

Western Rotorcraft

September 2011



Fly-In Season Concludes in CA, UT

PRA 2 in Utah will hold its annual Fall Fly-In & BBQ on Saturday, Sep. 10 at the facilities of Utah Helicopter, at the north end of the ramp at South Valley Regional Airport (formerly Municipal Airport #2, pictured above) in West Jordan, UT. There is a simultaneous open house at Leading Edge Aviation, a Cessna Pilot Center also located on the ramp. This is an excellent opportunity to introduce members of the general public, as well as airplane enthusiasts, to personal rotorcraft. The 10am MDT PRA 2 meeting and a brief Q&A with the staff of Utah Helicopter will be accessible on the web, and the webcam will be left running for the fly-in after the meeting adjourns.

Chapter 1 in CA welcomes you to the annual Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In, September 23-25, on the El Mirage Dry Lake in Southern California. This heritage event has official days Friday-Sunday, but earlybirds may show up as early as Tuesday the 20th. There's free camping right on the dry lake (no hookups), and what may be the most nearly perfect environment for a student's first flights, due to its 2-x-6-mile flat oval of level, hard, very flat silt.

Heavy rains last season flooded the lake, which results in natural resurfacing. You can meet many of the readers of WR from several states at this event, which is unlike any other in the world. Last year, rides in a vintage Bensen Gyroglider were available! Bring sunscreen, lip balm,

sunglasses, protective clothing, a good hat, and plenty of water. The sun is very intense due to the 2,840' MSL elevation and reflections off the light colored lakebed. Find more event details at www.kbffi.com.



Above, the flightline at KBFFI 2010, El Mirage, CA.

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Regional Report

Paul Plack, NW/Mtn Rep

The end of September brings the Autumnal Equinox on the 23rd, the official start of Fall. That happens to come during the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In this year, the event which marks the unofficial end of the rotorcraft fly-in season in the west. Two reasonable questions are, will you be at El Mirage? And, what will you do to advance the sport during the off-season?



The last two years, members of Chapter 2 have done an informal group carpool to El Mirage. Participants generally take a vacation day on Friday, and prepare to get on the road immediately after work Thursday.



The last two years, we've arrived at Gyrocopter Cove on the lakebed about 3am Pacific Time, thrown a tarp down on the ground, put out inflatable mattresses, and caught a few hours of sleep under the stars. In the morning, (PRA 2 camp at dawn Sept. 26, 2009, above,) the camp stoves come out, hot breakfast is prepared from food brought in coolers, and we get the tents set up. We munch on cold-cut sandwiches for lunch each day, and Friday and Saturday night Chapter 1 arranges dinners.

We enjoy the event, get good nights' sleep Friday and Saturday, then head home Sunday morning. It's about 12 hours back to Salt Lake City, and everyone is back at work Monday morning. Costs are \$150-200 per person for the weekend, including food and fuel.

This is a mighty cheap way to experience an out-of-state fly-in. I highly recommend it!

The second question has tougher answers. See if you can arrange a winter ground school or other instructional programs to keep enthusiasm alive during the off-season. URA and Chapter 2 (now separate organizations) will both be working to produce more webinars over the winter, and you're welcome to incorporate them into your meeting plans if the timing works.

If your group has access to a provider of such a program, consider sharing a presentation through a webinar. Those of us who've done it will be happy to show you how.

Gyro Training in UT

CFI Mike Burton reports Groen Brothers Aviation has made a surplus SparrowHawk available to [Airgyro Aviation](#) for training use, for an indefinite period of time. As this issue goes to deadline, Mike says the machine needs to be checked out, and a LODA obtained, but the Salt Lake City FSDO has been good about turning LODA requests around very quickly.

If you've been waiting for training in the western US, [book your time ASAP](#), because we don't know how long the machine will be available. Mike says he's working on a longer-term solution for access to a gyroplane trainer. We'll have details as the situation develops.

URA Organizational Meeting

On October 8, 2011, the new Utah Rotorcraft Association, Inc. will hold its first membership meeting at Airgyro Aviation in Spanish Fork, UT. The more informal organization which has preceded it, which will continue on as PRA 2, will hold a meeting at 10am MDT to officially approve some final details. URA, Inc.'s three charter members will then officially convene to accept into the new organization members of the old group who have completed proxy forms. The corporation will then elect directors. Following the URA membership meeting, the new URA board will meet to elect officers.

All these meetings are expected to be very brief, and the end result will be the official launch of PRA 2 as a separate entity, to be administered primarily through an e-mail reflector. URA, Inc. will focus on the activities permitted under its bylaws, a final draft of which will be approved at the URA, Inc. meeting. The draft bylaws are available to current PRA 2 members in the Members Only section at www.utahrotorcraft.org.

Current members of PRA 2 can expect to receive a URA proxy form and membership application, which will need to be completed, signed and returned to have membership automatically transferred into the new corporation. PRA 2 members who do not apply for membership in the corporation will continue to receive their copies of Western Rotorcraft through the period for which their dues are paid.

New PRA 2 Website

In considering the legal constraints on URA as a 501(c)(3) organization, the interim officers of URA concluded a separate URL for the PRA chapter will be needed. The URL

www.pra2.org was registered for a three-year period at a cost of roughly \$39, and a temporary site created. The additional URL



can be hosted at no additional cost on the URA hosting plan, an offer which will also be open to other personal rotorcraft groups in the western US as part of URA's educational outreach. The PRA 2 site will include the limited information needed to conduct the new, more informal group, and include links to resources at www.utahrotorcraft.org.

The Arizona Rotorcraft Club, PRA 15, which currently has no website, has also been offered a similar arrangement, provided the club covers the cost for URL registration. If any other rotorcraft groups in the western US are interested in exploring this opportunity, contact Paul Plack, secretary@utahrotorcraft.org. Each individual organization will be responsible for maintaining its own page, and hosting will be contingent on including the link to URA's resource pages.

WR Distribution Widens

The distribution of Western Rotorcraft, which has been made available as a free download on the websites of participating PRA chapters, but sent automatically only to members in good standing of participating organizations, will be widening. As part of the split of the old URA into a new corporation and a separate PRA Chapter 2, all activities of the old group which pertain to education and training will stay with URA, Inc., and be increasingly directed at reaching members of the general public. One of those activities is Western Rotorcraft, which will be distributed to anyone who wishes to receive monthly notification, beginning with the November, 2011 edition.

It is anticipated that monthly distribution could reach 1,000 or more individuals. This will provide a greatly expanded platform for participating clubs to reach prospective members and event attendees. Since URA, Inc. will not technically be affiliated with PRA, WR hopes to solicit notice of activities and events from other independent local or regional enthusiast groups, especially helicopter-oriented clubs in the west.

If the new focus results in a growth in the page-count of WR, the first eight pages of each issue will include all the essential content needed for PRA chapters wishing to use it as their publication of record for minutes and other official business. This will keep the printed form to one ounce or less to control postage costs. Expanded content will be included only in the electronically-delivered version, which is the one which will reach most readers.

Organizations currently participating were all notified of the impending change in August, and will have the option to return to publishing individual chapter newsletters.

Doug's Thoughts

Doug Barker, Director, PRA President, PRA 2 & URA



Life is going by so quickly I can barely keep up with the things on my to-do list. This summer has been chock full of exciting adventures and there are still more to come. Chapter 2's Fall Fly-In is coming up quickly (Sept. 10th) and then just two weeks later it will be time for a fun weekend at El Mirage.

It may not be my place to announce this but I just can't wait: Glenn Kerr has recently purchased a Butterfly Monarch with a Rotax 618, which should be a kick-butt machine for the high altitudes of the Wasatch Front. I know we have other members who are getting closer all the time to getting machines of their own and we just seem to keep getting new members each month. Some even have gyroplanes, so it is an ever evolving group that just seems to get better and better. If it's been a while since you have been to a meeting, you should come to this month's event and meeting all the new members.

I hope all of you that are within a few hours driving time will make an effort to join us at our Fly-In and BBQ on the 10th. I hope those that are new to our sport or just thinking about getting into it will make the commitment to take some time and attend any event you can before the main flying season slows down for the colder months. While flying can still be done in the winter months, it really puts a stop to the events so it limits our chance to share the joys of flying. El Mirage is an incredible event that everyone should attend at least once just to experience it. (Bet you can't go just once!) We will be putting together a carpool again this year, which really keeps the costs low, so if you can take one day off work and have the weekend available, you should join us for the trip. Please give me a call and let me know if you are interested in joining us. I'd love to have enough people that we needed a couple of vehicles to haul us all there.

If you are still sitting on the sidelines, just letting life slide past you, don't let another season get by without doing something to chase your dream. Life is only worth living if you have dreams. And dreams are only worth having if you are going to do something to make them come true. What holds most people back is simply making the decision to start moving towards their dreams. It really starts with a decision and when you decide to start trying, the opportunity will make itself available, and before you know it you will be going in the right direction. Don't believe me? Ask anyone who has started down that path (like Glenn Kerr) and you will find it really hinges on your decision much more than your circumstances.

Try it for yourself and see if that isn't right. Hope to see you all soon! - Doug





A REAL Ethanol Fuel Crisis!

The following are excerpts of an e-mail from [PRA 38](#) Pres. Mark Shook (above), and recent developments in the effort to make ethanol-free premium unleaded auto fuel available for use in aircraft which can use it.

"Two weeks ago Todd (Rieck) and I went flying for about an hour in my Xenon (912 w/Mitsubishi turbo). About 2.5 miles from the airport, the engine suddenly lost power (2200 RPM max), and shuddered, running very rough. I turned into the wind and landed in a large pasture. Fortunately we ended up right in front of the only gate in the pasture for two miles in either direction.

"After trailering it back to the airport, it still would not give more than 2500 RPM two hours later, yet the next morning it ran normally, full power, 41 inches and 5400 RPM on the ground. We removed and replaced the fuel filter. It was spotless.

"A similar thing has happened 3 times since October. So what caused the ROTAX to choke? Rotax mechanic Evan McCombs says vapor lock. My Rotax was not wrapped with heat insulation like Rotax requires for its turbo (914). All happened on warm to hot days after the engine was heat soaked.



"For over a year, I flew this aircraft all over Florida (above) and Colorado on hot days, over the Everglades, up and down the Florida Keys without a hiccup. I flew it

in Colorado over the state capitol, Royal Gorge, and near Pikes Peak, May till November 2010, without incident.

"What changed? When I flew over the Keys and Everglades, I was burning 100LL. After coming home in April 2010, I fueled from my 500 gallon tank filled with premium unleaded. In July of 2010 Colorado mandated ethanol in all unleaded auto fuel. I still had some 100% gas in my 500 gallon tank, and got my first load of auto fuel with ethanol in late October 2010. The first incident was about two weeks later on a hot day in Pueblo after sitting on a hot asphalt ramp for an hour, high temp turbocharged engine operating at 9600 feet density altitude. My best educated guess: ethanol is the culprit.

"What now? I am going to increase the fuel flow by turning up the pump pressure slightly, add heat insulation to all fuel lines and exhaust pipes in the engine compartment, and use 100LL from now on. I also may change the fuel filter set up."

Groups Working on Solutions

Mark is not alone in facing issues created by the use of ethanol in gasoline. Even in areas where pure gasoline is legal, it's becoming hard to find ethanol-free unleaded, because refiners are finding an ever-smaller market for it. Rotax and many other manufacturers have retroactively approved operation on gasoline containing up to 10 percent ethanol, but as Mark discovered, there's more to worry about than gasket compatibility.

A company called Clear Gas has been formed in California by a group of frustrated pilots, with the objective of providing a distribution channel for ethanol-free unleaded premium auto fuel. General Aviation News [reported](#) on July 5, 2011, "With the clock ticking down on an impending lawsuit aimed at producers and sellers of leaded avgas in California, a new company, Clear Gas, formed in May by a group of pilots in the Merced area, will deliver lead-free, ethanol-free autogas to airports, marinas, race tracks and all off-road applications in California in amounts as small as 500 gallons."

A different approach, also in California, is a non-profit "fuel club" based at Reid-Hillview Airport in the San Francisco Bay area. The airport's [website](#) calls the group "the first non-profit fuel club in California that will bring 92 octane unleaded ethanol-free fuel to Bay Area pilots as an alternative to 100LL. California's 10% ethanol mandate for auto fuel dried up all sources of FAA approved mogas in the state, so the group searched outside of California and was able to locate a source of ethanol-free fuel that can reliably be delivered to the airfield for a reasonable price.

And a group called the Ethanol Free Premium Coalition has an explanation and analysis of some ethanol-related issues [here](#).

Are you looking at this issue in paper form? To find the expanded information available by clicking the links in the story above, download the PDF version of this issue from your chapter's website or www.utahrotorcraft.org.



PRA 1 August 13 Meeting Report

PRA Chapter 1 held its meeting at 11am, August 13th. Members attending were: Terry, Dee, Grace, Karen, George, Teddy, Dejan, Chuck and Ryan. Main topic of the meeting was the Fly-In. DVD's for the goody bags this year should be ready by the next meeting (since the meeting, the DVD's have been completed and are shipping now). Glen, one of our members, is finishing up the Benson Gyroplane weather vane and hopes to have it ready for the raffle.

The Chapter is still gathering items for the raffle. George donated a very nice spot lamp for the raffle. The website will be adding a section to list the companies/individuals who have been gracious to donate for the Fly-In.

A major change this year for the Fly-In will be that all activities will be held on the lake bed. The BLM has closed off the gate that was originally used to cross over close to the Brock residence, and the remaining access is now only for property owners and their families. There will be lights, generator and a screen for Dr. Bruce Charnov's presentation on Saturday night.

Chapter 1 will have coffee and pastries Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning at 7AM for the Fly-In. Dejan volunteered to work on the plaques for next year's fly-in. He also said he would make the small plaques that are put in each goody bag. Ted gave him a plaque from last year for a sample. Teddy showed everyone the chocks he made and donated for the raffle. Said he made 3 sets.

We also have a helicopter that someone had won last year and gave it back to the chapter for this year's raffle. Karen mentioned that Jennifer at PRA has helped us at a lot with different things. She is retiring and we agreed to donate \$25 for her gift.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:10pm. (Terry Smith, Pres.)



PRA 2 August 13 Minutes

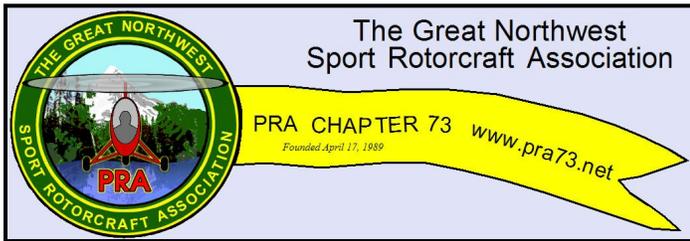
The meeting was called to order by President Doug Barker at 10:15am MDT at Hexatron Engineering, 1998 N. Redwood Road in Salt Lake City. Five members were present: Doug, Secretary Paul Plack, Lyle Carson, Kevin Eaton and Steve Pearson, and guests Steve Smith and Greg Hardy. July minutes were approved as published. Doug reported total funds on hand of \$753.38 with no pending bills. The report was approved.

Regarding the coming split of PRA 2 and URA, Inc., Doug reported that URA's specific focus as a separate organization will be in three areas: (1) Locate and equip a more centrally-located meeting place in the Salt Lake City area; (2) Subsidize travel for a gyroplane instructor willing to bring a training aircraft to Rotors Over The Rockies 2012 and offer instruction; (3) Establish a non-commercial gyroplane trainer in the area.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50am, and was followed by a plant tour of Hexatron Engineering, including the opportunity to watch a Hexadyne P60 four-stroke engine run on a test stand. The tour was conducted by company President Cy Williams, who generously entertained questions. (Paul Plack, Secretary.)

Below, L-R, guests Steve Smith, Greg Hardy look at Hexadyne P60 on test stand before demonstration run.





The Great Northwest
Sport Rotorcraft Association

PRA CHAPTER 73 www.pra73.net
Founded April 17, 1989

PRA 73 August 13 Minutes

1:13 PM Meeting called to order by Vice President Jim Miller at Sport Copter at Scappoose Airport. Thanks to those who brought food. Frances Miller brought a pineapple upside-down cake. David Vandewater brought a turkey salad. Dan Dalke picked up pizza.

Welcome New Members, Gillan Bradley and David Vandewater. Gillan is an 1100-hour SEL pilot. David is a student pilot. Both are PRA members.

Minutes of last month's meeting approved as printed in newsletter. Treasurer's report given by VP Jim Miller. Motion to approve made, seconded, and approved. Our new club patches were passed around for all to look at. Discussion about sales price followed. Our total cost is \$1.32 per patch. Motion made to charge members \$2, nonmembers \$5 for each patch. 13 patches were sold to members. Crazy Bob Miller bought 5, Dan Dubois and Jim Shawcross each bought 2, Clint Martindale, Rich Stewart, Jim Vanek and David Vandewater each bought one.

"Wings and Wheels 2011", as written up in last month's newsletter is from 11 am to 4pm 8/14/2011 and NWAAC pancake breakfast is from 8-11 am.

No old business. Membership forms are available.

Jim Vanek gave a rundown on recent activities. Popular Mechanics magazine had a write up calling Sport Copter's new law enforcement gyro one of the best 10 aircraft. With superior power, it blows the completion away. Jim



has a new tandem gyro in the works. Aero News Network, new Lycoming engine, parts available and lower operating expenses. Jim also discussed rotor blade problems that had previously occurred in the industry.

Brock Steiner (at left) is our new Gyroplane CFI. This is great news for those wanting gyro instruction. He will be using Sport Copter gyros here at Scappoose.

Jim Vanek will be giving short \$10 familiarization rides. Let's go FLY. 2pm Meeting adjourned. (David Vandewater, edited by Jim Miller, Vice President)

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

KBRA (PRA 1) Saturday, September 10, 11am PDT. Teddy Udala's hangar, El Mirage, CA. Last meeting before KBFFI! [\(Info\)](mailto:Info): (562) 493-3960

PRA 2 Saturday, September 10, 10am MST. Utah Helicopter, South Valley Regional Airport, West Jordan, UT. Details: www.utahrotorcraft.org.

ARC (PRA 15) September 23-25 at KBFFI. El Mirage Dry Lake Off-Road Recreation Area, CA. Contact Britta Penca at (520) 840-0951.

SDCRC (PRA 31) Meets third Thursday. Locations vary (CA). Request e-mail notice from John Rountree.

CRA (PRA 38) Next quarterly meeting TBA, Meadow Lake Airport (KFLY), Peyton, CO. Updates, flying and driving directions at www.copterpilots.org.

GNWSRA (PRA 73) Saturday, September 10, 1pm PDT, [Sport Copter](http://SportCopter), Scappoose Ind. Airport, OR (KSPB). Potluck at 12n, mtg at 1pm. Details: www.pra73.net.

Gyroplane for Sale



AIR COMMAND - 214 hours TT. Single-place w/ pod, extended keel stability mod. Rotax 503, dual carbs, CDI ignition. New Sport Copter 23'-x-7" rotor blades, redundant mast, PowerFin prop. Airspeed indicator, altimeter, engine & rotor tachs, EGT, CHT, Hobbs, compass. N6149H, registered E-LSA, logs and paperwork in order. Flies like a champ! \$9,000 firm. Contact Britta 520-840-0951. (AZ, 7/11)

Classified ads are free to members of participating PRA chapters. Contact your chapter for details.

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