

NEWSLETTER

December 2025- January 2026



Desert Off-Road Training

In preparation for the upcoming desert off-road season, the **Imperial County Sheriff's Office Aero Squadron** conducted a series of coordinated training missions designed to enhance operational readiness and safety.

Camilo Garcia, Jr, Squadron Public Affairs Officer reports that: "The exercises brought together multiple aircraft and flight crews composed of both pilots and observers, focusing on teamwork, communication, and mission execution within the target locations."

The Imperial Aero Squadron currently operates a diverse fleet of aircraft, including Cessna 172, Cessna 182, Piper Cherokees, Piper Saratoga, a Navion, and a Bonanza, providing versatile capabilities for search and rescue operations, aerial patrols, and community event support.

The comprehensive training sessions included radio communication updates and recurrent instruction on the proper use of sheriff's radio systems, codes, and inter-agency coordination protocols. These refreshers ensured that all air crews were fully equipped to support ground units and emergency services during one of the busiest seasons in the Imperial Valley desert.

In addition to communication and coordination exercises, the squadron carried out formation flying practice, honing precision flying skills essential for public events and aerial missions. The team's flyover took place at the November 2025 Brawley Cattle Call Parade, an annual event that attracts over 16,000 attendees and celebrates the region's proud Western heritage.



Above -- A beautiful Squadron Bonanza flies over the Imperial Valley; below – sand dunes for off-roading and camping.



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AOPA President's Tour



AOPA's new President Darren Pleasance visited Five Rivers Aviation at Livermore Airport, in October 2025 for a special meet-and-greet event.

Air Squadrons from Alameda and Sacramento were in attendance and asked Pleasance specific questions about Northern California aviation issues.

The Livermore meeting was one of the final steps of a year-long tour schedule since Pleasance took over AOPA duties in January 2025. Altogether 13 stops covering all US regions took place.

Pleasance spoke on his vision for AOPA and his estimate of the future of general aviation.

Serving as AOPA's sixth president, Pleasance is no stranger to Livermore Airport since he grew up in the Livermore area and began taking flying lessons at KLVK.

Pleasance shared some of his aviation life story with the group, which is highlighted in his recent book "True North."



He has over 8,000 hours in more than 50 types of aircraft and arrived at KLVK in a P-51 – in which he is a fractional owner.

Sacramento County Squadron has new website



SACRAMENTO COUNTY
SHERIFF'S AIR SQUADRON

Enter search string



Sacramento County's Squadron released a new website version last month – sacairsquadron.com. The site includes a unique login accessing membership info and dues payment.

We are looking for news articles and event dates

Is your squadron involved in an upcoming event? Is your group holding a meeting with a great speaker? Are members flying to interesting locations? We would love to put your upcoming dates on our calendar. Let us know when and where – we'll send out information to our squadrons.



Pass on suggestions for articles and upcoming event dates to: Dale Terry, Newsletter Editor, Dale.Terry@sacairsquadron.com.

Alameda Squadron Celebrates Volunteers

On Saturday, November 1, 2025, Sheriff Yesenia Sanchez and members of the Alameda County Sheriff's Office gathered at the County Fairgrounds "Country Plaza" picnic area to honor the department's dedicated volunteers from the Air Squadron, Communications Team, Mounted Posse, Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Units, Chaplaincy Program, Dive Team, and Search and Rescue.

The event brought together volunteers, their families, and Sheriff's Office staff for a relaxed afternoon of food, drinks, and family fun. Guests enjoyed a BBQ picnic spread with soda, water, and iced tea, while children had a great time bouncing and playing in the bounce house set up for the occasion.

One of the many highlights of the day was the recognition of several Air Squadron members for their years of service and commitment to the community:

- > 10 years – Gary Cose
- > 20 years – Lenny Summers
- > 35 years – Jila Hicks
- > 40 years – Greg Presnell and Bob Tucknott

Sheriff Sanchez expressed her gratitude to all volunteers for their ongoing dedication, emphasizing how their service strengthens the department's connection with the community. The volunteer units were recognized for having jointly provided a total of 16,000 manhours during the preceding year.

The event offered a chance for volunteers and their families to connect, celebrate milestones, and reflect on the collective impact of their work across Alameda County. It was a day of appreciation, camaraderie, and celebration for the volunteers who continue to give their time and talents in support of the Sheriff's Office mission.



Alameda County Sheriff Yesenia Sanchez presents Air Squadron member Greg Presnell with a 40-year service award.



The Squadron's Cessna 206G Stationair aircraft which is based at Livermore Airport (KLVK).



Preflight Complacency

By Kevin McDonnell, Alameda County Squadron

From our very first flying lesson, we're taught that a thorough preflight inspection is essential. Over time, we all encounter the usual minor squawks—low oil, burned-out bulbs, and the like. But every so often, something truly odd turns up.

Among the more memorable discoveries I've made were a forgotten wrench inside the cowling and nose gear doors literally duct taped shut.

One of the perks of owning your own airplane is familiarity. On the next flight, you know every switch and setting will be exactly where you left it - lights, fuel selectors, pressurization, radios, intercoms, all perfectly in place. But that comfort can breed complacency, which is especially dangerous on a post maintenance flight. On one occasion, I found my fuel selectors set to a cross feed position I'd never used. That's now the very first item on my flow check.

Propeller nicks are easy to find by running your fingers along the leading edge. But that method nearly fooled me once. I happened to notice an odd ding - not on the front, but on the backside of the propeller blade. I stared at it in disbelief. How could debris from the ground possibly strike there?



I called an A&P to help investigate. After a few minutes of head-scratching, he pointed out a missing screw from the spinner. Mystery solved – at some point, a spinner screw had backed out striking the backside of the blade as it departed the aircraft. One very expensive overhaul later, the prop was as good as new.

The goal of sharing this story is to encourage everyone's vigilance against the complacency trap. The more times we have preflight without seeing any problems, the more likely confirmation bias could fool us into not seeing something wrong.





Imperial County Off-road training photos –Above – Squadron members prepare aircraft for training missions; lower right – aircraft airborne over Imperial Valley; lower left – off-road campground used for mission ground identification.

