



The Save Runway 8-26 Fund

The all out effort by Watsonville Pilots Association (WPA) to stop development encroachment in the runway 8-26 safety zones is being heavily supported by local pilots. After a valiant effort to convince the City of Watsonville not to create "new noise and safety problems" failed, the only course left was to use legal action. Now locals are putting their money where their mouth is.

Contributions are coming from all over California and even Oregon. One of the legal fund checks had in the memo section: "for the save runway 8-26 fund." Yes, that about says it all. Anyone, who thinks that building high-density housing, high occupancy buildings off the ends of runway isn't going to eventually cause restrictions, and even closure of the runway, is naïve.

Does the City think development will close runway 8-26? That is indicated by the City's response to the Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury Report, "Watsonville Municipal Airport: Headed for a Crash" In the City's mandatory response a number of statements indicate it has little understanding of the importance of the runway, or support for keeping it open. Grand Jury report finding #23 says, "the proposed densities for Buena Vista specified in [General Plan] Watsonville Vista 2030 will result in more households being exposed to the risks of off-airport accidents and subject to noise pollution." In response to this, the City makes this bizarre statement, "Additional housing does not increase danger for off airport landings." Anyone who has ever had an engine failure (I've had five) has no desire to hit any kind of structure.

So what are the chances of winning this case, scheduled for adjudication on Friday May 4th? It's prudent to be conservative.

The City filed a legal action to exclude the State Division of Aeronautics from the suit. The exclusion was denied. The PUC codes regarding airport land use planning are fairly clear. Aviation and airports in California need to win this one.

Note: The city asked for and was granted a 28 day extension

To contribute to the legal fund send your check made out to "WPA" and write in the memo section, "legal fund", then send it to 137 Falmouth Court, Aptos, CA 95003 or to WPA, P.O. Box 2074, Freedom, CA 95019-2074.

~ Dan Chauvet ~

Airport officials sound off on noise

Monterey City and airport leaders wrestled with the perennial problem of noise generated by airport operations. Monterey Peninsula Airport District officials told city officials and members of the public that their hands are tied by federal law when it comes to regulating operating hours, flight paths and types of aircraft to reduce noise impacts.

"Airports can't pass their own laws and restrict access," said airport General Manager Tom Greer. He said the Monterey airport district passed noise-abatement ordinances to restrict flight paths and touch-and-go landings in the late 1980s. The ordinances were immediately preempted by federal law.

"To impose a curfew, you have to have a really egregious noise situation," said David Willoughby, airport district counsel. Only one U.S. airport, in Naples, Fla., has been able to do that, he said. Greer said most pilots who use the Monterey airport use voluntary guidelines to keep noise in nearby neighborhoods to a minimum. Only 2 percent of flights take place between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. -- a period the airport district calls a "voluntary curfew."

But Richard Ruccello, president of the Casanova Oak Knoll Neighborhood Association, said he has attended hours and hours of meetings during the past 20 years about airport-noise issues that never get resolved. "When you have a continual problem, you have to change your way of thinking," he said.

Ruccello said airport neighbors must put up with safety and traffic issues as well as noise. He urged officials to press for flight patterns to steer aircraft away from heavily populated areas.

Monterey City Councilman Jeff Haferman said airport noise is a recurring issue that he hears raised at neighborhood meetings. "I'm hearing a lot of concerns," he said.

Airport Director Robert DeVoe said his agency "wants to be a good neighbor, and we're trying everything we can."

A just-started study that will update a noise-contour map for the airport could show that overall noise levels have slackened. Greer said newer commercial planes must meet tighter noise standards, and airports are pressing the feds for similar rules for private aircraft.

"We'll be in a much better position after the study is complete," said airport Director Carl Miller.

~ The Monterey (CA) County Herald ~
~ LARRY PARSONS, March 2, 2007 ~

Pilots: Watsonville airport plan fails to take off

A proposal to establish a city committee to create a plan for future development near Watsonville Municipal Airport isn't flying with pilots. Local and national pilot groups, the state aeronautics agency and the Santa Cruz County grand jury have all pressed for the establishment of a countywide commission to oversee land-use planning around Watsonville Municipal Airport.

The City Council will consider today a recommendation by City Manager Carlos Palacios to set up a city-appointed committee instead.

But the city's rocky relationship with the aviation community has only worsened in recent years as Watsonville plans for development in the Buena Vista area north of the airport, and pilots' reactions have ranged from skepticism to downright opposition.

"We've been bitten and we're going cautiously down this road," said Bill DeRouchey, who represents Experimental Aviation Association Chapter 119 on the Watsonville Airport Advisory Committee.

Pilots have been asking the city to adopt an airport land-use compatibility plan for years. Such a plan would spell out how much and what kind of building would be appropriate near the airport. Pilots believe such a plan, if done right, would forestall intense development in the Buena Vista area in the interests of safety and airport preservation.

The city general plan calls for as many as 2,250 new homes to be built there during the next two decades, though officials insist that as plans are refined the number could drop.

DeRouchey said there's no reason for a stakeholder committee since the state Division of Aeronautics has established guidelines for land-use planning near airports that should serve as the blueprint for a local plan. "I'm happy to work out a land-use plan with them," he said. "But we're not going to compromise safety in any way".

Palacios doesn't see the issue of safety as clear-cut, however. For him, it's a question of risk assessment and balancing needs. The city also is under pressure from regional and state officials to meet new housing quotas. "We do risk assessment every day when we decide where to put a traffic light or set a speed limit. It's no different from that," Palacios said.

Dan Chauvet of the Watsonville Pilots Association, which filed a lawsuit against the city in July over the general plan and its environmental impact report, said the idea for a committee is an attempt by the city to head off an unfavorable decision in the courts. "What's happened is this has come up very fast," said Chauvet, who expects a court decision within months.

But Palacios said the city wants to move forward with planning for Buena Vista, and this is a first step. He said the city has a record of finding compromises when all stakeholders are engaged, and he pointed, for example, to the approvals that led to the building of Pajaro Valley High School. The city agreed not to grow west of Highway 1 in exchange for support from the county, environmental groups and the state Coastal Commission for the once contentious project.

"We have a good track record of getting people of good will to come to the table and find solutions," Palacios said. "We can find a compromise that's best for the airport and good for the overall community".

Pilot and flight instructor Rayvon Williams isn't completely sold, but he's willing to listen. "I'm a big believer in the city of Watsonville's need to grow," said Williams, a Scotts Valley resident. "But before I can say yeah or nay on the committee, we need to talk more about it"

~ Santa Cruz Sentinel ~
~ March 13, 2007 ~

California Flying

Apr 21 — **Shafter, CA.** Minter Field (MIT). Warbirds in Action. Minter Field Air Museum Annual Warbird Airshow. Base Reunion of Military & Civilians 1942-1945. Contact Jim, 661-837-1551

Apr 26 — **Oakland, CA.** Oakland Intl Airport (OAK). Business Aircraft & Jet Preview. Sneak preview! Airport Journals invites you to see the latest business aircraft. Contact Paul Lips, 866-202-0096

Apr 28 — **San Andreas, CA.** Calaveras County Airport (KCPU). Calaveras Air Fair 2007. Calaveras Air Fair 2007 Fly-in & Open House 8am-5pm. Static Aircraft displays, Local non-profit food vendors, Classic car displays, Radio control airplane display, \$5 scenic airplane rides, and more! Contact Kathy, (209) 736-2501

Apr 28 — **San Diego, CA.** Gillespie Field, San Diego Air & Space Museum (KSEE). 13th Annual Super Safety Seminar. A full day of Wings Safety Seminars from 9:00am to 4:30pm. AOPA "Handling Inflight Emergencies" and "Say the Right Thing". Other topics include Special Use Air Space, Single Pilot IFR, Light Sport, Helicopters and more. Presneted by AOPA, SAN FSDO FAAStea. Contact Rich Martindell, 619-253-7649;

Hollister - Airport Seeks \$250,000 from FAA

Airport Manager Bill Gere hopes to get \$250,000 from the federal government in the coming month to repair runways at the Hollister Municipal Airport. Gere is still pursuing tens of millions of dollars in federal grants for airport expansion, but he said the airport must take care of basic maintenance before moving on to more ambitious projects. "We have our book of dreams, while the (Federal Aviation Administration) has its practical requirements," Gere said. "We ask them for millions of dollars, and they give us half a million bucks."

Fred Meyer, who has a plane at the airport, has been critical of Gere's work in the past. When told about Gere's current funding efforts, Meyer said, "I'm glad to hear it - if I can believe it." Meyer said the airport hasn't gotten the funds it needs in the past because of Gere's failure to provide the FAA with the necessary paperwork. Last year, Gere asked for \$43 million to fund airport improvements including the purchase of new land and the construction of taxiways. The land could eventually be used for a new airport hotel and restaurant, he said, as well as more businesses overall. At the time, Gere said it was unlikely he'd get all of the requested funds. "You can't get it unless you ask first," he said. "You have to play the game and ask for the moon."

At the time of Gere's last funding application, one hangar tenant said there was a much more serious need for basic maintenance, including fixing potholes on the runway. Former City Councilman Robert Scattini, who is also a pilot, agreed that the runway needs improvement. Gravel on the runways remains a major problem, he said, because planes can kick gravel off the ground, and that gravel can chip the planes' propellers.

Scattini added that he hopes Gere will also succeed in getting money for the larger growth plan.

"The airport needs to grow," he said. "I really hope we do get the money."

*~ The Hollister (CA) Free Lance ~
~ By Anthony Ha, 3/02/2007*

WPA meeting minutes of February 28, 2007

John Cowan, the VP, called meeting to order at 7:10.

Minutes

The minutes were moved and seconded to be approved as printed in the January Newsletter.

Treasurers Report

- ◆ Treasurers report; Funds are safe and sound and in order. Response has been excellent to the large mail out done the end of January.

Old Business

- ◆ The WRAP report: The dinner fundraiser was well attended. Funds collected were sufficient to sustain expenses. (This is an annual event and we encourage your support)

New Business

- ◆ Mike McIntyre addressed the membership regarding a recent request from Phil Boyer AOPA president, to Congressional members regarding USER FEES. He wrote a generic letter for members to use as a guideline to address the issue.
- ◆ Hal Zamora reported on the legal fund.

Announcements

- ◆ Specialized Helicopter: Chris Gularte, CEO He addressed pattern usage and emergency at the airport. He is at 150 Aviation Way Suite 101. His door is open.

G1000 in your future?

Rayvon Williams introduced our quest speaker, Max Trescott who wrote a manual on glass cockpits and the GPS 1000.

Next Safety Meeting

The next Wings Seminar Presentation will be on March 28th at the next scheduled WPA meeting. The topic will be The National Weather Service.

For further information on upcoming WINGS Seminar's, go to the WPA Home page at <http://www.watsonvillepilots.org/> and press the [WPA "WINGS" Seminar Calendar](#) button.

Now you know the news.

*~ Charlene McIntyre ~
~ Secretary ~*

A Call for Officers

The WPA nominating committee has announced a call for officers in preparation for elections in April 2007. Here's your chance to become more active in your organization. The offices are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term of office is two years, beginning in June 2007. All offices are available, but we especially need a President and a Secretary. Neither of these jobs requires a large outside effort, but rather the ability and desires to attend most monthly chapter meetings as well as several board meetings each year. The officers of Watsonville Pilots Association do for the organization what they are good at and what they enjoy. We welcome you whatever your interests and talents. If you are interested in becoming an officer, we would be happy to send you a copy of the bylaws, which lists the responsibilities for each office. Please contact Charlene McIntyre, chair of the nominating committee at 408-353-5969

~ The WPA nominating committee ~

Fuel Prices

At WVI Fuel Island, 100LL is **\$3.98** and Jet A is **\$3.13**
(03/14/2007)

At KOAR (Marina), SS 100LL is **\$3.49** and Jet A is **\$3.03**
(03/14/2007)

Local Events

WPA -- meet on the last Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00 PM in the Watsonville Aviation Ed. Center, Watsonville Airport.
EAA Chapter 119 -- meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:30 PM in the Watsonville Aviation Ed. Center, Watsonville Airport
Monterey Bay 99s -- meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00 PM in the Watsonville Aviation Ed. Center, Watsonville Airport.
Civil Air Patrol Squadron 13 -- meet every Tuesday evening, beginning at 6:30 PM in the National Guard Armory, Watsonville Airport.
Northern CA Aerobatics Club IAC38 -- meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month at the Livermore Municipal Airport

WPA Airport Legal Fund

Please Help WVI with Your Tax Deductible Contributions. Checks should be made to "WPA" or "Watsonville Pilots Association". On the memo line note: "legal fund". Send your contribution to: 137 Falmouth CT., Aptos, CA 95003
Thanks for Your Support

WPA Officers

Mike McIntyre: Chairman
John Cowan: Vice-Chairman
Charlene McIntyre: Secretary
Sarah Chauvet: Treasurer
Hal Zamora: Secretary of Legal Affairs
Dan Chauvet As. Sec. of Legal Affairs

Committee Heads

Dan Chauvet: WAAG
Richard Lippi: Web Site
Randy Pesce: Field Security
Bob Olmsted: Newsletter Editor
Chris Olmsted: News Ed./As. Sec.
Rayvon Williams: AOPA/WINGS
John Cowan: Public Relations
Brian Moffet: Video & Media

Airport Manager: Don French

Feedback: wpanews@yahoo.com

WPA Newsletter
PO Box 135
Brookdale, CA 95007-0135

Next Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday, **Mar. 28**
@ the EAA-WAEC Building
60 Aviation Way, Watsonville Airport