

Lovin Life with Lori

It was just one day shy of nine weeks since I had really gone flying on any kind of a trip. It had been many months since I had seen Lori, a pilot, an airplane owner, yes a Mooney owner, who is also based at the Corona airport. We both had birthdays last week (she is considerably younger). I did owe her a flight for several years and today I got a chance to give her that flight. We met each other at the airport between 10 and 11 and the marine layer had already burned off. We saw blue skies everywhere except for a serious line of clouds building up over the San Gabriel mountains. We were going that way.

Lori started the day off with a big old hug. I was going to fly with Jon's wife today. Lori walked all around the airplane and approved of everything, while I explained some of the things that were changed out during the annual inspection. We pulled the airplane out of the hangar and got it facing - the runway. We drove our cars in and closed the hangar doors. Time to get a picture.



Oops, wait a sec, she forgot something in her car, there now she has everything



First we tried the 'lovin life' pose but that strained my back so I suggested we do it proper

Briefly, from her perspective, my airplane is quite different than hers so I chose to explain a lot of the things that she was looking at on the instrument panel. We did that at the run-up area as I got ready for us to get going. The haze was thick today, but about five minutes later we could see the haze line as we got above it. Too hazy for air to ground pictures today.

Then, the air traffic controller asked us to turn left to 300° for spacing. We did and that worked out just fine for us. When she said "Resume own navigation." I told her I wanted to stay on the 300° heading due to the storm clouds ahead. She said that was just fine. I could have flown under them but we both knew how much turbulence was under them. We did an end run around those big bad boys and cleared a low point in the mountains at 8500'. The clouds were all out the right window and then behind us. We were now 13 miles off course, to the left. It was only 100 miles to lunch today.

Back down on the ground at Tehachapi, I parked right in front of the pilot lounge that they have set up for us pilots. Lori noticed that there was no airplane parking lines on the ramp surface there. I said that this is Ed Shreffler parking and that it is unmarked. I took Lori inside and she was amazed. It is a wonderful and almost secret place. How many of you have been there?



I told her when I take her somewhere it will be first class, she agreed. Everything is spotless. Not a smudge on any window. Air conditioning was perfect. I showed her around like it was my place.

Pretty soon two ladies came inside and asked us where was 'that airport restaurant'. I knew what she meant. There is no airport café at the Tehachapi airport but the Apple Shed was just a three block walk away and Lori was going to go there anyway. I explained how to get there and the three of them left together. Based on my experience, I knew it would be a 30-40 minute wait. I walked around a bit.



Yes! They do have their nice new signs up now.



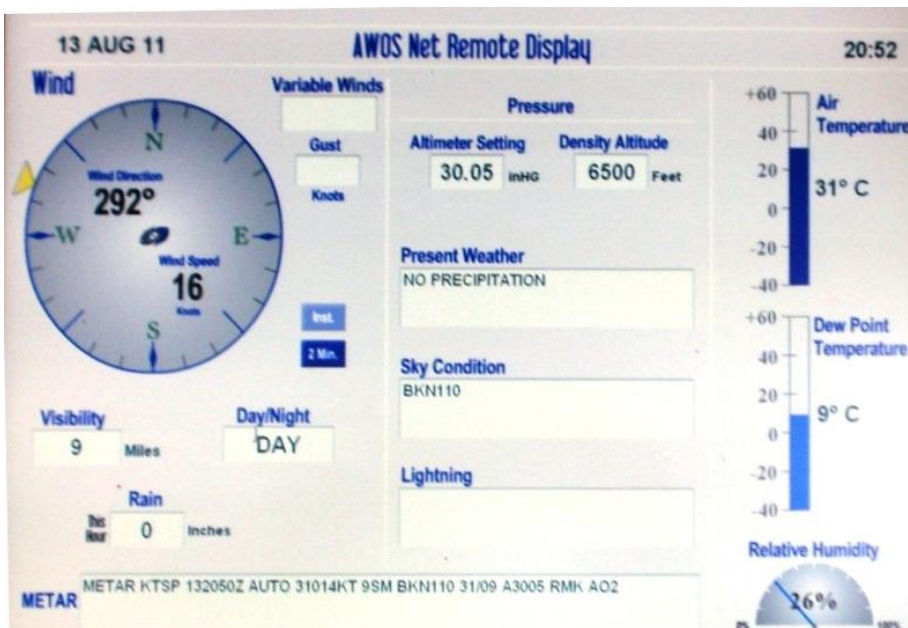
There they go to town for some great grub, it was 1:20, I looked around



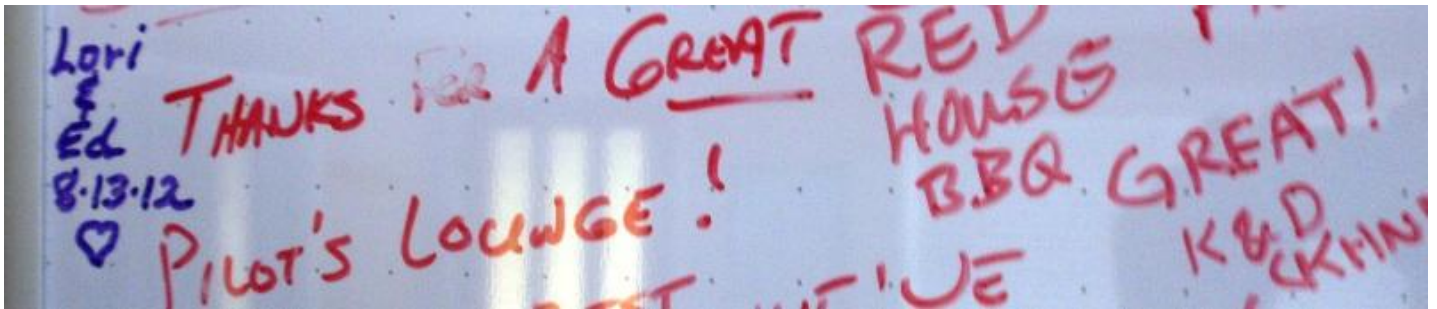
Above, I saw a FedEx box on the bed of an electric cart that was plugged in and recharging. A closer look showed that it was unopened so far. My personal belief is that that box could remain there for years without anyone taking (stealing) it. This is the extra special part about being a pilot, the part that the outside world does not even know about. Every small and medium sized airport is a community where people know and care about each other. Lovin life here.



I went back inside to show you what a treat awaits you when you open the door



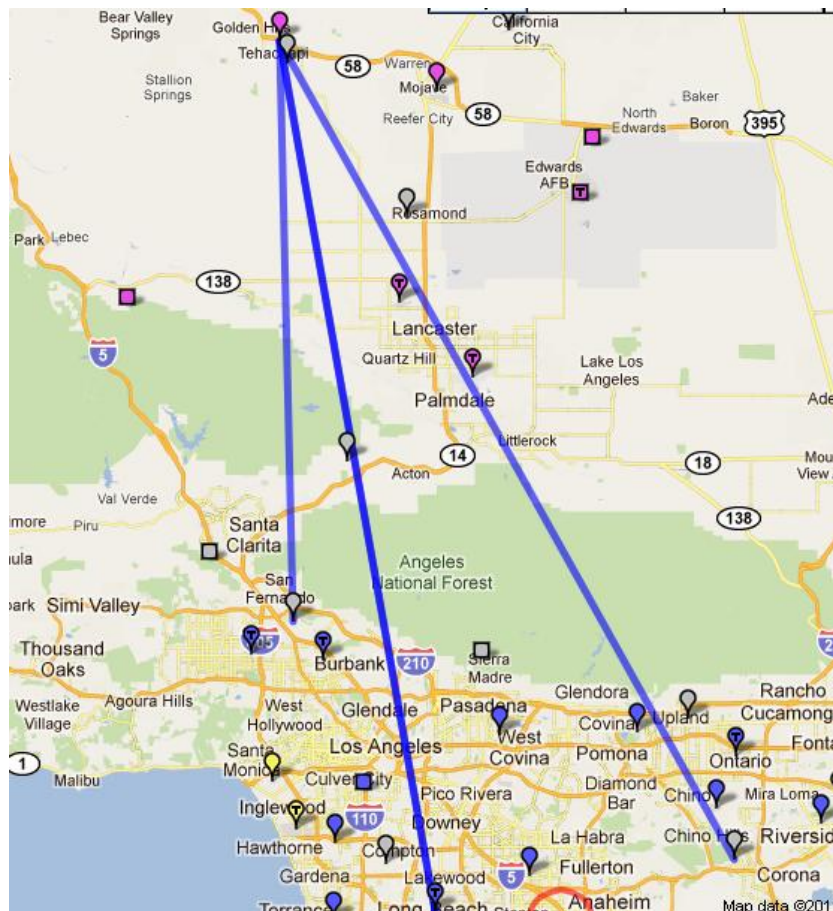
Pilot's weather, another computer for anything, a telephone, and even a hot shower are available



Then I documented our existence today on the left side of the big white board
She didn't notice that I was off by a year ☺

I opened the blinds and turned off the ceiling lights which made it seem cooler. Lori came back with a big plastic bag of lunch. Two awesome sandwiches, two big dill pickle quarters, a side of potato salad for me and a side of 3 bean salad for her. No sense hauling heavy drinks back, the refrigerator there was stocked with everything imaginable. Lori chose a Canada Dry ginger ale and I had a Pepsi. And for a whole 75 cents each!!! All on the honor system. The cash drawer is inside the refrigerator, it works! We sat down and Lori had two selections of sandwiches and asked which I wanted. I said we usually split 50 - 50 here and so that worked well. She was famished, I ate slowly.

Two guys walked in and I said "Hi." like I owned the place. We all got to talking. They were out of Whitman airport just northeast of the Van Nuys airport. Then the two ladies returned and one sat down with us at the wooden dinner table and the other one sat on one of those plush brown stuffed recliners that look so inviting. They were out of the Long Beach airport. All SoCal airports.



From left, Whitman, Long Beach, and Corona



The gal in the lavender T had an I-Pad with a Sectional Chart loaded on it. The man in the black T is a pilot, the guy to the right is a student pilot, also with an I-Pad. Paper charts are becoming obsolete.



After they left and we finished our lunch, Lori checked out the kitchen to find a place to leave our extra napkins and plastic ware. Looking through the drawers and cabinets, she found everything you would find in an average home, right down to the coffee maker and pizza cutter.



Back outside in the back yard complete with nicely cut green grass and healthy rose bushes, Lori looked around. She came back and showed me a complex flower that she had found. She has an app on her cell that lets her scan the flower and send it to Google. If there is a match, it will send her the name of the flower and other information. No luck. We went around to the front to watch airplanes. It was quarter after three and 85° out. My tummy was full and I also had some take home.



Yes, I was watching airplanes and also that storm system over there, but it turns out that we were going that way (yellow arrow). Then a Cessna 172 climbed nicely above the runway. The 2 ladies!



About gasoline. Pilots call the stuff we put in our fuel tanks, fuel. Sometimes called avgas. When I am in my Toyota RAV4, I put gasoline in my gas tank. A totally different chemical makeup. Although high in octane, please don't put avgas in your car as the lead will clog up and destroy your car's catalytic converter. Avgas in SoCal ranges wildly in price. Many places charge \$5.50 to \$6.50 currently. Corona is special at \$5.17 this weekend. Tehachapi was selling theirs for \$5.06. ☺ I was thinking of topping off but I was down just 8.5 gallons out of 64 & Lori voted no, so we just taxied by.

The take off and climb out was positive but in no way sterling at that density altitude. Then there was that hill straight ahead just a mile in front of us. Not a pretty sight out the windscreen. A gentle turn to the left avoided that hill and put us climbing southeast over the residences and parks below in their valley. A few minutes later, it was time for another decision. A higher ridgeline was ahead dotted with white wind turbines. I told Lori my Plan B here was another left turn over a low area if needed. She said she likes my Plan Bs. Not needed, we climbed easily over that ridgeline and we were clear of all nearby terrain. A 25° turn pointed us right at Corona.

Remember that it was 85° at departure? Well at 9,500' it was a refreshing 60° out. As I flew over Fox Field in Lancaster, I checked on their current surface temperature. They had 100° then and there.

Once over the San Gabriels I was handed off from Joshua Approach to SoCal Approach Control and I started my descent. Picture the whole landscape below as spray painted gray. We could not see a thing down there except for a dark blue bump on the horizon that was the Santa Ana mountains. When we had gotten down to around 7,500' an unusual request came over the radio. "Mooney 5807Tango, expedite descent to 5,000". After verifying that Lori was emotionally OK with that and that her sinuses were clear, I pulled the throttle back, popped the speed brakes, and pointed the nose at the earth below. I pegged the VSI. The altimeter unwound like never before. Though I never saw it, I imagine that an Ontario airliner departure was going to cross over us. Just 5 more minutes to go.

A gentle tire squeak announced that I had again landed at Corona. Back at the hangar, we had fun going over all of the experiences of the day. Two Blue Cans were enjoyed. Lori had another commitment so a goodbye hug and she drove off. I was left holding the bag (Can).



I soon faded away



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More of my stories are on my Webpage at: <http://www.mooneyevents.com/shreffler.html>