

# EAA Mount Rainier Chapter 326 Newsletter

Thun Field – May 2011

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## Meeting Notice

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

**Program: Dynon Avionics. Kirk Kleinholz**

**Refreshments: Marv Scott**

Hope you can give it a try, see you online sometime soon!

Fly Safe

Andy Karmy  
Chapter 326 President

## From the President

May 2011,

This month, I have been thinking about the wealth of online resources that we have available to us as GA pilots of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thinking back just a few years to when I got my license (in high school) I never had even a fraction of the information that we now can take advantage of. Things like the FAA safety information that we heard about last month. Internet forums for each type of homebuilt and popular GA planes have been created that bring together the history of knowledge about each type of plane. Broader information from EAA and AOPA on a variety of topics keep us up to date with government issues along with aviation milestones of various types. Lastly via these forums and email directly you can maintain contact with an ever broadening circle of like minded individuals that can help you be a safer builder and pilot.

Similar to all of our safety topics, it's up to us to grab hold and take advantage of these resources that have been created and put out on the "information superhighway" One of these resources with a distinctly more local flavor is our chapter's very own discussion forum. You know that place I told you about over a year ago, ya that's the one, the one that everyone seems to have forgotten... I have been wondering if there is a need for such a group when compared and contrasted to all the other sources of information that we have these days. I know everyone has much to talk about between the short breaks at each monthly meeting, so perhaps that interest could translate into the forum for additional questions between meeting times?

How about giving it a go again? I'll be posting topics from our meetings which everyone is welcome to jump in and add their insights into the topics or ask questions of your own. One feature that I find useful is the ability to subscribe to all new posts via email which makes sure you don't miss a post if you are not visiting it frequently. The button is at the very bottom of the forum and says "Subscribe forum" you need to do it twice if you want to subscribe to both the for sale section and discussion section.

## From the Secretary

*actually the undersecretary, Randy, in Kerry's absence*

Visitor Jim Sygitowicz from Olympia building an RV-9A.

Treasurer report \$6804.18 with 100 paid up members.

Next Board meeting set for May 15th at 1500.

Young Eagle update: 44 kids signed up already. YE day set for June 25th.

EAA headquarters pushing a program called "Learn to Fly Day" focusing on adults interested in becoming pilots. Tentatively set for May 21st.

Jeff Liebman retired from the USAF on March 1st. He has been stationed here at McChord since 1992. He and Sandy will be moving to Ft. Lauderdale in May. Jeff was President of our Chapter a few years back and has contributed so much to our success. As Jeff put it so sincerely, "we consider the chapter as our family." Jeff and Sandy, stay in touch, all the best in your new adventures.

Builders reported current status of their projects with much progress being made since the last report. Several projects are nearing test flight. Break with refreshments provided by Jeff and Sandy.

Andy's safety topic this month was density altitude and aircraft performance. He told of a trip in a fully loaded C-172 from Chehalis to Redmond, Oregon. Easy departure from Chehalis... scary leaving Redmond, using all of the runway. Another story flying home from Oshkosh in his RV-9. Again fully loaded, he had trouble crossing the mountains due to an extreme temperature inversion. Unexpected and eye-opening.

Main presentation for the evening was by Minard Thompson FAA Safety Team (FAAST) program manager for the Washington and Northern Idaho regions. Although homebuilts account for about 10% of the US civil aviation fleet they account for 17% of accidents. Fatal accidents since 2005 show 1.1% for

the GA fleet and 1.2% for the Homebuilt segment however the ratio for hours flown in GA as compared to Homebuilt is about 8 to 1. The main cause of experimental aircraft fatal accidents is pilot error. 90% of these accidents occurred on the first test flight. Survivable force in a crash has been demonstrated to be up to 21G provided the restraint system holds and the structure does not crush the pilot. A very good article on this subject entitled "The fastest man on earth" chronicles the testing done by John Paul Stapp Col USAF. Unbelievable as it may seem he was able to withstand over 46 Gs with no permanent damage to his body. The site is [www.ejection-site.com/stapp.htm](http://www.ejection-site.com/stapp.htm)

Kerry Albritton  
Chapter 326 Secretary / Photographer

## Madera

For those of us that fly formation around here, this is a big deal. It is an annual formation clinic hosted by the West Coast Ravens at Madera, Ca, (KMAE). It is focused on bringing new pilots into the fold, introducing them to formation flying and training them to FFI standards. Formation Flying Incorporated is the set of standards, qualification criteria, and proficiency levels that, when achieved, allow RV pilots to fly in FAA waived airspace at airshows. FFI wingman is the coveted basic qualification and can take years of training to pass the wingman checkride.

This year the turnout was huge, 68 aircraft by the time they closed the door on applications. About half the pilots are very experienced, a fourth intermediate, and a fourth rookies. The Ravens are very welcoming, very well organized, and do everything possible to make it a safe, productive and enjoyable weekend.

Marv Scott, Randy Albritton, and Jim Piavis attended this year. Here's Randy's narrative:

"This past weekend I had the distinct pleasure of attending the annual Ravens West Coast Formation Clinic in Madera, CA. The trip from KPLU started out around 0830 Friday morning with forecast of decent weather and 20 knot tailwinds.



After detouring around some weather just south of Bend, OR we finally were able to climb above the leading edge of the weather front and made it into Madera around 1430. Wind was blowing 30 knots plus right down the runway and our flight of three, ably led by Jim Piavis with Marv Scott as 2 made our arrival. The break looked good from my position even though the landings were a bit challenged. Fortunately (for the landings) there were few witnesses at the time.

"After checking into the hotel we attended a mandatory 4.5 hour basic formation pre-briefing and got ready for the next days flying. My first flight with Paul Rosales as flight lead, "Rosie" got up around 0900 and went well. I got the 4 position and was able to hide from lead most of the flight. Second flight was with Rosie again and I alternated between 2 and 3 position. This second flight took us through a simulated checkride for the FFI wingman card and maneuvering was crisp. I once again was able to not screw up so badly as to acquire an unwanted callsign.

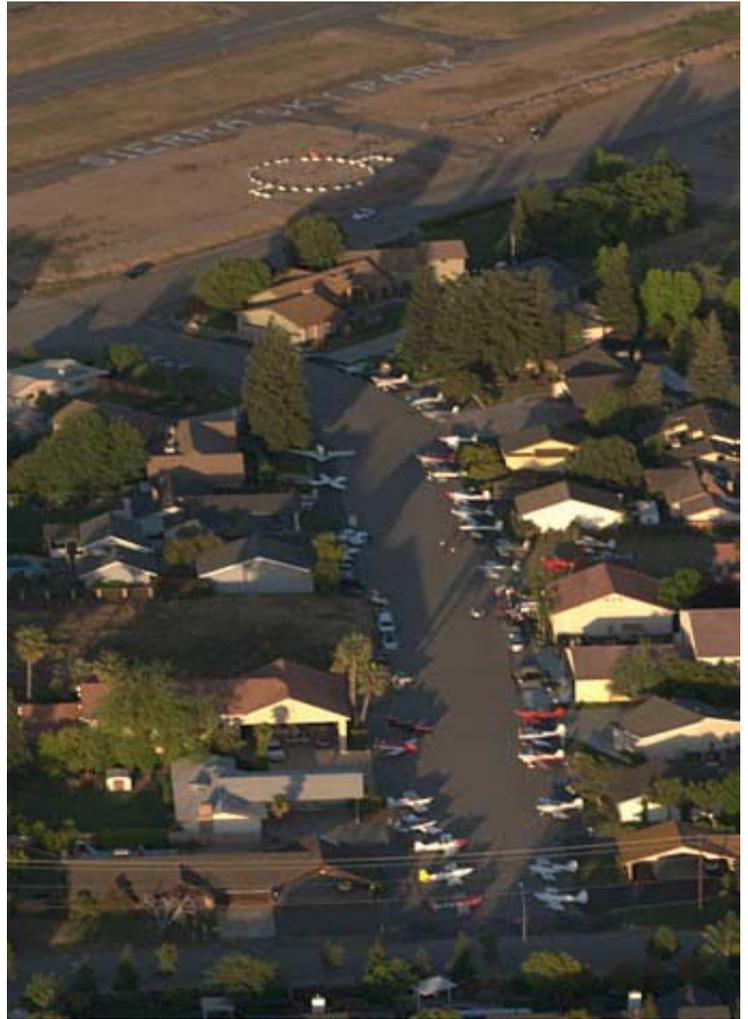
"We then broke for lunch and my third flight was with flight lead, callsign "Condor". I had no clue that he was the FFI checkride examiner. I had the 3 position on this one with a rookie 2 and a newly minted FFI wingman as my 4. Let's just leave it that this flight did not meet either my or Condor's complete satisfaction. OUCH these FFI guys are really picky. Seeking to redeem myself in Condor's esteemed presence I finagled myself into his next flight, again flying the 3 position. With intermediates as 2 and 4 I figured on doing well. Having been criticized on being slow on the previous joinup after takeoff I was determined to make this one snappy. 4 did a good job keeping up and we really had some cutoff going into the crosswind turn. I crossed him over as we slid in behind lead, got off the power and proceeded to slide by leads right wing. Slipping and cursing had no effect at this point and after a few seconds taking over as temporary lead I slunk back into position hoping "Condor" had not noticed. The rest of the flight was a blur but again I was able to escape a derogatory callsign. Back at the gas pump after the flight I apologized profusely to my 4 and bribed him not to tell lead. Nothing was mentioned in the debrief. Curiosity and my inherent honesty got the better of me later and I asked Condor if he had noticed. The slow shaking of his head said it all.

"The next day's all up flight of 32 had me down for the slot position in Echo flight. After an hour long brief we were given a time hack and told to be ready for engine start at 1005. This was just 9 minutes away and I guess it didn't register with a lot of the guys. I raced to my plane, untied, strapped in and was ready to go with a minute or two to spare. Only about half the props were turning on time and Alpha lead came on the radio with a check-in call at 1006 followed by lots of pauses in the cadence. Profanity filled the air as the slackards sauntered to their planes and one engine failed to even turn over at all. A spare was conjured up seemingly out of thin air just as the punctual pilots were preparing to shut down and regroup. All was finally ready for the big show as 32 RVs took the taxiway. We were briefed for takeoff as 4-ship flights. That 150 foot wide runway suddenly looked very narrow as we lined up behind 4 other flights ahead of us and continued to taxi to make room for the 3 flights behind us. Takeoff and joinup was uneventful and was followed by an hour and a half of focus on Echo leads belly interspersed with glances at 2 and 3 to make the diamond look symmetrical. Watching the great mass of RVs gently undulate in front of me was a humbling

experience and made me truly appreciate what I was a part of and witnessing firsthand.

“Back at the debrief someone summed it up very well when he said that the biggest drawback to this type of experience is its highly addictive nature.”

Randy Albritton  
Callsign "Shorty"



*The Saturday evening barbeque at Tim Cone's place on Sierra Skypark, a short distance from Madera. A very upscale residential neighborhood with no resemblance to an airport until you see airplanes parked fender-to-fender at curbside. Sunset is approaching and stragglers will be logging night time back to Madera.*

end

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