

2021

FEB



# GULL WINGS NEWSLETTER

Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society (TPG)  
AMA Charter Club 129

Website: [www.torreypinesgulls.org](http://www.torreypinesgulls.org)

Editor – Dale Gottdank

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## Message from the President



Ian Cummings

If you haven't renewed your membership with AMA and the Torrey Pines Gulls, please take care of that right away. AMA needs to be renewed first to qualify for TPG renewal. Keys to the gates at the Encinitas and Poway fields will be changed this month. You'll receive a new key with your renewal. Don't get locked out. If you fly at

Torrey, you'll need both current memberships as well as a signed waiver with the Gliderport. You will also receive a lanyard to attach and proudly display your AMA and TPG cards while flying at Torrey.

Unfortunately, recent contests and Fun-Flys have all been cancelled due to State restrictions on organized events that include groups of people. I'm hoping we will get back to those soon. In the meantime, all TPG fields are open, so it's a good time to get out for practice and/or fly for fun. Please, always wear a mask when others are around. Hopefully event restrictions will be lifted soon. Stay tuned.

Also, we're bringing back general membership meetings! Our first meeting is coming up in a few weeks. Check out the announcement on the next page.

Happy Landings,

Ian

## TPG Virtual General Membership Meetings in 2021 – Gary Fogel

As it is the case that we had a great time at our TPG holiday party via Zoom, we're going to try to build on that with some quarterly/bimonthly Zoom meetings for the general membership in 2021.

These are intended to be a way where we can get together and enjoy the company of others despite all of the pandemic stuff. Each meeting, we hope to have a new speaker provide us with some information and a great dialog.

The first of these will be held on February 23 at 6:00pm PST via Zoom. We'll have former TPGer, RC soaring guru, and videographer extraordinaire Paul Naton of Radio Carbon Art. Further details on the Zoom link to follow via TPG Google Groups. But be sure to mark your calendars now for what should be a fun and very informative evening!



Here is Paul Naton's YouTube video channel

<https://www.youtube.com/user/pnaton>

And a really nice description of Paul's background

<https://www.radiocarbonart.com/about-rca/>

## Club Meetings, Contests and Activities

The Torrey Pines Gulls hosts monthly contests, fun-fly events, LSF (League of Silent Flight)) Soaring Accomplishment Program and onsite clinics.

***This year, after a long hiatus, we're bringing back club meetings! Quarterly meetings via Zoom will include guest speakers, show-and-tell and more!***

Be on the lookout for upcoming details and scheduling for all TPG and related events in the Newsletter and on the Torrey Pines Gulls website at:

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org> and <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/calendar/>



## Newsletter This Month - Dale Gottdank



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!

February Issue highlights include:

- [Epic Wind Day at Torrey by Ian Cummings and Greg Houck](#)
- [Profile of 1997 Modeler of the Year Don Richmond by Gary Fogel](#)
- [New For Sale/Wanted Section](#)

Please send in your articles or photos ([submit@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:submit@torreypinesgulls.org)) by the 25<sup>th</sup> 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. The newsletter can be found on the Torrey Pines Gulls website at <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org>.



## Club Membership Update – Cliff Hunter



Cliff Hunter

Hello Gulls,

*If you have not renewed your club membership, the locks to Poway and Encinitas gates will be changed February 1, 2021. If you fly the Gliderport, there is a new policy. You must wear a lanyard with your membership card and Torrey Pines Rated printed on your card for safety reasons. You will not have access to those two fields and the Gliderport without your renewal.*

As of January 25, 2021 have received 84 renewals of our current members. Our membership for 2020 was 135 members. That means we have 51 club members that need to renew. Please renew as soon as possible using our web site at <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/membership/>

Please contact me ([membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org)) if you have not received a 2021 renewal membership card, key and lanyard. The key gives you access to the gates at our Encinitas and Poway flying sites. Locks will be changed February 1, 2021. The lanyard allows you to safely fly at Torrey Pines Gliderport. All flying sites (Torrey Pines, Encinitas and Poway) are maintained by club members.

### Membership Processing:

You should have received a renewal notice using the new TPG Google Group email process. If you have not signed up for the TPG Google Group you will be sent an individual email. Please use the following link when renewing your membership:

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

We request online payment via PayPal, which allows payment using PayPal, debit/credit card.

However, if you chose to pay by check or cash, please email me at: [membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org) and I will mail you a membership application form. When the form is completed, please mail your membership application and payment using the provided preaddressed return envelope.

Annual Membership Dues are as follows:

- Full Members – \$60 per year
- Youth Members (19 years or younger) – \$5 per year
- Student Members (full-time) – \$30 per year
- Receive a credit of up to \$20 on your annual dues. \$10 per each half-day working at any TPG flying field

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.

## Club Membership Update (continued)

### Year-end Activity Membership Summary 2021

The following table below is a summary of membership activities based on completed registration forms received from members.

Total Members as of 1-25-2021	84
*Torrey Pines Gliderport Rated Pilots	42
*DLG/F3K	29
*Thermal Duration	30
*Scale	15
*F5J/ALES	19
*League of Silent Flight (LSF)	17
Average Club Member Age	51
TPG Google Group Members	105

\*Note: Most members fly multiple disciplines.

The Torrey Pines Gulls has the following types of membership:

**Full Members.** Full Members of the Society shall consist of those persons who are and remain Full members of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA), 5161 East Memorial Drive, Muncie IN 47302, have signified their interest in model aeronautics and a desire to be such a member of the Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society, Inc. and have paid all requisite dues.

**Youth Members.** Youth members of the Society shall consist of those persons who are 19 years or younger and remain Youth members of the AMA, have signified their interest in model aeronautics and a desire to be such a member of the Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society, Inc. and have paid all requisite dues.

Your yearly membership allows TPG to continue to provide you with:

- Access to three Flying Fields in La Jolla (Torrey Pines Gliderport), Encinitas and Poway.
- Monthly (or thereabouts) fun-fly events held at the world famous Torrey Pines Gliderport, and events at our Poway and Encinitas Flight Centers, where members will have ample opportunities to take advantage of our trio of excellent flying sites. Be on the lookout for upcoming details and scheduling.
- A group of RC soaring pilots who can answer just about any question you might ask, and do it with a smile.
- Contests that bring out world class competitors from around the globe.
- Competition and help for you, regardless of your skill level.
- A yearly holiday party to gather with flying buddies, friends and family.
- A website for current and past information [www.torreypinesgulls.org](http://www.torreypinesgulls.org)
- A monthly newsletter with updated information, contest reports and interesting articles to help keep members informed.
- We are an AMA Chartered Club, #129, with benefits such as field Insurance, etc.

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

## Google Groups – Stayin~~n~~ Connected

**Don't forget to join** 

For all current and recently joined TPG members:

In the past year, Yahoo Groups announced that it would no longer be supporting groups. In order to maintain a line of communication among members, during 2020 we have established 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](mailto: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!

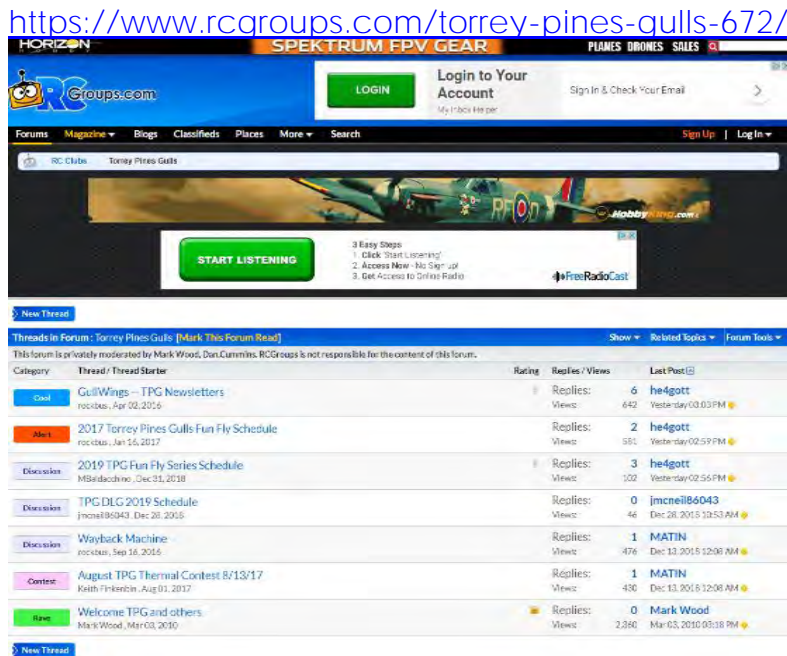
## RCGroups – Torrey Pines Gulls Forum

# 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
Good	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: 581	he4gott Yesterday 02:59 PM
Discussion	2019 TPG Fun Fly Series Schedule MBarbadoine, Dec 31, 2018		Replies: 3 Views: 102	he4gott Yesterday 02:56 PM
Discussion	TPG DLG 2019 Schedule jmcnel86043, Dec 28, 2018		Replies: 0 Views: 46	jmcnel86043 Dec 28, 2018 12:53 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 Thierstein, Aug 01, 2017		Replies: 1 Views: 430	MATIN Dec 13, 2018 12:08 AM
None	Welcome TPG and others MarkWood, Mar 03, 2010		Replies: 0 Views: 2,360	Mark Wood Mar 03, 2010 09:18 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.

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



## What do YOU think?

You can express your opinion at: [www.torreypinesgulls.org](http://www.torreypinesgulls.org).

We have a [QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS](#) link in the drop-down menu that appears when you scroll over [TORREY PINES GULLS](#) next to [LOCATIONS, CALENDAR, MEMBERSHIP...](#) If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc. for the board, here's your chance.

## 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/>

The screenshot displays the Facebook profile for Torrey Pines Gulls. The page includes a navigation bar with 'Page', 'Inbox', 'Notifications', 'Insights', 'Publishing Tools', 'Ad Center', and 'More'. The main content area features a large photo of two people working on a large white and red RC glider in an open field. Below the photo are interaction buttons for 'Liked', 'Following', and 'Share'. A 'Create' section offers options for 'Live', 'Event', 'Offer', and 'Job'. A post from 'Torrey Pines Gulls' is visible, dated February 2, 2020, with text about an RC article and a link to the newsletter. The right sidebar shows 'Visitor Posts' from Dale Gottdank and Jack Zabawa. A 'Chat' button is in the bottom right corner.



## Club Flying Site 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.



## News from the Slope – Mark Baldacchino, Slope Coordinator



Mark Baldacchino

Happy February, TP Gulls!



As I'm writing this article, the first of three storms is rolling through San Diego – finally! The Jetstream decided to be nice and bring some rain and wind for a change. With rain, comes sprouting weeds, so please be on the look out on RCGroups for a weed hacking day in the near future.

There not a lot to report on the slope news as the wind has been fickle, and I had to cancel our first Fun Fly due to COVID; don't lose hope – we're getting closer to normality. ☺

A few of you have been out flying lately, and have taken pictures of the Landing Zone warning signs and the caution tape; here's one below that my daughter took.



Natalie Baldacchino photo

## News from the Slope (continued)

Don't be alarmed that there was a crime scene out there, but rather that one of the paraglider pilots took it upon himself to make these signs, used sprinkler locating flags, and caution tape all the way around the LZ. We'll see how effective this is and how long it lasts, but at least it's something to detour passersby from walking through. The first day we put the first few rolls of AstroTurf we installed for a landing strip, I had to avoid colliding with not one, but three different people, walking in three different directions, flying Ray's KA-8 on approach. I hope these signs do the job for everyone's safety.

As mentioned before in prior newsletters, **you'll be required to show your TPG card at all times while flying that the Gliderport.** You should've received a nice lanyard with your club card, so wear it proudly, and let's be safe. Also, don't forget to watch the video and sign the waivers at the Gliderport.

TPG Gliderport Schedule for 2021:

- Feb 20th – Fly 'n Swap – A day to Fly + Swap Meet. Clean out your garages and make room for more birds
- Mar 13th – Scale Planes – Both TPG & TPSSS Fun Fly Day
- Apr 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday – This date is tentative, and subject to change – Torrey Pines Classic F3F Race. Open to all, register on the Vault.
- May 8<sup>th</sup> – Foamies – Ahi's, Alulas, KA-8's, Radians – if it's foam, this is your day.
- June 5<sup>th</sup> – Katie Martin Int'l Tribute – Not a Gulls Only Fun Fly event, but International Event
- July 24<sup>th</sup> – Aerobatics Day – TWF/ PNF – Jesters, Ahi's, Shrikes; whatever turns on a dime
- Aug 21<sup>st</sup> – TPG 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Again. Rescheduled from 2020 Run-What-You-Brung
- Sept 25<sup>th</sup> – LSF & Old School Vintage/Classic Woodies – Balsa BOTs, Olys, Sagittas – whatever is built-up wood
- Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> – Landing Contest – let's see who's the top three at landing on our new strip. Ribbons for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Nov 27<sup>th</sup> – No Shopping Saturday – a couple of days after Thanksgiving to get out of the house

Stay safe, and Blue Skies!

Best Regards,

Mark Baldacchino  
Slope Coordinator



## Club Competition Activity

### Thermal Duration / F5J

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Tom Watson

#### TD Coordinator – Tom Watson

For Thermal Duration and F5J contest dates, check the calendar on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/calendar/>

For contest rules, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/torrey-pines-gulls-thermal-competition-rules/>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2021 TPG TD & F5J contest schedule thread for the latest contest news:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?3771517-2021-Torrey-Pines-Gulls-TD-F5J-contest-schedule>

or contact Tom Watson at [thermal@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:thermal@torreypinesgulls.org)

### Hand Launch / DLG / F3K

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Chuck Norris

#### DLG Coordinator – Chuck Norris

For DLG contest dates, check the calendar on the Torrey Pines Gulls website: <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/calendar/>

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming Hand Launch/DLG contests, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website: <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/discus-launch-glider-series/>

Additional information will be shown in the F3X Vault site ([https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=location&function=location\\_view&location\\_id=2002](https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=location&function=location_view&location_id=2002)) as TPG coordinates with the Vault for contest sign-ups, tasks, results, etc.

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2021 Torrey Pines Gulls DLG Contest/Clinic Series thread for the latest contest news:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?3798531-2021-Torrey-Pines-Gulls-Contest-Clinic-Series>

or contact Chuck Norris at [dlg@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:dlg@torreypinesgulls.org)



## Club Competition Activity (continued)

### F5J Explained

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Mike Smith

#### CD Mike Smith

This event is open to all electric sailplanes, so anyone with an electric model (Radian, Sport model, etc.) can give it a try. However, it is important to state that all airplanes must be equipped with an approved F5J Competition Altimeter.

If you don't have one, SoaringUSA sells several for around \$60. Click here to check out the Altis Nano:

<https://www.soaringusa.com/Altis-Competition-Altimeter-NANO.html>

Entry Fee is \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members. Two pilot classes will be flown: *Sportsman and Expert*.

To learn more about F5J, follow this link:

<http://www.f5j-usa.com/f5j-primer/>

For F5J and Thermal Duration contest dates, check the calendar on the Torrey Pines Gulls website: <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/calendar/>

Mike Smith, CD

## LSF Report – Ray Pili



Hi Gulls,

There are no scheduled LSF events for February. Depending upon the level of interest among club members, we hope to continue the LSF Program during 2021.

Here's some general information for you.

This table outlines the various tasks required for each level. (Source: <https://www.silentflight.org/index.php/lsf-program/lsf-tasks>)

Requirements	Primary	Intermediate			Advanced
Level	I	II	III	IV	V
Thermal Duration	5 min.	15 min.	30 min	1 hr	2 hrs.
Slope Duration	15 min.*	1 Hr.*	2 hrs.*	4 hrs.*	8 hrs.
Precision Spot Landing	5 landings 3m (9.84 ft) or less	10 landings 1.5m (4.92 ft. or less)	None	None	None
Goal and Return	None	None	1km (0.62 mi.)	2km (1.24 mi.)	10km(6.2 mi)
Competition	None	6 contests** w/ 1 place or 3,000 pts	6 contests** w/ 2 place or 4,500 pts	6 contests** w/ 2 places and 1 win or 6,000 pts	6 contests** with 12,000 points including 3 wins

As you can see, Level I is not that difficult if you are a thermal pilot. If you fly slope only, that 5 min. thermal will tear you down. With Poway and Torrey within fairly close proximity, I believe someone local can complete Level I in one day.

If you are interested in participating in a scheduled LSF event, bring your AMA card, a thermal plane or e-thermal glider such as the E-flite Radian and download a copy of the Accomplishment Vouchers (SAP or ESAP) from the LSF site (<https://www.silentflight.org/index.php/lsf-program/lsf-tasks>). The events are free; you don't have to be a Gulls member.

## LSF Report (continued)

The Vouchers describe in more detail what each task involves and the credentials of your witnesses.

Submittal of a completed voucher is as follows:

1. Email the LSF Secretary John Marien: [john@ne-aero.com](mailto:john@ne-aero.com) a clear photo, or PDF scan of your completed (and signed by witnesses) Voucher.

**That's it. No more sending money or sending your original hard copy.**

John will then review your voucher and email you your acceptance or rejection of the voucher submission. If for some reason your voucher is rejected, you will have to adjudicate rejections with John.

Another nice change is while you are waiting for a reply you can download a new voucher and start on the next level.

### LSF Procedures for Poway

We will follow the COVID-19 rules outlined by Chuck Norris for the Poway DLG contests. I paraphrase:

- 1) Pilots must have a mask when arriving at the field.
- 2) Masks are required when you are within 6 feet of separation such as during pilots meeting.
- 3) Masks are optional when flying or timing, as long as the 6 feet separation is maintained.
- 4) Hand Sanitizers/disinfectant wipes will be provided for users of high starts and winches and any measuring devices used.
- 5) Everyone is encouraged to bring their own writing utensils to record results and to sign as witness.
- 6) Maintain 6 feet separation between pilots and timers at all times.
- 7) Please stay home if you do not feel well or have any symptoms associated with Covid-19.

As a reminder, LSF is a 5 level program for RC Glider Pilots. Each level has increasingly more difficult tasks. LSF involves Slope flying, Thermal flying, Spot landings and Contest participation. Each level must be completed before proceeding to the next. Makes for a well-rounded RC Glider pilot.

The pure glider program is called SAP (Soaring Accomplishment Program).

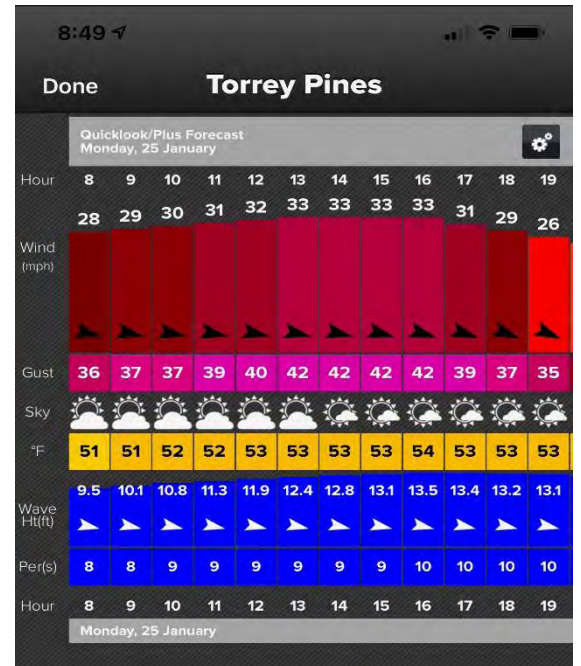
Blue Skies,

Ray Pili  
LSF Coordinator  
[lsf@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:lsf@torreypinesgulls.org)

## Epic Wind Day at Torrey – Ian Cummings and Greg Houck

From Ian Cummings:

Monday, Jan 25, 2021 brought us the windiest day I've ever experienced at Torrey Pines. After a week of promising forecasts for big wind, some of the guys were clearing their calendars, requesting time off from work, and prepping gliders for the day. It was time for the "dawn patrol". Of course, rain was predicted as well. One of the great times to fly Torrey is on those rare days when the wind is strong and steady in the morning as the sun rises, even if rain squalls are passing through. Anything above 12-15 MPH discourages all or most of the manned aircraft, so we have the skies to ourselves. There's an added advantage of having the sun at our backs. Often it's a cat and mouse game with the rain; flying, then running for cover in the car, followed by another session with the clearing winds. The views at Torrey are so good you can often see the rain coming from half an hour out.



Ian Cummings photo

Monday was an exceptional day. Tom Drake was the first "dawn patrol" RC pilot there, followed by Ian Cummings, Ray Pili, and Jim Birkett. Everyone brought their heaviest gliders, keeping in mind there could be some carnage on a day like this. The wind was so intense you had to lean into it to stay on balance. At one point it was measured at a steady 45 mph with a gust at 75mph.



Ian taking a speed reading (Ray Pili photo)



Ian Cummings photo



## Epic Wind Day at Torrey (continued)

Ian was the first to launch, with Tom giving Ian's ballasted Cyril F3F a toss. It immediately got blown back and was landed abruptly, but safely. That's a heavy plane to get blown back so easily. Ray was the next out, self-launching his 94 oz. Joe Manor D-60, a very stout plane designed for high-speed DS'ing. Ray tore up the skies and put on quite a show, with specked out pumps and screeching runs along the edge. He finally had to land when his eyes started tearing up from the wind. Whoo-hoo, still no carnage.



Ray holding on tight to his Joe Manor D-60 (Ian Cummings photo)



The windsock at Torrey with Scripps Pier and some serious surf in the background (Ian Cummings photo)

## Epic Wind Day at Torrey (continued)

Mike Frandsen arrived shortly and blew everyone away by launching his 28 oz. self-made, carbon fiber, twisty wing, Jester. Mike threw it into the wind, only to have it twist to inverted when it left his hands. He did an amazing job of smoothly rolling it around and punching back through the edge sheer, never losing control. After that, he put on an aerial show with endless rolls, loops, and speed runs. He followed with a textbook harrier landing. Ray caught it all on video with some great slow-mo coverage of the launch. Phil Davy did some editing and added some sound and....enjoy! <https://vimeo.com/504580401>



Mike's inverted launch (Ian Cummings photo)

Phil Davy and Ward Hagaman also arrived and we had a good time with some slope trash-talk (or is that slope-trash talk?) The second shift arrived later in the day with some great PSS action, but I was at home warming up and missed it.

From Greg Houck:

The afternoon was much like the morning. I arrived late morning after some of the dawn patrol had left for warmer venues. Turns out that even if the ambient temperature is in the low to mid-fifties, with steady 50+ mph winds, even San Diego can have wind chill! Most folks opted for heavy jackets, wool beanies, and long pants instead of their normal t-shirts, ball caps, and shorts. Even well attired, we often retired into the warmth of a vehicle! The good news is the earlier rains had wetted down the face of the cliff. That prevented much of the normal "sandblasting" that occurs when the wind goes big!



## Epic Wind Day at Torrey (continued)

Mike, Jim and Ward both hung around to watch and participate in the afternoon follies. Brian Laird heard through the grapevine about the conditions and drove down from Riverside. Joe Cormier, Tom Drake, Ed Blodgett, and even Martin Taraz woke up for the epic day!

As described by Ian, launching in these conditions is tricky. I was fortunate that Mike F. did the honors for me. He'd obviously figured out how, because he made four perfect tosses for me! His technique was to get a 5-7 yard running start and give my PSS planes a heave. The result was about a 3-4 yard penetration forward and 75+ foot straight up elevator ride!

There was some carnage in the afternoon. My 60+ ounce Hellcat developed "some" aileron flutter and decided to convert from a one piece plane to a two piece removable wing! A relatively easy fix. The flutter was traced back to the control rods being too flimsy for the weight and wind. I'll beef them up next time.



An unfortunate mid-air with my Slopestream and Joe's BD5 (he wasn't at the controls) resulted in his removable wing being separated from the fuse. Those fuses make a spectacular lawn dart! Mike F. (busy guy- seems to be everywhere) found the fuse in the bushes and then the wing a couple hundred yards past the golf course fence. The same golf course collected a Typhoon's errant landing as well.

Brian did some smooth flying as well. He clocked the winds at mid-50's, gusting to nearly 60 mph. His landing was boring... just the way we all like them. Mike flew his Zephyr46 several times. I believe it only weighs in the mid to high 30's oz. Tore holes in the sky. Good thing nobody told him it isn't designed to fly like a Jester!

It was definitely one of those days that we'll talk about for years! Congratulations to everyone who got to experience it, and to those who missed it... next time don't!

## TPG History: The Trophy – Gary Fogel



### This Month: Don Richmond, 1997 Modeler of the Year

In a manner similar to Ron Scharck whom I wrote about last month, I had the pleasure of interviewing Don Richmond as part of the development of this article. Don was very kind to provide lots of material!! He has led a fascinating career in naval aviation and in retirement. What follows is a write-up that is partly mine but mostly based on his own words. I hope you enjoy reading this very impressive biography of one of our most special members!

Don grew up on a farm in Upstate New York in the late '30's and '40's, at a time that was near the end of the "barnstorming era" where airplanes were still rare and fascinating. After WWII, Don convinced his mother to finance the acquisition of a stick and paper model airplane kit.

She wasn't that keen on the idea and did not like the smell of the glue and later the dope. But Dons pleading prevailed and for a couple of months during the winter he toiled, grumbled and cried (too young to curse) as the parts were put together. It was a free flight plane with plenty of dihedral, an .049 motor covered with red and white silkspan.

On a beautiful spring day the model was trimmed for a gentle glide, a few ounces of fuel added and the motor started. A gentle toss into the wind and it was off in a gentle climbing turn. Don recalled, "What I know today as about 300 feet it was still climbing. Perhaps somewhere around 4-500 feet the motor stopped (too much fuel) and a nice turn in the other direction followed. Wait – it's still climbing. How can that be??





## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

The motor is stopped. But climb it did. Across the field, across the road, over the woods (He was following) and over the swamp – never to be seen again.”

Don's first thermal wasn't his last but at the time, financing another model airplane for the hobby wasn't in the cards. Roughly ten years later, in 1957, Don enlisted in the Navy and proceeded through the Naval Flight Training Program at NAS Pensacola. He would later go on to fly a wide variety of fixed-wing aircraft including the T-28 Trojan, T-34 Mentor, C-45 Expeditor, HU-16 Albatross, T-1A Seastar, FJ-2/4 Fury, T-39D Saberliner and the C-12 Huron. While in Pensacola, he met his future wife Brenda. Brenda had two younger brothers ages 12 and 10. Don saw the opportunity to reengage with model aviation and purchased a control line kit to build with the boys. After considerable building, Don recalled, “We stretched out the control lines checked for proper operation and proceeded to start the engine. We had agreed to have the younger brother hold the plane while the older boy and I tried to fly it. The moment arrived, the signal was given and the model moved smartly into the wind. Up and up but wait – it's doing a wing over – it's headed for us – run!! It flew right through the area where we had stood, stretched out the control lines and crashed at the edge of the park. A review revealed that we had forgotten to put some lead in the outboard wing to balance the weight of the control lines. Eventually it flew successfully albeit dizzyingly.”

While in Navy flight training, in 1960 Don made a transition from fixed-wing aircraft to helicopters. Over his career he became one of the more accomplished helicopter pilots in the Navy, flying many types and stationed at a variety of locations. He flew the HTL-4 Sioux (a variety of the Bell H-13 similar to the ones used on the TV show M.A.S.H.), Piasecki H-25/HUP Retriever, the H-19 Chickasaw, H-34 Seahorse, H-53 Sea Stallion and HUK-1 Huskie. He flew many hours in the SH-3 Sea King while commanding two squadrons and completing a deployment to the Western Pacific with USS Enterprise and Airwing 15. He attended U.S. Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey, California in 1966, graduating with a B.S. in engineering science in 1968. After this he was assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Four (HS-4) in San Diego.



Bell HTL-4 Sioux

## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



During this time, HS-4 was assigned the task of retrieving Apollo 8 astronauts after their splashdown in December, 1968, using the SH-3D helicopters. For the Apollo 11 mission, LCDR Richmond was assigned the task of piloting one of the helicopters to retrieve the astronauts from the Pacific on their return from the Moon. Following extensive training with a boilerplate steel replica of the Apollo command module, locator beacon, and specially trained SEAL teams to secure the capsule with floats, Richmond took off from the deck of the USS Hornet in one of four Sikorsky SH-3 Sea King helicopters. Their mission put them 30 to 40 miles away from the carrier, staggered in the likely vicinity of where Apollo 11 would return. **Richmond's helicopter happened to be the one closest to the eventual re-entry trajectory and they were the first to observe the capsule with its parachutes as it came out of the clouds and splashed down. A front row seat to history, the first humans to see the re-entry first hand.**

Photo at left shows the recovery of the Apollo 11 astronauts using a Sky King helicopter. The heli that Don flew was not #66, but he was commander of one of the other three helicopters on the pickup mission.

<https://www.navyhistory.org/2012/02/navy-photographer-apollo-11-recovery/>

## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

LCDR Richmond continued in the Navy, amassing over 6000 accident-free flight hours, having qualified in more than 30 aircraft from prop to heli to jet, and having earned the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Battle Efficiency "E", Navy Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Medal, and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. He had command of HS-2, served a tour in the Pentagon and had command of HS-10 in San Diego. For a time he was on the staff of the Commander of the Naval Air Force, US Pacific Fleet in San Diego into the 1980s. From 1982-1984 he was the Commanding Officer of NAS Alameda. He finally retired from the Navy in 1986.

In 1989, Don's oldest daughter and her husband came to San Diego for the Christmas holidays. Given both Don and the son-in-law shared an engineering background, Don thought once again that perhaps a model airplane project would be fun. At a hobby shop in Encinitas, he purchased a Kyosho 2000, a 2 meter span RC motor glider with a 03 motor running on 6 NiCd batteries. Don recalled:

"A couple of days for us working together to assemble and shop test it and it was time for the flight test. We drew straws to see who would go first. I won the honor. Motor and controls checked well so it was tossed into the wind. Almost immediately I wished we had put some color on the white wings!

I managed to make a couple of turns and then tried a landing. Overshot the first attempt and did a touch and go on a chicken coop on the second attempt. This unfortunately broke the folding prop. In those days no replacement parts existed for electric powered sailplanes. With some MacGyver like tinkering a fixed prop was fitted so son-in-law Matt could have his turn the next day.



Captain Donald G. Richmond, USN.

<https://nara.getarchive.net/media/capt-donald-g-richmond-usn-covered-1812f4>



## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

We put some color on the wing before the next flight and I cautioned him not to let it get too far away before turning back. Well he tried but to no avail. He could not keep it coming towards us. Away it went into the upper reaches of a neighbor's Eucalyptus tree. Approaching said neighbor with a big smile and a question about the location of our model, they assured us it had passed overhead and landed at the Carlsbad airport. After a quick scan we spotted a wing in the tree and the fuse standing up in the garden next to the tomato plant!"

After that experience Don was hooked on RC. He increased the inventory of electric-powered aircraft, flying with a loosely organized group of RCers in Carlsbad. One of these RCers was Ray Smith, a member of the Torrey Pines Gulls. Ray helped Don as an instructor but also steered Don towards RC gliders. Soon Don purchased a House of Balsa 2x4 and a Goldberg Gentle Lady. He later continued with electric by adding a Mini-Challenger and an electrified Gentle Lady.

Don attended his first TPG meeting, in January of 1991. He was impressed by the number of people at the meetings, the exchange of information, and friendly camaraderie. He attended his first thermal duration contest soon thereafter, flying a used Sagitta 900. At the time, TPG hosted some of its TD contests at Montgomery-Waller Park and this first contest was at that location. Don recalled, "I invited my wife and children to come and watch. Not being familiar with the winch procedures, I had others run the winch while I flew the model. Things went well for a couple of launches and then disaster! In an effort to gain more altitude in the zoom, I pulled too hard. One wing separated and then the other while the fuse became a lawn dart. The family was not impressed and rarely attended other contests. Oh well!!"

Fortunately, Ron Scharck joined the TPG in 1992 and together Ron and Don used considerable efforts to galvanize club activities. At the time it seemed that the club lacked a "base" for thermal operations with activities at several sites including Hourglass Field (Mira Mesa), Montgomery-Waller (Chula Vista), Bay Terraces Community Park (South Bay) and with the North County Clouds at their field in San Marcos. A new thermal field at Poway was identified by Jim Bolen with arrangements made for TPG's use starting in about 1993. This helped to centralize activities and bring club members together. Don, Ron, George Joy, Mike Smith, and others did a lot of the work to help prep the field for thermalling (at the time this field was to the south of where we fly today, in what is now the area with the horse corral).

In retirement from active duty in the Navy, Don, and his business partner, started up a computer hardware/software company called Scott Systems. At the same time TPG started up the International Hand Launch Glider Festival. Fortunately for TPG, Don's lead programmer at the company was also an R/C pilot, and Don convinced him to write a program to build the rounds and heats from random selection for the IHLGF and to compute scores upon completion.

## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

Meanwhile, Don recorded a timing program in his home bedroom so that the various countdown requirements for the different rounds could be played over an audio speaker. According to Don, “My dear wife thought I had lost it!!” This all worked out well with Don’s wife Brenda helping with the scoring during the first handful of IHLGFs at Poway. These important tools were later re-designed by Tom Clarkson.

Don continued to build and fly various RC sailplanes including an Alcyone, Climmax, Compulsion, Addiction and other sailplanes. This changed the year that Fred Sage brought a new R&R Genesis to one of the club meetings. Don ordered one immediately and flew it in many contests. But “one day at Poway the launch was imperfect, the model stalled and broke hard left. You may recall a utility pole just to the left of the launch area. Well the impact was tremendous! It rained fiberglass for five minutes as pieces and parts fluttered to the ground. Gone in a heartbeat! The good news was that we got to see how the molded processes worked inside the wing. Lots and lots of splooge!!”



Joe Wurts (left), Larry Jolly (middle), and Don Richmond (right) at the 1993 Nationals accepting the Dan Pruss Memorial Team Award, presented to the best scoring three-person team from the same AMA chartered club based on the results of their competition in both the 2-Meter and Unlimited Events

The photo at left is from the 1993 Nationals. As related by Ron Scharck, the story goes:

“Realizing that neither of his new teammates were currently TPG members, Don, prior to the beginning of competition, officially recruited Joe and Larry as our two newest TPG members. Great recruiting job, Don!

Done as more of a “lark by three guys that had nothing better to do” than seriously contemplating winning, the TPG team, carried by the stellar performances of Joe Wurts and Larry Jolly, won the 2003 Dan Pruss Memorial Team Award. As Don said to me, “Joe and Larry are not only good fliers, but are extremely strong to have carried me for four days and still finished ahead of everyone. A great thrill for me!” Don, everybody has their role. Yours is Membership Recruitment!

## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

As a side note, the names of TPG members have been recorded in the pages of the AMA National Championship and World Championship records many times over the years. It is this legacy, borne out of national and international competition that has helped make the name of Torrey Pines Gulls known and respected world-wide."

In 1994, Don Richmond was part of the team that helped run the soaring NATS at Lubbock, Texas along with George Joy and Ron Scharck. Since that time Don has attended every RC soaring Nationals with the exception of 1997, 2011, and of course 2020 because of the pandemic. He flies "all the events" and has placed several times, winning electric unlimited one year and 1/2A sailplane. He remembers the drives from San Diego to Muncie and back with Ron Scharck as being great times but long drives. Between Don, Ron, and Arthur Markiewicz, some great stories could be told.

Don started an internet company, Hilaunch.com, to provide small hard to get commodities to the RC soaring community such as CF spar tubes, aluminum joiners, horns, bell cranks, tape, etc. In the 1994 Don also purchased a Supra and enjoyed flying it at many contests. He jumped into ALES/F5J in the mid-2000s, with the purchase of a Maxa, and later a Maxa light, a Volo, a Plus, a Plus X, and more recently a Vixen 2. He also enjoys aerotowing, both the soaring part and the towing part. In 2010, Don and his wife Brenda moved to Virginia Beach, VA to be closer to their three children and seven grandchildren. Unfortunately, Brenda passed of liver cancer in 2011. But Don continues to enjoy RC soaring in a variety of forms, and as he said "I started R/C flying when I was 54 and continue at almost age 86. My motto: It's just a number. You are never too old!!"



Cool hand Luke Don Richmond using a buddy box at Torrey Pines to train some hopeful TPG future members in 1997.



## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)



A current photo of Don Richmond with his beautiful Astro Jeff, suitable for nostalgia class at the Nationals.



## TPG History: The Trophy (continued)

Torrey Pines Gulls honored Don as Modeler of the Year because of the tremendous effort he put in as President of the TPG in 1997. He remains a continued friend of the TPG and wishes to be remembered to everyone. Hopefully we can join him at the NATS later this year!



Don Richmond and his Plus X for F5J competition.

## 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 yearly 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). **Needless to say, horizontal format photos are preferred.** Email your photos (.JPG format preferred) to Dale Gottdank at [submit@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:submit@torreypinesgulls.org). Please provide your name, location of photo and photo description.



January Co-Winner – Scale ASW-27 coming in to land on a windy Torrey day (Greg Houck photo)



## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



January Co-Winner – Matin Taraz's Raven2 at Torrey (Greg Houck/Matin Taraz photo)



In last month's issue, this photo was incorrectly identified. It is Greg Houck's Joe Cormier Racer; twisty wing pitcheron. (Dan Cummins photo)



## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Jim Birkett enjoying a quiet day at Torrey with the sky all to himself (Ian Cummings photo)



Steve Condon hand-catching his Vixen F3J (Mike Smith photo)



# Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Mike Smith landing his aero towed scale at Palomar RC Flyers field (Palomar RC Flyers member photo)



Mike Frandsen pilots his 28oz. Jester over whitecaps at Torrey (Ian Cummings photo)



## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



February Winner – Mike Frandsen is about to toss his 28oz. Jester into 40+ mph winds, gusting to over 70.  
(Ian Cummings photo)

## Club Officers and Contact Information

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### Executive Officers



Ian Cummings



Bob Hirsch



Dale Gottdank



Don Lochhead



Tom Watson



Mark Baldacchino



Chuck Norris



Cliff Hunter



### TPG Classified Ads Policy

Classified ads are free to TPG members for non-commercial purposes. Commercial customers should contact the editor. To submit an advertisement, send the information to [communications@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:communications@torreypinesgulls.org). Ads must be submitted by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month to appear in the next issue.

All advertisements will remain in the newsletter for the month of issue and will be removed for the following issue. If you wish to advertise for another month, you will need to notify the editor or resubmit.





## Quote of the Month:

*“I love the feeling of the fresh air on my face and the wind blowing through my hair.”*

*~ Evel Knievel*



Torrey Sunset (Marty Dine photo)