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# American Racing Pigeon Union *Pigeon Tracks*

## AU/4-H Fly-In Report

By AU Youth Ambassador Thomas Strand

Some pigeons might like to have a Fly-out. But not these pigeons, they want a Fly-in. This is the third year running that the Thunderbird 4-H club has hosted the annual Fly-in in the club's hometown of Bellingham, Washington. This year AU youth members from the Thunderbirds, Skypilots and junior racers from Washington, Idaho and Oregon were invited to attend.

The event took place on the 26th of March. Yet, the kids of the Thunderbird club were excited about the event long before then. When the program began, the kids found out that birds had been donated from many AU members including Herb Cartmell, Rick Arriola, Lori Malone, Terry Dry, Karl Wohlmacher, Matt Hazen and Vicki & Thomas Strand.

One thing that the kids do, is have a Northwest Washington Fair style Fit & Show, where the kids get to show off all the different pigeon knowledge that they have accumulated. Once the list of questions ran out, the audience was more than welcome to ask any harder questions of their own.

Next up was the public presentation practice, where the kids, if they want to, can do a small show-and-tell of any subject they desire. 18 year old Thomas Strand

did a talk on how to complete a 4-H record book, and 7 year old Simeon Leavitt gave a review of a book called "A Cote of Many Colors" (a pigeon book).

Karl Wohlmacher gave a talk on young bird flying, in which he kept the kids attention for well over an hour and a half. By the time Karl had finished his talk, all the kids (and lots of the adults) had learned something.

As the high point of the day, it came time to pick out pigeons. How this works is that all of the kids write their name on a raffle ticket and drop that ticket in a hat. The first name out of the hat gets to pick the first pigeon, second name picks second, etc, etc. There were ten kids picking pigeons but there was only 39 pigeons so the last child in line would have lost out on getting a fourth pigeon. Luckily a pigeon flyer by the name of Ted Amsler offered to donate one bird to that last child.

All in all it was an amazing event. Every kid went home with four pigeons to be used for young bird flying this year. To top it off, all the kids can't wait for the event to come back next year.

See photos on page 10.



### Fall 2016

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# YOUTH RACE UPDATE

With Mark Rozwadowski, Handler



Quality feed for:  
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Juniors, we've got a great group of birds in the loft! They're healthy and they're loft flying very well. We'll start training pretty soon.

The sponsor of the race is Leach Grain & Milling. You can thank these fine folks for helping out a lot with getting the birds in good condition.

This has been fun. It's a lot of work, but I've really enjoyed putting this together for junior members. We're hoping for a lot of visitors. We'll have entertainment and a cookout lunch. It should be awesome! Plan to be here if you can.

This will be a little bit of a tough course, but the distance is short and they will be in shape. Their health is unbelievably good.



## This article was submitted to the Lyndon Tribune

By Thunderbird Club Reporter, Simeon Leavitt

The 4H Thunderbirds Racing Pigeon Club is a club that races homing pigeons. To race pigeons, we take them to a certain place and release them, and see who gets home first. The pigeons live in the same loft. A loft is a pigeon house. The 4H Thunderbirds Club Reporter is Simeon Leavitt and I am writing this report about two races.

The 4H Thunderbirds Racing Pigeon Club had its first race on July 23. Twenty-nine pigeons were released in Arlington at

9:22. The first bird arrived at the loft at 10:27:06. It was band number 68723. The owner was Paxton Erickson. The bird flew 42.77 miles per hour. Second place (second bird to arrive in the loft): bird owner Max Gardner; time 10:28:28; band number 61682. Third place (third bird to arrive in the loft): owner Gwen Berglund; time 10:29:17; band number 68701.

The 4H Thunderbirds Racing Pigeon Club had its second race on July 30. Twenty-nine pigeons were released at the

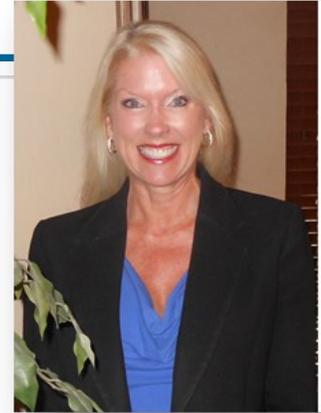


Northgate Mall in Seattle at 8:00. The first bird arrived at the loft at 9:48:46. It was band

*(Continued on page 7)*

# PIGEONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Karen Clifton, AU Executive Director



Summer break is over and most of you are back in school or headed back to school soon. We hope you had a wonderful summer vacation.

Often students are required to prepare a presentation, book report or some other educational display for school. We can help!

If you are looking for a way to share information about the pigeons and your racing hobby, consider a pigeon presentation. Call on us and we will gladly send you literature and brochures that you may distribute in your classroom as you make

your presentation.

Remember the pigeons' invaluable service to our country in different military conflicts. This easily fits into history, which can be useful in the classroom. You will find a lot of information and "ready to use facts" at [http://www.pigeon.org/pigeons\\_in\\_war.htm](http://www.pigeon.org/pigeons_in_war.htm).

Who knows? You may find a couple of new junior members or at least some classmates that are very interested in learning more about your hobby. But we are certain you will inform and impress!

## The American Pigeon Museum



Visit the museum online at  
<http://www.theamericanpigeonmuseum.org/>

# 4-H in Sheridan, Wyoming



Kat Hersman and her daughter Sarah are out in the sparsely populated town of Sheridan, Wyoming.

With the assistance and guidance from Herb Cartmell in Washington, Kat was able to take small steps toward getting a small youth group started in homing pigeons. Herb has extensive experience working the homing pigeons into a 4-H program, so with his help, the first step was getting Sarah involved in a

pigeon related project that could be utilized in 4-H competition.

Sarah completed her first County Fair. She made an information board on pigeons and received a blue ribbon. She showed in Junior Showmanship and won Reserve Champion. Now that they have some experience and have been able to speak to several kids, they are hoping to expand the project over the next year.



You go, Sarah!

## NORTHWEST JUNIOR FLYERS FEATURED ON WWLP 22 NEWS



Here is the story from the news website:

Some rural and hill town children aren't satisfied with playing Pokemon Go. Instead, they prefer to race pigeons.

The sport of pigeon racing is an international one, and local kids from the Pioneer Valley have gotten into it in part because of the Northwest Junior Flyers Group, a Pioneer Valley-based group created by Belchertown native Tim Tessier that works with children to get them interested in the sport. Now, children from Blandford, Russell, Belchertown, Cummington and elsewhere are becoming involved in the activity.

"We were at the Cummington fair and we sent pigeons with notes out and then Tim sent the

notes back to us," Chloe Govani, 12, from Blandford, said.

Govani said that the pigeons flew back to Tessier's home, which is where he retrieved the notes and sent them to her and her friends.

"That's when we were hooked," she said.

Now, she and her two friends, Nicole Hannigan and Laine Gardner, both 12, are raising seven pigeons in a coop at Govani's parent's home in Blandford, getting the birds ready to learn to fly. The trio was provided birds, a pigeon coop and bird seed from the Northwest Junior Flyers free-of-charge. The coop is one of 30 that Tessier has given kids, and the birds are among the hundreds he said he has given, as well.

Zackery Zawalski, who is 11 and from Belchertown, is the Northwest Junior Flyers president and ambassador, and said he was drawn to pigeon racing because of the prestige pigeons appear to have.



A look inside one of the coops .

"We came to pigeon racing because of the history and the amazing adapting abilities of the

*(Continued on page 6)*

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bird,” Zawalski said.

Zawalski readily rattled off facts and figures about the birds, from how long they can live—20 years domesticated—to how fast they can fly—over 40 MPH—and showed just how passionate junior participants can become in the sport. He even gave a presentation about the birds, complete with posters.

Zawalski and his parents Jen and Jeff and his sister JenaRose, have a total of 33 pigeons at their home in Belchertown. His parents enjoy the



Zackery and JenaRose Zawalski with their pigeons, Jo-Jo (L) and Sparkle (R) and an educational presentation on the birds.

sport not just because of the activity but also because of what it teaches their son and daughter.

“I love how it teaches them responsibility and shows kids the stages of life,” Jen Zawalski said.

Of course, it isn’t all passion and ease for the children.

“They all have trouble letting them go to fly,” Tessier said. “That’s the biggest thing with the kids, they don’t want to lose them. But when they do let them fly and they come back it’s amazing.”

In order to remain solvent, the Northwest Junior Flyers raises funds through an annual auction. This past year the top bird went for \$250, and that money was used to purchase supplies and vaccines for the pigeon.

That cost is small though, compared to what some other pigeons can go for. The highest priced homing pigeon, according to the American Racing Pigeon Union, has sold for \$228,000, and race winners can win upwards of \$500,000 on a single race.

The races can take place over hundreds of miles, whether from Albany to the Pioneer Valley or California to Massachusetts. The birds are timed and the fastest home wins.

And this group has already started raising some strong competitors. Zackery Zawalski proudly proclaimed that his bird recently placed 17th out of 200

others in a race.

“And he was the smallest one there,” Zawalski proudly proclaimed.



(From left to right) Chloe Govoni holding Liea, Laine Gardner and Nicole Hannigan holding Lacy.

See <http://www.wp.com/2016/08/04/pigeons-can-race-too/> for the story.



An artist named “BENT” created these murals in New Zealand.

(Continued from page 2)

number 68715. The owner was Thomas Strand. The bird flew 43.69 miles per hour. Second place: bird owner David Dow; time 9:48:59; band number 6543. Third place: owner Simeon Leavitt; time 9:49:43; band number 61678.

What is a band? A band is something that you put on a pigeon's leg when it is very little so you can tell the pigeons apart at the race.

If you want more information about the club, contact Vicki Strand at (360) 966-4796, or

come to the fair and see us there in the poultry barn!

Nice reporting, Simeon. Here's the lineup.



WinSpeed-1	ENTER CLUB / ORG NAME		07/25/16-20:24						
	Weekly Race Report		Page 1						
	Open and Junior Category								
Name: ARL 1	Young Bird Race		Flown: 07/23/2016						
Release(A): 09:22	Birds: 29	Lofts: 2	Station: ARLINGTON						
Weather (Rel) blue skies, none, 62 degrees (Arr) blue skies, none, 65 degrees									
POS	NAME	BAND NUMBER	CLR	X	ARRIVAL	MILES	TOWIN	YPM	PT
1	Thu Paxton/27	68723	AU	16	STLY BBWF	C 10:27:06	46.409	00.00	1254.671 28
2	Thun Max	61682	AU	16	THUN DCWF	C 10:28:28	2/ 27	01.22	1228.873 27
3	Thun Gwen	68701	AU	16	STLY BC	C 10:29:17	3/ 27	02.10	1213.957 26
----- Above are 10 percent -----									
4	Thun Gwen	68706	AU	16	STLY DC	C 10:29:22	4/ 27	02.16	1212.455 25
5	Thun Daniel	68830	AU	16	STLY BB	C 10:29:57	5/ 27	02.50	1202.047 24
6	Thun Paxton	61655	AU	16	THUN BB	C 10:30:15	6/ 27	03.09	1196.763 23
----- Above are 20 percent -----									
7	Thun Spare	61658	AU	16	THUN GRIZ	C 10:30:26	7/ 27	03.19	1193.557 22
8	Thun Simeon	68700	AU	16	STLY BB	10:30:39	8/ 27	03.33	1189.790 21
9	Thun Max	6295	AU	16	EVE BB	C 10:31:50	9/ 27	04.44	1169.629 20
10	Thun Maggie	61630	AU	16	THUN DC	C 10:32:13	10/ 27	05.07	1163.243 19
11	Thun Gwen	61662	AU	16	THUN DCWF	10:32:46	11/ 27	05.39	1154.203 18
12	Thun Simeon	61678	AU	16	THUN BBWF	10:33:57	12/ 27	06.50	1135.220 17
13	Thun David	6543	AU	16	SKI BCSF	C 10:34:36	13/ 27	07.30	1125.056 16
14	Thun Thomas	68708	AU	16	STLY BC	H 10:36:14	14/ 27	09.08	1100.302 15
15	Thun Maggie	68772	AU	16	STLY DC	C 10:36:22	15/ 27	09.16	1098.329 14
16	Thun David	61665	AU	16	THUN RC	H 10:36:23	16/ 27	09.16	1098.083 13
17	Thun Simeon	68804	AU	16	STLY DC	C 10:36:29	17/ 27	09.23	1096.609 12
18	Thun Spare	61653	AU	16	THUN BBWF	H 10:36:36	18/ 27	09.29	1094.894 11
19	Thun Max	61650	AU	16	THUN RC	C 10:36:42	19/ 27	09.35	1093.428 10
20	Thun Spare	61654	AU	16	THUN BC	C 10:37:11	20/ 27	10.04	1086.399 9
21	Thun Maggie	68710	AU	16	STLY BB	H 10:37:13	21/ 27	10.06	1085.917 8
22	Thun Spare	61642	AU	16	THUN BBSF	C 10:37:23	22/ 27	10.16	1083.516 7
23	Thun David	626826	AU	16	AA BB	H 10:39:02	23/ 27	11.55	1060.308 6
24	Thun Spare	61675	AU	16	THUN BCWF	C 10:41:57	24/ 27	14.51	1021.627 5
25	Thun Thomas	68715	AU	16	STLY BB	C 10:54:17	25/ 27	27.11	885.090 4
26	Thun Thomas	61660	AU	16	THUN BB	C 13:35:00	26/ 27	03:07	322.842 3
27	Daniel Holl/2	1608	AU	16	THUN GRIZ	H 17:06:52	49.958	06:34	189.143 2
28	Daniel Hollem	1604	AU	16	THUN GRIZ	H 19:51:39	2/ 2	09:19	139.643 1

# California Promoting

Krissy Omalley-Rapp (Auburn RPC, California) has been manning a promotion display at her local fair each year. Her creativity shines in attention-getting games and handouts. Here are some photos of her display. Great job Krissy!



# AN IDEA IN PROGRESS

By AU Youth Ambassador, Thomas Strand

Six years ago, back when I was raising my very first batch of squabs at my loft, I was worried that the squabs wouldn't know how to fly very well when they grew up.

I decided to take matters in to my own hands and so I had the idea to pick up each squeaker, one at a time, and walk them all around the yard while letting their wings hang out. I figured that that by doing this, I would be able to train the squeaker's basic flying skills before the baby was even ready to leave the nest.

I didn't have any proof of whether or not it worked, but I do have some

proof now. My second and third years I didn't do any squab training and I didn't get as good of results, but in my fourth year I restarted doing it and the birds starting picking up again.

Now seven years later I am still getting good results from doing this and found that it even worked to help settle birds that came from other lofts. Now I am slowly spreading my idea around. This year my 4-H pigeon club had a Fly-In and all of the kids received pigeons that were donated by AU pigeon flyers. I have encouraged all the kids in my pigeon club to try out the idea and even they have had good results.



I encourage all of you to try it for yourselves and hope you get good results.

AU Youth Ambassador  
Thomas Strand

*The AU thanks Siegel's Pigeon Supply, Ed Minvielle, and Benzing for providing the generous prize of an electronic timing system to Youth Membership Essay Contest winners each year, for **14** years!*

*We like the way one 5-year old celebrated his birthday, in Washington!*



**Siegel pigeons**



# 4-H Fly In Photos



# The Federation Picnic Get Together!!!

By AU Youth Ambassador, Kalynd Reed, Sperry, Oklahoma, Two Twisters Sisters Loft



Our club Tulsa Oil Capitol RPC always has an annual summer picnic and awards banquet but last year we also invited our federation members. Well, we did the same this year on Saturday, August, 6, 2016.



We all met at Tall Chief Cove- Skiatook Lake. We had several locals that showed and many that traveled a long way to spend the day with us.

There were a lot of wonderful things going on, my mom set up a 75 foot Slip-N-slide for all the kids to play on. We soaped ourselves down with dish soap and raced each other down the slide it was a blast!



Bobby Greenfeather smoked briskets and ribs and everyone else brought sides. We had a lot of different foods and a great view of the lake.

After everyone ate, they announced the winners for 2015 young and old birds and gave out trophies. Then everyone visited and got to know more about everyone.

We got to meet new friends and visit with old friends and Kylee and I took some of the younger kids to the park across the street.

I think everyone really had great time at the Federation picnic get together, I know I did.

It's always a great experience to meet everyone around you even though you've already met the old friends it's great to see them again and talk to them and find out what's been going on lately — and you can never have too many friends.

I'm looking forward to our young birds season which starts September 10th. Hope everyone is getting their birds in shape.



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