

WINDY FLYER

AMA Charter | Club 279 | Downers Grove, Illinois

From the President

By Tim Mercier

A Treasure Trove in Toledo: Reflections from the Swap Meet



This week, I decided to check out the Toledo Swap Meet, a spot I've heard a lot about since joining the R/C hobby a few years ago.

The swap meet had two main sections. The first area up front was packed with vendors selling everything you might need for your next project. As a fairly newcomer to the hobby, it was very educational to see a lot of the building materials. The second, larger area was mostly planes for sale and some parts, along with a few old radios and electronics.

Though I've been told the event used to be even bigger, there was still a lively buzz, especially in the first hour. I did stay the night before to avoid a super early drive, spent a good two

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Woodland Aero Modeler's Flying Field at Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve, Lemont, Illinois

Did You Know?

Electric Funeral: Disposing of your LiPo Batteries

These days it's fair to say that most new RC aircraft are powered by LiPo batteries. Every single one of those LiPo batteries will eventually reach the end of its useful life. So, how do you dispose of those batteries safely and responsibly?

Step one is to diagnose the suspect battery pack. Obvious causes for failure, such as crash damage, over discharging, and swelling or puffing, are often easy to see. If your pack is visibly damaged, discontinue use, even if it is still holding voltage. The internal components may be compromised. One more hard hit (or even just charging) could be the final straw that causes the battery pack to short out.

See "Did You Know?" On the next page

(From the President
continued)

hours looking around, and then headed back home that day. I was interested in a few planes, but my only buy was foam tac!

For someone relatively new to the hobby like me, the Toledo swap meet was a cool experience. It wasn't just about what I could buy but about feeling part of this larger community of R/C enthusiasts. It's clear that while the hobby might not be as bustling as it once was, there's still plenty of excitement and camaraderie.

Don't forget to read Rich Magin's article on the South Eastern Model Show. It gives you a nice recap of a very popular Swap meet.

Stay Safe and have Fun!

Tim Mercier, President

"Did You Know" continued

A sweet, pungent smell from a crash-damaged battery indicates the electrolyte solution in one or more cells is leaking.

Discharging a LiPo below 3.0 volts per cell is another potential way to cause damage. This is called over discharge. Puffing or swelling is common with LiPo cells. Slight swelling over time is normal as a pack ages. This swelling will be less than 2mm if the cells are healthy. If swelling is more than this amount, discontinue use because the battery is on its way out the door.

After you have identified a bad battery, you must dispose of it. You can simply tape up any exposed leads on the battery and take it to your local recycling center or lithium drop-off location. Lowe's, Batteries Plus, and other large retailers have locations to drop off old lithium batteries for recycling.

Another option is to render your battery completely inert. Some chargers have a "destroy" feature (discharge) that will completely discharge a LiPo battery for safe disposal. If your charger does not have this feature, you can use a resistor to fully discharge the battery. An example of this is a lightbulb discharger.

Some hobbyists dunk their sketchy LiPos in salt water to slowly drain the voltage to zero. This method is not recommended because it is inconsistent and not safe because you need to expose the lithium to the saltwater to guarantee that it is inert.

No matter what method you use to deplete your battery, do it in a fire-safe, outdoor location, such as on a concrete driveway. There is a small chance that the battery could catch fire. Keep the battery within sight at all times during discharge.

After the battery has been discharged to zero volts, you should strip off enough insulation to join the positive and negative wires together. This will ensure that the battery remains completely dead. Do not throw away any battery that still has voltage, even if it's in just one cell. It could short and start a fire.

A fully discharged LiPo battery can be thrown away with your normal household garbage. Note that this is not true for other types of rechargeable batteries, such as NiCds and NiMHs. Those type of batteries contain hazardous materials and must be properly recycled.

LiPo batteries are an integral part of electric flight, but they do require special care and attention. This remains true from cradle to the grave.



Woodland Aero Modelers

Radio Controlled Flying Club

Club Officers

President/membership	Tim Mercier	timothymercier@yahoo.com	630-240-0938
Vice-President	Brad TerMaat	badbrad20@hotmail.com	941-726-3626
Executive Director	Craig McKenzie	squid683@comcast.net	630-291-0347
Secretary	Ed Miller	edwjmiller@yahoo.com	630-745-1102
Treasurer	John Baderman	wam@baderman.co.uk	630-408-6668
Safety Officer	John Horwath	hiflyer692@comcast.net	630-240-8433
Chief Instructor	Craig McKenzie	squid683@comcast.net	630-291-0347
Instructors	John Baderman	wam@baderman.co.uk	630-408-6668
	Ed Miller	edwjmiller@yahoo.com	630-745-1102
	Brad TerMaat.	badbrad20@hotmail.com	941-726-3626
<i>Control Line</i>	Mark Romanowitz	mwromanowitz@att.net	630-901-0261
<i>Helicopter.</i>	Steve Zielinski.	joegero3@hotmail.com	708-707-9357

Calendar

April 2024

2nd Monthly Club Meeting at the VFW; starting at 7pm.

5th, 6th Toledo R/C Swap Meet and Expo

May 2024

7th Monthly Club Meeting at the VFW; starting at 7pm

11th SAC Club Float Fly 8am-Noon



April Birthdays

Tariq Gill 4/12

Jay Ostrowski 4/14

Markus Dombrowski 4/18

Ed Dedowicz 4/21

Minutes from the March 5th Meeting

Meeting Called to Order: 7:00 pm by President Tim Mercier

Secretary's Report: Report read, and approved

Treasurer's Report: Our checking account is at \$6870, savings account \$4024 for a total of \$10,894.

Executive Director's Report: Craig McKenzie states that once we get our certificate of insurance to the Forest Preserve we will get our permits for our Open House.

Chief Instructor: Brad TerMaat has volunteered to be an instructor.

Safety Director: John Horwath stated pit area at the field is very sloppy, be careful.

Announcements

- Discussion concerning PropMasters auction. Ray Luchetti said there were about 40 attendees. Not as much as last year but still good. Financially, they did ok.
- Lawn Mower is undergoing routine maintenance.
- Robart Company which makes retractable landing gear, struts and certain other products are discontinuing them. Super stands, scale wheels, hinges, and control horns will still be produced. They make Zap adhesives, they will still be made.
- Steve Zieliski mentioned that Sig is in the process of moving to Desplaines, very near to where he works. They are filling backorders but still list most everything as out of stock.

- Brad TerMaat asked what time frame was R/C in its prime. Most of our “senior” members thought late sixties, seventies, and early eighties were the best. People built more, there were more kits available. Control line, patterns pylon racing, endurance, and sports flying were all prevalent. At one time Woodland had so many members, we thought about limiting membership to 120 members. This was back when we flew on 72mh and you couldn’t fly if someone else was on your frequency.
- Reminder: We will add a “Planes for Sale” segment to the Windy Flyer. Send Ed Miller what you want to sell, anything RC related, not your old rocking chair, and we will put it in the newsletter.
- We couldn’t do our Slack presentation, we’ll try again next meeting.
- Ed Niccum is still struggling. Latest update is he has a cyst that needs to be drained before he can undergo surgery.
- Some planes from Ed Niccum were auctioned, but due to not a lot of interest, we will try again at a later date.
- **Planes for Points:** Craig Mckenzie brought in a E-Flight DeHaviland Beaver. An older kit, he converted it to electric, motor is equivalent to a .45 glow. Struts were not included so he built them. All equipment, motor, servos, and receiver were gotten at Value Hobby for a much better price than at Horizon Hobby. Plane flies great!



Craig McKenzie with his DeHaviland Beaver

Stan Warden donated an old transmitter.

-Model Building Hints and Tips:

- Stan Warden inquired about aligning and glueing Robart hinges.

New Members: none

Meeting Adjourned: 8:35 pm



Travel Report on the 2024 Southeastern Model Show

By Rich Magin

This year's Southeastern Model Show (SMS) was held on March 1st and 2nd, near Perry, GA (about 100 miles south of Atlanta). The SMS calls itself the "Super Bowl" of swap meets. (<https://www.gamarc.com/smsshow>). Admission is only \$12 and is good for both days. Driving at the North gate just after 10am on a raw and rainy day, I found a long line of attendees, most of whom were purchasing tickets. I did not see the short line for pre-paid entry. (Pro Tip #1, buy your tickets on-line, and search out the correct line.)

The annual event features over 400 vendors exhibiting at more than 1000 tables that are distributed inside three adjoining exhibit halls at the Georgia National Fairgrounds. Each building is heated and has rest room facilities. There were food trucks outside and a couple of indoor snack bars, but not a lot of places to sit-down.

The Vendors had been admitted at 7am to set up. The rain was not a big problem because the buildings are close together, but they are not all connected with covered walkways. If you want an early view of the tables before the gates open at 10am, you will need to purchase a table and try to sell a few things. (Pro Tip#2, become a vendor). There were no ATMs in the exhibit buildings. (Pro Tip #3 Bring cash!)

Unlike some packed Expos I have attended, the aisles and nightlines were open, and table to table movement unimpaired. There were hourly raffles, and hordes of models waiting on tables, boxes of sheet and bulk balsa and gallons of fuel ready to be moved to the trunk of your car.

This was my first visit to the SMS exposition, so I tried to gauge the scope of the event by visiting each exhibit hall for a walk around. In general the larger vendors were arrayed against the perimeter walls and at the ends of each row of tables. There was a vast array of RC airplane and helicopter models of all sizes.

I only saw a few RC boats, cars and quad copters. Nevertheless, there were hundreds of small sellers with tables displaying everything from motors of all kinds, (electric, glow, and gas), to new and gently used RC airplanes and gliders as well as tables stacked with contemporary and vintage RC kits (only a few control-line and rubber). There was even an exhibit of classic ignition motors, and one of steam engines.

Finding a particular motor was difficult because aside from special display cases of antiques, most sellers just provided large boxes of vintage ignition, glow and gas motors. So, I first had to find the box of control line glow motors, and in most cases I was not the first or only person looking



Waiting to get in



Displays



Glow and Ignition Motor Display

for parts and/or for bargains. Fortunately, I found a dozen Fox 19/25 motors at reasonable prices (\$10-\$30) and a stash of parts for motor building kits that I am using in my model airplane and motor building class at the Western Springs Park District each summer.

In addition, I took photographs of a few other interesting motors that I saw on display or for sale, such as a K& B outboard, a five cylinder gas hog and a Wankel Rotary engine.

Around 3pm, I was running out of gas and had run out of cash, so when I discovered there was no working ATM on site, I took it as a hint to stop buying things and to head back to the motel. (Pro Tip #4: Next time I attend this event, I will bring more money!

All in all, the SMS Expo 2025 (February 28, and March 1) is another reason to head South next winter.



Engines for sale!



K & B Model Engine



Wankel Rotary Engine



Five cylinder Gas Hog

