



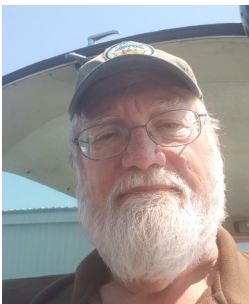
CWB member Steve Hewitt's son Rod (left) earned third place in STOL Drag at Roswell. Video frame: Trent Hendricks



## ★ Cascade Warbirds Squadron Newsletter ★

### CO'S COCKPIT

By Dave "Prancer" Desmon



**WELL, THE AIR IS** getting cooler and flying season is winding down, which means our indoor meeting season is starting up! We just had our first indoor meeting of the season at the Museum of Flight Restoration Center and Reserve Collection at Paine Field. Thanks, Austin for hosting us! We had an excellent presentation on the air museums of Europe.

Our next meeting will be at the Museum of Flight at Boeing Field, on Saturday, November 8, where we will hear from our own Drew Blase about his time flying the U-2—definitely a meeting you do not want to miss! It looks like the majority of our downtown meetings will now be held in the Red Barn Classroom. That is the one in the basement, accessible by the elevator near the café. If you have an interesting topic for a future meeting or a suggestion for someone who might, please contact me. I am always looking for interesting presentations for our meetings.

A number of us are just recently back from the first inaugural Roswell National Championship Air Races. It was interesting, to say the least! First of all, the Sport Class did not compete and the Unlimited Class pulled out just a few weeks prior to the race, leaving a lot of fans disappointed. However, there were a lot of positives. First of all, the city was all in for the air races. They really went above and beyond to assist in any way possible—paving acres of new ramp, building new taxiways, and organizing after-hours events. The local college also opened its facilities, pool, and movie theater for campers. The downtown shops stayed open late to receive race fans after the day's racing was done and Roswell *really* leans in to the whole alien thing! Aliens and alien gear were everywhere in Roswell. It was really fun walking the downtown streets looking at all of it and shopping for cool alien souvenirs. There were even a few green stowaways spotted in back seats on the race course!

The venue is the former Walker Air Force Base, an ex-SAC base. There is a 13,000 foot runway and the "small" runway is "only" 10,000 feet, which was the home stretch for the race courses. Our boxes are set up like in Reno, right on the start/finish line on the front row. The venue is *huge!* It will never be outgrown. There was room for literally hundreds of static displays and the pit area was enormous. The family that owns the ranch land over which most of the course is flown has committed to no encroachment and allowing the air races to continue for at least thirty years. They were superbly

supportive. The race course is very flat, unlike Reno, and the racers are easily visible from the seats all the way around the course; you never lose sight. The city put in a new 2,000 foot STOL Drag course right in front of our box and the entire course is clearly visible from our seats, unlike Reno. The race courses are a little longer than they were at Reno, which means lower *gs*, which means higher speeds. In addition, the Valley of Speed, the fastest part of the course, is now the long straightaway immediately in front of the seats.

One bit of news is that Cascade Warbirds will now have two front row boxes, our customary #A-41 and the adjacent #A-40. So rather than our second box being behind the first, it will be alongside, a second front row box. If you are interested in attending in 2026, contact Fred ASAP to reserve your box seats. The first box is already sold out.

Hotels were a bit of an issue because Roswell has nowhere near the number of hotel rooms that Reno does. Hotel owners knew this and took advantage of it. Some of the room prices were pretty high. Cascade Warbirds has secured a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Express at \$215 per night for 2026, which is about half what some folks paid this year. The hotel was nice, with an indoor pool and hot tub, guest laundry, and free breakfast.

One big change from Reno was that GA fly-in traffic is encouraged. You have to fly in before or after the day's racing, of course, but the FBO has tons of parking and is very helpful. When I inquired about fly-in parking and event fees, they replied,

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## Squadron Commander Emeritus

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Dave "Prancer" Desmon

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This is the official publication of Cascade Warbirds. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of Cascade Warbirds. Members are encouraged to contribute any matter related to warbirds, which the editor will gladly work with you to publish.

It is the goal of Cascade Warbirds to promote the restoration, preservation, operation and public display of historically significant military aircraft; to acquire and perpetuate the living history of those who served their country on these aircraft; and to inspire today's young people to become the aviation pioneers of tomorrow.

All correspondence to the squadron may be submitted via the email or mailing addresses below.

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## HELLO!

It's always a pleasure to introduce new members. Joining us recently is **Joe Edwards** of Seattle. He's an Army vet, serving from '71-'74. He earned his private pilot certificate in 2002 and is now rated commercial ASEL/S and private rotorcraft. He currently owns and flies a TH-55 (Hughes 269). We'll likely see a story and photos in an upcoming issue.

Also recently joining us is **Desiree Houle** of Lakebay, WA. She's an ardent warbird fan and hopes one day to learn to fly. She joined our ranks to be able to help marshal our aircraft.

Hailing from Everett is **Grant Hasting**. He's a United pilot, a CFI/CFII/MEI, and owns both a Piper Pacer and a Bonanza. He's been a warbird volunteer for fifteen years and is a pilot for CAF.

Joining us from Sandy, UT, is **Sharon Gracia**. Her passion is warbirds and sharing their history. She's also a board member of the Flying History Foundation.

## HOLIDAY PARTY

Our annual dinner party is scheduled for Saturday evening, 13 December 2025. We'll again be gathering at the Hilton Garden Inn at the north end of Paine Field and enjoying the wonderful holiday buffet served up by Shawn O'Donnell's Irish Pub. All the details from dinner pricing to hotel reservations will be provided via email in the upcoming weeks. Hope you can make it.

## ROSWELL 2026

We're back from a successful first year of racing in Roswell, NM, and already planning for mid-September next year. Interest remains strong; already, twenty CWB members have made deposits for the 2026 event. If you want to give it a try, get a \$100-per-seat deposit to Fred, check or e-pay. Seat pricing and hotel availability details will be blitzed to you over the next several weeks.



## Memorial Scholarship

Our annual scholarship program is funded by donations from benefactors like you. Consider making a tax-deductible donation to invest in future aviators.

Thank you for your generosity!

## SCHOLARSHIP SEASON

It's almost that time of year again. Our youth flight training scholarship program will open during November. Please point interested young people our way. Watch [cascadewarbirds.org/youth](http://cascadewarbirds.org/youth) for the application to be published.

We'll also be looking for pilots to serve as mentors for these student aviators. Our hard-working scholarship committee will put out the call soon.

## FLY DAY 2026

While you're marking your calendars, pencil in Saturday, 13 June 2026. XO Bob Stoney has started preparations for the third successful member appreciation day and will be seeking volunteers. Plan for a fun day with your warbird friends at Arlington Municipal Airport.

## AIRPLANE FOR SALE

Paul Newton is selling his 1/5 share in a 1942 AT-6C. It once served in the South African Air Force and has some nice upgrades. More info is at [cascadewarbirds.org/for-sale](http://cascadewarbirds.org/for-sale). ♻



Photo courtesy Paul Newton

**GREETINGS, Warbirds Enthusiasts.** Another flying season is in the can, and it was a good one. Thanks to everyone who contributed to making this such a memorable summer.

The Multi-signatory Warbird Formation Clinic was held at Bremerton National Airport from 26–29 June. A number of Cascade Warbirds pilots turned out, including host Roger Collins, Dave “Prancer” Desmon, Bob “Baddest” Stoney, John “Smokey” Johnson, Stan “Sundance” Kasprzyk, Dave “Capo” Gagliardi, Victor “TO/GA” Norris, Trent Hendricks, and Jeff “Spank” Hanoff. Supporting the event were marshallsers Paul Youman and Brian Ruby, photographers Brodie Winkler and me, Jason Stiffey, Carl Hendricks, and our indispensable Event Coordinator and Morale Officer, who fed us and held the whole thing together, Colleen Hale.

Two weeks after the formation clinic, Cascade Warbirds made a triumphant return to Bremerton for the third annual Bremerton Air Show. Dave Desmon and Stephen Baldwin (Ryan Navion & L-17), Bob Hill and Victor Norris (IAR-823s), Drew Blase (Marchetti SF.260), Mike Hanten (Scottish Aviation Bulldog), and special guest pilot Bob Gill (Roger Collins’s T-6 Texan) performed during the Cascade Warbirds aerial demonstration, with Kirstan Norris providing color commentary along with show announcer Ken Hildebrandt. Jeff Kimball’s Aeronca L-16 and Paul Youman’s Navion were on static display outside the hot pit.

Cascade Warbirds’ own Roger Collins and “Smokey” Johnson, along with Scott Urban, performed a formation show in three different models of T-28 Trojan (B, C, and D). Roger was a busy man during the show, also flying *Lady Jo* along with Cascade Warbirds member and former commander Greg Anders, in *Val-Halla*, and eight other P-51s as part of the “Mustang Mania” event at the show, the largest single gathering of P-51 Mustangs in Washington in years. Drew Blase and Lee Oman performed separate aerobatics demonstrations in their aircraft on both days. Keeping both the aircraft and the attendees safe on the ground was the CWB marshalling team, led by Rich Cook and consisting of Paul Youman, Brian Ruby, Robert Mitka, Tonia Houle, Jasper Scofield, Dennis Van Swol, and Nicholas Van Swol.

Cascade Warbirds was well-represented at AirVenture in Oshkosh this year, as well. Bob Stoney, “Smokey” Johnson, John Haug, Rich Cook, Jim Custis, and I were all in attendance in the Warbirds Briefing Room to see Bob Stoney receive the Federal Aviation Administration Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award for fifty years of exemplary professionalism and safety in the field of flight. This was my first true pilgrimage to Oshkosh, having flown out with a buddy in a 1950 Cessna 170A, and what a breathtaking adventure it was. Much fun was had and many lessons were learned on

the flights there and back. AirVenture itself was just a joy to experience, where nobody is truly a stranger and where you can strike up a conversation with anyone and not run out of aviation facts, figures, and stories to talk about. It’s an experience I’ll never forget, and I would encourage everyone who hasn’t been to AirVenture to do it.

In August, pilots Dave Desmon (Navion), Bob Hill (IAR-823), Victor Norris (IAR-823), Eric Olson (Navion), and Justin Drafts (CJ-6), as well as marshaller Robert Mitka, took part in the Heritage Flight Museum’s 23 August Fly Day. The Cascade Warbirds performed formation fly-bys at the event, representing us to the community and continuing our long and enduring relationship with this wonderful museum.

Closing out the summer, CWB had two boxes at the inaugural Roswell Air Races in New Mexico. As with any time a well-established event moves to a new venue, there were a number of challenges (some of them quite significant and costly to attendees), but there’s no denying the City of Roswell worked hard and got an awful lot right. The new courses, unrestrained by terrain like Reno’s courses were, are faster and more visible to the spectators, with the chute and the Valley of Speed right in front of the viewing area. The flat terrain ensured the crowd missed none of the racing action, even at the farthest reaches of the Jet course. Additionally, the pits, the static display areas, and the vendor area were roomy and had space to expand as the event gets bigger over time. Granted, the Sport and Unlimited classes were not there this year, but no one can deny that the quality of the competition in the remaining classes was top-notch. The Cascade Warbirds crew got together for dinner at the Texas Roadhouse in town and had an absolutely great time.

I’d like to close by sincerely thanking everyone who volunteered in any fashion to make this airshow season so successful. The great Jimmy Doolittle once said, “Nothing is as strong as the heart of a volunteer,” and you all exemplify that with your service to Cascade Warbirds and to the local communities at large. I’d also like to apologize to Paul Youman, whose Navion I inadvertently left off the list of static display aircraft at the Olympic Airshow in my last Ops Tempo column.

As the weather begins to get less pleasant, please keep your skills sharp, but know your limitations and always keep safety in mind in whatever you do.

I’ll see you at the monthly meetings! 🍷

**2025 MARKED MY FIFTEENTH** year marshalling for CWB and eighth year marshalling at Oshkosh.

Mike Weisner and I joined CWB at the Arlington Airshow in 2009 and became marshallers in 2010. With CWB we have marshalled at Olympia, Tacoma Narrows, Bremerton, Arlington, Boeing Field, JBLM, and Paine Field. We joined Historic Flight Foundation in 2010 and marshalled for their events at Paine Field and Felts Field in Spokane until its closure at Paine Field. I have participated as a marshaller for Young Eagles flights and Challenge Air events. I have also been involved in marshalling training for CWB and HFF.

In 2015, Mike had a thought to marshal at Oshkosh, as we had been there before in 2008. Mike talked to Dave Desmon about us volunteering in Warbirds and Dave knew the right people to make it happen. That year, I flew with Dave and Sundance to Oshkosh in Dave's Navion and stayed in the CWB house on Lake Winnebago. Mike flew commercial and on Monday we arrived at Warbirds volunteer registration and began our training to marshal at Oshkosh. We were assigned to the T-34/T-6 line and I was amazed at how many planes they could park in very short order.

We skipped 2016 and went back in 2017. This time, we stayed in Mike's RV in Camp Scholler. We followed our old lead John Clough to the bomber and transport line, where we got to play with the big birds.

In 2019, after three years of volunteering at Oshkosh, we got to stay in Warbirds camping. That saved a lot of travel time getting from the camping spot in Camp Scholler to our work area in Warbirds.

In 2022 and 2025, fellow CWB member Torsten Reinl joined me and we stayed in the CWB house.

Since 2017, I have been in the bombers and transports line, where we marshal a large variety of aircraft including B-17, B-25, A-26, TBM Avenger, C-47 and C-53, C-33, C-45 Expeditor, U-8 / L-23 Seminole (Twin Bonanza / Queen Air), U-21 Ute (King Air), L-27 / U-3 (Cessna 310), HU-16 Albatross, PBY Catalina, B-24 / PB4Y, Howard 500, and Cessna UC-78 Bobcat.

At Oshkosh, we had the opportunity to participate in and witness major aviation anniversaries. In 2017, for the 75th Doolittle raid, we saw Colonel Dick Cole and launched B-25s for the show. In 2019, for the 75th anniversary of D-Day, we launched C-47s for the show.

People may ask why we do this. It's a lot of work, but we enjoy it. We are close to the action at airshows. I have developed friendships that last through the years and I play a role in keeping the public safe. As the airshows in Washington State slowly disappear and marshalling opportunities

diminish, Oshkosh continues on.

If you want to join in the fun and excitement of marshalling for CWB, contact our head marshaller Heijo Kuil. If you are interested in marshalling at Oshkosh, you can talk to me. Oshkosh requires you put in enough hours marshalling to justify a free entry pass.

### MIKE WEISNER ADDS...

Donna and I were unfortunately too deep in the throes of completing our new home in Missoula this summer for us to attend AirVenture this year. It was a bummer to disrupt my string of eight shows since 2015 but bad timing was everything.

Rich's description above sums up our more than fifteen years of CWB, HFF, and then Oshkosh marshalling exploits very well. As I imagine actors who make it to Broadway or Hollywood consider it the "big time," the same goes for being able to join one of the warbirds groundcrews at AirVenture every July!

The magnitude of the planes—and therefore marshalling "work"—is mind-boggling compared to nearly any other airshow. Parking up to eleven C-47s (and DC-3s) with five feet between wingtips will surely keep your attention. And the occasional "Wrong Way Corri-gan" B-25 taxiing opposite to our signals proves that it's not just a few general aviation pilots who ignore us marshallers! All this organized chaos happens on not perfectly smooth grass, in challenging weather, and with the general public walking in and about our aircraft while under power.

This is the ultimate experience if you enjoy working the flightline as a hobby. It's great fun and carries great responsibility; you need to be aware of your surroundings for the safety of our guests. Communications and teamwork is vital and the group leads are very good at what they do. Hit me up, too, if you'd like to join the Big Show in 2026! 🍷

Mike (L) and Rich ® on the warbird line at Oshkosh. Photo: Mike Weisner



**BLUF (BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT):** If you travel to Roswell, NM for the National Championship Air Races (NCAR) and expect a Reno, NV experience, you will be sadly disappointed. However, if you attend the races in Roswell with an open mind and reasonable expectations, you will be rewarded with experiences and memories that only few events and venues can provide. While RARA, Roswell, and a host of other organizations have a ton of work to do to make the NCAR the premier event that it once was, 2025 was a good start to the long journey that lies ahead. This opinion piece will outline many of the different facets of our September Family reunion experience as witnessed firsthand from a constructive viewpoint. Please keep in mind this was *our* experience, and it may not necessarily reflect other CWB member experiences or observations.

## TRANSIT TO/FROM ROSWELL

As a family that travels annually from the east coast to the air races, airline schedules to and from Roswell are convenient via Albuquerque, NM and Lubbock, TX via Southwest Airlines. If you were lucky enough to reserve a seat on the one airline that flew directly into Roswell, then lucky you. (We feel the lack of adequate rental car availability in Roswell may hinder this option if having a vehicle to drive while you're in town is a priority.) Conversely, the drive from Albuquerque to Roswell is just over three hours and the drive from Lubbock is just under three hours. From our personal experience, the route from Albuquerque to Roswell consisted of great roads with plenty of services along the way. If you don't mind driving, it's a wonderful option.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Due to the late withdrawal by the Unlimited and Sport classes, coupled with so many unknowns, many would-be return attendees decided to cancel their accommodations, which allowed us to book a last-minute hotel room for our group after our VRBO option was canceled the Friday before our arrival. (Keeping in mind that it was paid for, in full, eleven months prior to the event.) Price gouging was evident everywhere in the accommodations arena. The local news stations even produced stories documenting the difference in prices from the week of NCAR versus the weeks before and after. It is our opinion that Roswell falls short of having adequate housing capacity for a fully operating week of races. Plan early and have a backup plan.

## TRANSITING TO/FROM FIELD

From the heart of Roswell to the parking area of the airfield is a very easy ten to

fifteen minute commute, with multiple businesses opening early to accommodate race traffic. Afternoon traffic returning to town will require significant review and improvements to alleviate the bottleneck at US 285 and northbound S Main St. The New Mexico State Police were very proactive in observing and documenting the issues and potential issues this year during a relatively light volume. Hopefully, they can formulate a traffic mitigation plan during the morning and afternoon rush hours to facilitate the safe and expeditious transit of all the visitors to and from the Roswell Air Center.

## DISTANCE BETWEEN PARKING AND SEATING

With the purchase of CWB box seating comes the privilege of orange lot parking passes, which this year offered no advantage. The shuttles that were provided were only for the Checkered Flag Club ticket holders and that left many of us walking greater distances than we would have if we had parked in general parking, through mud and other less than optimal conditions. Granted, it won't rain every year in Roswell but, boy, it sure did rain this year on Saturday! This Mother Nature-induced event created a whole new set of challenges for event organizers and, all in all, they did a decent job of meeting the challenge with the resources that were available.

## EVENT SECURITY

Second to none. The presence of NM State Police, Roswell law enforcement, Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, and other private security personnel (most, if not all, of the parking lots were on university property) made for a very safe and secure environment.

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The gang on a sunny day at Ren-...Roswell! Photo courtesy Dave Desmon



AS SUMMER 2025 DRAWS to a close, so did a major event during the Second World War eighty-five years ago. It was the first battle decisively conducted aerially—the Battle of Britain. In May and June 1940, Germany invaded and rapidly defeated France. Britain refused to capitulate, encouraged by the near miraculous evacuation of over 338,000 Allied soldiers at Dunkirk despite having to abandon nearly all their weapons and kit. Britain’s equipment-depleted forces now stood alone as the German war machine was amassing a mere twenty miles away in occupied France, preparing to unleash Operation Sea Lion, the invasion of the British Isles.

The Luftwaffe had lost more of their aircraft than expected during the Blitzkrieg of Poland, Norway, the Low Countries, and France. Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, spearheading RAF Fighter Command, had earlier refused to send more Hurricane and Spitfire squadrons to France, as they had suffered a loss of 435 pilots. The RAF pursued this slim advantage in matériel in July to intercept Luftwaffe attacks on crucial naval and merchant convoys around the English Channel. Despite losses on both sides, the RAF successfully delayed the impending German attack.

*Adlertag* (Eagle Day), the planned day of the aerial assault by the Luftwaffe, finally commenced on 13 August, with attacks targeting radio direction finding stations and airfields dotted around the British southern coastline under 11 Group, commanded by Air Vice Marshal Sir Keith Park. Herman Göring had promised Adolf Hitler the RAF would be destroyed both in the air and on the ground within a few days, thereby enabling Germany’s amphibious invasion to take place as planned with the tides. But Göring would prove a poor leader with even poorer judgement. He used his air war experience from WWI to wage a modern attack. Yet, he lacked a clear vision for the campaign and kept changing mission goals. First the radar sites, then the airfields, and then the cities. Knocking out the first two would have likely achieved German air superiority, but Göring’s impatience and fear of displeasing Hitler

meant he never prosecuted the air campaign to its logical conclusion. Day after day, the relentless raids continued to pound the southeast

airfields in Kent, often multiple times. Under Lord Beaverbrook, the Ministry of Aircraft Production was starting to struggle with replacing the valuable fighters. Worse still, crucial fighter training was often down to a handful of hours to fill the pilot shortage. Fighter Command was coming close to being on both knees as pilots were getting fatigued by going up on multiple scrambles daily.

The Luftwaffe’s Military Intelligence Branch had grossly underestimated the strength of the RAF in terms of production and operational aircraft as well as pilot rotation. A critical factor that seemed to have eluded the German command was that the British were fighting on their home territory with a network of aircraft repair facilities which were not always close to the targeted airfields. By contrast, the Luftwaffe had to fly their aircraft hundreds of miles between the northern French coastline and Germany while also attempting field repairs of the bombers and fighters unable to fly back to Germany. Surprisingly, the Luftwaffe did not have sufficient pilot reserves or training to allow for leave and losses, culminating in a gradual decline in operational strength.

Although Göring’s promised victory in a few days had failed, the Luftwaffe relentlessly continued its bombing campaign without developing any focused strategy for defeating RAF Fighter Command. Confident that the RAF was near its end, Göring switched tactics by launching strategic day and night bombing on a smorgasbord of targets. Frustrated that the Luftwaffe was still being intercepted by the RAF, Hitler agreed with Göring to turn upon London to destroy the British bulldog morale. The Blitz inflicted heavy damage, but because sustained pressure was never put on any one type of target, Germany failed to cripple Britain’s fighting and defense capacity. Disagreements among the Luftwaffe fighter and bomber commanders revolved more around tactics than strategy. They were also trying to appease Hitler and gain his favor, resulting in ever-dwindling aircrews. Infighting and scattered focus effectively doomed the offensive over Britain before it



Aircraft dogfight over St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. Photo: © IWM (HU 54557)



Formations of Hurricanes, like this one of No. 85 Squadron, helped save the UK from invasion during the Battle of Britain. Photo: © IWM (CH 1503)

had even begun.

In England, the turning point of this fight is known as Battle of Britain Day and is celebrated annually on 15 September. The Duxford Battle of Britain Air Show is one of the largest events to have many aerial heroes flying together. This year, it included a combined total of eight Hurricanes and fifteen Spitfires, known as the "Big Wing." It was the largest aerial gathering of these two types in the show's history! This day is significant as the RAF successfully repelled two large waves of Luftwaffe raids, with the latter losing a substantial number of bombers. These costly raids finally convinced the German High Command that the Luftwaffe were unable to achieve air supremacy, leading Hitler to postpone the planned invasion on 17 September.

While not much is known of the Battle of Britain within the United States, it was the first major defeat of any significance for Germany and resulted in the loss of a vast proportion of its Luftwaffe. Hitler would lose interest in Britain in

Squadron Leader Brian Lane shows the wear done to aircrews from repeated sorties to repel attacks by German fighters and bombers, such as this Heinkel He 111 photographed over East London. Photos: © IWM (CH 1366), © IWM (C 5422)



1941 and turn his attention fully upon the Soviet Union and other delusional *Lebensraum* adventures. Had the RAF, made up of multiple nationalities (yes, even volunteer Americans!), not been able to stand up to the seemingly unstoppable German might, the result would have been darkly different. As Winston Churchill stated in his famous "Finest Hour" speech on 18 June: *"If we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science."* ✪



(Continued from page 5)

#### EVENT ORGANIZATION

With the many challenges that presented themselves throughout the week, the event organizers did a good job of maintaining the activity schedule as close as possible.

#### DEAD SPACE

There are acres and acres of empty space between the parking areas and the front gate. (Just an observation.)

#### DINING LOCATIONS/AVAILABILITY

Dining establishments did a good job this year keeping up with the patron demand without undue waiting times. But in the upcoming years, as attendance grows, this could easily change.

Point of interest: We would like feedback on availability of banquet/meeting areas for luncheons, team gatherings, CWB dinners, etc.!

#### ALTERNATIVE TO RACE ACTIVITIES

We took a full day to drive down to see Carlsbad Caverns National Park and experienced one of the most amazing spectacles this world has to offer. Descriptions and pictures would never do this place justice so know

that if you go to New Mexico, this is a must-do! After hiking all the way down to the bottom of the 750' deep caverns, we rode the elevator back up, went into the town of Carlsbad for dinner, then returned for the evening bat flight, which is also a cannot miss experience. This is an all-day activity that will require missing a day at the races.

#### POST-RACE ACTIVITIES

Many businesses stayed open late to accommodate the race fans' desire to shop and visit. They were all very pleasant, helpful, and super happy to have us there.

#### IN SUMMARY

The NCAR in Roswell, NM was a very enjoyable event and an experience that we'll always treasure. Seeing the September Family is a big part of that experience! Hopefully RARA and the Roswell Chamber of Commerce can continue to expand capacity in the local area and address the concerns and suggestions that have come to light following this first year's trials and tribulations. The potential for Roswell is unlimited (no pun intended) and, with the return of the Sport and Unlimited classes next year, the local economy will get to realize the full experience the way it's meant to be! ✪

I WAS IN NO way at the top of my class in either high school or college. Not by a long shot. Nor have I ever been accused of being a fast learner. But I am persistent, and I like to think that I learn lessons well. Especially, as I get older, lessons learned from others' mistakes before I have the chance to make them myself. So, I'd like to give you, the maintenance-minded reader—and every aviation enthusiast should be mindful of maintenance—the opportunity to benefit from my own recent arduous mistake. No, let's please call it my recent "learning experience."

Back on Christmas Eve of 2012, I essentially shook hands over the phone to seal a gentleman's agreement, making me the latest owner of a 1974 CJ-6A Nanchang aircraft. I bought it from an elderly gentleman in Pennsylvania, while the aircraft's first owner was Chairman Mao Zedong and his People's Liberation Army Air Force of China. Much of the aircraft was original equipment, having spent years as a trainer in Chinese military service, a history which has made for some interesting adventures in doing almost all my own maintenance.

During my 2025 condition inspection, an experimental category version of the annual inspection, I discovered a horrendous drop in RPM during the magneto check on the familiar engine run-up checks. A tenacious gremlin had just appeared. This is where the tried-and-true principle of K.I.S.S. comes into play. (It bears explaining that this gem of an acronym is usually translated as "Keep It Simple, Stupid.") One or more spark plugs that have become dirty or "fouled" are usually the culprit for such an excessive RPM drop, often cured by briefly running the engine on a much leaner, hotter mixture setting. My optimism was soon dashed when this quick cockpit remedy did not fix my problem.

With no small effort, I removed each of the oily radial engine's eighteen—yes, eighteen—spark plugs for a thorough cleaning and inspection, replaced two for good measure, and tried the run-up again with barely a hint

of any improvement. I began realizing that my visiting gremlin was a truly stubborn one. Repeating the spark plug removal and cleaning process only ate up more time, without any redemption. It's at this point that you please need to pay attention. I had two choices: an easy, speedy path or a tedious, expensive path. Yes, I chose the latter and focused my frustrations on the troublesome left magneto. Investing a huge amount of time and effort researching, checking, cleaning, testing, and pestering fellow mechanics for advice, and doing a dang near complete overhaul of the left magneto *in situ*, I was stumped to find that the RPM drop was only getting worse! The grumpy gremlin just laughed at me.

At last, I looked back to that easy path long since shunned and recalled a fellow Nanchang keeper's simple advice: check the condition of the cockpit's magneto switch itself. In hindsight, given the aircraft's likely abuse during its decades-long military career of being flown and parked in all conditions, this was sage free advice that had been learned the hard way. Why didn't I listen? Sigh.

Typical of 1950s communist engineering, the Nanchang's magneto switch is a colossus compared to modern designs (seriously, it's as big as a coffee mug), and its removal via four exposed screws was simplicity itself. Even more simple was the removal of the switch's back cover, and simplest yet was just liberally spraying its exposed innards with miracle-working contact cleaner. After crisply cycling the red switch handle a few times and a quick reassembly, I was ready for the latest of I've-forgotten-how-many engine tests. And the RPM drop was suddenly perfect.

While I'm grateful to have learned so much more about my engine's magneto internals and functions, I have to shake my head at the thought of so many weeks of effort spent and expense lost to "fixing" what wasn't actually broken. The pervading lesson is just to try the simple fixes first! It might save you money and get you flying much sooner. ☺

Justin's magneto and its original sponsor. Photos: Justin Drafts



## NEW FORMATION RATING

By Kerry Edwards

**TRENT HENDRICKS IS THE** newest Cascade Warbirds member to earn a formation qualification rating. Formation flying is one of the most demanding forms of flight. It derives from military flight requirements and offers flying skill enhancements, performance efficiencies, mutual support qualities, is a skill required for towing a glider, and is often demonstrated at air shows.

Trent has been a participant in the last two annual Northwest Formation Clinics with his Varga 2150 Kachina and made great progress. But his development was somewhat hampered by the limitations of his little airplane. It was difficult to match with other aircraft for speed and there were only a couple of instructors who could fit the tight back seat in the tandem cockpit.

Following his progress at this year's clinic, the burden was thrown back at Trent to find the time for some concentrated personalized training. In early August, he approached Dave "Prancer" Desmon and appropriate plans were developed. Most qualified CWB members were too tall or wide to fit and other clinic instructors were geographically beyond consideration. So, former F-15 Eagle instructor Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk, who just barely fit, was tabbed as training instructor.

After a pair of concentrated flights, the trainers felt Trent was well-prepared for advancement and recommended him for testing. CWB Executive Officer Bob Stoney, a highly qualified instructor and certified examiner, and the tallest member of the group, directed the testing from the right seat of Prancer's Navion under rules that were developed for pilots with single seat aircraft. A rigorous test flight was conducted with a special wrinkle tossed in by Stoney to test total situational awareness and Trent passed with flying colors.

The Formation and Safety Team (FAST) is a worldwide educational organization dedicated to teaching safe formation flying in warbirds. The Federal Aviation Administration recognizes the FAST program as meeting federal requirements for formation demonstrations at organized air shows. Trent Hendricks is now the holder of a FAST two-ship certificate and looking ahead to his future four-ship rating. ✪

Dave, Sundance, Trent, and Bob celebrate. Photo: Bob Stoney



## SEQUIM VALLEY AIR AFFAIRE

By Dave Woodcock

**THE SEQUIM VALLEY FLY-IN** and Air Affaire was held at W28 on Saturday, August 30, 2025. This yearly event in Sequim, WA includes a "Show and Shine" for cars, live entertainment, and food. Representing Cascade Warbirds was Dave Woodcock with his Piper L-4H Grasshopper, Brooks Petersen with his Cessna L-19 Birddog, and Robert Mitka assisting the local EAA Chapter 430 with marshalling. The afternoon had perfect weather and temperatures. Our "warbird area" included a 1943 Ford GPW Jeep, a 1967 Kaiser Jeep Ambulance, and a 1952 GMC M211 brought in by Karen and Jeff Gossage from Port Angeles (Puget Sound Military Vehicle Collectors Club).

The airport was busy all day, although some lower ceilings slowed early arrivals. Hot air balloon rides in the morning were followed by rides available in a 1929 Travel Air biplane and a Robinson helicopter. A seven aircraft formation flight of RVs, mostly Ravens and Blackjacks, made beautiful flyovers and landed for lunch. There were twenty-eight aircraft registered and forty-one display cars. Over 2,500 people attended, making it a perfect Labor Day weekend event. ✪



Brooks' Birddog got attention, as did Dave's L-4 from enthusiastic disability advocate Sarah Tompkins. Photos: Dave Woodcock



# CWB SUPPORTERS

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## November

8 Member meeting, 10 AM  
 Museum of Flight  
 (Seattle, WA)

## December

13 Annual holiday party  
 Hilton Garden Inn  
 (Mukilteo, WA)

## January

10 Member meeting, 10 AM  
 Museum of Flight  
 (Seattle, WA)

## February

14 Member meeting, 10 AM  
 Museum of Flight  
 (Seattle, WA)

**Bold** denotes a “max effort”  
 event for Cascade Warbirds.

See [cascadewarbirds.org/](http://cascadewarbirds.org/)  
 events for details or contact  
 the Ops Officer.

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*(Continued from page 1)*

“Twelve dollars.” I asked, “Per day?” “No,” they said, “just twelve. But that’s waived with a nominal fuel purchase.” And their avgas was pretty cheap, too. There are a few commercial flights directly into Roswell, so rental cars are available from several major vendors.

We were worried about finding enough restaurants to handle the volume and good enough quality of food. We need not have worried! There were plenty of restaurants in Roswell and the food was delicious.

All in all, a good time was had by all! We are planning to go back in 2026 and hope to see many of you there. The USAF Thunderbirds will be headlining the show and hopefully the Sport and Unlimited classes will return to join in the fun, so it should be a good one!

Fred will be sending out reservation details. Dates for the 2026 event have not yet been officially announced. However, we are going on the assumption it will start around September 15<sup>th</sup>. We will keep you updated with any changes.

In other news, our scholarship committee has expressed concern that that our students may not have access to in-person ground school training due to format changes at many flight schools. At our October board meeting, the suggestion was made that each of our scholarship recipients be paired with a pilot mentor from the squadron to help them study and prepare, address any questions, and to keep the scholarship committee advised of the student’s progress. If you are interested in becoming a mentor for one of our deserving young scholarship recipients, please contact me or Pete Jackson.

Lastly, it’s not too early to start thinking about Oshkosh. The dates are July 20–26, 2026 and the squadron intends to once again rent a house or two near the event. If you are interested in reserving a room in the squadron house, please contact me ASAP.

That’s all for now. Keep ‘em Flyin’! ✪

# CHECK SIX



RAF pilots sprint to their Hurricanes on 25 July 1940 during the Battle of Britain. Bronze station bells with hand-drawn clappers, which became known as “scramble bells,” warned of incoming Luftwaffe fighters or bombers detected by coastal radar stations. Pilots stood ready in full gear and aircraft were prepared for immediate startup. This allowed pilots to take off and climb to altitude faster, intercept the attacking aircraft sooner, and minimize damage to military facilities and civilians. Photo: Imperial War Museum, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205022025>