

MAIN ROTOR



PROFESSIONAL HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION



STAR HELICOPTERS

CORPORATE MEMBER FOCUS

PART 135 ON-DEMAND CHARTER, TOURS & PART 141 FLIGHT SCHOOL

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MAIN ROTOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE
PROFESSIONAL HELICOPTER
PILOTS ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2015

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PHPA Mission Statement

- Promote safety and understanding among helicopter pilots;
- Coordinate efforts towards improving communications methods of operation within the airspace system, or any other area that will contribute to the safety and education of all pilots;
- Provide a forum for identifying and seeking resolution to local problems of interest to the membership;
- Promote community relations between the public and the helicopter industry.

PHPA Takes Action to Address Reopening of the LAX Heliport

Jun 20th 2015

During 2011, The Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Heliport located atop Terminal #4 was closed to all helicopter traffic due to construction of the new LAX International Terminal.

That construction activity has long been completed but the facility currently remains closed to all helicopter traffic except emergency public operations.

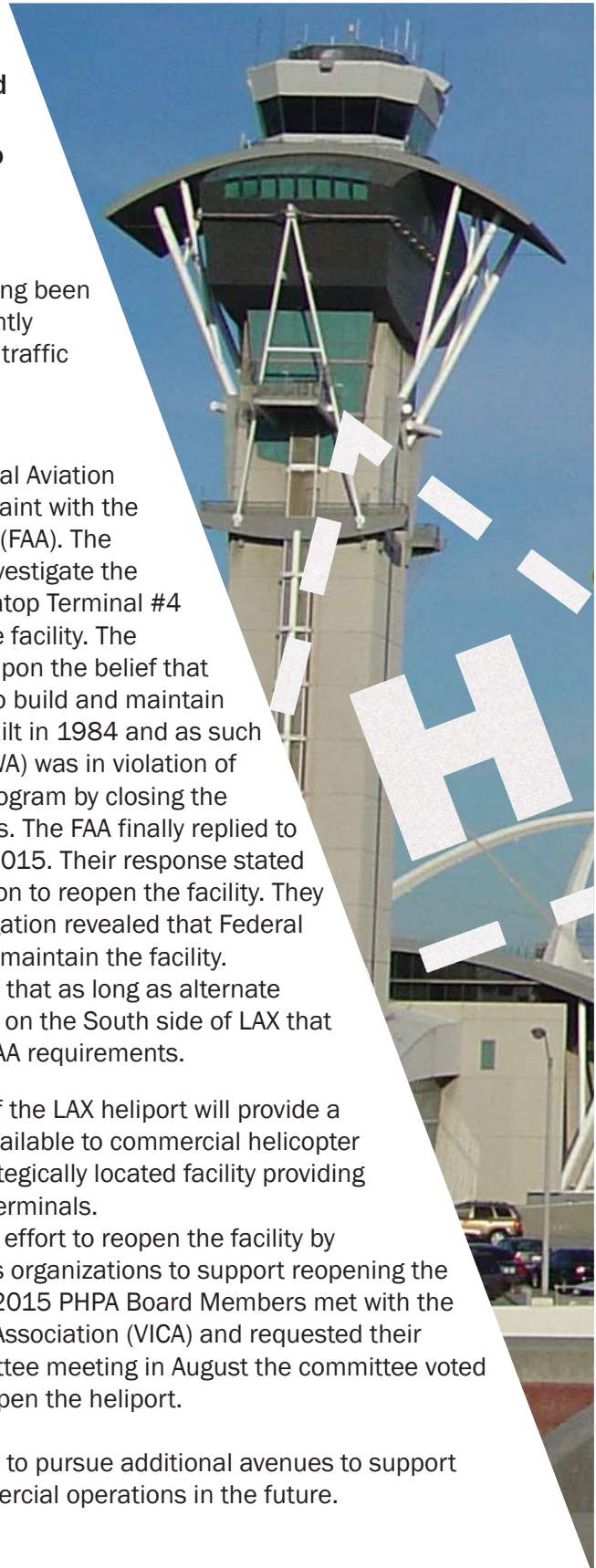
During 2014 PPHA filed a Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 13 Complaint with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The complaint requested the FAA investigate the closure of the Heliport located atop Terminal #4 and to take action to reopen the facility. The complaint by PPHA was based upon the belief that Federal Funds had been used to build and maintain the heliport ever since it was built in 1984 and as such Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) was in violation of the Federal Grant Assurance Program by closing the facility to commercial operations. The FAA finally replied to PPHA's complaint in August of 2015. Their response stated that the FAA could not take action to reopen the facility. They advised PPHA that their investigation revealed that Federal funds were not used to build or maintain the facility. Furthermore, FAA advised PPHA that as long as alternate heliport facilities were available on the South side of LAX that LAWA was in compliance with FAA requirements.

PHPA believes that reopening of the LAX heliport will provide a public service that should be available to commercial helicopter operators. The heliport is a strategically located facility providing public access to the LAX main terminals.

As such, PPHA is continuing the effort to reopen the facility by requesting support from various organizations to support reopening the facility. During July and August 2015 PPHA Board Members met with the Valley Industry and Commerce Association (VICA) and requested their support during the VICA Committee meeting in August the committee voted to support PPHA's efforts to reopen the heliport.

PHPA's Board of Directors plans to pursue additional avenues to support reopening the heliport to commercial operations in the future.

by **BILL WITHYCOMBE** Board of Directors



Getting the Star Treatment

Corporate Member Focus: Star Helicopters, LLC



This issue's operator profile is **Star Helicopters, LLC**. Based at Jack Northrop Field in Hawthorne, CA, Star is the only helicopter Part 135 on-demand charter, tour and Part 141 flight school on the field and in the South-Bay.

In business since 2009, Star began as the collaboration of two individuals, one a very successful entrepreneur, and the other a highly motivated professional pilot. CEO Keith Harter commented that they "started with an eye toward the on-demand charter, tour and helicopter training markets in the metro Los Angeles area."

The partners' concept was, and is, that they could compete in these markets; initially by focusing on tours of the Los Angeles area, while providing high end VIP treatment for their customers, and then by expanding into flight training and developing an on-demand charter operation. To fulfill their vision, the first aircraft that they put on the line was an industry stalwart, the Bell 206BIII JetRanger; a solid and reliable turbine helicopter, with the performance necessary for Star's mission.

While on their tours passengers enjoy the great visibility, roomy interior, leather upholstery, and Bose™ noise cancelling headsets afforded them in the JetRanger. Customers are offered a number of tours of the greater Los Angeles area and well known landmarks. They may even request a tour custom made to their wishes and given the choice of catering, limo service

The next step in the growth of Star Helicopters LLC was opening a flight school, which has since 2014 evolved into a Part 141 operation, and the addition of two Robinson R-22, and Two R-44 helicopters. To give the aircraft a distinctive look, all of the company's aircraft are painted in the company livery of Gold and Black, and all eight of the company's pilots are uniformed in distinctive tan flight suits.

Another milestone in Star's growth was the approval of their Part 135 On-Demand Charter certificate by the FAA in 2014. Local industry legend, FAA Designated Pilot Examiner, Beach Cities Aviation Co-owner, and PHPA Board Member, Pat Carey was appointed the Director of Operations, and long-time law enforcement pilot and PHPA Board Member Tony Byrnes came aboard as Chief Pilot. Star now offers a full range of services to the flying public and guarantees these services to their customers at the highest safety standards, and a competitive rate.

Finally, Star Helicopters LLC also understands and fosters a good neighbor policy towards the general public as well. Currently a member of the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Operators Association and a participant in the Helicopter Pilot's Pledge to fly neighborly, as well as the Los Angeles Noise Initiative, the company's policy is to follow best practices developed to mitigate noise in Southern California.

by **TONY BYRNES** Board of Directors



Star Helicopters LLC, 3670 W. 120th St. Hawthorne, CA 90250
<http://www.star-helicopters.com/> Phone: 310-355-1959

Helicopters and “The Sound of Service” at the American Heroes Airshow

Jun 20th 2015



On June 20th, Hansen Dam hosted the ever popular American Heroes Airshow. This years theme: “Helicopters: The Sound of Service”.

First presented in 1993 at the Santa Monica Airport, the American Heroes Air Show has grown to become the nation’s premier, helicopter-only, admission-free aviation event designed to educate the public, media and community officials about rotary-wing aviation’s diverse capabilities in law enforcement, public safety, communications, Search & Rescue as well as homeland security and national defense.

Alongside static aircraft displays and vendors, the crowds were treated to aerial winching displays from LA County Sheriff’s ‘Rescue 5’ Super Puma and Cal Fire’s Super Huey. Chuck Aaron was on hand to wow visitors with aerobatics in his Red Bull BO-105. This is without doubt the largest helicopter show on the west coast and was a great hit with all who attended.

The PHPA is proud to be a supporter and sponsor of this great event, an industry showcase that brings the community closer to the the world of helicopters and educates the public in the benefit of rotorcraft operations in our day to day lives.



by **JIM PAULES** Board of Directors

www.heroes-airshow.com

Mourning The Loss of PHPA Members & Friends



ALAN PURWIN

The PHPA was saddened to learn of the death of one of our members, Alan Purwin.

Alan will be missed by the entire aviation community, known well for his movie and TV flying, alongside being an accomplished businessman. Alan was a passenger when he was killed on **September 11th** in a fixed wing crash following a day of filming for a new Tom Cruise movie in Columbia. The crash also took the life of another pilot and seriously injured another.

A Celebration of Life was held at Helinet Aviation on Sept 19th September. The day was well attended by the local helicopter community, friends and family, marked with a flypast of 18 helicopters from various public agencies and civilian operators.

Instead of flowers, donations were requested to the Emergency Transport Program at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the program that Alan Purwin's company supports with Sikorsky S-76 air ambulance services.

STEVEN ROBINSON

The PHPA mourns the loss of fire helicopter pilot Steven Robinson. He passed away on August 9th.

Joining the Los Angeles Fire Department in 1986, he followed his father and siblings in serving the city as a firefighter until his promotion in 1996, becoming a LAFD helicopter pilot.

In March 1998 Steven was involved in a helicopter crash following mechanical failure whilst transporting a critically injured child. He guided the aircraft away from residential areas and managed to put down in Griffith Park. He and his crew chief sustained serious injuries, but the crash tragically killed three firefighters and the child. Because of his injuries, Steven was unable to return to flight but continued to support the LAFD as a dispatcher.

A memorial service was held at the Calvary Community Church in Westlake Village, a well attended event in honor of this dedicated firefighter.

His family requested donations be made to the Widows, Orphans & Disabled Firemen's Fund in lieu of flowers.

JIM DUNN

The PHPA expresses it's sympathy at the passing of Jim Dunn, owner of Van Nuy's Airtel Plaza Hotel. He passed of health care complications at the age of 70.

Jim was passionate about aviation and was both a helicopter and fixed-wing pilot. The Airtel Plaza Hotel has played host to numerous PHPA events over the years, thanks in great part to the hospitality and support of Jim Dunn. His passing is a huge loss to the aviation community in the San Fernando Valley and in the Southern California area.

PHPA would like to extend our condolences to the his friends and family, as well as the staff of the Airtel Plaza Hotel who are mourning the loss of their friend and leader.

by **MATTHEW WEST** Board of Directors

To my fellow PHPA members,

Last night, December 14, 2015, your newly elected Board of Directors nominated me to fill the position of President of our great organization. I am honored to have been considered, and immediately accepted the call-to-duty.

Over the past two years, your Board has been extremely active on your behalf on many fronts. Although we attempted to keep the membership informed about all the hard work we engaged in, we realized after the fact that we had often fallen short on this endeavor. One of my main goals over the next two years of my presidency will be to do a better job of keeping everyone informed. Our newsletter is better-than-ever, thanks to Matt West, who has been active on the Board since last year. Keep an eye out for future editions.

PHPA Board members have attended nearly sixty (60) collaborative meetings with the FAA and the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition (LAAHNC) to address community concerns regarding helicopter noise in the Los Angeles basin. Due to our efforts, the FAA sent a letter to Congress that significant progress on this issue had been achieved. As such, we have, at least for the time-being, successfully headed off the attempt by the LAAHNC to force Congress to mandate the FAA regulate helicopter operations beyond the current FAR's. This is not over by any stretch of the imagination. The LAAHNC continues to push forward with their goal in getting us regulated. We will continue to fight. Your safety will be the main goal!

Your Board has representation on the helicopter complaint review data committee which meets monthly with the FAA and LAAHNC to look into the complaints filed by the automated noise complaint system which has been active for about nine months. We also sit on the committee to discuss an FAA proposed voluntary off-shore helicopter route.

We are actively involved in the fight to re-open the heliport at LAX. Due to the efforts of the Board, we were able to garner support on this fight from both aviation and non-aviation related business groups. There is a great deal more work to be done on this issue as well. We have met with the executive staff of the Hollywood Bowl in order to assist them in educating pilots about how and when to avoid the Bowl during concert season. We expect to hear soon how effective our efforts were this past season.

Over the past year, the PHPA has co-hosted and will continue to co-host informative regional helicopter pilot summit meetings to discuss these and many more topics of interest to all of you. We published informative brochures which highlight the noise sensitive areas in the basin in order for us to, "Get educated, not regulated!" I look forward to seeing you at future meetings and PHPA events.

Many challenges lie ahead for the helicopter community. Rest assured your Board will be here, fighting on your behalf! I encourage the membership to become more involved, too. This is an all-volunteer Board and we can use your help to keep fighting for your benefit. I promise to keep the membership up to speed on these and the multitude of other activities that are done on everyone's behalf. I look forward to working together with all of you as we go forward and hope to see you at our upcoming functions! Fly safely.

by **MORRIE ZAGER** PRESIDENT

Suspected Drone Collision in Van Nuys Nov 24th 2015



On the evening of Nov 24th a Robinson R22 helicopter operated by Los Angeles Helicopters had a suspected collision with a drone whilst flying southbound through the Sepulveda Pass.

Flying at around 70 knots and 800ft AGL (2000 MSL), the aircraft sustained a windshield impact with an unknown object that resulted in the plexiglass shattering in on the instructor who was occupying the left seat. The pilot immediately diverted for an emergency landing at the Van Nuys airport. The instructor sustained cuts from flying plexiglass and the pilot was uninjured.

No obvious indications of a bird strike, such as feathers or blood, were found. Currently the incident is being investigated by the FAA.

If this incident is indeed a drone strike it will be the first confirmed helicopter collision with an unmanned aerial system.

The PHPA urges all members to maintain vigilance whilst operating their aircraft and to keep up-to-date with drone issues via our Facebook page and website (www.phpa.org)

by **MATTHEW WEST** Board of Directors

PHPA Responds to the FAA's 'Significant Progress Report' to Congress on the Los Angeles Helicopter Noise Initiative

On April 21, 2015, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) released a document stating that significant progress has been made on six action items stemming from a May 30th, 2013 study done by the FAA on noise matters in Los Angeles County. The statement of, "significant progress" followed a request for progress to be made as referred to in the January, 2014 Congressional Appropriations Act.

Despite published statements to the contrary from some of the stakeholder groups who maintain no significant progress has been made, the PHPA stands firmly behind the FAA and agrees this multi-party collaborative group of industry and homeowners representatives have made significant progress. All of us agree there is much more work to be done and the process is ongoing. However, hundreds of hours have been dedicated to collaborating with the other stakeholders to work toward appropriate solutions to the helicopter noise concerns in the Los Angeles basin.

The PHPA has been at the forefront of negotiations with the residential groups and with the FAA. We participate in many of the stakeholder group committees and remain committed to ongoing positive and substantive communication with all stakeholders.

The PHPA is concerned that the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition (LAAHNC) may not accurately represent the full contingent of homeowner associations, much less the full population of over 10,000,000 people in Los Angeles County.

The PHPA has reached out to helicopter operators, both public and private, and has drafted several versions of voluntary agreements which have been signed by the upper management of these operators. Those voluntary agreements represent the helicopter industry's commitment to mitigating noise, while at the same time keeping helicopter traffic safely away from fixed-wing (airplane) traffic in the Los Angeles area and operating with maximum safety to all parties. The Los Angeles area represents the most complex airspace in the nation. Simply mandating that all helicopters increase their altitude to the height where the much faster flying fixed-wing traffic exists is not a solution. That would only lead to mid-air collisions or massive changes in air traffic throughout the County in order to avoid such mid-air and a resultant decrease in safety for the public as well as an increase in the cost of all forms of aviation in the greater Los Angeles area.

Virtually all of the versions of the voluntary measures put forward by the PHPA, which included specific increases in altitude of certain helicopter traffic, as well as route adjustments, have been summarily dismissed by the LAAHNC. The coalition has said the voluntary measures the helicopter industry has put forward are not good enough. Members of the LAAHNC have ridden along with helicopter pilots and have been shown the reasons why helicopters operate at the altitudes they fly, the physics of rotary-wing flight, and the airspace ripple effect issues.

No amount of education or statistical proof has changed their "official" published stance that the helicopter community has been less than cooperative. Many members of the LAAHNC, however, have told us privately they appreciate the efforts the PHPA has made, recognize that helicopters have a job to do, and only wish the spokespersons for their organization would concede that progress is moving forward.

Instead, the LAAHNC is demanding the FAA change all the fixed-wing routing, including the routing for aircraft on instrument flight plans (i.e.: commercial airliners), so helicopter traffic can fill the void where fixed-wing traffic would have operated prior to a routing change. This approach lacks reason, and lacks support throughout the aviation industry (beyond rotary-wing aircraft owners and operators). It would likely lead to major disruption, substantial costs to the airlines and other operators, as well as inconvenience to the public.

The re-routing of all air traffic in the Los Angeles area would be a herculean task and would require years of study by the FAA. It would likely have a huge impact on safety of flight and additional cost to the traveling public. The PHPA has acted in good faith and will continue to collaborate. We only hope the other stakeholder groups will come back to the table so we may resume discussion.

by **MORRIE ZAGER** Board of Directors

PHPA Elections and New Board Members Dec 15th 2015

The 2015 Board of Directors election results are in!

The 2015 membership elections of the PHPA Board of Directors concluded on November 10, 2015.

Tony Byrnes, PHPA Corporate Secretary, certified the election and presented the results during the December 14, 2015 meeting of the Board of Directors. All incumbent board members were re-elected and they are:

JIM DAVIDSON	Seat 1
ANTHONY BYRNES	Seat 3
PAT CAREY	Seat 5

MORRIE ZAGER	Seat 7
MATTHEW WEST	Seat 9
ALEX CALDER	Seat 11

The elections also required appointing new corporate officers by the Board of Directors, and after doing so, the association would like to introduce to you, our members, the 2015-2016 PHPA Corporate Officers:

PRESIDENT	MORRIE ZAGER
VICE PRESIDENT	BILL WITHYCOMBE
TREASURER	JAMES PAULES
CORPORATE SECRETARY	ANTHONY BYRNES

The board welcomes our new board members:

LCDR DAKATA BRODIE
DIRECTOR



LCDR Dakata Brodie has been flying helicopters since 1999. He is a 17-year war veteran of the U.S. Army and U.S. Coast Guard and currently assigned to U.S.C.G. Air Station Los Angeles. Dakata started his career in the U.S. Army flying UH-60A/L (Blackhawk) helicopters and served as a Company Commander and a Maintenance Test Pilot (MTP). After transitioning to the U.S.C.G. in 2005, Dakata began flying HH-65C (Dolphin) helicopters at units along the Gulf Coast. He is currently assigned to U.S.C.G. Air Station Los Angeles as the Assistant Operations Officer flying Search and Rescue (SAR) missions and Law Enforcement Patrols in MH-65D (Dolphin) helicopters for the Greater Los Angeles Area. He has aviation experience in 7 models/types of helicopters and holds an ATP rating.

ALEX CALDER
DIRECTOR



Alex has been working in television news helicopters in Southern California since 1995, most recently for KNBC-TV. Before becoming a Board member, Alex was an advisor for the PHPA Board of Directors for 20 years, working behind the scenes for much of that time on the PHPA.org web site. Additionally, he is the founder of the popular helicopter photo web site Helispot, which he launched in 1996. Alex currently divides his time between Los Angeles and his hometown of St. Louis, MO.

by **ANTHONY BYRNES** Board of Directors

Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Update Dec 16th 2015

The last legislative session in California saw two UAV/UAS bills that made their way thru the California legislative process and ended up on the Governors desk. Both bills were vetoed by Gov. Brown.

SB 142 would have extended liability for wrongful occupation of real property and damages to a person who operates an unmanned aircraft or unmanned aircraft system, as defined, less than 350 feet above ground level within the airspace overlaying the real property, without the express permission of the person or entity with the legal authority to grant access or without legal authority. The bill was primarily driven by concerns over privacy. When I contacted my local Assemblyman's office for comment as to why the state felt they had jurisdiction of airspace at any height I was told that state lawmakers expected the fed's to give them airspace rights under 400 AGL "soon".

SB 168 came out of the recent fire along the I-15 where several UAV's hindered firefighting efforts as a large brush fire swept across the freeway. Gov Brown vetoed the bill stating that there were already enough laws on the books to prevent this. Just last week, the FAA published their new drone rules, which include mandatory registration. You can read up on the new laws at this link: http://www.faa.gov/news/updates/media/20151213_IFR.pdf

Be sure to monitor our Facebook and webpage (www.phpa.org) for timely news on issues involving our airspace.

by **STEVE GOLDSWORTHY** Board of Directors