

# Radio Control Flyers Unlimited

## Flight Plan

AMA Charter # 1442

President: Jim Scott - 209-576-7549

Vice President: Jose Macias - 209-464-5313

IMAA Charter# 623

Sec/Treasurer: Steven Howie - 209-847-0567

Membership Chairman: Mike Cummins - 209-985-1550

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[www.rcflyersunlimited.com](http://www.rcflyersunlimited.com)

### Current News

I would like to extend the club's welcome to our new members.

Patrick Roy  
Don Mekeel

Please make our new members welcome and give them any help and advice they wish to have.

The membership discussed the installation of a vinyl rail fence at the main entrance to the field. Cost estimates will be obtained and revisited at the next club meeting. We can determine if this is an appropriate project and prioritize based on other projects and needs at the field.

There are two club events scheduled. One is the toys for tots toy donation at the field to be held on December 14, 2008. Please come out and donate a toy for needy children. The other event is our annual swap meet. This will be held on March 28, 2009.

The club officer positions are coming up for election for the 2009 year. These will be held at the November 2008 club meeting. If you wish to run for President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer or nominate a club member for office, please come to the November club meeting or let one of the club officers know prior to the meeting.

I have sent out the annual membership information form/invoice to each member for the upcoming year. Please return the form with all corrected information and fees/dues owed. Even though you may not have any fees owed and the form is current, it is imperative that you return the form. Otherwise, you will be dropped from the roster. This allows me to keep the membership roster current. Thanks for your cooperation.

We have some new signs at the field for duck season. Please observe and comply with the instruction on the signs.



## Happy Thanksgiving

## PILOTS CORNER

### **A Lifetime of Balsa Glue and Dreams**

by Rob Shernick; From the Pikes Peak Soaring Society Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado

When one gets to the age of being qualified as an old fogey, there comes a time when you start to reminisce about how you got started in this hobby and what it was that kept you so interested for all those many years.

As we look around us, we again keep wondering what we can do to interest young people in learning how to build and fly model airplanes. I have come to the conclusion that there must be certain spark that is ignited either by a person, an event, or a very motivated author. Kids of today have such an abundance of external enticements; they flit from one thing to another, and never really get the full-bodied flavor of any particular, so to speak. Sports are so diverse in the schools that they can consume a youngster, so there is no time left over for other things like model building or flying.

I was born at the start of the Great Depression, which heralded a time of great personal deprivation and struggle. We have all heard and some of us have lived during that time, and I feel confident in saying that we would like to never go back. However, there was a greater simplicity to our lives then, and a whole lot more personal interaction. My dad was able to keep the family going with being a house painter, but keep in mind that he was coming down from being a nationally recognized fine arts muralist. He was lucky to make about nine to 12 dollars a week, and that was it.

A boy growing up during those days was just as curious and precocious as they are now or were before, but there was one great exception. If you wanted something to play with, or got tired of climbing trees, playing hide and seek, kick the can, etc., you had to figure out how to make it.

Thinking back on that kind of demand now convinces me that it gave me the ability to create something from practically nothing. One soon learned that what appeared obvious from one point could be thought of from a different viewpoint and made into something else.

A case in point: there was an open air fruit and vegetable market about a mile away from where we lived on the west side of Denver. My folks, my brother, and I would walk up on a Saturday, and do some modest shopping there. As a boy of six or seven, I was not interested in the quality of peaches or apples, but did love to rummage around in the back of the tent area in

their scrap pile. There they had such things as grape baskets with delightful thin wood, and wire bales.

Asking if I could have a couple of them, I would later take them apart very carefully, and then go through a process of soaking and flattening the wood, using bricks or boards with stones on top. Once I had the raw materials, I could then use one of my dad's castoff razor blades, and follow my hand-drawn lines for a profile fuselage, the wing, and the tailpieces. My first efforts were very crude, but I gradually learned how to think about design, proportion, and even introduce some degree of realism with colored pencils or water-colors.

One day, in the middle of summer, my attention was drawn to the sky above Denver where I observed something happening that I never thought possible. An airplane was flying quite high, but it was creating a line with smoke. As I continued to watch, the pilot would turn on the smoke, and cut it off while forming the letters of the drink Coca-Cola. I went to bed that night dreaming that maybe one day I might have such a wonderful job like that pilot. I saw more airplanes gradually flying nearby as World War II began. As the country became deeply involved with the war, more of my attention started to focus on heroes in airplanes, and I set out on a plan that later became a formidable task. I had decided to model one each of all the fighter airplanes in the war.

You could buy model kits for as little as 15-25 cents that were made by Guillow and Cleveland model companies. For a 10-12-year-old boy, they might as well have cost \$10, but I managed to scrimp and save, and do odd jobs to buy a few.

Many times the balsa was pretty inferior and had hard spots in it. Many of the cheaper kits were made from a very poor grade of basswood and had the lines printed on the wood. I would have given anything to have a X-Acto knife back then. I soon discovered there was a very fascinating world of reading in a magazine called Model Airplane News and I kept all my issues for reading; reading and rereading them over and over.

Through that magazine, I learned how to do tissue covering, build lighter, and how to construct models that actually flew. Those were exciting times and I can remember building one airplane that flew at the end of a fishing pole. I spun around in circles, making me so dizzy that I was sick for hours, but I would get up and do it again because that airplane could actually fly! I cracked it up many times, but thanks to a big tube of Ambroid cement, I stuck it back together. It was a continual habit, incidentally, to sit in class at school and peel Ambroid cement off my fingers.

I tried doing rubber-powered airplanes and had lots of fun with them, but the sheer joy of building a glider was

the most fun and best learning experience. I probably would have gotten into CL flying earlier if I could have afforded a lot of equipment, but a good Ohlson & Rice engine during the late 1940s went for a hefty \$19.95. I would have to save a long time to get half of that. Besides, I could now keep a glider flying that was my own scratch-built design by just buying some better quality balsa, and learning things like how to balance and build lighter.

RC was just beginning to be talked about in the magazines, but it was not until the late 1950s that I ever saw an airplane fly with that kind of equipment, and even then, the transmitters and receivers looked like jury rigged chunks of tubes and wires. By this time I had quit being a loner and met some other fellows who taught me how to do CL flying, but even then I still did not really feel comfortable with the tethered aircraft. Sailplanes had a certain majestic, pure flight, regal aura about them, and seeing a few full-scale sailplanes in flight one day made my heart pound and shivers run up my spine from their sheer beauty.

I had had a ride once in a Piper Cub that was fun, but there is just no comparison to a fully dressed sailplane.

Naturally, when the Korean War came along, and I was about to be drafted, I joined the Air Force, and spent quite a bit of time in airplanes, but never learned to be a

pilot. I never sat in a sailplane nor was I ever affluent enough to charter a ride in one.

No, I look back on it now, and really love the memory of all those cold winter nights crouched over my building table down in the basement next to the warm furnace. Learning what chord, empennage, dihedral, ailerons, etc. were about, and then the sheer joy of watching that new bird stay up in the sky, if only for a little while.

I have come a long way from the time of the grape baskets, but I have a tremendously long way to go yet. It wasn't until I joined the Pine Peaks Soaring Society that I realized just how much more I needed to know. There were guys like Bob Avery, Barry Welsh, Jack Dech, and Milt Woodham who were so very patient with me, trying to get my brain and transmitter to work together in this new challenge ... an honest-to-goodness flying kind of sailplane that could become a speck up there if you just learned how to "see" thermals, or watch the hawks.

What a great club to belong to. It makes all those years of Ambroid cement on the fingers have some meaning about quality time. So, go buy some balsa guys, and get out to the club field as soon as you can.

### Cash Flow Report

Income		Expenses	
Club Dues (including initiation fees, field assessment fees, and Donations)	\$274.50	Port-o-potty service	\$140.00
Net Event Income	\$0.00	Fuel for field usage	\$80.12
		Newsletter	\$210.00
		Warbird event expenses	\$226.89
		Pest Control	\$40.00
		Web Site	\$29.85
		Field Lease	\$690.00
Totals	\$274.50		\$1,416.86

Last Month's Total .....	\$10,805.03
Income .....	\$274.50
Expenses .....	(\$1,416.86)
Balance .....	\$9,662.67

**The November Club meeting is scheduled for:  
Wednesday, November 12, 2008 at 6:30 pm  
at the Police Station at 10th and G sts**