The AMA INSIDER
The National Newsletter
for Newsletter Editors and Club Officers

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 5 SEPTEMBER 2006

PRESIDENT TO PRESIDENT

The flying field you save may be your own!

Lately you have probably realized that AMA has been encouraging clubs to get out and do something with local park flyers. Many have asked, "What's in it for me?" This is a good question, and it's one that can be easy to answer, but hard to convince your club members it's worthwhile.

Before proceeding, ask yourself if your club has enough political influence in town to convince the political power structure to change its mind after passing an ordinance that would prohibit you from flying at your club field? Consider how long that process would take.

Those who have been involved in the local community may have sufficient influence to preclude an ordinance from being passed in the first place, but if this is the case, your club is probably in that 10% that have their ducks in a row.

For the rest of us, having to deal with an ordinance that would prohibit model-airplane flying within the county (city, township, etc.) limits would be a challenge.

Some of our clubs wouldn't even know it was being proposed before it was a done deal, and we would be faced with the *very* tough job of getting it repealed.

Club visibility is the first way to avoid surprises, but is this enough in today's world? With park flyers flown in ball diamonds, soccer fields, backyards, and even in parks, it's just a matter of time before someone does something "dumb" with one of these, and creates a reason for the city fathers to think about some form of control for them.

Do the city fathers in your community know you well enough to draft an ordinance that would prohibit park flyers without prohibiting organized AMA club members? Further, do they even know we exist?

Obviously, while the answer to this in a few cases is yes, the majority of us face an uphill battle if this scenario were to occur in our areas. Ironically, the problem isn't limited to just "them" causing the problem.

In a few cases, our own members can create the problem by flying in places which are inappropriate for model airplanes or which some in the rest of the community will deem to be unreasonable. After all, these new models can be flown just about anywhere, can't they?

That is the loaded question. While these new models are capable of being flown just about anywhere, whether they *can* be flown there is a different question. An even more appropriate question is whether they *should* be flown there.

There are a number of factors to considered before answering these questions and there is more to think about than whether the model is capable of being flown in that spot. For most club members, frequency interference would be the first thought but does a new pilot with a park flyer think of that first?

There is the question of pilot proficiency to think about. An experienced pilot may be able to fly that park flyer in a typical park, but someone with no previous experience probably won't be able to keep the aircraft within the confines of most parks until he or she has some amount of experience.

Park flyers are easier to fly than most "conventional" models, but the inexperienced newcomer will still have the problem of the aircraft getting too far away to handle—most likely downwind.

How many models crashing indiscriminately around town do you think it will take to raise some eyebrows? What if one hurt another park patron?

How do we minimize the risks posed to *our* activity posed by the sales of huge numbers of these models? The easiest way is to try to bring the new fliers into the fold.

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September 2006 CONTENTS

TIPS FOR CLUBS

Security Advisory

by Jay Mealy, Director of Programs

Because of questions directed to the Academy of Model Aeronautics from various sources, we are reprinting two previously published advisories regarding dealing with law enforcement agencies and the news media when asked about model-aviation activities and our national security. We feel it is important to remind our members, clubs, and industry partners how to best represent our sport under such circumstances so the following are provided for your review.

Security Advisory

The most important thing to do is to cooperate. Once the representative(s) have established their identity—and any legitimate officer or investigator will do this—cooperate by answering their questions honestly, politely, and with care. Please take these inquiries seriously and don't forget the impact your answers and attitude could have on your flying privileges not only locally but nationally.

These are the times to give factual information and not the time to brag on your "modeling exploits." Although you are answering questions to determine the security risk model airplanes may pose, you may also be answering questions asked by people who have never before experienced our sport. You may be teaching them about the activity they are investigating. If that is the case, you want them to be well informed

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so they can fully appreciate our activity.

Always remember to direct them to the Academy of Model Aeronautics, your national organization, for any additional information they may need. We have a good rapport with the agencies responsible and are glad to assist at any level necessary.

Establishing a good working relationship with such agencies is important not only to our national security but to the efforts put forth to maintain our privilege to continue participating in the sport we all cherish.

A copy of the Media Advisory, which AMA issued in April 2003, suggests how to respond should members of the media approach you. Please keep the points made in mind.

Media Advisory

This advisory is a result of events involving the news media making contact with AMA chartered clubs or individuals.

In today's tense atmosphere of terrorist threats, possible military actions, etc., there appears to be exuberance on the part of news agencies and individual reporters to gather information concerning the use of model aircraft as possible security risks. Often, in an effort to take advantage of the opportunity to garner some public exposure for their local flying activities, the members are surprised when the news release does not resemble what they had assumed would be published. This results in negative press for the sport and local participants, and may spread misinformation.

As a service to all AMA chartered clubs, we are suggesting that if you or your club are contacted by TV, radio, newspaper, or Internet reporters for interviews (other than coverage of such activities as fly-ins, mall shows, airport awareness days, etc.) you direct them to the AMA Headquarters for information. If in doubt, please err on the side of caution.

Our main purpose for the "Advisory" was to bring the matter to the attention of our members and remind them of how important it is to be cautious when giving interviews during these times. We are all aware of how communications can be misunderstood or misinterpreted and how reporters can sometimes inject their own perceptions. All we can ask is that anyone speaking on behalf of our modeling activities be aware of what the consequences of their words might be.

At any time please contact Jay Mealy at AMA Headquarters with questions, comments, or concerns. ✈

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Try to convince them to join your club and fly at your field. If your field is too far out in the wilderness to be attractive to them, then get a group together and work toward creating an E-field or two in town.

Work proactively with the local authorities to establish appropriate places for park flyers to fly. I think you will find that the local hobby shops will support those efforts.

You might find it fun and convenient to have a place to fly an appropriate model on your lunch hour or after dinner when a trip to the "regular" field isn't practical.

Being proactive in addressing the potential situation will go far to avoid that issue becoming a "problem" or even a "disaster" in the future.

To steal an old saying: the flying field you save may be your own! Think about it selfishly! ✈

—Dave Brown

Santa Barbara Radio Control Modelers, Santa Barbara CA

Flight Instruction Program

[Please note: this is one of many training programs available in use and AMA supports all programs that safely and successfully teach the rich rewards of model airplane operations.]

The Santa Barbara Radio Control Modelers (SBRCM) flight instruction program has been designed to help teach beginning pilots how to fly radio-control model aircraft.

Without proper instruction many beginners crash their airplanes, get discouraged, and perhaps abandon the hobby. Therefore, we encourage all beginning pilots to take advantage of the instruction program. There is no charge for this program; however, to participate, you must be a member of the AMA and the SBRCM.

There are two phases to the SBRCM flight instruction program.

Phase 1

Phase 1 consists of six sessions that include preflight checks of the airplane; field safety procedures; and basic flying maneuvers, including use of elevator, rudder, ailerons, and engine controls, stalls and stall recovery, loops and recovery to level flight, rectangular flying pattern, and landing approach. Each session will include a minimum of three flights with associated ground instruction.

Fight instruction will be scheduled in three one-hour sessions beginning at 9 a.m. and running through 12 p.m. There will be no instruction scheduled after 12 p.m.

No individual may schedule more than one session at a time. He or she must wait until the scheduled session has been completed before scheduling another; however, reservations can be made as far in advance as necessary to accommodate openings in the reservation schedule and the student's convenience.

Reservations are first come, first served.

Students must contact the flight coordinator to schedule the sessions.

The master schedule will be maintained by the flight coordinator.

The flight instructor will be at the field and ready to begin instruction by 9 a.m. and the students must be on time for his or her scheduled sessions. If a student is more than five minutes late for his or her session, it will be forfeited. If for some reason a student cannot make an instruction appointment, he or she must call the instructor by 6 p.m. on the Thursday just before the scheduled session.

Scheduled flight instruction occurs Saturday mornings, and the club furnishes all equipment. For those who have their own aircraft, instruction is available at other times by prior arrangement

Phase 2

Phase 2 of the instruction program begins when a student has completed six sessions. This phase focuses on landings and takeoffs and culminates in solo flying. During this phase, students participating must:

- provide their own airplane, radio equipment, flight gear, and fuel.
- contact an instructor or another club member to help them with their takeoffs and landings.
- complete their solo flying with one of the listed flying instructors when they are ready to solo

During the solo flight, the student will need to perform the following preflight procedures and flying patterns:

- transmitter impound procedures
- range check procedures
- preflight check of control surfaces and attachments
- takeoffs and landings
- straight and level flight out
- straight and level flight back
- left- and right-hand turns

please see **Flight Instruction Program** on page 5

Battery Incident Report

by Carl Maroney, Director of Special Services

This is a summary of modeling incidents reported to the Academy involving nickel cadmium, nickel metal hydride, and lithium batteries. We wish to bring to your attention that improper usage and/or not following the manufacturer's recommendations may result in fires.

Proper battery maintenance is important. Please read and follow safety warnings and instructions furnished by the manufacturer. It is recommended that lithium battery packs not be left unattended while being charged.

Please note that the comments in the description of the incident were copied directly from insurance report forms provided by members.✈

—AMA Safety Committee

		2003 INCIDENTS	
DATE OF LOSS (yymmdd)	STATE	TYPE OF BATTERY (If known)	DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT
030308	CA	Unknown	Battery charger caught fire in back of member's truck. No further information available.
030621	CA	Unknown	Member was charging his receiver battery in his apartment when he heard an exploding noise. The battery had exploded and caught his airplane on fire.
030726	NE	Unknown	Member had put radio on standard charger in trailer to charge overnight. Another flier came later to the member's RV to tell him the trailer was on fire.

		2004 INCIDENTS	
DATE OF LOSS (yymmdd)	STATE	TYPE OF BATTERY (If known)	DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT
040423	WV	Unknown	Per first contact information, airplane was put on charger and battery pack blew up. No further information available.
040428	TX	Unknown	Per first contact information, member was charging radio and battery caught fire; burned/melted transmitter. No further information available.
040703	GA	Lithium Ion	Member was charging a Lithium Ion battery in the back of his vehicle. After his approximately 10-minute flight, he turned around to find his vehicle full of black smoke. He ran to the vehicle, opened the window to find his airplanes and other equipment on
040912	TX	Unknown	Member placed his aircraft on charge. The aircraft was being charged with a four-output charger, the transmitter with a one-output charger. He had also replaced Ni-Cds in transmitter with a 1100 mAh transmitter battery pack. At appoximately 11 p.m. CST on
040929	FL	Lithium Polymer	Member left models and batteries in his minivan for approximately 30 minutes. When he returned to the car it had caught fire and been destroyed. Per the member's statement in first contact, fire investigators stated the fire was caused by the Li-Poly (Lit

please see **Battery Incident Report** on page 4

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041015	FL	Lithium Polymer	Member plugged his battery pack in to the charger and it showed three cells in the window. He then pushed the arrow to increase it to four cells and started the charge. About 10 minutes later he noticed that the second set of cells was starting to get ext
041118	OH	Lithium Polymer	Member was charging a Li-Poly battery in the back of his truck; battery exploded and caught the cab of the truck on fire.
041230	MI	Lithium Polymer	Member was using a universal charger charging the battery in his garage when it caught fire; six amps was the charge rate. After fire started member noticed an error message on the charger; temperature was about 40 degrees.

2005 INCIDENTS

DATE OF LOSS (yymmdd)	STATE	TYPE OF BATTERY (If known)	DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT
050131	NC	Lithium Polymer	Charging battery in car and battery exploded. No further information available.
051109	RI	Lithium Polymer	Member placed a 1500 mAh Li-Poly on charge. Fifteen minutes later smoke alarm in garage sounded and entire airplane pack was engulfed in flames. Member assumed charger malfunctioned; fire fighters ruled it as general electrical fire.

2006 INCIDENTS

DATE OF LOSS (yymmdd)	STATE	TYPE OF BATTERY (If known)	DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT
060409	IL	Lithium Polymer	Member was charging battery in his garage. The battery was inside a fire-lock box. It ignited and burned everything within a 4-6 foot radius around the box. Per member's assertions, battery was charging properly at manufacturer's recommended settings.
060416	OH	Unknown	Vehicle was parked in driveway; possible battery fire. Fire happened in the middle of the night so fire depart,emt was not called because it burned itself out. AMA sent a battery-fire form to gain more information on this incident.
040627	TX	Unknown	Member was charging battery in back of truck but stated he didn't charge it right; no further information available on this incident. AMA sent member a battery-fire form to gain more information on this incident.

From Rocky Mountain Flying Machine, Tampa FL

Restoring a CL Model

by Bill Jacklin

I have been asked just how I would proceed in renovating an old CL model that had hung on the wall for eons, knowing that the structure and other materials might well have deteriorated to the point where safety was compromised.

A few years ago, I wrote a column in which I warned of this condition, but offered no suggestions about how to deal with it.

Apparently, some of you are indeed in this situation and are curious as to what I would do if I were also in it. I have actually done this more than once, most recently with the Sterling Mustang I picked up at a garage sale some years ago and have been flying somewhat regularly ever since.

The first thing to do is to remove engine, tank, wheels, etc. and check out the overall condition of the aircraft, paying particular attention to the nose. If the engine mounts, tank area, etc. are so oil-soaked as to be spongy, just hang it back up on the wall—you are done.

Minor oil-soak spots can be cleaned up using K2R, available at grocery stores and hobby shops, but if there is any doubt that the front end will withstand the pull and vibration encountered while flying, this is a lost cause.

Assuming that all is well here, go on to the gear-attachment system, the tail feathers (paying particular attention to the hinges), and make note of any required replacement of the rubber wheels, fuel line, and other expendables. The next thing to do is to remove the paper, fabric, or plastic covering. We need to look at the control system, and the covering is undoubtedly shot anyway. That includes any covering on the tail surfaces and the fuselage, too.

Inspect the leadouts and their bellcrank attachment. Solid wire leadouts will eat up soft aluminum bellcranks with use over time, so be sure to check this out thoroughly. A strong light and a mirror will be helpful.

Check also for corrosion. In days gone by we often soldered lead-outs. (We don't do that anymore—epoxy or cyanoacrylate over copper wire wrapped terminations of braided lead-outs is standard now.) If there is *any* doubt about whether the bellcrank mounting will stand up to the pull-test, now is the time to carefully remove a section of the wing center sheeting and again glue the mounts. Glue any and all suspect rib, spar, LE, and TE joints. (Most of them *are* suspect, you know.)

Now that you are reasonably sure that the wing will stay together and the bellcrank will stay in the wing, you need to see to it that the wing will stay on the airplane. If anything, the wing-fuselage joint needs to be stronger than the bellcrank mount.

A failed bellcrank mount during a pull-test will take out a rib or two, the mount, and possibly a chunk of the center sheeting. If the wing-fuselage joint lets go, you will lose a substantial chunk of the sheeting, some ribs, an ungodly amount of fuselage, and the outboard flap. If you are lucky, the spar(s), LE, and TE will stay together and the pushrod will not take out half of the fuselage formers. (Yes, been there, done that … that's how I know all about these things!)

The fact that you still have the airplane after all these years says something about how you feel about it.

Spend some effort in poking about in and otherwise worrying the wing-fuselage joint, and by all means glue it again whether you think it needs it or not. Now pull-test the model using a spring scale or use a pull-test machine. If, despite your best efforts, you lose the aircraft, there is some consolation in the knowledge that there was nothing you could have done about it anyway. Before you do the pull-test, make sure that indeed, you have done all that could be done.

Now replace the expendables that were noted in the first steps above and decide on the method and extent of the recovering and refinishing you are willing to do. Plastic film or the hard way? Dope, acrylic, or epoxy? Sport finish or hand-rubbed contest finish? Decisions, decisions.

The fact that you still have the airplane after all these years says something about how you feel about it. Breathing new life into it can be a very satisfying thing to do.✈

—Bill Jacklin

Flight Instruction Program continued from page 2

Most people will be able to fly solo safely within 10 to 20 instructional flights, depending upon natural ability and the type of aircraft being flown.

We have found that the best type of aircraft for beginning pilots is a high-wing, 4-channel trainer in the 50- to 65-inch-wingspan size range. Airplanes such as the Sig Kadet LT-40, Kadet MkII, Kadet Senior, Kadet Seniorita; Goldberg Eagle 2, or Eaglet; Great Planes PT series; or similar designs, will be easiest to fly, and provide the capability to do primary aerobatics after sufficient flying skills are gained. ✈

Tips & Tricks

Fixing Holes

Fixing fiberglass cracks or filling holes and missing sections on airplane parts such as cowls is not hard to do. Clean the part well. Patch the area with masking or electrical tape on the outside surface. Cut fiberglass cloth to fit the inside area and a second patch slightly larger to overlap. Coat the inside of the tape with epoxy and layer the patches. When the epoxy cures, remove the tape and the repair will have nearly the shape of the original.

—Ernie Lee via the Web

Keep Connected

To prevent electrical connections (such as servo wires connected to a servo connection inside of a wing panel) from coming apart, place a short piece of heat shrink tubing around the connections and then apply heat to the shrink tubing. This will ensure a connection that will not come apart.

—Gordie McCann via the Web

both from Odessa Propbusters, Odessa TX

Working With Carbon Fiber or Fiberglass

You may have noticed that your tools do not last very long when sanding or filing carbon fiber or fiberglass. Even the best hardened tools will loose their edges when working with these materials. One trick I have found is to use a metal cut-off bit in my high-speed motor tool, but instead of using it at high speeds, I use it at low speed. I do not want to melt the resin as it will just wreck the bit. High-speed tools are great for many tasks, but when it comes to carbon fiber or fiberglass, I prefer to use these tools in the slowest setting possible.

Carbon fiber and fiberglass are great lightweight products used throughout our hobby. Sometime we may not even realize that we are working with these products since many airplanes are made of balsa and have a shrink-like covering, such as MonoKote or UltraKote.

Many of the airplane's motor mounts are made of a plastic material which in many cases is carbon fiber. Carbon fiber and fiberglass can be deadly if inhaled. These materials can not be dissolved by the body and will remain in your lungs. The body will try to rid itself of this foreign material and can cause respiratory problems and possible death.

When drilling, filing, or sanding anything that looks as though it is made of plastic, carbon fiber, or fiberglass, it is always best to wear a good mask that will filter out the very small particles you will be producing. The best mask you can buy and one that uses a carbon filter and has a good, tight fit is the one you should use.

You should also wear some sort of eye protection because removing fiberglass dust or particles from your eyes will not be a pleasant or easy task.

—from the Batavia RC Flying Club Web site, Batavia NY

From SAM NX-211, Saint Louis MO

Creating Insignia and Markings

by Frank W. Beatty

Colorful appropriate markings, insignia, and lettering can bring our models to life. Suitable markings may be furnished in the kits we buy or can be purchased at hobby shops. Scratch builders can generate suitable markings on home computers or at copy centers such as Kinko's, but sometimes none of these options will do the job.

This describes an additional system of creating markings that has worked on half dozen or so of my models.

Obtain a piece of plate glass 12 x 12 or 12 x 18 inches with the edges ground round to prevent cuts. Coat one side with a sudsy, soapy film of water. (I use a bar of Oil of Olay hand soap.) When dry, spray with coats of dope. It can be clear or colored coats depending upon how you will go about creating the images.

The clear, doped glass can be placed directly over a full-size pattern of the image you are duplicating. Designs such as an Indian Head Squadron insignia or unusual lettering can be painted or inscribed directly above the pattern below using model dopes or FW Acrylic Artist ink. These inks can tolerate some handling and will not be affected by the protective clear dope overspray that will follow.

If there are large, unusual-style letters or numbers, then. spray the glass with that color. Trace the outlines on the plate and then cut around the outline with an X-Acto knife. The soapy film will act as a release agent and these images will easily lift off the glass.

Trace around where the image will be located on the model and paint that area with a very watery, thinned-out mix of Elmer's Glue and then apply the image to that area. Squeegee out any surplus glue and level out any bubbles. This application of glue sets the image to the model surface and will prevent crazing or distortions from occurring when a protective, clear dope overspray is applied to the area.

The colored dopes can be sliced into very thin strips and used for pin striping around lettering, etc. These thin strips and images we have created are surprisingly strong and will tolerate considerable handling without breaking up.

Here's to prettier models!

From Flying Circus, Camarillo CA

WORD SEARCH

by Ron Boyer

S	T	T	I	M	H	C	S	R	E	S	S	E	M	B
R	T	D	R	I	B	R	A	W	Z	R	T	J	U	P
T	A	T	N	I	F	I	X	K	E	A	S	C	A	T
A	H	P	I	A	M	O	P	N	I	P	I	Z	Y	H
G	T	U	S	P	C	P	I	L	O	T	N	P	J	C
N	A	I	N	G	K	A	R	R	A	A	O	J	U	T
I	B	D	O	D	R	C	T	B	N	N	R	U	N	A
N	M	G	I	T	E	E	O	O	A	S	E	G	G	R
T	O	S	U	H	T	R	B	C	A	P	Z	L	M	C
H	C	O	W	L	E	I	B	D	M	A	E	Y	E	S
G	A	P	E	A	P	D	U	O	L	N	B	S	I	U
I	N	W	A	R	R	W	R	Q	L	O	R	T	S	K
L	A	I	D	A	R	F	O	A	S	T	G	I	T	H
I	R	T	P	R	O	P	E	L	L	O	R	C	E	O
P	D	H	M	U	S	T	A	N	G	E	M	K	R	I

The words to the right are hidden in the puzzle above. Enjoy!

AEROBATIC
BIPLANE
CANARD
COCKPIT
COWL
CUB
FIN
GOLDBERG
JUG
LIGHTNING
MOSQUITTO
PILOT
PROPELLOR
RIB
SOPWITH
SPAR
SUKHOI
THUNDERBOLT
TRIM
WARBIRD
ARF
BONANZA
CANOPY
COMBAT
COX
DIHEDRAL
GLOWPLUG
JUNGMEISTER
KIT
MESSERSCHMITT
MUSTANG
PITTS
RADIAL
SCRATCH
SPAN
SPORT
TAIL
TRAINER
UGLYSTICK
ZERO

From the Longmont Aircraft Modelers Association, Longmont CO

Murphy's Laws Revisited

by Al Coelho

Murphy had some laws; here are some of Al's.

1. Law of mechanical repair: after your hands become coated with grease your nose will begin to itch or you'll have to go to the bathroom.
2. Law of tools: any tool, when dropped, will roll to the least accessible corner.
3. Law of probability: the probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.
4. Law of the telephone: when you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal.
5. Law of the alibi: if you tell the boss you were late for work because you had a flat tire, the very next morning you will have a flat tire.
6. Law of lanes: if you change lanes in traffic, the one you were in will start to move faster than the one you are in now.
7. Law of likeability: as soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it.
8. Law of close encounters: the probability of meeting someone you know increases when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.
9. Law of the result: when you try to prove to someone that something won't work, it will.
10. Law of biomechanics: the severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.
11. Law of carpets: the chances of an open-faced jam sandwich landing face down on a floor covering is directly correlated to the newness, color, and cost of the carpet.
12. Law of logical argument: anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.

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ABOUT THE *AMA INSIDER:*

The Academy of Model Aeronautics' *AMA INSIDER* is published electronically on a bimonthly basis for members of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Its purpose is to create a network of information exchange between the Academy of Model Aeronautics-chartered clubs as well as the Academy of Model Aeronautics officials and chartered clubs.

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SUBMISSIONS

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