



Fort Worth Thunderbirds

Radio Control Association Inc.

The Pilot's Log



Issue 4417, October 2015

Next club meeting: October 26th, 2015, 7:00 pm, Spring Creek Barbeque Hwy 80 and Las Vegas Trail

Presidents Corner: by *Tom Blakeney*

Hello, fellow Thunderbirds.

Now that the best weather for flying is here, I hope everyone has had a chance to get to the field and enjoy it.

My flying time since our Sept meeting has been pretty limited for a number of reasons. I did manage to get to the large BEST electric event in New Waverly, TX. I have been there every year since 2003 and would hate to miss it. That was my only flying time so far in October.

We do have two fun events coming up. Our big electric event, TEX, will be on Nov 7 and it looks like we will have another great raffle as part of the electric event. The Winter Float Fly is just a week later on Nov 15. I hope you plan on making it to these fun events.

I owe the Thunderbirds an apology. My workload has been tougher than normal this year and I have also been dealing with my mother's rapidly failing health since June. This

Vice Presidents Corner: by *Verne 'Sarge' Bell*

No report this month.

September Meeting Minutes; by *Woody Lake*

Meeting called to order by President Tom Blakeney followed by opening comments and welcome to new and or prospective members.

Safety: Mel Wells presented a slide show regarding new technology available to modelers and the need to be vigilant when using for the first time. Make sure you read the instructions carefully for a successful safe first flight.

has caused me to be less effective as club president than I wanted to be. As I see no signs of either work or parent care easing up any time soon, I will not be running for any club office in 2016. It will be all I can handle and then some to direct SAE Aero Design next year and CD one or two club events. I do want to thank you for the great support you have given me this past year. I might give it another shot in a few years after I retire and can devote more time to club business.

We have nominations for club officers and Thunderbird of the Year coming up very soon. I hope some of you are thinking about giving back to the club by serving as an officer. We need you.

I will see you at the meeting! We are moving to Spring Creek Barbecue at the corner of Las Vegas Trail and Camp Bowie/Highway 80 West for the meeting at 7pm on Monday, Oct 26.

Show and Tell:

Tom spoke briefly about powered gliders an on-board telemetry features. Spectrum radio capabilities emit tone indication altitude and changes in altitude. Cool stuff.

Paul Bloxham presented an interesting briefing on the pros and cons of gyro systems. Paul flies jets and is sold by the smooth flight characteristics especially in cross winds and gusty conditions. As a bonus he spoke about the Savex L-39 with a Wren 44 10lb thrust turbine he brought and used for gyro demonstration purposes.

Reports:

VP Serge Bell: is looking for future meeting show n tell programs. Contact Sarge for ideas.

Treasurer Chris Berardi: Club monetary status is good.

Field Manager Ken Knotts: Briefed status/ condition of our flying field. Grass is growing slowly and we need RAIN.

President Tom Blakeney: Reported funding from the AMA for disaster relief and approved. Check is expected sometime in shortly. Lockheed Martin grant is in work. Chris is completing a form W-9 which is required before the grant can be approved.

SAE is on the horizon (6 months) away. New rules are in and planning for the event March 11-13 2016 has begun. Ken Knotts will be the Thunderbird lead.

Historic Field Plaque Steve Ehlers: AMA has made some changes to the wording for the plaque that enhances our accomplishments. Motion to accept by Ken Knotts and seconded by Mel Wells. Approved.

Treasurers Report: *by Chris Berardi*

Recently a member inquired why I was not putting any financial information in the newsletter. In fact, that's a fair question - the answer to which had been provided many years ago but not recently as far as I am aware. Though not specifically directed in our constitution or bylaws all Treasurers in the years since I have been a club member (1989) have provided the financial information directly to club members at the monthly meetings. Further, detailed statements are provided to each officer at those meetings and every officer can access the banking records.

Bomber Field Giant Scale B-17 Gathering 9-19-15: by Grant Schroeder

We had to wake up at 5 in the morning on Saturday to go to the Bomber Field B-17 gathering in Monaville Texas. This is probably my favorite event and I have gone to every year since I was five years old. Round trip we traveled 477 miles and it was 3 and 1/2 hours each way. We arrived at Bomber Field USA at 9:30 a.m. right when the national anthem was playing. As soon as we got out of the car a full scale warbird that looked British flew about 5 feet over us at full throttle. We first walked around the field to look at all of the planes and many people were still setting up in the morning. There were over 100 registered pilots and there were over 250 planes. The runway is 50 feet wide and 700 feet long and there is over an 800 foot grass runway. One of the planes that really caught my attention was Buckee's Zirolu Hellcat. Buckee owns RC Hobby Shop in Houston and it is my favorite hobby shop. I asked Buckee about his Zirolu Hellcat and he said that it was an all wood kit, it took five months to build it, it is glassed and painted, it has JR servos, a DA 100, Life batteries, Robart gear, it weighs 53 pounds, it goes about 120mph, and it is awesome. He also said that it recommends a 62cc but he put a 100cc in it, he said that the hardest part for him when he was building it was learning how to glass because it was a new learning experience for him. He said that painting was easier than learning how to glass, it has over 80 flights on it, the cowl flaps open and close, he used automotive paint and it is called PBG, he used a 28X10 prop but he cut it down to 26 inches to get a big beefy prop and still have ground clearance. The plane was a beautiful gloss navy blue and it flew really well. There were a couple of turbine jets and a lot of stick built planes. The main event was when the B-17's flew at around lunch time. The B-17's had over a 10 foot wingspan and there was also a B-24 Liberator that dropped fake bombs. All of the B-17's

Historic Plaque stone funding motion made by Bennie Throne and seconded by? Motion passed.

Tree Removal: Joe Jopling said the Corps has agreed for tree removal to the east of our runway. Proposed tree removal to extend 500 to 600 feet east of runway and 425 feet south of runway.

Sprinkler System: Joe Jopling stated the Corp has agreed to a sprinkler system for our infield area. (Between pit area and taxi way parallel to runway)

Upcoming events:

Texas Electric Expo: Nov. 7th

Winter Float Fly: Nov 15th (Camp Joy)

Boy Scout Demo at Texas Motor Speedway Nov 14. Follow-up with POC more additional info and if we can support event

Alternative Meeting Site: discussion by members present. It was decided to hold the October meeting at Spring Creek BBQ located at Las Vegas Trail and Hwy 80. Raffle items and meeting adjourned at 2100 hrs.

The reasoning behind this as told to me is that we did not want to publicly announce the financials in the newsletter because it is distributed to many more people than simply club members. The newsletter finds its way to hobby shops, honorary members, government officials, and quite possibly individuals who may have an axe to grind. If you would like to know more about how the club sits financially, please attend the club meeting.

were glow powered and they sounded really good. They were raffling an e-flite carbon z T-28 and a couple of other planes. I left at around 4:00 p.m. right after the raffle and I cannot wait until next year.



SAFETY CORNER

There are a number of new models currently available in most of the hobby shops with gyro systems and GPS technology to assist new RC pilots. Hobby Zone is selling a really nice one called the Sportsman S+ (SAFE+ technology). There is a good article describing some of its capabilities in the September issue of Model Aviation. The model seems to practically fly itself. But beware. We can catch ourselves relying on this new technology way too heavily. You need to be aware of your surroundings and follow the model instructions to the letter when you calibrate the GPS in this type of model aircraft.

The story below is true.

First I want to say that all individuals involved with this incident are AMA members, have experience flying model aircraft, and are members of the Fort Worth Thunderbird RC Club.

On Friday morning, September 11, the lawn and field maintenance crew had just finished our task for the day and I was about to leave. On the south end of the pilot pits I noticed a gentleman handling an aircraft in a strange way with some crazy motions. As I approached him, I saw that he had a Hobby Zone electric Sportsman S+ RTF model. I introduced myself and he said that this was the first flight for this model right out of the box. This pilot admitted that he has been having a little trouble lately and wanted to see if this model could really land itself if he couldn't. I wanted to see how this model flew, so I decided to spot for him. Another pilot came out to the pilot boxes right behind us and decided to wait and see how we did before flying. While the aircraft was on the taxi-way next to the pilot boxes, the pilot turned on his radio systems and after some time the model sent some audio signals that indicated the GPS and such was ready. After one final check of flight controls and a short taxi, it was throttle up for a pretty decent takeoff. The flight however seemed a little erratic and flying the pattern associated with RC Field was quite difficult. Flying over the pilot pits and the shelter was getting way to common. This model was designed to fly within 650 feet of the runway center line if the model is set up correctly. Anything outside that perimeter is considered a no-fly zone so the model does a good job of turning back toward the runway if you fly it too close to the no-fly zone. Anyway, the pilot was really having trouble with his approaches, so he decided to see how well the model would do in self-landing mode. This is where the three of us showed some concern. The model settled right down and was flying super stable. It started its approach from the south end of the runway and was settling down nicely. The problem was, we were standing with the sun at our backs looking at the parking lot. Nobody was in the pits or at the north end, so we did not panic as we watched the model make a perfect three point landing on the concrete pit area right between the shelter and the flag pole. I don't know where our frame of mind was at that time, but it was definitely not in the right place. A landing in the pits or anywhere else in the No-Fly Zone when the pilot has control of the aircraft should *never* happen. It was then that I realized what the pilot was doing with all of those weird moves in the pits with the airframe. He was calibrating the GPS. The pilot also realized what he had done, and was a bit embarrassed, but luckily no harm was done on that day. Thank goodness the attendance at our field was extra light that morning and this model will fly another day with the correct GPS settings. But, regardless of our good fortune on that day, once we the pilots realized where the model was headed, in the name of safety, we should have taken back control of the aircraft immediately, and forced the plane into the safe fly zone and landed the aircraft on the runway. Even an ungraceful landing or a crash landing within the confines of the proper landing zone is way better than where it landed.

When you calibrate the GPS in one of these type models, do it where you intend to perform the takeoffs and landings. This point is also stated in the models instructions and also in the article in the Model Aviation magazine for September 2015.

This is new technology and we are obviously treading on new ground. Situational awareness and prompt corrective action are still essential to what we do with our models. Relying on fancy technologies like GPS, rate gyros, fail-safe recovery devices, etc., still requires that we, the humans, remain at the top of the decision tree. If it doesn't look right, go around and sort it out.

Having said that, it seems there is a whole new world of mistakes waiting to happen with this stuff. Unfortunately, this equipment is being sold to people who may not have the rudiments of RC flying under their belt. Worse, they are on our field relying on the gizmos to save them. Going around, aborting, etc. are not yet a part of their experience base or habit patterns.

These are potentially very dangerous combinations.

One more thing it is also recommend in the instructions when flying one of these models and you are not sure of what you are doing, you need to get with an AMA certified instructor for assistance and for a very good reason. I can't emphasize it enough; allowing your model to land outside the safe-fly area is unacceptable and should never happen.

Mel Wells Safety Coordinator

SPA: by Ken Knotts

Sometimes the weather cooperates at a flying contest. And it did just that for the 2015 West Senior Pattern Association Championships. The pilots enjoyed light winds and temperatures in the low nineties. There were two flight lines for the 15 pilots to get four rounds in on Saturday, then two more on Sunday.

One new pilot, Brian Way flew his first event and did very well in the Intro class. Brian has been flying for only about a year was the only flyer in his class.



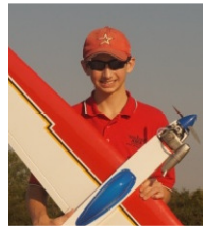
Brian Way



Bernie Olson

Novice class had three competitors with Bernie Olson taking 4 of the 6 rounds flying his beautiful Blue Angel airplane. Tommy Scarmardo won the other two rounds and took second with Gerry Stanford coming in Third. Gerry also won the points Championship for 2015.

Sportsman class had only two pilots but the quality of flying in this class was excellent. Bobby Zikes had his hands full with 14 year old Grant Schroeder. Grant bested Bobby and won the points competition for 2015. Advanced class pilots need to start practicing now because Grant is moving up next year.



Grant Schroeder



Tony Skelly

The Advanced class seems to always have the greatest number of competitors and did again this year with six pilots vying to be the best. This class also had a tie for the Annual Points championship at the beginning of the contest with Mark Ehlers and Tony Stelly each having 27 points. Tony bested all competitors and won first place and the points championship. Bill Vogeley took second with Mark taking third.

Expert had only 2 pilots with Pat Ensign taking Ken Knotts to class again and won every round. Pat also won the Annual Points championship.



Pat Ensign

Duane Wilson, SPA Newsletter Editor and competitor visited the event and didn't fly in spite of our pleading and arm twisting to fly a loaner airplane. He may have heard how well Grant flies and used the better part of discretion!

Presentation of Annual Points winners for 2015;



Gerry Stanford



Grant Schroeder



Tony Stelly



Pat Ensign

We need to thank all the people who help make a contest an enjoyable experience. They include the field preparation group, registration, raffle, data entry, score runners and the Fort Worth Thunderbirds for letting us use their beautiful field.





Apache Pass Fun Fly & Event Planning: by Chris Berardi

This weekend I attended a fun fly in Apache Pass and enjoyed what may have been the first day of nearly fall weather. The Apache Pass facility is a huge multi-function area capable of supporting 30,000 people. There is even a grass runway for full size aircraft, an on-site restaurant and a park. The fun-fly event was for several disciplines including FPV, FPV racing, sport and 3d fixed wing and helicopters. It was a well attended event though there were some overlooked details such as adequate trash receptacles, availability of water and a registration tent that was a half mile from the helicopter pits: Though if you flew airplanes it was convenient!

Thinking of that event's planning, or lack of it, brought to mind many of the fabulous events we put on during the year at our own field. We've become quite experienced at hosting all manner of events, large and small, fast and slow. Next year, we will again host the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Aero Design contest. The first event was held 18-20 June, 2004 and was the culmination of coordination between the SAE, LM Aero and the Thunderbirds. Six months prior to the event I was working for Lockheed Martin when I was contacted by Michael Bawden. He had looked up aeromodelling clubs in the vicinity of the company and I just happened to be both club member and an employee. He, in turn, had been contacted by Sam Barill of the SAE in the hopes of connecting university students with aerospace manufacturing companies. Initially, it looked like the event was going to be a onetime deal, but as we worked with Sam we were delighted to be told that this was going to be regularly held as long as there was a partnership between the organizations.

During those six months a complex plan was put in place to facilitate the event - in fact, it's really several events in one due to the inspection activities and multiple classes. We planned everything from medical care, real-time weather reporting, filming, inspections, weighing stations, fueling and accommodations; we even had a mail drop for the colleges to mail their models to. There was an expense to the club which we absorbed in part with the idea that we would be hosting ever bigger and better events. On 10th December, 2003, Michael Bawden presented the club with a check for \$1,000. We used this money for field improvements, protective fences, engine run stands and advertising. Since that check, LM Aero has become more generous though in return, the event has continued to grow and become more demanding (and the donation from LMAero has become quite sizable too).

That first event was attended by 41 universities from around the world including Australia and Venezuela. Interestingly enough, the flying field was on the verge of being flooded by a very swollen Benbrook Lake and several aircraft sank in the murky waters on the downwind leg. Overall, the Regular Class was won by the Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal by their team, "Lord of the Wing." Open Class was won by the University of Akron and their aircraft, "Conquest." In another class University of Akron won a prize for the "most interesting flight path," a.k.a. a crash!

If you have attended the Aero Design contest, then you'll know what a huge event it is and that it blurs the lines between model and full-size aviation, hobbyists, professors and students. If you'd like to see some photos and videos of the first couple of SAE events we hosted, come to a club meeting as I'll bring some archival CDROMs to show on a projector. Our club president will soon be managing the upcoming 2016 Aero Design contest and we'll be needing your support to run it. If you do participate you will find it a lot of fun to mingle with the students discussing their designs and giving casual advice on their models. I am quite sure they learn a lot from us, and we also learn a lot from them.

FANTASY-SCALE FLYING BICYCLE: by Model Airplane News Editor

Bet you've never seen RC models like these! Based on a real-life flying bicycle from the 1920s that actually flew across the English Channel, these unusual 13.7-foot aircraft are powered by King 95 engines and fly with 5-foot, 4-inch pilot figures behind the controls! Each model required close to 1,000 building hours, and they fly beautifully. The accompanying article video showed three of these flying. Our thanks to RCScaleAirplanes for taking this video at the 50th Flying Jubilee in Bad Wörishofen in Bavaria



Members Projects: by Woody



Flew my modified/detailed Hanger Nine Spitfire for the first time in about two years. Other than having to tighten a set screw on the left main gear all went well. Stock Photo on far right. Great flying airplane.

Tips, Label Your Gear: by Joe Jopling

As we age, our capacity to remember decreases (I noticed my memory beginning to fade at seventeen). It can get inconvenient and expensive when radio control is involved. I once left my transmitter on a table at the field. Fortunately Ken Knotts was there and recognized it as mine. My only cost was driving back to the field to pick it up. I have left chairs, glasses, thermos and other things there, some of which I got back due to the charity of fellow members. The Last thing I left was my tool box. It was a small "fishing lure" type about the size of a sheet of paper and 3 inches thick. Couldn't hold much of value, especially since all my flight line gear is separate, and I don't do big

repairs at the field. *Wrong!* I was surprised to see what some of the things I took for granted cost when full replacement is required. Then I tried memorintorying the little box and found that it held over a hundred dollars' worth of "stuff". If I had only put my name on it, a club member might have recognized and returned it. So from now on, I'm sticking my name and contact data on anything I take to the field and would like to return home with. By the way, the most expensive thing in that box was a metric prop reamer—15 bucks. Also by the way, as we age, our capacity to remember decreases—and we may start repeating ourselves.

THUNDERBIRD 2015 CALENDAR

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u> | <u>POINT OF CONTACT</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| November 7 | Texas Electric fun fly | CD Tom Blakeney |
| November 15 | Winter Float Fly | |
| November | 21 Pylon Race | CD Gary James, Verne Bell |
| November 28 | Toy for Tots | Coordinator Steve Ehlers |
| December | Thunderbird Christmas Party | Club Officers |
| May 14 2016 | Warbirds Over Lake Benbrook | Ed Kettler |

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|---|---|--|
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| Treasurer: Chris Berardi E-Mail: mikadopilot@gmail.com | Safety Officer: Mel Wells E-Mail: malekat@sbcglobal.net | Pilot's Log: Woody Lake E-Mail: at6pilot@att.net |

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UP COMING TBIIRD EVENTS



TEXAS ELECTRIC EXPO



NOVEMBER 7th



THUNDERBIRD FIELD



WINTER FLOAT FLY



NOVEMBER 15th



CAMP JOY PARK