

**URA**



# Utah Rotorcraft Association

December 2009

## URA Ends 2009 with 25 Members, Big Plans

The year 2009 has been one of growth for the Utah Rotorcraft Association. We'll finish the year at the 25-member milestone, with the promise of a great facility for our annual event in 2010, and with new technology which may eventually allow us to open our regular, monthly meetings to members who live too far distant from Northern Utah to make the monthly drive.



Our region stands to enjoy a higher profile within PRA in the coming year, and we're pioneering training for gyroplane enthusiasts who may live hundreds of miles from the nearest CFI. In short, we're growing in large measure because we're delivering on our stated mission to further safety and training for builders and pilots of personal rotorcraft. Look for details on these initiatives in this newsletter, and help us to make them happen in the new year to come!

### **PRA Regional Rep Program**

*by URA Secretary Paul Plack*

Directors of the PRA voted in August to establish regional representatives, serving as liaisons between chapters in the various regions of the US and the board. This function has been handled in the past through annual meetings of PRA Life Members, but regional representatives will offer a more responsive and timely channel for PRA issues.

Because I am already in touch with other chapters in connection with gathering material for the URA newsletter...(See 'PRA Rep,' page 2)



**November Meeting** – Our thanks go to CFI Cory Manning and the folks at Utah Helicopter Flight Academy for a very informative tour of their facility at the Spanish Fork/Springville Airport following our November 14 meeting. We learned much about the Robinson R22 and R44 helicopters, (*above,*) and even convinced Cory and another helo CFI to follow us back to Airgyro for an introduction to gyroplanes! (*Below.*)



**Next Meeting** – December 12 at the home of Paul and Cindy Plack in Murray, UT. Dinner, video, white elephant gift swap! (See page 4)

## **PRA Rep** (from page 1)

I was asked by PRA Chapter Coordinator Dave Bacon if I would serve as the rep for the Northwest Mountain region. This includes eight states with four known PRA chapters, two of which appear dormant. I told Dave I would accept if nominated.

That was in late September at El Mirage, but it was not until the September-October issue of Rotorcraft magazine was delivered to members, (for me in mid-November,) that less-active chapters got any word of the new program or the ongoing search for nominees. PRA Director Tom Milton made a request through the Rotary Wing Forum that chapters nationwide make it a priority to get nominees in as soon as possible. Observing that early participation in this program might allow a higher profile within PRA for traditionally overlooked enthusiasts and chapters in the west, I decided to actively solicit the nomination for our region, to see if we might become one of the first with this new regional representation, and direct, monthly access to the PRA board.

Both URA (PRA2) and PRA73 in Oregon have voted to nominate me for the position. In order to bring timely closure to the process, I elected to try to track down the status of the two "ghost" chapters in our region, PRA29 in Boise ID, and PRA30 in Auburn WA (near Seattle.) I eventually reached Chuck Strough, the last known contact for Chapter 29, who told me attrition due to members passing away, selling their gyroplanes or moving elsewhere had his group down to just two participants, himself and Jerry Williams. (Both own single-place gyros.)

A few days later, I heard back from Randy Rogers, President of Chapter 30. This group was meeting monthly two years ago, but activity seems to have fallen off sharply, and meetings are infrequent. He confirmed my assumption that after the loss of the local Groen Brothers dealer when GBA shut down, the loss of the only local Gyroplane CFI to inactivity, and the loss of Randy's own two-place RAF machine in a serious accident over the summer, it was difficult to maintain monthly meetings. We wish the guys in the Seattle area all the best.

It's now up to PRA to decide if nominations from its two active chapters in our region will suffice.

I'm not a fan of elections with one candidate, but I suspect it will be that way in most regions until the new program gets better established.

My duties, if elected, will be to solicit input from chapters within our region to be shared in a monthly conference call with the PRA board. In return, I plan to prepare a monthly summary of the board's actions, especially as they might affect our region, and use them to create a regional news page for our own newsletter, and to be shared with any other chapters who'd like to distribute it to their members. I'll share news as soon as we hear back.

## **Doug's Thoughts - Thanksgiving 2009**

*by URA President Doug Barker*

Although you may be reading this in the month of December, I am writing my thoughts down in November. It is early Thanksgiving day morning, and as I sit here thinking of what I want to share with you, my friends, my thoughts turn to all the things that I am thankful for.

I am thankful to live in this great country, where I have a right to pursue my dream to fly. While there may be more red tape and regulations than I would prefer, at least I can build my own aircraft and fly it with much more freedom than many places on the earth today. While it is not easy, nor cheap to pursue my dream of flight, it can be done and I am very thankful for that.

I am thankful for a wife and companion who, even though she does not share my love of flying, loves me enough to be supportive and wants me to be able to achieve my dream. She has been willing to allow me to use funds that she would have preferred to use on finishing the basement, or helping our kids with more of their college expenses. She has all kinds of priorities that don't include my Gyroplane, but she has seen and understood how important this dream is to me and has given me her blessing and support as I have chased my dream. Life doesn't get better than that!

I am thankful that we have the Airgyro Company here in Utah. Without them it would be much more difficult to get the training and the help...

(see 'Doug's Thoughts,' page 3)

## Industry News



**AgustaWestland** says the Public Security Bureau of Nanning, China has ordered an AW109 Power light twin engine helicopter, (*above,*) to be used in roles including law enforcement and civil protection/ disaster relief across the Nanning province.

AW is enjoying success in China. The Beijing, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Dailian Public Security Bureaus in China are already using AgustaWestland helicopters.

The 8-seat AW109 Power has the ability to change the interior configuration to support various law enforcement roles. It boasts a maximum cruise speed of 154 kts and a range of 512 nm. Over 470 AW109 Powers have been ordered by customers in almost 50 countries.



**AgustaWestland and Kaigai Aviotech** Corporation have also announced that Alpen Co., Ltd. of Japan has ordered an AW109 Power (*above*) for VIP/corporate transport purposes, operating from Nagoya. Delivery is expected by the end of this year.

## Doug's Thoughts (from page 2)

we need to attain our dream of flight. Being able to make a profit and so, be able to stay in business in this industry, is not an easy thing to do. Nate and Mike and Jake have worked hard and done what ever it took to keep the doors open. Though several plans have hit major road blocks, they have never given up, they have found a way to re-group and devise a new plan and keep on going. They deserve a major round of applause. I hope you will let them know how much you appreciate them and give them your business so they can remain a valuable asset to all us rotorcraft enthusiasts in the Western US.

I am also so thankful for all of my good friends in the Utah Rotorcraft Association. I have met so many new friends and built relationships that I truly cherish. It amazes me sometimes when I stop and look at how many new friends I would never have gotten to know if it weren't for our organization. We now have members in six states and we are picking up new members every month. What an incredible time to be a part of what's happening. Over the next few months it's going to get even bigger and better as we share our webinars with the whole country. I am excited to be a part of it and thankful to know all of you. I hope that you will try to make it to our Christmas Party at the Plack's home. We will have a great dinner and White Elephant exchange that will be a lot of fun, but mostly we will just spend a little time with friends. Please join us if you can.

I just have to list one more thing. I am so thankful for my fellow officers. There is no way we could do all the things we have done if it weren't for an incredible team and the efforts of everyone involved. Curt, Paul and Nate have all stepped up to the plate and done what needed to be done. We are growing and really starting to fulfill our mission. We are affecting peoples lives and truly making a difference. I am so proud of everyone. I am thankful for members that volunteer to take on projects like Randall Wall who is helping us to get the LLC organized and registered. Using everyone's expertise, we are able to accomplish so much more. Thank You to everyone who has helped us in any way, even if you just joined the organization. Your support makes a difference. Your friendship makes a difference. I am thankful for you!!!

## ***December Holiday Party!***



**Saturday, December 12 at 6pm** - Plan to join us for a holiday party for adult members and their guests at 6pm MST on at the home of Paul and Cindy Plack. We'll watch Doug's brief video from El Mirage, then enjoy a dinner of baked ham and potato casserole, followed by a "white elephant" (novel/humorous) gift exchange for those who wish to participate.

**Please RSVP** so we can get an accurate count before preparing food. Call Paul by December 10, at (801) 803-0408, and let us know whether you're coming alone or with someone special. No cost to attend, but URA members should bring an aviation-related gift, while their guests, if not aviation oriented, are welcome to participate with gifts of any sort. Please keep all gifts under \$20 in value, and family-friendly. Paul and Cindy live at 549 Daniel Ct., Murray, UT 84123. Directions will be sent in the December E-News.

## ***New Members***

URA has received membership applications and dues from Gary Mogan of Laurel, MT and Chuck Strough of Boise, ID. Guys, welcome, and plan to join us for Rotors Over The Rockies in June, and our winter webinars in the meantime!

## ***Winter Webinar Status***

Our winter online training sessions for gyroplane enthusiasts are nearing final preparations. In a national test held on Friday, November 20, Chapter 73 (Oregon) President Bob Johnson and Webmaster Gary Kaminski, Doug Barker and Paul Plack of URA, and Greg Gremminger of

Magni Gyro USA in Missouri participated in a first test of an online meeting service which allows the host and remote presenters to show presentation documents including PowerPoint and PDF, share videos, and conduct question-and-answer sessions using both on-screen chat and a telephone bridge for audio conferencing.

The internet connections of these attendees included cable, DSL, fiber-optic, and even a two-way satellite internet connection. While the technology we tried, through Dimdim.com, did work, it provided differing viewing formats for meeting attendees based on their screen resolution settings, and had a few bugs. A more basic and robust service called Glance seems to show promise for creating a more consistent and bug-free experience. Testing will continue.

Regardless of the transmission system chosen, our tentative plan is to first use it to conduct our January, February and March meetings at least partially online for the benefit of our distant members at 10am MST, then begin the instructional sessions at 11am, after other chapters and enthusiasts from around the US join the network. A total of 100 participants can be accommodated in the live session, but all presentations will be recorded and archived at [www.utahrotorcraft.org](http://www.utahrotorcraft.org).

Final details and instructions will be distributed by e-mail once final. Please plan to attend our meetings in person over the winter months if you can, to free available internet "seats" for those who live distant from northern Utah.

## ***November Meeting Minutes***

**The November 14 general meeting** was called to order at 10:10am by President Doug Barker, with seven members and two guests in attendance. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as published in the URA November newsletter and on the website. Treasurer Nate Oldham reported our funds total \$325.85 in savings, and \$227.73 in checking, for a total of \$553.58. The treasurer's report was accepted as read.

**New member Lance Marshall** lives in McGill, NV. URA now has 23 members in six states. Lance has been receiving URA's electronic newsletter and decided to join us...

(See 'November Minutes,' page 5)

## **November Minutes** (from page 4)

**Member Updates** - Given limited meeting time, member reports were replaced by introductions for the benefit of visitors Erik Jonsson of Twin Falls, ID, and Dave Larsen of Taylorsville, UT. Eric, who attended ROTR 2009, is president of the Magic Valley Experimental Aircraft Association, (EAA Chapter 820 based in Twin Falls,) attended ROTR 2009, and now has 35 hours on his Bensen B8-M. He also flies a vintage Ercoupe, and is restoring a Bonanza. Dave doesn't fly anything yet, but carpooled in with Erik to check out experimental rotorcraft.

**ROTR** - In a brief report on Rotors Over The Rockies 2010, URA VP Curt Pittman commented that the concrete for his new hangar at Brigham City Airport has been poured, plumbing, sewer and electrical utilities will be in soon, and the steel will be delivered in a few days. This 40'-x-60' hangar will be available to us at ROTR 2010 as an indoor space for forums by day, and aircraft parking by night. It was generally agreed to try to host the fly-in pancake breakfast requested by the city as part of our event on June 12, 2010, as a possible fundraiser for URA, rather than hand off that responsibility to another group.

**New Business** - A motion to approve approximately \$180 to cover online meeting services costs for a series of three internet instructional sessions for gyroplane enthusiasts was approved. The "webinars" will make instruction from leading gyroplane experts available at 11am MST on Saturdays, January 9, February 13 and March 13, 2010 to URA members, PRA chapters and individuals at no cost. Digital Technology International in Springville, UT has agreed to provide a conference room with high-speed internet access to serve as our origination point for the interactive broadcasts. First option for the limited number of internet connections will go to URA members; then to PRA chapters for group viewing; finally to members of PRA or its local chapters participating individually from their homes. A total of about 120 participants, plus presenters, will be able to interact. Recordings of the webinars will be made available in archived form at [www.utahrotorcraft.org](http://www.utahrotorcraft.org).

A motion to dispense with a full meeting in December, and instead hold a holiday party for members, was approved. The party is

scheduled for 6pm Saturday, December 12 at the home of Paul Plack and his wife, Cindy. Final details will be sent to members by e-mail, and published in the December newsletter.

**A motion to nominate Paul Plack** for the position of PRA Northwest Mountain Regional Representative was approved. This is a new position created by PRA at its national convention in August, and is intended to provide monthly liaison between local chapters and the PRA board of directors. The region includes the states of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Utah and Colorado. There are only two known active chapters in this entire region. (URA, PRA2, and the Great Northwest Sport Rotorcraft Association, PRA73.)

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:00am**, and was followed by a tour of Utah Helicopter Flight Academy, which is located near Airgyro on the Spanish Fork - Springville Airport.

## **Classifieds**



**SparrowHawk II Gyro For Sale** - Brand new, Subaru 2.5L, candy-apple red, leather seats and overhead panel, carpeted interior. MGL Odyssey 10.4" EFIS & EIS, Garmin radio and

transponder, PS Engineering intercom, helicopter-style headsets. Asking \$69K. Accessories available separately. Pleasant Grove, UT. Brian, (801) 831-4649. --- (11/3/09)

**For Sale - Butterfly Aurora Gyro** - 50 hours TT, like new, Rotax 912. Powerful, reliable. Asking \$48K. Custom enclosed trailer available for additional \$3K. Contact Doug at Butterfly of Utah, (801) 628-7598. --- (10/3/09)



## **URA Contact Info**

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**Phone:** (801) 628-7598 (Doug Barker)

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# URA

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### **NEXT MEETING:**

*Saturday, Dec. 12, 6pm*  
*Paul & Cindy Plack Home*  
*Murray, Utah*  
*Party & White Elephant*

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**Above** – One of 2009's great adventures was an epic cross-country made by two Austrians, Chris Kurz and Robert Nuentz. They crated a pair of MT03 gyros for shipment from Vienna to Boston, took commercial flights to meet the container, then flew to California. The trip was sponsored in part by Autogyro GmbH, which makes the MT03. Find Chris's blog with lots of photos on the web at [www.rotaryforum.com](http://www.rotaryforum.com). (Just enter "Boston homeopath" in the forum's Search function.)