Tis the season to be jolly. Come join us and celebrate not only the Holiday season, but also all our wonderful members.

The Place: Newport Landing
Restaurant
503 E Edgewater
Newport Beach
949-675-2373

The Time: 2pm

We want everyone to attend. Sponsorships are available. Please let Becky know if having a sponsor would insure your attendance. Also, let her know if you would like to be a sponsor.

Dec 2  Business Meeting, Signature 7pm

Dec 9  KSNA Airport Appreciation Night
(SNA Tower, Fire Station. OC Sheriffs)
Meet @ 6:30 in parking lot
Coordinate with Colleen 714-757-2051
stay tuned—always subject to change

Dec 13  Holiday Luncheon—2pm
Newport Landing
Information inside

Jan 6  Business Meeting, Signature

Jan 13 General Meeting – Movie Night – at home of CJ McMullin

Jan 24, 2016—Winter Workshop—San Carlos

Apr 22-24, 2016—Spring Section Meeting
Flabob Airport/Riverside

OUR MISSION -- The Ninety-Nines is the International organization of women pilots that promotes advancement of aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support while honoring our unique history and sharing our passion for flight.
Ten things I’m thankful for today:

1. My charmed life.
2. My loving husband.
3. Dogs who demonstrate unconditional love.
4. The warm relationships I have with all my friends who are also members of the Ninety Nines.
5. The excitement I feel when I’m in the presence of our chapter members.
6. The joy I get when I hug my 99s friends that I only see at Section and International.
7. The freedom to hold my own beliefs.
8. The blessings of many years of work and life experience.
9. Living in a healthy body.
10. Having trusted health care professionals in my life to help me through the bumps that come along.

Now its your turn. I’d love to receive your list by e-mail. What puts a smile on your face? Click here & start your list: engards@aol.com.

I’m going to close with a post I put on FaceBook. I think it is apropos for the current times.

“Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.”

Taken from a post by: Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph.D

Happy Thanksgiving,

Irene
New Members Night! — All Members Night was a great success!
by Diane Titterington-Machado

We laughed and cheered while members shared their stories.

What a fun night! Those of you who joined us on November 11th know why this is one of our favorite meetings. We learn lots of interesting things about our new members and long-time members. We have 16 student pilots in our chapter now. We love hearing about our student pilots’ exploration of flight as it brings back many fond memories of our training. We’ve become quite cosmopolitan with members from Asia, Mexico and Russia. If you think you have difficulty understanding the tower, imagine if English wasn’t your primary language. These members speak English beautifully, the hearing part is more difficult, so like the tower, we need to slow our speech rate a bit for these members.

Interestingly, more than one story that evening involved casting aside a less-than-supportive mate to remain flying. All of the stories brought us a little closer together.

Student pilot Sarah Hufnagel earned the top grade in her A & P (Airplane and Powerplant) class at Orange Coast College. Way to show ‘em. Girl power! We are so proud of you, Sarah!

After Angela Munoz’s introductory flight last month, she immediately headed for the ladies room. Some may have thought the flight upset her stomach. But no, Angela was just so excited with her first time at the controls and the joy of flying that she wanted to do her happy dance and thought it best to do in privacy. This flight attendant and mother of two, is now flying with CFI Carol Bennett about four times a week.

Another flight attendant turning pilot is Alex DePue who’s finished her ground studies to start the flying portion of her rating at Hawthorne Airport.

Student pilot Maria Skotnikova is also taking classes at Orange Coast College and has 8 hours of flying, She came from Russia with her husband, six years ago. Maria is interested in aerobatic flying.

Michele (Chunmei) Qi and Blair (Bo) Hu continue their flying and student pilot studies. We were glad to see them.

Melissa Johnson is getting very close to her PPL. She has also been working and going to college, too.

Lena Wilson, our treasurer, is continuing with her Instrument training while working and taking classes.

Our hat-lovin’ Chairman, Irene, decided I should be crowned as Membership Chairman. It’s so much fun meeting and getting to know our new members that I should pay for the privilege, not be crowned.

Pictured are some of our newest pilots and newest members.
New Members Night!--All Members Night was a great success!

Also in attendance (not pictured); Linda Eldridge, Diane Myers, Arlene Wilske, Colleen Handrahan, Heather Bradley, Pam Hengsteler and Carol Bennett.

Thank you, Pam Doddridge, for generously opening your beautiful home for our meeting. You were very brave to have us over while you were still in the midst of your remodel.

Michele Qi, Blair Hu, Irene Engard, Maria Skotnikova

Saturday, November 14, Julie McCoy, Cheryl Cotman, Heather Bradley and Diane Titterington-Machado flew to Montgomery Field for Mexican food at Casa Machado. (Unfortunately, no relation, no discount.) Unbelievably beautiful day, perfect flights both ways, good food and wonderful company. We were lucky gals.

Diane, Heather, Julie, Cheryl with Julie's nice shiny Baron.
Why Diane Titterington-Machado received a crown. Read to Diane like a proclamation.

Pat was in OKC this past week at the International Board meeting.

Report from Pat:

In the afternoon they were discussing the acquisition and retention of membership. They highlighted those chapters which are shining examples and Orange County Chapter was at the top.

If all membership chairs took the time and caring that our Diane does, our organization’s membership numbers would be going through the roof. Diane truly is a perfect example of how it should be done.

Me? I sat there beaming and of course expounded on how Diane takes new members under her wing and is so protective of them, making them feel at home and special.

They chuckled at her from headquarters because she’s on top of her membership duties and she rides Headquarters until they produce in print what she knows to be right.

I wish I could be there tonight to share the enthusiasm that was evident in that Board room.

Give her a big hug from me and tell her "Well done Mama."

Pat :-(
Mark Your Calendar
Sunday December 13, 2015 at 2pm

Holiday Luncheon

Newport Landing - 503 E. Edgewater, Newport Beach, CA 92661 949-675-2373
We have the Blue room reserved just for us. The cost is $24 per person.

Clam Chowder or Garden Salad

Coffee, Tea or Soda

Choose One: Potato Wrapped Salmon—with lemon caper sauce & jasmine coconut rice OR

Filet Skewer—1/3 lb of filet mignon skewered, red rose potatoes & steamed vegetables OR

Grilled Vegetable Platter—Eggplant, zucchini, tomato, carrot, bell peppers, mushrooms, spinach in garlic soy balsamic

No Host Bar will be available for our enjoyment.

Reserve your seat before December 5th—
e-mail Becky Valdez - fxala@hotmail.com

Information needed:
* Your name
* Your guest’s name
* Food choice for each attendee (indicate FISH—BEEF—VEGE)
* Send checks payable to “OC 99s” to Irene Engard, 931 Presidio Dr, Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Or pay by credit card on our website http://oc99s.sws99s.org/ via the “Donate” button.

In our tradition of giving—we will collect unwrapped gifts for the children at

Orangewood Children’s Home (toddlers to age 18).
Jack & Julie’s Christmas Vacation (Copper Canyon Trip)

When I roped four of our closest friends into accompanying us through the Copper Canyon of Mexico at Christmas, I billed the trip as a scenic and relaxing adventure, to be enjoyed from the comfort of Canyon railway’s plush, heated trains, complete with a full bar and a dining car serving excellent hot meals. The only potential hardship: a lack of proper wine, easily remedied by toting along a case of California Merlot. In the interest of full disclosure, I did explain that one day’s exploration would entail a 3-hour van ride from the rim of the canyon to Urique, 6,000 feet below, down a hair-raising single dirt lane. Intrepid travelers all, my friends dismissed any reservations and enthusiastically embraced this unique opportunity for fun and adventure.

On December 26th, we all arrived by private plane in the town of El Fuerte, a beautiful colonial town in the State of Sinaloa, which I have frequented many times as a volunteer pilot for Liga, the Flying Doctors of Mercy. Jay, Maria, and their daughter Nicole (who would turn 18 during the trip) flew their Cessna 310 and brought along Tom, Tonya, and their son Matthew (14, going on 27). Jack and I flew our Baron from Alamos in Sonora, Mexico, where we had spent Christmas at the lovely Hacienda de los Santos with friends and consummate hosts Jim and Nancy Swickard. We were met at the El Fuerte airport by two cabs and delivered to the charming Rio Vista Lodge, perched high on a hill overlooking the El Fuerte river. It was a perfect December day in El Fuerte, and we gathered on Rio Vista’s patio to toast the beginning of our trip with a pitcher of margaritas and watch the sunset. We were joined at dinner by Liga volunteers and close friends Gregg and Lucy Plambeck, who were married a few months before in the lovely El Fuerte church (Lucy being from El Fuerte—but that’s another story). After a short walk around town, we retired early so as to be rested for the start of our journey the following day.

On December 27th, after a traditional Mexican breakfast in the dining room overlooking the Rio Fuerte, we were delivered to the El Fuerte train station at 8:15 a.m. to await the arrival of the northbound train at “approximately” 9:00. As the train rolled in at 9:05, everyone marveled at its promptness, surely a harbinger of things to come. Settled into our spacious seats on board the “Chepe”, we passed the next four and a-half hours watching the spectacular scenery of the Sierra Madre foothills roll by. As the landscape transformed slowly from desert sage to mountain conifer, and as the train climbed from sea level to 7,000 feet, the air took on a pine-forest crispness. Inside the cozy dining car, we feasted on chicken quesadillas and sipped tequila and Merlot, while admiring the passing view of hidden waterfalls, wildlife, and a progressively dramatic landscape.

We arrived at the Bahuihivo train station four and a-half hours later and were then transported in vans down a dirt road, past the Tarahumara town of Cerocahui, to the San Ysidro Lodge. At 6,200 feet, the lodge is a collection of rustic cabins nestled in evergreen trees and heated by wood-burning stoves. Charming. The air was crisp, the sky was blue, and we all needed to stretch our legs after the train ride (and the tequila). After a simple, but tasty meal of fresh ingredients, we embarked on a hike to view the canyon and take in some of the local Tarahumara dwellings. On the return trek, I noticed some ominous-looking clouds rolling in from the West. Jay and I remarked they had a decidedly “frontal” appearance. No worries. Back at the lodge, we quickly forgot the weather as we enjoyed margaritas and popcorn around a roaring campfire and Maria gave Matthew instruction in salsa dancing. I spent the cocktail hour getting to know our new friends, Chris and Cedric from San Francisco, who had been traveling for several days and had arrived with a suitcase full of dirty laundry, which the staff had agreed to take care of for them. The temperature began to drop precipitously, and we retreated to the warmth of the lodge.

After another wonderful fresh and warming meal, we retired to our cabins to the challenge of coaxing the wood-burning stoves to life, as the outside temperature was approaching freezing, and the wind had begun to howl. I was awakened a couple of hours later as the wind, now blowing a steady gale, wrestled with the flimsy tin roof of our humble dwelling, threatening at any moment to rip it from its moorings. The rain started not long after, pelting sideways, and the resulting cacophony (together with anxiety about the roof) doomed the remaining night’s sleep. In the meantime, the wood-burning stove had long since ceased burning, and the cabin was frigid. As a pale light dawned and the punishing rain and wind continued, Jack braved the elements to retrieve firewood—wet firewood. Much of the remainder of the day was occupied with trying to make fire from wet wood, a challenge that would daunt the most seasoned Boy Scout, but one on which Jack, my brave Scout, would not give up.
Over breakfast, I queried our guide about the day’s plans, which had originally included the drive to the floor of the canyon to visit the charming Tarahumara town of Urique. Knowing that the road to Urique was perilous under the best of circumstances (as I had done this trip before), I assumed that the rain turning to sleet outside pretty much made Urique a no-go. Our guide, Mario, confirmed that we would be confined to the lodge until the weather improved.

No worries. The storm had knocked out the power, the Halletts had no hot water, the Ghanbarzadehs had no water at all, our new friends’ laundry was frozen solid on the line outside, and our wood-burning stoves were cold again, but the fireplace in the lodge was warm and welcoming. Mario distributed candles to light our rooms, and we all pulled our chairs around the fire and settled in. As card games progressed and the tequila bottle was passed, the rain outside changed to snow—first a wet snow mixed with rain, then a dry, quiet snowfall that continued steadily for the next ten hours. Knowing that the next day we would continue in the comfort of the train to the spectacular Uno Lodge, perched on the rim of the canyon, we determined to enjoy the forced down-time, and the day passed comfortably and in good fellowship.

As we enjoyed cocktails before dinner and Maria gave Matthew further dance instruction, Mario’s truck pulled up bringing unexpected guests. Alex and Carol, a couple from Huntington Beach, had been taking the train north to Creel and were forced to disembark at Bahuichivo, as a bridge north of the station had been rendered out of commission by the storm. Alex related that the stationmaster had told him the repair would take 48 hours. I am as seasoned Mexico traveler, and I love the country and its people, but I know what 48 hours means in Mexican—two weeks, maybe three. No worries. We were warm and dry and about to enjoy another satisfying meal by candle-light. It was “all good”, as Alex would say.

The following morning, with the ground covered in a foot of snow, we were presented with a dilemma. Since the train was not going north to our next destination, we could either spend another night at San Ysidro and hope the track was repaired by the following day, or we could return to El Fuerte on the southbound train. Not relishing another day without a shower or electricity, and having pretty much exhausted our abilities to heat our rooms with wet wood, my group unanimously voted to return to El Fuerte. The lodge staff delivered Chris and Cedric their frozen clothes from the line, which they carried like life-size cardboard cut-outs under their arms. We all piled our baggage into the vehicles and prepared to depart. Before we went to the train station, however, we would first visit picturesque Cerocahui and its stunning 400-year old church.

It was a beautiful, cold December day in Cerocahui, and the town was blanketed in white, providing a great back-drop for our photographs. As the rest of us toured the church, Tonya made arrangements to have Matthew baptized there by the local priest, a dream of hers and a present for Matthew’s grandmother back home. This “project” also afforded the group a way to pass the time until the train departed at 3:00 that afternoon. At 12:30, we all gathered before the altar to witness Matthew’s Catholic baptism, with good Catholic Maria and husband Jay Ghanbarzadeh (that’s Italian, right?) serving as godparents. Afterwards, Mario announced that his sister-in-law would be serving us lunch before our 2:00 p.m. departure for Bahuichivo and the train.

Before lunch we were served a hot punch, which we found a nice compliment to the remaining tequila. As we sipped and awaited lunch, we heard the sound of an approaching helicopter and ran to the porch only to see “Doolie”, whom Jack and I had met in Alamos, fly over in his distinctive purple R-44. Jack and I waved and beckoned to Doolie, feigning distress, seeking amusement wherever we could find it. Little did we know.

Punch was followed by lunch, which was followed by a birthday cake (pancakes stacked and frosted) for Nicole. It was all very delicious, but it was also very late, lunch finally being served at 2:15, fifteen minutes after we were to have left to catch the train. No worries. I knew Mario must know something that we didn’t. Perhaps the train was again delayed, a plausible scenario. At 2:30, we retrieved our luggage and hoisted it into the back of Mario’s pick-up truck. The luggage in place, Mario now informed us that the van in which we were to have ridden was stuck in the snow, and we would be making the 30-minute trip to Bahuichivo in the back of the pick-up with our bags. No worries; I’ve done this before many times. Two people scampered into the cab with Mario, and the remaining ten of us clambered into the back and settled in among the luggage.
Now, I am a seasoned Mexican pick-up truck traveler, having made many, many trips from the dirt landing strip in El Carrizo, Sinaloa to the clinic that the Flying Doctors operate there. However, nothing could have prepared me for what would transpire over the next half hour on that December day. Aware that we were seriously late in departing Cerocahui, Mario turned in a performance that would have had a champion Formula One driver reduced to tears. We careened down the narrow, winding, ice-covered road, dodging stranded vehicles, and rounding hair-pin turns on two tires. We bounced, lunged, and fell on top of one another as the pick-up plunged down the treacherous road, narrowly missing obstacles, momentarily airborne between potholes. We clung to each other, closed our eyes, and gritted our teeth against the extreme cold and our impending deaths. As we screeched to a halt at the Bahuichivo train station, we were informed that the train had left three minutes earlier.

I lost it. We had spent four and a half hours in Cerocahui, mostly killing time until our departure for Bahuichivo, only to miss the only train that day. It was 20 degrees, the sun was disappearing behind the hills, the train station was locked, we were half-frozen from our hair-raising truck ride, and we had nowhere to stay that night. A stray traveler, who billed herself as a “healer”, but who Jay maintained was a witch, lectured that we should “live in the moment”. Not what I cared to hear. I briefly considered slapping the witch. A new batch of travelers had arrived on the train, bound for Mario’s lodge at San Ysidro, which would be full that night. He offered that we could return to his lodge and sleep on the floor. I declined.

Mario left with his eager, unsuspecting, new arrivals for the one-hour drive to the lodge, promising to return for us in two hours. When we could brave the cold no longer, we relocated from the station to a restaurant in town, where we whiled away the time drinking beer and considering our next move. Mario had volunteered that his sister had a place in Cerocahui where we could spend the night, but I was skeptical about further entrusting ourselves to Mario and his kinfolk. We checked for hotel rooms in Bahuichivo, but there were none to be had, the town having been filled with stranded travelers the previous day.

We waited. When Mario finally returned long after dark, I directed him to take us to the Hotel Mision in Cerocahui. He said he didn’t know if they had rooms. I said I don’t care. He said it’s very expensive. I said I don’t care. He said his sister had rooms for us. I said I don’t care. Arriving at the Hotel Mision, exhausted, hungry, and cold, we were told they had only three rooms left (the hotel being packed with stranded travelers), but there was no hot water, the power was supplied by a generator that would be turned off in a few hours, and they could not give us anything to eat. I said “We’ll take them.”

After everyone was settled, I took a freezing cold shower and then had a cry (and some wine) in front of the wood-burning stove in our room. Somehow, the nice folks at Hotel Mision had scrounged up some food for us, and we dined on tortilla soup, chicken with vegetables, and warm tortillas. In celebration of her birthday, Nicole had two margaritas from the bar. Over dinner, Tom and Tonya engaged me in conversation in a transparent, but very sweet, attempt to take my mind off our plight. I had no idea what the next day held. That night, after the power went off, I tripped over a piece of furniture in our room in the dark and badly sprained a toe. Jack asked why I didn’t complain. I said “Are you kidding?”

The following morning at breakfast, good news was finally announced. The northbound train was running and would depart at 11:00 a.m. Cheers went up from the folks who had been waiting for three days to continue north to places such as Creel, Divisadero, and Chihuahua. The southbound train, we were told, would be leaving at 3:00 p.m. We briefly considered continuing north and trying to make the Uno Lodge, but the last information we had was that the road to the Uno was impassable (the higher elevations further north having received over two feet of snow). We had no way to get current information as all the phone lines were down, but the hotel manager told us that the roads further north were “muy peligrosa”—very dangerous. We decided to take the 3:00 train to El Fuerte. We killed another day in Cerocahui, only to be told in the afternoon that the 3:00 train was now departing at 8:00 p.m.

We departed for the train station at 7:00 p.m., arriving at 7:30. It was a beautiful, clear night, but dangerously cold. The waiting room at the station was open, but unheated, lacked running water, and was lit by a single fluorescent bulb that flickered on and off, creating an odd strobe-light effect. The room, designed to accommodate about 40, held over 100
people. Thank goodness. The body heat made it reasonably bearable inside, but it was standing-room only. Anyone wishing to sit would have to do so outside, on top of the luggage, where the cold was almost intolerable. We stood. We waited. The train did not come at 8:00. At 9:00 a roving band of musicians arrived to entertain us, but no train. At 10:00 the crowd was singing and clapping with the music, but still no train. Finally, at 11:00 p.m. the train pulled into the station.

We poured from the station, stumbling over luggage and running to the first available cars, anxious to sit down and to drift into sleep for the four and a half-hour trip to El Fuerte. Sleep, however, would elude us, as would sitting. Inside the train, there was not a seat to be had. The luggage room was packed from floor to ceiling, leaving no room for our bags, and inside the dining car, sleeping bodies littered the tables, bar and floor. There was nothing to do but park our luggage in the aisles and sit on it, or stand. A few minutes into the trip, a kind woman put her young son on the floor at her feet and offered me his seat. I gratefully accepted, as my back was killing me after four hours of standing at the train station. Jack broke out a couple of bottles of Merlot and distributed it in paper cups he had the foresight to bring, offering some to the nice lady who had made a seat for me. He then attempted to make a sitting place for himself on top of a suitcase, but a young girl with motion sickness forced him to vacate it when she almost evacuated her dinner on him. He decided to stand. Toward the front of the car, Jay sat in the floor watching a movie on Jack’s video player, Maria curled up in a ball on the floor, the “kids” made a nest in between some seats, and some gentleman finally offered Tonya his chair.

At 3:30 a.m. on December 31, we arrived in El Fuerte. We tumbled from the train, and were met by two cabs that deposited us back at the Rio Vista Lodge, as Maria said, “just a little bit early”. (We were to have returned there that night at about 8:00 had we stayed with our intinerary.) After a few hours’ sleep, we parted ways, Jay taking his group to Punta Pescadero on the Baja to thaw out, and Jack and I flying to Alamos, where we spent a lovely New Years’ Eve (after long naps) at the very special Hacienda de los Santos.

I did not get to see the Copper Canyon this year, but I learned a few things about travel. First, be careful what friends you invite to share in your adventures. We were blessed by the stoic acceptance and good-natured dispositions of our friends, who not only made the most of a bad situation, but made it a “fiesta”. And to their credit, they never allowed me to take responsibility for our plight, Tom at one point assuring me that “We’re all in this together, sweetie.” Even Matthew and Nicole, who at 14 and 18 probably had the most cause for consternation over their ruined Christmas vacations, barely murmured a complaint.

Second, never, ever go to the Copper Canyon in December.

And third, and most importantly, always take wine.
OUR MISSION
The Ninety-Nines is the international organization of women pilots that promotes advancement of aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support while honoring our unique history and sharing our passion for flight.

Join us Online

Chapter Website -  http://oc99s.sws99s.org/new

Facebook -  https://www.facebook.com/oc99s

Contact the OC99s -  OCninetyNines@gmail.com

To a Very Accomplished Woman:  All Ninety-Nines