A Gyroplane Breakthrough?
Paul Plack, Editor

In an April 15 post on the Rotary Wing Forum, Paul Komander of Poland made the following observation: "Looking at the recent news from S'n'F and Aero fairs, you can get an impression that 2011 could be the breakthrough year for gyrocopters. The number of new models on the market, number of factory-built machines sold, first machines for government use sold in the US, this all shows a huge growth potential.

"If only, finally, the FAA would end the nonsense situation with LSA rules for gyrocopters, the future would look really bright.

"Eventually getting rid of some flawed machines ruining the image of the brand and some serious manufacturers getting reasonable numbers sold, allows for moderate optimism. Also the great job done by CarterCopters (to) licence to top military suppliers gives a new public perception to gyrocopters. We slowly but surely move away from the 'toy' image of Little Nelly and Mad Max Gyronaut cliche."

Paul could be right, but I would observe that not everyone in the US is excited to see the sport started by Dr. Bensen a half-century ago morph into a marketplace of higher expectations, higher prices and higher participation levels. Some fear the availability of factory-built, Experimental Light Sport Aircraft (E-LSA) gyroplanes would prompt the FAA to end training in the current fleet of Experimental Amateur Built gyro, wiping out the current training fleet, driving out our most experienced instructors, and inflating hourly instruction rates.

Some worry that the culture of the sport would change, with hundreds or thousands of newcomers flooding in with little knowledge or appreciation of the traditions we cherish. Some fear the companies which currently sell gyro kits will wither in the new competitive environment, or even that we'll have only European gyro available for purchase in the US.

I believe all these fears are unfounded, and here's why. The biggest obstacle to our sport's survival is that most people in the US have never seen a gyroplane fly except in an old movie. We have the greatest light sport aircraft ever devised, with the ability to fly low and slow along the beach in 30-knot winds, and it's the best-kept secret in power sports. Most of our flying events happen in out-of-the-way places where the general public can't easily find us. Even our most active PRA chapters usually do a marginal job of getting media interested in personal rotorcraft events.

If our expectations for FAA action on E-LSA gyroplanes proves accurate, several manufacturers will be granted permission to sell a few dozen factory-built E-LSA gyros in the US as a test. If they achieve a decent safety record, the gates may be opened wide a few years later. If this happens, the gyro market can reasonably be expected to look like the market for fixed-wing LSAs. Let's look at what that might mean.

You can find an airplane instructor on almost every little airport in the nation. Even those using $100K LSAs charge about what we pay now for..."
GYROX Resumes Record Flight

Norman Surplus

Having left G-YROX (aka Roxy) in the Philippines last September as the winter closed in across the Bering Sea, I am about to set out once more to continue with my world-record-setting quest to pilot the first ever autogyro around the globe. Roxy is still “en route” for the circumnavigation attempt, having been overwintered at a small friendly grass airfield two hours drive north of Manila. She has been regularly

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...
Bensen Days 2011

Sunstate Wing & Rotor Club (PRA 26) reports this year’s Bensen Days event (April 6-10) provided lots of fun and flying, though the number of gyroplanes was down from last year. A few previous attendees who didn’t return this year blamed higher gas prices. The weather was pleasant for the event, in contrast to the storms which hit Sun n’ Fun in Lakeland, FL just a few days earlier.

PRA Secretary and Human Target Stan Foster (above) finally got hit in the “Cluster Cluck” Egg Drop this year. Stan says he moved his arm just in time to avoid a direct hit, only to be splattered with the ricochet. Brian Willis was the marksman who took home a purse totaling $400. Reports from the banquet are that the Spot Landing contest was won by Tim Verroi in an Aurora Butterfly. George Jacobs won Man & Machine by vote of other pilots. PRA and Sunstate President Scott Lewis won Grand Champion with his new Dominator tandem with its spectacular, patriotic paint job. (Below, Matt Novotney took second place in the Spot Landing Contest.)
Gyroplane CFIs

The following instructors are PRA members. This list is provided as a convenience for readers, and does not constitute an endorsement of any instructor, aircraft, syllabus or training enterprise by PRA. (Aircraft listed in parentheses are available for instruction.)

Arkansas

Ron Menzie (501) 766-6456
2715 S Main St
Searcy, AR 72143
(SparrowHawk, Parsons, RAF)

Arizona

Terry Brandt (602) 739-0554
11423 W Citrus Grove
Avondale, AZ 85392

Florida

Dofin Fritts (850) 587-2504
Brewton Muni Airport AL 12J
Pensacola, FL
(251) 867-9446
Robert Martian (772) 546-7335
8011 SE Helen Terrace
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
(Marchetti)

Glen Garrick (386) 479-4838
635 Forest Lane
Deland, FL 32724
(RAF)

Georgia

Steve McGowan (478) 461-1451
2725 Herbert Small Airport Rd
Macon, GA 31217
(SparrowHawk, Parsons)

Illinois

Don Randle (217) 414-0108
513 South 6th St.
Petersburg, IL 62675

Chuck Roberg (630) 983-7625
614 Bunker Hill Ct
Naperville, IL 60540

Indiana

Gary Goldsberry (317) 996-2487
1181 W SR 42
Mooresville, IN 46158
(Twinstarr)

Silas Smith (219) 374-4604
11709 W 117th St
Cedar Lake, IN 46303
(Marchetti)

Bensen Days Photos (from top): Wauchula Municipal Airport is a little hard to find from the highway without good signs, but the upside is a rural environment allowing lots of aerial sightseeing opportunities. When there's no event going on, aircraft operations here average 22 per day (2010 data). Middle: Chasing shadows down on the deck in a Dominator. There are lots of places to safely and legally fly low and slow at this event. Bottom: The cattle are so accustomed to the buzzing, they've stopped looking up. Jim Fields of AeroWorks International flies a hot pink HoneyBee G2 near the airport. Vendors saw lots of traffic at this year's event.
April 8, 2011 PRA Board Meeting Summary

The following summary is intended to inform members of board activity, but is derived from minutes which have not yet been corrected or accepted by the board. Unofficial minutes are subject to revision. Above: PRA Treasurer Robert Rymer taxis at Bensen Days.

The meeting was called to order by President Scott Lewis at 7:00 PM EDT. Also present were VP Tim O'Connor, Treasurer Robert Rymer, Secretary Stan Foster, Directors Tom Milton and Ernie Boyette, former President Gary Goldsberry and PRA Office Manager, Jennifer Gillmore.

Minutes from the August 6, 2010, board meeting held at Mentone during the convention were approved. On April 7, 2010, membership was 1,301. As of the same date in 2011, membership is now 1,400.

Paul reported PRA’s Rotorcraft E-Zine has reached 1,325 subscribers. Tim O’Connor made a motion to keep Rotorcraft free to promote PRA member benefits. The motion passed, with a condition that it will be revisited in August 2011. Tim reported website development is complete and paid for. Implementation of the PRA Forum will have to wait until Tim has more available time and volunteer administrators.

Ernie Boyette announced at the meeting that due to demands on personal time, he was resigning from the board, effective immediately. The board decided to keep the board at it new size, nine members, for now.

Scott reported that $3,000 in revenue from Bensen Days is being donated to PRA by Sunstate Wing & Rotor Club (PRA 26) in exchange for a one-year membership in PRA for all Sunstate members. Scott also announced that Sunstate is interested in having PRA take over management of the annual event for the next two years under a revenue-split agreement. (In the days since, that agreement was accepted by both PRA and Sunstate - Ed.)
PRA Chapters

Arizona
#15 Arizona Rotorcraft Club
Britta Penca
(520) 840-0951

Arkansas
#6 Mid-South Rotorcraft Club
Thom Francis
(870) 403-2888

California
#1 Ken Brock Rotorcraft Assoc.
Terry Smith, President
#31 San Diego Rotorcraft Club
John Rountree (619) 743-6712
#58 Sierra Rotorcraft Club
Jim Burrow (925) 449-4855

Colorado
#38 Colorado Rotorcraft Assoc.
Mark Shook
(719) 683-3062

Florida
#26 Sunstate Wing & Rotor Club
Scott Lewis
(561) 718-3922

Georgia
#56 Peach State Rotorcraft
Lewis Gulley
(706) 232-6299

Illinois
#18 Greater Midwest Rotorcraft Club - Tom Milton
(708) 895-0398
#25 North IL-South WI Rotorcraft
Mike McKiernan
(847) 638-4840
#35 Saint Louis Rotorcraft Club
Mark Greene
(309) 287-1470

Indiana
#34 Indiana Rotorcraft Assoc
Sue Goldsberry
(317) 996-2487
#36 Wendell Knight Gyro Club
Cynthia Sanders
(765) 795-3489
#81 Mentone Aero Club
Bernard Ernst
(574) 633-4675

Gyroplanes at AERO 2011 Friedrichshafen
Kai Bode

In April 2011, AERO 2011, the global aviation trade fair took place in the city of Friedrichshafen in Germany. Again, it was a magnificent experience to see all those flying contraptions in one place. Once more it was a big step forward for the gyroplane industry.

The ICAO rules for aviation apply in Europe as everywhere in the world. However, the European authorities allowed for a lower, less regulated class, similar to the LSA in the US.

The regulations allow for a class below 450 kg (992 lbs) MTOW, which the countries can rule by themselves. These planes are not allowed to fly in A, B or C-class airspaces. They are limited to daytime VFR flights and a maximum of two occupants. The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) later opened the weight limit to 560 kg (1234 lbs) for gyroplanes and many countries adopted this upgrade. Germany unfortunately did not.

Every European country has created its own rule set for this so called Ultralight or Microlight class. In Italy you are not allowed in control zones and limited to the lower regions of G-class airspace. In Germany, France and many other countries you are a full member of the aviation family, with radio and often transponder, allowed to go on many controlled airports. This UL class is also the home of gyroplanes in most countries.

To maintain safety standards, the countries issue their construction detail regulations. The British Section T and the German BUT go into great detail and demand high loads and are therefore recognized by many other countries. Examples for the requirements are: resistance against 3G without structural damage and 9G with damage but without destruction of tanks or occupants.

The most popular powerplants for two seaters are the four-cylinder, four-stroke Rotax 912 ULS (100hp) or Rotax 914 (115 hp), which have a great reputation, but also a high price attached. The resultant aircraft are sturdy, but a bit pricey. These are the gyroplane manufacturers on exhibition in alphabetical order.

Arrowcopter - The Austrian model leads the pack. The tandem gyro can be flown with closed or half-open canopy. The sleek looks and the incredible attention to detail make this a most impressive machine.
PRA Chapters

**Kansas**
#75 Wichita Wing & Rotor Club
  *Jim Sampson*
  (316) 685-3430

**Louisiana**
#20 Pelican State Rotorcraft
  *Bill Wieger*
  (318) 640-5656

**Michigan**
#77 West Michigan Rotorcraft
  *Wes Clements*
  (616) 225-0200
#32 Bay Area Rotorcraft Club
  *Brian Anthony*
  (517) 777-7617
#63 Central MI Gyroplane Club
  *Kurt Pochert*
  (810) 632-7830
#36 Wendell Knight Gyro Club
  *Cynthia Sanders*
  (765) 795-3489
#70 Maumee Valley Rotorcraft
  *Michael L. Marckel*
  (260) 316-4022

**Minnesota**
#17 Minnesota Rotorcraft Club
  *Brent Bruns*
  (612) 802-1210

**Missouri**
#35 Saint Louis Rotorcraft Club
  *John Wohaska*
  (636) 296-7188
#67 Mid-America Rotorcraft
  *Craig Tompkins*
  (816) 618-3840

**Nebraska**
#12 Nebraska Rotorcraft Club
  *Warren Hale*

**New Hampshire**
#39 Yankee Rotors
  *John Christopher*
  (603) 744-6232

**New Jersey**
#14 North Jersey Rotorcraft
  *Ralf Schumann*
  (201) 652-6294

**Autogyro Europe** is probably the market leader with 1000 machines produced. Its models (above), the open MTOsport (shown on floats) and the fairly new closed Calidus are now produced one per work day. (Info)

As a big event they introduced the new Cavalon (above), a side-by-side two-seater. This aircraft presents itself with great workmanship and lots of clever ideas like adjustable pedals, lots of baggage room etc.
**PRA Chapters**

**Ohio**

#19 Buckeye Rotorheads
Brad Dutton
(330) 767-1019

#40 Cincinnati Rotorcraft Assoc.
Scott Biser
(513) 383-5046

**Oregon**

#73 Great NW Sport Rotorcraft
Robert Johnson
(503) 665-4449

**Pennsylvania**

#4 West Penn Rotorcraft Club
James Nadig

**South Carolina**

#13 SC / GA Rotorcraft Club
John C. Magnan
(706) 547-3607

**Texas**

#62 Lone Star Rotorcraft Club
Steve Weir
(832) 457-1785

#78 Texas Rotorcraft Assoc.
Bob Stark
(940) 564-2938

**Utah**

#2 Utah Rotorcraft Assoc.
Doug Barker
(801) 444-3736

**Virginia**

#22 Nat’l Capital Rotorcraft Club
"Buck" Buchanan
(703) 250-4868

**Puerto Rico**

#60 Puerto Rico Rotor Club
Charles D. Peterson
(787) 460-6820

**International Chapters**

**France**

#28 Autogyre St. Ciers Charente
Eric Changeur
Moulin du Chatelard, Puyreaux
Charente France F-16230

**Japan**

#79 Akira Ishikawa
2-1-11 Tsujido-Taheidai
Fujsawa 251, Japan

**Rotorcraft**

Celier Aviation is best known for its successful Xenon 2 (right), the enclosed side-by-side two-seater. This time they displayed a new version of the Xenon, the Executive (above), with leather and wood interior. Doors opening forward like car-doors and better aerodynamics. (Info)

But the big event was the unveiling of the Kiss (below), a tandem, with open or half-canopy. The machine is planned to be priced much lower than the other models. It has a very tough appearance and is huge compared to the others.
Event Calendar

Note: The Rotorcraft Event Calendar is open to PRA chapters with minimum 45 days notice. Other events enthusiasts may be included at the discretion of the editor. To submit an event, send event name, sponsoring chapter, dates, times, location, and a URL, e-mail address and/or phone contact to editor@utahrotorcraft.org.

(G) General Aviation Event
(R) Rotorcraft Event

Rotors Over The Rockies
UT Rotorcraft Assoc. (R) (PRA 2)
Jun 9-11, Brigham City, UT


Vertical Challenge (R)
Hiller Aviation Museum
Jun 18 & 19, San Carlos, CA
Helicopter airshow now two days and includes wine, microbrew, food and kids festivals. (Info)

Ela - The Spanish company displayed their two models in Germany. They have not gotten their aircraft approved in Germany, but hope to get it done soon. As this gyro has been the model for many to copy, it would be great to see it thrive in the marketplace. (Info)

Gyrotec produces a single seater enclosed gyroplane (DF02) with a 70 HP, two- cylinder engine from Hirth. It shows great performance and comfort. So far only few are flying. (Info)
**Event Calendar**

**Homer Bell Meet** *(R)*  
Homer K. Bell Consulting  
**Jul 21-23, Hillsboro, OH**  
Homer provides consulting and other services for builders of kit helicopters. 27th & Final event, helicopters only, no general public admitted! *(Info)*

**EAA AirVenture (G)**  
Exp. Aircraft Assoc.  
**Jul 25-31, Oshkosh, WI**  
The largest fly-in in the world. Tens-of-thousands of aircraft, hundreds of vendors incl. Most major aircraft mfrs. Type club gatherings and group fly-ins, seminars, workshops. Rotorcraft flight limited to Ultralight Village, certain hours. Camping adjacent to Wittman Regional Airport. Volunteers recruited annually from EAA chapters. *(Info)*

**Magni** - The Italian manufacturer has an excellent reputation for its stable and safe gyroplanes. Their open models, M16 and M22 were on display together (above) with the closed side by side M24 (right). During the fair they got the German approval for the M24, which they duly celebrated. *(Info)*

**Rotortec** is still struggling to get their highly innovative 4 blade side-by-side two-seater (left) approved. After some temperature issues with the 2-cylinder Weber engine they are now waiting for the noise test to finalize the process. Additionally Rotortec offered the already well known Cloud dancer 1, an enclosed 1-seater. New was the stronger 84 hp 3-cylinder engine by Hirth. *(Info)*

**PRA Convention (R)**  
Popular Rotorcraft Assoc.  
**Aug 2-6, Mentone, IN**  
This event in 2010 drew 70 rotorcraft and 55 powered parachutes. Traditionally has wide variety of helicopter and gyroplane models. Instruction & flight reviews available from CFIs with advance notice. Annual members meeting, on-field camping and food. *(Info)*

**Ken Brock Freedom Fly-In**  
KBRA (PRA 1) *(R)*  
**Sep 23-25, El Mirage, CA**  
This legendary event takes place on a dry lake bed with enough room for gyro-gliders, a taste of the old-school, west coast gyrocopter scene, and a Saturday night corn roast at the Brock Ranch. US BLM charges $15/day or $30/wk for access to lake bed. *(Info)*

As Germany also now has a super light class, 120 kg (264 lb), no medical, Rotortec tried to meet this goal. They missed by 15 kg, but the good looking machine (below) will be priced well below the enclosed version.
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PRA Discounts
These partners offer discounts to PRA members at pra.org.

Falcon Insurance - 5%
FlyAgainParts.com - Free
Rotor Flight Dynamics
2% on Dragon Wings rotors
5% on all other products.
Purple Polish 15% when ordered direct from mfgr.
Lithium Aviation Batteries
10% when ordered from mfgr.

CFI Scholarships
The goal of the "PRA CFI Support Program" is to recruit sponsor manufacturers willing to subsidize the sport through discounted training aircraft and ongoing support, team them with other sponsors providing cash or in-kind support to equip and operate the machine, and make trainers available to CFIs needing a two-place machine with up to $10,000 in loan assistance.

Applications from PRA member CFIs will be accepted via PRA Chapters in good standing. Competing applications will be evaluated based on how they would serve the needs of the sport. Instructors will agree to a lien on the machine to protect the interest of PRA, and commit to a minimum schedule of event appearances, introductory flights and training quotas. As those requirements are met, the loan is forgiven.

The first award will be made in 2011 if funds allow. Watch for more details here, and posted at the new www.pra.org.

Trixie - A total newcomer was the Austrian Trixie (above, right), again a closed or half-closed tandem gyroplane. The workmanship looked great and the correct positioning of the horizontal stabilizer makes this a great design. This one is certainly going to make an impression on the market. Certification in Germany is almost finished.

Some Numbers
While the one-seaters range from about 20,000 up to 30,000 Euros, the two-place tandem-seaters are around 50-60,000 Euros in basic configuration. The side by sides range from 55-70,000 Euros.

Yet, there are exceptions. The Kiss tandem is planned to only cost 30,000 Euros, while the Arrowcopter is priced at 100,000 Euros.

The flight performance in numbers does not differ much. Most have now a VNE of around 180 kph (100 kts). The cruise speed varies, depending on the aerodynamic design, and is usually around 145 kph for side by side, open tandem or single-seater and 160 kph (86 kts) for closed tandem.

So this year, again we have a large number of new gyroplanes to admire and ever increasing number of new registrations per year in all European countries may offer enough room for all of them. Two-seater side-by-side is becoming a new standard but also the tandems are still good for a surprise.
G-YROX Resumes
(continued from p.3)

taken from the hanger to run her engine up to temperature and ensure that all her moving parts are well exercised. By carefully maintaining the mechanical integrity of the aircraft during the non flying months, we have been able to ensure her ongoing airworthiness.

The first half of the journey played out over half the Earths’ surface (above) last summer. The plan going forward is to set out from the Philippines in mid-May heading north towards the Bering Sea to cross to Alaska.

Once across in North America the plan is to return to more temperate latitudes through Alaska and the North West Territories of Canada, before embarking on a coast-to-coast record attempt...Portland Oregon to Portland Maine. From Maine it is back up into Canada again for the crossing to Greenland, followed by the three big 400-plus-mile stepping stone “hops” across the North Atlantic via Iceland, the Faroe Islands and the Outer Hebrides. Then it’s down the west coast of Scotland heading for the FAI World Record circumnavigation finish line in Sandy Bay playing fields, Larne, Northern Ireland (our original starting point on the 22nd March, 2010.)

Tech: In the Beginning - The Aviomania Genesis
Stan Foster

This is the first of several articles detailing my experiences as I build the first Genesis gyroplane kit to reach the United States. The Genesis is a kit from Aviomania company out of Cyprus, owned by Nicolas Karaolides, who has many of these flying over in Europe. Now he is venturing out with a kit version for the US market. He is an aeronautical engineer and used his grasp of physics to design this centerline thrust gyroplane.

John Rountree had been carefully researching several fine gyro kits already out there, and our friend Leigh Ressasi told John at Bensen Days 2010 that he was impressed with the Genesis. John became the US distributor.

I was woven into the mix receiving the first kit. I had already checked Nicolas’s website many times, admiring this refreshing new gyro and very intensive flight videos that really demonstrate its dexterity and also the piloting skills Nicolas has.

This was a new venture for Nicolas who has a nice established pre-built market on his side of the Atlantic throughout Europe. Now he was in new territory, designing a kit that satisfies the FAA 51% build rule, and learning the logistics of economically shipping the components. There were unforeseen documentation requirements, dealing with US brokers and Homeland Security. John is now having all Genesis shipments sent to San Diego, CA, where the individual kits will then be shipped to their new owners around the country.

This build will educate us all on how to refine the shipping and building processes. I have had the opportunity to work on several gyros for myself - a Bensen, an Air Command, an RAF 2000, and a SparrowHawk. My latest project just completed last fall is a Helicycle that I am flying now. These build experiences and just my love for building another gyro found me gnawing on yet another gyroplane kit.
GYROPLANES FOR SALE

AIR COMMAND - Low rider, Rotax 447, Powerfin 3 blade prop, 5 gallon seat tank, 23 ft Dragon Wings. No damage history. Asking $4000. Contact Linda Barton, Dodson, LA, (318) 628-7817 or dannybarton@netzero.net.


DOMINATOR - 2007, N514RK. 175 TTSN, new engine has 50 hrs, SPFI, Delta cam, milled heads, stainless valves and springs, stainless steel straight pipes w/ mufflers, 90-100 hp and very easy to maintain. 26' Dragon Wings. FAA#. $19,500. Robert, (252) 342-0535 or robertkel58@centurylink.net.

BENSEN STYLE GYRO - $6,900. Dropped keel, cleaned, rebuilt and refurbished. Blades are aluminum Knight Hawke 22' in good shape. Engine is a Subaru EA-81 with Warp Drive three-blade prop. Prerotator is electric, main wheels are 12” with good brakes. Will be sold as parts. (Not registered and no N-number.) Partial assembly, liability release required. Contact Michael V. Perdue, friend of owner, Marion, VA. (276) 782-7889.

Classifieds are free to PRA members, and may be subject to editing. Photo may be used as space allows. Send ads to Jennifer, prahq@medt.com, or call her at (574) 353-7227.

On Valentines Day this past February, I opened the first shipment. I was delighted to find huge drawings (right) in color, builder DVDs, and very high quality components. Many parts have the pilot holes drilled, and I bought a hundred sacrificial hardware store bolts for initial assembly. The plan is to fully build this gyro, then disassemble it for powder coating the aluminum and steel, spray painting the composite parts, and polishing the rest. When all this is done, final assembly will be done with the supplied AN hardware. This will result in all new bolts, and none of the substandard work of taping bolts and nuts off, and spraying around them.

The plans are very large, with all the correct bolt sizes, washers, spacers, etc. clearly marked. Almost every part can be located quickly on the drawing, oriented right, and the cut lines and drill points figured out. This is a refreshing change from my past builds where I only had videos to watch, and few drawings or pictures to study. Also nice, Nicolas responds back very quickly with any answer I need.

My DeWalt miterbox with 80-tooth carbide blade cuts aluminum like butter. This is a compound miter saw, but a typical miter saw will suffice. Another handy tool is my 12-inch bench disc sander, great for rounding corners of the aluminum, or sanding straight flats to the exact marks.

The project grew each hour I worked on it, with very little time lost trying to figure out the orientation of the parts and what size to cut them to. Many parts are already cut and have pilot holes drilled in them, while others have to be cut out of rough stock, drilled etc. so as to satisfy the 51% rule.

At the time of this writing, I am just starting on the spring suspension landing gear. Its beefy and fully adjustable for toe in/out and down extension. There will be plenty to write about the next several months.
49th Annual
PRA Convention
August 2 - 6, 2011
Mentone, Indiana

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*Registration for the Extravaganza can be found at www.powrachute.com

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