

Western Rotorcraft

PRA 1, 2, 15, 31 & 73

October 2010

El Mirage Provides a Safe, Fun Weekend

The 2010 Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In, an event that dates back to the early days of the light gyroplane sport, was one of the more interesting of the past several years, especially notable for the availability of intro flights in a gyroglider. Old friendships were renewed, new ones begun, and even a few dented ones patched up the weekend of September 24-26 on the El Mirage Dry Lake. The event was accident-free, (for aircraft and other sorts of vehicles as well,) and while the afternoons got windy, the mornings were cool and calm enough for some attendees to get their first personal experiences involving "air under the tires" in a single-place machine. Congrats to the hard-working members of Chapter 1, and all the others who made this terrific event happen. (*More KBFFI comments and photos, pages 6 - 7.*)

Gremminger Ultimatum to PRA



Greg Gremminger, (above, at Mentone,) US distributor for Magni Gyro, is disassociating his regulatory reform efforts from the Popular Rotorcraft Association to pressure President Scott Lewis to resign. Lewis was elected first to the board, then as president, by the board in February, in a move that required changing the PRA bylaws to eliminate the requirement for length of membership. Hailed early for his energy, business savvy, and success in leading Chapter 26, (*See "Gremminger," page 2.*)

PRA Makes Major Changes

In an emergency board meeting September 23, the directors of the Popular Rotorcraft Association finalized some changes designed to ensure the organization's solvency, and return it to a focus on services and advocacy for the personal rotorcraft sport. Monies were approved for the professional design of a new PRA website, and the monthly production of "Rotorcraft E-Zine," a monthly electronic magazine which will replace Powered Sport Flying magazine (PSF) as the PRA's official mouthpiece to members. A proposal from Western Rotorcraft editor Paul Plack to produce the new international e-magazine, submitted in August in response to a request from the board, was approved. This action followed a unanimous board vote at its regular meeting in August to discontinue PRA's relationship with PSF, due to financial constraints and problems with timely delivery.

The PRA election which was scheduled at Mentone, but which had to be canceled when the issue of PSF containing member ballots had not yet been delivered to members, will be conducted through a separate, mailed ballot as soon as possible. The change to a digital magazine will come with reduced dues of \$42 effective on next renewal, but left at \$49.95 for members who wish to receive a condensed, black-&-white, printed version by mail.

Several new programs for members are expected to be introduced in the first issue of the new Rotorcraft E-Zine, due out later this month. A CFI scholarship program, discounts for members on products and services, and a contract for a vendor to create a new website for the organization are expected. (*See "Regional Report," page 2.*)

Gremminger (from page 1)

Lewis has ruffled feathers in the months since.

Gremminger, while reportedly never having been officially appointed to represent PRA in a regulatory interface capacity, has led efforts on behalf of the personal rotorcraft sport to convince the FAA to accept manufacturer petitions for approval to sell factory-built gyroplanes as Experimental Light Sport Aircraft, and to resume issuing Letters of Deviation Authority to allow primary training in Experimental Amateur Built gyro trainers. Neither effort has borne fruit over the last few years.

In a letter to be published in the inaugural issue of the Rotorcraft E-Zine, Gremminger, responding to an announcement and solicitation of contributions, writes in part, "I told Tim O'Connor (PRA VP) that I would no longer be supporting the PRA as 'regulatory watchdog', or Technical forums moderator, or anything else. I will still be working for the gyroplane community in interface with the regulatory agencies and ASTM, but I will not be doing it as a representative of the PRA, or under the auspices of the PRA...until Scott Lewis is out of the President position, I will not be able to provide any of the material you are asking for."

PRA leadership and members have often cited Gremminger's work on behalf of the sport as a benefit of PRA membership, although there was no official appointment or financial support of his efforts from PRA. An official strategy for PRA representation in FAA matters has not yet been announced.

Regional Report **Paul Plack, NW/Mtn Rep**

I'm humbled to report that a few days ago, the directors of PRA officially contracted me to undertake the production of a monthly, international e-magazine, inspired by the format and content of this one. This new digital media product has been under discussion for months, and I was asked to bring a proposal to PRA's board meeting in Mentone in August. While my vision was positively received, it took some time for PRA leadership to finalize the electronic publication's relationship to Powered Sport Flying Magazine. That debate has ended with a decision that it is not productive nor economically feasible to continue that relationship.

What I'd like to do here is address the relationship between this newsletter, and the new international e-zine. Western Rotorcraft is a volunteer labor of love

for me, a commitment which started as part of my role within Chapter 2, and will continue unchanged. The e-zine will be different in a few ways.

While I'm sure it, too, will bring satisfaction, it is not a hobby. The terms I proposed to the board took into account my need to be compensated for the PRA project, since it will displace other professional pursuits. I will be paid a monthly retainer, plus a percentage of ad revenue. I am volunteering in support of PRA in other areas, but this one is paid.

The nominal size of Rotorcraft will be 16 pages, (contingent on adequate submissions,) or double the size of this one. The look will differ, as the format of the pages will be optimized for online reading, unlike WR, which is designed to be most useful in printed form. I'll be striving to bring back two features PRA members have told me they've missed from the old days of the paper version of Rotorcraft - "Buzzin' the Chapters," a monthly summary of what's happening within chapters around the US, and "Builder's Corner," which in this incarnation will seek out novel solutions to common issues when building personal rotorcraft, with a priority on those with enough detail and documentation to be useful other builders.

There will be some overlap, particularly in "Buzzin' the Chapters." A condensed version of the news you send me for WR will be boiled down for "Buzzin'," and PRA's Jennifer Gilmore will be helping me collect similar news from other parts of the country. Rotorcraft will have less detail since, unlike WR, it is not intended to be the official source for any chapter's minutes, and it will have some content a month later, due to its different deadlines.

Finally, if you've always wished enthusiasts in the western US had more clout within PRA and within the sport in general, you should be encouraged by recent trends. Doug Barker of Chapter 2 is on the PRA board, and has been appointed to chair the search for board candidates for next year's election. The Northwest/Mountain region is one of only three nationwide with a PRA Regional Rep. Now, the cornerstone of PRA's international media, the Rotorcraft E-Zine, is being produced here. Our people, chapters and events are better known now than at any time since Ken Brock served as PRA president. Get busy with those cameras and word processors, and let's all make the most of the opportunity to grow the sport!

To make this work, PRA will need to rapidly build an e-mail database of members for use in distributing the new Rotorcraft. This is being promoted by an e-mail sent to all members of the Rotary Wing Forum, and through USPS First Class mail. If you don't get details either of those ways, I'll try to keep up-to-date details on the home page of utahrotorcraft.org.





Welcome to...

Ken Brock PRA Chapter 1
of Southern California

September 11 Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 11:05am by Terry Smith Chairman of the Board.

Present at the meeting: Marion Springer, Dee Catanzaro, Karen Keene, Michal McDowell, Ed Nievesky, David Wilson, Ralph Johnson and Jeff Jones. Joseph Nievesky, Ed's son also came to visit.

Members talked about different things they have been doing.

Michael said today he gotten his first view of the lakebed from the air. He flew from the flying J Ranch to the lake in a trike. Said it took about 15 minutes. He said over the Labor Day weekend he was at the Watsonville Air Show and Vance was there. He went and introduced himself and found out Vance was a member of Chapter One and was coming to the fly-in and had raffle items Ed had made.

Ed Nievesky said he has been working on rebuilding McCullough engines. He has 5 completed engines right now

Dave Wilson has a gyro he is working on that is in Burbank, CA. He has the tail finished, rotor head done and motor mounts. He changed and went away from the McCullough and being that the machine is so large he decided to put a larger engine in than a Rotax. The final product should look amazing.



Ralph said he will be displaying a gyro at the BLM Visitor Center. The gyro will also be on display at the fly-in. *(Editor's Note – The gyro, shown above as it was displayed at KBFFI, is the X-25, a Bensen which was built for evaluation by the US Air Force.)*

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Jeff (*below at KBFFI 2010*) said he recently went to the Swansboro Fly-In. He met with the Sierra Rotorcraft Club. Said they have a lot of videos on You-Tube that members should check out.



Terry went to Bridgeport, Texas last month and went flying with Larry Neal in his Golden Butterfly. Said Larry gave him the stick to get a feel for it. Said flying was great and it was a beautiful craft to fly in.

Terry said he had been in contact with Dave Bacon and Dave was planning on having the Chapter One gyro glider at the fly-in to give rides in. Terry said we need to make sure it was ready to use.

Bruce Charnov was unable to attend the meeting but he did e-mail Terry a list of presentations he could talk about at the fly-in. Members picked two and Terry was going to e-mail them to Bruce. We decided on Autogyros to Gyroplanes and Autogyros in the Movie Industries. Presentation will be held at Brock's hangar on Saturday evening.

The two 10x20 canopies have been purchased and are at the lake ready for the fly-in, which will provide more shade for everyone there.

Jeff mentioned that Chapter 15 members had talked about doing a tribute gyro flight Saturday morning for Mike Schallmann. He was president of Chapter 15 and also member of Chapter One. He passed away last year at the fly-in in a motorcycle accident (Saturday September 26, 2009).



Meeting was adjourned at 12:50pm.

(Above photo: Mike Schallmann flies at KBFFI 2009.)



PRA 2 September 11 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:18am by President Doug Barker at Airgyro Aviation at the Spanish Fork, UT airport. Five members and two guests attended in person, with one member attending remotely via the internet. Both guests were first-time attendees. Don Helvey lives in Payson, UT and is still investigating sport rotorcraft. Mike Thomas of Oakley, UT is a CFII at Whirlybird Helicopters, which has established a training base at the Airgyro hangar at Spanish Fork. He reports new classes will be forming for a start in January, and an open house is planned at Spanish Fork Airport the weekend of October 16-17. *



(Above: Mary Barker, URA President Doug Barker's wife, gets her first gyroplane flight with CFI Mike Burton on Brian Bird's Sparrowhawk II at the September meeting. Mary was apprehensive, but came back smiling. Congrats, Mary!)

Minutes of the July meeting were approved as published in the newsletter and online. Treasurer Nate Oldham reported a total of \$1058.26 on hand in all accounts, with outstanding expenses of \$94.05, for a net of \$964.21. The report was approved.

Old Business - Secretary Paul Plack noted that there are several outstanding issues based on feedback from Rotors Over The Rockies which have not been delegated or addressed, and suggested they be included as agenda items at the October meeting.

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New Business - Doug related the events which led up to his appointment to fill a vacant seat on the PRA Board of Directors at Mentone in August. A director who resigned due to an inability to participate in board meetings left with two years remaining on his term, and Doug will fill that seat until it comes up for election in 2012. He also urged URA members to join and support the PRA as new leadership works to solve long-standing issues, and noted that with his position as a Director and Paul's role as Regional Representative for PRA's Northwest / Mountain Region, members of URA have an excellent opportunity to have their ideas heard by PRA. Mike Burton suggested that PRA needs an auto-renewal option to avoid losing members.

New URA member applications from Ben Belus of Sheridan, WY and Marion Springer of Adelanto, CA were formally accepted, and Fritz Chamberlain of Tucson, AZ was approved as an honorary member.

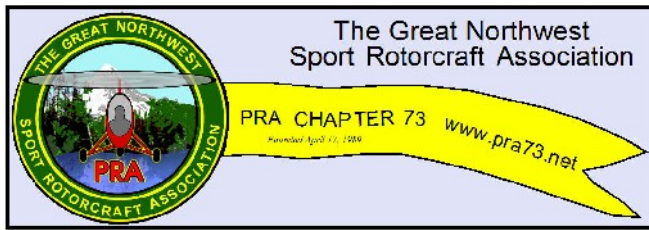
A discussion on meeting attendance followed. Doug noted his disappointment at the low turnout for the August meeting, which failed to reach a quorum, and acknowledged that post-meeting programs have been lacking. An informal discussion followed, with a general consensus that URA should not host a Christmas party, and that members be polled on the feasibility and desirability of holding December, January and February meetings wholly online.

Doug reported that the URA carpool to the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In in California has two people committed and two more likely. Anyone interested needs to decide quickly, since vehicle choice will be determined in part by the number of passengers. The carpool will leave the Salt Lake City area at about 4pm on Thursday, September 23, arriving on the El Mirage Dry Lake after midnight Saturday morning. The group will leave the lake the morning of Sunday, September 26, arriving back in the Salt Lake area Sunday evening. Contact Doug at (801) 628-7598 as soon as possible if interested.

It was decided to hold the October 9 meeting at 10am in Curt Pittman's hangar at the Brigham City (UT) Airport, to allow members from states north of Utah one more good opportunity to attend a meeting in person before the weather becomes unreliable. The meeting will also allow the opportunity to go over preparations for ROTR 2011 while at the airport. There is no high-speed internet connectivity at Brigham City Airport, so that meeting will not be available online.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15pm, followed by the annual URA BBQ. Mike Thomas, Doug Barker, Mary Barker and Paul Plack all got flights in Brian Bird's Sparrowhawk.

* Whirlybird Open House info: www.flywhirly.com



September 11 Minutes

Charles Smith, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 PM in the Sport Copter Hangar by President Bob Johnson.

Acknowledgments - Thank you Jim Vanek / Sport Copter & staff for the use of the facilities for this meeting. Members who brought food for the meeting – Thank You!

Attendance - Clint Martindale, Jon Hayden, Jim Miller, Kevin Richey, I. Bensen, Robert Johnson, Charles Smith, Wayne Mansfield, Ken Cabbage, David Brackett, Ted Faro, Dan Darling, Dan Dalke, Kevin Richey.

Previous Minutes & Current Financial Report: Discussed & Approved. For a complete report visit the Members Only portion of the pra73.net web site.



(Above: Wayne Mansfield gets dual instruction in Sport Copter's one-of-a-kind stretch Vortex tandem from CFI Jim Vanek at the September meeting.)

Old Business

1. PRA 73 Gyro-Copter windbreaker jackets are still available at cost, \$30 each, various sizes, contact Jim Miller (360) 771-9247
2. Reminder: Members advertisements to buy, sell, etc., must be renewed for each monthly newsletter.

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Send complete information to Gary Kaminski, gkaminski@tigerwolf1.com, or (503) 799-8705.

3. Members who manned the booth and those who brought their rotorcraft to the NWAAC fly in at Pearson Field in Vancouver last month were a big help in making our PRA73 Information Booth a success. Thank you all!

New Business

1. Not discussed in this meeting but scheduled for discussion in the next meeting is the renewal of NWAAC's membership for PRA73's President.

Rotorcraft Progress Reports & Shared Info

1. Wayne Mansfield of Coos Bay shared the status of his Bensen Rotorcraft upgrade. In addition to upgrading and replacing the original cable brakes, significant upgrades and changes were made to the rotor head. Fuel lines were replaced and he is looking forward to some dual flight training with Jim Vanek today.
2. After the meeting was a tour of the Sport Copter manufacturing facilities. An overview of the operation, current projects and challenges provided insights into the attention to detail necessary to produce the highest quality components and assembled rotorcraft using the best materials available.
3. Following the meeting observation of rotorcraft, and light aircraft landings, take-offs and other maneuvers kept many members occupied before heading home.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2010 1:00 PM Scappoose OR Sport Copter Hangar, fly, drive, bring a friend!

Formal Meeting ended approximately 1:35 PM.

G-YROX Pickled for Winter

Norman Surplus has announced on his blog that, due to deteriorating seasonal weather conditions in the Bering Straits and North Atlantic, he has stowed his yellow MT03 gyroplane (above) in the Philippines for the winter, and will resume his attempt to circumnavigate the globe in the spring. Get updates at www.gyroxgoesglobal.com.



A Wonderful Weekend

Terry Smith, Chairman, KBRA (PRA 1)

Well, El Mirage 2010 is in the History Books, so to speak, and it was a GREAT fly-in! We had a lot of flying over the 3 days of the official fly-in dates, with quite a few people showing up on Thursday when Chapter 1 started setting up.

I want to thank each and every one of the Chapter 1 members, and early arrivals, who helped with the set-up, operation and closing of the 2010 fly-in. This is certainly a group effort, and it would not have been such a success without so many great people getting involved!



It was hot, and dusty, but there were no injuries or accidents this year, and that is always good news! There were a lot of 2-seater gyroplanes and many people got their 1st ride in a gyro this weekend – including our Secretary/Treasurer Karen Keene! She also got her 1st helicopter ride! (Above: *Mark Sanders of The Arizona Rotorcraft Club, PRA 15 in AZ, readies his SparrowHawk for flight.*)

Peter Prentice and Dave Bacon gave people rides this year in the gyro-glider. Although a little dusty on take-off and landing, the flying was great, and those who flew in it were wearing big smiles after! With luck, this will be a part of next year's fly-in as well. On Saturday night, Dr. Bruce Charnov entertained us with some wonderful presentations, and even gave us a glimpse of the worst movie ever made with a gyroplane rescue in it, amongst other features. Thank you again, Bruce!

The Friday night corn roast and Saturday evening Presentation were held over at the Brock Hangar. Our thanks goes out to Marie Brock, who couldn't be there this year due to moving, and Terry Brock for all their support over the years. Both nights were a big success because of their kindness and generosity.



I met a lot of new friends this year, and put faces to names for people I'd only talked to via e-mail, and that was one of the best parts of this fly-in for me. I look forward to next year's fly-in, and seeing all of you there, enjoying the California sky!



Upcoming Regional Meetings

KBRA (PRA 1) Sat., Oct 9, 11am PDT
Teddy Udala Ranch, 22055 Old El Mirage Rd.
El Mirage, CA 92301. Info: (562) 493-3960

URA (PRA 2) Sat., Oct 9, 10am MDT
Curt Pittman's Hangar, Brigham City (UT) Airport.
Directions, instructions at www.utahrotorcraft.org.

ARC (PRA 15) Watch for e-mail from Britta Penca.

SDCRC (PRA 31) TBA. [Request](#) e-mail notices.

GNWSRA (PRA 73) Sat., Oct. 9, 1pm PDT
[Sport Copter](#), Scappoose Industrial Airport, OR
Preceded by potluck lunch at noon.

Doug's Thoughts – El Mirage **URA Pres. & PRA Director Doug Barker**

The weekend of September 25 was a magical moment in time that I will never forget. Chapter 2 put together a road trip and 3 of us (Mike Burton, Paul Plack and I) made the commitment to take a day off work and make the journey to El Mirage, CA to spend a couple days in the sun, visiting with friends and checking out all kinds of rotorcraft. We all got more than we bargained for.

Before we ever left, Mike had been talking to Kevin Richey, a chapter member who lives in Portland, OR, about how it wasn't as much fun to travel to a fly-in when you didn't have something to fly. Kevin offered to let Mike (a CFI) take his Sport Copter up for a flight while we were there. I hoped for a flight in the gyroglider they had promised to have running for the event.



And true to their word, they started taking people for introductory glider flights. Since I am planning to build a gyroglider, I was really hoping to get a ride in theirs, and I did. I was happy and satisfied, and if that was all that happened I would have gone home a happy man, with my temporary flight fix taken care of for a little while. But Kevin had bigger and better things in mind for us, and soon asked both Paul and I if we would like a shot at flying his Sport Copter also.

Paul was ready for that and quickly accepted the offer and I was very thankful that Kevin offered the chance to me, but I didn't feel like I was ready for a solo flight.

Kevin replied he had talked to Mike (my CFI) about it and Mike felt I was ready to be turned loose to do some balancing on the mains and crow hops in ground effect if

I felt ready for it. With Mike's blessing and Kevin's assurance that he really wanted me to try it I decided I would be crazy to turn down an offer like this.

The next morning, the air was calm and I had miles of flat lakebed all around me. Kevin went over his machine and made sure I was familiar with the controls, then Mike gave me some last minute instruction on what he wanted to see. I stayed out about 45 minutes. Balancing on the mains is a whole different experience on a lake bed where you don't have to worry much about your track and can concentrate on the stick and the throttle. I learned more that day than I would have ever thought possible. What an incredible day.

The next morning the winds were dead calm again so I filled up the tank and out again I went, this time with a lot more confidence. I started giving it a little more power and the next thing I knew the machine was leaving the ground. Mike had told me to use the stick to increase the rotor angle and that would increase the drag and it would settle back down. As I was going through this ritual I could hear that music that plays on the Ken Brock training video as he did this over and over. It was a magical time that I will never forget.

I had been out nearly an hour. I lined up for one last run across the lake bed, but this time I decided to see how long I could hold it off. Before I knew it I had flown the width of the lake, then settled back in with a perfect landing. When I got off that machine, I was a different person. It may not technically be called a solo flight, since it was all within ground effect, but I had left the bonds of earth and soared, even if it was only a few feet in the air, and my life will never be the same. It truly was a magical time and I know I got way more than I had bargained for. I wish everyone could have just as magical an experience in their life. Who knows, maybe someday everyone will!



Classifieds - For Sale



VANCRAFT – E-LSA; Rotax 503, digital panel, hyd. Brakes, trailer incl. \$8,950 OBO. (Photo above.) Clint, (503) 775-7372. Scappoose. (OR, 09/2010)



SC VORTEX – Rotax 582 greyhead, no N-numbers. **REDUCED** - \$17K. (Photo above.) Richard, (360) 431-6817, forfunandsun@yahoo.com. (OR, 09/2010)

Hangars Available, Scappoose, OR – Choice of two. See www.pra73.net "[Classifieds](#)" for details.

In This Issue - Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In, 1, 6, 7; Greg Gremminger's Ultimatum to PRA, 1; PRA severs ties with PSF Magazine, announces new Rotorcraft E-Zine, reduces dues, reschedules 2010 election, 1, 2; Regional report, 2; Chapter Minutes, Detail, 3-5; G-YROX Update, 5; Calendar, 6.

Editor's Notes – Chapter 58, the High Sierra Rotorcraft Club in California, has had a recent influx of new members, and is reactivating. This chapter was started by a group of Rotorway helicopter owners in the early 1980s. Also, information has been requested by a group seeking to start a new chapter in Colorado.

Western Rotorcraft is edited by Paul Plack at the Utah Rotorcraft Association, and published monthly for members of participating PRA chapters in PRA's Northwest/Mountain and Western/pacific regions. Participation is open to chapters with formal dues requirements, pending approval from the URA.



RAF 2000 GTX SE 2.2 FI - Horizontal stab, always hangared. **REDUCED** - \$23K OBO Details & photos [here](#). Gary, (503) 799-8705. (OR, 06/2010)



RAF 2000 - 240 TT. Parham stab, elec. trim, EJ22 EFI 145 HP, radio/ intercom. Incl. tools & supplies. \$23,700. Terry, (208) 221-7401. Details, photos [here](#). (UT, 05/2010)

SparrowHawk II - Completed 2009. Subaru 2.5L, leather seats, overhead panel, MGL Odyssey 10.4" EFIS & EIS, Garmin radio and transponder. Award winner! **REDUCED** - \$65K. Available separately, 15' tandem-axle trailer with hyd. lift, custom tow bar, more. (See photo on page 4.) Brian, (801) 831-4649. (UT, 11/2009)