

# THE FLYER



Middlesex County  
RC Fliers, Inc.

March 2017



**P-51 Mustang on Static Display** Planes similar to this are on display at the New England Air Museum, and the Club is considering supporting a trip on March 11<sup>th</sup> to visit the museum. For additional info, see pg. 3 of the Newsletter. *Photo by Jim Orsborn*

## Inside this issue:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| President's Message,<br><i>by Jerry Crowley</i> | 1  |
| February Meeting<br>Notes                       | 2  |
| Trip to the New<br>England Air Museum           | 3  |
| Membership<br>Renewals                          | 3  |
| Proposed Operating<br>Rule Change               | 4  |
| Training Update                                 | 5  |
| Officers and<br>Directors                       | BC |

## President's Message, *by Jerry Crowley*

Greetings to all Club members. I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Holiday and a Happy New Year. It's February, where does the time go, winter is here with a generous amount of snow. For those who fly in the cold stuff it's time to dust off those skies and get them mounted. Hopefully we will be able to get in some nice flying days between now and Spring.

I would like to thank everyone who helped in supporting all the functions we had during the year 2016. It's hard to believe we are into another year already.

We had a lite turnout for the February meeting; but I want to thank everyone who turned out for the January meeting and supported the annual Election of new Officers and Directors. Most of the Board is returning from last year, but we have one new Director, Adam Harte.

Cont. Pg. 2

## President's Message (Cont.)

Jeff provided a Treasurer's Report and an update on the Annual Auction. The Club owes another big Thank You to Jeff for his dedication as our auctioneer for this annual event. Thanks go out to everyone else who supported the event as well. From Jeff's report the Auction was another success. The new location seems to have worked out well.

During last month's meeting, I presented a couple of proposed Operating Rules that will need to be voted on for final approval. The vote on these new rules was postponed until next month, so I hope that everyone will review them and come to the March Meeting so we can have a final vote.

Dan Costa has been talking about a trip to the New England Air Museum for several months. He presented a cost estimate for a bus trip, but did not have a final attendance list. So you will probably see an e-mail asking members to show their interest in supporting the trip. Please respond to either Dan or Paul Sullivan so that we can finalize the plans.

I hope to see everyone at the March meeting. We look forward to hearing from members as we begin to set the Calendar of Events for the coming year.

*Jerry Crowley,*  
President MCRCF

## February Meeting Notes

Ken Pappas came to the meeting and gave a status update on the River Bend RC Flyers before we started the meeting. Ken said that the club is down to fewer than 8 members, but they still have access to the field in Tyngsboro. He explained that despite several contentious meetings with town officials, the group still has full access to the field and they are encouraging others to join them at the field.

President Jerry Crowley called the meeting to order a little after 7:30 PM. Attendance at this month's meeting was 11 members including the Board. There were no new members.

Jeff indicated that the Treasury had a starting balance of about \$9,500 on Dec. 1st. In December, there were no expenses. With monthly raffle and dues income, the Treasury ended the month with about \$10,900.

Jeff also provided details regarding the Annual Club Auction. He suggested that the final Net Income will be about \$780 after expenses. Some of the topics discussed included:

Good weather and a nice location helped make the event a success. We sold 145 entry tickets, the 50/50 raffle netted \$103, food netted \$119. Jeff said there were 108 auction items, but the average sale price was down about \$20 over previous events. The event went over the 4 hour contract limit, so we paid the Elks an extra \$100 for the hall rental.

Jerry mentioned that the Holiday party went well. Attendance was good (down only 2 or 3 individuals). Prizes included a



U-Can-Do Airplane, DLE 20cc Engine, and a HiTec battery charger.

Jerry Crowley started a discussion about two new Operating Rules that have been proposed by the MCRCF Flight Committee. After a lengthy discussion, there was a motion to postpone a vote on the rules until next month. See the article on page 4 for additional information.

Dan Costa reported that he has an estimate for a bus trip to the Air Museum down in CT. The fee would be slightly over \$1,000 for up to 28 people. Dan still does not have an accurate attendance count, so a final approval for the trip was postponed. See the article on page 3.

#### January Election Results

President: Jerry Crowley  
 V. President: Paul Sullivan  
 Treasurer: Jeff Ward  
 Secretary: Ray Capobianco  
 Directors: Dan Costa, Dan Fisher,  
 and Adam Harte

## Membership Renewals

The weather has not exactly cooperated, but there have been a few members trying to demonstrate that they are All-Year fliers. In any case, our 2016 flight privileges have expired.

Please remember that any member who waits until after March 1st to renew their membership will need to include the extra \$25 Initiation Fee.

## Trip to the New England Air Museum (NEAM)

Plans are coming together for a trip to visit the New England Air Museum (NEAM) located in Windsor Locks, CT. This has been a dream that Dan Costa has discussed at several recent meetings. With so many exhibits to see, Dan has been hoping the pull together a small group of MCRCF Members who would like to share a bus ride.

At the February Club meeting, Dan told us that he has contacted a bus company that is willing to transport a group, wait several hours while we visit the museum and then bring everyone home. The transportation will cost about \$1,000. So Jeff has requested that we have a confirmed signup list before we discuss how much the Club may be willing to support.

#### Proposed Trip Details:

Day Trip to visit the New England Air Museum (NEAM) in Windsor Locks, CT  
 Website: <http://www/neam.org>

Date: Saturday, March 11, 2017

Transportation Cost: Est. \$40 per person  
 Museum Entry Fee and Food is extra.

POC: Dan Costa (978) 987-2124 and/or  
 Paul Sullivan, [psullivan2313@yahoo.com](mailto:psullivan2313@yahoo.com)

If interested, please contact Dan and/or Paul ASAP for additional details. The need to hear from you by February 25th. The current plan is submit an attendance list and a budget for approval at the Monthly Club Meeting on March 8th.

The group would really like to make the trip, so if the attendance list is too small to support a bus, then it may be necessary to look at alternate ride share options. In any case, please contact us if you have any interest in a trip to visit this museum.

## Proposed Operating Rule Change

An incident at the club field last year has resulted in the Flight Committee coming forward with a proposed rule change that needs to be considered by the full membership. Basically the Club has been operating for several years under the assumption that we had a 400' ceiling that was imposed by the AMA's Safety Guidelines.

Last year, Ray observed a member flying his glider at a high altitude and he told the member that it was not allowed. This was a rather new member, so he asked to see where the rule was documented. He thought that he was operating in compliance with AMA guidelines which say that members are not limited to a 400' ceiling.

The MCRCF Flight Committee met to review our rules as well as several recent changes to both AMA and FAA guidance. The committee found that we do not have a ceiling limit in our rules. The FAA has apparently tried to limit models to a 400' ceiling, but the AMA successfully pushed back on the FAA's strict limit. The FAA has sent a letter to the AMA that recognizes the AMA as a "Community Based Organization" that is authorized to set rules for safe operations by its members.

So the current guidance from the AMA is that the 400' rule primarily applies to operations within 3 miles of an airport. The AMA rules go on to address other areas such as spotters and also flight speeds for small UAVs. The end result is that the AMA no longer limits flights to 400', but they do offer several other conditions.

During the Flight Committee meeting, Jeff noted that our field is approximately 5 miles from Hanscom Field, and he noted that flights will typically cross our airspace

at altitudes as low as 2,000'. Other members have also noted numerous helicopters that overfly our field at even lower altitudes.

At last month's club meeting, Jerry proposed a two new Flight Operating rules that the Flight Committee is recommending to the membership for approval. These rules are as follows:

**A designated SPOTTER is required when pilots are flying above 400 ft. (for a sustained period of time).**

**All flight operations shall be limited to a maximum of 1,500 ft. above ground.**

During the meeting, there was significant discussion about the need and merits of the proposed rules. Jeff pointed out that the Club had been operating for several years under the assumption that we had a 400' ceiling limit. He felt that the proposed change was increasing that limit while offering prudent guidance that would help avoid interference with full scale aircraft.

John Parisi mentioned that several area clubs currently call for ALL pilots to use a Spotter. Having a spotter solves the concern about recommending that pilots should not fly alone.

Christian Dantz suggested that the ceiling limit was not mentioned in the AMA guidance, so he felt the fixed limit was not needed. He also felt it would potentially limit membership.

Jim Orsborn mentioned that the new rules appear to be the result of a single flight incident and not a series of incidents. Furthermore, there were no complaints or actual safety issues related to the incident that was observed.



After a somewhat lengthy discussion, there was a motion to postpone a vote on the rules until next month. It was also suggested that we attempt to explain the proposal to members in advance of the meeting, so that they would be better informed before the vote.

One of the primary objectives of the Flight Committee is to review and propose any changes to the Club's Safety Rules and Operating Procedures. The current set have been reviewed and were voted and approved by the membership in 2009. Members receive a copy of these rules each year along with their new Frequency Pin. These rules address topics like flying alone, not flying over the soccer fields, using the frequency pole, etc. Club Membership actually requires signing an agreement to accept and follow these rules.

Veteran Club members are aware that several rules have been almost a constant topic of discussion. The rules have obviously been put forward in an effort to provide general guidance that will help us maintain a safe hobby. In the end, we have to recognize that Safety is an Individual responsibility. Please exercise good judgement when you are at the field.

## Training Update

Our Club is one of the few that still offers a full Flight Training program that is free to members. Our objective is to help new pilots learn all of the skills needed to safely fly an RC model. Our emphasis is on fixed wing airplanes, and we recommend that students learn to fly a .40 size, glow engine plane. We will assist the student by helping them set up the plane, make the first maiden flight, and then train the student using a Buddy Box transmitter.

At the end of the Flight Training, a student will be able to takeoff, fly around the field and then land without incident. This is much like receiving a learner's permit for a car.

Once you have solo'd, a member is then free to adventure out into the big world of RC choices. However, we do encourage students to spend additional time with their Trainer style plane.

Electric power has come a long ways in even the past two years. More ARF kits offer the option of either electric or glow power. Once a student has solo'd, this may very well be the direction that they choose to go forward.

Some of the small electric models like the Apprentice come with electronic flight assistants that are attractive. But we need to emphasize that they may actually be a hindrance to students actually learning how to fly. Members will likely see these models at the field again this year, but the emphasis will be on using them as an introduction to the hobby.

Again, our training program is free and the instructors are not paid for the service. For more information, contact an Officer or the Club Secretary.

**Official Publication of the Middlesex County R-C Fliers, Inc.**

**The FLYER** is the official publication of the Middlesex County R-C Fliers, Inc., a non-profit organization chartered for the promotion of radio controlled model aircraft building and flying. The club operates a flying field located on Treble Cove Road, Billerica, MA. The club offers free flight instruction to any member provided they have a current membership with the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Contact any club member for details. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month between September and June in the Billerica Recreation Dept. building at 248 Boston Road in Billerica, starting at 7:30 PM.

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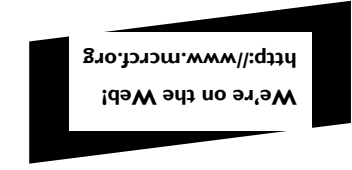
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**Next Club Meeting**  
**March 8th, 2017**  
7:30 PM  
Lewis Building  
248 Boston Road (Rt 3A)  
Billerica, MA

**First Class Mail**



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