship with a wingspan of 96 inches and total weight of 38oz. while Don Cone flew the faster one.

Ed Phillips assisted with all of the required radio equipment. Ed had a master's degree in Electrical Engineering from Caltech and was employed by Hughes Aircraft in the Radar Development Section. Hard to find a better guy for the job. He developed transmitters operating on 27MHz that were housed in a cabinet powered by a car battery. This equipment was checked at the field for transmission range with and without the antenna. The system even kept track of the number of rudder commands so that each pilot would know how many turns of the rubber escapement remained before, well, free flight took command. During the flights Ed continuously monitored the batteries for dielectric strength, no stone was left unturned.

A log of the events that transpired that day was later reported in American Modeler magazine for December 1956. Paraphrased here it is worth reviewing.

0600: Up and prepping for Torrey

0710: Leave for Torrey

0930: Arrive at Torrey, others from the team also arrive including Russ Johnson and his wife

1000: Dr. Bob Chase and his wife arrive at Torrey, Don and Ed Phillips soon thereafter.

1025: Equipment checkout started

1045: Checkout complete

1051: Bob Chase launches Don Cone's RC glider

1053: Russ Johnson launches Bob Chase's RC glider

1154: Wind shifts 30 degrees, lift decreases, Don Cone's glider lands while Bob Chase continues

1201: Wind returns back to normal direction, lift increases and Bob's glider is now 250 feet above the cliff edge

1210: Changed batteries on transmitter

Celebrating a Very Important RC Anniversary (continued)

1223: US Coast Guard helicopter approaches along the coastline on patrol, swings out to sea after observing RC glider (even back in 1956 there was traffic!!)

1225: Don Cone relaunches for fun

1230: Lunch served by Mrs. Chase – potato salad, eggs, chips, pickles, sandwiches, and Coke

1657: Cone lands for a second time as lift decreases, Chase fights to retain altitude

1915: Chase scouts for place to land with the rest of the team applying body English to help keep the plane up with every turn

1927: Chase lands; 8 hours, 34 minutes, 21 seconds

1951: Model is examined and it was determined that there was sufficient escapement and battery for another 8 hours of flight “but the wind and the human body just couldn’t do it anymore”

2030: Model is packed for return trip home

2245: Arrive home

The AMA and FAI paperwork were submitted thereafter and the world record for RC soaring endurance once again returned to the USA. This record remained in place for years.

Frank Bethwaite of New Zealand became a commercial airline pilot for Tasman Airways (Air New Zealand) and served as meteorologist for the Australian sailing team at the 1976 Summer Olympics. Bethwaite is regarded internationally as one of the originators of high-performance sailing, especially solid low drag wings on the sides of sailboats. His sons have continued the family tradition of sailing.

Dr. Bob Chase continued in soaring. He started the Chase-Sisley C100-S project in 1962 to build an aircraft from wood, Styrofoam, aluminum and fiberglass. Only one C100-S sailplane was ever built, in 1968, with a max glide of 38:1.

Many years later, in December 1968, when the Soaring Achievement Program of the League of Soaring Flight was established, a committee of Le Gray, Duane Myer, Keith Brewster, and Scott Christensen began thinking about the requirements for five increasingly difficult levels of achievement. Their divisions of difficulty across thermal duration, slope duration, landing tasks, cross-country soaring, and competitions was truly an amazingly well-thought out set of experiences for personal growth. LSF Level V requires an 8-hour slope duration flight, what has become known colloquially as the “bladder test.” Over 130 pilots have completed Level V and this 8-hour slope burden. However, the first to achieve that task was Dr. Bob Chase, flying a single channel polyhedral glider in the lift at Torrey Pines 12 years prior to the start of the program.

Dr. Chase’s world record was likely not the first RC flight at Torrey – there are accounts of flights going back to 1954. However, his was surely the most important early flight – it set the stage for Torrey Pines to become a capital of RC soaring in addition to manned soaring. His flight, and the many other important accomplishments that happened in RC soaring at Torrey over the decades are a central reason why the Torrey Pines Gliderport was selected as America’s first National Aeromodeling Historic Landmark in the National Aeromodeling Heritage Program in 2003.

Celebrating a Very Important RC Anniversary (continued)

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David Hatfield photo

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest – Gary Fogel, CD

On May 2, 2026 we held a fun “design, build, and fly” equivalent at the Torrey Pines Gliderport with students from San Diego State University (SDSU) and UC San Diego (UCSD). This event was in coordination with the local San Diego Section of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) and the local AIAA chapters at SDSU and UCSD as well as their AIAA Design Build and Fly teams. Each year, AIAA holds a large international competition for college students to design, build, and fly RC aircraft – the competition takes place typically in late April. Our TPG-AIAA event is designed to be after this, to allow teams that have worked hard since the fall to enjoy a fun low-pressure event and introduces them to RC soaring. We scheduled the event for May 2 well in advance but did not realize until the week prior to the event that UCSD has its Sun God Festival on the same weekend. That conflict likely contributed to an unfortunately low turnout from UCSD.

Five TPG mentors volunteered to assist with the effort; Ian Cummings, Eric Zanutto, John McNeil, Chuck Norris, and Gary Fogel. Mentors began arriving at Torrey around 8:20am for set up. It's unusual to arrive at Torrey at that early hour! Around 9:00am we had a pilot's meeting to review the activity. Four teams of students were provided with: 2 sheets of white foamboard, 1 sheet of black foamboard, 1 roll of strapping tape, 2 popsicle sticks, bamboo skewers, and rubber bands. No glue. Mentors brought folding tables, cutting devices, transmitters, receivers, and servos. Three of the four teams were composed of five students each from SDSU. The fourth team was composed of three UCSD students with initial help from Yoichiro Tobita, a SDSU aerospace engineering master's degree student.



Pilots meeting (Chuck Norris photo)

Each team was provided with the goal of being the first team to soar an RC glider off the cliff for more than 10 minutes with a safe landing on top. (No shed parts). A more important goal was to have fun and learn. Teams went to work right away with mentor oversight. Gary Fogel moved between teams to provide encouragement and try to keep teams aware of where they were relative to progress. (When one team would fall behind, Gary would come up and say “you’ve got to get going with building quickly!” and light a fire...)

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)



Projects underway (Ian Cummings photo)

Only three students attended both this and last year's event, so for most it was a brand-new experience. Some teams came armed with their own design ideas even before the event started. Other teams were designing from the outside and even making their drawings on the foam that would later be a part of the plane. By 9:45am triangular fuselages started to take shape. By 10:30am teams were working on tail assemblies and wings. All teams chose conventional designs except for the UCSD team, which had a low wing short-coupled design. Despite John McNeil's best efforts in a quick demo during the pilots meeting, no team tried a flying wing.

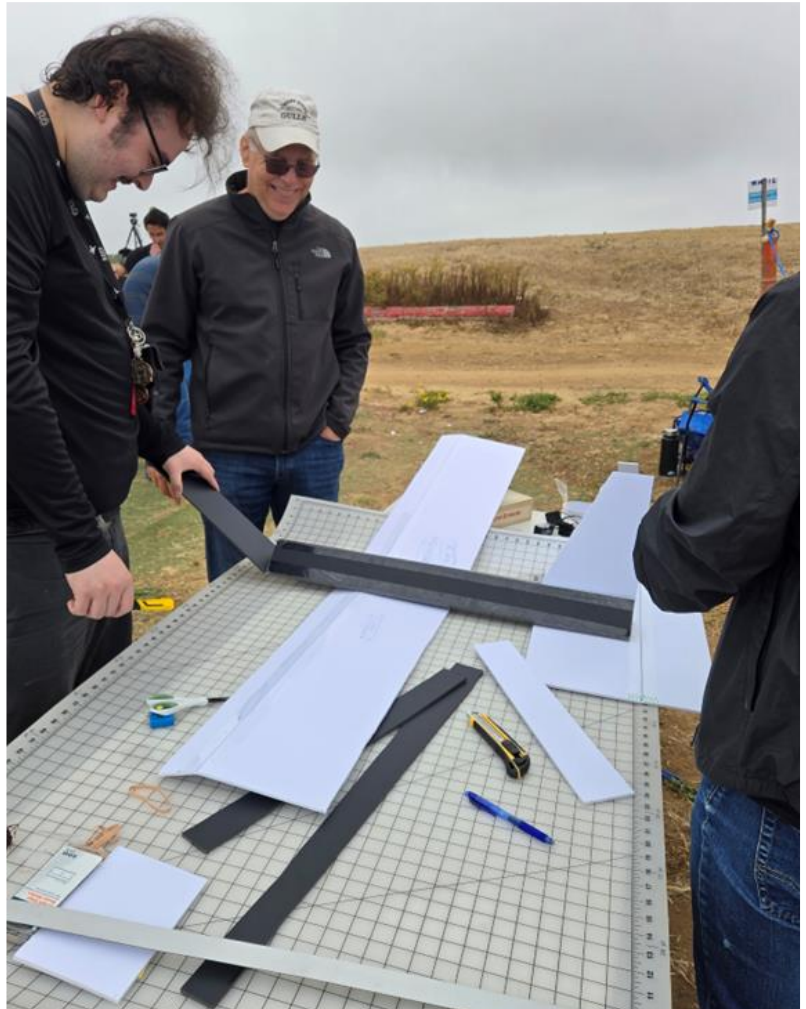


Contestants on Ian's team get started with design. (Gary Fogel photo)

Eric Zanutto's "Torrey Termites" team was first to get a fully functional aircraft, heading back to the top of the hill for test flights at around 11:40am in a fresh breeze of 7-10kts out of the NW. John McNeil's "Osprey" team was second with a full aircraft for testing. While the Termites were working on some mods and then test flying again, John led the Osprey on a very quick test flight before making a mad dash for the RC mound and throwing the plane off at roughly 11:50am as the first to try for 10 minutes.

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)

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Members of Chuck's team came up with a low wing design – if you look closely, you'll see the initial sketches for the glider on the wing before it was cut out... (Gary Fogel photo)

The difference in efficiency was quite noticeable. Yet, both teams kept soaring and were soon joined by a Ian Cummings' team which had a very stable polyhedral floater with a large chord and long fuselage. Once trimmed, Ian could take his hands off the glider and it was soaring without any issues. Soon the timer read 9 min on John's flight. He was still scratching for lift during a down cycle. PGs were in the window and John did his best to avoid. One avoidance maneuver had him behind the edge in front of the RC mound dabbling with the rotor. As he eased the plane forward to get back over the edge, lower and lower he sank and at 9 min 20 seconds the plane came face to face with one of the orange cones right on the edge, missing it by inches and continuing on in the lift to eventual glory. John landed at 12:02pm on a path near the bowl area with no damage. Winners! Eric landed the Termites plane next. The fourth and final team, UCSD, launched their low wing design from near the cliff edge. It lacked a sufficient spar and the wing folded on launch. But test pilot Chuck Norris was able to get it down in one piece near the top and so after a quick rescue and additional supporting structure above and below the wing at the root, they too launched and were soon soaring above Torrey. All four teams eventually had successful flights.

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)



Eric Zanutto's team getting ready for test flights on a nearly finished product.



Ian's team finalizing their conventional polyhedral design.

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)



We had a pilots meeting to recap and declare Team Osprey as the winner. They received an RTF FliteTest Simple Soarer. SDSU makes it two years in a row with their win. Students and mentors both look forward to repeat performances in this fun format. Perhaps we should also try it as an event for TPG non-student members!

Some post-event comments from the mentors:

Ian Cummings

I had a great time as a mentor for the SDSU / UCSD Build and Fly Competition. It was very cool to see these students work so well together as a team, a quality that will be a great asset when they join the work force later on. My team from SDSU quickly decided on a design, then every member jumped on a task and went to work; some building the fuselage while others built the wing. I had very little to do with the design or building of the plane, other than giving a gentle nudge a couple of times when I saw something that might be problematic. Once the plane was built, we did a couple of test flights on the back field, made a few adjustments, then threw it off the cliff. With a successful launch, I was able to trim it out and fly it hands off. We didn't have the fastest time, but our team's design and build were top notch and a great learning experience. Pretty impressive for a group of newbies, many of whom have never been exposed to the world of RC gliders or the Torrey Pines Gliderport. All in all, this was a fantastic event and made for a rewarding day for all involved. Count me in for next time.

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)



Ian's team from SDSU including TPG member Zeve Zilberstein holding the plane (Gary Fogel photo)

Eric Zanutto

I had a great time as well, and overall, I think things went well. I tried to mostly be hands-off but tried to point out obvious issues or things in the design I think needed rework. My team, the night before, did some "calculations" which came back with a wing that was too small and tail too large. In the end after a first test flight, I convinced them the wing needed more area, so that added some extra



Eric's Team from SDSU (Gary Fogelphoto)

TE pieces Later I realized the wing wasn't centered, but it still flew 🤖. That being said, I think my team was heavily focused on calculations and aero but later learned the simple things can make a difference.

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)

Chuck Norris

Our team was late showing up, and members trickled in over the first 30 minutes, so our build got off to a slow start. The Sun God Festival at UCSD apparently had taken its toll. But we caught up quickly and I thought we might still have a shot at getting in the air first. But alas, it was not to be. Our wing structure, which I feel could have handled flight loads adequately, unfortunately, couldn't handle the stresses of getting buffeted before launch with the thrower standing at the edge of the cliff. One wing folded, and the crease left a weak spot that plagued us through several attempts at reinforcement. When we finally got it airborne and out of the challenging turbulence at the lip, it flew extremely well - just what we were hoping for. Controllability was excellent, and it was very stable and mild-mannered. Even though we were dead last in the race to flight, the design was a winner in my book.



Chuck's team composed of mostly UCSD students. (Gary Fogel photo)



John McNeil's team from SDSU and their Osprey after their success (Gary Fogel photo)

John McNeil

I had a really fun time with my team. The Ospreys generated a plane that had a flat plate airfoil. We test flew it with one flight and the CG seemed reasonable, so with no time to spare and no interest in damaging the plane in test flights, I ran to the mound, threw it off, fortunately survived the rotor and made it out into the lift. One low lift cycle around 9 minutes into the flight had me scratching for the last bit and wishing for a better airfoil. But success - we lasted for 10 minutes and I squeaked by with a landing on top near the bowl. Fun times!

Second Annual TPG-AIAA Foamboard Contest (continued)



Everyone had a fun time! (Gary Fogel photo)

TPG History: The Trophy – Gary Fogel

This Month: Tom Farley, 2025 Co-Modeler of the Year



Tom Farley was born in Northridge, California in 1957. He developed a healthy interest in cars as a teenager and while one brother was into model rockets and a neighbor was into .049 control line models, none of that really was of much interest to Tom...until February 1972. That month, National Geographic had an article on the modern re-birth of hang gliding, featuring the now-famous Otto Lilienthal Meet in California and its many colorful Rogallo-style hang gliders. At age 15, Tom was immediately hooked. One of the gliders pictured was a Batso by Taras Kiceniuk. Tom wrote to Taras for more information and for \$10 received plans in return. The Batso was originally built out of bamboo for the structural supports but Tom built his out of an aluminum amateur radio antenna as that was easier to acquire. Slowly the hang glider took shape on his parent's tennis court in the back yard with a black pool covering for the wing. Once completed Tom flew his Batso from a local hill near Northridge at Devonshire Downs with the assistance of his brothers and ropes to help get the glider airborne. The glider almost came apart in midair, but Tom wasn't injured and through tethered flights at 30-40 feet high he had his first tastes of flight.

Australian hang glider showman Bill Bennett was making the rounds at this same time using a delta wing hang glider towed from just about anything to make paid public demonstrations. Bill came to the circle dirt track at



Devonshire and made a flight, and Tom was further hooked. He bought a hang glider from Bennett with a friend. The friend took off in the hang glider, it steered into a tree, and he never flew again. Given the accident, Tom's father Ed (an electronic engineer working for Tasker Industries in Whittier) looked over the hang glider and arranged a meeting with Bennett. At the meeting, Ed Farley insisted that new cables and clamps were required. The discussion between Ed and Bill was heated but Tom's dad was convinced the only way for Tom to continue flying was to have a more professional approach to safety around the structure and his training.

With the hang glider repaired and retrofitted to more stringent safety requirements, Tom showed up at the first US national hang glider championships at Sylmar, California in 1973. There he enjoyed several successful flights, even with his mom watching from near the landing zone as he glided high up in the air. All this was when Tom was only ~15 years old. By the time he turned 16,

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

he got his driver's license, put racks on a Datsun suitable for carting hang gliders, and spent every weekend flying through his junior and senior years of high school. He started a hang-gliding club at Crespi Carmelite High School, graduating from there in 1975. He also continued to progress in hang gliding, flying frequently at Sylmar and Escape Country.

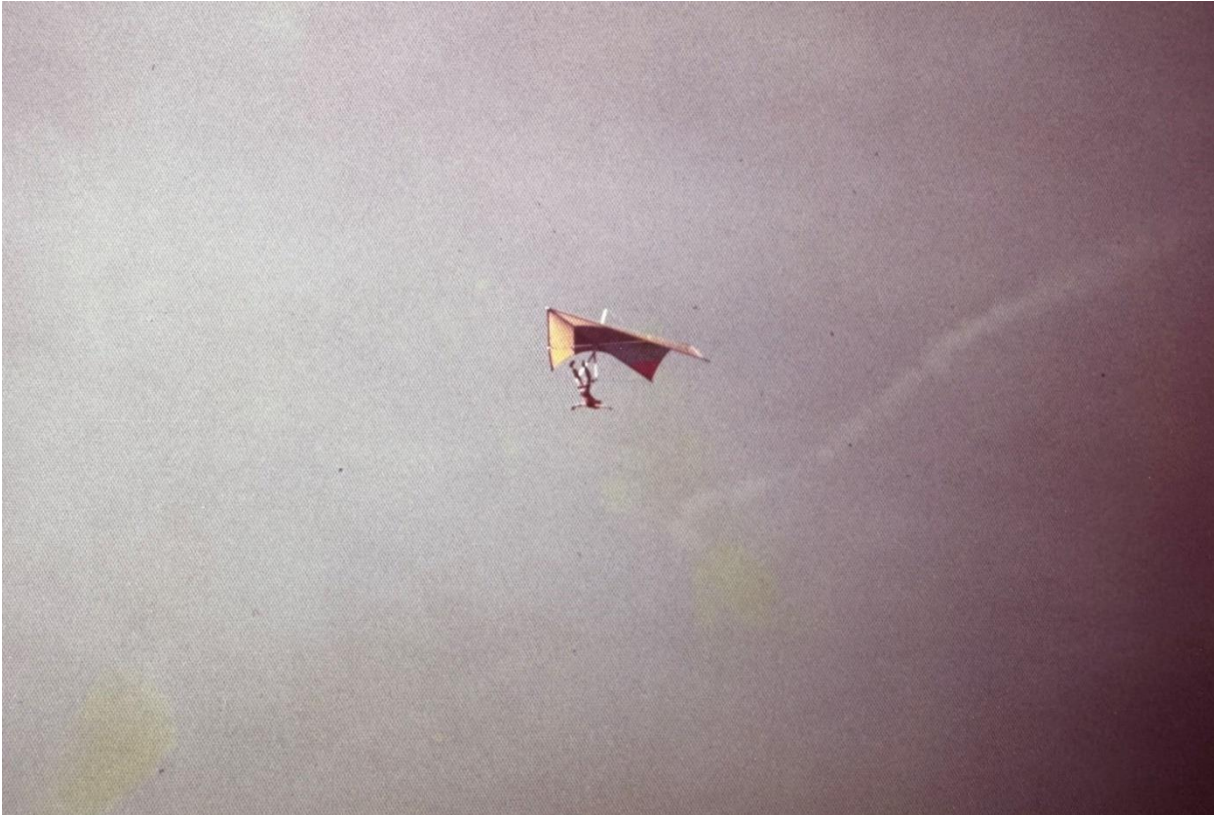


Tom Farley flying his Batso hang glider with his younger brother helping with the tow. It's always good to have a younger brother...



Tom Farley flying in Bill Bennett's Rogallo hang glider at Sylmar as a teenager.

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Tom Farley doing tricks on the control bar (on purpose) while flying near Sylmar.

Once Tom completed high school, there was the important decision of where to go to college. His parents insisted that the hang glider was not going with him for freshman year, at least up to the first set of midterms and if he did well, then maybe... Tom had the choice of attending either Pepperdine or UC San Diego. It wasn't much of a choice. Pepperdine (too close to family) vs. UC San Diego (right next to Torrey Pines...) and so off he went to major in economics with minors in mathematics and psychology at UCSD. He traveled home every weekend to see his girlfriend at the time and fly his hang glider at Sylmar.

An unfortunate accident that seriously injured hang glider pilot and mentor Jack Schroder happened at nearly this same time. This event led to a large discussion in the Farley household with the agreement that Tom would only fly hang gliders at places he was already familiar with like Sylmar and Escape Country but not at new places like Torrey Pines. Attending UCSD – and NOT able to fly HG at Torrey. That was a bummer. He sold his Bennett hang glider and his cars to a med school student and in exchange took a VW bus trip around the United States. It was the 70s...

Tom graduated UCSD in 1980. Needing employment, he ended up working for Evans Hotels in 1984 as a carpenter. This led to additional work in framing, and he soon rose to lead their in-house construction department. For those not familiar, Evans Hotels operates the Catamaran and Bahia Hotels in Pacific Beach and for many years operated the Torrey Pines Inn (currently the Lodge at Torrey Pines) near the gliderport. Tom continued in this role for nearly 40 years.

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

Over time he got the itch to take up motorcycling but gave it up. He got the itch to take up skydiving. During one jump at Perris, CA the plane ahead of him had an accident but Tom jumped from his plane regardless. While in the area of the gliderport for work, he used to stop by and watch the hang glider and RC activities. RC gliding never interested him all that much at the time, and accidents at Torrey with hang gliders reminded him of the risks.

In the mid-1980s, Tom met Marcus Salvemini who began making early paragliders from Ram air parachutes. These were made in a garage and test flown at Little Black Mountain near Rancho Penasquitos. Marcus formed a company, Airtek, to help sell these paraglider designs, and Tom began providing instruction on the weekends. Occasionally these activities migrated to the Poway slope near Tom's house with van-loads of students showing up to try paragliders and landing in the empty fields below. Now also into paragliding, Bill Bennett paid for Marcus and Tom to enter a contest at Horse where Tom was introduced to the brand-new Katana higher-performance paraglider. Tom flew from his house in Poway 6 days a week for many years and held a site duration record of 4 hours 59 min at Buckman Springs for many years – as a “wind dummy” – the first to takeoff is usually the first to land but not so with Tom – he was the last to land that day, after climbing to 12,000ft MSL in his shorts. Brr. Unfortunately, Tom had three “come to Jesus” moments in paragliders and after each he took a break from flying for 30 days just to re-think and gain a better perspective.



Tom Farley flying PG at Poway slope while receiving instruction from Marcus Salvemini. That's Poway Road in the distance on the right; not a freeway!

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Tom Farley enjoying PG on the Poway Slope.

He started dating his would-be wife Debbie in 1989 and continued flying paragliders to 2015. After paragliders, he shifted back to motorcycles. Tom is always on the move!

But another seed was planted back in the 1990s. One that is finally blossoming now.

A friend named Todd roomed with Tom in the 1990s at Tom's house in Poway. Todd and Tom built a pristine Mark's Models Wanderer over a period of 6 weeks. Neither Todd nor Tom knew how to fly RC but occasionally they would see members of the Torrey Pines Gulls flying on Poway slope. They ventured out with the Wanderer and launched it on its beautiful maiden flight. This RC soaring stuff is easy! Soon enough in the flight they did a loop. That was fun! Then they wondered how many consecutive loops could be made. Loop after loop after loop and then POP! Wing folded. And that was that. Tom's first experience with RC was over.

Sometime later, Tom noticed folks enjoying slope combat with Zagis at Poway slope. These were mainly young kids – many of them were under 16 – and some were not behaving well at all. They would park in the Sabre Springs community nearby, cause a ruckus and show no remorse. Eventually the community rebelled against them, they were booted and stopped showing. Meanwhile Tom repaired the Wanderer and enjoyed flying it on occasion from the slope. Todd built a Bob Martin Coyote and enjoyed flying that too (both planes are currently owned by Paul Nibecker).

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Tom Farley helping rescue Chuck Norris' BAMF2 from a tree at Poway at the 2026 IHLGF (Ian Cummings photo)



Tom Farley receiving a 2024 F5J Foamy Fun Fly trophy from John McNeil (Bob Hirsch photo)

Then more recently, Tom saw others flying at Poway and he came out to introduce himself. There he met Gary Fogel, John McNeil, Chuck Norris, and David Hall slope soaring with a variety of planes including a foam Radian. It had been a long time since someone had flown RC at the site and Tom struck up a friendship. (And Gary and others were like “wait, you are the guy who owns the house on the top???!”) Thereafter, Tom has gotten into RC gliding. He has a Radian, Weasel, Conscendo, UMX Conscendo, two combat wings, a foamy Schweizer 1-26, and discus launch gliders both regular and electric. He’s not only hooked; he hooked his friend Kevin into RC gliding as well.



Tom Farley with his toys at Poway. (Photo by Bob Hirsch)

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

Tom saw the professionalism of the Torrey Pines Gulls and joined. Ever since becoming a member, he has taken considerable time and effort to help with field work, help rescue planes from trees, help encourage membership, and he and Debbie have been exceptionally kind to allow TPGers to park and fly near their home for our new Poway Slope Fiesta events. Given his many hours in the air in hang gliders and paragliders, he already understands a lot of what the atmosphere can provide and how to make use of it. He now enjoys doing so with two feet on the ground and TPG friends nearby. The TPG honored Tom as co-Modeler of the Year with Jake Olefsky in 2025 for his many efforts to help make TPG a better club. Thank you, Tom!



Tom and Debbie Farley (Bob Hirsch photo)

May Tow Hook Contest Report – John McNeil, CD

On May 3rd, we had eight friends and pilots for our contest on an overcast day. The winds came up from WSW, but not too strongly. The wind was enough, however, to set up a wave, sometimes right at the top of the launch. The thermals were present, but sometimes got shredded quickly. I found the conditions fun, but not in the "I must be a great pilot, this is easy" sense of soaring fun. Even our winner Gary landed two of six flights well short of 6 minutes.

Thanks as always to everyone pitching in to set up and tear down. Also, a big congratulations to Jake for his first podium finish! That was excellent flying!

F3X Vault Scores

| # | Pilot Name | Total | Diff | Completed Rounds (No Drops In Effect) | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------|----------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 | Round 4 | Round 5 | Round 6 |
| 1 | 2 Gary Fogel 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 4280.00 | | 814.00 | 814.00 | 361.00 | 676.00 | 809.00 | 806.00 |
| 2 | 1 John McNeil 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 3742.00 | -538.00 | 814.00 | 812.00 | 401.00 | 477.00 | 451.00 | 787.00 |
| 3 | 4 Jake Olefsky 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 2663.00 | -1079.00 | 332.00 | 333.00 | 161.00 | 296.00 | 763.00 | 778.00 |
| 4 | Luke Skywalker 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 2578.00 | -85.00 | 315.00 | 803.00 | 248.00 | 344.00 | 407.00 | 461.00 |
| 5 | 6 David Hall 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 2390.00 | -188.00 | 804.00 | NE | 194.00 | 336.00 | 270.00 | 786.00 |
| 6 | 7 Kellen LeBlanc 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 2212.00 | -178.00 | 214.00 | 700.00 | 241.00 | 464.00 | 200.00 | 393.00 |
| 7 | 8 Bret Locke 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 2168.00 | -44.00 | 221.00 | 259.00 | 333.00 | 720.00 | 303.00 | 332.00 |
| 8 | 3 Don Lochhead 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 1812.00 | -356.00 | 150.00 | 237.00 | 549.00 | 221.00 | 425.00 | 230.00 |
| 9 | 10 Steve Hurd 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 0.00 | -1812.00 | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE |
| 10 | 9 Robert Stein | 0.00 | | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE |
| 11 | 5 Chuck Norris 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 | 0.00 | | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE | NE |



Don Lochhead maidenied his new red, white and blue Purito...Great looking plane, Don! (Jake Olefsky photo)



Three students from SDSU came to test fly their modified 1.5m Yellow Jacket at the Tow Hook contest with Gary Fogel serving as test pilot. The aircraft included dual spoilers, additional polyhedral, and minor winglets as well as a thinner CF spar in the wing. Flights were successful and the aircraft earned 4th place (as walk on Luke Skywalker in F3X Vault). Pictured are students Daniel Schulman (left), Amelia Chiavetta (center), and Blake Huckaby (right). All three students graduated with their bachelor's degrees in aerospace engineering this month. Amelia has already joined AMA and TPG and is eager to continue flying. Blake Huckaby has also expressed interest in doing the same. (Gary Fogel photo)

Club Membership Update – Christoph Efstathiou



Christoph
Efstathiou

Hello Gulls,

This month we welcomed two new members to the club, bringing us to a total of 95 members for the year. Welcome to our two new members, and thanks for joining us.

If you are an existing member who has not yet renewed, please consider doing so!

If you have not yet received your card and key, please let me know and I will get that to you as soon as possible.

Renewing or new members must fill out the registration on our web site.

Please use the link below when joining as a new member or renewing an existing membership. Fill out the registration form completely and pay using PayPal, credit card or check. If you have not signed up for the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an individual email when becoming a member.

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/membership.html>

Membership Processing

Please use the link below when joining as a new member or renewing an existing membership. Fill out the registration form completely and pay using PayPal, credit card or check. Current members will receive a renewal notice using the TPG Google Group email process. If you have not signed up for the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an individual email.

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/membership.html>

All new and renewing members will receive a membership card and key (if requested, for Encinitas and Poway). The key provides access to the gates at our Encinitas and Poway flying sites. Members who fly at the Torrey Pines Gliderport and are Gliderport rated will receive a club lanyard from a club representative at the Gliderport. Members must wear the lanyard with the membership card attached when flying at the Gliderport, for safety reasons. Remember, you must have a current AMA membership to join TPG. To join AMA, follow this link:

<https://join.modelaircraft.org/torreypinesgulls/>

Please contact us at: membership@torreypinesgulls.org if you have not received your membership materials or have any membership-related questions.

Club Membership Update (continued)

Annual Membership

TPG's membership period is January 1st through December 31st. Renewals begin November 1st of each year.

Club Dues are as follows:

- **Full Members** – \$60 per year
- **Youth Members** (19 years or younger) – \$5 per year
- **Student Members** (full-time) – \$20 per year
- **Work Credit** You will receive a credit of up to \$20 on your annual dues; \$10 per each half-day working at any TPG flying field. When filling out your registration form, there is a place to input your hours/credit.

New members joining in the first six months of the year pay the full rate. Those joining in July through September pay half the applicable rate. If you are a new member joining in October through December, you pay the full rate, but your membership is considered paid through the end of the following year.

You can get more detailed information regarding your yearly membership benefits by using the following link: [Torrey Pines Gulls Membership Guide](#), which will provide answers to many of your questions regarding Torrey Pines Gulls activities. Also review the TPG Club Bylaws for more information at: [Club Bylaws](#)

Christoph Efstathiou
Membership Chairman
membership@torreypinesgulls.org



Note: TPG membership information will not be shared or sold and will only be used to contact members for purposes of TPG business.

Where We Fly – Panoramas – Ian Cummings

Here are Ian Cummings' immersive panoramas of our world class flying sites; the world-famous Torrey Pines Gliderport, Poway Flight Center, where each year the club sponsors the IHLGF (International Hand Launch Glider Festival) and the Encinitas Flight Center. Clicking on the pictures takes you to our sites:

Click on this photo to visit the Torrey Pines Gliderport.



Click on this photo to visit the TPG Poway Flight Center.



Click on this photo to visit the TPG Encinitas Flight Center.



How We Compete

F5J Contest Series



John McNeil

Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil

Thermal Duration (winch launch) contests have been moved into the Tow Hook Series (see the following pages). For F5J contest dates, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/f5j-competition.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG F5J contest schedule thread for contest news. In the meantime, check out what's been going on during 2025:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4662319-2025-TPG-F5J-contest-schedule>

or contact John McNeil at thermal@torreypinesgulls.org

DLG/Hand Launch/F3K Contest Series



Justin Tolman

DLG Coordinator – Justin Tolman

For DLG contest dates, check the calendar on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming Hand Launch/DLG contests, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/discus-launch-glider-series.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG DLG Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4841707-2026-TPG-DLG-Contest-Clinic-Series-Information>

or contact Justin Tolman at dlg@torreypinesgulls.org

How We Compete (continued)

Team DLG Series



John McNeil

Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil

Following a successful and fun launch of this new contest format in 2024, we have expanded the team DLG schedule in 2025. Each event will be on a Sunday following a Saturday monthly DLG.

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG Team DLG Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4861235-2026-TPG-Team-DLG-Series>

For more info, contact John McNeil at thermal@torreypinesgulls.org

Team DLG format:

- Teams consist of exactly four pilots.
- In each heat, three of the pilots fly while one pilot times and provides team direction.
- Each round, the timer is rotated. After four rounds, all team members will have timed once.
- Contest rounds follow F3K formats except:
 - Flight timing
 - Flight time starts when the last of three pilots releases the model.
 - Flight time ends when the first of three pilots time would end.
 - If any pilot lands out of bounds, then the flight scores zero.
 - (In other words, all three pilots fly each flight together for a single flight time)

For full details, check out this RCGroups Forum:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4617285-New-F3K-Team-Contest-Format>

How We Compete (continued)

2024 TPG Tow Hook Series - F3L/F3RES/TD/1.5m



John McNeil

Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil

The TPG Tow Hook Series was a great success in 2025; more contests, fun fly clinics and even a multi-club/multi state event, The Coastal Cooler, which was held in August.

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming Tow Hook Series contests, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/f3l-res-competitions.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG Tow Hook Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4861221-2026-TPG-Tow-Hook-Series-F3L-F3RES-TD-sub-250g>

For more info, contact John McNeil at thermal@torreypinesgulls.org

Aircraft Classes

- 1.5m RES bungee launch. Max flying weight is 250g. Construction materials and techniques must follow F3L rules. Maximum flight time is 5 minutes.
- 2m RES bungee launch. Construction materials and techniques must follow F3L rules. Maximum flight time is 6 minutes.
- AMA thermal duration open class. Winch launch. Skegs are allowed. Maximum flight time is 10 minutes.

Equipment

At least three landing tapes will be provided, marked for F3L. AMA TD will use the same landing bonus formula as the other classes.

F3L compliant bungees will be provided by the club and set up at the CD's direction. At the CD's discretion, all bungees may be shortened from F3L standard to accommodate field conditions. Lighter 1.5m meter bungees will also be setup.

Winches:

A single winch will be on TD days. The winch shall be set up in parallel with, and at the same length as the stretched bungees. The winch will not have a retriever.

How We Compete (continued)

F5J Foamy Fun Fly and Contest/Clinic Series



Don Lochhead

TPG will continue our F5J style foamy fun fly contest (and clinic) Series in 2026 at our Poway field.

This is truly a fun-fly and a great way to get into F5J style flying. Any foamy or stick-built plane up to 2m (or so) is welcome. Night Radians are very popular but we also see Yellow Jackets (stick-built) and a variety of other vintage foamy and balsa stick-built aircraft.

We typically pause mid-contest for a quick clinic. Subjects generally focus on F5J topics of interest to pilots getting into the format. The events are free but we still ask all pilots to sign up on F3X Vault so we know how many to expect and can run the matrix ahead of time.

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming F5J Foamy Fun Fly and Contest/Clinic events, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/foamy-fun-fly.html>

Our next fun fly will be held on July 18th. Sign up and come join in on the fun.

https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4152



Bob Hirsch photo

League of Silent Flight and TPG – Gary Fogel



Gary Fogel

The League of Silent Flight (LSF) <https://www.silentflight.org/> is the special interest group (SIG) representing RC soaring to the Academy of Model Aeronautics. LSF has its own lengthy and important history, having first been conceived of in Northern California in 1969, and helps arrange the annual RC soaring Nationals at Muncie, Indiana each summer. Additional info on its history can be found here: <http://www.silentflight.org/images/documents/lfsstory.pdf>

Mark Smith was the first local to sign up for the LSF program with LSF #19. His father Rod was not far behind with #28. They may have been flying more with Harbor Soaring Society at that time (1969/1970) than Torrey Pines Gulls but soon were enjoying membership in both clubs. Since then, over 10,000 people from around the world have signed up and received an LSF number.

Don Edberg was the first in the club to achieve LSF SAP Level III (February 2, 1974). Randy Warner was not far behind, completing the level on April 25, 1974.

Don Edberg was also first in the TPG to achieve LSF SAP Level IV (June 27, 1975). Keith Finkenbiner completed the level on July 8, 1975 but was likely living in Illinois at that time. Ben Clerx completed Level IV on September 30, 1975 but was perhaps living in Honolulu at the time.

Larry Jolly completed his SAP Level V on November 16, 1983 but may or may not have been a member of TPG at the time. TPG members Don Edberg completed his on July 8, 1989. Since then, George Joy (1992), Patrick Dionisio (2002) and Keith Finkenbiner (2002) have completed Level V:

- SAP Level III – 51 pilots
- SAP Level IV – 31 pilots
- SAP Level V – 5 pilots

Larry Jolly (1983), Don Edberg (1989), George Joy (1992), Patrick Dionisio (2002), Keith Finkenbiner (2002)

For LSF eSAP, only one pilot in the history of the program has completed Level V – Larry Jolly (September 2, 2015). We need more pilots signing up and completing eSAP levels especially given the popularity of F5J, our regular F5J fun flies, and the opportunity to use electric launch DLGs in our monthly F3K contests.

League of Silent Flight and TPG – (continued)



Who in the TPG is currently working on which levels? I have the following info; if you do not see your name listed and wish to be added please let me know. It's good for us to have a list of current aspirations so that we can help others team up along the way and get to their goals. Don't forget to use 2026 TPG events towards next levels!

| First | Last | SAP Level next to achieve | eSAP Level next to achieve |
|-----------|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Milan | Bregman | Level I | |
| Gary | Legerton | Level I | |
| Mengchen | Li | Level I | |
| Paul | Nibecker | Level I | |
| Scott | McCurdy | Level I | Level II |
| Justin | Tolman | Level II | |
| Christoph | Efstathiou | Level II | |
| Ed | LaCroix | Level II | |
| Jake | Olefsky | Level II | Level II |
| Eric | Metzdorf | Level II | |
| Daniel | McFarland | Level II | |
| Don | Lochhead | Level II | |
| Ian | Cummings | Level III | |
| Mike | Verzuh | Level III | |
| Ray | Pili | Level III | Level II |
| Tom | Kiesling | Level III | |
| Mike | Smith | Level IV | |
| Steve | Condon | Level IV | |
| Chuck | Norris | Level V | Level II |
| Gary | Fogel | Level V | Level III |
| John | McNeil | Level V | |
| Scott | Condon | Level V | |
| David | Hall | Level V | |
| Ben | Clerx | Level V | |
| Rick | Shelby | Level V | |

How We Connect

Questions or concerns?

You can have your questions answered at: www.torreypinesgulls.org

We have a [Contact Us](#) link in the drop-down menu that appears when you scroll over [The Club](#) next to [Membership](#), [Locations](#), [Contests...](#)If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc., here's your chance.

Don't forget to join

In order to maintain a line of communication among members, we have a TPG Google Group. Please make sure that our club Membership Chairman has your current email address. You can confirm this by contacting membership@torreypinesgulls.org. If you are not already a member of the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an invitation to join.

When you join as a member of the private TPG Google Group, the club will distribute notifications, newsletters, contest events and holiday party info, etc. This information will keep you informed of all club activities throughout the year. You don't need a Gmail address to participate in Google Groups, but you do need to be a member of TPG.

Google Groups provides a great way of communicating with one another. If you have any questions or concerns about almost anything having to do with flying, building, finding another club member, etc., you can post them on Google Groups. It also allows you to send links and attachments, just like regular email.

...and, very importantly, since all postings/emails are done through Google Groups, your actual email address is not visible when notifications are sent out to the club members. Also, only members of the group can post to the group, so joining the group does not add to your spam burden.

So, verify that the club has your correct email, make sure you receive an invitation to join Google Groups and sign up!

Procedure for Joining Google Groups

Here are the steps new club members need to take to be added to Google Groups if they don't have a Gmail account/address:

1. Go to the [Google Account Sign In page](#).
2. Click Create account.
3. Enter your name.
4. Click Use my current email address instead.
5. Enter your current email address.
6. Click Next.
7. Verify your email address with the code sent to your existing email.
8. Click Verify.
9. Confirm with TPG Membership Chairman the above steps have been completed, use the following email address: membership@torreypinesgulls.org

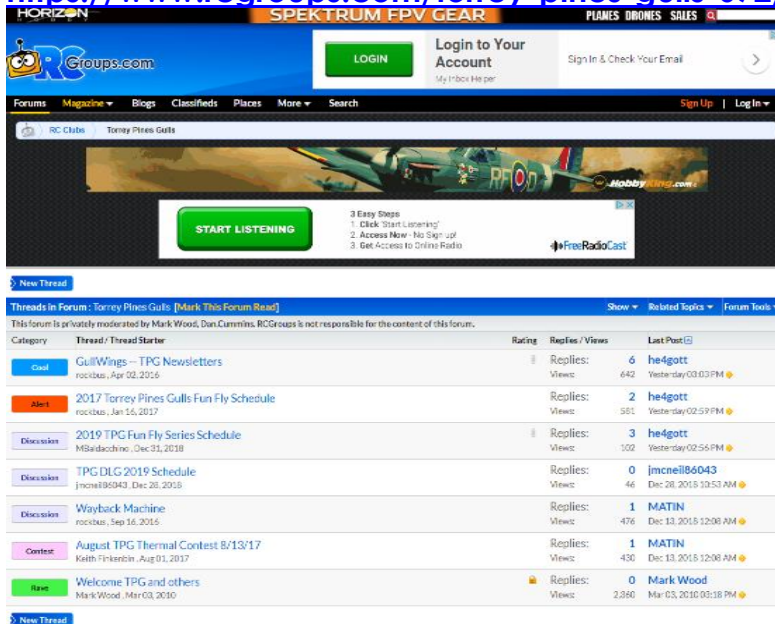
How We Connect (continued)

Are you a member of ?

If you're not...**you should be!** RCGroups is the most widely used and active online Radio Control Community for everything RC, from planes to cars, to boats, drones, radios, power systems...pretty much anything RC! It includes forums, specific interest threads, blogs, discussions, etc....and, more importantly, The Torrey Pines Gulls Forum.

To get started, click on the link or web page below to get to the TPG Club forum. You can also get there from the **Clubs** link at the lower right of the RCGroups home page and scroll down to Torrey Pines Gulls.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/torrey-pines-gulls-672/>



| Category | Thread / Thread Starter | Replies / Views | Last Post |
|------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Goal | GullWings – TPG Newsletters rocksas, Apr 02, 2016 | Replies: 6 Views: 642 | he4gott Yesterday 03:03 PM |
| Alert | 2017 Torrey Pines Gulls Fun Fly Schedule rocksas, Jan 16, 2017 | Replies: 2 Views: 561 | he4gott Yesterday 02:59 PM |
| Discussion | 2019 TPG Fun Fly Series Schedule MBaradachino, Dec 31, 2018 | Replies: 3 Views: 102 | he4gott Yesterday 02:56 PM |
| Discussion | TPG DLG 2019 Schedule jmcneil86043, Dec 28, 2018 | Replies: 0 Views: 46 | jmcneil86043 Dec 28, 2018 10:53 AM |
| Discussion | Wayback Machine rocksas, Sep 16, 2016 | Replies: 1 Views: 476 | MATIN Dec 13, 2018 12:08 AM |
| Contest | August TPG Thermal Contest 8/13/17 Keith Finkestein, Aug 01, 2017 | Replies: 1 Views: 436 | MATIN Dec 13, 2018 12:08 AM |
| Item | Welcome TPG and others Mark Wood, Mar 03, 2010 | Replies: 0 Views: 2,840 | Mark Wood Mar 03, 2010 03:18 PM |

If you haven't yet joined RCGroups, click on the **Sign Up** link at the upper right and follow the instructions.

Once you've navigated to the Torrey Pines Gulls Forum, you can subscribe to the Forum or to any of the individual threads within the Forum.

To subscribe to the Forum, click the **Forum Tools** link and select "Subscribe to This Forum" from the dropdown menu. Then choose from the notification dropdown menu. If you want to subscribe to a specific thread, click to open the thread, and click the **Thread Tools** link. Select "Subscribe to This Thread" from the dropdown menu. Again, choose from the notification dropdown menu.

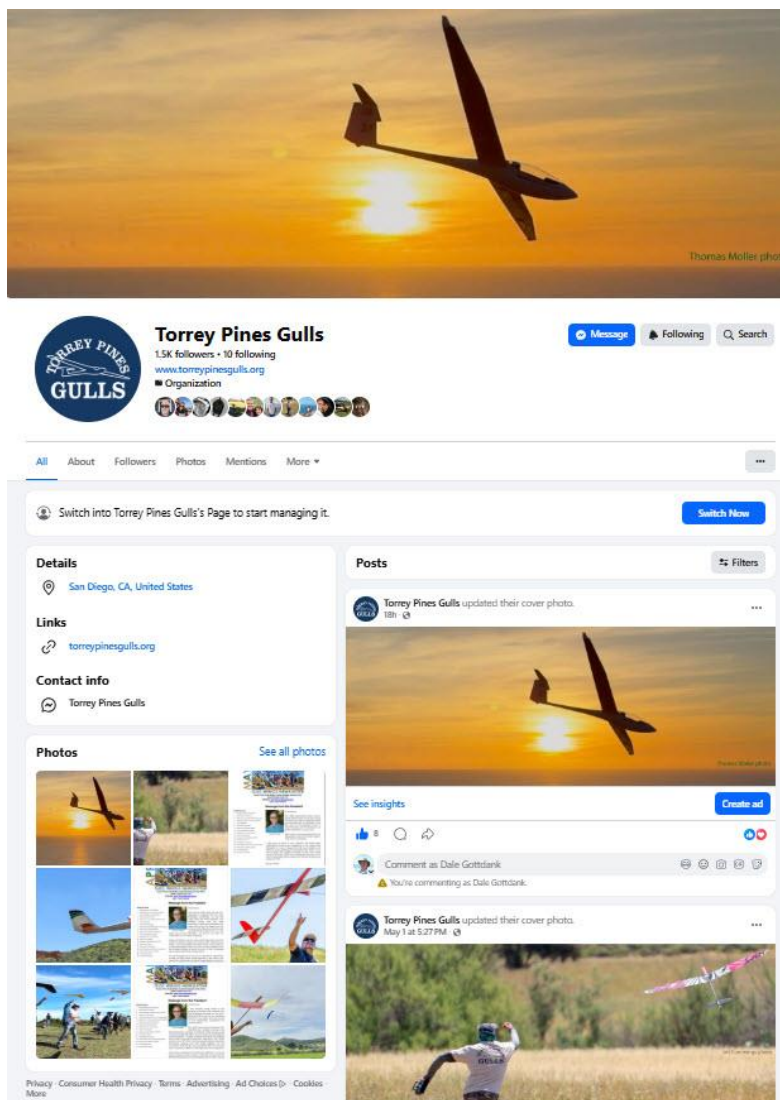
RCGroups allows you to post photos and videos. By subscribing, you can keep up with the latest events, club activities and member postings.

How We Connect (continued)

Check out the TPG **facebook** Page

If you haven't had a chance yet, check out our TPG Facebook page by clicking the links below for new content posted by club members and friends.

<https://www.facebook.com/TorreyPinesGulls/>

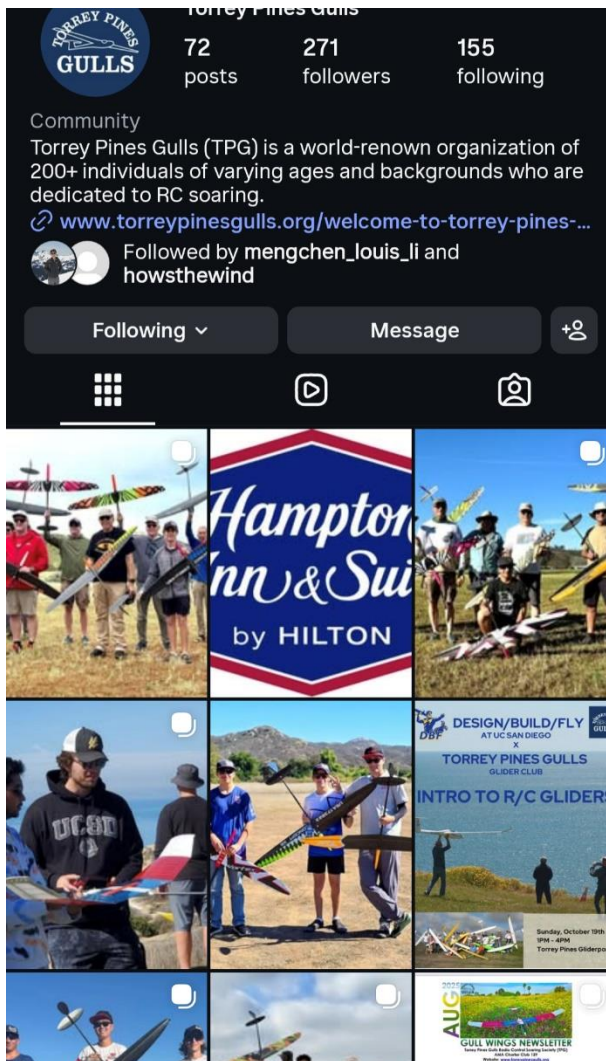


How We Connect (continued)



TPG's Media Coordinator, Mengchen Li, has created an Instagram account for the Torrey Pines Gulls. If you're already on Instagram, search for `torrey_pines_gulls` and click on follow. If you're not on Instagram, well, now's a great time to join!

Also, if you have any photos or videos of your RC soaring activities, contests, builds, fun flies, etc., send them along to Mengchen at media@torreypinesgulls.org and you might find your submittal on a TPG Instagram post.



How We Connect (continued)

Join the Conversation:  **Discord**

Discord is a free website and app that you can download to your phone or computer that gives you access to the Torrey Pines Gulls group chat. This is an active discussion group with interesting conversations happening all the time. It's a great place to ask questions and learn from your fellow members. Event reminders and club news are posted to our Discord server so you can stay up to date with what's happening.

To get in:

1. Visit the Discord website and download the app to your computer or click the 'Open in Browser' link.
2. Or, search through your phone's app store for the Discord app and install it.
3. Create a free account inside the app or website.
4. Scan the QR code or click the link below it to join.



<http://www.discord.gg/vRdV6Fd9nP>

Newsletter Submissions - Dale Gottdank, Editor



Dale Gottdank

Please contribute to our **GULL WINGS NEWSLETTER**

Send pictures, or maybe even an article! It could be just a paragraph with some photos from a great soaring day ...even something interesting you've seen on the internet. I'd like to have the newsletter published by the first week of every month. If there's a project you're working on, don't just post it on RCGroups...share it with your club!

Please send in your articles or photos (communications@torreypinesgulls.org) by the **25th** of each month so they can be included in the monthly newsletter. If there are too many, we'll save them for the next issue. Photos should be in their original, high-resolution format. The newsletter can be found on the Torrey Pines Gulls website at <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org>.



Club Officers and Contact Information

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| President | Chuck Norris | president@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Vice-President | Gary Fogel | vp@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Past President | Ian Cummings | |
| Secretary | Dale Gottdank | secretary@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Treasurer | Don Lochhead | treasurer@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Communications Officer | Dale Gottdank | communications@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Thermal Coordinator | John McNeil | thermal@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Slope Coordinator | Bret Locke | slope@torreypinesgulls.org |
| DLG Coordinator | Justin Tolman | dlg@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Membership Chair | Christoph Efstathiou | membership@torreypinesgulls.org |
| IHLGF Coordinator | Chuck Norris | president@torreypinesgulls.org |
| LSF Coordinator | Gary Fogel | vp@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Webmaster | Jake Olefsky | tpg@foldnfly.com |
| Media Coordinator | Mengchen Li | media@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Historian | Gary Fogel | historian@torreypinesgulls.org |
| Raffle Chairman | Michael Gillen | Contact via TPG Discord server |

Executive Officers



Chuck Norris



Gary Fogel



Dale Gottdank



Don Lochhead



John McNeil



Bret Locke



Justin Tolman



Christoph Efstathiou

Photo of the Month Contest

Each month club members may submit photos of an activity related to soaring and the newsletter editor will post a **WINNER**.

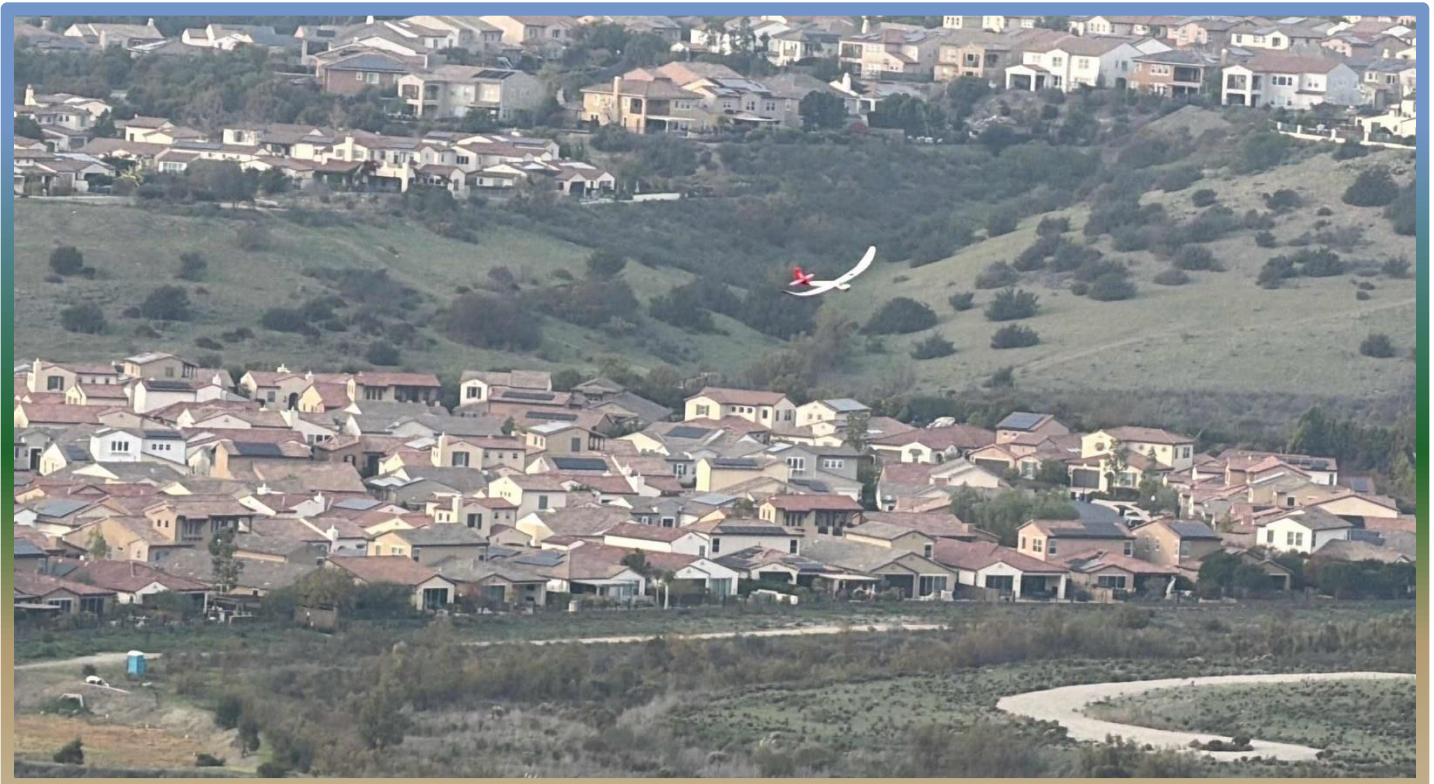
A Photo of the Year winner will be selected from among the monthly winners and will receive a prize (their photo will be used as the website and newsletter masthead AND will appear on the following year's club membership card); so **horizontal format photos are preferred**.

Email your photos (**JPG format and original high-resolution version, please**) to Dale Gottdank at submit@torreypinesgulls.org. Please provide your name, location of photo and photo description. Note: December photo of the month winner(s) will be included in the following year's Photo of the Year competition.



4th Quarter (Oct-Nov-Dec 2025) Winner – Steve Stanton launching his self-designed Cayley at a TPG F5J contest (Bob Hirsch photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



January Winner – Lone glider near the Black Mountain Gliderport (Kevin Vu photo)



February Winner – Justin Tolman mid launch (Dave MacNeil photo))

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



March Co-Winner – Kellen LeBlanc launching at the Tow Hook Contest (Bob Hirsch photo))



March Co-Winner – Group launch at the February Poway Slope (Combat) Fiesta (Bob Hirsch photo))

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



April Co-Winner – John McNeil launching his open class ship at the March Tow Hook Series/TD Fun Fly (Ian Cummings photo)



April Co-winner – Jeff Sinsay launches a well-worn, but still well-flyin' Radian (Bob Hirsch photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



May Co-winner – Aaron Wallace's HKM ASW-27 (Thomas Moller photo)



May Co-winner – Scott McCurdy launching at the 2026 International Hand Launch Glider Festival (Ian Cummings photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Joe Cormier launching his Vmax at Torrey (Matin Taraz photo)



Ray Pili launching at the 2026 International Hand Launch Glider Festival (Ian Cummings photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Paul Broyles launching Mike Lance's ASK-18 at Torrey (Ray Pili photo)



June Winner – Ray Pili's LET DG-1000 over Torrey (Ray Pili photo)



Quote of the Month:

“And what is so rare as a day in June? Then, if ever, come perfect days.”

~ James Russell Lowell



April at the Gliderport. Aaron Wallace's HKM ASW-27 soars over the setting sun (Thomas Moller photo)