



American Racing Pigeon Union



Summer 2013

In this issue:

NW Junior Flyers—What My Pigeons Mean To Me	Page 2
Sky Pilots on Sport Promotion	Page 3
Sport Promotion is Club Building, by Herb Cartmell	Page 4
Pictures from the 2013 4-H Fly In, in Washington State (on line only)	Page 4

2013 AU NATIONAL YOUTH RACE

Karen Clifton, Executive Director



We hope you are enjoying your summer and that you are gearing up for the young bird season. We wanted to stay in touch regarding the Youth National Race and let you know that Tom Kurz, the youth loft handler, reports the birds are looking good and he will begin training shortly.

If you have entered a bird in the race and your bird wins, you could be on your way to a fantastic vacation at the 2014 AU Convention...as our guest! That is right. Each year the winner of the AU National Youth Race wins a trip to the following convention. The AU pays for your convention registration, hotel and transportation. It would be a memory of a lifetime!

Each entrant also receives a certificate and the top ten will be mounted on plaques. We wish you all the best of luck and as soon as training begins, we will send out monthly updates to let you know how your bird is doing.

Please feel free to call us if you have any questions about the race or the convention. We hope you are planning to attend the 2013 AU Convention in Tampa and look forward to seeing you there!

On another note, now that school has begun, there may be opportunities for you to share your hobby by making a presentation in one of your classes. We are here to help you. The AU has a lot of promotion materials that can be printed

and even customized to fit your presentation or event.

We have heard from many youth members, that when other kids and teachers find out you are involved in racing pigeons, they will ask you to do a presentation for your school or class. This is a fantastic opportunity to show your birds off, explain the history of the hobby and share how the birds fly and race. You may even end up being invited to talk to other schools or classes. Just remember to give us a call and we can help with your presentations. Your national office phone number is 405-848-5801. For assistance with promotion, email aupromo@aol.com.



American Racing Pigeon Union
Over A Century of Excellence!

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Don't miss your chance at a FREE Benzing electronic timer from Siegel's Pigeon Supply and Ed Minvielle! Find the contest information at http://pigeon.org/pdf/Junior_Member_Newsletter_April_2013.pdf

The deadline is September 27! Start writing now!

What My Pigeons Mean To Me

Excerpts from a northwest junior flyers project

The Northwest Junior Flyers is a group of junior members in Massachusetts. The club had a contest and these are some of the entries.

My pigeons mean a lot to me. They are a big part of my life. With pigeons I am able to learn and teach people about pigeons. Pigeons teach me responsibility because I need to feed them, change their water, and train them every day even when I don't want to. Pigeons give me a great hobby and fun thing to do. With pigeons I have met so many wonderful people. I especially love to watch my pigeons fly and come home. I hope that my success with pigeon racing will help me get into college. I love pigeons and they mean so much to me, and I will always have a special relationship with pigeons.

My pigeons mean everything to me. In the spring time, when babies are born, I get to watch them grow up. From the time they first learn to fly, to the time I win a race. I'm with my birds every day, and you come to know each and every bird by heart. The best feeling is having birds come up to you, and eat grain out of your hands. Now, in the competitions when I'm racing against the people who taught me how to fly, I'm as good as they are, and occasionally I get a chance to beat them. On race day, when you waiting for your birds to come home and all of a sudden you see your birds rush, in at that very moment, you know you're doing something right. My pigeons are my world, and I love them.

Lying on my back, I watch as a dozen pigeons circle above as one. Nearby, several young pigeons tentatively test their wings for the first time, pumping

them vigorously to hop a foot into the air. The power, grace and freedom of the old bird team fills me with awe; the joy of watching the young birds discover their liberty spills over into a smile and laughing eyes. Participating in the Northwest Junior Flyers Club has introduced me to such a supportive group of people. Each week during race season, we gather to band and load the pigeons into the trailer for the race the following morning. As race secretary, I am responsible for calculating speeds and for ensuring the integrity of our races. I enjoy assisting our club leader, Tim Tessier, who has introduced me and so many others to the sport. The culmination of the hard work of raising and training the pigeons has led to this moment, like our club, the pigeons are working together as a team. They are free, yet they will return.

I like holding my pigeons. I also enjoy watching them fly.

We have three pigeons that live in our little red coop. We love to watch them fly in big circles in front of our house. one made a figure eight in the air once. I wish I could fly with them.

Pigeons are very calming. When I walk into their lofts, the pigeons sometimes walk right up to me and lovingly peck my feet. Their cooing is peaceful. When we let the pigeons fly, we sometimes sit or lie in the grass and look up to watch them flying gracefully above us. the first time we ever took the pigeons out of our yard to let them fly home, it was just over a hill, but I was still surprised when they got home before we did. Even when we travel farther than just over the hill, they still often made it home before us. every Saturday in the spring and fall

we send our pigeons for a race with the rest of the club. Every Sunday we watch them come home. the next week we get the race results back. it is fun to see who we beat, even if we did not win. I love my pigeons very much and I love to watch them fly.

I love keeping pigeons because when I become an adults, I want to be a vet. It gives me experience when I have an injured bird and I have to take care of it. I love keeping my pigeons because I love to be around animals. We also have chickens but the pigeons have more personality. my pigeons are fun to take care of and I love entering them in shows, like at the Cummington Fair.

My pigeons are a lot of fun to take care of because I like being responsible for them. although they can be messy, it makes me feel happy to give them a clean, and warm home. At first they seem scared of me and my friends, but once we interact with them and play with them they're nice and calm. I like to fill up a bin of water for them to go swimming in. it's funny to see the splash around in their water.

my pigeons mean a lot to me and I have giving one away or losing one. last year, two baby pigeons were born, one week apart or so, and so one was bigger. One day I went in the coop and found one in the corner, bleeding. I took the baby inside and hand fed and cared for it for almost a month. I treated it's wounds and made sure it didn't get into any trouble, while living in my bedroom! I will always have a spot for Hope.

Sky Pilots on Sport Promotion

These are photos of the new model loft “Prop’ we’re building for the fair demonstration, which we’ll do as a group on loft construction. Each of us will take a

section of the loft: flooring, ventilation, traps, perches, etc. to explain how it affects health and proper care of the pigeons. We had a blast making it from scratch

and from scraps. Mr. Cartmell helped us. We made the bobs for the trap out of jewelry parts.



Sport Promotion is Club Building

By Herb Cartmell

The terms and the objectives are really one in the same. If you promote our sport and put it into a 'package' people today can relate to, you have a better chance of growing the club through new members. I feel that one of the best ways to really promote the sport is to get those unfamiliar with our sport talking about it in a positive way. So how do we make a little "Visual Noise"?

Club Training trailer. I think that clubs that offer club training have more participation and have a stronger club. Clubs that train together seem to fly together. Granted not everyone want to always train on the trailer, and that's OK, but for those who are new to the sport, or whose schedule prevent the kind of training you need, to be competitive, it is still one of the best ways of getting everyone flying.

Gas is a big deal today and I think always will be, so partnering up with a few other club mates only make sense. Your trailer is a great way to advertise our sport.

Get involved in your community. We have a tremendous opportunity to show off our pigeons and their amazing ability to return home which, to the uninformed public, always seem short of amazing. Every time a pigeon truck goes down the road you have another opportunity to advertise our sport.

For the past three years my local lions club has hosted a Flight for Sight race, where they go out and get sponsors for the 150 mile race at the beginning of the season. They have raised thousands of dollars for their

sight and hearing programs, and even pay out a cash prize to the winning sponsor.

What's in it for the club?

Well for one thing, my neighbors and local businesses have all been talking about the pigeon race and asking when the next one is happening. OK, maybe we could build in an extra \$100 cash prize for the handler, or get our shipping expenses out of it, but the amount of positive impact and good will we generate with our pigeons far outweighs anything we could generate with giving a prize to ourselves.

Some clubs have done a race for Cancer Cure. Some have done benefits for the Wounded Warrior and our veteran organizations, the Heart Association, Big Brothers/Sisters, and YMCA. Our pigeons offer a unique fundraising opportunity that costs nothing as flyers. My next fundraiser race is a 'Wounded Wing Race', sponsored by our local American Legion chapter, with the benefits going towards PTSD support and research. (With a tie in to the military service our birds have performed of course!).

There are many groups or organizations that you could approach and offer to put our pigeons to work for their benefit, with the understanding that they produce publicity for the race, and maybe provide the signage on the back of the pigeon truck. A truck with 3 or 4 names of organizations of the various races that you sponsor is sure to get people to talking, and put our sport in a more positive light and add interest then just flying for a few diplomas.



There are dozens of other ways, and they keep coming, but this may provide a few idea starters for your club or organization. If you want to grow you have to step out of your box and look for ways that our pigeons can make a difference in our communities and reverse some of the negative aspects that Pigeons sometimes have. We have a unique and special sport that people are fascinated with. We just need to let them know we have it and show them. It's the best game in town, and you can prove it.

For more information on how to set up a charity race email: pigeonherb@comcast.net

Enjoy pictures from the 2013 4-H Fly In, in Washington State.

<http://tinyurl.com/mvour92g>

Show us your loft! Large or small, let us see what you created.

<http://www.pigeon.org/showcaselofts.htm>