



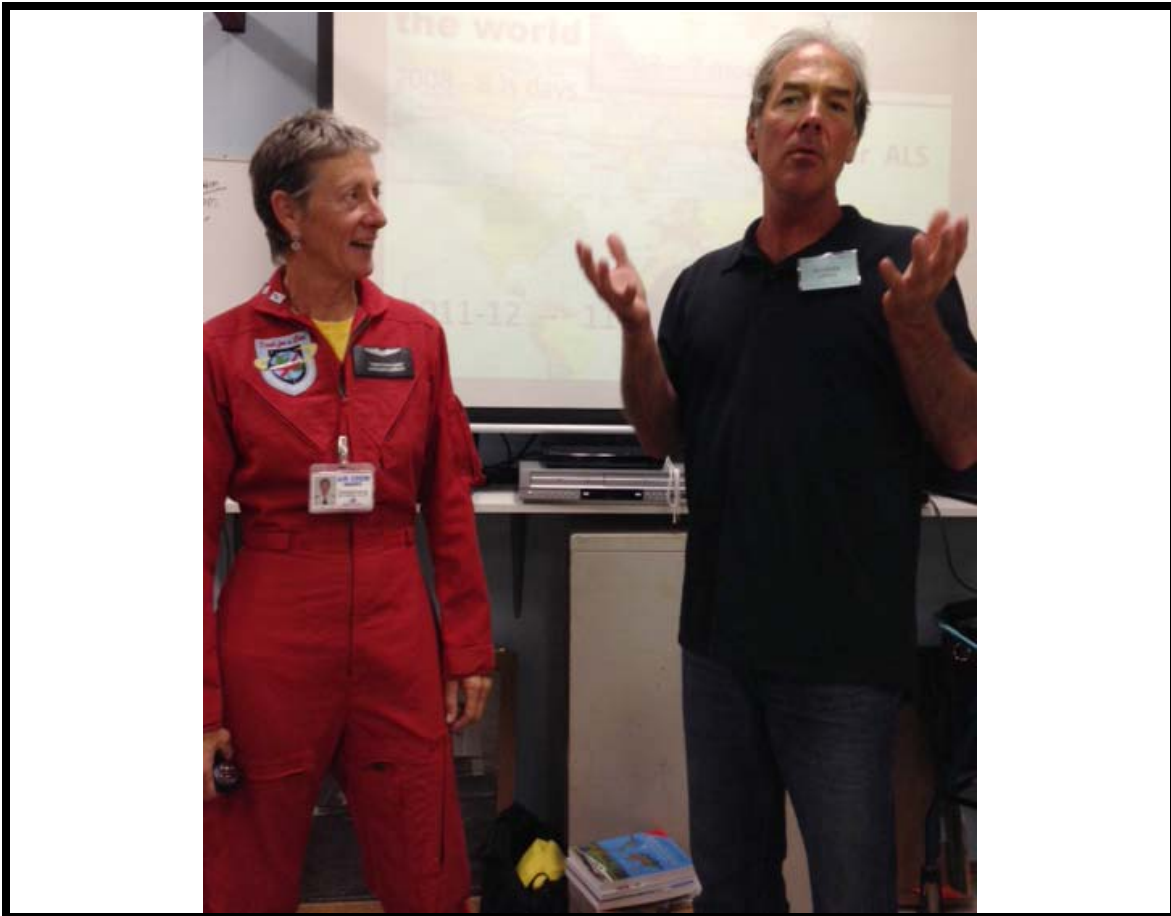
# THE FLYING TIMES

The Official Newsletter  
of the Sonoma Skyrafters

EAA Chapter 1268

Sonoma Skypark Airport  
21870 Eighth Street East  
Sonoma, CA 95476

SEPTEMBER 2014



CarolAnn Garratt is introduced by Richard Craig

## **CHAPTER OFFICERS**

President: Don Booker, 707-938-9461  
VP/Air Ex: Robin Tatman, 707-553-2747  
Secretary: Marsi Fahraji, 415-686-5254  
Treasurer: Bill Wheadon, 707-224-3901  
Membership: Bill Wheadon, 707-224-3901  
Young Eagles: BK White, 707-996-1335  
Dinner Co-ord.: Roy Myers, 415-897-2983

BOD: Jeanette Woods, 707-996-4563  
BOD: Paul Seibert, 707-939-7491  
BOD/Building: Darrel Jones, 707-996-4494

## **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

The September meeting is this **Tuesday, September 9**. The Board of Directors will meet at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner is at 7:00 p.m. after the Board of Directors' meeting, and is \$6.00 per person. Our chefs for the month will be

Our speakers will be those who attended Oshkosh: Ron Price, John Thomason and his guests, Calvin and Ron.

## Warm Thoughts and Great Memories

By Jeff Skiles



**August 14, 2014** - I am writing this the week after EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2014 – my last week as an EAA employee. It has been a true privilege to work for EAA and for you, the members - both as a volunteer chairman and later as an employee - but it is time for me to move on to other challenges.

These last five years as Young Eagles co-chairman and vice president of Communities and Member Programs have been a time I will remember always, and I intend to stay actively involved with the organization as a volunteer, a member, and a supporter of EAA. I can think of no richer experience in my life, and I leave with warm thoughts and great memories.

Paul Poberezny's vision, understanding, and humility built an organization that stands alone in aviation, and his belief in the chapters was like a rock in a tempest. The chapter network is the foundation of EAA, and each and every chapter displays the values of inclusiveness, community, education, and love for aviation that Paul instilled in all of us. Communicating Paul's message to future

generations now falls to us, and I know that the EAA members and chapters are more than equal to the task.

As Paul often said, the chapters are EAA's churches, because even if Oshkosh ceased to exist, the chapters would continue on spreading the word of aviation. I have enjoyed working with you all and will continue to do so in new capacities. I very much appreciate the support and friendship that you have shown me.

Thank you all so much.



By **BRIANNA LOPER** Whitefish Pilot

"Hold on. You're in for the ride of your life." That was it. That was the first thing Peter Gross said when we met last week at Stillwater Landing.

Gross, the owner of Backcountry Flying Experience, shook my hand and then squinted. "Have you ever flown in a floatplane before?" I shook my head nervously. Suddenly, this trip seemed like a bad idea. Thankfully, another pilot stepped in, taking pity on me. "Don't scare her too much," John Carmichael said.

Gross laughed. "Don't worry, you are in safe hands. John has plenty of experience." They handed me an incredibly attractive hunter orange life preserver, "Just in case we tip over."

Without further ado, we head to a tiny blue floatplane tied to the dock.

**For the past four years,** Backcountry Flying Experience has helped pilots to get their seaplane rating, a course and certification required to fly a floatplane.

Floatplanes, small planes that land and take off from the water, offer a different challenge and set of rules for pilots. Taking off, landing, docking and even emergency procedure are slightly altered to accommodate the water.

Gross founded the flight school, and with the help of chief pilot Carmichael, the company has taken more than 25 flights in the past two years, and eight already this season.

“We do a lot of ratings,” Gross said. “But lots of times, people who have already flown with us just want to come back and fly again. They say they miss it.”

**Crawling into the two-person cockpit** proved to be a challenge. The plane bobs in the water, with only two thin bars as steps into the high-riding cabin. Hoist yourself too high, and you’ll jam your head into the giant wing that juts out from the side — I learned from experience.

With help from Gross, Carmichael and a friendly bystander, I manage to fumble my way into the passenger bucket seat. The entire dashboard in the cockpit is covered with knobs, dials, and gauges, many of which I could study all afternoon and never understand.

As I try to figure out the three-part seatbelt harness, Carmichael gracefully hoists himself into the plane. He does some routine checks, jots down notes in a logbook, then turns to Gross.

“All set.”

Gross nods, and begins to untie us from the dock, sending the plane bobbing into the middle of Lower Stillwater Lake.

**Backcountry Flying Experience** is based out of two different locations in the Flathead Valley. I met them at their Stillwater Landing location, a floatplane base owned by Bill Montgomery on Lower Stillwater Lake. Their other base is Lee’s Landing near Bigfork. Student pilots fly for a couple hours, learning the basics of operating a floatplane. The crew goes to five different area lakes where students learn how to take off, land, and maintain a safe journey.

Carmichael has more than 7,000 hours of flight instruction experience. He went through flight school after leaving the Army and has been a practiced pilot ever since. He frequently flies in Alaska, teaching pilots or taking customers hunting and fishing in the wilderness.

**Carmichael hands me a radio** headset so we can talk over the sound of the engine. I feel very official.

He turns the plane around, starting at one end of the lake.

“Have you ever tipped over before?” I asked, and Carmichael smiles.

“Just once, a long time ago,” he said, explaining that high winds are usually the cause of flipped floatplanes. He said the plane’s wing caught a 50 mile per hour gust and was slowly blown sideways into the water.

“It was December, in a mountain lake, too. I got out of there so fast, I was only wet from my waist down.”

Carmichael begins to accelerate down the lake, the engines roaring.

Immediately, I understand why so many people are afraid of flying. This seems like a horrible idea, and maybe I should just watch the Youtube video instead?

Too late.

Carmichael accelerates, and in less than three seconds, the nose of the plane begins to lift off the water. Suddenly, we are airborne.

The plane wobbles uncertainly, and I glance sideways at Carmichael, sure he’s going to tell me to start praying. Yet, he seems right at home behind the steering shaft. I let out the breath I’ve been holding since takeoff and finally look out the side window.

“Beautiful day, isn’t it?” Carmichael says, and I see what he means. As he tours the plane around Stillwater Lake, I can see for miles down the valley. Rivers snake in and out of mountains, which rise up against the grey-blue sky.

**Backcountry Flying Experience started** with the sole purpose of teaching pilots to fly floatplanes, but now, they are starting to expand due to commercial interest.

Last year, when “The Bachelor” TV show came to Whitefish, The Lodge at Whitefish

Lake asked Backcountry to fly the main star into Whitefish Lake. Since then, curiosity has grown.

"It's a really good way to see the area,"

Carmichael said. "You get to see things that you would never see from the ground."

Backcountry offers commercial tours around the area, flying above the Bob Marshall Wilderness and Glacier National Park.

"A lot of people just enjoy the flight," Gross said. "It's great seeing the area from a different view."

#### **After touching down on Dickey**

**Lake**, Carmichael expertly navigates the plane back to Stillwater Lake, smoothly landing on the calm water.

And, surprisingly, I was reluctant for the ride to end. The ride was a beautiful way to see the valley.

For more information, or to book a flight, visit online at:

[www.backcountryflyingexperience.com](http://www.backcountryflyingexperience.com).

### **EAA 1268 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN AND TREASURER REPORT 2014**

#### **YOUNG EAGLES SEPTEMBER 14**

As always BK White is looking for volunteer pilots, ground crew and registration helpers for our monthly Young Eagles events. Let him know you will be joining us and helping out by sending him an email to [eagle1@vom.com](mailto:eagle1@vom.com) or by calling him at 707-996-1335.

#### **AIR EXPLORER UPDATE**

Greetings! I have exciting news for you - Daniel Shulte's project, For The Love of Flight, was successfully funded through Kickstarter on August 31. This is wonderful news, and I want to say **THANK YOU EAA 1268!!** to everyone who kindly (and very generously) donated to

Daniel's project. We are all very excited and humbled by the support he has received to get this going.

Daniel started college in the last few weeks, so he will be busy plotting a filming schedule along with managing his other classes. New filming equipment has already been purchased.

I am hoping he can get credit for the film towards his degree, but that is yet to be determined.

It was fascinating to watch his Facebook and Kickstarter page to see just how far and wide word was spread about the project. Thanks also to Piper Aircraft and author Karlene Pettit among the many people and companies who got word through their blogs that gave a lot of much needed exposure. Definitely the Internet at its best...Stay tuned for more details about the project.



This month the Air Explorers will go mobile again! I have wrangled Captain Ben Middlebrooks, based at Travis AFB to give a tour of his lovely KC-135 and company. It will be a great opportunity to see the airplane, learn about life in the military, and get some terrific

career guidance. We've had to re-schedule this a few times, but so far we have a green light!

The picture below is from April of this year when Ron Price showed the Explorers how to paint guide lines to get your airplane safely in and out of the hangar without bruises.

Everyone got a turn with the line, tape, and paint. Its always great to see a 747 Captain effortlessly directing traffic and getting results - all the lines were straight! Thanks again, Ron.



New Feature!

Since joining the EAA chapter a few years ago, I have noticed that Darrel has been constantly looking for contributions from the members for the newsletters. And, for the amount of members we have, frankly, he hasn't seem to have gotten a lot of response.

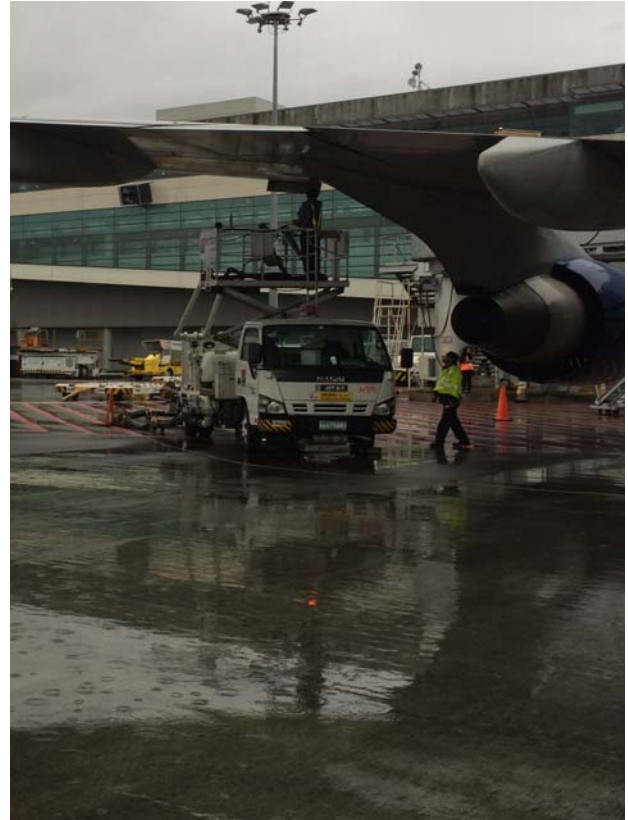
However, I realize that many of you have been around for awhile and may be "contributed out". In an effort to keep Darrel's sunny disposition, well, sunny, here is something new.

Below is a picture I took in July while at work. You folks know what I do. At the upcoming meeting, if anybody can correctly guess what I am doing, I'll donate \$10 to the EAA 1268 general fund (yep, that's right - it will go towards helping to get kids to Air Academy). And if you can guess where I'm doing it, I'll donate \$10 more.

Now, with all of the flying you all have done over the years all over the mainland U.S.,

Alaska, Canada, and right here in California, I bet you have some great shots at home that might be able to stump the best of us in terms of where and what you are up to. If you'd like to contribute some pictures, let me know and we can throw them in future issues. It's a chance to raise some money, tickle your brain, and give Darrel some relief. The first one is easy! See you at the meeting...

Robin



## MOVIE NIGHT AT SKYPARK



Movie night: **Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>.**  
The Movie: **The Lady Takes a Flyer (1958), in color, with an all-star cast, Lana Turner and Jeff Chandler, on our Cinemascope screen!**

Pizza is always available for \$5 per person, including beverages, and complimentary popcorn just to whet your appetite (or spoil it), courtesy of Walt Lewis and his Amazing Real Movie Theater Popcorn Popping Extravaganza Machine.

See you at the movies on Skypark Movie Night, **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th** at 6 p.m.

**DINNER SCHEDULE**

We are lining up our celebrity chefs for 2014 so let Roy know if you would like to be one of our famous chefs for the upcoming year. Roy can be found at [Flyboyroy@aol.com](mailto:Flyboyroy@aol.com) or by phone at 415-897-2983. You can also let me know at [wd6bor@vom.com](mailto:wd6bor@vom.com) and I'll put you on the roster.

The schedule for this year so far is:

Month	Cook	Meal
<b>2014 DINNER SCHEDULE</b>		
SEP		
OCT	Air Explorers	
NOV		
DEC	XMAS	PARTY

**SPEAKERS**

We are always, continually, everlastingly looking for speakers for our monthly programs.

Send an email to me at [wd6bor@vom.com](mailto:wd6bor@vom.com) so we can get your program or speaker information into the newsletter.

Month	Speaker/Member	Subject
<b>2014 SPEAKER SCHEDULE</b>		
SEP	Ron, JT, Calvin, Ron	Oshkosh
OCT	Air Explorers	
NOV		
DEC	Chris K.	

**2014 EAA 1268 CALENDAR**

Send me any events you have for the calendar and I'll put them in.

DATE	EVENT
9/9	1268 Meeting 7 Pm
9/14	Young Eagles 9 Am
10/12	Young Eagles 9 Am
10/14	1268 Meeting 7 Pm
11/9	Young Eagles 9 Am
11/11	1268 Meeting 7 Pm
12/	
12/	XMAS party at Sonoma Skypark!

**EAA CHAPTER 1268 MINUTES**

Send me your news for your newsletter!

**Sonoma Skycrafters**  
EAA Chapter 1268  
358 Patten Street  
Sonoma, CA 95476

MEMBERSHIP **DUES ARE DUE** IN JANUARY, AND MEMBERSHIP RUNS FROM JANUARY TO DECEMBER. DUES ARE STILL A MODEST **FIFTEEN BUCKS**, SO BRING SOME CASH FOR DINNER AND A BIT MORE TO **PAY YOUR DUES FOR 2014!** SEE YOU THERE!

**REMEMBER! THE SEPTEMBER MEETING OF SONOMA SKYCRAFTERS EAA CHAPTER 1268 IS THIS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 AT 7 P.M., AT THE SKYCRAFTER'S CLUBHOUSE HANGAR B-5 AT SONOMA SKYPARK AIRPORT. DINNER STARTS AT 7 PM, SO DON'T BE LATE!  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WILL BE 6 P.M. BEFORE THE MEETING**

**SKYCRAFTER MEMBERSHIP**

**EAA CHAPTER 1268** Membership Dues: **\$15 per year.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ APT: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number, home: \_\_\_\_\_ work: \_\_\_\_\_

EAA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

AIRCRAFT OWNED OR BUILDING: \_\_\_\_\_

Your check should be made payable to: **EAA 1268**

**Please mail your dues to:**

**Bill Wheadon, Treasurer**  
**1021 Stonebridge Drive**  
**Napa, CA 94558**