



# MAIN ROTOR

Winter/Spring 2019



**American Heroes  
Airshow**

***Page 5***

**Fire & News Crew  
Appreciation Luncheon**

***Page 4***

**Elaine's Fly-in**

***Page 8***



# MAIN ROTOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
PROFESSIONAL HELICOPTER  
PILOTS ASSOCIATION

WINTER/SPRING 2019

## EDITORIAL

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Association (PHPA) California

## PHPA MISSION STATEMENT

- Promote safety and understanding among helicopter pilots
- Coordinate efforts toward 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



## President's MESSAGE

*Morrie Zager*

Fellow PHPA members:  
The Professional Helicopter Pilots Association has been active these past several months promoting our industry and offering our members first-class training opportunities as well as some much needed social events!

We, along with HAI, co-hosted an all-day Safety Seminar at the Airtel Plaza Hotel in Van Nuys on September 29th, 2018. The entire event, including the training, parking, breakfast, lunch, a wonderful social hour as well as dinner was completely free to all attendees. We were treated to a wide variety of training subjects during the course of the day as well as a town hall briefing by HAI President and CEO Matt Zuccaro.

On November 3, 2018, the PHPA once again helped sponsor the American Heroes Air Show at Hansen Dam featuring helicopter crews from law enforcement, fire, EMS, ENG, military, tour operators, homeland security, and even some regular helicopter pilots showcasing their machines. This one-of-a-kind show is dedicated totally to helicopters and is free to the public. What a wonderful way to showcase all the hard work all of you do on a daily basis. We are so proud of the varied work all our members do and we are honored to support you in any way we can.

Speaking of supporting our members; On March 16, 2019, we proudly hosted a luncheon to honor our local Fire and ENG pilots who fought and covered the recent fires in Southern California. Many of our members and even some of the public came out to show their support for these heroes. Our honorees took time out of their busy schedules to enlighten us as to the difficult flying conditions they endured during the fires. Thank you to all who came out to wish these professionals well and

thank them for their hard work!

I continue to attend monthly meetings with homeowners groups, other helicopter professionals, and the FAA to discuss helicopter noise complaints in our area. Thanks to this continued collaboration with the stakeholders, we have thus far been able to show our elected officials that regulating our industry with mandatory routes and altitudes is unnecessary. This fight continues to be a difficult one and is getting harder as time passes. Certain areas like the airspace adjacent to the Hollywood Sign, Griffith Observatory, and the coastline are most certainly getting the lion's share of noise complaints. The battle-lines in these areas have been drawn and our elected officials, both local and national, are watching closely. We must, as an industry, be willing to fly neighborly or risk the very real possibility of regulatory control like our partners in New York! Please familiarize yourself with the latest Helicopter Route Chart and take note of the voluntary off-shore helicopter route (750' off-shore at an altitude at your discretion). If you can safely fly this route, please do so. I assure you our industry is being watched closely, especially in these hot spots.

The PHPA and the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Operator's Association (LAAHOA) partnered in a request to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to pick-up funding for the Automated Noise Complaint System which had been funded by the FAA for the past three years. The FAA stopped funding the system in June, 2018. Why on earth would we request funding for a complaint system, you may ask?

As I mentioned earlier, the homeowners groups are well organized and have the ear of

*continued on page 11*



# In Memorium

By Pete Gillies

*(Editor's note: PHPA lost a good friend and supporter in Patsy Gillies this past October. We want to honor her long support of PHPA and her work in the helicopter industry. No one can convey how special Patsy was better than her husband Pete.)*



We met in 1970. She was working for an electronics company on Kearny Mesa, San Diego as a highly experienced switchboard operator and receptionist. We fell in love and married on December 29, 1973. I had joined Western Helicopters on October 2, 1972, and Patsy became my fuel truck driver, or swamper. We staffed Western's San Diego operation until moving to Western's main base at L67, Rialto, in 1975. This included Western's 1974 USFS six-month contract at Ramona with a 500C. She was the fuel truck driver for that entire contract.

My role back then was mainly power line construction with one of Western's Bell 47G-3B-1s stationed at Montgomery Field. This continued after we moved to Rialto. We became the relief crew for Western's USFS and BLM fire contracts, flying from base to base in one of Western's Cessna 206s all during fire season. This went on for three years until our first son arrived in 1977, and even then she would accompany me on relief trips and would drive fuel trucks from Western's Rialto base.

I knew I was the luckiest helicopter pilot in the world back in those days, with Patsy being such a part of my work and my life. When not swamping for me she would be doing all sorts of jobs at Western, from the office to the shop to making parts runs to L.A. to washing helicopters. Name it. Something needed to be done? Ask Patsy!

Everything I have accomplished since flying for Western Helicopters is because of Patsy's presence in my life. She inspired me in many ways and encouraged me through thick and thin. She was simply magic when it came to meeting people and remembering details of their lives and families, whether it was on a base heliport in Region 3 or 5 or in the supermarket. Truly a sweetheart in every way. And 2018 marked the 25th year she was a dedicated volunteer at the Loma Linda University Medical Center.



*It's that time of year again*

**Hollywood Bowl and  
John Anson Ford Amphitheatre**

**2019 Concert Season**

**May-October**

**ATTENTION  
ALL PILOTS**

PLEASE DO NOT FLY OVER THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL  
MAY 1 - OCTOBER 31 BETWEEN 6PM AND MIDNIGHT  
WHEN THE WHITE SPOTLIGHTS ARE ON

**HOLLYWOOD BOWL**

American Airlines  
PILOTS PLEASE CHECK LOCAL ATIS FOR MORE INFORMATION  
LA Phil





# PHPA 2019 Fire & News Crew Appreciation Luncheon



Morrie Zager

*By Morrie Zager*

On March 16, 2019, the PHPA hosted an event at the Airtel Plaza Hotel to recognize the Fire and ENG pilots who battled the flames and provided coverage of the recent wildfires that plagued Southern California this past fire season.

We were thrilled to welcome the new FAA Western Region Administrator, Ms. Raquel Girvin, to the event. After being introduced to the attendees, Ms. Girvin spoke briefly about how proud she was to meet our PHPA members in-person as well as to honor the hard working Fire/ENG pilots present at the event.

Our honorees were treated to a free lunch, courtesy of the PHPA. They shared anecdotes with the audience of their work during the fires and provided riveting insight into their specific piloting skill necessary to work in the fire environment.

The event was very well attended by helicopter pilots of all kind, members of the public who simply wanted to show their support for our honorees, and, of course, the hard-working helicopter firefighters and ENG pilots.

Attendees were reminded that the PHPA is a non-profit organization and the only way to continue funding these important social events is through our membership renewals. We signed up a few new members at the event and had a few more renew their memberships on their way out!

*Photos courtesy of Tony Byrnes*



Brennan Reilly



Raquel Garvin



John Testa



Tim Lynn



Derek Bell





U.S. Navy VX-49  
"Scorpions"  
MH-60 Seahawk

# American Heroes AIRSHOW

25th ANNIVERSARY ~ NOVEMBER 3, 2018

By Tony Byrnes - Hansen Dam, Los Angeles CA  
Photos by Damon Duran

The American Heroes Airshow is designed to "Educate, Communicate and Demonstrate the Value of the Helicopter Industry to the Community." 2018 marked the Silver Anniversary of the airshow and was, once again, a great success and a great community event. Held at Hansen Dam in Los Angeles, it was a community showcase of the heroic women and men that serve our great nation and the wonderful flying machines they employ to accomplish their missions.

The sun rose to reveal a beautiful day for an airshow and the morning was filled with the sounds of arriving helicopters. The safely and well-orchestrated movement of aircraft from the sky, to the ground and then to their parking spots, by air and ground crews is always something to behold. The entertainment value was evident by the local people drawn to the sight of these magnificent rotorwing contraptions landing on the soccer field.

They quickly gathered into a large crowd in the parking area adjacent to the landing zone, along with folks arriving for the Air Show, and stayed put until the last helicopter shutdown. Show goers were then allowed access to the aircraft and to meet the crews out on the grass of the display area. Many facets of helicopter aviation were represented, including helicopters from the Army and Navy, Search & Rescue, Law Enforcement,

Helicopter Emergency Medical Services, Fire and Rescue, Commercial Aviation and even a classic Warbird.

The audience was also treated to a couple of aerial demonstrations. First, a Search & Rescue demonstration by the Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept. Super Puma "Air 5" in which a paramedic was winched down to a patient and then winched up to the helicopter with the patient in a litter. It was amazing to watch this crew perform their mission and the worthwhile utility of helicopters. Then the LASD Golden Stars Skydiving Team made a jump to the baseball diamond area, thrilling the audience and landing with precision on their target. Their skill was impressive and fun to watch.

Food and drink were also available to show attendees, along with ground demonstrations by Law Enforcement and Fire Fighting agencies. One of the highlights this year was a Citizenship Ceremony for Minors in which 42 Minors participated to become U.S. Citizens. Finally, Star Helicopters LLC provided helicopter demonstration flights and scenic flights. <http://www.star-helicopters.com>

The 2019 American Heroes Airshow is scheduled for November. <https://www.heroes-airshow.com> for more info.

PHPA was a proud legacy sponsor of the event, which furthers the association's mission to "Promote community relations between the public and the helicopter industry."

*See photos on pages 6, 7, 9 & 10*

[www.heroes-airshow.com](http://www.heroes-airshow.com)



USN VX-31 MH-60 "Dust Devils" SAR Seahawk



Mike Elliott in his Bell 47D1



Reach Air Med 22 EC-135P2+



Calif. Air National Guard UH-60M Blackhawk



Reach Air Med 22 EC-135P2+





Glendale/Burbank PD MD-520N



CalFire Bell 205A Super Huey

Left: Charlie Wallasch  
in his Bell AH-1S Cobra



LASD Air5 EC-225 Super Puma



Bell AH-1S Cobra





Rotorway Execs

Story and photos by Doug Williams

I awoke on Saturday the 26th of May to an IFR day, thinking Elaine's Annual Fly-In might be cancelled. I even texted a friend that was flying in to see if she was able to get out of REI. No response...she must be flying, I thought? My suspicion was confirmed as I drove down the hill; I saw that the clouds were bunching up at elevation but clear below. The day was ON! I soon received the text I was awaiting: We are here at F70!

As we walked the ramp at French Valley Airport (F70), helicopters had already lined up. I was able to see the Rotorways, flight of two, arrive. Already on the ramp were a medical Astar, Jack's 369A, two nice Enstrom's, a newly refurbished 500E, two 500 D models, a 500C, and four awesome Jet Rangers. A Gazelle landed just after that- a sight (and sound!) to be seen. By my count, a total of 16 helicopters joined the fly-in: a great showing!

Our guest lecturer for the day was Pete Gillies, the legendary pilot from Western Helicopters fame. Pete spoke to emergency procedures, specifically the 'new' Vuichard Technique for recovery from Vortex Ring State (VRS). He addressed questions, and then we ate a wonderfully catered meal courtesy of the O'Neil's.

I have tried in the past to target my attention to one of the helicopters that flew in, as it is difficult to be able to speak in-depth to all of the pilots. The ship that caught my eye this year was a beautiful 500D flown in by pilot/owner Jeff Scrape from the Fallbrook area. This ship has a really nice paint job- red, black and two shades of silver. The interior is almost all black, and every detail has been addressed. Jeff asked Pete Gillies to join him for a couple of laps around the pattern, including a demo of the Vuichard Technique. Pete said the ship tracked wonderfully, and was a pleasure to fly. Jeff acquired this ship via a Bankruptcy auction- it has quite a story that you will have to ask him about when you get to see this helicopter in person!

After lunch, we watch as one-by-one the helicopters departed. Some gave us a nice zoomie fly-by before they departed. The Gazelle is always one to show his stuff, and he did not disappoint. The fly-in was another success,



Bell 206 Jet Ranger



Hughes 500D & MD -500E



Pete Gillies & Elaine O'Neil



Aerospatial Gazelle

with hopes of getting bigger with more participating in the coming years. Special thanks to Jack and Elaine who made it possible. See you next year!





LA Co Fire SK-70 Firehawk & LAFD AW-139



USN VX-49 "Scorpions" SH-60 Seahawk



LASD Air 5 SAR Demo



Pasadena PD MD-500E



Calif Highway Patrol AS-350B3 Astar



# AMERICAN HEROES AIRSHOW OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER ~ DAMON DURAN

Story & photos by Damon Duran

Damon Duran was the Official Photographer for the 2018 American Heroes in Los Angeles. He started his professional aviation photography career in 2002 but had been taking photos as long as he can remember. A resident of Lomita, California where he lives with wife Soraya, Duran is a self-confessed 'avgeek' having a lifelong passion for all things military and although it is not in the rotary world, he considers the F-4 Phantom II his favorite aircraft.

Damon is one of the founding members of Aviation Photographers of Southern California (APSOCAL), formed when he and fellow photographer Joshua Nyhus decided that there was a need for an organized group that would open more doors to larger shooting opportunities.

The group was originally centered around the Torrance, CA area, but expanded to appeal to a larger geographic group in Southern California. The group now numbers over one hundred active photographers. The association is informal but meet several times per year.

His first published photo was of the oldest T-38 Talon still flying, making its last landing at LAX. The aircraft



Damon Duran

served the USAF, USN and NASA and now belongs to the California Science Center in Los Angeles. Damon's image was picked up by Aircraft Illustrated and from that point on, he realized that there may be a future in the aviation photography business.

Images from Damon's collection have been featured in Aircraft Illustrated, Air International, Combat Aircraft, Vertical and Collective Magazines as well as a few books over the years.

A great deal of his focus is on military and law enforcement aircraft, having ventured into helicopter photography through a friendship with an Orange County Sheriff's Department Pilot, which then led to an invitation to do an air-to-air shoot for OCSD's UH-1H Huey arrival. He became the air unit's volunteer photographer and regularly assists with photography of the unit's readiness and search and rescue training operations, further helping the capability of the unit.

Damon's work can be found on Instagram, Facebook and Flickr under PhantomPhan1974 Photography.



Cal Fire Bell 205 Super Huey



USN VX-49 "Scorpions" SH-60 Seahawk



Reach Med EC-135P2+



USN VX-31 "Dust Devils" MH-60 Seahawk



## President's Message

from page 2

elected officials. They want us regulated with compulsory routes and altitudes. I firmly believe the homeowners expected the complaint system to show exponentially more complaints than were really being filed by the public. What it actually showed was a relatively small number of complainers who were filing multiple complaints. It did showcase certain hot spots, some were mentioned above. Without this empirical data, the homeowners can and will continue to voice their concern to their elected officials that helicopters are out of control. Frankly, the data did not show that. But without that data, it's our word against

theirs, and they are better organized and more well-funded than we are! Having a complaint system in place to capture actual data is far better than us trying to plead our case without the numbers to prove it.

My term as president of our organization is winding down. The president and vice president are limited to two consecutive two year terms. My second term as president is over in June, 2019. I hope to remain on the Board and continue to represent all of you at the monthly noise complaint meetings. Please help me welcome our new Board of Directors at our Annual Meeting at the 94th Aero Squadron on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at the 94th Aero Squadron. The reception will start at 6pm. I have been truly honored to represent the PHPA membership for the past four years. Thank you for your continued support of the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association.

# Come Join Us!

PHPA regularly distributes emails that contain important information to our members.

PHPA provides a website ([phpa.org](http://phpa.org)) which provides valuable information to helicopter operators.

PHPA "Main Rotor" quarterly newsletters provide updates about our organization, our industry and our members and local operators.

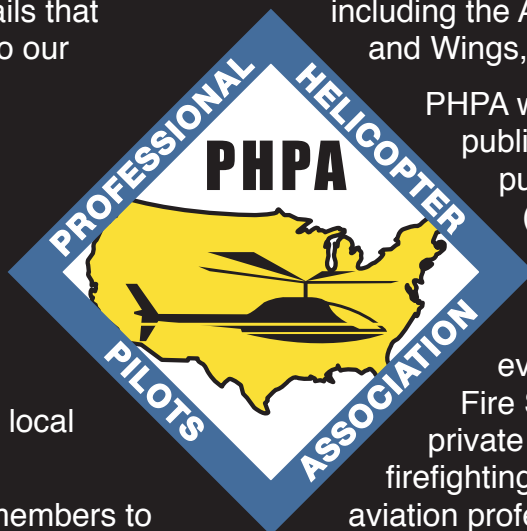
PHPA Safety Seminars allow members to gain valuable knowledge from some of the top leaders in our industry.

PHPA "Helicopter Awareness Day" events are now held in collaboration with other local helicopter air shows and events

including the American Heroes Air Show and Wings, Wheels & Rotors.

PHPA works in conjunction with public service operators to publish safety materials (including our Public Service & Media Aviation Guidelines booklet) and offer hosted events (including our annual Fire Service Briefing) where private operators can meet the firefighting and law enforcement aviation professionals and get updated information about the requirements of flying near their incidents.

PHPA provides a great opportunity to network with other aviation professionals in your community.



*By paying your Annual Membership Dues, you give us the financial foundation that allows us to continue fighting unfair or restrictive government regulations, protecting our heliports, promoting aviation safety and educating pilots, working together with the public, and securing a healthy future for our industry.*

**To join, fill out the Membership Application on the back.**

**Mail your completed application and payment to:**

**PHPA, PO Box 4699, Garden Grove, CA 92842**

