
ROTOR GAZETTE

St. Louis Rotorcraft Club – PRA Chapter 35 – July 2006

A RECAP OF THE 2006 MENTONE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Although the weather was much more pleasant this year at the Convention, the attendance was seriously down. There were less gyros, and less drive-in traffic, than I remember from last year. Cathy and I arrived late Thursday evening, and Steph and Greg had the combo Chapter 35/Magni gyro tent set up. It was time for free flying, and Gary Goldsberry was giving a demonstration of how to really wring out his Mac powered Bensen. There were a few other gyros doing touch and goes, and flying out over the playground area.

There were a few dedicated members from the club there. Steph and Greg were there with the mighty Magni. Joe Swanton, Carl Schneider, and Matt Steinke, all had their machines there. Fred Blair, Larry Miller, Bobby Ireland, Jeff Milburg, and Mark Knight, all motorcycled in. Dave Kayser and Bill Hammond, who just became a member, were also there. Along with Cathy and I.

Even with the small turnout, there was a steady stream of aircraft flying, virtually all day long. Things were a little better this year viewing-wise. Due to the limited number of gyros, the pilots were allowed to do touch and goes this year, as opposed to having to land and pull off each time they came in. We had two gyros with smoke systems attracting attention, by Ron Awad, and Adam Helwich, from Chapter 18.

There were 10 gyros that took off Saturday morning for a cross-country breakfast flight to the Richmond Airport. Reports are that a great breakfast was provided for the gyro pilots.

Greg was kept really busy coordinating the seminars, so he didn't do nearly as much flying as he normally does at this show. Steph held down the fort at the club tent, and acted as the Magni demo flight tour operator. She also announced the manufacturer's flyby demonstrations. There were all kinds of forums available, covering numerous topics from Sport Pilot to Autocad design. I didn't get to see it, but there was a presentation by some German gentlemen who are representing a new Gyro, somewhat along the lines of the Magni gyros. Greg and Tom Milton did a great job answering questions about converting to Sport Pilot. They addressed both pilot and machine issues.

Probably the biggest news of the convention is that Rusty Nance was elected President of the PRA, and our own Greg Gremminger is Vice-President! Congratulations Greg, and good luck in your latest endeavor.

I've already mentioned that we have a new member. Bill Hammond, who has attended some club meetings this spring, was at Mentone. Bill purchased an Air Command single-place CLT with a 582. Bill has spent some quality time with Greg transitioning to his new machine, and is flying it regularly now, practicing his takeoffs and landings. Bill already has two pretty exciting flying stories to tell you. Please be sure to ask him about them at the next club function. A special thanks to Bill for allowing me to commandeer his services to help Joe Swanton, myself, Jim, and another gentleman, load a newly purchased Dominator into Jim's truck.



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An interesting little note regarding Joe Swanton. He is currently training four students from the Minneapolis area. And I believe Joe told me that none of them knew each other prior to meeting at Joe's airport. I hope they realize how lucky they are to have flying buddies so close to each other. If you don't know Joe very well, take the time to get to know him. He's a very easy going guy who, like Greg, has a wealth of knowledge regarding gyro flying.

We still have at least 3 fly-ins scheduled for the rest of this year. If you are aware of others that the club members might be interested in, please contact me and they'll be added to the next newsletter. The next fly-in planned is the Ste. Gen. one, hosted by Steph and Greg at their "home" field. It's a nice strip right along the Mississippi River, and there are a couple of good places to eat at in Ste. Gen. If you need directions or hotel ideas, please contact Steph and Greg (hope this suggestion was ok, guys).

Shelbyville is planned for Sept. 8-10, and I am coordinating that event. One change I am planning on, is to change the Saturday night dinner from pizza to Mexican food. We have eaten at a couple of Mexican restaurants in Shelbyville, and I intend to contact them to see if they can provide food for us for a reasonable price. I'm also hoping to coordinate a Saturday morning cross-country flight of some type, either to a breakfast, or just to do some sightseeing. More info will be provided in the next newsletter. If anyone knows of an airport where we can get breakfast that's less than an hour's flight out and back, please let me know. I have received a couple of calls for the phone number for the Shelby House Inn, so if you are planning on staying there, now would be a good time to reserve your rooms.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND FLY-IN DATES:

AUGUST 11-13: STE. GENEVIEVE FLY-IN

SEPTEMBER 8-10: SHELBYVILLE FLY-IN

SEPTEMBER 16-17: LITCHFIELD OPEN HOUSE