



MAIN ROTOR

Spring/Summer 2021



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NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ROTORCRAFT ASSOCIATION

SPRING/SUMMER 2021

EDITORIAL

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FACEBOOK

Southern California Rotorcraft Association (SoCalRotors)

SoCal Rotors 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

Jim Davidson

**We've
changed
our name,
read on...**

Jim Woodaman 2021 Southern California Rotorcraft Association *Leadership Award Recipient*

Vice President Jim Woodaman is stepping down and the Board of Directors has voted unanimously to honor his many years of service to the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association as we evolve into the Southern California Rotorcraft Association. Jim has served on the PHPA Board of Directors beginning in 1991, which included terms as President and as Vice President.

Jim's flying career started in 1983 as an airplane pilot and progressed to helicopters in 1990. In 1996 he founded Summit Helicopter, located at Whiteman Airport, which is engaged primarily in power line construction and maintenance work. Currently, he is a pilot for Siller Helicopter primarily flying fire missions in support of the USFS and Cal Fire. He is a principal of Welk Aviation which owns both Angel City Air and Summit Helicopter. Jim began flying ENG in 1999 and was also a pilot for the Hawthorne Police Department from 2001 to



2013. Throughout his career Jim has worked for several Southern California operators including Western Helicopters, Briles Helicopters, National Helicopters, KNBC, KCAL and KCBS, flying a variety of missions including external load/construction, law enforcement, ENG and firefighting.

Jim has been integral to our association's success and represents the best of the helicopter industry. Therefore, the Board of Directors has awarded Jim Woodaman the 2021 SoCal Rotors Leadership Award.

PHPA Pivots to the Future: *and You're Invited to Come Aboard!*

by Jim Paules and Jim Davidson

Since September 29th, 1967, when the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association became an official non-profit association with the California Secretary of State, we have relentlessly cherished our history of member development /community service. Yet as with any flight plan, we are also aware of approaching challenges...often just over the horizon.

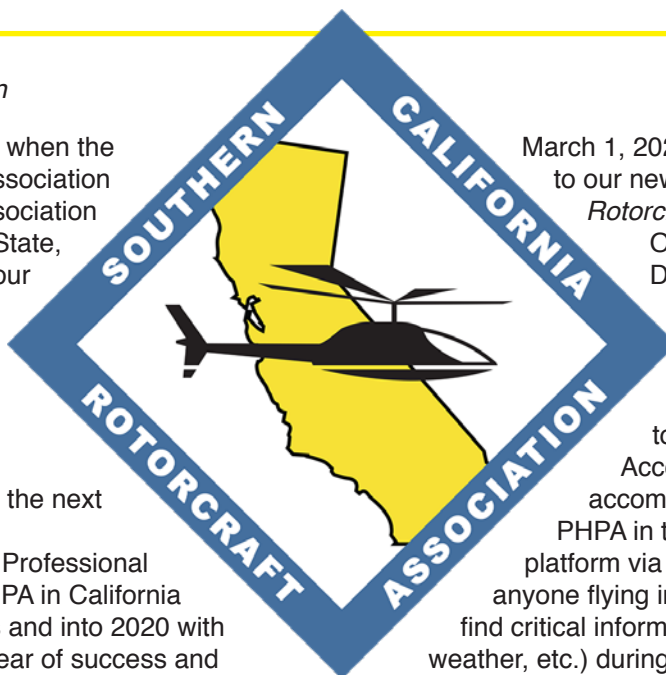
We welcome our members to the next future for our association!

Like many close families, the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association/PHPA in California rolled through the 2019 holidays and into 2020 with a high expectation for another year of success and growth. Our PHPA worked seamlessly with HAI to host the Manufacturers' Demonstration Ramp at Angel Stadium during HAI's HELI Expo in Anaheim. This was our third time at this site and the insurance services and permits with the Angel Stadium management team went well and we welcomed the first arrival on Tuesday, January 28, 2020.

Over the next three days, our PHPA team had the privilege of welcoming eight helicopters from among the leading rotary-wing aviation companies from around the globe. Our partnership with the Angel Stadium and HAI management teams went flawlessly while our volunteer ramp support from PHPA members was unending and, most importantly, our PHPA BOD member Dave Andrews (MDR Ramp Boss) provided a well-scheduled and safe sequence of flight arrivals/departures. The last helicopter departed for home January 30, at 1740 hours and we congratulated our team for the best Demo Ramp ever! Clearly 2020 looked like it would be a high-flying year... after all, what could possibly go wrong?

THE FAST PIVOT

Like the rest of the planet, we were too busy to notice the early news of the spread of COVID-19 that rapidly turned 2020 into a year unlike any one we've ever seen. Like many other nonprofit service associations, PHPA turned to online board meetings and put the *hard stop* to our in-person safety briefings. We also decided to use the unique schedule COVID delivered to work on changes we felt were needed for the future of the PHPA. As changes were discussed in operations and goals to sustain and inform our members, we began to believe we should go big and change the name of the association. Thus, on



March 1, 2021, we introduced the community to our new identity: *Southern California Rotorcraft Association / SoCal Rotors*.

Our association president, James Davidson, knows something about driving change to achieve goals, whether it's conducting combat missions in Vietnam or driving change to a non-profit organization.

According to Jim, one of the key accomplishments achieved by the PHPA in the past was to provide a unique platform via the PHPA website in which anyone flying in Southern California was able to find critical information (restrictions, frequencies, weather, etc.) during major fires in order to keep everyone safe. That website, which evolved to include association business, TFR's Noise Sensitive Areas, news, and other relevant information for our members has been redesigned to reflect SoCalRotors, our new moniker. Davidson also recalled how well attended the PHPA's annual Fire Briefing meeting had become, often at the Van Nuys Airport. The structure of the conference was designed to communicate critical flight ops info among airborne fire fighter crews and the growing number of media helicopters covering the fires during our treacherous Santa Ana winds. These discussions included sharing common acronyms and special frequencies used by fire, law enforcement, and ENG crews during airborne fire ops which is key to keeping all fight crews safe by communicating clearly with one another.

Davidson points out that while technology of rotary wing aviation has certainly changed since he flew gunships on combat missions, he notes the lessons he learned about managing change are still relevant to today's pilots. "We learned during the heat of battle, day and night, how to be prepared for flights, including

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BOD Zager and Pres. Davidson working the manufacturer's demo ramp.

PHPA Pivots

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pre-flights, density altitudes, departures, and approaches, while flying heavily loaded aircraft,” Davidson explained.

“Vietnam flying was very complex, with airspace restrictions such as Fire Bases, B-52 Arc-light missions, air strike’s, and artillery flying corridors to have to navigate in, around or through, much like the the Los Angeles Basin today. Now it’s the same—handling multiple radios, navigating and conducting your flight under different FARS all at the same time keeping your situational awareness on high alert. The same skill sets are true in organizing and mentoring others via the PHPA, which now is the new SoCal Rotors organization.

“The local knowledge, coordination and complete understanding of the big picture must be shared by all. How you fit into this is the key to being a successful pilot in the Los Angeles basin and surrounding areas.

“Pilots realize that a successful flight mission often means a 360 degree view and the ability to change course when needed, much like the decisions made by the PHPA Board to take action and change our name to the Southern California Rotorcraft Association.”

WHY WE CHANGED OUR NAME

“Several may ask why make this change at this time?” The PHPA has led the way toward community support for rotary-wing aviation with an active coalitions of pilots, FAA/government services and community associations concerned about helicopter noise. Part of the change

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Bell AH-1G Cobra



Phantom 1974 LAFD Bell 47



Sikorsky S-76



Cal Fire UH-60 Fire Hawk

Jim Paules

2020 PHPA Lifetime Achievement Award Winner



Jim Paules

With over 25 years of experience in real estate development, non-profit management and event development, Paules brings a unique toolbox of skills in financial/accounting management, business development and volunteer/team management. Paules holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, Northridge, along with graduate certificates in Real Estate Finance and Construction Management from the UCLA Graduate Builders Program. Jim is also a Certified Management Accountant, C.M.A.

Paules' career in real estate has included roles with many of the premier home and commercial property builders in Southern California including Griffin Industries and Forecast Homes. Additionally, Jim imagined, designed and took to market the landmark Customer Satisfaction Study for Homebuilders during his tenure with J.D. Power and Associates.

A member of the PHPA since

1996, Paules first served on the Board of Directors in 2000. During this long tenure with the PHPA, Paules has served as the association Treasurer, Membership director, newsletter editor and has worked on committees supporting the Helicopter Awareness Day and PHPA's involvement in a host of community events over the years.

As an enthusiastic supporter of rotary-wing aviation, Paules originated the American Heroes Air Show at the Santa Monica Airport in 1993. Since then, this unique event has grown into the nation's premier helicopter-only, admission-free aviation experience; produced by volunteers in communities from coast to coast.

Paules has additionally connected with the Southern California community via his authored articles in BUILDER

Magazine, the Los Angeles Times, Air Space Magazine and 9-1-1 Magazine with themes from helicopters' role in SAR Operations to customer satisfaction for builders to financial management tactics for non-profit organizations.

Upon graduation from Los Angeles' first FBI Citizens Academy class in 2001, Paules organized the F.B.I. Citizens Academy Alumni Association and served as the founding President. Additionally, Paules was the founding President and continues to sit on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles A.T.F. Citizens Academy Alumni Association.

Married since 1981, Jim has made West Hills in the San Fernando Valley his home with his wife Kristen, a Special Education teacher with LAUSD and their two grown children, Ryan and Victoria.



Jim speaking at the American Heroes Air Show



HELINET: A Multi-

by Allison Rakun, Helinet SVP of M

Since the late 80s, Helinet has been a staple in the Los Angeles helicopter community, providing services to a diverse mix of markets. Legendary stunt pilot and entrepreneur Alan Purwin co-founded West Coast Helicopters in 1987 and later merged the company with Helinet in 1998.

While most other aviation companies were focused on a small selection of rotorcraft, Alan saw the benefit of running a diverse operation from the start.

The company began with one Bell 206L, providing electronic newsgathering (ENG) services to local news stations and quickly expanded into other business lines, supplying VIP charter services to high-net-worth individuals, turnkey aerial production services for the television and motion picture industries, and time-critical flights for vital organ transport programs throughout Southern California.

In 1999, Helinet launched one of its most important missions: the helicopter air ambulance program for Children's Hospital Los Angeles, providing the hospital

with fully equipped EMS aircraft, pilots, fuel and maintenance at no cost to CHLA.

Helinet wasn't done expanding. The company launched its revolutionary Helinet Technologies division in 2009, a business sector that provides microwave downlink and other mission critical solutions to airborne law enforcement (ALE) across the nation. Most recently, a partnership with Brown Helicopter and Anduze Helicopter was formed to bring multiple UH-60s to Southern California for commercial production and aerial firefighting missions.

Helinet's pool of 37 highly skilled pilots and staggered schedule model allows the company the flexibility of having qualified pilots available to launch at a moment's notice. To support its various mission requirements, Helinet's fleet currently consists of 8 Airbus AS350s, 2 Airbus AS355s, 3 Leonardo A109s, 4 Sikorsky S76s, 3 Blackhawk UH-60s and 15 high-performance drones.

Through economic challenges, and most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, the company's diversity and





Mission Company

Marketing and Business Development

innovative solutions, along with its robust safety and training standards, has been the driving force that keeps the rotors turning at this Van Nuys Airport based operation.

Fly Neighborly Program

Helinet's rigorous flight standards are implemented with pilots from the moment they first walk in the front door. These standards are upheld in a variety of ways including internal and external training. On average, the company invests approximately 300 hours of training and check ride flights per year. Helinet's Safety Management System (SMS), Flight Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP) also support and ensure a strong safety culture.

To mitigate the company's noise impact on the communities they fly above, Helinet has developed a "Fly Neighborly Program" to provide a clear foundation and set of standards for its pilots and staff. "Pilots can help make the public less hostile to day-to-day helicopter operations by being aware of noise sensitive areas, and when possible, avoid flying over these areas," said Helinet's

Chief Pilot Brian Petschauer. "They can also fly in ways that cause the least possible impact to the public," he added.

As Chief Pilot, Brian regularly sends out operations memos to his team, highlighting noise sensitive areas and ways to reduce Helinet's noise footprint in that particular region. However, there are times when certain areas can't be avoided in the interest of flight safety, meeting FAA regulations and ATC directions, or due to the time-critical nature of the mission. "When we get a call from Children's Hospital Los Angeles to pick up a child with a life-threatening condition, or one of our hospital clients need immediate transportation for their organ

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procurement teams, we have an obligation to fly the quickest and safest route possible,” said Al Sousa, Vice President and Director of Operations.

While most community members can certainly understand Helinet’s commitment to providing rapid helicopter transportation for medical missions, which at times means flying over noise sensitive areas, they still deal with people that don’t seem to care.

From claims of decreasing homeowner propriety values to disrupting sleep, Helinet has heard their fair share of noise complaints over the 30+ years the company has been in business. “We’ve heard it all, but what we’ve found is that the majority of the noise complaints come from a small group of people. We try our best to respond to complaints by educating the individual on the reason for the flight and explain some of the tactics we use to minimize disruption,” added Sousa.

To help mitigate the impact of its helicopter operations on the public, Helinet has created Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to reduce noise levels during various flight missions. Pilots are notified through the company’s air carrier management system when a new SOP is promulgated.

One of the main points the SOP stresses is flying at or above 1,000 feet AGL when over residential areas. It also highlights best practices to decrease an aircraft’s noise signature. Some of the techniques listed include

avoiding sharp maneuvers and blade slap, using steep take-off and descent profiles, and while on departures, utilizing maximum power settings and best rate of climb airspeeds. Another point is the importance of varying routes, as repeated flights over the same areas can lead to unhappy neighbors. There are obvious exceptions to this requirement, including takeoffs, landings, ATC routing, weather, collision avoidance regulatory reasons and operational requirements.

Covering the News from Above

Breaking news happens fast. Such news usually attracts an aerial crowd consisting of multiple electronic newsgathering aircraft representing the major news stations within the region along with local airborne law enforcement teams tracking the incident. To help pilots prepare for the dynamics of flying an ENG mission, Helinet’s Chief Pilot and Lead ENG Pilot teamed up with LAPD Air Ops to create SOP guidelines for these types of flights.

“While our goal is to help broadcasters get the best aerial vantage points possible, Helinet’s ENG pilots are trained to give ALL aircraft working an incident the proper space needed to effectively do their job and communicate with the agency pilots on the scene to ensure safe operations,” stated Petschauer.

Working in the Car Chase Capital of the World

The high-speed pursuit has become a unique part of LA culture. ENG aircraft get dispatched to the scene while viewers stay glued to their screens, waiting for the bad guy to get caught. Working in the car chase capital of the world means LA-based ENG pilots need to be prepared



to cover one of the most complex news stories to navigate from above.

During a pursuit, airborne law enforcement typically relays critical information to the ground units, while ENG aircraft are on the scene to provide news stations with real-time coverage. Helinet pilots are trained to understand the importance of allowing multiple agency aircraft appropriate space to maneuver and follow the pursuit as required. ENG crews are also taught to be mindful of possible handoffs from one agency to another when a pursuit crosses city boundaries.

At times, ENG aircraft could be interfering with ongoing investigations or tactical operations on the ground. "Under these circumstances, the ALE aircraft may give our pilots a set of parameters to operate by, said Petschauer. "We teach our pilots to respect the guidelines set forth by the law enforcement agency while keeping ENG crews informed. Situational awareness is key."

From navigating above noise sensitive communities to keeping up with active vehicle pursuits, rotorcraft operations in the heart of Los Angeles can bring forth many



Children's Hospital/Helinet Sikorsky S-76C+



complex challenges. Having an experienced team with strong communication among staff, clients and community members continues to be a crucial part of Helinet's success. As the company continues to evolve, diversify and enter new markets, one thing that will remain at the heart of the operation is a culture of putting the safe and professional operation and maintenance of aircraft first.



Helinet UH-60 Firefighting Aircraft



Brian Petschauer, Chief Pilot

Photos courtesy of Helinet Aviation

For more information, visit www.helinet.com

PHPA Pivots

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was from the desire to be more directly titled and aligned with our mission. The Professional Helicopter Pilots Association had a great mission, but our organization has changed just as the rotary-wing environment has changed. The PHPA was not, and had never really been limited to just helicopter pilots. We welcomed and honored then, as we do now under our new name, a wide range of crew-members, maintenance teams and corporations. Most of all, we have a new focus with goals to guide students seeking the pilot's seat for tomorrow's helicopter missions.

"Much has changed since 1967 when the association first invited membership applications; today we invite you to join us and be part of the team navigating the future changes and challenges that the rotary-wing industry is sure to encounter...*just over the horizon.*"

www.SoCalROTORS.org



Top: Sikorsky S-58T Screaming Mimi;

Left: Bell 429;

Below: Airbus H-135

Photos by PhantomPhan1974





Cal Fire UH-60 Fire Hawk



Bell 407EX

Come Join Us!

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

SoCalRotors provides a website (socalrotors.org) which provides valuable information to helicopter operators.

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

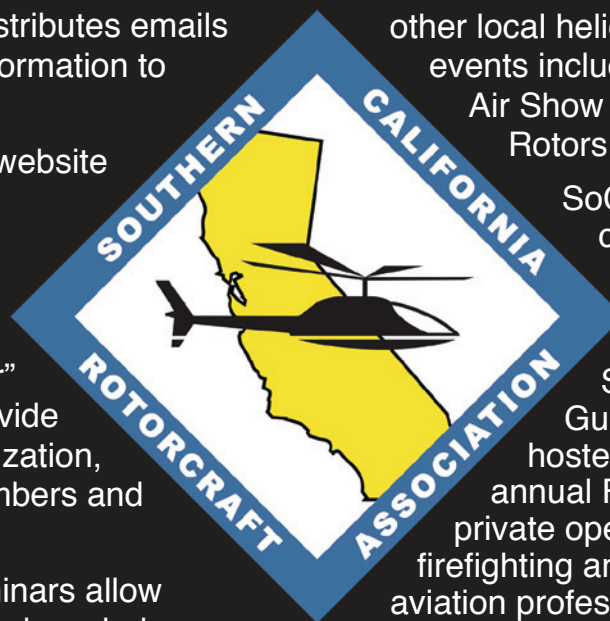
SoCalRotors Safety Seminars allow members to gain valuable knowledge from some of the top leaders in our industry.

SoCalRotors "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.

SoCalRotors 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.

SoCalRotors 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 SoCalRotors, go to:
www.socalrotors.org**

