

# EAA Mount Rainier Chapter 326 Newsletter

Thun Field – November 2009

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## Meeting Notice

**Tuesday, November 10th, 7 PM  
CAP Building, Thun Field**

**Program: Aveo Lights (LEDs for airplanes)  
Howard Olsen – Kestrel Air**

**Refreshments: Dave Vermeersch**

## From the Secretary

October 13, 2009

Kevin called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Tonight's program was about the Boeing 727 hijacker, D. B. Cooper, presented by Ron Foreman with help from his wife and daughter. They wrote a book about their friend and local pilot Barb Dayton... the real DB Cooper. Fantastic story.

Our sympathy was given to Sandi at the passing of her father and we had a few good remembrances of Skinner who also passed away last month.

Also our thoughts go out to Ken Turpin, a chapter member that crashed his RV-8 on October 6<sup>th</sup> near Scappoose. He's in serious condition but recovering in the hospital currently.

Norm gave a treasurer report \$4554.13 in the bank. Dues are due for 2010 so please get them paid up to Norm as soon as possible.

December 8<sup>th</sup> is the Christmas party. It will be in Kevin's hangar again this year. Look for future notices about what to bring. If you have pictures from this year's events bring them to the November meeting to get them ready for the Christmas party.

Sunday Nov 8<sup>th</sup> at 3pm for a chapter board meeting. – Subjects include the Christmas party and the Aviation Trade Show.

George Gibony placed 4<sup>th</sup> at Reno this year in the Super Sport class at 382.8mph!

Tool list. We will be setting up a chapter tool list on the website. Look for a future announcement about it.

Visitors: Chris Byrd – building a Sonnex  
Rich Hannenburg – built a pedal plane for his grandkids

Andy Karmy

## Frederickson Flyers

Not sure why or how, but we were invited to do a formation flyover during the school dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday, Oct 27th. Frederickson Elementary is only a couple miles west of Thun Field.



John Brick  
Todd Cameron Harry Nelson  
Harold Smith Dave Babcock  
Marv Scott Jim Triggs  
Terry O'Brien Randy Albritton  
John Andrews

We often have a hard time gathering four airplanes for our weekly formation practice so it was absolutely amazing that ten showed up. We've all practiced together, albeit in much smaller numbers.

We took off thirty minutes early in order to warm up for the main event. We made two passes over Eatonville in the same fashion as briefed for the school. Irvin Luke agreed to critique our spacing from the ground on the airport. Read his comments below.

Mike Salmon was on the ground at the school to radio us in. He had the kids pumped as only Mike can do, and timed our crossing to coincide with the end of their school song. Did it work? Well if you believe the principal, "it couldn't have been more perfect."

The school mascot is an airplane and the kids have adopted the name "Fredrickson Flyers." One of their 6th graders came up with their airplane logo. They've started gathering model airplanes to display throughout the school. The principal is fond of aviation metaphors and she says our flyover inspired another, "take care of your wingman."



John: I went into Eatonville today to get the mail and was approached by two people who knew I lived on the Eatonville airport. They both asked if I had seen the formation of fighters that flew over Eatonville last night. One said "Wow, was that something! You only see something like that once in a lifetime", and said that he had never seen anything like that before. The guys went on to talk about the smoke that some of the planes were emitting, and one guy said he was waiting for the machine guns to start blasting away, and one of the guys imagined he saw one of the planes doing rolls (I assume it was his imagination!)" One person said "Man, they were really going fast". I talked to them about the RV airplanes and invited them to the airport to see my RV-6, and one of them came to look at it.

I have no idea how many people in Eatonville witnessed your formations, but I think you all made a wonderful impression and created some brief excitement for aviation and the airport here, A great thing!

Thanks to all the pilots,  
Ervin Luke

## Todd Cameron

Todd flies his RV-7A out of Crest Airpark and joins us often for formation work. He let slip something about his sailing experience, which led to me asking for a biography.

### Who are you Todd Cameron:

Born 3/29/1953 to (still doing ok so far)

I am still working on who I am and what I want to be when I grow up. My parents claim that my birth certificate was lost in the fire at the administration wing of the hospital. That pretty much leaves it up to me to remember things if and as I choose. If some details do not exactly match my story you can inform me and I will change the story to accommodate any reasonable facts that need working into the next telling. Let me recount some events and in doing so those facts should weave into some sort of biography.

### Biography and events as best I can fill them in.

Some time in the early fall 1960 I recovered consciousness in the outfield located close by the Ponca City Oklahoma airport. I was in second grade playing left outfield. At the time there was a DC-3 flying overhead that had momentarily distracted me when the only fly ball to make its way to the outfield that year was hit. I may be a little fuzzy on some details but I it was a DC-3, not a hawk. I am very clear on this point. Dad was not at the game. But on his return from yet another trip, I was taught something about never quitting and something more about humility as I was made to rejoin the team I had just quit. Oh...these lessons turn out to be useful in building an airplane. Never quit, be prepared to be humbled.

### Dad

Just a little piece of background on dad. Dad had a fist full of awards, graduate and honorary degrees from multiple colleges in states and was recognized on several continents for his economic expertise. In the US he was an advisor to the Nixon administration, Vice president of Conoco (now Conoco / Phillips), ran Asia, European, and then US operations for Conoco, finally he moved to the headquarters in Houston to train management in politics, technology, and mostly I think he just liked to surround himself with smart people and new ideas.

### Mom

My mom at the age of seven, with her younger sister and brother, was taken in and raised by a friendly group of religious people after her mom passed away. Mom spent most of her adult life wishing to be a missionary and giving as much money to the churches as my dad could make. She did her job quite well and people to this day will surprise me with some event, place or organization she quietly supported.

### Back to me

It was Sunday and I was once again trying to figure out how to get out of church when the obvious solution presents itself to me; sailing. Doug my friend in Connecticut had a BlueJay sailboat and he never went to church. He went camping. But what am I doing in Connecticut? Well I moved from Oklahoma to

Massachusetts to Louisiana, to California, to Connecticut, to Japan, back to Connecticut, Texas in there someplace, that is how I got there. So it was a Sunday and I have been told that I can not miss church for any reason. Our family goes to church and you will come... dad says: "do I make myself clear?" that was not really a question... But I have cards still to play. Ever since the baseball team in second grade I have had an out if I will participate in some team sport then missing church would be a reasonable thing to request. "For the team" rings true as a call to arms for my dad. The one thing my dad knows nothing about is sailing so I choose sailing. I had envisioned sailing out the a small island off Westport Ct. and camping out there overnight, coming back the next day sometime after church was out. That might be a team sport of a sort, maybe if I took my girlfriend that would constitute a team. And there was my plan. My dad it turns out has some acquaintances who recommend I learn to sail properly by getting some proper instruction. Their idea is to teach me by having me crew on a racing sail boat. Who knew? Dad it turns out also has a degree in marine architecture. Who knew?

In any event I went sailing and it was more fun than I had thought. First I missed the boat and had to go watch from the committee boat so there was no actual sailing for me. Second there was a storm with lightning and everything just like Oklahoma that came up from nowhere. Fantastic and I was under cover which was probably a good thing for my first day of sailing. Next, out of the rain with lightning all around, comes a Thistle class sailboat under full spinnaker screaming down with the dagger board humming, the tiller buzzing on a plane trying to stay under the chute. This feels like an imminent ground loop the whole time. Facing the other direction away from the storm is a backdrop of fall colors and New England steeples on the still sunlit shore. Ted Fontelue Sr. crosses the finish line in first place to the firing of the cannon, drops the spinnaker, spins the boat around, ties up to the committee boat and serves himself a cocktail as the rain hits in dead earnest. I am hooked on sailing for the next 15 years. In fact that fall I head off for college but drop out after two years to continue sailing. It turns out that I am a good sailor and even better sail-maker. Who knew? I have sailed many of the seven seas and many of the predominant races. I have my name on big trophies and lots of little jiggers and... I have a lot of religion but have missed a lot of church services.

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I dropped out of Rochester Institute of Technology after two years and an associate's degree, to go sailing. Later I received special training from a couple of professors out of MIT as the need for knowledge stopped progress in one project or another. Most of my training is in math, computers languages, several engineering disciplines, and in how to be a better husband and father. I can talk knowledgably on many of the subjects except for the husband / father part. It has been clearly pointed out to me that I still have much to learn in that area.

I sailed US26 Courageous during its second campaign, mostly however I was kept in the dark and sailed the trial horses that were reigned in if we broke pace or managed to get out in front. The New York Yacht Club watched every move in selecting the defender for Americas Cup. Years later I was again offered a position to sail, this time in Australia, but by then the old

aluminum boat was being called 'Old Bent' and I surmised it would never be a contender again. If I have to be honest, much against my nature as a fishermen and sailor, the racing of US26 was more in favor of my skills as sail-maker than as a sailor. I was "Tentmaker to the gods"! I sailed with the deities by day, then by night and into the rising of the next morning's sun I worked to fix the carnage of the prior day. Often the sails were never needed, but repaired, altered, packed and ready to hoist, sometimes never hoisted, often replaced three days later with a new one to be evaluated. Money, materials and people were torn up and littered the path between the sheds and the boats. Everyone worked harder than I can now imagine. The boats need work too. I did learn however more about sailing than could be expected in any one normal lifetime. Each crewmember had some special or extraordinary skill and comparable attitude. Sailing is a management of lit firecrackers. I witnessed firsthand athletes of unimaginable strength and skill, creativity and tactics that inspire awe and become the story line of fairy tails, treachery that still smolders in disbelief in the back of the mind. This was life head on at high speed. This is my education. There is no second place! And that is how I lived for 15 years, moving up and down the east coast racing big boats, dinghies, and everything in between that had a sail or could float. I taught people how to race their boat and win. Then Sandy the kids and I moved to Seattle to be close to my brother, sisters and parents.

Now you know someone who sailed America Cup boats, built experimental aircraft, and still stayed married. Wow! I am stunned. Who knew that 20-year-old Sandy with braces would stick with me, a 23-year-old longhaired sailor through all this? She seemed much smarter than that. Sandy my wife and I have two children Chris the boy, now a young man of 30, and Candice our daughter who follows Chris by two years. Both kids have moved out to be on their own but occasionally enjoy scaring Sandy and myself by offering to take us up on our offer to move into the apartment over the hangar. Call me if you need a fantastic place on the airpark to live while building a plane. It is empty at the moment.

TC

### Local Ethanol-Free Premium

A gas station in Puyallup is selling ethanol-free premium gasoline for use in boats and aircraft. If the station can sell about 200 gallons a week they'll keep selling it. [Exxon Liberty Gas Station](#), 11802 Meridian – located about 20 blocks north of Thun Field.

You might want to test it first. The last batch I bought from this station contained about 5% ethanol. This was back in September and I'm still using it in the car and motorcycle. Randy Albritton

"My mother never saw the irony in calling me a son-of-a-bitch."

--Jack Nicholson

end

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