

TAILWINDS

Desert Flying Club's Quarterly Newsletter

Winter Edition
2021

Desert Flying Club
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President's Message

By Nathan Whittacre



What a year 2020 was for Desert Flying Club! As with most other small organizations, the pandemic hit the club very hard. Flight training was grounded for about 2 months, many people stopped flying and we lost a few dozen members. Then something magical happened and demand for flying increase exponentially overnight. I believe that people wanted an escape and aviation offered that. I have this T-Shirt that I think speaks to all of us:



Isn't aviation a great escape from the troubles on the ground? The smell of AV-Gas cures so many mental ills. It also challenges us, even in challenging times. I took the opportunity personally to add on two ratings last year – instrument and multi-engine. I love the challenge of learning new things. It is also a great motivator to be a better person and explore our limits.

Many others joined in on that challenge last year. The demand required the club to increase its number of aircraft and instructors. In 2020, we added 4 additional aircraft (a 50% increase) and doubled the number of instructors. It was truly amazing to see how aviation allowed people to escape and learn and look for new opportunities, even in the toughest of times.

I am very excited about 2021. We have a great board of directors that do so much great work for the club. We now have new volunteers that are making it even better. Lauren Scott, Fernando Molina and Alan Zwick on the safety team, Jan Greenberg as our social and events director and Nick Lynch as our membership director. They each are bringing great ideas to continue to grow the club and those ideas are already taking shape.

With the pandemic restriction easing, we are looking forward to meeting again as a club, doing social events together and enjoying aviation... together rather than distanced. I look forward to seeing everyone around the clubhouse and up in the air. Happy skies and safe flying!

-Nathan

A Word About Safety

By Lauren Scott, CFI



At Desert Flying Club, we are kicking off 2021 focusing on safety. We have a new safety team comprised of Safety Officer Lauren Scott, assisted by club members Fernando Molina and Alan Zwick. CFI Lauren has been instructing at DFC for over 2 years after taking a long break from flying and remembers well what it feels like to be a rusty pilot! CFI Fernando joins us as a retired Weapons Systems Officer in F15E, and current Flight Test Analyst at Nellis AFB. CFII/MEI Alan is a retired USAF pilot and currently flies as Captain for Southwest Airlines. He has also experience as an aircraft owner.

Besides planning and leading the monthly DFC safety seminars, the safety team is dedicated to encouraging practices at the club that promote a strong culture of safety. According to the Joseph T. Nall Report for 2018, safety of non-commercial fixed-wing aviation flights has been on the rise, but we still have work to do to make it even safer. In 2018, there were 1,033 non-commercial fixed-wing accidents, including 277 fatalities. Sadly, many were due to pilot errors such as loss of control, fuel mismanagement, and continued VFR flight into IMC conditions.

The AOPA Air Safety Institute Article “*Safety: What is a Safety Culture?*” includes some valuable insights: “We are what we repeatedly do...our actions define us. While we may have the best intentions, if we don’t act in accordance with those intentions, they are for naught. This concept applies to everything we approach in life, and especially so in aviation, whereas we know, the margins for error are thinner...Every pilot intends to be a safe, conscientious pilot. Yet every year, pilots do things...that are counter to those intentions...We are what we repeatedly do...So if we as pilots consistently act in a safe manner, we start creating an individual set of good practices that then carry over to whatever group we’re a part of. This is what becomes our safety culture.”

The Safety Team has developed some practical ways for our club members to pursue individual and club safety. Besides the monthly safety seminars, we have three new challenges in which to participate. The first is the **DFC 2021 WINGS Challenge**. Each member who completes one FAASafety WINGS credit per month (flight or knowledge) in 2021 will be eligible to enter a drawing to win prizes in January 2022.

We also have a **Safety Topic of the Day** and **Emergency Procedure of the Day**, which are posted on the safety bulletin board upon entering the clubhouse. There are different topics for each day of the month to briefly discuss for the day a pilot is flying. For example, the Topic and EP of the Day for the 10th day of the month are “Filing a VFR/IFR flight plan in-flight,” and “Inadvertent VFR flight into IMC.” If a pilot is flying on March 10th, he or she would spend a few extra minutes briefing these specific scenarios to increase personal proficiency and preparedness.

Lastly, DFC has a dedicated email address for members to ask questions, share concerns, or make safety-related suggestions. We’d love to hear from you! You can contact us at safety@desertflyingclub.com.

At DFC, safety comes first! As pilots we must consistently prepare and act as Pilot in Command. As one of my students wisely observed about flying, “It’s only fun when you’re good at it.” Our lives and the lives of our loved ones depend on our dedication to flying safely.





Member Spotlight

Desert Flying Club member and Private Pilot Glynis Olgado has her sights set on obtaining her instrument and commercial tickets this year – a tall but not impossible order. Fortunately, Glynis' experiences learned from obtaining her PPL has conditioned her to know what to expect as she pursues her aviation goals and DFC is pleased to be a part of her journey.



What got you started in aviation? I come from a family of flight attendants, so I already had a natural interest in aviation. I also used to be a concierge on the Las Vegas Strip and would book tours and other fun activities for guests. My work let me go on these tours so I could accurately describe the experiences. When I went on an airplane tour to the Grand Canyon, I was more interested in what the pilots were doing than the actual Grand Canyon! After the tour, I even chased down our captain to ask for advice on how to get started and to this day we are great friends. Ever since then, I was interested in a career in aviation and started training shortly after.

What was the biggest obstacle in flight training that you had to overcome? Struggling to afford my flight training. In the beginning, I never put money aside for it and did a "pay as you go". I was constantly stopping and starting, which ended up costing more in the long run. I took a really long break from flying, got a better paying job, and saved up. I started over completely at DFC with CFI Lauren and ended up zipping through my private pilot training in 4.5 months and finally earned my license.

What is your next aviation goal? My goal in 2021 is to complete instrument and commercial training.

What advice would you give someone pursuing their certificate or an add-on? Be a self-starter. Study and understand the material before doing the actual flight training. Make every lesson count. Ask questions! If you don't understand something, speak up.

From the Chief Flight Instructor

By Chief Flight Instructor Gary Kauffman, CFI/CFII/MEI/ATP

The windy season is around the corner. March thru May typically see the most wind in our area. If it's been a while since you've practiced crosswind landings please take advantage of our excellent instructor staff and schedule an hour or so dedicated to crosswind takeoffs and landings, which you can also use for "WINGS" credits. A blown tire, runway excursion, or hard landing is not the best time to decide you need practice. Know your personal crosswind limitations. Student pilots are typically limited to 6kts max crosswind component, which can be challenging if you haven't practiced in a while.

Please lean the mixture after engine start. You may have noticed a cylinder on the conference table a couple weeks ago. Our maintenance team left it there as a reminder of what a consistently rich mixture does to engine cylinders. There were heavy deposits and carbon buildups embedded on the intake and exhaust ports, which diminished performance to the point where the cylinder had to be replaced. After engine start you can aggressively lean the mixture around 2" or halfway out on most of our planes and leave it there until before takeoff. If the engine hesitates during runup, push it in slightly. As you lean at idle you will reach a point where the RPM increases by 100-150 RPM indicating optimum fuel/ air ratio. In flight, please lean above 5,000' MSL. As summer approaches, we'll be leaning for best power before takeoff, a topic for the next newsletter.

Standby reservations: If the aircraft you want is taken when you want it, you can still schedule it as standby. Just schedule as you normally would, and at the bottom of the page check the "standby" box. If the airplane becomes available, your standby will become active, and you will receive an email notification.

Club Updates

- Effective March 1st, the following aircraft rental rate will increase by \$5 to \$150/Hobbs hour: N52286, N81894, and N55167. The increase was agreed upon by the aircraft's owners and DFC's board of directors after a fuel audit was performed, which found that these 180HP aircraft burn 1-2GPH more than their 160HP counterparts. Questions? Please contact board@desertflyingclub.com
- DFC is pleased to announce that Don Henry has joined on as the club's A&P – Welcome, Don!
- In accordance with local health authorities, face coverings must be worn at all times within the DFC clubhouse.
- Have you checked out the blog page on the DFC website? Visit to see the recent post about day trip flights. It includes great photos and suggestions of popular day trip flights from HND. Check back often for new blogs!
- If you've renewed your medical or obtained a new certificate/ rating, please make sure DFC is aware! Send a message to admin@desertflyingclub.com if you have information that needs to be updated.
- Please log into Flight Schedule Pro and make sure your emergency contact information is on file and current.
- Are you aware of DFC's new insurance deductible plan? This new plan eliminates the need to carry a renter's hull coverage policy, as our plan will cover your deductible in the event of a loss. This plan is just \$5/ month for pilot members, \$7 for students, and there is zero deductible for any covered event. Existing members can opt in immediately, and all new sign-ups will be required to participate in the plan.
- DFC continues to host its monthly safety meeting remotely over Zoom. The meeting is held at 7pm on the third Thursday of each month. Keep an eye out in your email for the invitation to join!

Member Accomplishments

Solo Status

Kevin Papp (Gary K., CFI)
Eliji Mondesir (Josh H., CFI)
Mike Mallozzi (Adam H., CFI)
Rob Kemp (Lauren S., CFI)
Thomas Verhoeve (Jennifer J., CFI)
Gabriel Torres (Troy M., CFI)

New Certificates & Ratings

Brianna Francis, Private Pilot (Lauren S., CFI)
Glynis Olgado, Private Pilot (Lauren S., CFI)
Tanner Fortgang, Private Pilot (Troy M., CFI)
Rocky Saso, Commercial Pilot (Jake L., CFI)

