



# The Windsock

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International Organization of Women Pilots  
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

## Push To Talk

We've had our share of wet weather this winter, but there have been some beautiful days for flying. The Friday before the Super Bowl, I asked our Chapter Secretary, Sal, to join me on a flight. We triple checked NOTAMS and I called a briefer to ensure we interpreted everything correctly and then called the FBO in Hollister to see if they could accommodate us for a lunch stop. They said as long as we departed by 3 pm, they had plenty of space. We took off from Reid Hillview with flight following, which ATC cancelled by the time we were near San Martin, and made a quick flight over to Watsonville before heading to Hollister for lunch.

Watsonville was busy in the pattern, but Hollister had very little traffic, and for the first time ever, not a single plane was parked on the field. They had cleared everyone out to make way for Super Bowl traffic, including the gliders. When we landed, the FBO had a beautiful hot rod parked out in front, along with a "Follow Me" vehicle. Staff were out washing the FBO's windows and preparing for their Super Bowl arrivals. Sal and I had a nice lunch at Seabrisa's, which was nearly empty, and then headed back to Reid Hillview. All in all, it was a beautiful day to fly.

I also made my annual trip up to Washington (via Southwest Airlines) to for Northwest Aviation Conference in Puyallup where I attended a number of FAA Safety seminars on a variety of topics. I was able to meet up with several fellow 99s, including three from chapters in Oregon and Washington who I met when we all flew the 2023 Palms to Pines Air Race. I also had the chance to reconnect with fellow Ninety-Nine, Cecelia Aragon who was one of the presenters.

Speaking of connecting with fellow Ninety-Nines, we've had several new members join our Chapter over the past 2 months and it has been great to see them join our monthly meetings and fly outs. I'm looking forward to our meeting in March where we will have a "finger foods" potluck and trivia mixer hosted by Trade Winds Aviation at Reid Hillview thanks to Candace Le who is a CFI there. Please mark your calendar for March 19<sup>th</sup> and plan to join us!

Mary McEnroe  
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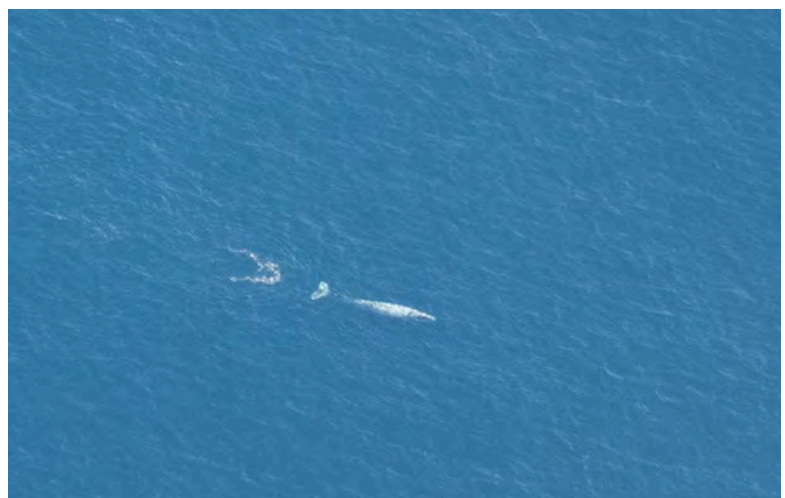
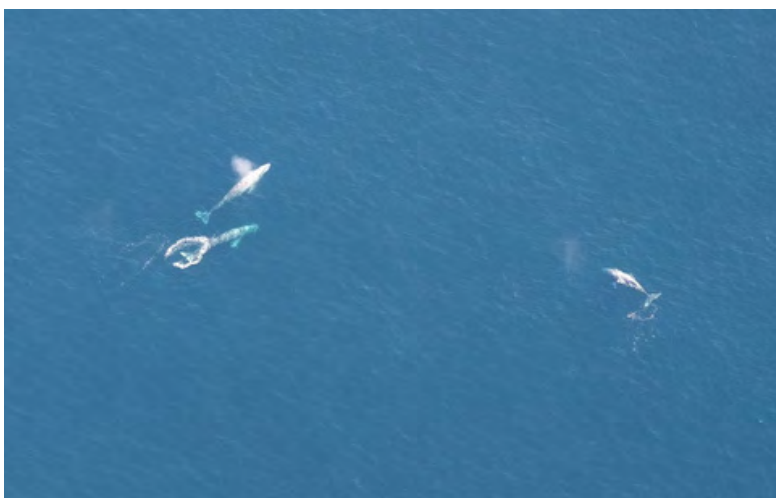
# Chapter News and Events

## Annual Whale Watch Flight



The annual SCV99s whale watching fly out and lunch at the Flying Artichoke had a fantastic turnout, and we weren't disappointed by the whales! The final count was 25 people in 9 planes.

Those who went whale watching before lunch saw more whales, but those of us who went after lunch still saw several, and the weather was perfect. Thanks to Pat for organizing, and happy birthday to Sue, Debby, and Pat!



# Chapter News and Events

## Annual Fly-In Planning Meeting


Our annual fly-in planning took place during our January meeting. Find out where and when we are flying in the monthly announcements.

At the meeting, we also celebrated Pat's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday with two cakes and homemade cookies.




## February Fly-In Half Moon Bay

The February fly-in to Half Moon Bay turned into a drive-in. Five members drove over the hill to eat at the Pilot Light Cafe.

**Announcement from Sunni**

Ralph (Tourino) and I got married yesterday (January 31) afternoon 🥰🎂🌟🌟. We had a sweet private ceremony here at the house with just Ralph and me, the Pastor and his wife. My cello teacher, Olga Zoomed in and played cello for us, and a couple of our kids and my sisters also joined on Zoom. A happy day all around 😍😍

*Congratulations* Sunni and Ralph! 🥂🥂 

# Tule Fog & LOW IFR ASEL Approaches

By Sara Gagne

Chapter secretary Sal and chapter member Sara enjoyed a flight in a C172SP out of SQL on January 19th. The mission of the flight was to do some practice instrument approaches, in actual IMC; courtesy of the ever-persistent tule fog that was hanging around the central valley.

When you anticipate taking a single-engine airplane into known actual IFR conditions, your preflight preparation has to start early. Sal shared with Sara her very detailed flight planning on foreflight, and took her time conducting an aircraft preflight that left us with no question about the safety and integrity of the airplane. We both discussed the details regarding our opinion of where we would maneuver in the event of any real anomaly or emergency, and how we could act as a 2 pilot crew in that scenario.

Sal picked up her IFR clearance with SQL tower - which has very unique instrument departures. Due to the structure of the SFO Bravo airspace above it, no aircraft may depart under IFR - they must remain VFR until 1200' and until crossing the Oakland 165 radial. Once abeam this radial, you are now considered an IFR aircraft. Our plan was to do the RNAV (GPS) RWY 28R into KMOD - with minimums down to 291 on the LPV approach.

Though I do not have record of the exact conditions at the time, what I do remember was that it was certainly LIFR conditions; the visibility was very low - roughly  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  SM.

When we began flight and descent over the Tule fog, it is interesting to note the lack of depth perception. We both couldn't seem to agree where the top of the clouds started. Cleared for the approach with the autopilot disengaged, we entered the clouds. Both Sal and Sara have roughly 3 hours each in actual instrument conditions, so it is undeniable that for the both of us, entering actual IMC can be intimidating. Sal safely flew the approach down the published minimums, then we climbed out to complete the published missed. As safety pilot, Sara recalls that this was the only actual IMC approach she has ever done in which at minimums we truly saw no sign of the runway or its respective lights.

On the missed, at GPS waypoint "Sheli" (the point that also is the holding fix) Sal requested to get vectors for the ILS at LVK. We got cleared directly there, but ultimately decided that after one real IMC approach - a practice approach in VMC at LVK wasn't very exciting and we cancelled IFR to return to SQL. In regard to emergency planning, we both breathed a sigh of relief once we were clear of the Tule fog, with visual reference to the ground.

Some topics we both discussed from this flight: the use of autopilot on an actual IMC approach, and when to disengage it. The use of flaps when in actual IMC. VFR flying in and out of SQL - as this was Sara's first time doing so. Overall it was a great flight that benefitted both pilots and left us grateful for the 99s for connecting us!



# Hypoxia – It's Different for Everyone

By Sara, Sal, and Mary

On January 29<sup>th</sup>, three Santa Clara Valley 99s separately went to San Carlos Flight Center to experience the FAA's traveling hypoxia chamber. Each session had a group of 4-5 pilots and consisted of a briefing, 5 minutes in the hypoxia chamber and a debriefing. During the briefing, participants learned what to expect and took baseline measurements of oxygen and heart rate. Everyone was given instructions to put their oxygen mask on in the chamber if they a.) had 3 symptoms, b.) oxygen saturation dropped to 65%, or c.) got to the 5 minute limit. Everyone was given a paper with math problems and a word search to test cognitive abilities while hypoxic.



The chamber was set at an oxygen level of a little over 20,000 feet and there was an FAA observer inside the chamber wearing an oxygen mask. Each participant had an oxygen mask in their lap to use quickly if needed. One FAA staff member was located outside the chamber keeping time and giving instructions or asking questions. Every minute, each participant was asked to check boxes related to the symptoms they felt and record their oxygen level and heart rate. Separately Sal Valdes, Mary McEnroe and Sara Gagne each experienced the hypoxia chamber and here's what they have to share about the experience.



**Q.** Have you ever been in the PROTE hypoxia chamber before? If so, did you learn anything new from this experience compared to your first experience? What was the most important thing you learned about your own hypoxia symptoms?

**Sal:** I've tried to find this training since January 2025, but didn't get the opportunity until SCFC hosted this event early this year.

**Mary:** I tried to sign up to do it when I went to Oshkosh in 2023, but all the sessions filled up before I had the chance. I've been wanting to do this for a long time, as I've been really curious what my hypoxia symptoms are. It turns out that my heart rate gets elevated very quickly and I didn't need a monitor to tell me that. I could feel it in my chest. I also noticed it initially felt a little hard to breath but that surprisingly started to go away after the first minute, almost like my lungs adjusted.

**Sara:** I had the opportunity to try out a hypoxia chamber at the Women in Aviation Conference in 2018 when I was a student pilot and entirely new to aviation. Compared to that experience, I entered this chamber wanting to improve on my last performance. In 2018, the hypoxia chamber left me feeling thoroughly embarrassed at how poorly I did answering verbal questions and my inability to do simple math problems. Entering this chamber in 2026 as a CFI, I noticed new symptoms settling in much faster than before, as I was using a lot of my brain's bandwidth to answer questions quickly and correctly. In both experiences, my primary symptom was a tingling sensation, but during this experience, I noticed a euphoric feeling, and my fellow "chamber pilots" noticed cyanosis of my lips.

# Hypoxia – It's Different for Everyone, continued

**Q.** Do you think you would be able to recognize your hypoxia symptoms early if it started happening in real life?

**Sal:** Thanks to the training, I discovered my early symptoms. I had a unique heavy, tingling feeling in all of my muscles that presented itself within minutes.

**Mary:** If my hypoxia symptoms always start with an elevated heart rate, I think I would be able to recognize it pretty quickly. It was quite noticeable in my chest and I initially felt like I could not take a deep breath and get sufficient oxygen. I was able to do the cognitive exercises correctly without much delay, so hopefully I would have the presence of mind to be able to recognize the significant increase in heart rate as a symptom of being hypoxic, but that is a concern.

**Sara:** I think I would have some ability to recognize my symptoms before they develop to the extremes of that experienced in the chamber, although it is important to note that real hypoxia symptoms would set in at a different rate in flight. This is because the chamber is only able to simulate the percentage of oxygen at high altitude by replacing the air with a higher concentration of nitrogen than normal. The chamber does not alter the partial pressure of this O<sub>2</sub>/N mixture, which would make real symptoms set in earlier and/or more dramatically. I certainly noticed my symptoms of tingling and euphoria within a minute or so in the chamber, but in truth, I was having a lot of fun, courtesy of my euphoria giggles. If experienced in flight, I would be doubtful of my ability to correct it. Cyanosis is a symptom that others would notice in me before I do.

**Q.** What were your oxygen and heart rate results over the course of the 5 minutes in the chamber? How quickly did things deteriorate?

**Sal:** My readings before entering the chamber were 100% (oxygen)/67 (heart rate) and stabilized to low-80s(oxygen)/110s (heart rate) within 2 minutes.

**Mary:** I started with Oxygen of 99% and a heart rate of 77. After one minute in the chamber, my oxygen saturation dropped to 82% and my heart rate had shot up to 113. It stayed nearly identical in the second minute (81% and 114) and then dropped to 78% saturation for the rest of the time in the chamber. However, my heart rate climbed to 120 in minute 3 and then leveled at 122 for the remainder of the time. Interestingly, when time was up, after one minute of using the oxygen, my numbers were back to normal, so the oxygen does quickly relieve hypoxia symptoms.

**Sara:** Oxygen/Heart Rate over the course of the time in the chamber were:

Minute 1: 82 / 97

Minute 2: 77 / 109

Minute 3: 77 / 109

Minute 4: 69 / 109

Minute 5: 67 / 109

The FAA team made a major point not to let your O<sub>2</sub> drop below 65%. In truth, at minute 5, I was fixated on the O<sub>2</sub> stats as it was dropping quickly while my heart rate stayed relatively steady at 109. As we put on our oxygen masks and took deep breaths, I remained fixated on the pulse oximeter, concerned that I was now dropping just below 65 (62-64 range). There is a short delay between real O<sub>2</sub> saturation and the reading on the pulse oximeter, so I was safe and fine. Had we let the chamber go for another minute without supplemental oxygen that could've ended not so well for me.

**Q.** What was the most important information you took away from the group debrief following your time in the chamber?

**Sal:** The FAA trainers pointed out the only physical characteristic that has a predictable impact on hypoxia symptoms is cardiovascular health. That'll motivate me to jog more this year.

# Hypoxia – It’s Different for Everyone, continued

**Mary:** While I did not have the same cognitive symptoms as several others in my group, it is a very real concern and difficult for the person experiencing the symptoms to recognize. One participant had been in the chamber five years ago and both times she forgot questions the administrator had asked her while in the chamber when reminded of them in the debrief. She recorded the session to review afterward and said she had no recollection of the conversation in the chamber. Others said they were agitated when asked questions while hypoxic and some said they gave up trying to answer questions (resignation). When flying at higher altitudes, it is possible people will experience symptoms at lower altitudes than when oxygen is required and I will work to be observant of any changes to the person I am flying with. I’ve had this experience once before when flying over Yosemite at 11,500. The pilot who was my passenger let me know he feels like he has a “buzz” starting around 10,000 feet. I used a pulse oximeter to monitor my oxygen saturation during the flight and remained at 98% or better. I had him try it and he was in the high 80s, demonstrating it definitely affects people at different altitudes.

**Sara:** My most important takeaway from the group debrief was how incredible it is that despite the same simulated oxygen saturation, people have vastly different symptoms. There was an older gentleman in my group who voiced concerns that age makes you more susceptible to hypoxia. This was debunked by the FAA staff. A younger female pilot to my right reported a myriad of symptoms I did not have - headache, fatigue, and feeling hot/cold. The FAA staff member asked her to recall how she answered a math problem verbally given to her around the four-minute mark. It occurred to me that despite her sitting directly next to me, I had not even heard this question. It was as if I had selective hearing or temporary amnesia. I brought this up, and the FAA staff confirmed that this is common and often the reason hypoxic pilots do not respond to ATC coherently, or at all.

**Q.** If you watched another session before or after your session, what did you observe that you did not notice in your own session while hypoxic?

**Sal:** Watching the session before me, I couldn't identify unusual behavior or symptoms in the group. As boring as it is, it seems like mild hypoxia is subtle and hard to identify from the outside.

**Mary:** I had the opportunity to observe Sara’s group following mine, and I recorded it for her. The FAA administrator asked her if she was wearing lipstick and I looked over and her lips looked purplish due to cyanosis. I also noticed people struggling to answer questions that were asked of them. In both my session and in Sara’s session, there were pilots who exceeded one of the three indicators that was supposed to trigger putting on the oxygen mask and none remembered those triggers. It demonstrated that even if someone has an awareness about the potential for hypoxia, when it happens, they may not be cognizant enough to take appropriate action. We need to look out for our fellow pilots and passengers.

**Sara:** N/A

**Q.** Would you recommend this experience to other pilots or student pilots? If so, why?

**Sal:** Do not let the opportunity pass you by. For the same reason we simulate engine failures, we should simulate physiological emergencies.

**Mary:** I would absolutely recommend this to all pilots, including student pilots. It is a very safe way to learn your personal hypoxia symptoms so you can be more aware when flying. I think it would also be helpful to share your symptoms with others when flying together at higher altitudes so they can watch for your symptoms in case you don’t recognize them yourself. If possible, have someone record your time in the chamber so you can watch it afterward and see if there are things you may not recall occurring during the actual experience. The FAA observers do a good job of making some notes for the debrief, but they are also running the test and observing 5 people, so a recording would be helpful.

# Hypoxia – It's Different for Everyone, continued

**Sara:** I would recommend this experience to all pilots. Students and experienced pilots should be exposed to and understand their own hypoxia symptoms in a safe and simulated manner before they potentially fall victim to it in-flight. Generally speaking, the more we know about ourselves and our bodies' reactions to these physiological situations pilots can face, the better we can equip ourselves to be safer pilots.

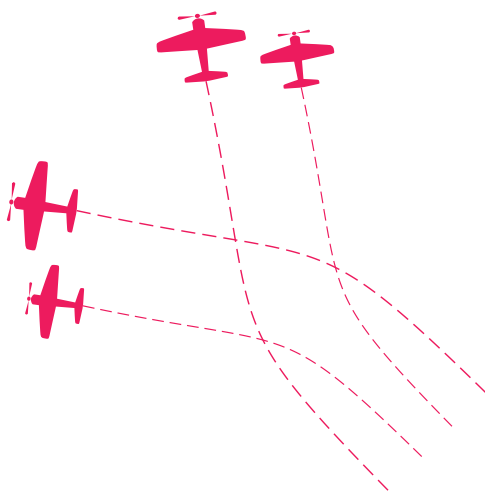
**Q:** Is there anything specifically noteworthy you would like to share or any interesting things that happened to you or that you observed?

**Sal:** The trainer's definition of "useful consciousness" - "If I look at you and tell you to raise your hand and you just stare at me...we've passed the point of useful consciousness."

**Mary:** I think an important lesson is how different symptoms can be from one pilot to the next. One pilot in my session self-reported more than 8 symptoms while I never observed more than 2 symptoms. He was one of those who forgot the instructions to put on his mask once he had three symptoms. Some people were euphoric, some were irritable and some had attitudes of resignation, all which can be dangerous when flying. If flying as a passenger with another pilot, it could be difficult to get them to recognize they are hypoxic and get them to take action. That was an unnerving thought and something that I plan to discuss with fellow pilots when planning flights where hypoxia could be a concern.

**Sara:** The degree at which my hypoxia symptoms set in was significantly faster and more pronounced than that of my 2018 experience. I was told by the FAA staff that because I was so determined to do the math problems correctly, or to solve the word searches quickly, I used more of my brain's mental capacity. This made my hypoxia symptoms set in quicker, evident by my cyanosis of the lips and general euphoria, two symptoms I certainly did not experience my first time in 2018.

Flying can be very task saturating, especially when we consider aspects of SRM (Single-Pilot Resource Management). If you combine real hypoxia symptoms with a task saturated single pilot, it is a recipe for disaster with regard to how quickly hypoxia could develop to an unrecoverable situation.



# Florida in February

By Nancy Sliwa

In early February, my husband Steve and I took a major cross-country trip in our Vision Jet, N955M (also called Morgan.) We invited our friends Gordon and Melissa Boettger to join us. Gordon is a FedEx Boeing 777 Captain, a record-setting glider pilot, and a gifted aviation communicator. His Instagram feed is [@grboettger](#). I learned a lot flying with him. His wife Melissa is an interior designer and Gordon's primary cheerleader for his flying exploits, as well as delightful company.



On Sunday, February 8 we left the house early and met Morgan at the Cirrus facility at SDL. The big PGA golf tournament created a gate hold, and we had to wait for permission to start the engine—an oddly Scottsdale sentence.

I flew left seat with Gordon right seat on the first leg to San Angelo (SJT), doing a practice RNAV approach to Runway 3. I learned that “right seat pilot” is called the PNF, or Pilot Not Flying at Fed-Ex, who has a very specific set of duties. From SJT to Pensacola (PNS), Gordon flew left seat with Steve as PNF. PNS was our overnight stop because although Gordon had done his initial jet training with the Navy at PNS 37 years ago, he had not been back since. Although the weather was perfectly clear, we intentionally flew the ILS into PNS so Gordon could hand-fly using the synthetic vision and flight path vector of the Vision Jet. It was smooth, stable, and precise—very professional. He says the Vision Jet avionics are better in many ways to the 777 he usually flies.

On Monday we visited the National Naval Aviation Museum on NAS Pensacola and met with the Foundation President, Rear Admiral (Ret.) Kyle “KC” Cozad. We searched for and found all the aircraft Gordon had flown, plus the ones flown by Steve's father and mine as Navy pilots.

We flew to Daytona Beach (DAB) with Steve in the left seat and Nancy PNF, a rare configuration for us. Our CRM left a lot to be desired, but we had a fun banter-filled leg. In cruise we briefly saw 432 knots groundspeed for a few seconds, with over 120 kts of tailwind. We thought 440 might be possible that day—then ATC requested descent just as we were leveling and building speed. A small pilot moment, but memorable.



We checked into Yelvington Aviation FBO, stayed at the Hilton Garden Inn Daytona Beach Airport, and had dinner at Chart House on the Intracoastal. It was Speed Weeks in Daytona, which culminates with the Daytona 500, so the raceway was noisy all during daylight hours.

On Tuesday we visited Verdego Aero to learn about hybrid propulsion and where that technology may fit into the next generation of aircraft. Hybrid/electric will be viable well before purely electric aircraft are commercially useful.



Afterwards we visited our old neighborhood of Spruce Creek Fly-In—14 miles of taxiways and hundreds of airplanes based there, many in hangar homes. We had lunch with some long-time friends who live there, and spent quite a while talking with a P-51 owner about some of his harrowing experiences when he had to “abandon ship” from his Mustang.

# Florida in February, continued

On Wednesday we spent an arduous day touring Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. My husband Steve served as ERAU's third president from 1991 through 1998. Returning decades later is a chance to see what endured, what grew, and what the next generation is building.

Steve had actually signed Gordon's diploma. Gordon graduated from ERAU's Worldwide Campus, but had never seen the Daytona Campus. Our tour included the Student Union, Athletics, Engineering, Flight Operations, College of Aviation, and the MicaPlex research park. The Flight Operations tour was staggering: 100+ aircraft and up to 700 flight hours per day, even though much of the initial training is now virtual, which speeds up the training process immensely.

The campus had changed a lot since I'd been there last. When Steve was there, he built the first new campus building in many decades, the Engineering Building. The Athletics Center also went up while we were there. But now every building on campus has been replaced. The Campus is amazingly modern – a far cry from the Quonset hut collection it was when we were there.

On Thursday we enjoyed a boat cruise on the Halifax River with friends, then we flew the Vision Jet to Fort Pierce (FPR). Gordon flew left seat for the third and final time on the trip with Steve as PNF.

On Friday we visited Save the Chimps, a chimpanzee sanctuary that we've donated to frequently over the years. This organization provides a home to chimpanzees that have been rescued from medical research, roadside zoos, abandoned as pets, etc. The chimps live on three-acre islands with indoor "home base" structures. Seeing older chimps explore outdoor space safely—protected and cared for—was powerful.

We said goodbye to Gordon and Melissa as they were off to visit local friends then fly commercially back to Nevada. Steve and I then flew from FPR to Key West (EYW) with great visibility on arrival. Steve's brother Dave met us and took us to our beachside hotel. He then drove us to Mallory Square for the famous sunset pictures and dinner at [El Meson de Pepe](#), a fantastic Cuban restaurant.

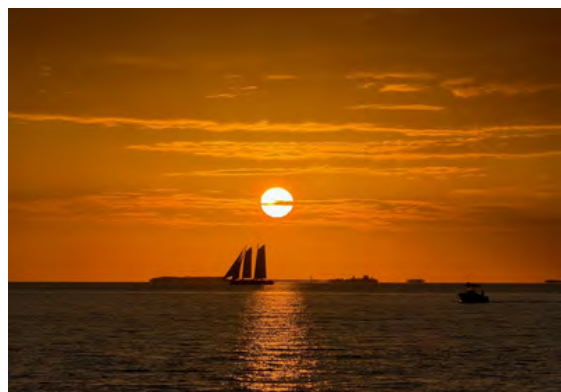
On Saturday we walked to the [Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservancy](#). It was excellent—better than expected – many more butterflies than most conservatories. My favorite part was the flamingos Rhett and Scarlett; Rhett was especially vocal because it was mating season. I'd never seen a live flamingo close-up before. These were brilliant pink with creepy white eyes.



ERAU Daytona Beach



Save the Chimps Preserve



Rhett and Scarlett

# Florida in February, continued

Dave took us on a driving tour of the local keys, and the Navy base where his live-aboard sailboat was moored, and we did a bit of laundry. Next we window-shopped the boutiques at the yacht harbor. Dinner was at Half-Shell Raw Bar: steamed stone crabs, conch fritters, lobster spring rolls.

Sunday we got up early to meet Dave at popular breakfast spot Blue Heaven. They open at 8:00 a.m. and don't take reservations, and the wait can be up to two hours. Dave was nervous about the wait and arrived at 7:15 a.m. to be first in line. Blue Heaven was great: roosters walking among the tables; a relaxed Key West atmosphere; and truly excellent food. We then scooted to the Hemingway House and later to the Southern Most Point for the obligatory pictures. We also visited the Route 1 end marker / Kapok Tree of Souls area.

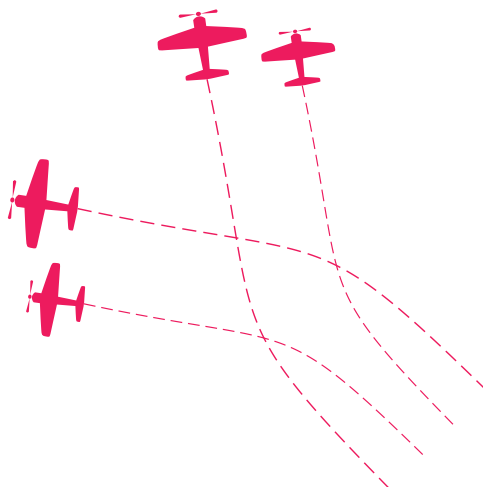
We wanted an early dinner to prep for our trip home, so we drove to Square Grouper. Great service, good environment, and one of our favorite meals of the whole trip.



Key West- a long way from anywhere

On Monday, we started for home. The first leg was from Key West (EYW) to Gulfport (GPT). It was somewhat over water, but always within gliding distance to land (not hard when you're at 30,000 feet.) We landed on the ILS approach through a 1400' overcast. From Gulfport we flew to San Angelo (SJT) with lesser headwinds than we expected. But the next leg made up for it. For the leg into Scotsdale (SDL) we had up to 80 kt headwinds, moderate turbulence, in the clouds for half the flight, and icing on descent. It was good to finally be home when we landed.

The final leg was a reminder that trips end the same way they begin: disciplined flying, careful margins, and gratitude for a reliable machine.



# A New Year's Safety Tune-Up

By Louise Mateos

Safety Tips

## Resetting the Safety Clock

The start of a new year is a natural pause point—a chance to reset habits, refresh skills, and recommit to the fundamentals that keep flying safe and enjoyable. While aircraft don't care what the calendar says, pilots do. Complacency, skill fade, and gradual normalization of risk often creep in quietly over time. A “New Year's Safety Tune-Up” is an intentional reset: reviewing what matters most, identifying weak spots, and setting practical goals for the year ahead. Whether you flew 200 hours last year or only a handful, the principles are the same: sharpen the basics, respect the risks, and fly with purpose.



*Setting the tone for a new year of safe flying*

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## Start With the Pilot: Currency Is Not Proficiency

A common trap is equating legal currency with true readiness. The regulations define minimums, not mastery. A safety tune-up begins with an honest self-assessment.

**Key questions to ask yourself:** - When was my last flight in actual or simulated IMC? - How comfortable am I with crosswind landings **today**? - Could I confidently handle an abnormal or emergency without rushing or freezing?



*Making an honest self-assessment*

## Skills That Deserve an Annual Refresh

Even experienced pilots benefit from structured practice:

- **Manual aircraft control:** Slow flight, stalls, steep turns
- **Takeoffs and landings:** Short-field, soft-field, crosswind
- **Abnormals and emergencies:** Engine failures (various phases), system malfunctions
- **Navigation:** Pilotage and dead reckoning—not just GPS

A flight with a CFI early in the year, even when not required, is one of the best safety investments you can make. Treat it as a skills tune-up, not a test. You can even get WINGS credit! (Don't know about WINGS? Checkout this FAA Pilot Proficiency Program here: [https://www.faasafety.gov/WINGS/pub/learn\\_more.aspx](https://www.faasafety.gov/WINGS/pub/learn_more.aspx) )



# A New Year's Safety Tune-Up, continued

## Decision-Making: The Quiet Center of Safety

Good decisions rarely announce themselves. They happen early, calmly, and often on the ground.

### Use Simple Risk Tools—Every Time

Formal tools like **PAVE**, **IMSAFE**, or a simple risk scorecard help externalize judgment and reduce emotional bias. The FAA is promoting use of a Flight Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT). Take a look and see if it can help you make more complete assessments.

[Flight Risk Assessment Tools](#).



*A simulator can be used to review routes and alternates*

Key habits to reinforce:

- Make a **go/no-go** decision before engine start
- Identify divert and abort points in advance
- Brief yourself on the **worst reasonable outcome** and how you would respond

### Normalize Conservative Choices

Turning back, diverting, or canceling is not failure—it's professionalism. A strong safety culture celebrates good judgment, not just completed flights.

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## We Fly Better Together

Flying clubs and organizations like the 99s have a unique advantage: shared experience. A New Year's Safety Tune-Up is most effective when it extends beyond you as an individual.

**Some ideas:**

- Attend a safety meeting or, better yet, volunteer to set one up. You don't need to be the speaker.
- Plan to join a fly out and participate in related scenario-based discussions (weather, maintenance, decision-making)
- Join our mentoring program
- Contribute to open discussion of mistakes and lessons learned

A culture where members feel comfortable speaking up is one of the strongest safety defenses available.

# A New Year's Safety Tune-Up, continued

## Set Safety Goals for the Year Ahead

End your safety tune-up by setting two or three **specific** goals. Some ideas include:

- Fly with a CFI by March
- Create a plan to complete a phase of WINGS this year
- Practice emergency procedures every third flight
- Revisit weather training before the next season change
- Pursue another rating
- Engage your flying community in one new way

Keep goals realistic and measurable. Small, consistent actions compound into meaningful safety improvements.



*Commit your goals to paper (or to your favorite electronic notes app)*

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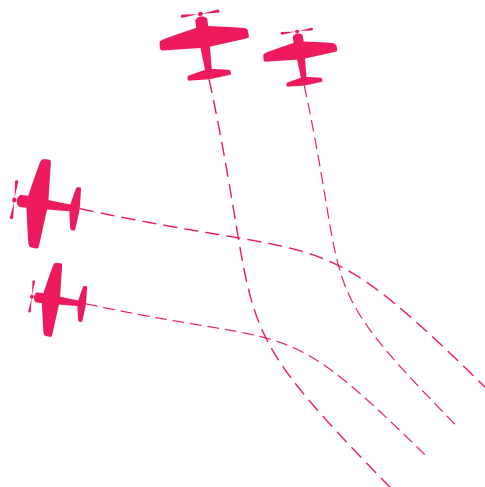
## Fly the New Year With Intention

A New Year's Safety Tune-Up isn't about fear or restriction—it's about confidence.

Confidence built on preparation, discipline, and respect for the risks we manage every time we fly. By recommitting to proficiency, paying attention to details, and supporting one another as a community, we set the tone for a year of safer, more enjoyable flying. The calendar may have turned, but the fundamentals remain. Revisit them often, and let safety be the quiet habit that guides every flight.

***Blue skies—and safe ones—for this year, and beyond.***

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## CHAPTER BOARD 2025-2027

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**Vice-Chair** Louise Mateos  
**Treasurer** Maki Yu  
**Secretary** Sal  
**Director** Nancy Sliwa  
**Nominating Committee**  
 Pat Gregory  
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**Windsock:** Laura Del Favero  
**Flying Activities:** Pat Gregory  
**Airmarking:** Marcie Smith  
**Scholarships:** Debby Cunningham  
**Forest of Friendship:** Pat Gregory  
**Tech Committee/Website:** Pat Gregory,  
 Susan Tilley, Nisha, Maki Yu

## CHAPTER DONATIONS

You can make a donation to the chapter to help offset costs of running the chapter. The chapter suggests an annual donation in the amount of \$15.

You now have the option to donate via Venmo (QR code below).

If you'd like to make a donation, you can pay via PayPal or by check. Make check out to SCV99s. Email Treasurer Maki Yu for PayPal instructions or mailing address: [treasurer@scv99s.org](mailto:treasurer@scv99s.org).



## CHAPTER CALENDAR

### Chapter Meeting

Every Third Thursday of the Month  
 Generally held at the Palo Alto Airport

### Harris Ranch Fly-in Saturday March 21

### Join us for Goat Yoga in Half Moon Bay on April 11

Sign up here:  
<https://www.lemosfarm.com/goat-yoga>

## Upcoming SWS and International Meetings

Date	Meeting	Host/Location
March 27-29, 2026	2026 Spring Section Meeting	Host chapter: Coachella Valley Location: La Quinta, CA
July 8-12, 2026	2026 International Conference	Location: San Diego
Sept 24-27, 2026	Fall 2026 Section Meeting	Host chapter: Las Vegas Location: Las Vegas
TBD	2027 Winter Workshop	Host chapter: Santa Clara Valley



## The Windsock Information and Deadlines

To our members, please send me your ideas, articles, and photos for the newsletter.

### Article Due Dates:

- The Windsock is delivered bimonthly
- The due date for articles is the **last day** of even-numbered months (**Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, and Oct**)

### Preferred Content Format:

- Please provide articles in Word docs or as text within an email
- Photos as picture files (not in the document or body of an email) preferred

Thank you,

Editor

Laura Del Favero

newsletter@scv99s.org