



Fort Worth Thunderbirds
Radio Control Association Inc.
The Pilot's Log



Issue, 6404 April 2026

Next club meeting: April 27th - 7:00 pm - Location - CERA, 3300 Bryant Irvin Road

President's Desk by Scott Hays

Another month has come and gone. It seems it has been windy and wet...typical spring here in Texas that challenges us to get in much flying. Warm weather and lower winds are in our future!!!???

By the time you read this, SAE will be over for this year.

Weather challenged us on Saturday, but everyone adjusted and made the best of wet, windy day. I would like to personally thank Mark Johnson for taking the lead, coordinating volunteers, and leading the ground game....very well done and we appreciate all of your hard work and leadership. I would also like to thank everyone of you that gave your time to volunteer and support SAE. The amount of work and effort it takes to plan and execute this event is massive and could not be done without all of you who got involved.

Very well done! I am so proud of our team, much thanks to all!

I would also like to thank SAE for the opportunity to host this event. Glenn Cashion and Tom Blakeney are a couple of leaders that help make this happen. We appreciate their partnership and support. It was also great having David Sander, the Community Program Manager for SAE at the event. We also appreciate all of the SAE, Lockheed Martin, and other volunteers that help make this all come together.

We also had several visitors from the AMA. Our District 8 Vice President, Lawrence Harville, stopped by for a visit and snapped a few pictures. Hopefully he will include some of those pictures in an upcoming AMA magazine. Although a member of our club, many of you may not know that Johnny Hunt is one of our District 8 Associate Vice Presidents. Johnny, thank you for all you do in District 8, and for all of your help at SAE and our club. Lastly, we had our newly elected President of the AMA, Greg Stone, attend the event. Greg rolled up his sleeves and helped inspect planes and volunteered where needed. It was fun getting to know Greg and learn more about his vision for AMA and our hobby.



With the SAE behind us, we now look forward to our club events for the year.

First up is our **War Bird Event on May 16th**. This event is not only open to propeller driven warbirds but also includes military EDF's and Turbines. Grant has secured some awesome planes for the raffle! Even if you are not flying, you will want to be there for a chance to win one of these great raffle prizes. If you have questions or if you would like to volunteer, please reach out to Grant Schroeder, our event CD.

Next up is our first 2 day event, The **Cowtown Jet Classic on June 12 – 13**. Whether you fly a turbine or just want to watch some awesome flying, you don't want to miss this event. Mike Sawyer, our contest CD, has lined up some incredible raffle prizes that include 2 Skywing Falcon Jets and a FrSky radio.....plus other items! Even if you aren't flying, this will be an incredible raffle you won't want to miss. The event is also open to EDF's. If you have any questions or if you would like to volunteer, please reach out to Mike Sawyer.

July 4th we will be hosting an event at the field hosted by the board members.....more to come but please get this on your calendar!!

The **Float Fly is on August 15th**.....plenty of time to get a float plane ready! This will be an awesome event and if you've never flown off of water, this is a blast!!

If you have any questions or would like to help with the event, please reach out to Chris Berardi.

Mark your calendars for September 11-12 for our second two day event....

EDF JET BLAST. This all EDF event will be one of the biggest and best events we have ever had at our field! More information to come soon. If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please reach out to Kraig Rogers or Derek Gregory.

Members Day will be held on Oct 10th and will be hosted by the Board.

And finishing up the year will be the *TEX Expo on October 24th* with Tom Blakeney as the contest director. Tom's event are always a fun time so make sure this get on your calendar!

Many of you who have visited our Thunderbirds Webpage (fwthunderbirds.org) may have noticed a new fresh look and an improved experience. This incredible transformation was done by Margaret Johnson, Marks wife. Currently we are still reviewing the current content and developing a process to include new and current information. Margaret, thank you so much for creating such a great webpage to showcase our club.

Lastly, don't forget our Club Meeting on Monday April 27th at CERA that will begin at 7 pm. Our special guest speaker will be Derek Gregory. Derek will be sharing with us his knowledge about administering first aid and will include the usage of our new Trauma Kit. Derek will also be reviewing the proper usage of our AED. This is a meeting that can benefit every member of our club. I encourage everyone to try to make this very important meeting.

See you at our meeting....and of course at the field!

Scott

Vice President's Corner: *by Mark Johnson*

Hello Thunderbirds

As I write this month's pilots log, I am grateful to be a member of the Fort Worth Thunderbirds. With SAE now in our rear-view mirror. I want to thank all of you for pitching in to make it happen. The comments I had while at the field were all positive. I am thankful to all of you for your hard work in making this a wonderful experience for the competitors and their families.

As you well know Saturday did not go as planned. I put in a word with the weather gods, but they sent rain and lightning Saturday, making havoc for all. But they stepped up for Sunday with perfect flying weather. We have work to do in return to the parking areas, due to the rain and damage caused by vehicles. If anyone has ideas of how to speed the process, please let Rex Anderson or Gary Nelson know.

I would like to thank the SAE Aero Design staff for allowing us to host this event again this year. I would also like to thank my fellow board members for helping me organize the event.

I would like to give special recognition to Gary Nelson and his brother Lige Nelson. Gary worked hard to make sure the field was in terrific condition and ready to host our SAE competitors. Lige Nelsson takes care of mundane tasks and he is not a club member. Allen Terfger, Gary King, Rob Solis really stepped up when needed. Rob opened the field all week to allow teams to practice and the Garys, Nelson and King were frequently the last out at the end of the day. Many of you took care of things when needed, making our club look good. The list is long of volunteers that stepped up. Once again thanks to all of you.

Be sure and give Tab Bowland and Wayne Lemkelde a shout, they were responsible for the concessions and morning food along with Gary and Jeanne Alphin who traveled from Broken Arrow Oklahoma to help.

I look forward to seeing you all at this month's meeting

Mark

Secretary's Corner: by Robert Solis

Hello Thunderbirds!

Wow, we have been busy this month again! SAE is upon us and a chance for people all around the globe to see our world class facility and the club that makes it all happen! We have so many to thank for the help we could start an entire newsletter for just the thank-you. We will have a recap of the event for everyone so you know how we did as an organization.

If you haven't been out in a while to see the field let me tell you the new striping, grass areas and new information signage with our safety gear is looking immaculate.

And in case you deleted my last 10 emails here is the summary of the last meeting. We had to cancel the Cubs and Cousins because of the unpredictable Texas weather.

Regular Meeting Minutes Summary - Fort Worth Thunderbirds 03 23 2026

Facilitator: Scott Hays

Officers in Attendance: Scott Hays, Mark Johnson, Chris Berardi, Fred Neal, Rob Solis

30 members were in attendance constituting a quorum and the meeting could vote for club business

Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm. The meeting ended at 8:09pm

General Updates:

1. **Membership:** The club has 156 members, with one new member added recently. There are issues with email communication due to unsubscribes from MailChimp, which require members to re-subscribe themselves.
2. **Financials:** The club is in a strong overall position, with revenues exceeding expenses. Membership dues are the primary source of income, and the positive financial situation provides the club with the ability to consider improvements and future projects.
3. **State Recognition:** The club has regained its status as a recognized corporation and is working on finalizing its 501(c) (7) nonprofit status and updating its bylaws for member review and voting.

Events:

1. **SAE Event:** Members are encouraged to sign up for volunteer roles. There are concerns about low volunteer numbers compared to previous years.
2. **Upcoming Events:**
 - **April 4th Event:** Food and raffle arrangements are being finalized. Volunteers are needed for registration and other tasks.
 - **Warbird Fly-In:** Scheduled with raffle prizes and awards. Updates will be posted on the club's Facebook page.
 - **Turbine Jet Rally:** Expected to be a major event with significant revenue potential. Plans include tent rentals, sponsorships, and a raffle for high-value jets. Discussions about logistics, such as tent placement and power supply, are ongoing.

Field Updates:

1. **Lease Area**: The club leases specific areas of the field, including the road, parking lot, flying field, pits, and shop. Any improvements or changes require approval from the Corps of Engineers.
2. **Field Maintenance**: The field's electricity has been upgraded, and the paint has been refreshed. A workday is scheduled for May 9th to complete additional improvements.
3. **Safety Measures**: New safety signs and a metal box for first aid kits, trauma kits, and AEDs will be installed soon. AED training is being planned.

Future Plans:

1. **Restroom Facilities**: Members discussed the possibility of replacing portable toilets with permanent restrooms. Options include financing through a loan, fundraising, or seeking support from the Corps of Engineers.
2. **Five-Year Plan**: The club is updating its five-year plan and seeking input from members on their vision for the club's future. Suggestions include fostering a culture of inclusivity and considering long-term investments like permanent restrooms.

Other Discussions:

1. **Volunteer Efforts**: Members are encouraged to channel their initiative for field improvements through proper club processes, including discussions and voting during meetings.
2. **Administrative Tools**: The club is setting up online payment systems for event registrations and exploring legal compliance for raffles.

This meeting emphasized the importance of member participation, proper processes for decision-making, and building a strong relationship with the Corps of Engineers to ensure the club's continued success.

Club Meeting Discussion

This transcript captures a club meeting focused on brainstorming long-term vision, improvements, and legacy goals for the organization and its facilities. The conversation covers ideas for infrastructure, member engagement, and youth involvement, along with general remarks about club operations and values.

Key Themes and Discussion Points

1. *Club Improvement and Facilities*

- **Training Center**: Multiple members support the idea of a dedicated training or STEM center to build skills and attract younger participants.
- **Facilities Access**: Discussion about whether improvements (like courts) should be member-only or public, depending on who funds them.
- **Wi-Fi and Connectivity**: Request for better internet access and security cameras.
- **Storage Space**: Need for more storage facilities.
- **Runway Enhancements**: Suggestions include widening the center taxiway, adding another east-west runway, maintaining or leveling surfaces, adding sprinklers, and creating helipads.

- **Float Plane Area**: Members want an area for float plane operations.
- **Shade and Trees**: Proposals include adding shade structures and planting trees (with reminders not to cut live ones).

2. Youth and Community Engagement

- **High School and STEM Outreach**: Several members propose organizing more high school events and creating partnerships to reach kids interested in flight technology.
- **Flight Test Program & Insurance Issue**: Concern about how AMA insurance requirements may hinder youth participation; need to coordinate policies between AMA and Flight Test.

3. Vision and Legacy

- Members are encouraged to think long-term — 5, 10, or 15 years into the future.
- The discussion emphasizes leaving a legacy for future generations, similar to contributions by past leaders (e.g., Ken Knot's work on the field).
- One participant mentions wanting a club that renews its 20-year lease in the future, sustained by younger members.

4. Ideas and Miscellaneous Suggestions

- **Observation Tower / Control Podium**: Idea of a raised viewing or control area to better oversee events.
- **Regular Maintenance**: Routine repair, including pothole maintenance.
- **Publicity and Surveys**: Plan to publish meeting results in the next newsletter and possibly send a member survey for more feedback.
- **Auction Items / Donations**: Members are encouraged to bid on or donate for items displayed, with proceeds going to the club.

5. Member Culture and Values

- Emphasis on being a friendly, engaging, and welcoming club.
- Members are urged to introduce themselves to new faces and strengthen community ties.
- Light humor occurs throughout (e.g., jokes about forgetting a spouse's name).
- Recognition that the club's average age (~60–63) highlights the need to attract younger members.

Closing

The meeting concludes with thanks, reminders about the donation items, and encouragement to stay active and involved in shaping the club's future. The tone is collegial, forward-looking, and community oriented

From the Treasury: by Chris Berardi

Membership Type	Count
Individual	126
Family	5
Associate	4
Life	17
TOTAL	152

That's about it for this month. See you at the flying field

Safety: by Fred Neal

Hello Thunderbirds

Well it looks like we've made it through another month. The weather hasn't been the greatest but we have had a few good flying days. I spent quite a bit of time at the club and I have to commend everyone for really being safe while preparing and flying their airplanes and jets. Thanks, it makes my job a lot easier.

The other thing I would like to say is congratulations and thank you very very much to all of our volunteers and club members both pre, during and post SAE, you all did a wonderful job. I had the opportunity to speak with quite a few of the college students and their school advisors. In talking with them, they had nothing but praise and admiration for the quality of the facility and the friendliness and assistance of all of our volunteer Thunderbird Club members.

Again, thanks to everyone. Fly safe and have a great. See everybody at the War Birds event this next month.

Sincerely, Fred Neal

Field Manager: Rex Anderson

April has already seen the start of training, a Boy Scout flight orientation event, and the Club support for the SAE. Training started a little slow but I expect it to pick up as the summer warms up and school lets out. The Boy Scout orientation was a great success, with many positive comments from the adult leaders. Fred Neal, Larry Moyer, Melvin Bowser and Rob Solis took control of the Real Flight simulators to give the Scouts some preflight instruction before the actual buddy box flying. On the flightline Grant Schroeder, Melvin Bowser, Allen Trefger and Gary Nelson gave the Scouts the opportunity to show us what they had learned on the simulators. Some of them showed real natural talent and hopefully we will see them again. Once things got going on the flightline, Scott Hays, Rick Kraft and Fred Neal supported the instructors with battery runs, neck straps sizing and anything else the instructors needed. Mark Johnson did a great "PR" job of "herding" everyone in the right direction while answering the occasional question. A special thanks to Grant Schroeder for coming out and showing his young face to the young Scouts to show them we are not ALL just a bunch of OLD GUYS playing with toy airplanes.

The SAE went pretty well, I guess, I weaked out on sick call. I got just a few calls to help find things so everyone pitched in where needed to make it a successful event. Mark Johnson and Melvin Bowser filled the biggest pot holes before the SAE began so the participants thought the

roads were "normal". Thank you Mark and Melvin! The SAE boss in charge was very happy with the club's support and that says everything. That just about wraps things up for now, so be safe and have fun!

PS. I am missing a DX9 transmitter I use for training. If I loaned it to you or if you know who has it, please let me know where it is @. (CRS) Thanks, Rex.

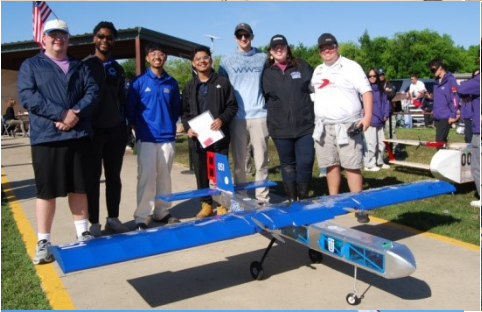
Rex

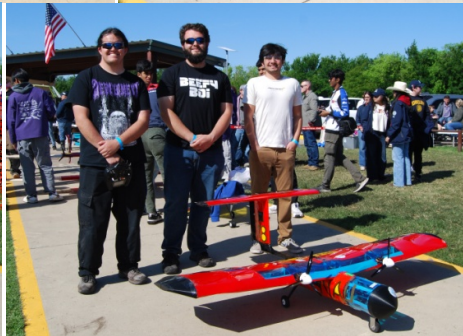
SAE:



We're going to need a 'Bigger Boat'







Eagle Squadron Spitfire Fly-In GSW RC Club



Debrief: We had 17 pilots and 14 Spitfires. A good time was had by all. The rain held off until 1400. Typical English weather, we could have had more. Squadron Leader Bob Mueller out.



From the Editor's Desk: by Woody



Greetings to all. Just a reminder that our newsletter is a member's document. If you have any aviation related article you would like to share please get it to me for inclusion in the newsletter.

wdylake@yahoo.com

2026 CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>POINT OF CONTACT</u>
May 16	War Bird	Grant Schroeder
June 12 -13	Turbine	Mike Sawyer
July 4th	Picnic	Board Members
August 15	Float Fly	Chris Berardi
September 11-12	EDF Jet	Kraig Rogers/Derek Gregory
October 10	Members Day	Board Members
October 24	T.E.X eXpo	Tom Blakeney

www.fwthunderbirds.org

POSITION	BOARD MEMBER	EMAIL
President	Scott Hays	hays2441@sbcglobal.net
Vice President	Mark Johnson	mijohnson64@att.net
Secretary	Robert Solis	robdogsolis@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chris Berardi	mikadopilot@gmail.com
Safety Officer	Fred Neal	fredneal@sbcglobal.net



Pres: Scott Hayes



VP: Mark Johnson



Sec: Rob Solis



Safety: Fred Neal



Treas: Chris Berardi



Field Manager: Rex Anderson

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Flying Field New Signage

WELCOME TO THUNDERBIRD FIELD
3602 Winscott Plover Road Fort Worth, Texas 76126
Latitude 32.60997° N Longitude 97.48473° W

This field is leased from the United States Army Corp of Engineers
and maintained by
THE FORT WORTH THUNDERBIRDS RADIO CONTROL ASSOCIATION
All Pilots must have a current AMA Membership.
Pilots must adhere to the AMA, and Thunderbird Safety Codes
posted on the opposite side of this board.

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT
ANY EMERGENCIES - CALL 911
NEAREST HOSPITAL IS
HARRIS METHODIST HOSPITAL SOUTHWEST
VIA CHISOLM TRAIL PARKWAY

FIRST AID **TRAUMA** **AED**

Legend
FRIA
Fixed Wing Flying
Helicopter Flying

THUNDERBIRD FIELD

Academy of Model Aeronautics
National Model Aircraft Safety Code
Effective January 1, 2018

A model aircraft is a non-human-carrying device capable of sustained flight within visual line of sight of the pilot or spotter(s). It may not exceed limitations of this code and is intended exclusively for sport, recreation, education and/or competition. All model flights must be conducted in accordance with this safety code and related AMA guidelines, any additional rules specific to the flying site, as well as all applicable laws and regulations.

As an AMA member I agree:

- I will not fly a model aircraft in a careless or reckless manner.
- I will not interfere with and will yield the right of way to all human-carrying aircraft using AMA's *See and Avoid Guidance* and a spotter when appropriate.
- I will not operate any model aircraft while I am under the influence of alcohol or any drug that could adversely affect my ability to safely control the model.
- I will avoid flying directly over unprotected people, moving vehicles, and occupied structures.
- I will fly Free Flight (FF) and Control Line (CL) models in compliance with AMA's safety programming.
- I will maintain visual contact of an RC model aircraft without enhancement other than corrective lenses prescribed to me. When using an advanced flight system, such as an autopilot, or flying First-Person View (FPV), I will comply with AMA's Advanced Flight System programming.
- I will only fly models weighing more than 55 pounds, including fuel, if certified through AMA's Large Model Airplane Program.
- I will only fly a turbine-powered model aircraft in compliance with AMA's Gas Turbine Program.
- I will not fly a powered model outdoors closer than 25 feet to any individual, except for myself or my helper(s) located at the flightline, unless I am taking off and landing, or as otherwise provided in AMA's *Competition Regulation*.
- I will use an established safety line to separate all model aircraft operations from spectators and bystanders.

For a complete copy of AMA's Safety Handbook please visit:
www.modelaircraft.org/files/100.pdf

Humor



SAE CRASH RECOVERY – RAPID RESPONSE CREW

Thunderbirds Events

WARBIRDS OVER THUNDERBIRDS

MAY 16TH 2026 AT FORT WORTH THUNDERBIRD FIELD
3602 WINSOTT PLOVER RD, FORT WORTH, TX 76126

  CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK!
@FORT WORTH THUNDERBIRDS
RADIO CONTROL ASSOCIATION

 CONTEST DIRECTOR: GRANT SCHROEDER
GRANTSCHROEDERBELLAIREII@GMAIL.COM



RADIO-CONTROL TURBINE JET FLY-IN

JUNE 12-13, 2026

THUNDERBIRD FIELD – PREMIER FLYING SITE
Fort Worth, Texas



- ★ 40' x 480' concrete runway with grass runoffs
- ★ Limited Overnight RV Parking - No Hookups
- ★ Pop Up Tent Locations
- ★ Raffle Prizes
- ★ Aircraft Awards



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in TEXAS

Register Today!

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michaelsawyer.2004@gmail.com



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INAUGURAL
THUNDERBIRDS
EDF JET BLAST

SEPT 11-12, 2026

BENBROOK, TX

- ★ 40' x 480' Concrete Runway with Grass Runoffs
- ★ Limited Overnight RV Parking - No Hookups
- ★ Pop Up Tent Locations
- ★ Raffle Prizes
- ★ Aircraft Awards



SCAN FOR INFO
& REGISTRATION

CD: Kraig Rogers • TBEDFJetBlast@gmail.com