

September 2012 Edition

Wine Country Flier



Next meeting: 18 September 2012, 7:30 P.M.
Veterans Memorial Bldg. (Northwest Room) Across from Fairgrounds

Get there early for your free door prize raffle ticket!

www.wcflyers.com

Promoting Model Aviation in Sonoma County

2012 Club Officers:

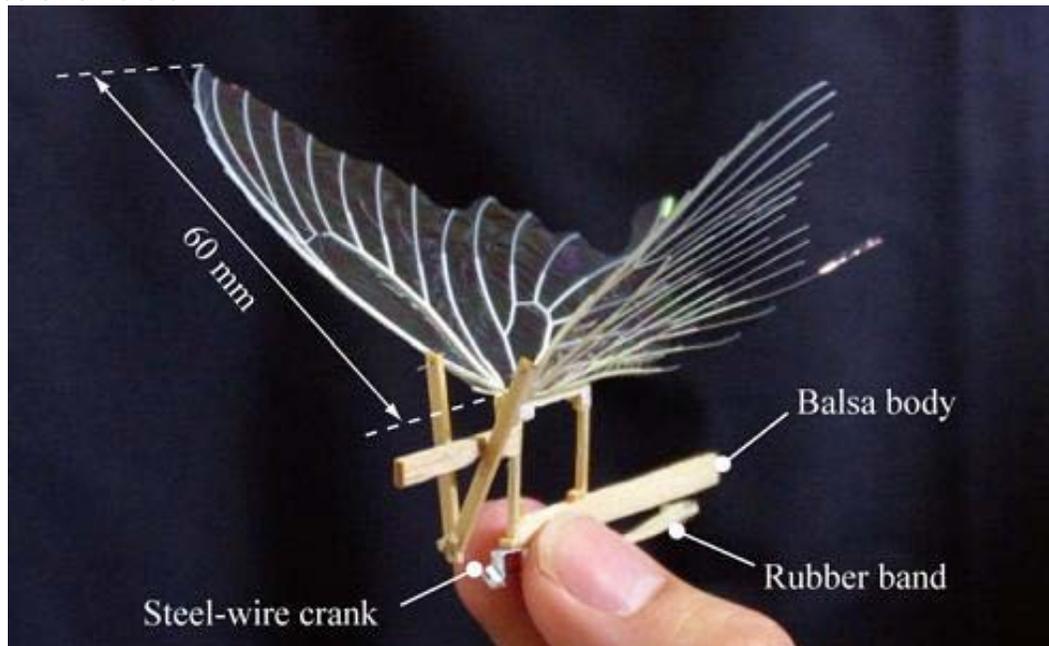
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Presidents Report

By: Dave Mercer

Greetings everyone,

Some of you are aware, but for those of you who are not, our current President Jon Stychno has recently decided to step down as president so he can focus his full and undivided attention towards his father's health concerns. Which means that I will be serving as interim president for the remainder of this year. The turn of events was rather sudden and caught me by surprise. I've always realized that part of the vice-presidential duties were to fill in for the president....but to know that is one thing, and to actually have to do it is another. I will do my best to fulfill the presidential responsibilities. Anyway....let's move on to other current events. Has anyone else ever loaded up their gear, went out to a flying event, and have the flying conditions and the whole day turn out virtually perfect? Such was the case for me at our last Float Fly event on Labor Day. The weather conditions were the best I've ever seen on one of our float fly days. For almost the entire morning there was a dead calm and Sal Lake looked like a sheet of glass. Takeoffs and landings were a cinch. Sixteen pilots signed up on Merle's sign-in sheet and there might have been a few stragglers who snuck past him and flew anyway. The turnout was good, with a fair amount of wives, guests, kids all enjoying the spectacle and having a great time. There was a guy who setup right next to me--a guy named Lou, didn't catch his last name--who came all the way from San Mateo to participate. He was an excellent pilot, been obviously flying for quite some time, and best of all he had a Great Planes EP Seawind just like I have. We compared aircraft setup, batteries that we're using, etc. That's one of the best things about this hobby, the chance to meet people you ordinarily would never meet and share stories. I had spent some time prior to this sorting out my Seawind--more on that later--so it flew great. I was relaxed, my Seawind was dialed in, the conditions were perfect, all in all I spent the day thinking "Ya

know, it just doesn't get much better than this." I even got a chance to witness Paul flying his Grumman Goose, the one featured in MA magazine a few months ago. An absolutely beautiful aircraft in the air, or at rest. I was so stoked when I left the Float Fly that when I asked myself "Hmm.... should I just head home to Santa Rosa?" I decided no....no....no....I think I'll see what's happening at our Trentadue field. So I took the short jaunt up there and things were winding down, after all it was mid-afternoon by then, it was getting a bit breezy and people were leaving. I still wanted to fly some more before heading home, so I broke out my little mCPx heli and flew three battery packs through it. Maybe it's just me, but I seem to fly best when I quit stressing over things and just relax. I had a blast and never even crashed that little sucker, which is a rarity for me.

Aside from the great conditions, what else contributed to my excellent day of flying? I'm glad you asked. The simple answer is that I spent time the day before to sort out and dial in my Seawind. At the previous float fly on the 4th of July I had just gotten my Seawind the week before, hurried through the final preparations, used the cheesy foam stand that came with the kit to check the CG, and thought I had it all sorted. Well I failed to account for the wide variance in weight of my three cell 2100 mA battery packs. My lightest one worked fine but the other three that I brought with me were all too heavy--there was no room to slide them back far enough to make it work. I could have added weight at the tail but I didn't want to do that. And then when the wind kicked up unexpectedly and blew my brand new Seawind off the table I had set up and cracked the elevator and stabilizer....well I packed it up and went home rather disappointed. Shortly before the Labor Day Float Fly I took my cheapo Harbor Freight digital scale down to Jakes Performance Hobbies, placed it on the counter and said "I need some three cell li-po batteries that only weigh this much"--about 145 grams. They were gracious enough to break open some new packages and we weighed them. I ended

up buying two Parkzone 1800 mA batteries that fit the bill and I was good to go. Being able to keep the CG right with all the batteries I brought out to the event made all the difference in the world. After a little bit of trimming my Seawind flew like it was on rails. I had also done a thorough pre-flight check to avoid any other surprises.

Which brings me to another point. Too often I witness people unload all their gear and immediately stuff a battery into their plane and take off flying. NO pre-flight check, no testing that the servos aren't binding, locking up, moving in the right direction....nothing!!! It only takes a few minutes, at most, and could mean the difference between having a great flight or having a short-lived flight and dejectedly going home with the remains of your aircraft in a trash bag. Some people would counter with "Hey I checked it last night and all was fine" but that's not the point. Pre-flight means PRE-FLIGHT, right before you take off. There's a reason that full-scale pilots religiously go through a pre-flight checklist. This stuff is important folks!!! Much better to catch a problem when your plane is on the ground than when it's spiralling out of control in the air. We're all aware of the term "hangar rash" where our aircraft get a bit banged up in our garages. Things happen. But don't lose sight of the chance for what I would call "transportation rash," where your plane suffers some damage from simply being transported from home to the flying site. Do a final pre-flight check AFTER you arrive at the flying site. It could save you a lot of grief.

One final note. I'm not as young as I used to be. Perhaps some of you share this same dilemma. There's not much we can do about it, time keeps marching on. Up until four or five years ago my eyesight was great and I never gave it a second thought. Then I was slowly forced to admit that I have a hard time focussing on things really close. Turns out I needed reading glasses. Now I can't live without them, I need to pack around a pair of glasses wherever I go. My distance vision is still fine, but forget about the up close stuff. I

can't read a damn label in the supermarket without 'em. My point is that vision or eyesight is CRUCIAL to our efforts to safely control and fly our aircraft. If you can't see your airplane clearly and distinctly how can you expect to control it? Even if your vision is great it's easy enough to fly too high or too low--right across the sun shining down--and lose orientation. I know I've done it. All of us need to ensure that we don't compromise the safety of the general public or our fellow pilots by our own vision problems. GET YOUR EYES CHECKED !!!!! It is really that important.

Fly often, and fly safe
Dave

General Meeting

By: Paul Kohlmann
21 August 2012

- VP Dave opened the meeting to announce that President Jon will be stepping down. This is due to the unhappy news that Jon's dad's condition has taken a turn for the worse. Jon's dad is member Paul Stychno. Dave will be filling Jon's shoes.
- Opening Raffle—Bill Van Asdian took the \$30 gift card from Jake's.
- New Members—we met Steve Call, Paul Gamboa, and Frank. My apologies for any misspellings!
- EAA/Young Eagle—the club staffed a booth in Petaluma on 7/21 for the airport open house and Young Eagles event. Merle and Drew Kohlmann got rides but the event was only lightly attended.
- Learn to Fly Day—this event was held on 7/22 and quite a few kids got instruction. John Reade was out teaching along with others.
- Air Show—the Club pulled off two great days of demo flying and the booth got plenty of traffic. Jim Swanson got some neat footage from his hexacopter that will be posted on the Club's website. The pilots got quite a few kudos from participants and also from some of the fullscale pilots. Enough raffle tickets were sold to cover all prize costs with \$45 left over. Another benefit of the Club's participation is that Adam scored ~20 gallons of smoke oil left over from the performers.

- Pylon Racing—coming up this weekend.
- Float Fly #3—coming up on Labor Day, this is the last scheduled Float Fly.
- Neil Taylor/Larry Frank—at the end of the month, we'll host this Fun Fly and Scale event. A big BBQ is planned and it is expected to be a good event.
- Certificate of Completion—Drew Kohlmann received his Nitro Solo certificate as a result of the flight he had with John Reade's Kadet on the Learn to Fly Day.
- Show and Tell—Adam brought in a Multiplex Merlin micro sailplane. It took about 30 seconds to assemble and is a neat little ship. He has flown it for up to 90 minutes on a 3S out on the coast!
- Raffle: \$71 in tickets sold.
Drew: \$45 gift card from Jake's
Adam: 4 cycle motor donated by Chuck Greene
Jerry: aircraft book donated by John Reade

Adjourned at 8:10

Board Meeting Minutes

By: Paul Kohlmann
4 September 2012

- PCAM Raffle—all winners have been contacted and they have been invited to receive their aircraft and get flight instruction on Sunday, 9/9. Most of the winners are taking us up on this opportunity. Adam is leading this effort but could use some help. \$377 was spent on the prizes and \$420 was taken in.
- PCAM Recap—overall the Club's participation went well. The consensus was that Sunday's performance was better—likely due to the experience from Saturday. A number of pilots received kudos from spectators as they were leaving the show with their aircraft. Jon may have gone to the PCAM's debrief.
- Float Fly Recap—the last Float Fly at Sal Lake was held on Labor Day. Sixteen pilots signed up including a flyer from San Mateo. This was considered the best one of the year for the great weather, not too hot, and the lack of wind well into the afternoon.

- Canvas Falcon—Liberty will be holding this WWI scale event on October 13th.
- Ukiah Propbusters—they are holding a Fun Fly and swap meet on October 6th.
- Night Fly—the first two events went well and there has been interest in adding a third before the year is out. After checking the moon phase, October 13th looks like a good bet.
- T-shirts and Schwag—progress on this has slowed as there is discussion on updating the Club's logo.
- Neil Taylor/Larry Frank—coming up September 30th, its time to nail down the details of the event. The BBQ will run \$5-\$6 just to cover costs. Judges and paperwork for the scale competition need to be located. Award plaques have been ordered and Wayne Frederick is working on them.
- Christmas Party 2012—the right time to start planning this event is now. We reviewed what went well and what could have gone better at the party in 2011. We agreed that we will host the event ourselves again, but that we need to find a better way to share the workload.
- Member's Meeting Venue—a discussion was held on moving the monthly meeting to Round Table. The thought was that it costs ~\$100 per month to hold the meeting with raffle at the Vet's Hall. We may draw more club members if we spent the money on pizza instead. We will likely try holding one meeting in 2012 in a restaurant meeting room to test this out before we have to renew our reservation at the Vet's Hall.

Meeting convened at 8:00pm.

3-D Vision

by Jim Tiller, On the Safe Side Author

My home overlooks a small lake. This summer, with the continuing drought, the lake is nearly empty. The fish are pretty concentrated in the remaining water. For the past couple of weeks the pond has been visited each morning by a red-tailed hawk looking for an easy breakfast. I have been fascinated watching him glide back and forth,

drop to the water, and come up with a silvery meal.

I was reminded of a biology lecture on depth perception. Some birds and many mammals have both eyes in front of the head so they have binocular vision. That means when both eyes, some distance apart, focus on the same object they can judge the distance to that object by comparing the two slightly different views. Picture a triangle with the base of the plane on your face and each eye being one triangle corner. The apex of the triangle is the object in question. This stereoptic view of a single point creates what is called parallax. For animals, it is particularly useful when determining the immediacy of a threat or the distance to prey. Humans use it for everything from hitting the cup with poured coffee to successfully making a right turn onto the taxiway.

If you think about this method of triangulation, it should be apparent that parallax is limited to objects that are fairly close. The distance between your two eyes is just a few inches and as an object gets farther away, the parallax triangle becomes less and less visually accurate quite quickly. Most humans can only judge depth, with any accuracy, to about 75 feet.

So how do we fly our airplanes in a 3-D world where we must determine the distance to objects much farther away?

Since you were a baby you've been gathering information that you use to supplement your binocular visual cues. We learn that the apparent size of an object increases as it comes nearer and decreases as it goes away. We learn that near objects are colorful and far objects fade to grayer shades. We learn that water towers are generally taller than trees. We learn that objects that block our vision are closer than the objects they hide. These are just a few examples of how your brain deals with distances in your visual world.

But this also means that our eyes can easily draw a wrong conclusion if they are given conflicting visual cues. You have all seen optical illusions. This is the reason our brains can see depth in two-dimensional pictures or photographs. Artists have mastered the ability to make two-dimensional objects appear to have depth, by manipulating those visual cues.

So much for the biology lesson, what does this have to do with safety? By and large, the only sense you use when flying RC is eyesight. You will have to be constantly aware that your 3-D vision is limited and you must learn a new set of rules for dealing with depth or the lack of it.

Keep some daylight between your landing airplane and the field fence until you are sure it is inside the fence perimeter.

If you fly your giant-scale airplane just after a small one, be aware it may appear closer than it really is. Try to glance away from your model occasionally and search your peripheral vision for other objects that can give you visual cues.

Adjust your flight path to keep daylight between you and any other airplane in the sky.

Never fly directly over anyone when your airplane is close to the ground, regardless of how distant they may appear to be from you.

When you range test your radio, make a mental note of its apparent size when you are 100 feet and 200 feet away from it.

Darker colors will appear farther away than brighter colors. Make the pattern on the top of the wing different than the bottom.

A person with 20/20 vision has no better depth perception than the person wearing trifocals.

It is our binocular vision and our accumulated knowledge that keeps us safe, but in the same breath, never forget how easily our human eyes are fooled.

A Few Random Tips

With the warm (overly hot where I live) summer temperatures, many of us are doing our shop and field work in shorts and flip-flops. I had a close call with a shop knife that left my workbench and narrowly missed my shoe this past winter. With bare feet, an errant knife or tool would surely do damage. An easy way to keep X-Acto knives from rolling off the table is to buy some cheap pencil grips and slip them over the handle.



They will always stay where you left them that way and all you have to do is remember where you put it.

With the floor fan running more in your shop to keep you cool, remember to blow out the motor occasionally to keep it from accumulating too much dust and becoming a fire hazard.

I was going to remind you to put your sunscreen on before spending the day at the field, but if you are not aware of the accumulating effects of skin damage to skin from UV rays, you must be living under a rock or in South Dakota. If both of those are true, stop by and see me sometime—we're neighbors.

On the Cover

By: Guy Nicholas

Cool looking micro Orinthopter, check out the video and other info here:

http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-20008019-1.html

WCF 2012 EVENTS SCHEDULE

September 23rd - Pylon Race # 3

September 30th -Larry Frank Scale Fly-In

October 21st - Pylon Race #4

November 18th -Pylon Race # 5

December 8th -Christmas Party



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