

2026



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

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Chuck Norris

Hi everybody!

This last Thursday, John McNeil and I completed an 8-hour slope soaring task at the Torrey Pines Gliderport. Why did we do such a crazy thing, you might ask? On and off I've been working on the League of Silent Flight soaring achievements program. If you're not familiar with it, the LSF program starts out at Level 1 with tasks that even a new pilot can accomplish, then works up to

successively more ambitious tasks in levels 2 through 5. Each level gets progressively harder, until level 5 where you have to complete an 8-hour slope flight, a 2-hour thermal duration flight, and a 10k goal and return.

There's a cool thing about the progression. When you start off, level 1 seems doable but the higher levels seem like you'll never be able to complete them. But as you finish one level, you find that the next level now seems possible. The skills you learn completing a level make the next level seem easier. I'm now working on level 5, and I'm looking forward to completing the tasks. A two-hour thermal flight will be challenging, but I've already done a one-hour to complete level 4, and two hours seems very doable to me now. The 10k goal and return will definitely be challenging, but now I'm comfortable flying from a moving vehicle, and know that a successful flight is more a matter of planning and finding the right conditions.

Photo above:

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

(continued)

Message from the President (continued)

If this sounds fun to you (it definitely is!) there are number of club members who are also on the LSF path, so reach out and you'll find people happy to help you reach your next goals. There is no deadline, so you can go as fast or slow as you like. But getting connected with other people also doing LSF tasks will really help get some momentum going. People who have already done the tasks you're working on can help you plan and practice to learn what you need to succeed.

You can read more about the LSF and download the tracking forms here:

<https://www.silentflight.org>.

Chuck



John McNeil at left, with his Aspire and Chuck Norris with his Ava Pro, at Torrey; after they completed their LSF 8-hour slope flights. Congratulations guys! (Gary Fogel photo)

TPG July/August Events

DATE	EVENT	COMMENTS
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
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
August 8 th	Fly 'n Swap Again! – A day to fly and swap meet. Clean out your garages and make room for more birds	Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Fun Fly!
August 8 th	11:30 am: AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame induction ceremony for Dr. Don Edberg	In conjunction with the Fly 'n Swap event.
August 15 th	DLG Contest	Poway Flight Center Register on F3X Vault
August 25 th	Club Virtual Meeting	Zoom link: TPG Virtual Meeting Zoom Link
August 29 th – 30 th	TPG Coastal Cooler – Two-Day Tow Hook Series Contest F3L/F3RES – 2m & 1.5m	Encinitas Flight Center Register on F3X Vault



At the slope (Ray Pili 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 below)**.

At our last virtual meeting, on June 23rd, we were joined by Aerospace Engineer Dr. Jeffrey Sinsay, who discussed 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. Thank you Dr. Sinsay!

About 16 TPG members attended the meeting and Dale Gottdank was the lucky winner of the raffle prize, a Dream-Flight Ahi, EPO foam aerobatic sloper kit. Congrats Dale!

Our next club meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 25th, 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.

...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 will set up on F3X Vault in advance of the meeting:
"TPG Club Virtual Meeting Via Zoom" for buying raffle tickets.

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.

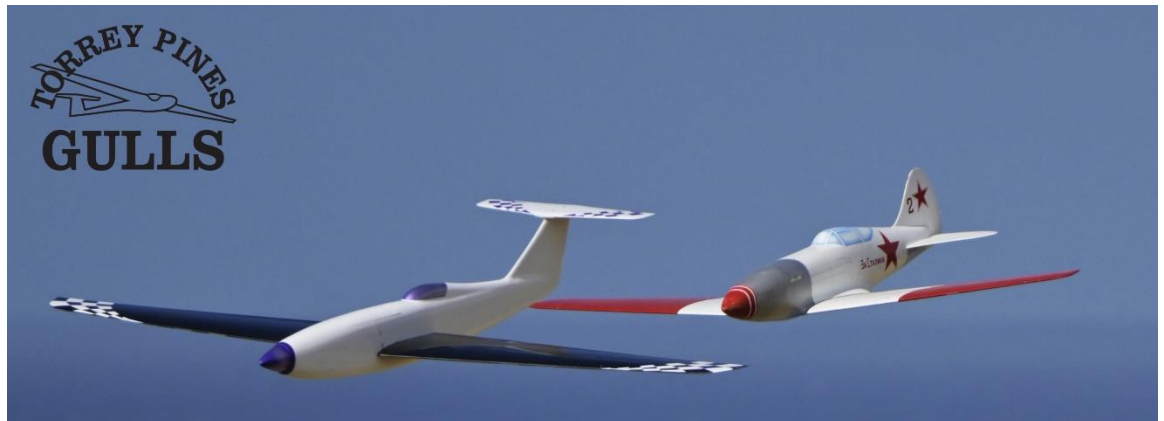
The prize for the upcoming raffle will be announced in the next month.

Good luck!

News from the Slope – Bret Locke, Slope Coordinator



Bret Locke



Onshore Slope Winds for the Duration!

The daily onshore winds continue to blow in our favor at San Diego slope flying hotspots. Overcast conditions are also moving out to sea, making for enjoyable sunny days at the coast. The RC landing area at Torrey Pines Gliderport is in fair condition and providing adequate area for long soft landings; while The Torrey Pines RC Pit Area is maintaining a manicured look. If you're planning on flying some slope planes this season, now is the time.

June 6th, the Annual Katie Martin International Tribute (KMIT) was held at Torrey Pines Gliderport. The KMIT is our club's largest sloping event drawing participants from far and near. As usual there was the usual flock of Hobbie Hawks and many old school gliders. The raffle for a new Hobbie Hawk, two Dreamflight AHis and various other valuable items raised over one thousand dollars for the American Heart Association. The festivities went off without a hitch, and there was plenty of air time to be had by those so inclined.



Participants gathering for the 14th Annual Katie Martin International Tribute...and the 52nd anniversary of Hobbie Alter's creation of the Hobbie Hawk (Gary Fogel photo)

News from the Slope (continued)



Hobie Hawks and a Super Hawk (Gary Fogel photo)



Bret Locke, Event Coordinator on behalf of the TPG. Thanks, Bret! (Gary Fogel photo)

News from the Slope (continued)

Upcoming Events

July 4th, Slope Aerobatics Day is scheduled to be held at the Torrey Pines Gliderport. Time of attendance is usually based of the timing of favorable winds for the day.

July 25th, is the Slope Combat Fiesta at the Poway slope, starting around 12:00pm. Although combat is the name of the game, craft unsuitable for combat can flown and gently grounded in the designated areas. Please register on F3X Vault when registration opens, for planning purposes.

The Summer of 2026 has been slope-wise, consistently flyable, and the sunshine has been sweet!

Sincerely,

Bret Locke
TPG Slope Coordinator

SAFETY ALERT:

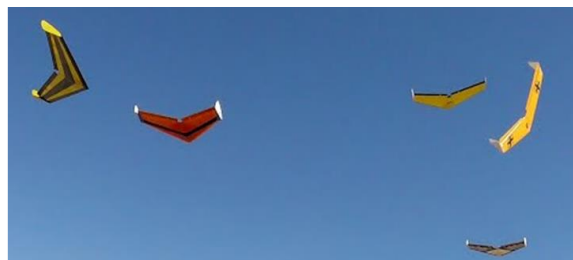
Our most effective safety practice is the Blue-Sky Rule; your depth perception cannot be trusted; Maintain Situational Awareness; and fly with a spotter if feeling overwhelmed by your plane or by paraglider traffic. In uncomfortable situations (i.e. numerous paragliders in the R/C window), landing is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

TPG Gliderport Schedule for 2026

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
August 8 th	11:30 am: AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame induction ceremony for Dr. Don Edberg; In conjunction with the Fly 'n Swap event
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.



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TPG History: The Trophy – Gary Fogel

This Month: Jake Olefsky, 2025 Co-Modeler of the Year



Jake Olefsky is a local who grew up in Solana Beach. While attending Skyline Elementary School he enjoyed flying Estes model rockets, mainly with B or C engines. While attending Earl Warren Junior High, he began to be interested in paper airplanes, and very likely also built a Whitewings kit or two as the kits were popular at the time and had better performance than standard paper airplanes. Jake grew up with an interest in physics and STEM classes. He graduated from Torrey Pines High School in 1995.

Shortly thereafter he attended Stanford in the fall of 1995, intent on physics as his major. However, after one year, he changed his major to computer science. An exciting course in mechanical engineering changed his outlook and Jake attempted to change majors again, but didn't have enough time. Jake finished his Bachelor's degree in computer science in four years but stayed for a fifth year to add a minor in mechanical engineering. Officially he is the class of 1999 but he graduated in 2000 with his Bachelor's degree. During his time at Stanford, he took only one course in aerospace engineering – it was a very math heavy course and it just didn't jive with Jake's interest at the time.

In 1999, Jake interned with a company called IDEO in Palo Alto. He worked in the toy invention studio which had a relationship with Estes model



rockets. Jake was hired full time at IDEO after his graduation from Stanford and one of his tasks with making new products for Estes. One of his first products was a rocket that reported max altitude achieved (a rocket called Max Trax). At the time, accelerometers were too expensive, so this rocket made use of simple sensors to determine when the eject charge was released. A calibrated streamer and impact sensor determined time to ground. From these, reverse calculation could provide an estimate of the maximum altitude. Jake developed the prototype and electronics, conducted the flight tests, and saw it all the way to production. A follow-up model rocket, the Speed Freak, calculated max velocity with similar calculations but Jake was not directly involved in that effort.

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Initial two prototypes (code name eRocket) and the final production model (released as MaxTrax).

Jake had also met his soon-to-be-wife as an undergrad at Stanford, and they married in the year 2001. She was accepted to the Cornish College of the Arts for a BFA and so together they moved to Seattle. While there, Jake started a new direction, inventing and developing new types of websites. No longer prototyping model rockets and toys, he was now brainstorming and inventing new websites. One in particular, braingle.com, has been going strong for over 25 years. Braingle publishes brain teasers, trivia and games with much of the content user-generated and edited by volunteers. He also developed Toodledo.com, an online productivity tool to help with tasks, note taking and collaboration. This grew into a small company with a website and apps for both iPhone and Android. Jake ran the company for 12 years from 2006 for 2018 and for a time it was the #1 app in the productivity section of the app store.

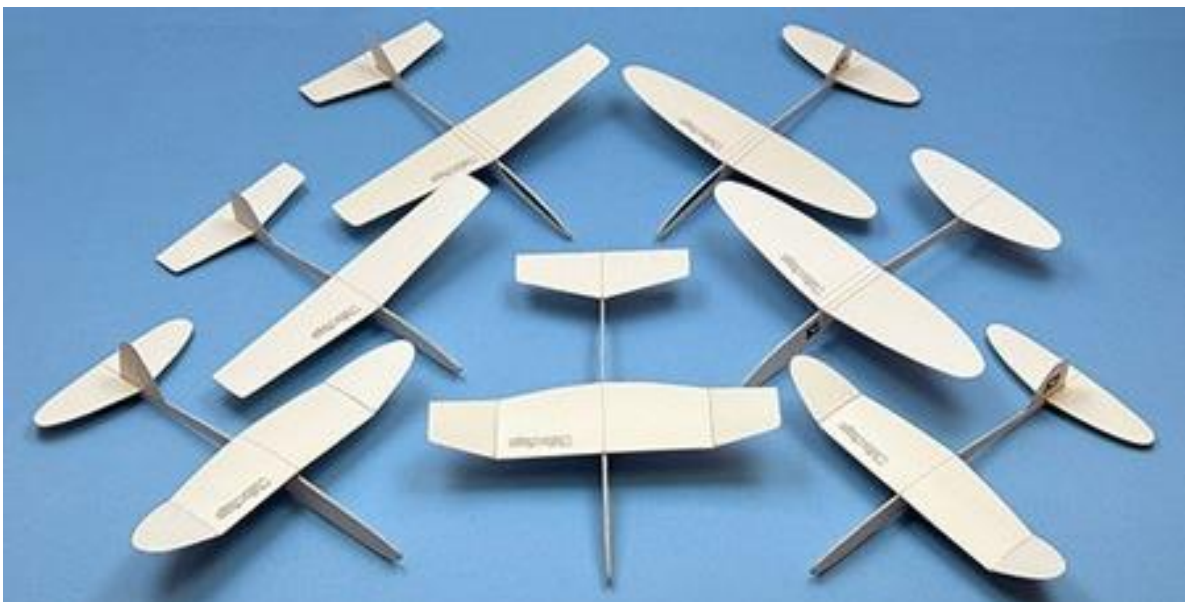
During this time, Jake also had two kids, a daughter in 2007 and a son in 2011. Entertaining them on the weekends became a regular thing and that's when paper airplanes crept back into the game plan. Jake searched for paper airplane websites but really had no luck and those that were offered were terrible. He thought, "Why don't I just build my own" and foldnfly.com was born. Over time, Jake bought many paper airplane books and turned [Fold'N Fly](http://foldnfly.com) into a database of paper airplanes with articles about how to trim them and other activities that can be enjoyed. The website was initially slow to take off but it didn't take long for it to become the #1 website on paper airplanes in Google rankings.

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

By 2022, Jake was looking to expand beyond folded paper airplanes. He remembered the Whitewings gliders from his youth but discovered that they were sadly no longer in production in the USA. He began collecting old Whitewings kits via eBay to study their designs and history. The whitewings.com website was defunct but he emailed their contact for more information. A few years later he finally connected with the person, now retired, who ran the USA division for Whitewings. Soon Jake purchased the Whitewings website and relaunched it as a museum of the history of Whitewings and their importance to the free flight community. Jake then wondered about selling downloadable plans for the Whitewings gliders – this required more investigation about trademarks and ownership. He eventually tracked down the original owners of Whitewings in Japan and over a period of several months negotiated a license to reproduce some of the kits. In 2025, Jake launched a Kickstarter program to fund the re-development and release of these kits in the USA.



Jake Olefsky testing a whitewings model at the local park in Carlsbad.



A selection of Whitewings paper airplanes available through www.whitewings.com

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

During this same effort to re-brand Whitewings, Jake began exploring clubs in the San Diego Area involved with gliders. First, he found the San Diego Orbiters – the main free flight club that operates both outdoors and indoors in the area. He joined and found it to be a fun club. What other clubs are in the area? A Google search turned up the Torrey Pines Gulls. And they happen to have a field in Encinitas very close to where Jake and his family live! Jake sent an email to inquire, and Cliff Hunter replied, inviting him to the next F3L Tow Hook contest at Encinitas. Upon arrival, Jake met Cliff, Chuck Norris, Gary Fogel and others and soon found himself going home with a Gentle Lady offered by Chuck as a gift. Jake flew this for a bit and then replaced it with a Medina. He also built a 1.5m Yellow Jacket (his first RC glider build) and just recently finished a mini-Gentle Lady. He also owns a Polires (thank you John McNeil), a UMX Radian, a Dream Flight Weasel, several foam combat wings, and a 1m Hawk DLG (thank you Bob Hirsch). Jake is now a regular at the Encinitas Flight Center flying with the TPG. Occasionally, you'll find him catapult launching a free flight glider or paper airplane just for fun. Or is that work? One never knows. But work should always be fun and anyone working in paper airplanes has the right idea of work/life balance.



Jake receiving his Jim-/Birkett-built Gentle Lady (Chuck Norris photo)

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Jake Olefsky (And Paul Nibecker) flying at the Poway Flight Center during an F5J Foamy Fun Fly.

Armed with his background in website design, in 2024-2025 Jake took the time to redesign the TPG website. This was a considerable effort and required a whole new approach to the design itself. Working with previous webmaster Steve Hurd, each page was reviewed, and put into a different context, a new calendar page made, etc. with the goal of making the website both more accessible to the public but also more easily managed and updated by members of the TPG Executive Committee.

Given all of his hard work to develop this new website for the Gulls, and for his efforts to revive the Whitewings gliders that many of us flew as kids, the TPG awarded Jake Olefsky with the Modeler of the Year trophy in 2025, an honor shared with Tom Farley that year. Thank you Jake for all you do for TPG!



Jake Olefsky making a landing at one of the TPG foamy fun flies with his UMx Radian. Perhaps we should consider scaling the landing tape to account for the difference in size between UMx and full-size radians! (Bob Hirsch photo).

TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



Tom Farley (left) and Jake Olefsky (center) receiving the TPG Modeler of the Year trophy from TPG President Chuck Norris (right) in December 2025.

"June" Tow Hook Contest Report – John McNeil, CD

We held our "June" Tow Hook contest on May 31. The day was pleasant, and the lift was mixed. We had three new faces: Michael Prager, Steve Hurd, and Amelia Chiavetta. Michael and Steve aren't new pilots, but they are new to Tow Hook. Amelia is a new pilot and flew buddy box with Gary Fogel and is listed as Captain Picard on our score sheet. She is a member of the San Diego State University team who presented their analysis and modifications of a Yellow Jacket at a recent Gulls meeting. She flew that modified Yellow Jacket quite well.

Our tow hook format is open flying in general, so scores are not normalized – 820 points is the maximum you can get. That's two points per second for six minutes plus a 100-point landing. Gary and I decided to fly head-to-head in every round to prepare for our upcoming contest in Albuquerque. You can see from the scores, that Gary won with four six-minute flights. Sometimes during the day, the lift just wasn't there. Other times, there was wave lift that didn't last. If a thermal blew through, you really needed to catch it, because that thermal would break up the wave lift as it passed through.

As usual, we had a good time, some good laughs, and got to fly, which is what it's all about.



Contest winners, Jake Olefsky (3rd, left), John McNeil (2nd, middle) and Gary Fogel (1st, right) (Justin Tolman photo)

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

June DLG Contest Report – Justin Tolman, CD

The June DLG contest was held on June 27th, with 14 pilots (plus one of Gary Fogel's students) joining the fun. Of the 15 attendees, scores were entered by 11 pilots, with Brent Lytle taking 1st place, Milan Bregman in 2nd place and Matt Nelson taking 3rd place. Congratulations to our winners!

We hope to see you at our July DLG contest on the 17th. Register here:

https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4120



DLG pilots group (Bob Hirsch photo)

#	Pilot Name	Total	Diff	Completed Rounds (No Drops In Effect)						
				Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
1	13 Brent Lytle 🇺🇸	6866.7		1000	998.5	906.0	992.3	1000	969.9	1000
2	8 Milan Bregman 🇺🇸	6618.5	-248.2	1000	759.4	1000	1000	859.1	1000	1000
3	12 Matt Nelson 🇺🇸	6354.6	-263.9	771.4	1000	1000	884.5	785.6	978.2	934.9
4	5 William Lalla 🇺🇸	5874.6	-480.0	1000	569.1	1000	1000	1000	719.5	586.0
5	14 Mike Ray	5372.0	-502.6	571.4	725.7	1000	824.8	837.0	854.7	558.4
6	6 Don Lochhead 🇺🇸	5237.6	-134.4	771.4	899.1	888.3	779.1	623.0	937.9	338.8
7	2 Mengchen Li 🇨🇳	4998.3	-239.3	1000	666.7	1000	998.3	333.3	1000	0.0
8	11 Kevin Halle 🇺🇸	4692.8	-305.5	571.4	885.2	946.7	391.7	592.6	672.6	632.6
9	4 Gary Fogel 🇺🇸	3984.7	-708.1	1000	1000	1000	984.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
10	10 Tom Farley 🇺🇸	2861.8	-1122.9	257.1	685.2	1000	306.5	613.0	0.0	0.0
11	7 Malick Hernandez 🇺🇸	0.0	-2861.8	0.0	DNS	DNS	0.0	DNS	0.0	0.0
12	Captain ...c Picard 🇺🇸	0.0		0.0	DNS	DNS	0.0	DNS	0.0	0.0
13	3 Justin Tolman 🇺🇸	0.0		0.0	DNS	DNS	0.0	DNS	0.0	0.0
14	9 Chuck Norris 🇺🇸	0.0		0.0	DNS	DNS	0.0	DNS	0.0	0.0

June DLG Contest Report (continued)



DLG contest winners Milan Bregman (2nd, left), Brent Lytle *1st, middle and Matt Nelson (3rd, right) (Justin Tolman photo)

Club Membership Update – Christoph Efstathiou



Christoph
Efstathiou

Hello Gulls,

This month we welcomed another new member to the club, along with one renewal, bringing us to a total of 97 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.torreyпинesgulls.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 click on [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

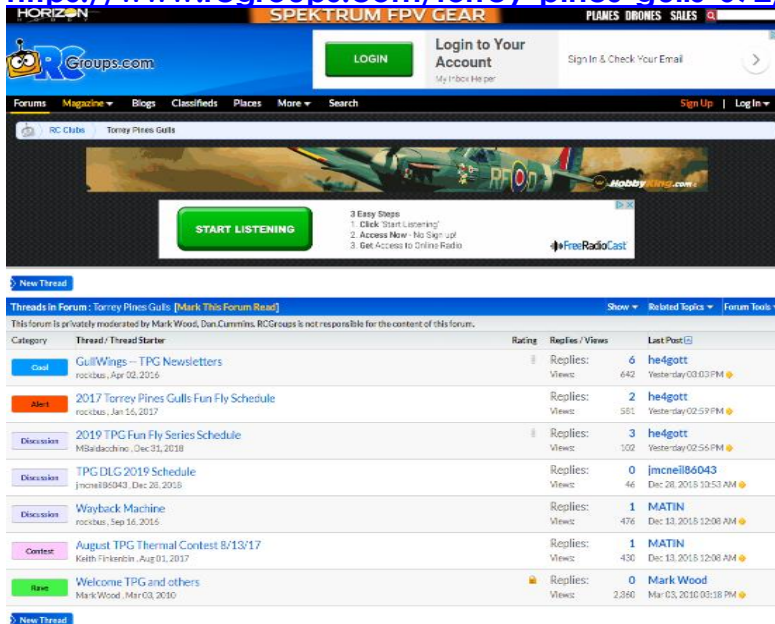
How We Connect (continued)

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	Rating	Replies / Views	Last Post
Goal	GullWings – TPG Newsletters roccas, Apr 02, 2016		Replies: 6 Views: 642	he4gott Yesterday 03:03 PM
Alert	2017 Torrey Pines Gulls Fun Fly Schedule roccas, 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 roccas, 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.

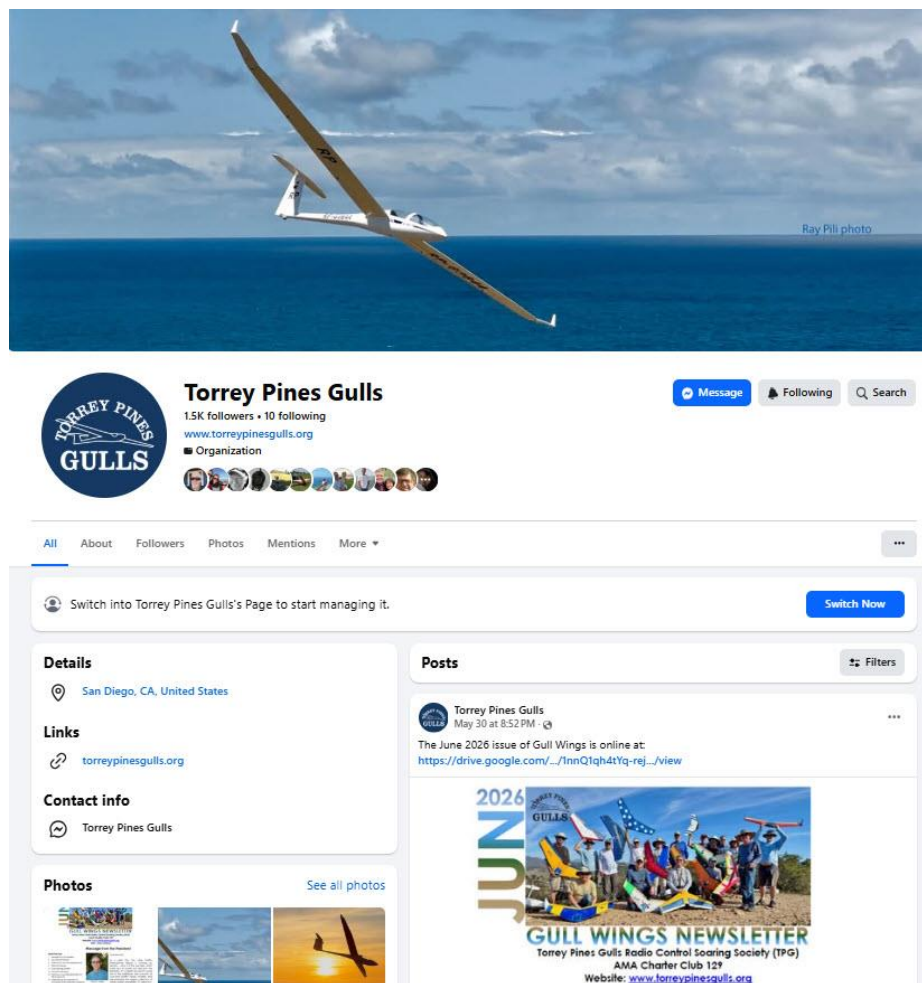
RCGroups allows you to post photos and videos. By subscribing, you can keep up with the latest events, club activities and member postings.

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/>

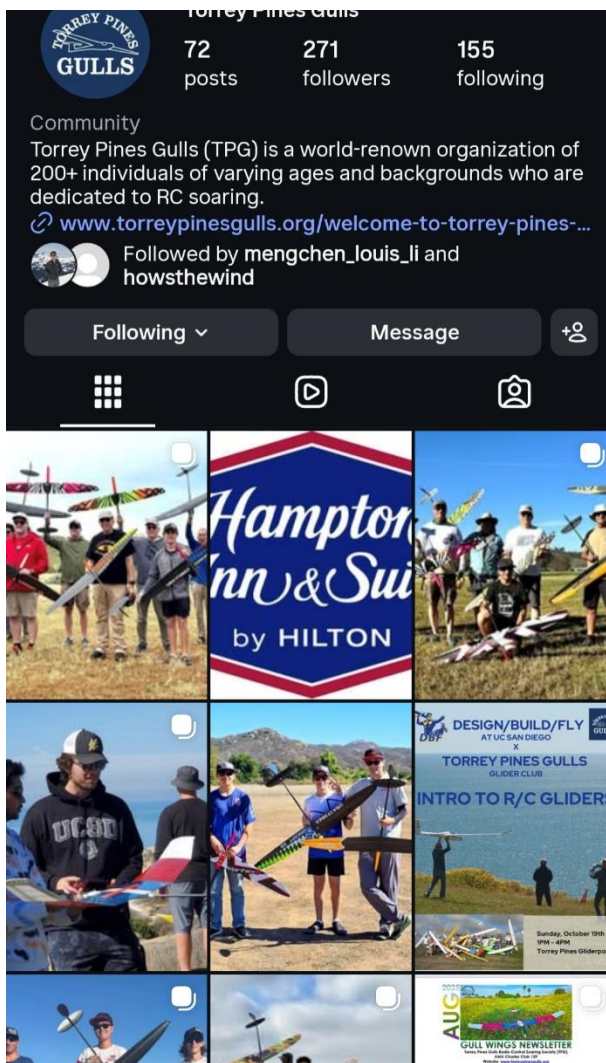


How We Connect (continued)



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)



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



Brian Laird launching his Slipstream at Cajon (Greg Houck photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Flying over Torrey (Bob Hirsch photo photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Joe Cormier's Slopestream (flown by Brian Laird over Cajon (Greg Houck photo)



Joe Cormier launching a Matin Taraz-designed Me Comet piloted by Brian Laird (Greg Houck photo)

Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



July Winner – Alvaro Corzo launching Aaron Wallace's ASW-27 (David Fierro photo)



Quote of the Month:

“Freedom lies in being bold.”

~ Robert Frost



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