



EAA Chapter 430

Serving Northern Olympic Peninsula



February 2026 - Newsletter



From the Left Seat with President Ray Ballantyne

It's been exciting to see the daylight getting longer and longer every morning and evening. And it's been an unusually warm and snowless winter. Many are taking advantage of these conditions to commit aviation. But it's not always easy to get out of the blue hole. The joke is we can always get airborne in the blue hole, but all you can do is fly around in circles. 😊 I had a trip planned for the southern Oregon coast recently, and the weather there was beautiful for days – but the fog moved into the Peninsula keeping me grounded. But Spring is

coming, and it's time to start planning some aviation adventures.

I hope you're planning to attend the Northwest Trade Show in Puyallup. Even if you're a veteran of this event, it's always fun to see and talk with old acquaintances and see what's new in aviation at our local level. Watch for announcements to form up a car pool. Join others for the trip. There are always great seminars provided. I'm planning to do the oxygen deprivation hypoxia chamber this year. I heard it's a nice room, but has no atmosphere.

And the following weekend, I am joining Past President Ken Brown for a two-day course to obtain our LSA Repairman Inspection Airplane authorization the first weekend of March. That will give us authority to conduct and certify annual Condition Inspections on our own E/AB airplanes. Even with this authority, I still plan to ask for help from the wealth of mechanic experience we have in our chapter.

On May 18th we will be having our sixth Flying Start presentation at Pt Angeles. This is an opportunity to introduce people who always wanted to fly, but because of funds or time haven't yet. The program discusses all types of aviation and aircraft and what it takes to get a pilot license. So if you run into someone who finds out you're a pilot and say that they always wanted to do that, ask them to join you at this event.



Usually, we don't have a Gathering in February due to the NW Trade Show, but the calendar gave us the last day of the month for our Gathering. So get ready for another delicious breakfast at Port Angeles and a great presentation remembering Bob Nagy. I hope to see you there.

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Upcoming Events

Board of Directors Meeting
Feb 20 - 9:00am
 Mariner Cafe

Membership Gathering
Feb 28 - 10:00 am
 Wm. R. Fairchild Intl. Airport
 Terminal Conference Room
 (Breakfast - come early)

VMC/IMC Club
Mar 11 - 7:00pm
 Mariner Cafe

A Quick Note

Our February Gathering will feature a presentation about long time chapter member Bob Nagy's remarkable flying career. Bob left us last year, but he'll be fondly remembered by those who knew him.



Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) in 2026 – Ray Ballantyne, WA State Liaison

January Gathering Presentation RAF Overview

Transitioning from Chapter President to RAF Liaison, Ray assumed the trademark orange shirt and cap just like Superman out of a phone booth (what’s a phone booth?). He then provided a 25-minute overview of the RAF and current projects and activities.

Ray showed airstrips that are being preserved, improved and created all around the country from Florida, Maine, Arkansas, New Mexico, California, Idaho and Washington.

He also discussed airstrips in Washington State and activities planned this year.

February Fly-Out Fun Barry Halsted

February can be a cantankerous month when it comes to weather for fly-outs. But this month’s forecasts showed a few good days and Wednesday the 11th was one.

As a result of Wednesday’s good weather, 15 people arrived at Amelia’s Hangar for lunch by aircraft and one on foot. Sid Vandiver and I arrived a bit late and it was really cool when we walked in to see the entire group seated along one wall, chatting happily away.

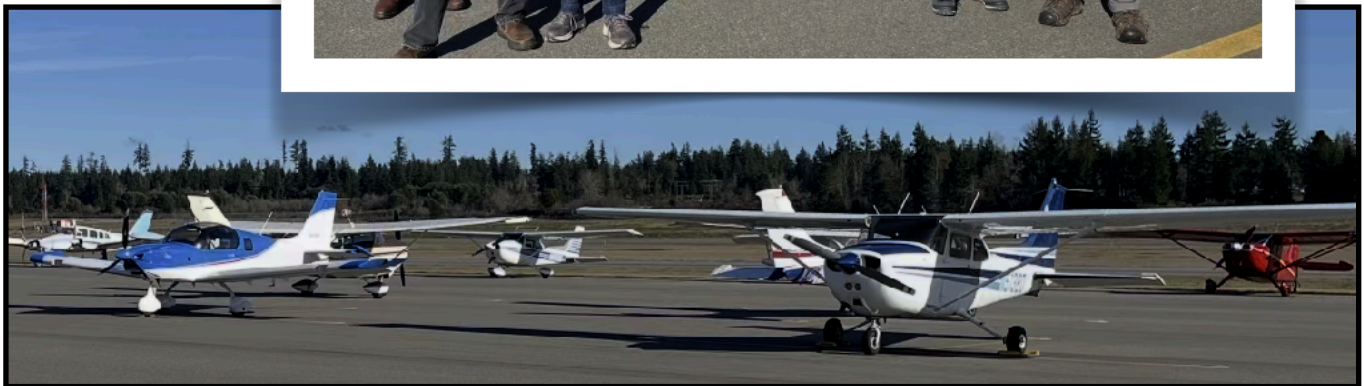
Those flying to the fly-out included Richard Howell (Sling 2), Emily Westcott, Aidan Lara and Kevin Tracy (Emily’s Cessna 172),



Sid Vandiver and Barry Halsted

John Ward (Pipestrel Sinus), Ken and Skip Brown (RV-9), Scott Alair (Lancair Legacy), Ray and Lisa Ballantyne, (Glasair Sportsman), Doug Medema (RV-6), Mark Long with Drew Zacharias (Sea Rey LSX), and Barry Halsted with Sid Vandiver (Cessna 172). Pat Barrett arrived on foot from 1000 ft down the ramp!

Weather on the way home was good, and we're all looking forward to another fun fly-out next month. *



Full Circle Aiden Lara

I've loved airplanes for as long as I can remember. Even as a little kid, I was the one staring at the sky whenever I heard an engine overhead. Some of my earliest memories of aviation come from watching the World War II aircraft from The Collings Foundation fly into William R. Fairchild Airport in Port Angeles. Seeing those historic airplanes up close made aviation feel real and alive, not just something distant in the sky. Even then, I think I knew flying would somehow be part of my life.

My first real step into aviation came in the summer of 2013, when I was eight years old and had my first Young Eagles flight. I met a pilot named Joe Platt, who flew a 1946 Aeronca Champ. Sitting in that airplane for the first time and feeling it lift off the runway was unforgettable. It wasn't just exciting—it felt meaningful, like I had crossed a threshold from dreaming about flying to actually experiencing it.

Not long after, I met Emily Westcott and her Cessna 172, "Sally." She flew me as a Young Eagle as well, and that flight left a lasting impression on me. Emily became

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both a mentor and a friend, and over time I went from being a passenger in Sally to flying with her regularly. Today, we fly together all the time, and one of the things we've especially enjoyed is collecting stamps for the Fly Washington Passport Program, turning each trip into both an adventure and a shared accomplishment.

I was also fortunate to experience aviation from another angle through radio-controlled flying with the Sequim RC Aeronauts. Flying RC aircraft gave me a hands-on understanding of aerodynamics, control, and patience, and it deepened my appreciation for how airplanes really work. It was there that I met Linda Priddle, who has been an

incredible mentor, friend, and supporter throughout my aviation journey. Her encouragement and guidance, along with the welcoming RC community, helped strengthen my confidence and passion for flight in ways that continue to shape me as a pilot today.

Years later, in August of 2024, I earned my Private Pilot certificate, a milestone that marked the realization of a goal I had worked toward for years. Since then, I've continued flying as often as possible and have built up around 250 hours of flight time, gaining experience, confidence, and an even deeper appreciation for aviation with every flight. Along the way, I've also developed a strong interest in weather



Emily and Aiden with "Sally"

and have really enjoyed learning to understand it better, knowing how important it is for safe and thoughtful decision-making as a pilot.

In the summer of 2025, I found myself in the left seat as Pilot in Command, taking Young Eagles up for their own first flights—in that very same airplane. That moment was a full-circle experience I'll never forget. Looking over at a new Young Eagle seeing the world from above for the first time, I saw the same amazement I had felt back when I was eight years old. Being able to pass that experience on, in the same plane that once carried me as a first-time flyer, made me realize just how powerful aviation can be as well as what an important program the Young Eagles is to the future of aviation.

I've also truly enjoyed being a member of EAA Chapter 430 and am grateful for all the help and



encouragement they've given me along the way. The aviation community they've built on the Olympic Peninsula is something special—welcoming, supportive, and passionate about flying. One of my favorite parts has been the monthly fly-outs, which bring pilots together and keep everyone engaged and excited about getting into the air regularly. That sense of community has played a huge role in keeping my motivation strong and my love of aviation growing.

My family, mentors, and friends have supported me throughout this journey, encouraging me to keep going even when training got challenging. Every lesson has brought me closer to my goals. At the end of March, I'll be earning my AA degree, another milestone on my path.

As I've become more involved in the aviation community, I've also enjoyed helping bring pilots together by organizing group fly-outs. One of my favorite experiences was coordinating a trip to Yakima to tour the CubCrafters factory, which was both

inspiring and educational for everyone who attended. I also organized a monthly fly-out to Roche Harbor, creating another opportunity for pilots to stay active, connect, and share their passion for flying. I also had the opportunity to help coordinate the Olympic Peninsula Air Affaire, which was a rewarding experience that allowed me to contribute behind the scenes and support an event that brings



Roche Harbor Fly-out (Oct 2025)

the aviation community together and inspires others to share in the excitement of flight. I've discovered that I really enjoy planning these events and seeing people come together through aviation, and I'm already looking forward to organizing another group trip this year to tour the Van's Aircraft factory.

My long-term goal is to become a commercial pilot and work either in the airlines or in corporate aviation. Flying started as a childhood fascination, but it's grown into something much bigger—a direction for my future and a passion I know will stay with me for life. No matter where this path leads, I'll always remember those first flights, because that's where everything truly began. ✨



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EAA Chapter 430 – General Membership Meeting

Date: January 31, 2026

10:11am call to order

30 members and guests present

- Minutes approved from November 2025
- Correspondence
 - EAA Chapter Renewed for 2026
 - Ray Scholar candidate not identified, Linda Exploring \$12k or cost sharing options
 - Ray discussed construction plans for taxiway A at KCLM with Airport manager more to come in future
 - Diamond Point Days August 15th, same day as young eagles
 - No Air Affair in 2026

Old Business

- Treasurer/Membership
 - \$4800 in Scholarship, \$2315 Checking, \$233,500 Building. 119 Members
- CAP continues Richard, Ray, Linda and Eric participating
- January Flyout record attendance 25 @ Forks. Bremerton proposed for February
- Building Committee, back on the job nothing new to report

New Business

- Ray scholarship see above 2b
- New aviators gave update of their progress
- Holiday Party, new venue being explored more information next meeting
- Because of no Air Affair in 2026, there will be a general EAA430 meeting @W28 on August 29th
- Kevin Tracy leading crew for cleanup of Recognition Plaza, contact Kevin if you wish to help
- Richard Howell making steady progress updating EAA430 website
- NW Conference and tradeshow is 1 week earlier this year, which means EAA430 will have general membership meeting at KCLM on February 28th
- Alan Bernard donation for sale to members in kitchen
- March 3-4 EAA Virtual boot camp, see Ray if interested.

Project Reports

- Multiple reports from those builders in attendance

Meeting adjourned 11:15.

Presentation from the RAF

Important **February** 2026 Dates

- Feb 11th @ 7 pm VMC/IMC Club, Mariner Café
- Feb 20th @ 9am BOD, Mariners Café
- Feb 28th General gathering KCLM conference room

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Stephens, EAA 430 Secretary