

## President's Message

by John Dobson



Last month I asked for input on the decline (42%) of GA operations at Paine Field. I was very pleased to hear from a wonderful cross section of Chapter faithful. One in particular, our senior statesman, Mr. Glenn Human, captured the essence of the problems facing our passion. I asked Mr. Human for his permission to reprint his letter. No doubt aviation is going through some major changes. I can only say that my love of flight far outweighs my logic or pocketbook.

Hi John,

Great President's Message in the June 2004 issue of "The Paine Flyer"! I assume you'll get a lot of different responses. I don't think there is one primary problem with general aviation, but there are many.

I've found some corrections, trivia and interesting data in response to your epistle. The air traffic count at Paine Field peaked at 217,000+ in 1979 and not in 2000. This was the year 17,000+ aircraft were built, there were 5 FBO's on Paine Field, it was the height of the Viet Nam veterans GI Bill flight training program and 90% of the flight activity took place on Rwy 11/29.

Please go to AOPA nationwide GA trends 2002 - 2003 < <http://snipurl.com/6xpo> >. You'll find that EVERY GA statistic (nationwide) shown is a negative number or percentage. It would appear that GA activity is down nationwide and not just at Paine Field or the Puget Sound region.

Please go to AirNav for local & national fuel prices < <http://www.airnav.com/fuel/> >. The fuel price for 100LL at Paine Field on June 7th was \$3.41 a gallon, at Harvey on June 4th was \$3.41 a gallon, at Bremerton on June 1st was \$2.98 and at Jefferson County on May 20th was \$2.86. The northwest region average price was \$2.79. Fuel prices at Paine are higher than the surrounding smaller operations, but less than Galvin on Boeing Field. Fuel is certainly a major expense, but it doesn't look like fuel at Paine Field is the result of a "vast right wing conspiracy".

John, you cite that car sales are up. You didn't indicate whether they are new cars or used. I don't think car sales are any longer an indicator of the economy. Automobiles are now considered a necessity and not a luxury. Also not mentioned was the influx of people to the region (look at all of the new apartment houses). These may be people with lower paying jobs, these people have to eat and buy necessities at Wal-Mart, and they buy cars to commute to work, take children to day-care and pick up their welfare check. The majority of the people that appear to be improving the retail economy are probably not candidates for flight training and buying expensive planes in a community where Boeing and Microsoft may still lay off workers. I know this first hand as I have a son and son-in-law in this category. They make good money, but aren't about to spend what they have on aviation in an unsettling economy. Maybe Dave Waggoner is right, it is the (uncertain) economy. Seems to me that people have to satisfy their basic needs of job security, housing, food, medical care and paying kids college tuition before they are candidates for planes. Planes are probably the first thing to go in a declining economy and the last to improve in an improving economy.

I think the reasons for the downward spiral of General Aviation are that it's TOO EXPENSIVE, TOO SELF CENTERED, TOO COMPLEX, TOO OVER REGULATED & TOO RESTRICTIVE, HAS TOO MUCH COMPETITION FOR THE PUBLIC'S

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NEWSLETTER  
DEADLINE  
July 11th**

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# President

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DISCRETIONARY DOLLARS and has generally OUTLIVED IT'S USEFULNESS AS A TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE. Let's take the issues one at a time.

**BACKGROUND:** I've been fortunate that during my working and retirement years our family income has exceeded the national and local median. After 58 years I quite flying, not because I had to, but because I felt the cost of flying had exceeded the pleasure derived and plane ownership was taking too great a percentage of the total family time and monetary resources. Most importantly, I've lost most of the friends in my aviation community that made aviation and hangar flying interesting, affordable and enjoyable. I used to go through the open Paine Field gates several evenings a week and would always find several friends cleaning or working on their airplane. Saturday was always a "big" day at the airport that included a little flying, lunch at the Jet Deck and hangar flying with friends, but not anymore. The Jet Deck is no longer a restaurant frequented by many pilots and my friends have either gone or can't get through the locked airport gate. Today you can fire a cannon between hangar rows and not hit a plane, car or person.

**TOO EXPENSIVE:** The aviation media has long taunted general aviation as being affordable for the average citizen. EAA and other aviation moguls have courted our youth, like drug pushers, claiming them to be the future of general aviation. It's difficult for me to push general aviation when it costs about \$125 an hour (+ 8.3% sales tax) in a C-150 to learn to fly, \$5,000+ to get a private license and months of lessons and practice, so you can take another person aloft.

\* New single engine planes at \$75,000 to \$450,000 are too expensive for general public purchase. \* Used planes, starting at about \$15,000 are too expensive, mostly caused by the high price of new planes. Planes were not originally built to last 30-50 years and are now expensive to maintain. A 1950 Bonanza that originally cost \$8,000 new may be worth \$30-\$50,000 today. Keep in mind that when replacement parts are purchased today from Beech / Raytheon the replacement parts may be based on what it cost to produce a like part for a \$450,000 A-36 Bonanza. A new GM 350 crate engine for a motor vehicle costs less than a field re-skinned Bonanza aileron. \* Rental planes are expensive. Considering their cost, maintenance, fuel, FBO overhead and profit margin, the rental rates are probably justified. But, they are still too expensive for the average workers income. \* At a local average of \$3.15 per gallon, avgas is too expensive to feed engines that have 10-15 gallon an hour appetites. Lack of competition, a low market demand and leaded fuel, having to be transported by trucks instead of a pipeline, are contributing factors. \* I'm not going to judge whether \$2,600 a year is too much for hangar rent, but I wouldn't own a plane without having a hangar. A hangar is an additional expense of airplane ownership. \* Airplane insurance is too expensive, probably due to lack of competition. Plane insurance, after a pilot attains age 70, is problematical to acquire, expensive and restrictive (additional physicals, flight checks with instructors, etc.). \* Maintenance is too expensive. I'm not complaining about the intent of safety or the A&P wages, but \$10,000 - \$25,000 for an overhaul of a C-150 or Bonanza engine is more than pocket change for the average wage earner. Annual inspections costing several hundreds to thousands of dollars are not amounts taken from the family sugar bowl. \* Flight instruction is expensive, continuous and necessary. An instrument rating is almost required to fully utilize a plane in the Northwest. The cost can be several thousand dollars even if you own your own plane. \* Avionics and instrument replacement and maintenance are expensive due to satisfying government regulations. \* Planes must be flown regularly. They don't accept non use as well as a car, RV or even a boat. \* Product Liability costs, borne by all of us, is a major aviation cause of high costs.

**TOO SELF CENTERED:** The interest, desire and finances to support aviation addiction are generally centered on one person in the family. Lucky is the person

*see President on page 3*

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### **Would you like to submit an article?**

Please email to:

newsletter@wpa-paineifield.org

You will receive a positive response

that your article has been received

- if not - call Mitch at 206-890-6367

whose spouse is also a pilot. Most spouses that don't fly — go along to get along. Owning a boat or RV are more accepted family oriented activities.

**TOO COMPLEX:** In 1945 it took an average of 8 hours to solo a tail dragger and that included an hour of spin training. Today it's unusual that a student solo's a tri-gear until they have about 15 hours of instruction. Much of the additional time is on radio communication, conformance with FAR's and other installed components that a J-3 Cub never had. Unlike a boat or an RV, to be more fully utilized, a pilot and plane must be certified to fly IFR. This takes more money, more instrumentation, more instruction, more certification, more recurrency training and more practice, etc. Many panels in GA planes are loaded with HSI's, transponders, EGT/CHT cylinder monitors, collision avoidance equipment, auto pilots, multiple communication devices, ADF's, GPS's and more. All of this equipment is said to make flying easier and safer. But, show me a pilot that will express confidence in making an IFR GPS approach. GA pilot training / practice can be expensive and almost a full time job to stay proficient.

**TOO OVER REGULATED AND TOO RESTRICTIVE:** There is NOTHING connected with general aviation that is not regulated by the government. Over regulation costs money and is restrictive. TFR's are the latest regulated restrictions. The FAA uses threats and intimidation to control its subjects. Who wants to enter a program so tightly regulated by the government? Several years ago AOPA printed a survey that indicated a large percentage of new flight students were those 60 years of age and older. These are the people that have paid off their homes, put their kids through college and now can afford to learn to fly. Unfortunately this is also an age where pilots are apt to loose their medicals and will soon have difficulty acquiring insurance for their plane.

**TOO MUCH COMPETITION FOR THE PUBLIC'S DISCRETIONARY DOLLARS:** In the 1930's and 1940's flying was the darling of the young and the restless. Aviation is now common place. Taking general aviation's place are fiberglass pleasure boats, Jet Ski boats, Ski-do's, recreational motor homes, motorcycles and vacationing at theme parks. Please note that none of the above mentioned alternatives to general aviation require costly training, they require few instructions and little additional regulations to learn. All people need to do is acquire financing, get the keys and they are an immediate captain of their ship or motor home. Unlike an airplane, the entire family can participate, enjoy, and most all can control a water craft.

**OUTLIVED IT'S USEFULNESS AS A TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE:** When I learned to fly in 1945 airlines still used DC-3's. In 1947 Beechcraft introduced the Bonanza, which was about as fast as an airliner. The Bonanza was a big hit with those that could afford them because they brought fast air travel to most every airport. At the time, it took five (5) hours to drive to Portland, having to drive through every city and wide spot in the road. Traveling to Portland in a Bonanza saved a lot of time. In the 1950's President Eisenhower mandated the construction of the Interstate highway system, which provided multiple lanes of highway and bypassed the cities. Driving time was almost cut in half and general aviation usefulness diminished. Let's do some comparisons on a trip to Portland. In VFR conditions a pilot living in Seattle may file a flight plan, drive to Paine Field (30 min.), get his plane out of the hangar and do a pre-flight (15 min.), fly 175 miles to Portland (75 min.), tie his plane down and arrange for a rental car (20 min.) and drive to his destination (20 min.). That's a total of about 2.6 hours and a car and driver can cover the same distance in about three hours. On the return trip the plane owner must drive the 30 minutes from the airport to get home, but the car driver is already home. It appears a plane is most useful for personal transportation when the trip is 500 or more miles. But, how many GA pilots at Paine Field have the regular need to fly 500 miles a week or a month?

**SUMMARY:** I love aviation, love airplanes, and enjoy talking to my aviation oriented friends. I hope aviation survives, but I think aviation is looking at the wrong sources for future pilots and plane owners. Spending time courting youth is OK, but it's the independent business owners and professional people that can afford flying lessons and planes. Take a look at the WPA roster. How many plane owners on the roster make a living flipping burgers, go to school or run a cash register at Wal-Mart? Those interested in the survival of general aviation should hope and pray that the Federal OMB and FAA approve The Sport Pilot Rule. The Sport Pilot Rule will allow flight in any aircraft that meets the definition of a light-sport aircraft (LSA). In the current proposal, a LSA is defined as a two-place, single-engine aircraft with:

1. A maximum gross takeoff weight of 1,232 pounds or less.
2. A maximum stall speed of 44 mph in the landing configuration AND a maximum stall speed of 51 mph with flaps retracted, if so equipped.
3. A maximum speed in level flight of 132 mph.
4. A fixed or ground-adjustable propeller.
5. A fixed landing gear, with the exception that seaplanes may have landing gear that can be rotated for amphibious operation.

The Sport Pilot Rule will utilize real planes similar to J-3 Cubs, Aeronca Champs, and some Taylorcrafts. It will take fewer training hours and cost less to get a Sport Pilot license. It will allow old guys, who have a driver's licenses, but don't possess a FAA Class 3 medical, to get back in the air.

Thanks for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Glenn C. Humann

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## Flyouts and "Hangar Flying"

by Rebecca Lohman



Is it Summer yet? We have had such a mixed bag of weather this past Spring. We have managed to have some good flying days and I, for one, am looking forward to the next few months. I figure once we are past July 4th, the weather has to get better.

Up coming events include on July 11th, our Saturday fly-out will be to Arlington for the EAA Northwest Regional "Fly-In". Since I live to near the airport, it will be up to y'all to get to the event. It just doesn't make sense for me to drive to PAE and then turn around and come back to the Arlington Airport.

The following week-end July 17th, will be our fly-out to the Second Annual Orcas Island "Hamilton Family" potluck event. This year Robert and Carrie have also invited pilots from the island to join us. So remember to bring a salad, dessert, chips, veggies, etc., to share. We will still meet at PAE to fly-out as a "flock". This should once again be a lot of fun!!!

If you missed the fly-out to Jackpot, NV, you missed a good time. Anytime I can also see an Air Show---I'm happy! Twin Falls, ID, again hosted an air show the same weekend that we were at Jackpot, and it is only a few minutes flight to Twin Falls. So for those of us who aren't "pool people", and don't play golf, this is great! Remember our trip to Jackpot is something PAE Field WPA Chapter, has done annually for over 10 years, maybe 15 years, so mark it on your calendar for 2005.

Our next over night fly-out will be to Republic, in eastern Washington, for those new to the area. The folks that went last year had a great time. There is camping, and showers, etc. or for those of us (ok, me), who aren't the best campers, there are several nearby motels, but because of all the activities that week-end you should make a room reservation early.

I truly need your input on destinations for the Saturday Morning Fly-outs. You should show up some Saturday morning and listen to the grumbling, if I don't have a good suggestion of a place to head out to. So Please, have pity on me, and come with some input of where you would like to see us fly to.

And as usual, you don't have to be a pilot, nor own a plane, nor be a member of WPA, to join us on Saturday mornings around 10:00 at Regal Air, Paine Field. We will do our best to fill the planes that show up. With the Very High price of fuel, some places \$3.85 a gallon, and climbing, it would be appreciated if you would help the pilot who is providing your flight with some of the cost of the fuel. What a good deal in exchange for the joy of flying here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest!!

Fly Safely,

## Programs

by Stephanie Allen

### June Program Review

We thank, Med Velasco of Transport Canada, for his time and efforts in providing an informative educational program. This is only the second time we have held a Friday night program and followed with a continuation on Saturday. Forty seven attended the standing room only program on Saturday at Regal Air. This indicates a high level of interest in flying in Canada and will probably have a repeat performance in the future.

### July Swap Meet & Bar-B-Que

Bring you items to the Inner Terminal Ramp. There will be tables set up under the eaves next to the Airport Office. A tent will be available if we need more space. You may drive in to unload through the gate next to Everett Jet Center. If you fly in, parking will be available at Everett Jet Center. The Swap Meet opens at 5 pm. If you do not wish to stay with your items, a silent auction tag will be available. Come sell and bid, someone else's junk might be the treasure you are waiting for. We already have a good selection of items. At 7 pm we will start a BBQ. At 7:30 we end the swap meet. The seller is responsible for exchange of any money. WPA and Paine Field Airport will not be responsible for any items. At 8 pm we will have a short business meeting. Regardless of weather, the swap meet and BBQ will be held. The Airport Office is providing a large tent to keep us out of the rain or hot sun. So come one, come all, this is open to everyone near and far.

### August Goodrich Tour

Goodrich Tour on August 6th: Dinner and tour hosted by Goodrich. Registration will be required for security reasons. Watch our web site and next newsletter for final details and registration instructions. Registration will start in mid July. We thank Goodrich for hosting this event.



**July 9th, 2004**  
**1st Annual Swap Meet & BBQ**  
**@ PAE Inner Terminal Ramp**  
**look for the tent**

**Swap meet starts at 5 pm**  
**ends at 7:30 pm**

**Silent Auction Tags available or stay and barter**

**Fly or drive in**

**Ramp access will be available next to Everett Jet Center to unload your items**

**Aircraft parking available on the Inner Terminal Ramp**



**Seller is not obligated to accept any offer**

**WPA and PAE not responsible for items, change or exchange of monies**

**BBQ at 7 pm**

**Business meeting at 8**

**check our PAE WPA web site for details**

**wpa-paine-field.org**



**NEXT MEETING**  
**FRIDAY July 9, 2004**  
**Paine Field**  
**Terminal Bldg**  
**5 pm - Swap Meet**  
**7 pm - Bar-B-Que**

The Paine Flyer  
 PO Box 14001  
 Mill Creek, WA 98082-2001  
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSRST STD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 EVERETT, WA  
 PERMIT NO. 336

**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

Jul 9th	Tent Revival
Aug 6th	Goodrich tour
Sept 10th	Hanger Party
Oct 1st	Flying in Alaska
Nov 5th	Year in Review
Dec 3rd	Christmas Party

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

**FOR SALE** 50% of T210 hangared at Boeing Field. \$62,500. Call Gary 206-932-2306

**FOR SALE** 1983 C-152 II; 50 hour progressive maint. program since new; 385A Nav/Com; RT359A transponder w/mode C; Fightcom intercom w/PTT; EGT; extended tanks; pitot heat; pulse landing light; strobes. Interior/ exterior = 8. Exceptionally clean. Tight rigging. TTAF: 12,050; 900 SMOH; \$25,000. Contact Gary: 360-629-2005 or [AB7RK@aol.com](mailto:AB7RK@aol.com); or Tom at 425-681-4316

**WPA STORE**

*Have our WPA logo put on anything – blankets, jackets, shirts, etc. Computer controlled machine stitching of the WPA logo is made available to the Paine Field Chapter by Don's Group Attire.. The approximate cost for a garment is \$42.00 for front and back logo and your name.*

**Don's Group Attire**  
**5216 1st Ave. S.**  
**Seattle, WA 98101**  
**(206) 767-0366**



Name Badges \$5.00  
 e-mail: [store@wpa-painefield.org](mailto:store@wpa-painefield.org)

**FOR SALE** 1991 Challenger 1 Ultralight, Single Seater, 42 horsepower Rotax 447 Engine, 90 mph. Top Speed, 344.7 Total Tach. Time. Hangared in Port Townsend, WA. \$6,000. Call 425-745-3412.

**FOR SALE:** 1978 Skylane, leather interior, 2869 TT, 748.9 SMOH, dual collins digital audio & vor. ILS, ADF, Trimble GPS, LR Tanks, fresh annual. Hangared last 13 years. asking 98K. (206)365-1343 or (206) 819-8151

**WANTED** Partner(2), Looking to join or form partnership in 5-6 seat plane. 1/2 or 1/3 share, Contact Todd at [Todd@Echelbarger.com](mailto:Todd@Echelbarger.com) or (425)741-3535

**WANTED** Students and renter pilots. Private and instrument ratings in Piper Cherokee airplanes. Check our website for details and rates. FAA and airport approved instructor. Hella Hernandez & David Wheeler dba H & D Enterprises. Website: [www.NorthwestSchoolOfAviation.com](http://www.NorthwestSchoolOfAviation.com). Phone 425-238-7696