

Western Rotorcraft

January 2012



2012 Webinars Begin in January

URA's 2012 Winter Webinar Series will begin Saturday, January 14 with a presentation by Chapter 38's Dick Goddard, who will look back at the early gyroplane scene in the Rockies, especially the development of McCutchen rotorblades and the Windryder gyroplane (see photo above).

Find the link to participate at www.utahrotorcraft.org. Start time is about 10:30am MST, immediately following Chapter 2's monthly meeting.

FAA Issues New 51% Guidance

[Tom Milton](#), a [PRA](#) Director and FAA Designated Airworthiness Inspector, announced December 29 that the FAA has issued new guidelines to inspectors which are to be used to evaluate whether new amateur-built rotorcraft being submitted for inspection meet the requirement that a major portion of fabrication and assembly tasks were performed by amateurs. (Also known as "The 51% Rule.")

Tom's post on the Rotary Wing Forum says, in part:

"It looks like the long awaited gyro checklist has arrived without a whimper. Greg Gremminger, myself and others...were asked to make a prototype checklist for gyros and we did. I believe we left off some time ago with the hint that it might be approved by October 2011. It looks like it has been approved..."

Apparently, the FAA did not notify DARs at the time, but they will be expected to begin using the new checklist immediately. This means builders will need to use it for reference, to make sure they qualify for an EAB airworthiness certificate and repairman's certificate.

Find the FAA document [here](#), and scroll to the bottom to find links to the new checklists for Helicopters, Gyroplanes (called "Gyrocopters" on this list), Weight Shift and Powered Parachute.

Monthly News for PRA Chapters 1, 2, 15, 31, 38 & 73 and the Utah Rotorcraft Association, Inc.

Regional Report

Paul Plack, NW/Mtn Rep



I hope you got to enjoy your holidays as much as I did mine! Those of you who know Cindy know she goes all out on things like food and decorations, so the inside of our home has looked and smelled great since about Veterans Day!

As you read this, PRA VP Tim O'Connor's most successful online ground school session yet is just getting underway. The seven-week course prepares students for the FAA's Sport Pilot / Gyroplane Knowledge Test, and when registration ended December 19, Tim had 22 people enrolled. If this translates into people going on to seek flight training in 2012, we should see lots of activity in the new year.

Part of the credit for the good turnout has to go to PRA's more effective use of its E-Alert e-mail list. A bulletin was sent to more than 2,000 enthusiasts, including some whom are not members of PRA, on October 26. It promoted the ground school, and also urged readers to post comments in support of an EAA petition asking the FAA to clarify its intent regarding Sport Pilot Instructors. (This was the first use of the E-Alert for a purpose other than sending a link for downloading PRA's Rotorcraft E-Zine.) A ruling by the FAA's own attorneys has stated that dual instruction received from a Sport Pilot CFI cannot be counted toward higher certificate classes, which has killed the market for these instructors. If the FAA clarifies its intent as requested, you'll still need some instruction from a full CFI to advance from Sport Pilot to Private, but at least the dual you've received won't be discounted completely.

The same PRA e-mail list which allowed that call to action to reach more than 2,000 people is now going to be used to more widely distribute this and other chapter and regional publications like it from around the country. We've been looking for some time at ways to get our news into the hands of more enthusiasts. I was able to convince PRA leadership that the added content we bring would help grow PRA's list, and I got approval to go ahead. The first issue has already gone out, carrying links for free downloads of Western Rotorcraft and Southwest Rotorcraft. (The latter covers Chapters 6, 20, 62

and 78 in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas.)

Based on download stats, it looks as if we'll have more than 800 additional readers for the December issue. Use this new exposure to promote your activities and events in 2012! If you're not already subscribed to receive Rotorcraft from PRA, watch your e-mail inbox for a second E-Alert with the added content each month. If you're not yet subscribed, click the button shown below, or if you're reading this in the paper edition of WR, look for that same button near the top of the page at www.pra.org.

[Subscribe To Rotorcraft Magazine](#)

PRA's new editor for Rotorcraft E-Zine, Lisa Kluttz, got her first issue out December 15. Lisa is a graphics professional, and her expertise shows. But to keep her fed with content, we're all going to have to step it up. Photos and accounts of your activities are welcome, and since our new distribution arrangement allows Lisa to read a bunch of local news every month, don't be surprised if she contacts you directly to ask for an article on what you're doing.

PRA Chapters in the west have been somewhat invisible to the rest of the country for years. Increased coverage of El Mirage and Rotors Over The Rockies and our newsletter co-op have made us more visible, but we still have a long way to go. Every little bit will help.

One more thing - an invitation has gone out to CFIs, exploring the possibility of getting a second gyro CFI to come to ROTR in 2012. If we get interest, URA will try to raise funds to partially offset costs for the instructor. The goal is to have a second CFI to complement Mike Burton to serve those of you needing the Sport Pilot / Gyroplane add-on. We'll keep you posted.

Here's to a successful, safe, and happy 2012!

Paul





Chapter 2 Meeting Report

Chapter 2 did not have a regular meeting in December, but members were invited to a party on Friday, December 9 at the home of Paul and Cindy Plack. A dinner of baked ham with potato casserole was enjoyed by all, and was followed by a "White Elephant" gift exchange.



The tackiest gag gift was easily the "Pootin' Tootin' President" doll, made by Big Mouth Toys. Pull the finger of the stuffed Barack Obama doll and he makes political comments about rivals, his own party, the Taliban and others as he passes gas. (Click photo for video demonstration.) Among the 21 sayings:

"Don't look at me! That was Joe Biden!"

"And they're sayin' we're facin' a serious gas shortage. I don't think so!"

"Whee! Maybe that one should come with its own birth certificate!"

The references to current events may one day make this toy a collector's item. Rose Pearson got to take "the prez" home, but we suspect her husband, Steve, will play with it more! Chapter 2 will hold its January 14 meeting online, using the URA Webmeeting Channel, at 10am MST. (See page 1.)

From the Rotary Wing Forum

Turbocharged cars are becoming commonplace on the highways, which means the availability of turbocharged auto conversion engines for use on experimental aircraft is improving. Eddie Sigman of Polvadera, NM says in a recent post on the Rotary Wing Forum that his airport elevation is 4,850' MSL, which means density altitudes are between 6,000 and 9,000' most of the time.



Eddie found the 2.2L, normally aspirated, Subaru engine on the RAF 2000 he recently acquired would not fly with two people in his local conditions, so he decided to upgrade. He switched to a 2.5L engine, then added a stock, water-cooled turbocharger with a wastegate set for 5.8 pounds of boost, which he says is low enough it does not require an intercooler.

He adds, "The only changes made were the new exhaust system I made, a later model coil pak, and a colder spark plug. I also bought a cleaned up intake manifold and throttle body. The key piece is the ECU...Its tuned while the engine is running with a prop load, by plugging your laptop computer into it.

"I turn a 5 bladed Warp Drive prop at 5,100 (RPM) on takeoff. So far the engine has about 40 hours of flight time, the water temp stays at thermostat temp, the oil pressure is great."

Eddie credits Metrix Motors in Centerville, UT, which specializes in Subarus, for help in getting the setup tuned. He estimates 230 horsepower, and reports a climb rate of 750 feet per minute at 65 MPH with the engine turning only 4,600 RPM. If this powerplant proves reliable, it could be a relatively economical solution to the density altitude problem.

See more photos, read Eddie's full account, and follow his progress in [this thread](#) on the Rotary Wing Forum.

Build / Fly Reports

Gary Warnecke of Clarkston, WA has started building a Sport Copter Vortex M912 single-place gyro, and has chosen a commercially available [builder's log](#) called Kitlog Pro 2.0 to document the process. The package generates a web page which can be shared with others. This may be a good option for those who want the ability to show their progress without inviting large numbers of unfiltered comments, which often happens on the Rotary Wing Forum.



The Vortex M912 is a further-strengthened version of the original Vortex, designed to accommodate the Rotax four-strokes, and to hold up under the demands of export customers who use the machine in cattle-mustering operations. It also incorporates suspension improvements inspired by the Sport Copter 2 two-place machine.

There is a contact link on the page, but it requires the use of a form in order to keep the builder's e-mail address confidential. The home page of Kitlog Pro claims 871 projects uploaded to date. Among the 20 linked from the front page is another rotorcraft project, a Helicycle turbine helicopter being built by Mike Smith of Pittsburg, KS.

A Look Ahead to 2012

**Carl Matter, President
AZ Rotorcraft Club (PRA 15)**



I always enjoy seeing the history of gyros among club members. Some are still flying the original Bensen machines complete with engines from World War II. That tells me we started with a good design. Then Ken Brock made some improvements. After that each Gyrobee had the individual style of it's builder.

And enthusiasts continue to make their own flying machines. I recently saw a Hornet under construction. Making your own flying machine is one of those fantasies that can actually come true. So I don't see any end in sight.

Britta just sold her gyro to a new student of Ron Menzie. The movement continues.

The presidents of PRA chapters which participate in Western Rotorcraft have been invited to share whatever is on their minds as we start the new year.

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Where Did the Year Go?

**Terry Smith, President
KBRA (PRA 1)**

It almost seems like yesterday we were just getting used to using 2011 in our check books and now it's time to roll out another year.

I think for the most part it was a wonderful year for [Chapter 1](#). But as always, there are things that as a sport and chapter that I'm sure all of us would like to see improved upon.

One of the biggest challenges that I've noticed – especially out on the West Coast – is the lack of qualified instructors. For many people, traveling out of state for training is a difficult proposition. But, like anything you have a passion for, there will be some obstacles to overcome, and proper training – wherever it may be – should be budgeted.

Another challenge I see is getting people who want to experience gyro flight to see if it's "for them" up in the air. While there are a few individuals who have two-seater gyros and have been happy to take up people with the gyro bug (THANK YOU Vance!), many people don't get that opportunity.

Chapter 1 has a gyro glider, and now, with the acquisition of rotor blades, is planning on getting its members some air time in 2012, with the emphasis on getting proper training! While a glider can be a good start, nothing beats qualified instruction.

The 2011 KBFFI event turned out great this past year, and I'm looking forward to the 2012 event already. Supporting your chapter and any events it hosts or attends I believe is a great way to keep the sport alive! Rotors Over the Rockies, Benson Days, The PRA Convention – just to name a few – are all events that with support, promote our sport in a positive light. It's events like these that attract new blood into the sport, so the more we support them the more we have the opportunity to grow.

2012 - What will the year bring? With a little work, it can bring good growth to your chapter, and the PRA. I hope that 2012 is a GREAT year for all of you!

A Time for Optimism

***Doug Barker, Pres., PRA 2
Pres., Utah Rotorcraft Assoc.
Director, PRA***



Starting a new year can be a very exciting time. It is always good to review what has been accomplished up to that point and to decide what can be done differently to get even better results the next time around. Regardless of how successful you have been the last year in accomplishing some of your goals, you now have another chance to do even more or do even better. I am thankful for that opportunity to have a fresh start with 2012.

While many things have been happening with the URA and the PRA and our sport in general, my personal dream of getting my Super Sky Cycle up and flying has for the most part been stalled for the last year. While I have been able to do some minor work on it, the major movement I was hoping for simply did not happen. This was due mostly to a lack of discretionary funds available to invest in the project. Sometimes changing your financial situation can be a lot more complicated than you would expect. While I still have my job (for which I am very thankful) our family has had several situations come up that have made extra demands on our available funds and I just haven't been able to get ahead of the situations, so there were no funds left for me to continue my project.



I know everyone has situations come up in their life and you just have to juggle your priorities sometimes, to take care of the things that are the most important. While I sometimes wish my SSC could be placed higher on the priority list, the truth is there are several other items (like my family) that are more important to me, so they often take priority. Especially for a person that is still raising a family, recreational pursuits (regardless of the passion behind them) simply have to wait until it's their turn. The good news is, the challenges that have held my project back, seem to be coming to an

end and I believe I will soon be in a position to start investing money in my project again. What an incredible feeling that is!

With that hope burning brightly in the forefront of my consciousness, excitement is starting to creep back into my daily perspective. I have found that you don't really have to be living the dream to find happiness, but you do need to believe that you are on a path that will eventually take you there! There are lots of things you can do to help you find fulfillment while you are waiting. Helping others find the path to their dreams is a good substitute when you can't actively be traveling down your own path. However, there is nothing to really make your life exciting like knowing that you are moving in a positive direction towards your dreams. The steps don't have to be big ones and you don't have to be moving fast, but you do have to be doing something that moves you in the right direction.

For many of us, those steps entail attending rotorcraft events, or reading magazines like PRA's Rotorcraft E-Zine or our own Western Rotorcraft newsletter. Those of us that made the commitment to attend Rotors Over The Rockies or the PRA Convention, or El Mirage last year, all gained from those efforts. Friendships were built and strengthened, memories were made, and the dream was kept burning and alive. The moments in life we tend to look back on with fondness often come as a result of taking off on an adventure and stretching to do something that we didn't think we could do. The relationships we build along the way become some of our most priceless possessions. I hope more of you will decide to join us this year as we all work towards achieving our dreams together.

New Italian Aircraft Tax

The government of Italy, facing default on loans, has implemented a series of "luxury taxes" on items such as boats over 10 meters in length, and cars over 250 HP. Also designated luxuries - all general aviation aircraft. Owners will pay an annual tax ranging from about a dollar a pound for aircraft up to 2,200 lb., to several times that for business jets. Helicopters will be assessed double the fixed-wing tax rate. Gyros will pay a flat 450 euro (about \$585 US) per year.

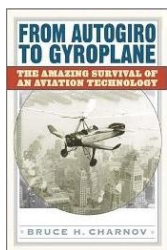
Opinions vary on how the general aviation community will respond. AOPA Italy has warned lawmakers that the suppression of general aviation activity will cost the nation more than the new tax will bring in. Air Command founder Dennis Fetters offered an interesting perspective on the Rotary Wing Forum. He predicts, "It's good news, but you all don't see it...It's cheaper now to own a gyro. Less taxes to pay. People will buy more gyros..."

Western Rotorcraft Yearbook

With most chapters not meeting in December, we have a little extra space in this issue, so here is a look back at some of the highlights in Western Rotorcraft from the year just past.



January - The Colorado Rotorcraft Association ([PRA38](http://www.pra38.org)) held its organizational meeting (above) on December 11 (2010). Among the agenda items approved were the organization's name, affiliation with Popular Rotorcraft Association as Chapter 38, and participation in the regional newsletter cooperative. This new chapter has 20 members and at least 15 rotorcraft! Follow their progress at www.pra38.org.



"The San Diego County Rotorcraft Club ([PRA 31](http://www.pra31.org)) had a special meeting in December as we were treated to a presentation from our newest member, Dr. Bruce Charnov, at his home. Guests in attendance included Andy Keech, the holder of many gyro records."



February - Chapter 31 was dormant for years, but at one time had a Hollmann HA-2M. Dave Bacon finally tracked it down, and 31 hopes to

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build a training program serving southern CA.

Chapter 2 offered a webinar with Jay Carter, Jr. of [Carter Aviation Technologies](http://www.carteraviationtechnologies.com), at its January meeting, and published an interview transcript in the February issue of WR.



March - The cover photo (above) showed the El Mirage "Dry" Lake flooded, nature's resurfacing program that makes the surface so nice for the annual Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In. Following the appearance of three Autogyro GmbH gyroplane models at the US Sport Aviation Expo in Sebring in January, WR reported an announcement from Tim Adelman that [Chesapeake Sport Pilot](http://www.chesapeake-sport-pilot.com) in Maryland will be the US importer, and that the Autogyro models will be available as kits conforming to the FAA's 51% Rule.

April - Chapter 73 planned its annual BBQ to celebrate 22 years as a PRA chapter. After two years without issuing a Letter of Deviation Authority (LODA) for gyroplane training, the drought was broken by CFI Steve Craft of Hebron, KY, who got approval to train in his Lycoming-powered Parsons tandem. (Later in the year, official guidance would be issued, allowing easier access to LODAs.) Chapter 15 finalized plans for its "ARC Days" fly-in at San Manuel Airport (below).

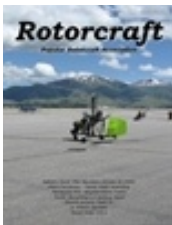


May - Chapter 73 reported a turnout of more than 30 people for its BBQ April 9, where many got an intro flight with CFI Jim Vanek of Sport

Copter. Chapter 31 reported the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum is interested in acquiring the old Hollmann HA-2A Sportster gyroplane, and the chapter plans to retain the Lycoming O-320 for use on a new gyro trainer for the area.



June - Chapters 15 and 38 both reported successful fly-ins in May. Chapter 2 reported it had obtained the use of a 120,000 sq. ft. hangar at Brigham City Airport (above) for Rotors Over The Rockies. The first steps were taken to make [Utah Rotorcraft Association](#) an independent, not-for-profit corporation focused on developing rotorcraft training opportunities. Irish pilot Norman Surplus resumed his attempt to become the first pilot to circumnavigate the Earth in a gyroplane after bureaucratic delays following repairs to his MT-03 grounded him in the Philippines for the winter. Chapter 1 assisted the US Bureau of Land Management with its spring clean-up of the El Mirage Dry Lake.



July - Rotors Over The Rockies proved successful in June, despite cool temperatures. Lyle Carson of Pocatello, ID got his airworthiness inspection for his Air Command gyro at the event, and others received dual instruction.

Chapter 73 welcomed new members Robert Miller and Ron Lemmon in June. Utah Rotorcraft Association got its approval from the IRS for 501(c)(3) status. Doug Barker announced an opportunity for interested partners to take joint ownership of a Butterfly Aurora.

August - Rotorcraft shown at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh were pictured and displayed on the front cover and throughout WR. Chapter 38 announced that due to density altitude considerations, it would not hold a summer fly-in, but would instead focus on one per year, in May.



September - Chapter 2 announced its annual Fall BBQ meeting, and Chapter 1 announced final preparations for the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-in. CFI Mike Burton announced that [Airgyro Aviation](#) in Utah would soon have available a SparrowHawk for dual training.

Chapter 73 announced that member Brock Steiner earned his CFI stripes. Chapter 2 announced its own new website, separate from URA, as part of the splitting of the two organizations. URA announced that it would seek to widen the distribution of Western Rotorcraft, starting with the November issue.



Chapter 38's Mark Shook told the story of a forced landing traced to vapor lock, caused by ethanol in his fuel. Chapter 2 provided photos of its meeting at [Hexatron Engineering](#) (below).





October - Members from several chapters reported on another successful Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In at El Mirage, CA. Airgyro Aviation in Utah announced it will become an authorized distributor for the Autogyro GmbH gyroplane line. At Chapter 2's September BBQ meeting, new member Steve Pearson's Dominator gyroplane got its first test flight with CFI Mike Burton at the stick. Chapter 2 member Glenn Kerr related his adventure in buying and bringing home a Butterfly Monarch gyroplane from Texas. Steve Pearson and Greg Hardy of Chapter 2 showed off their unique, folding gyroglider which can be carried in the bed of a pickup truck. Long-time CFI Marion Springer was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by Chapter 31 (above).

November - URA reported on its official launch as a separate organization in October, and summarized long-term goals. Chapter 31 toured the "Classic Rotary Museum" at the Ramona Airport. PRA urged support of an EAA petition seeking credit for dual instruction provided by Sport Pilot Instructors when advancing to higher certificate classes, and publicized an online Sport Pilot Ground School.



December - Chapter 73 elected Jon Dailey (at left above) as president. Chapter 73's Kelly Vanek related a story about a side-effect of pregnancy which could affect depth perception for women pilots. Chapter 15 President Carl Matter recapped El Mirage.

Gyroplanes for Sale



RAF 2000 GTX-SE-FI - 160 hours TT. Completed in 2009 with GBA CLT conversion and tall tail. Subaru 2.2L, Becker radio & transponder, recent annual, logs in order. \$49,300 includes 20 hours dual instruction. Curt, (435) 730-0828. (UT, 12/11)

Wanted to Buy

ROTORBLADES & HUB BAR - Seeking 25' Rotordyne or McCutchen rotorblades with hub bar for two-place gyroglider. Contact Steve Pearson, huntjunkya@aol.com, (801) 910-6117. (UT, 10/11)

Upcoming Rotorcraft Meetings

KBRA (PRA 1) Sat., Feb. 11, 11am PST, Teddy Udala's hangar, El Mirage, CA. Info: (562) 493-3960

PRA 2 Saturday, January 14, 10am MST. Online meeting. Details: www.pra2.org

ARC (PRA 15) Thursday, January 19, San Manuel Airport (E77), Arizona. Info: (520) 795-1333.

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), www.copterpilots.org.

GNWSRA (PRA 73) Sat., Jan. 14, 1pm PST, NWAAC, Scappoose Airport, OR (KSPB). Potluck at 12n. Gate code in members section at www.pra73.net.

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