

## **Special to the newsletter**

### **One Approach, Three Landings, Sightseeing, and Lunch!**

**By Ray W. Stratton**

Where to go? It's a common pilot problem. You are ready to go flying, but where to go? Back to the same \$150 burger? Boring.

How about visiting the second longest runway in the US (KDEN is number 1 at 16,000'), getting in three landings from one final approach, seeing all Southwest's grounded B737 Max 800s, and lunch too?

It is less than an hour away for most SoCal Pilots. It's "Southern California Logistics Airport" (long title), otherwise known as Victorville (KVCV), previously known as George AFB. Don't let the title of the airport intimidate you. Think of it as a very large Victorville Muni.

It's a fuel stop for cargo flights heading to Asia and avoiding LAX. It's a boneyard for Boeings, Airbus, Lockheed, and Aeroflot.



Victorville also serves as the parking lot for all of Southwest's Boeing 737 800 max fleet. See photo next page.





Victorville runway 17/35 is 15,050 feet long and 150 feet wide, the second longest runway in the US. Victorville tower is very accommodating and there is little traffic. When I flew there last year, I had lunch at Hesperia (L26) first and then called VCV tower for permission to take an aerial tour of the boneyard at 1000 AGL or less. "Cessna 1234, report over the field". "VCV tower, Cessna 1234 is over the field to tour the boneyard." "Cessna 1234, maneuver as desired, report leaving the Class D." How easy is that?!

Be sure to ask if you can do "stop and go's" on 17/35. With 15050' you can fly a final approach, land, stop, take off, land, stop, take off, land, stop, and take off with room to spare. You have three 5000' runways connected by runway. There are your three landings! I didn't see any restrictions in taxiing by the boneyard, but ask ground control first, even if it's off the movement area.

Months later I flew to VCV to drop off an Angel Flight West passenger. Million Air is the FBO and has a café open on weekdays.

If it's the weekend, try the café at Hesperia (<https://www.eatataviator.com/>). It's very good. The runway is 3,900 but only 50' wide. Talk about a contrast! Hesperia can also test your crosswind skills since the runway has bluffs around it.

It's still a \$150 burger, but an adventure too.

*Ray Stratton is currently the President of the Smoke Eagles, Inc., non-profit flying club based at FUL. He has over 1,500 hours and a commercial license and is instrument rated.*