

EAA Mount Rainier Chapter 326 Newsletter

Thun Field – February 2012

158

Meeting Notice

**Tuesday, February 14th, 7 PM
CAP Building, Thun Field**

Program: Howard Olson, owner of Kestrel-Air. They market Aveo Products... lighting, avionics and aircraft accessories

Refreshments: Darrin Dexheimer

From the President

February 2012, From the President

Hopefully you all fared well during our recent ice storm. Taking my Kitfox up for the first time in 4 months the other weekend, the broken trees were very apparent from the air. Everywhere I looked you could see damage. But by now your power is back on and people are returning to the shops.

I want to extend a big thanks to everyone who came to the board meeting a few weeks ago. We had a good series of conversations about upcoming events and chapter involvement. Once again we will have a good presence at the NW Aviation Conference and will be looking for your help to man the booth and setup / teardown activity.

The weather has been one of extremes as we now have beautiful sunny weather perfect for flying! Hopefully you got out and enjoyed some of it while it's here!

Fly Safe!

Andy Karmy

From the Secretary

Andy brought the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Visitors:

Paul Nielson. He recently purchased Curt Bryan's gyrocopter.

Peter Gelines is working on a RV-9, the fuselage at this point.

James Elliot is a "born-again" member. He has been out of the country working in Iraq for 3 years and is glad to be back in the country so he can fly again. His interests lie in RV-4 and Corbin Baby Ace.

Ron Smith from Kapowsin. He has raced top fuel dragsters, but has had open heart surgery so his interest is in the lightsport.

Daniel Creech says he is joining and his interest is auto gyros.

Norm says there is no treasury report at this time, but 70 members are paid up

Projects:

Conrad, who has been mentored by Jim Triggs, had a wonderful presentation on the Sonex that he has been building while he was a senior in high school. Conrad said he really enjoyed assembling the VW based Aero-V engine. Charlie Cotton signed him off just two days prior to the meeting and he is now working on final detailing including fiberglass work.

Brice Johnson says his engine is hung and now working on the avionics of his RV-9A.

Smitty completed his instrument panel. He was pleased when the panel lit up and with no smoke. He is working on the gear doors and getting the engine ready to hang.

While having the floor, Smitty wanted to remind everyone that the NW Aviation conference is February 25th and 26th and wanted to know if anyone has a flatbed trailer.

Set-up is on Friday the 24th from 2:00pm to 8:00pm. Enter through the orange gate.

A Few Stats of last years conference:

11,000 attendees

85% were pilots

45% owned aircraft

18% were A/P or Aviation mechanics

Over 300 booths

It is a great time for all. There is lots to learn and plenty of fun so make plans to join us

Ben Watson with Angel Flight wanted to let everyone know that the auction held on Dec. 9th raised \$2,500. Ben thanked everyone who donated items for the auction and to everyone who showed up.

Andy's monthly safety topic involved arriving at a new airport:

1.) always check the weather prior to take-off

- 2.) Is it a controlled airport or not?
- 3.) always check the terrain... what's the altitude? Is it a LH or RH pattern?
- 4.) What's the radio frequency?
- 5.) Visualize the airport, listening to traffic when arriving, and thinking through the approach
- 6.) Have an emergency plan in case of the need to abort.
- 7.) Check for identifying landmarks - Navmonster shows google earth around airports and is free.

John Brick spoke of the Antique Airfield in eastern Iowa where, at their annual fly-in, their instructions are to turn off the GPS, turn off radios, and look outside. Simplicity at its best!

Our guest speaker was Allen Kam with the weather service.

The URL is www.wrh.noaa.gov/seattle or you can go to the national website as (weather.gov) and click on western Washington to reach the Seattle web-page. The URL shows a picture of the United States. Click on the map anywhere to get local forecasts and for aviation click on "aviation"

Allen spoke of the Puget Sound Convergence Zone (PSCZ) which is a terrain-caused weather phenomenon. Vancouver and the Olympic mountains shape the zone. Wind flow channels through Puget sound and mountain gaps. The mountains and water inlets help to form our terrain-caused weather phenomenon. A PSCZ occurs when low-level winds, channeled by the local terrain, converge or collide downstream, or east of the Olympic mountains, resulting in rising air. When the moisture in the rising air condenses into low clouds and precipitation, it can cause poor flying conditions, possibly blocking the north-south flying corridor in the central Puget Sound. The poor weather caused in the PSCZ can be deceptively hazardous to pilots, especially since the weather north and south of the zone frequently is quite good. The large-scale wind field (spanning an area about 300 miles offshore to the Cascades) must be blowing onshore. This would be anywhere from a southwest to northwest direction. The low-level wind will be forced to flow around the Olympic mountains. The southern branch flows between the Olympic and Willapa hills and is then forced to turn northward into the Puget Sound by the Cascades. The northern branch flows through the Straits of Juan De Fuca (in between the Olympics and Vancouver island) where it also runs into the Cascades. This branch usually splits, with one part turning south into the Puget Sound and the other part turning north across the San Juan Islands. Wherever the winds collide or converge in the central Puget Sound you will get rising motion in air mass. If enough moisture is present, the rising motion can produce clouds and possibly precipitation. The PSCZ can occur anytime during the year, but is most frequent during the spring and summer. The 2 main summer weather phenomena that can present a hazard to aviation are thunderstorms and marine push.. There is a double convergence zone at the Straits of Georgia and Juan De Fuca. The height of the convergence zone depends on how unstable the air mass is. Summer thunderstorms are more likely to occur over the Cascades or eastern Washington and mainly during the afternoon. Western Washington summer thunderstorms are usually circumnavigable with at worst brief marginal VFR conditions and strong gusty winds near the rain shaft. Of course, if you fly into the storm, you will likely get a strong dose of

severe turbulence and icing. The marine push occurs when a cool ocean air mass "pushes" inland from the coast, blanketing western Washington and western Oregon in low stratus clouds. In Western Washington, these can cause widespread IFR conditions, mountain obscuration, and most often results in broken to overcast ceilings between 1000 to 3000 feet. IFR conditions with drizzle and fog can develop, especially during the morning. Mountain obscuration occurs when the clouds push up against the slopes of the mountains.

Pressure is measured in milibars with pressure gradients that track pressure differences over time. All pilots are required to know about our National Airspace System; types of airspace, how towers, TRACONs, and ARTCCs relate to each other, and where Flight Service Stations fit into the system. Doppler, weather radars have improved our weather radar data tremendously. Pilots can access weather information lots of ways, but the best bet for an actual flight is to call Flight Service for an up-to-the minute weather briefing. You may also access the National weather website at www.wrh.noaa.gov/seattle.

Randy and I had great pleasure in providing the treats for this past months meeting.

Kerry Albritton
Secretary/Photographer

EAA Young Eagles Air Academy Nominations

Our pilots who flew 10 or more Young Eagles in 2011 earned our chapter \$5 per Young Eagle in Young Eagles Credit. At our January board meeting we agreed to apply those credits to pay the tuition fees for a youngster to attend the Young Eagles Air Academy in 2012 as we did in 2010 and 2011. Transportation and other costs incurred in getting to and from the Air Academy in Oshkosh, Wisconsin must be covered by the Young Eagle's family. The candidate does not have to be a Young Eagle.

Nominations are now open for a youngster who will be between the ages of 12 and 18 by the time they attend the Air Academy. If you have a child, grandchild, or friend who would qualify and is interested, please email the name and age of the youngster at time of attendance to Dave Fritzsche at fritzsche@eskimo.com. Also include a one-page document written by the candidate telling us about her/him and why they would like to attend the Academy. Priority will be given to children, grandchildren and relatives of chapter members. Our candidate will be expected to report their experience to our membership at a chapter meeting upon return from the Academy.

To learn more about the Air Academy go to www.youngeagles.org/programs/airacademy.

The dates of the Academy session are:

Ages 12 and 13

Session 1: July 5 – 9, 2012

Session 2: July 11 – 15, 2012

Session 3: August 13 – 17, 2012

Ages 14 – 15

Session 1: June 18 – 23, 2012

Session 2: June 25 - 30, 2012
Session 3: August 6 - 11, 2012
Ages 16, 17 and 18
Session 1: July 17 - 25, 2012
Session 2: July 27 - August 4, 2012

http://www.wolverinepublishing.com/Snow_and_Spire \$\$

To see John's photos, which are truly awesome, go to his website at:

<http://www.pbase.com/nolock/mountains> free

Why We Need Aviation User Fees

By Dana Hyde, Associate Director for General Government Programs, Office of Management and Budget

Thank you for signing the petition "[Take Aviation User Fees Off the Table](#)." We appreciate your participation in the We the People platform on WhiteHouse.gov and your concerns about user fees in a challenging economy.

In a challenging budget environment, the Obama Administration believes it's essential that those who benefit from our world-class aviation system help pay for its ongoing operation. And we want to ensure that everyone is paying their fair share. For example, under current law, a large commercial aircraft flying from Los Angeles to San Francisco pays between twenty-one and thirty-three times the fuel taxes paid by a corporate jet flying the same route and using the same FAA air traffic services. This is why the Administration proposed to establish a new surcharge for air traffic services.

The proposed \$100 per flight fee would generate an estimated \$11 billion over 10 years, reducing the deficit and more equitably sharing the cost of air traffic services across the aviation user community. All piston aircraft, military aircraft, public aircraft, air ambulances, aircraft operating outside of controlled airspace, and Canada-to-Canada flights would be exempted.

We appreciate your petition's acknowledgment that there needs to be an increased user contribution to aviation system funding in the current fiscal climate, and we recognize that some would prefer to raise the tax rate on aviation fuel. At the same time, we have concluded that a \$100 per flight user fee is an equitable way for those who benefit to bear the cost of this essential service.

As we work to get our Nation back on a sustainable fiscal path, the Administration is making tough choices across the Federal budget and asking everyone to do their fair share. We recognize these shared sacrifices are not easy, but together with investments in our economic growth and job creation, they will make us stronger and more competitive for the future. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Congress and the aviation stakeholder community on this issue, and thank you again for your constructive input.

Snow and Spire

Here is a link to a new coffee table book of winter photos of the North Cascades by John Scurlock. These fantastic photos were all taken by John from his RV-6.

THE WICKHAM B

By Curtis Clark

Editorial note: While camping near Deer Valley in Phoenix, Paul Good got a ride in this rare bird. He forwarded this story from his friend Curtis. Paul says this airplane lived on Thun Field for a while in one of the open door hangars.

Put your feet up and let me tell you a story of how I got to own a real piece of homebuilding history.

Way back in the day before ball bearing stewardesses and GPS was still a potato salad from Germany, a Seattle Boeing engineer decided he wanted an airplane that would offer a higher degree of safety when flying around the rocks and mountains of Washington than the four place plane he had designed and built. Jim Wickham envisioned a plane that would be strong, safe and very simple. Along with simplicity he wanted to keep the costs under control in the way EAA'ers did it back then. From 1957 through 1965 he designed every detail of the plane on paper. He used to say that by day he was an aerodynamicist and by night a structures engineer as he worked in his basement skunkworks. Because of the high level of engineering, it only took him three



years to actually build the plane. It has over 10,000 driven rivets! I remember when I was a kid visiting his house and looking at this gigantic plane in his basement. Of course I was only four feet tall and it was indoors. In keeping with the simple/low cost approach to building he had a Krylon party when it was done and bought a case of spray bombs at the local Ernst Hardware and invited his EAA Chapter 26 buddies over to do the honors! It still has that paint on it today. Those were simpler times and there weren't aircraft paint shops!

The plane first flew in 1968 and had Lycoming O-290G (G for ground power unit) engines. The engines had some problems so

he later switched to 0-320, 150 horsepower engines that worked perfectly. Jim and his family flew the little five-place bird coast to coast on several occasions and visited the fly-in at Rockford and the first year at Oshkosh.

After flying it for around 650 hours, Jim decided he needed space in the hangar for his next design and he donated it to the Museum of Flight where it took to the skies on a 22-year flight as it hung in the central display area. Serendipitously he took all the logs, drawings and paperwork and put it away in his basement workshop where it sat for a quarter of a century! On many overnights for America West I would ride the bus down to the museum to have lunch and spent many hours looking at the Wickham B hanging from the ceiling.



Fast forward twenty two years and at the Museum of Flight it was time for a change. They gave the twin to South Seattle Community College. They took one of the engines off and pretty much gutted the interior. When they lost their hangar at Boeing Field, I had made an attempt to buy it but it was traded for a jet engine and it was dismantled and hauled off. It turns out I wasn't the only one that had been following the plight of the Wickham B. Ross Mahon, a Seattle aeronautical engineer, and his Dad had both been friends with Jim Wickham and Ross always wanted to get his hands on the plane. After much finagling Ross bought it from The ME-262 Project in Everett Washington who had traded it for a surplus jet engine that they had. Ross, being a local EAA Chapter president and all around nice guy, was able to track down the various parts and pieces that were scattered in many Seattle homebuilder's workshops and hangar walls. When people heard he was trying to put the plane back together it didn't take long for his hangar at Paine Field to be filled with parts, props, instruments and just about everything to put the plane back together except for the engines. The hangar was so full that the plane was actually outside in a plastic tent! The final icing on the cake was when Jim Wickham's son, Jim had passed away years ago, produced all the original plans, logbooks, and even a FAA bill of sale that was filled out but never given to the museum! It had sat in his Dad's workshop all those years! All that remained was to locate two very expensive Lycoming 0-320's, one new and one overhauled, and the plane was back in the air!

Back in 2009 I was fortunate too be spending a lot of time in Seattle sailing my boat around on 32-hour layovers and when I

heard that the Wickham B was back flying I wasted no time tracking down Ross and telling him "down the road when you want to sell it". Of course he was proud of his now flying one-of-a-kind plane and had no plans to sell it. Over the next three years when I would see Ross at fly-ins and airshows, I always introduced myself and gave him a card with my contact info. I had ran into him at AirVenture last summer where he had the Geoduck flying boat on display, he was now the President of the company that made them. Ross recognized me and asked if I still had the same e-mail address, the gears started turning. After a bunch of e-mails and a quick trip to cold and rainy Seattle in October we started negotiating in earnest. We finally struck a deal just before Copperstate and Ross even volunteered to ferry the plane down to its new home at Deer Valley Airport.

When it landed, Ross had put 125 hours on it since its reassembly and was able to live his childhood dream of owning the Wickham B. After seeing the Wickham's new hangar mates he knew it had gotten a good home and the heritage and vision of it designer and builder would be shared with people for years to come.

The big question is how does it fly. It has very light balanced controls, short takeoff and landing, and climbs like a homesick angle. With no soundproofing it is really loud and it is not really very fast, cruising around 130 mph. Jim Wickham designed it to be simple. Fixed pitch metal props, fixed gear, no boost pumps or crossfeed valves, it is really simple. The plane is built like a baby Boeing but it is fairly light at 1700 lbs and a 935 lb useful load with full 50 gallon tanks. It seats five and has a huge baggage compartment that Brian Mitchell's daughter Hanna can actually stand up in! It is my hope to take the restoration to the next level with a new soundproofed interior as well as replacing the forty four year old Krylon paint job. I am going to try and not change anything that works for the sake of a few MPH. Plans are in the works to fly it to as many fly-ins as possible so people can enjoy seeing this one of a kind all metal homebuilt twin and I can have the chance to live out my childhood dream just as Ross did. Jim Wickham may have long since timed out but his design will be flying and be shared with aviation aficionados for many years to come.

Hangar Deal

Tom Worth sold his T-18 and now has room for a hangar mate at Tacoma Narrows. He is offering a sub-lease at \$140 per month. Contact Tom at 253-576-2730.

Alaskan Super Cub Adventure , Due Up

<http://shaunlunt.typepad.com/>

This is a story about a young doctor who flies a 1954 Piper Super Cub up to Alaska in 2007. The photography is spectacular! Unfortunately he had a Vmc fatal accident in 2008. Begin with the July 2007 series for a super ride up North !

end

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