

CARTWHEELS

BY: LARRY LOUCKS, PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT TO PRESIDENT

A Club in Need ...

by Dave Mathewson, AMA President

"Help! We're losing our flying site."

AMA gets calls that start like this almost every week. Most of the AMA vice presidents will tell you that this is the type of call and request for help that they receive most. When I was a district VP, the very first thing I would ask of the person making the contact was, "Tell me what your club has done over the years to become an asset in your community." If the answer was, "Well, we haven't done much, but we're thinking about doing XXX ...," it's almost always too late.

The very best way to protect your flying site is to be proactive in preparing for the day when losing your site might become a possibility. Site loss can be attributed to several factors; losing a site to things like soccer fields account for some. Other times it's an unhappy neighbor who, for whatever reason, is opposed to your field being where it is.

In all of these cases having the support of the local community, especially when local town boards become involved, is invaluable. Most local boards will listen to its constituents, especially when they express their feelings strongly in one direction or another. A club standing before a town board pleading its case is one thing. That same club standing before that same board, but having members of the community standing right alongside, is something entirely different.

So, how do clubs become a welcome asset in its community? They become involved. There are a number of simple things that each of our clubs can do that have the potential to pay large dividends. Things like collecting canned goods at events or meetings and then donating the collection to the local food pantry. Hosting an event and donating a portion of the proceeds to a local charity. With the holiday season fast approaching, maybe this would be a good time to collect toys for the Toys for Tots program that almost all communities have.

Parents appreciate groups, like model aircraft clubs, that run outreach programs that their children can participate in. Getting involved with local Scout groups, community recreational programs, or running an after-class program at the local school for kids interested in modeling can be extremely effective. On the other end of the spectrum, consider contacting your local senior center and ask if they would be interested in someone coming to the center to speak about model aviation. Those of us

who have done this will tell you that this can be an extremely rewarding experience. And, finally, a very simple program your club can become involved in that takes very little effort is the Adopt-A-Road program that most communities have. Participating in a program like this most often results in a roadside sign, indicating that your club is participating in the program and is responsible for this section of road. This is like having a billboard along the road, promoting your club to motorists who travel this stretch of highway.

Nearly all of these ideas, if approached by the club as a group, can be fun activities. At the same time, you'll be building strong relationships with those in your community whose help you may someday need. Being proactive has the potential to pay off down the road when you just may need it most.

See you next time.

Have fun, be safe, SEE YA at the meeting.

New Members

Proposed at the February Meeting

None



March 4-7
Lakeland Linder Airport

Are You ready to RACE?

6th Annual
Southern 500!

March 19 – 21

www.imperialrcclub.com for all the details.

Scott Smith CD 863-670-5141

ssmith4710@aol.com

Scott needs the usual cast of volunteers to assist in what has become one of the best pylon events held each year!! Please contact Scott today.

Propwash is published monthly by the **Imperial Radio Control Club, Inc.**

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*Courtesy and
common sense keep
R/C modeling fun
for everyone.*

**Our next club meeting is:
Thursday March 11th at FTE.
Plan to attend and see what's
new.**

ON THE SAFE SIDE

Distraction Action

by Don Nix, Safety Column Editor

Once upon a midnight dreary, as I pondered weak and weary....

Actually, it was last night, considerably before midnight, not dreary at all, while I was pondering what to write for this column. Then I began to recall some incidents where distraction at the flying field had caused crashes. Here are two in which I was personally involved.

As I've mentioned in past columns, when I lived in Southern California most of my flying was done at Mile Square Park in Orange County. Mile Square was the busiest RC park I ever saw, and quite possibly the busiest in the US. I say "was," because it was closed to model flying some years ago.

The runway was an abandoned WW II military airfield, the RC part 2,000-feet long. There were 12 pilot stations, and on good weather weekends it was not unusual to have 50 or 60 fliers at the field and all 12 stations "hot" at the same time. One particular distraction incident remains clear in my memory although it took place more than 20 years ago.

A good friend of mine did a lot of teaching. When newbies came to fly for the first time, they were usually directed to George to get them on the buddy box and start learning. One Saturday, George called me over just before starting a beginner's engine.

"Don, before I get this fellow on the buddy box, you take his transmitter. After takeoff, I'll trim mine, then turn it over to you to get his box trimmed out so he won't have to struggle with it." I agreed, and after George made a couple of circuits said, "Okay, Don, you take it and trim his box."

I had control of the model for perhaps a hundred yards when we heard someone scream, "HEADS UP!" followed by the unmistakable sound of a model under full power and, even without seeing it, could hear it was coming toward us.

Naturally, we ducked and a split second later the airplane crashed hard on the pavement three or four yards from our feet.

As soon as we realized we had not been hit, our attention turned back to the model we were test flying. This happened to be at a moment when almost all the other stations had models in the air at the same time. The sky looked and sounded more like a swarm of large bees than a model flying field.

Scanning the air for our model, George yelled, "I've got it!" quickly followed by, "No, that wasn't it; I think it's that one!" The sun was at the point where most of the airplanes in the air appeared to be almost silhouetted against the sky and were hard to distinguish from each another in the flock on the far side of the circuit.

George repeated the phrase two or three times over the next 15 seconds, until it was obvious that none of the models were ours and that it was apparently gone into Never-Never Land out of sight somewhere beyond the trees in the distance. There was nothing to do but hand the owner's transmitter back to him, tell him we had no idea where his model had gone, followed with a heartfelt apology. Understandably, the fellow was somewhat bewildered and heartbroken, having no idea such a bizarre thing could happen. However, this story does have a happy ending.

About a half-hour later, while the owner was packing up his gear to leave, a van bearing the logo of a gas station/auto repair shop came driving up. The driver got out, picked "our" model, totally unblemished, out of the back and asked, "Does this belong to someone here?"

After we got control of our astonishment, he explained: He and another mechanic were working on a car when one of them looked up in time to see the model, propeller stopped, rolling up quietly into an empty service bay. One exclaimed, "Where the (bleep) did that come from?" By then, several had gathered around, and one commented that a lot of such models were flown at Mile Square Park, a couple miles distant, so they decided to give it a try. Obviously, the plane, perfectly trimmed by George, had flown the distance, run out of fuel and glided to a stop, just yards from a busy street.

I realize the above sounds totally unbelievable, but I was there.

There is also a good lesson hidden in that incident. The last time I looked, a couple of lines in the AMA rule book clearly state that each model should

The IRCC monthly club meeting will be held at FTE near the Lakeland Airport. The next meeting will be on Thursday March 11^h and starts promptly at 7:30pm. Remember to bring a chair - if you want to have a seat.

have the owner's name, address, and phone number somewhere on or in it. This is a rule that is rarely taken seriously.

The second incident of distraction disaster took place back in the 1990s after I had moved back to Texas and was living in a small town near Austin. A friend from out of state was visiting, expressed curiosity about RC flying, and I, anxious to show off, said, "Hey, I have permission to fly models at our little local airport. C'mon ... I'll show you how these things work!"

I took my favorite, a big 1.20-powered aerobatic model. As I was putting the wings on, getting fueled up and ready to go, I was being a smart guy, explaining how everything worked. My friend stroked my ego with admiring comments. I started the engine, taxied to the takeoff spot, shoved the throttle full forward, broke ground and started a great climb-out. What happened next wasn't pretty.

Almost immediately, the model became uncontrollable, trying to roll from side to side. Within another two or three seconds it rolled on its back, diving straight into the pavement. I was stunned. We went over, picked up the wreckage and took it back to my van. I took the wings off, commenting lamely that the only thing I could think of was radio interference, which I had never experienced at that field.

I unbolted the wing, lifted it off and reached to disconnect the aileron servo leads from the receiver and found I didn't have to. In my eagerness to impress my friend and basking in the glow of his comments, I had never connected them.

Having been a full-scale pilot for decades and thousands of flying hours in addition to years of flying RC, I truly believe this was the single, solitary time in either that I never checked for full movement of all the controls before takeoff.

We should never, ever be complacent about safety, no matter what the level of our experience—novice or expert.

IRCC Meeting Minutes

February 4th, 2010

Minutes recorded by:
George Nauck, Secretary

- Larry Loucks called to order at 7:30 Sharp
- Minutes from Jan. meeting approved
- Treasurer Roger Pilkenton reported 49 members paid, with 6 winter, 3 junior, and 7 new members!
- Treasurer reported XXX+ in checking with lease paid through June
- Guests Denny and Sean Cole recognized
- Field Maintenance – New windsock at control line area. A gate was set up next to entry to try to stop whoever has been driving around the gate when it is locked. Discussed what to do if any trespassers are detected. Call President Loucks cell phone or any of the officers. Phone numbers are on the club website. Membership list will not be posted at the field due to so much personal information. Get phone numbers from the members that you wish to

call.

- There is a new field search currently underway, headed by V.P. David Raff. It was reported that there are some interested buyers for our site.
- Denny Cole gave a presentation and invitation for our club to participate in static display and/or information display at the MacDill AirFest March 19-21.
- Talked about the Pattern contest to be held at PropBusters in a couple of weeks.
- Next Club event – Florida Jets March 4-7. We will only do Flight Line and Crowd control. No Impound.
- Pylon Race will be sometime in March at our field.
- Don LaPointe discussed an article about a solar powered battery charging station and volunteered to put together a proposal for our field.
- Sportsmanship award was awarded to Dudley Colvin for his steadfast fellowship and goodwill, and for Corky's faithfulness as a greeter.
- 50/50 put \$30+ bucks in Roger's pocket.
- Adjourned at 8:35

TIPS FOR CLUBS

Is Your Flying Site Ready for the Season?

by Ashley Rauwen

Winter's finally moving on and spring is moving in. I'm sure many of you have spent your time indoors and out of the cold developing new creations to impress fellow modelers and yourself this upcoming season.

Your model is ready, but is your flying site?

For those with club's that are located in the colder parts of the nation, winter storms can do significant damage to a field. On the other hand, warmer states endure the rainy season and high waters—also damaging to flying sites. The field may look okay at first glance, but it's the small details that make a site nicer and safer.

Here are some things to look for when preparing your flying site for the 2008 season:

- Are there fences surrounding your flying site? When snow accumulates, it can be quite heavy. Abundant frozen snow sitting on a fence can quickly wear it down and cause separation or breakage. Walk the fenced areas around your flying site and check for holes or places where the fence may have fallen down. A quick mend can enhance the appearance of the site as well as keep wandering critters from getting too

close to your models.

- Check the runway and surrounding areas for holes or loss of terrain. Bald spots in grass or dips in the ground are unappealing and leave uneven surfaces that can cause injury if an individual is not watching his or her step. Take the time to lay grass seed in worn areas or fill in holes with loose dirt. If your site uses a paved runway, look into recovering the damaged areas or speak with your site owner about the possibility of repaving. It may mean a fundraiser for your club, but a smooth surface to taxi your new models is worth it.

- Are there trees on or around your site? While they may not be near your flying area, trees can affect your flight. Broken limbs and twigs can become airborne in high winds. They can easily damage property or possibly cause injury. Inspect around the tree line for any loose branches that can be removed from the area.

- Do spectators spend time at your field? If so, it is assumed that some form of seating is available to them. Take an inventory of all your seating surfaces. Do any of the chairs have broken legs? Are there any exposed nails sticking out of that picnic table? Sometimes a quick coat of paint can work wonders in turning that scratched and dented equipment into a welcoming visitor area.

- Take inventory of all signs posted at your site. Have some fallen down or been damaged by the harsh weather? Are the signs still legible or do they need to be remade? Signage at a flying site is very important; treat your signs as such. Additional or new signs and posters for Safety and RC Frequency can be purchased through AMA for a small fee. Contact the AMA club secretary (ext. 291 or loism@modelaircraft.org) to order.

- Lastly, what is your club's first aid supply like? Have supplies been used that were never replaced? Check all dates on supplies that can expire. Throw away anything past its expiration date and restock. Never use medical supplies that are past the date of expiration. There is no guarantee that they are still of quality.

The list can go on and on. Each club has a different flying site and appearance it's accustomed to. It's important that clubs take the time to evaluate their site property and make sure everything is safe and in good form.

Remember: AMA and its members take pride in model aviation; the flying field is an extension of this pride.

Coming Area Events

Florida Jets

March 4 - 6
Lakeland Airport
www.franktiano.com

IRCC Spring Pylon Race

Club Field
March 19 - 21
www.imperialrcclub.com

MacDill Airfest 2010

Featuring the Blue Angles
March 20 - 21
www.macdill-airfest.com

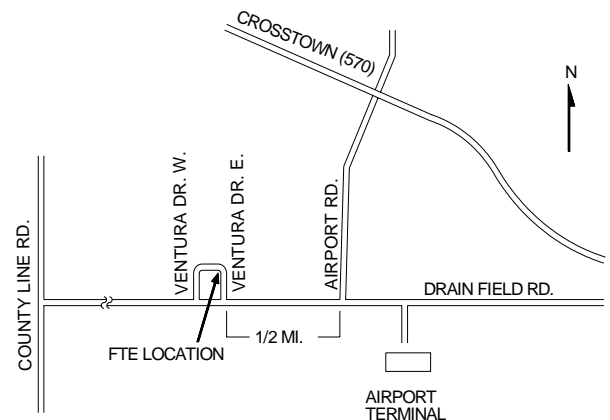
Sun'n Fun

April 13 - 18
Lakeland Airport
www.sun-n-fun.org

Top Gun

April 28 - May 2
Lakeland Airport
www.franktiano.com

Here is where we meet each month.



Please **DO NOT PARK ON THE GRASS** at FTE or his neighbors.

OUR NEXT MEETING IS:
March 11th 2010