

Western Rotorcraft

PRA 1, 2, 15, 31 & 73

September 2010

Chapter 1 Ready for KBFFI at El Mirage

The 2010 rotorcraft event season for the western US winds up again this year in California with the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In, scheduled this year for Friday-Sunday, September 24-26. Those are the three official days, although the word "official" seems out of place at [this event](#), which is unique in both its relaxed atmosphere and one-of-a-kind environment. Even when Chapter 1 was dormant for a couple years following Ken Brock's death, people still figured out when to show up, and the flying and fellowship went on. The pilot briefings start on Thursday or Friday, but you'll be in the company of earlybirds as soon as Tuesday.



The few major organized activities are hosted by the Ken Brock Rotorcraft Association ([PRA 1](#)) in honor of Ken Brock, an early Bensen dealer, developer of the KB series gyroplanes, and founder of this, the first of PRA's local chapters. Enthusiasts gather each fall on the [El Mirage](#) Dry Lake Off-Highway Vehicle Area near Edwards Air Force Base in the Mohave Desert. This roughly 6-x-2-mile oval of flat, level, hard-packed clay and silt sits at 2,840 feet MSL. Expect to see everything from trikes to Chinooks in the air, and an assortment of helicopters and gyros. (See "KBFFI," page 2.)



PRA Draws Over 120 Aircraft

The Popular Rotorcraft Association made a concerted effort to invite powered parachute/paraglider enthusiasts to this year's annual [convention](#) and fly-in, August 3-7 at the Mentone (IN) Airport. By week's end the mix was acclaimed a complete success. The event was safe, fun, and brought together many enthusiasts with much in common. The PPCs generally flew at dawn and dusk, causing no conflict with the rotorcraft which generally flew in the middle of the day. PRA President Scott Lewis said he counted more than 70 rotorcraft and 55 PPCs or more. The PPC guys loved the uncluttered airspace, welcoming atmosphere and flat surroundings, and many said they'll be back. (See "PRA/Mentone," page 8.)

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Top of page: A Joe Sousa Bandit UL gyro is readied for flight at El Mirage. At left, top: A flight school's R44 visits KBFFI 2009 to see the experimentals. At left: Dennis Fetters answers questions from El Mirage onlookers about his classic Air Command gyro.

KBFFI (from page 1)

Self-contained camping is allowed on the lake, and porta-potties are provided starting Thursday. A corn roast, (bring your own meat to cook on the community fire) is held Saturday night at the Brock Ranch adjacent to the lake. Plan to make a donation for the other food provided. Years after the passing of her famous husband and the dismantling of his company, Marie Brock and the kids remain gracious hosts, happy to open their hangar to closing night talk about the history of El Mirage, the company, and gyroplanes in general.



URA to Carpool to El Mirage

Again this year, the Utah Rotorcraft Association (PRA 2) will have a carpool to the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In at the El Mirage Dry Lake. Planned around the schedules of members in the Salt Lake area who take Friday off from work, the carpool will leave Thursday afternoon about 4pm, and arrive on the dry lake in the wee hours of Friday morning. The return trip will head out early Sunday morning, to accommodate those who need to be back at work Monday.

All are welcome to ride along or caravan in additional vehicles. This might also be a good option for those coming from farther out who'd like a place to rest before making the last leg of the trip.



URA also camps together on the lake bed, making this a very economical trip, so bring a tent. There are plenty of places to camp which are perfectly flat and level. Contact URA President Doug Barker at (801) 628-7598, and make sure to let him know if you'd like to coordinate meal prep with the URA gang. This is the way El Mirage should be experienced!

Doug's Thoughts **URA Pres. Doug Barker**



So much is happening right now it is hard to try to pick a topic and not take up several pages talking about everything. But I will try to keep this brief. As the newest member of the board of directors for the PRA I want you all to know that I am available to talk to and would love to hear your concerns about the organization. If you are not currently a member of PRA, I implore you to lend your support and join us. Regardless of what has happened in the past, or why you may have chosen not to be a member up till now, we need you to support this organization, and as a recreational rotorcraft enthusiast you need PRA. There is new leadership that is working hard to make the organization financially sound as well as more effective at providing strong value to it's members. Many new and exciting changes will be announced very soon. Please help us to help you!

Also the next regional event, the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In at El Mirage, is coming up September 24- 26. If you have never been to this event you don't know how much you are missing. This is an event like no other. The dry lakebed creates an opportunity very different from most other Fly Ins and the wide variety of Rotorcraft that you will see is unique from other events. Whether you choose to fly in and stay in a hotel or drive in and stay in a tent, there are lots of options to keep your costs down. We are putting together a group to go from Utah and you can share a ride. I would love to see us fill up several vehicles and the more people that go the more fun the experience. Ask any that went last year, it was a great experience. Please come join us and fuel your flying dream. I understand there will be a Gyro Glider there that you can possibly get some stick time with, while you're there. That is an incredible experience that you really need to try.

There are people that die every day with their dreams left un-attempted. But I also see people chasing their dreams and making them happen, every day. It is not a matter of how much money you have, but a matter of how bad you want to achieve your goals. The process is simple. Decide what it is you really want, then learn what your options are and what the costs will be. As you pursue this course of action, opportunities will arise and when the right one comes along, you will be ready. There are always multiple ways to get there. You just need to do your homework and that starts with getting involved with your local chapter. Talk to people who are doing what you want to do. Let your goals be known, don't be afraid to start down that road, and the opportunity will come. Let us help. See you soon. - Doug

Chapter 73 at NWAAC



NWAAC 2010 - The Great NW Sport Rotorcraft Assoc. ([PRA 73](#)) fielded three gyroplanes for a display (above) at the [NW Antique Aircraft Club's](#) 51st annual fly-in, August 21-22 at [Pearson Field](#) in Vancouver, WA, just across the Columbia River from Portland, OR. NWAAC had registered about 110 aircraft on the field Saturday, and the Chapter 73 crew got to talk to lots of new people about personal rotorcraft.



Working the Crowd - PRA 73 members (*in blue jackets, above*) went through a bunch of pamphlets.



Mr. Anti-Shiny - Dennis Dubois chose a subdued paint scheme for his "Viewmaster" gyro, (*above, curious bystander at right,*) which nevertheless took home top honors in "Rotorcraft/Modified."

Western Rotorcraft



Award Winner - Gary Kaminski (*at controls*) prepares to taxi as Chapter 73 President Bob Johnson (*right*) stands by. Gary's nice RAF won the top prize for Rotorcraft at NWAAC. This machine is currently for sale. (See "Classifieds," page 8.)

Western Rotorcraft Calendar

Saturday, September 11, 2010

10am MDT - URA (PRA 2) Mtg & Annual BBQ
Airgyro Aviation, Spanish Fork (UT) Airport
Contact: Doug Barker, (801) 628-7598

11am PDT - KBRA (PRA 1) Monthly Meeting
22055 Old El Mirage Rd, El Mirage, CA 92301
Call Teddy, (562) 493-3960, or www.pra-1.org

12n PDT - GNWSRA (PRA 73) Lunch & Mtg
Sport Copter, Scappoose Industrial Airport
Directions: (503) 543-7000 or www.pra73.net

Friday - Sunday, September 24 - 26, 2010

Members of the Arizona Rotorcraft Club (PRA 15) and the San Diego County Rotorcraft Club (PRA 31) will meet informally at the Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In at the El Mirage Dry Lake Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Area in Southern California. Find directions and more details at www.kbffi.com. Earlybirds can be expected as early as Tuesday, official days Friday - Sunday.



Welcome to...

*Ken Brock PRA Chapter 1
of Southern California*

August 14 Minutes & Detail

The meeting was called to order at 11:05am by Board Member Terry Smith. Present: Marion, Karen, Bruce, Rick, Teddy, Chuck, Michael and Wayne and visitor Bill Dodson friend of Michael. We all introduced ourselves to Bill.

Michael talked about the gyro that was given to him which he picked up in Napa. It is a home built gyro between a Benson and Brock with wood blades. Michael had been talking to a friend and when he started talking about gyros, his friend happened to have one, and gave it to Michael!

Terry brought the DVD's he made for the goody bags. He also brought all the plates, cups and utensils for Thursday night dinner. Terry said between now and next meeting he would purchase a few items for the raffle.

Karen has purchased two large coolers for the fly-in and will fill one with ice before coming to the fly-in on Thursday and Teddy will fill the other one when he arrives. Karen mentioned raffle tickets have been printed, and said T-shirts and pens will be done next week and she has already received magnets.

Terry is going to bring his own 10x10 easy up. Members talked about purchasing two 10x20 canopies for the fly-in. Karen said she would purchase them and Teddy would bring them to the lake next meeting. All members agreed on getting the canopies. Terry mentioned if we need chairs and tables he has a few chairs and picnic table he could bring.

Terry will be taking off Thursday and Friday to help with the setting of everything. Teddy mentioned we need all the help we can get setting things up on Friday. Michael went over the list of things people had signed up for. Things are getting done really well. Mike said he would send out the volunteer list to all members. Marion said she will be purchasing candy for the goody bags. Marion said she hadn't heard from Edna in awhile but she did send her the tote bags she had made. Karen said she would contact Edna and see how things were going.

Michael mentioned that Jeff was in charge of making the plaques. He was not at the meeting so Terry said he would e-mail him and see how he was doing with them. Karen had copy of plaques from 2008 with what is to be said on the plaque which Chapter One has always used. Terry said he could make copy and e-mail it to Jeff. Teddy said he had talked to Terry Brock about the little plaques and he is still going to make them for chapter. Teddy said he already had 20 made.

Marion said she would also make pinto beans to have with the spaghetti dinner on Thursday night.

Tickets for the Friday night dinner were brought up. Ron said he would make them but no one has heard from Ron so we might have to have someone else make them. It was brought up that we need to have a back up plan in case some things didn't happen the way they were planned.

Members decided to have hot dogs again this year and to



cook them on a BBQ. Teddy said he had two bbq's he could bring. Michael volunteered to pick up items for Saturday hot dogs. Members agreed on soda and water being \$1.00 each.

Bruce talked about the different presentations he could give at the fly-in. It was decided to have it during the award ceremony on Saturday night. Bruce has described a nice list of topics that he could discuss. While the final decision has yet to be made, whatever is decided upon will make for a fascinating presentation! And, Bruce donated an autographed book From Autogiro to Gyroplane for the raffle.

Terry mentioned we might want to get some method of communication in case we needed to man the gate that we go through from the lake to Brock's residence. Rick said he had some walkie talkies that we could use - Thanks, Rick!

Karen mentioned that Marie Brock would not be at the fly-in. Chapter has always provided the beans, salad and french bread and Marie and her friends and family were the ones who prepared everything for us. This year we are going to have to do this ourselves. We talked about it but it wasn't settled on how this would be done.

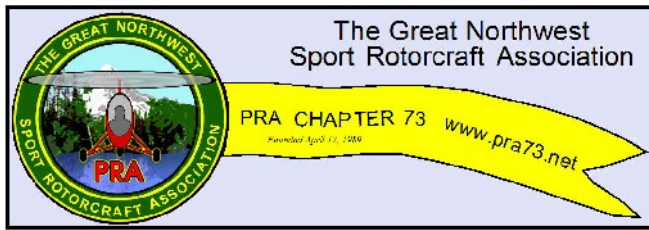
Karen suggested that since we have two model gyros for the fly-in, we could use one for a silent auction. Members agreed. These models are VERY well-made.

Marion brought up the issue of the conflict between Teddy and Ron, and that the chapter needs to find another meeting place. She said she had talked to Moe and he would rent chapter hangar that has electricity for \$30 a month with 3 months free rent if the chapter members would do some work on the hangar. Chuck mentioned that he felt chapter needed a neutral place to have the meeting and if not the hangar then maybe a restaurant. Wayne thought meeting at a restaurant was a good idea. Terry said after meeting everyone could go down and look at the hangar and that it should be voted on by members.

The club glider was brought up and Teddy said that it was still at Brock's hangar. Recently Dave and Jeff took it out on the lake. The blades do not belong to the chapter. Terry said we could talk about this more later. Getting the club glider back up and running would be a great way to share the gyro experience with others, and gain some benefit of flight time.

Rick offered to work on the KBFFI website and Terry said he would contact Ron about that. Terry has done an excellent job re-doing Chapter One website (PRA-1.org), though it's still a work in progress.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm. Club members went to hangars to look at gyros. As you can see, things are moving at a good pace for the September Fly-In! We look forward to seeing many of you there!



No Aug Mtgs for PRA 2, 15, 31

The newly-reformed San Diego County Rotorcraft Club (PRA 31) and the Arizona Rotorcraft Club (PRA 15) did not schedule meetings since the last edition of WR was published. The Utah Rotorcraft Association (PRA 2) had a scheduled meeting Aug. 14, but conducted no business due to lack of a quorum.

August 14 Minutes & Detail

Charles Smith, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by President Bob Johnson. Acknowledgments: Thank you Jim Vanek / Sport Copter & staff for use of facilities for this meeting. Thank you Hester, Kent & Jim for bringing food to the potluck.

Attendance: Clint Martindale, Rich Stewart, Kevin Richey, Robert Johnson, Charles Smith, Jim Shawcross, Jim Miller, Kent Okeson (guest from Everett WA), Jim Kerbs (guest – new member), Mike Beikley?, Hester and Orval Longanecker

Previous Minutes & Current Financial Report

Discussed & Approved. For a complete report visit the Members Only portion of the pra73.net web site.

Old Business - 1. PRA 73 Gyrocopter 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. Send complete information to Gary Kaminski, gkaminski@tigerwolf1.com, or (503) 799-8705.

New Business - PRA Chapter 1 is Hosting the "Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In", at El Mirage Dry Lake, CA, Sept 24-26 2010. www.kbffi.com or call Teddy at (562) 493-3960.

Rotorcraft Progress Reports & Shared Info

1. Welcome new member Jim Kerbs, who bought Richard Stewart's gyrocopter.
2. Clint Martindale would like to sell a Light Sport Vancraft gyroplane. (See "Classifieds," page 8.)
3. Jim Shawcross has completed two projects and needs to sell at least one. One is a Keckler Gyrocopter with a rebuilt 503 engine. The other is a mini cub like FFP 202 project with a rebuilt engine. Neither have been flown since being completed. Both are single place ultralights. Open to negotiation, sale or trade, please call to discuss details at (503) 659-5680 ext 927 voice msgs.

Next Meeting: Sept. 11, 2010 1:00 PM Scappoose OR Sport Copter Hangar, fly, drive, bring a friend!

Meeting ended approximately 1:45 PM

Western Rotorcraft

Regional Report

Paul Plack, NW/Mtn Rep



Welcome to Chapters 1 and 31!

Western Rotorcraft is now the official monthly newsletter of every active PRA chapter in a two-region area. I hope you take advantage of the opportunity to get to know fellow enthusiasts through these pages, and in person.



The new PRA leadership has made the very difficult and controversial decision to embrace the digital media era. The organization is again focused on its chartered purpose of growing the sport and its safety, and among the initiatives to

be undertaken is better access to flight instruction and inspection services, a major benefit to isolated members here in the west.

G-YROX Update



As WR goes to deadline, Norman Surplus (shown above at at Laoag International Airport) is in the Philippines with his yellow MT03, and will be killing some time at Woodland Air Park, near Angeles City in the center of Luzon Island. Norm is waiting for bureaucrats to approve the next leg of [his journey](#), which will take him into Japan. His May ditching into a lake in Thailand, and two month wait for repair authorization from the UK CAA, have put him way behind on his attempt to circumnavigate the world.

From the Ashes by Terry Smith



Last year, Teddy Udala, Chapter 1 Vice President, took to the sky after the club meeting, to do a little gyro flying. Those of us at the hangar enjoyed watching him carve up the mid-day sky. Everything looked fine in the air, and then...



Teddy hovered a bit in the breeze, and started to nose forward a bit, and was going to go forward, but from watching him, he ended up settling almost straight down. He started to turn left, but decided to turn back into the wind and land. As he landed, he hit "just" a bit hard, and tipped over. I think the wind had a hand in that too. Before you knew it, Teddy's gyro had decorated the El Mirage Dry Lake with bits of aluminum and wood, with a dash of oil for color.



Fast forward nine months or so, and "It's a Gyro!" Like the proverbial Phoenix, Teddy's re-born gyro is almost ready for the sky. He is working on an ignition issue, but expects to have her flying at the fly-in next month. Doesn't he look like the proud father?

Teddy has incorporated a folding mast, and independent brakes for each main wheel. Teddy wants to put a tall tail on the gyro, but we don't know if that will happen before next month. Still, we're very happy that Teddy will be back up in the air soon!

Industry News

Rotax 447/503 to Stay? - At Oshkosh, reps at [Lockwood Aviation](#), a major Rotax distributor in the US, made an effort to clear up misconceptions about the two remaining air-cooled, two-stroke aircraft engines in the product line-up. They say Rotax has no plans for any further manufacturing runs at this time, but has a supply of both engine types adequate for three to five years at current sales levels.

The threat to the continuation of the 447 and 503 has nothing to do with a corporate preference, but rather the absence of any volume manufacturer of aircraft using either engine at this time.



The 503 (*pictured*) was recently declared compliant with industry consensus standards, allowing its use in S-LSA, but there are no manufacturers doing so at this time. Parts for both engines are expected to remain plentiful for years to come, if not from Rotax directly, from aftermarket suppliers.

NTSB: "Oops!" The National Transportation Safety Board has fixed a goof in a regulatory subsection that became effective on March 8.

NTSB determined that a final rule which requires reports of certain runway incursions, failed to specify that one paragraph (49 CFR 830.5(a)(12)) applies only to fixed-wing aircraft operating at public-use airports on land.



As first released, the rule would have required pilots operating at sites outside an airport to submit a report each time they take off or land. In other words, a nightmare for helicopter operators!

The board has determined the correction does not require a new rulemaking procedure under the Administrative Procedure Act.

EAA AirVenture/Oshkosh

On the Thursday before EAA AirVenture opened, Oshkosh got seven inches of rain in just one day. Catastrophic flooding struck cities throughout the midwest, followed by near-record high temperatures, producing a bumper crop of mosquitoes. Yet, EAA did a commendable job executing (and improvising on) its contingency plans, and spirits were high. Final attendance was said by EAA to be down 7% from last year, but that's a near-miracle given conditions.



There were very few rotorcraft at Oshkosh this year, but a few of them were very noteworthy. Larry Neal (*above, in helmet*) of [The Butterfly, LLC](#) brought the prototype of his new legal ultralight, which was parked behind Airgyro's Powrachute booth in the main commercial exhibit area. Larry flew his 912-powered Aurora daily from the ultralight strip, where he was joined by a half-dozen other private gyroplane owners, two Mosquito helicopters, and a number of [CHR Safari](#) helicopters.



The GE Aviation Learning Center was filled with electric-propulsion exhibits. Sikorsky, a first-timer at AirVenture, brought its "[Firefly](#)" (*at top, right*) proof-of-concept electric helicopter. The modified 300C sports a custom-built, brushless DC motor producing 188 continuous horsepower, and 1,100 lbs. of lithium batteries. The remaining useful load is only enough for a single, very light test pilot, and the craft is projected to have only 20 minutes of duration. Like several other manufacturers, Sikorsky says better



storage options are coming, and the time to sort out the rest of the technology is now.

Jim Fields, who collaborated with GyroBee originator Ralph Taggart in the early 1990s to produce the original HoneyBee ultralight gyroplane, was back at Oshkosh with the AeroWorks [HoneyBee G2](#).



Jim brought a single-place machine (*right*) which can use either Rotax or MZ power, and a two-place (*above*) powered by a four-cylinder, Suzuki/Geo, 1.3L auto conversion. Jim's projected specs are impressive, and the two-place machine uses a sliding mount for the rotor mast to adjust CG for front-seat students up to 300 lbs. Jim promises more news soon.



Watch for complete coverage of AirVenture in upcoming issues of EAA Sport Aviation magazine.

PRA/Mentone (from page 1)

Utah Rotorcraft Association ([PRA 2](#)) President Doug Barker was chosen by the PRA board to fill a vacancy, and will serve a two-year term as a director.

PRA is on the ropes financially, and it was revealed to members by President Scott Lewis that the shift to the combined magazine has not put the organization in the black. A mix of digital media to augment or replace the magazine is being investigated.



The diverse mix of rotorcraft for which Mentone is known was in evidence this year, including Ron Herron with his [Little Wing](#) single-place tractor gyro (*above*) with a [Rotec](#) radial engine; Dick and Karol DeGraw doing synchronized jump takeoffs in their novel his-and-her gyros with 1.8L Subaru power; a Bensen Gyrocopter modified with hydrogen peroxide tip jets for prerotation; and at least two examples each of the Magni, Xenon, and Twinstarr gyros.



Daily cross-country breakfast flights to nearby Rochester Fulton County Airport and the adjacent Tweedle D's Diner drew about a dozen gyros each morning. A sensational fireworks show on Friday night put many municipal July 4th shows to shame, and was arranged completely on a barter basis. The closing banquet featured an appearance by noted autogyro researcher Dr. Bruce Charnov, a professor emeritus from Hofstra University, who promised that his complete, scholarly history of the PRA will be ready in time for him to present it to the organization at the 50th annual convention in 2012.

See full coverage in Powered Sport Flying magazine.

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. \$18,500. Scappoose. (*Photo above.*) Richard, (360) 431-6817, forfunandsun@yahoo.com. (OR, 09/2010)

RAF 2000 GTX SE 2.2 FI - Horizontal stab, always hangared. \$24,500 OBO (\$24K without GPS.) 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)

TRAILER - 12' X 7 1/2'. 1-7/8" hitch. Great for a single-place gyro! New decking. \$450. Details [here](#). Kevin, (503) 505-1344. (OR, 06/2010)

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