

The Rainier Paragliding Club Newsletter

Serving the Paragliding Community of Western Washington, USA

WWW.RainierParaglidingClub.org

October 2007

It is time to vote for RPC Club officers for the coming year. The ballot is on Page 6.



Inside this Issue

The RPC Social Scene	Steve Messman	Page 2
Meet Captain McFly	Bruce Burris	Page 3
2 Bear or Not 2 Bear	Mike McIntyre	Page 4
Patty Goes Easy on Tim	Tim Walsh	Page 5
The View From My Window	Jim Baldo	Page 6
Ballot	Please Vote	Page 9
Calendar		Page 10
Membership Application		Page 10

THE RPC SOCIAL SCENE

by Steve Messman



Here I am, the club's Director at Large for social activities, and for some reason or another, it took me almost a year to figure out that I should have a monthly article in one of the best newsletters in the paragliding world. Well, it may have taken awhile, but not one to believe it's ever too late, here is the first of a series.

OK. So what's been going on? In this part of Washington, the easiest thing I can tell you is that it's raining. The times spent flying have been few— but some of us have ducked between rain drops. Bremer has been good to a few of us recently. I drove the 4 hour round trip one day for a short 11 minute flight that was actually one of the strangest I have ever flown. I think we either took off in rotor, or the winds between thermal cycles were over the back making for a shaky ride down. A few days later, I made the same drive for a much better flight of 55 minutes, and I even snuck in two nice 30 minute flights at South Mountain one or two Sundays ago. So, enough about me. Let's talk about all of us.

Saddle Soar 2007! Now that was a good one. I've only been to Saddle once, and it was a blast, but this year that scheduled event was just not to happen. There was a ton of "want to goes," but there sure wasn't any get up and go when the time came to get in the car. The

weather was the real problem. Unending rain, winds the wrong direction, even snow at one of our alternate flying sites all forged together to keep us home. But the weekend was not wasted— hence this article. All I can say is, next year— or for that matter, why wait. One day when the weather makes it worth driving that distance, let's just get in the cars and go.

There are a bunch of other events that are planned, and some of them actually include flying. The Rainier Paragliding Club is all about getting together, and sometimes we do that without actually flying. Check this stuff out!

The Chelan Women's Fly-In: I personally have had fun every time I have gone to this fly in, though I always go with my wife, I always stay in a hotel, and I never go to the party. The flying is always good, and so are the local restaurants and activities. This fly-in takes place in Chelan (duh!) on October 27 and 28. I always try to go. We'll see about this year.

The RPC Winter Feast: This takes place on December 1st. Doug is heading up the location. We plan on meeting at 4:00, with food and eating at 5:00. There will be a lot more to follow on this one. It is a potluck, so start your plans now. We can always use some really easy foods: caviar, pheasant under glass, cordon bleu, anything like that. (Just kidding.) Our regular potluck faire is always the best.

Parachute Repack: This one is not scheduled yet, but we need to think about it. Last year, I got our school gym to do this. It was nice because it was so large. However this year, I am not teaching so I

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

am not sure about getting the gym. Other possibilities? Time to schedule? Seems like we usually do this about Feb or March. Something to think about.

Ebey Camping Trip: Usually we do this during Spring Break so the kids and families can go along. It is obviously not scheduled yet, but if we do it as normal, we will do it in April. I would suggest, in fact, that we do it this year a little earlier. That would be the 28-30 March. For me, that is the weekend that opens up Carol's spring break. A second option would be the weekend that closes that spring break, 4-6 April. A third option would be to go around some other school's spring break, but I don't know when those are. Think about it. You who have school schedules might even begin posting your spring breaks so we can discuss the timing of this very fun and very annual event.

That's all I can think of for this time. This carries us into April. With all the time spent flying between scheduled activities, I'm certain that we'll be seeing a lot of each other very soon.

Kim's Corner

Just wanted to thank all those who took the time to contribute to the club newsletter this month. It is so hard to try to write enough articles to fill even this little newsletter. As editor it is a lot easier if everyone contributes often and it is more interesting for the readers. Thanks again. Kim



Meet Captain McFly



I grew up in an aviation family as my father was an Air Traffic Controller and general aviation pilot and instructor. I soloed at age 16 and got my private license in 1966 at age 19. I went on to get my commercial, instrument, flight instructor and multi-engine ratings and was a flight instructor in Hillsboro, OR in 1969. At the end of 1969 I was hired by the FAA as an Air Traffic Controller and spent 10 years at Seattle Air Route Traffic Control Center in Auburn, with 2 years at Portland OR tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control. I was fired during the PATCO strike in 1981 and since I owned and flew a weight-shift ultralight, I thought it would be a good idea to start a business selling ultralights. I spent about 4 years selling ultralights until that industry went through a big down-sizing due mostly to insurance problems and lawsuits (I was even sued myself!). In 1986 I was hired by United Airlines and flew the DC-10 as a flight engineer; then B727, B757/767, and B747-400 as a co-pilot. In 1995 I took my first Captain position on the B737-300/500; then to the Airbus A-319/320, and finally to the B757/767 which is what I was flying when I retired on 12/31/2002. I retired 4 years early in an attempt to save my retirement, however, with United Airlines bankruptcy that same month, our retirement system was turned

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

over to the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp (the government!) and we received drastically reduced pensions. As a result, I went back to the Air Traffic Control work; first at Missoula, MT tower and then to Bellingham tower in Nov, 2003. I finally gave up the employment routine in May 2006, and moved to Sequim where I have been remodeling a house for the last 17 months (I'm very slow!). I live about a block from Steve Torgesen and he encouraged me to begin paragliding. I finally got tired of all the remodeling and decided I would do it this year. I took a week in September and went over to Aerial Paragliding in Cashmere, WA where Doug Stroop and Denise Reed took me through my P2 in just 5 days and 33 flights (I got real lucky with the weather!). I have since flown at the Baldy site south of Ellensburg (3 flights), and that is the total extent of my paragliding experience. I have a commercial sailplane rating, but I am a real beginner when it comes to the paragliding, and I'm looking for all the hints, suggestions, advice and education I can get from all the club members. I also ride a motorcycle, and am trying to figure a way to haul all the gear I need for paragliding on the back of my bike, and still have room for a change of clothes. I'm not sure if it's feasible. Thanks to all for the warm welcoming to the club! I'm sure it will be very rewarding!

Bruce Burris alias Captain McFly...
(Google said I needed a nickname...???)

2 Bear or Not 2 Bear

By Mike McIntyre

Tuesday, October 23rd this year, Wayne, Bruce, Steve T., Steve M. and myself were getting cabin fever, so even though the MM5 called for high winds aloft, we decided to have a look at 2 Bear. In spite of the high winds forecast, it was calm and warm on the ground most everywhere like Sequim, Port Townsend, and Elma, and crystal clear with nary a cloud to be seen. On arriving at the 2 Bear launch, the wind was out of the south and blowing 10 to 15mph, about half what MM5 predicted with sharp gusts. It was so warm up there that we all had to shed our coats. What with the strong winds and sharp gusts, none of the five of us fancied a launch, so we agreed to go right over to the slightly lower Brinnon launch on the canal. Getting there around 2:00 it looked terrific from launch level, and so gentle you needed a little extra puff to consider launching. The vote was unanimous (yes, I voted too) that I should launch first to see what was out there so the lesson began. A problem-free inflation followed by a couple of footsteps down the steep rocky slope, and an uneventful launch into very smooth conditions expecting a sledder. However, out in front about a 100 feet or so very smooth lift gave me enough boost to make a couple of passes at launch level, then back over launch for a couple of passes. Hmm, this is very smooth, and as the lift fills in not strong but very steady, I notice that it seems easy to go back over launch but getting out in front of launch is a little more time consuming, so I fly straight out slowly, and still headed the right direction (whew) but still going up (hmm). Getting a little nervous about the penetration or lack thereof, and how much



worse it might be higher up, I pull big ears a couple of times. This keeps me from going up, but does nothing for my penetration which is very, very slow. Did I mention that it's also very smooth, it's smoother than Ebey, no ripples at all, but not a whole lot of forward motion either. I'm considering changing my hmm's to eeks!!, but I have quite a bit of altitude and some forward motion so with the butter smooth conditions and feeling pretty calm keep going out.

After a while I kind of want to go a little faster as I watch the trees below creep slowly by, so I hit my speed bar for a while, but the accelerated loss of altitude is too alarming, and I go back to just hands up & tucked in arms, and watch the trees in their ever so slow march behind me. I'm beginning to consider what flavor tree I'd like to land in (The alders & maples are nicely colored this time of year, but I think conifers give me a better chance of not poking my eyes out on a branch) and continue on my merry way down, still making painstaking progress towards the LZ. The air is still very, very smooth, and at about 800 feet or so, I get some rather mild but persistent turbulence, drop down a few feet through some kind of inversion layer into air that though smooth is about 15 degrees colder, and my ground speed goes from barely noticeable to glider speed plus, which I estimate to be around 25 mph, and I know I'm going to make it. A quick trip over the motel and highway, and seeing the flag pointing 180 degrees different than I expect, I have enough room to turn around and make a graceful landing near enough to a spot, and 21 minutes after launch. The other guys, having seen my penetration issues, elect not to launch, and drive down to get me and pick up the rigs.

I learned at least a couple of lessons from this enjoyable but risky experience. The first is that you really can't reliably tell

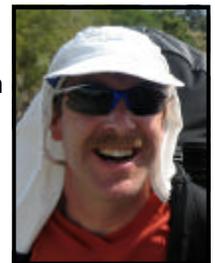
what's going on in the air above or in front of launch by standing there, unless there are telltales like clouds, mist, birds, RC gliders, or wind dummies out there demonstrating. Likewise, the ground winds though light on this day were out of the north, while winds at 1000 feet and up were out of the south and strong. The second is that MM5 came closer with it's prediction than NOAA as far as the high winds were concerned, but given the knowledge and observations we had before I went, I'm not sure I would or wouldn't launch again in similar circumstances. I think the other guys made a very good decision after observing me, and I would have done exactly the same thing they did. The third is that although we always try to use our best judgment there is sometimes justification in calling the first pilot off the mountain the "wind dummy", but somebody has to do it or we'd never fly. I just hope it's not me all the time. Mike

Patty Goes Easy on Tim

By Tim Walsh

Anytime the name or title of a proposed activity has the word "easy" in it, I become immediately suspicious. My skepticism of such labeling, though rewarded through physical exertion, was recently confirmed when a couple of seasoned pilots (I'll call them Chatty and Speedy) invited me to hike and fly a little known site. Sure enough, the trail was called "Paddy Go Easy".

The chosen Saturday was a couple of weeks ago when there was a nice high pressure over the region, the pressure



(Continued on page 7)

The View from My Window

If you've read my bio, you know that I can sometimes take a leisure activity to extremes. It happened to me in sport kite flying. When I began paragliding, my wife was crystal clear when she stated "no competitions! Enjoy the journey." If you've flown with me for any period of time, you might have noticed that I do have a competitive streak although it has been somewhat tempered during the last few years, probably by the march of time.



My mantra has been "no competitions" even when many of my fellow pilots

were branching out and taking part in the Rat Race, returning with stories of a fabulous, no pressure event providing more education than you would achieve in years of flying. I firmly believe (and still do)



that competitions can lead to risk-taking, especially if you have a very competitive spirit. In this already high risk sport, adding fuel to the fire just doesn't seem like the thing to do.

I guess now is the time for my confession. My recent trip to Owens Valley (that's another story) was timed to coincide with the Bay Area Paragliding Association's (BAPA) league meet. The plan was to spend the last weekend of the trip with the BAPA group. I therefore needed to address my "no competitions" stance. I could be a wind dummy and miss the actual activity that happens during the launching

and flying stages of the event, I could enter the competition and go for the gold, or I could take a more conservative approach. I elected for the conservative approach with my plan being to launch very late in the pack, avoid all the gaggles, and fly the task at my own pace. I thought about this tactic for 3 or 4 days to make certain it was firmly rooted in my mind.

So, what did I learn?

In a relaxed atmosphere, as are the BAPA league events, competitions can be fun. The only pressure and intensity is that which one places on oneself. Having a plan well laid out before the start of an event is an excellent way to mitigate most of the additional safety concerns one might have. Although I felt my competitive spirit stirring, I was easily able to control it realizing I was not competing and I would not be submitting my track log.

Watching the first group of pilots thermal was a real eye opener as they made thermalling in the demanding conditions look like child's play. I did not observe any obvious methods to improve my own skills or how to better identify them from the more experienced competition pilot .

How to fly a predetermined route takes forethought and insight. Although I landed in the same area as the majority of pilots, reviewing the task later revealed I didn't have a thought out flight plan.

I'm now more eager to fly and improve my thermalling skills. I again feel my competitive spirit stirring but this time in a controlled way to prove to myself that the sky is truly the limit. The journey continues.

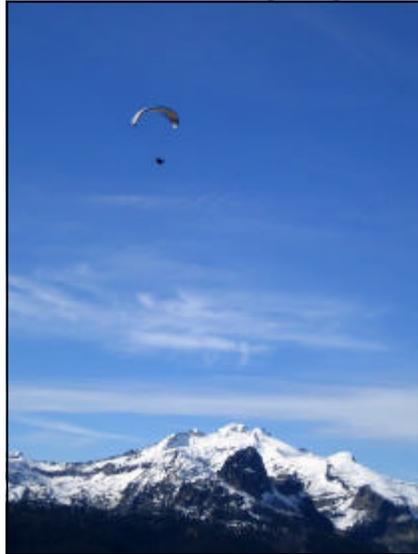
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differential between the east and west side wasn't significant and the jet stream was well out of the way. The plan was to meet in Issaquah at 8:30 (maybe 8:45 grumbled Chatty). By a little after 9 am we were caravanning over I-90 with coffee and lunch in hand.

Paddy Go Easy Pass is located on the eastern side of the Cascades and within about 45 minute's drive time of Roslyn. In prime hunting season, the area was crawling with hunter camps and very slow driving SUV's; splashes of hunter orange vests were only out shone by the swaths of yellow, red and burnt orange that poured down gullies and across the Cle Elum river bottom as the leaves made their final call.

We stopped near the trail head to set a couple of wind markers in the proposed LZ while Chatty folded his wing. The sun was bright on the hillside and there was a light breeze flowing up valley.

As a more recent member of this community I am still adjusting to the initial investment cost for the basic set of gear plus the plethora of gadgets that seem to accompany the well prepared flyer. Though I nearly always hike and fly Tiger, as Speedy set a brisk pace up the hill I quickly realized that if this were to be a regular adventure I was go-



ing to need to lay out additional chips; a mountain harness and ultra-light wing called my name as I sweated my 50lbs of gear along behind.

The trail followed a ridge separating two gullies. It was in excellent shape, steep but manageable and the view across the valley to Cathedral Rock was inspiring. After roughly 2,000' of gain we departed the trail for a short distance toward the suitable launch. We chatted, ate a bite and set up while a nice anabatic flow came up the ridge. It was consistent, not too strong nor gusty, so the conditions were looking great. Even if it turned out to be a sled ride I had already deemed the flight worth the hike.

The initial plan was for Speedy to go first. Speedy's DHV 2-3 seemed reluctant to take to the skies and while he was wrestling it into shape Chatty decided to bring up his wing and test the air. With a stable wing and no obstructions, Chatty decided the time was right, took two steps down the steep slope and was off. He found lift and was soon above launch but reported that the air felt "busy" and headed toward the center of the valley in search of cleaner lift. Speedy was soon off and climbing; as I did my pre-flight he was doing well and was straight above launch. Chatty was not having any luck out over the valley and landed soon after I launched. As he had managed to drape his wing over the only pine in the LZ, I figured he would be busy for a while and wouldn't mind waiting

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

for us. Chatty and Speedy had found lift directly in front of launch, right over the spine we had just hiked, so I headed for the same area. Sure enough, the elevator was going up, squirrely and sporadic as Chatty had mentioned, but going up. Speedy continued to climb up and back, toward the cliff and ridgeline behind launch. I wasn't having a lot of luck and found that I needed to be tight to the ridge in order to find consistent lift. Based upon Chatty's comments and my lack of experience at the site I was closer than I was comfortable with. After hitting sink, in close and just above launch, I chose the less risky option, staying away from the dirt and moving out to find something more comfortable. After about 15 minutes I landed having managed to get about 500' over launch.

Speedy flew the ridge line above launch, later reporting he could see Rainier, while Chatty and I fished his wing out of the tree, folded up and waited for my wife to hike down from launch.

As Speedy was coming in to land a jeep pulled up. Not to be detracted from getting pictures of Speedy landing, Chatty answered questions while looking through the camera...

"What's that?"

"A paraglider"

"Where did you launch from"

"Paddy Go Easy Trail"

About that time Chatty looked up to see the badge on the shoulder of Ranger #1. Yep, some one had called the Feds and

the beans were spilled.

It turns out that, though we had landed in the Cle Elum river valley (part of which is in Wenatchee National Forest), the launch was from the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area. As we all know, Wilderness Areas are a no-no. Fortunately, the Rangers were very understanding and extremely jealous of our adventure especially since we were a bit less cantankerous than some of the hunters. The regulations they had in hand stated "no hang gliding"; some quick talking by my wife pointed out that our craft were indeed paragliders which gave the Rangers the excuse they needed to not write us a warning ticket. With our phone numbers and license plates written down they assured Chatty that "their

boss would give him a call" (yet to occur) and they left us to pursue the less amiable hunters. A great, if not stiff,



hike followed by a nice flight and friendly Fed's all topped with pizza and beer in Roslyn. As flying season winds down, what more can you ask for?

As a side note, I have now looked at the appropriate maps and identified the boundaries of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness. It appears that there may be other trails, on legal land, that could provide a flight. Next time...

RAINIER PARAGLIDING CLUB ELECTION
November 20, 2007
Term of Office – December 2007 to November 2008

Voting options

- 1. Vote in person at the club meeting – November 20, 2007, 7:00 PM, Nickleby’s Restaurant, Tumwater**
- 2. Vote by mail using this ballot – Vote must be mailed early enough (by Friday the 16th should work) to be received by Monday, November 19. Mail to: Kathy Smith, PO Box 13, Cinebar, WA 98533**
- 3. Vote by email. Email must be sent before 2:00 PM Tuesday, November 20. Send to Kathy: paramom@lewiscounty.com**
- 4. Vote by proxy. You can send your vote to the club meeting with another member. Please let Kathy know via email that you will be doing this so the vote will be accepted.**

To vote place an X in the box to the left of the candidate you are voting for.

POSITION	X	NOMINEE	X	WRITE-IN CANDIDATE
President		Kim Smith		
Vice President		Mike McIntyre		
Secty/Treasurer		Kathy Smith		
<i>Director – Vote for two</i>				
Director - So-		Steve Messman		
Director - Safety		Doug Etter		
Director - Safety		Scot Lamb		
Newsletter Edi-		Jim Baldo		

These were the only nominations – please write-in candidates if you prefer to elect someone other than those nominated. Even though most positions are unopposed we still need your vote!

Only paid members can vote. If you have not renewed your membership your vote will only be counted if a check is included with the ballot.

I do keep track of who votes. I mark that a ballot has been received, then toss any identification (envelopes if mailed, cut off the email address if sent that way) and put the ballots in a pile to be tallied later.

Application to join the Rainier Paragliding Club

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

E-mail: _____

USHPA #: _____ Rating: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Annual dues are from July 1st to June 30th of each year.

\$24 for Individual membership

\$36 for Family membership living at the same address.

Send completed application and payment (payable to Rainier Paragliding Club) to:

Kathy Smith

P.O. Box 13

Cinebar, WA 98533

2007 Club Officers

<i>President</i>	<i>Doug Etter</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Mike McIntyre</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Kathy Smith</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Kathy Smith</i>
<i>Director</i>	<i>Steve Messman</i>
<i>Director</i>	<i>Scot Lamb</i>
<i>Newsletter</i>	<i>Kim Smith</i>

Calendar 2007

Oct 27-28	Chelan Women's Fly-In
Nov 20	Club Mtg and officer elections
Dec 1st	*Year End Awards Banquet

(*) denotes RPC sponsored activity