



October 2008

# Crosswinds

## SPARKS WEBSITE

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SPARKS  
P.O. Box 1361  
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|  |              |
|--|--------------|
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Luis Rodriguez 281-363-9134

### Ground Instructor- Airplanes

Vic Baney 281-357-1357

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### Helicopters

Warren Watkins 713-725-0827

## Message from President Wally Warren

Hopefully, everyone is getting some semblance of order back to their lives following Hurricane Ike.

Wally was unable to write a column for us this month due to power outages and then, work commitments.

When I spoke to him today, he was in Seattle until the end of the week. Join us for the next meeting on Oct. 1st. at Valley Ranch Grill as usual.



## From the Pikes Peak Soaring Society Inc., Colorado Springs, Colorado A Lifetime of Balsa Glue and Dreams by Rob Shernick

*Reprinted from the September issue of AMA Insider*

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.

**Article con't. on page 10**

## September Meeting Highlights



**“Two dates for fun, flying and swapping were set”.....**

Copies of same were forwarded to Harris County Parks Dept. and we are hoping for a lease on the Dyess Park site soon. With the signed lease in hand, we will speak with officials at May Field about locating our flight line in relationship to theirs.

Details for construction and disposition of our existing field equipment (tables, stands, etc.) will be discussed with the Parks dept.

One safety issue was discussed.....the matter of starting your engine at full throttle, whether it is on a stand or on the ground, is not a wise idea. We should all be diligent and place our safety as well, as that of your fellow members as # 1 priority.

Two motions were passed by the membership. More details will be announced later.

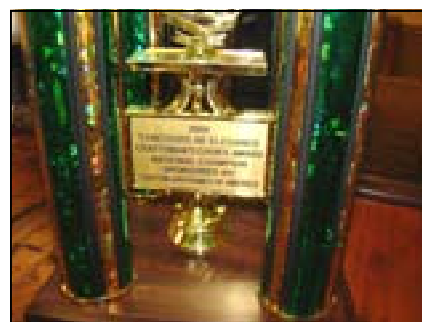
- Designate Saturday, November 22, 2008 as a “Survivor & Swap” meet Event. Any plane (survivor of the season) can be flown and a swap meet will be conducted. It will be an AMA sanctioned event and any pilot with an AMA license can attend. Members are encouraged to bring friends.
- Saturday, January 17, 2009, will be a Celebration/farewell of the existing field. Club members may bring a guest pilot with AMA license. According to the land sale terms, the present Field will not be available from Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>.

Gift certificates to Randy’s Hobbies were raffled.



Luis Rodriguez brought his “Pentathlon” which was awarded the 2008 Craftsman’s Choice Award National Champion at the U.S. Nats in Muncie this July. It was also named 1<sup>st</sup>. runner up in the Concours Event.

Luis reviewed the construction and painting of the magnificent craft. With his meticulous attention to detail, it was easy to see why he won the awards. Everyone was in awe of the craftsmanship.



## Clear Skies, Cooler Temps bring out the guys

It was an absolutely perfect day for flying or most outdoor activity. Low humidity, clear skies and temps in the lower 70°s made Saturday, Sept. 6th, the perfect day to catch up with everyone at the field.

At least 20 members were in attendance and finding an open parking place near a table was impossible. The late arrivals found places beyond the shed. This possibly the highest attendance in months.

Hopefully we will have more perfect days as fall arrives to enjoy the last

months at our current field.

Perhaps by the time this issue is published, we will have a lease with the Pct. 4 Parks Department for the proposed new site at nearby Dyess Park.



## Recent hangar additions.....

### *To right:*

Richard Lewis' Dad, Ron, brought his new craft, the Exceleron 50, out for its maiden flight.

It's equipped with a Saito 91 engine and Spectrum DX7 radio.



### *To*

**right:** Not a maiden flight since Dean Nistetter has ten flights on his new Carden, but several of us had not had a chance to drool over it.



*Please see  
page 4 for  
more on*

*Dean's Carden*

## After Ike.....

Hopefully, everyone has power restored by now and did not sustain any major damage.

I actually thought our shed at the field might be in Louisiana. It was a pleasant surprise when Ben Schultz called to report only minor repairs were needed at the field.

Heeding an email I sent to members, necessary repairs were made. SPARKS may be a bit tattered looking, but still there.

Many thanks to Ben for mowing very quickly so members could fully enjoy our great field right after the storm.



## My Carden 40% Extra 300 Midwing submitted by Dean Nistetter

Here's some stats.....

- Wing Span - 118"
- Length - 113"
- Wing Area - 2517 Sq. In.
- Flying Weight - 36 lbs 10 Ounces
- Motor - DA150
- Muffler System - MTW headers with KS canisters
- Radio - Futaba 12MZ with 14 channel synthesized
- PCM 2048 receiver
- Prop - 3 Blade Mejzlik 28.5x12
- Batteries - 3 separate A123 Lithium Nanophosphate 2300 mAh batteries
- Smart-Fly Power Expander
- 8 Hitec 5955 Digital servos, 1 Hitec 5945 digital servo, 1 Hitec 5245 digital servo
- Construction - Balsa, light ply, foam, carbon fiber
- 3 - 25' rolls of Monokote
- Removable control surfaces using 48 HD hinges
- Servos installed using the Durant Direct Drive system (servos are internally mounted with no linkages, no control horns, no pushrods, no hard points, etc.)



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## From the AMA to all members.....

### Just One Vote

by Jim Cherry, AMA Executive Director

Soon all current AMA members will be receiving their 2009 membership renewal notices and 2009 election ballots. In a cost-saving effort, the renewal notices and election ballots will be mailed together.

The ballot will be a postage-paid postcard to encourage members to participate in the elections.

Please note that the post-card ballots are to be returned to a different address than the dues renewals. Please don't include your ballot in your dues-renewal envelope.

Or you can save time and postage by renewing at

[www.modelaircraft.org/joinrenew.aspx](http://www.modelaircraft.org/joinrenew.aspx).



***Building the Ultimate Toy by Joshua M. Bernstein***  
***Photos Reprinted from the AARP Sept./Oct. 2008 issue***

Submitted by Jake Jacobsen

In the September-October issue of AARP magazine, there is a great article about two guys, Dante Di Mille and Tony Yellen (both in their 70's) "building a life size replica of the "Winnie Mae", the snub nosed Lockheed Vega that in 1933 lifted off and carried Wiley Post on his record-setting solo flight around the world.

*The project is something of a childhood dream come true for the retired Air Force cartographer, who spent countless hours building model planes in his youth. During World War II, Wings cigarettes distributed trading cards emblazoned with pictures of various planes and, as Di Mille remembers, "I saw a card with the Vega and fell in love."*

Please see the complete article at his website:

<http://www.timeout.com/newyork/articles/own-this-city/24379/field-of-vision>

And you can read more about the amazing aviator, Wiley Post at:

<http://www.acepilots.com/post.html>



***Editor's note: Which beloved Author, Movie Star & Cowboy Humorist was with Wiley on his ill fated last flight in 1935 ??***

***Reprinted from the AMA Insider,  
September 2008 edition***

**ON THE SAFE SIDE**

From AMA District VIII Safety Incident Reporting by  
Chuck Waller

What is a model airplane pilot's worst nightmare? To me, it is the sight of a model aircraft out of control, or with no radio response, heading for a parking lot or spectator area filled with people.

As this unfortunate incident occurs, everyone who sees it starts yelling, "Heads up!" to get the attention of every one at the field and, hopefully, in the parking lot or wherever the airplane is heading. All non-flying pilots are focused on the airplane and do their best to help people get out of the way. The pilot never stops fighting. He keeps the throttle all the way back in case he gets one more command in before the inevitable.

I have personally witnessed this event at least four times and had it happen to me once. Fortunately, no people were injured in any of these events.

So what would happen if we were not so lucky? What happens next when an incident, with or without personal injury, occurs?

Obviously, the first thing is to take care of any injured persons, if there are any. Your club should have a first aid kit available if the injury is minor. For major injuries you should immediately call for emergency services (911) and give them directions to your field. (These directions should also be posted at your flying field.)

Now what do you do next? It is very important at this point to gather as many facts regarding the incident as you can. You should immediately appoint one person as the "investigating" official. This

may be the club safety officer or another club officer. It is actually better if the investigating official did not actually witness the incident. This way, his report will not be "clouded" by his own recollections.

Immediately talk to any one who witnessed the event. Make sure to get their name, address, and phone number for future interviews. Take down a statement of events and facts from each witness. Try to do this before the witnesses talk to each other if at all possible. You may want to assign several people to assist in getting statements at this time. It is very important to take pictures of any damage that was caused to any personal property including autos, buildings, trailers, other models, etc. Do not spare the film! You can always throw out or delete repetitive or nonessential pictures.

As soon as possible, you should contact AMA to report the incident and to request a claim form. Even if the incident results in no personal injury or property damage, all incidents (close calls) should be reported so they can be evaluated for any possible corrective actions.

From the AMA membership manual: During regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST) please call (765) 287-1256. To report an incident involving serious injuries after hours or on weekends please call (765) 749-9210 or (765) 212-0793.

I sincerely hope you never have this type of incident happen at your flying site, but if it does, keep cool and follow these steps as closely as possible.

Fly safely and remember to have fun!



## Flight of the Extreme UAV's, from smallest to deadliest Submitted by Mike Rose

Here's a site with great photos of UAV's, Unmanned Aerial vehicles, from tiny to the deadliest.....

Here's the link..

[http://www.wired.com/politics/security/multimedia/2007/10/gallery\\_uavs?currentPage=1&slideView=4](http://www.wired.com/politics/security/multimedia/2007/10/gallery_uavs?currentPage=1&slideView=4)

**Photo above:** The WASP, at only 13 ounces is the smallest...Looks like it would be fun at the field..... Just kidding.

**Photo: U.S. Navy**

*To view and read about others, please visit the site listed above.....*



**Photo above:** The MQ-9 Reaper is the deadliest....it can carry up to 14 Hellfire missiles .....**Photo: U.S. Air Force**

## Tired of buying expensive fuel ??.....submitted by Mike Rose



**Photo above:** Besler Airspeed 2000 **Steam** Plane

Then try to convert to steam.

Here's a website with many old and rare photos of planes.

Many were one of a kind (you can see why) but still someone's idea and they were actually built and flown.

<http://rareaircraf1.greyfalcon.us/UNITED%20STATES.htm>

The one shown to the right was built and flown in 1933 and is detailed on this website. One of the designer's Nathan Price went on to help design Lockheed's first jet engine. It's really fascinating to imagine these early concept planes.

<http://www.stanleysteamers.com/aviation.htm>

## Meet Alex Ramcke, a fellow R/C'er

Many R/C modelers seek a place to fly, attend model shows and enjoy the hobby no matter where their travels take them.

For example, Alan Buckner, Lee Dillenbeck, Rod Kuntz and Nick Marson, have written articles describing their experiences with "R/C'ing" in far flung lands.

Such was the case when Alex Ramcke of Hamburg, Germany visited Houston back in the spring. Alex located the field and spoke with Greg Reide and Jim Greer. He emailed Mike Meyer and inquired if our club would allow him to fly at SPARKS during the two or three visits he makes to Houston each year.

At the August meeting we approved such an arrangement

Well, after an extended stopover in New York due to the arrival of Ike, Alex was here to enjoy our beautiful Texas weather and fly his new heli. After he and Greg put the finishing touches on the Hirobo Sceadu, they were ready to go on Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Alex said "Thank you to SPARKS for sharing your field with me during my stopovers here in Houston.

Flying conditions are so perfect here and I really appreciate your hospitality."

Please give Alex a big Texas "howdy" if you see him at the field.



## Nothing Lasts Forever submitted by Nick Marson

Diane and I went out to the field on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>, just a week after IKE.

Not expecting the field to be in very good shape I took my 14 year old biplane. Well my flying has obviously got a lot worse; even Diane asked why the plane was jiggling around in the air a bit. I thought I was rustier than I had expected. (Oh, FYI, the field is in great shape.)

On the next flight I noticed that I appeared to have 2 rudders, so I landed. Two of the hinges had fell out and one had sheared in two.

On close examination I noted that the mylar hinges were showing signs of cracks.

The moral to the story is: if you have an old plane then check your hinges, and everything else!

It's repaired now and ready for 14 more years !!



Two rudders



Notice the cracks in the hinge



## Did you know? Submitted by Jake Jacobsen

That on January 23rd, 1939, a new world diving speed record of over **575 mph** was accomplished by the Curtiss Aeroplane Division of the Curtiss-Wright Corporation, using a Curtiss-Wright 75A Pursuit plane near Buffalo, NY.

How did he keep the propeller from over-speeding (running away) ?? The engine had a Curtiss electric controllable pitch, full feathering prop. I would bet the engine was shut down and prop feathered during the dive.

What altitude did the dive start ?? Don't know, but must have been really high...30,000 feet in 1939. I think airplanes dived faster than 575 before 1939; but didn't survive to claim a record. How about a diving record for an R/C ?? I think a glider holds it.



Editor's note:

Here's a video of the Curtiss Hawk 75A-1.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcbF9ysddN4>

The one Jake was referring to above (the 75A) was mainly an experimental model. Later models had "-1, 2, 3, etc." or 75B, C, D, etc.

It was a very popular plane before and during WW 2. The first American fighter to down a German warplane in WW2 and the first French victory

came when an Hawk 75A shot down two Messerschmitt Bf 109D's. But when the Germans invaded France, they were using them against us.

Read more about this little known bit of history on these sites:

<http://www.fortunecity.com/meltingpot/portland/971/Reviews/usaaf/hawk-75a4.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P-36\\_Hawk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P-36_Hawk)

## More from Mike...submitted by Mike Rose

Here's a Power point display of old biplanes.....here are a few sample photos....

[http://www.ppvolunteers.org/pdf\\_files/Biplane\\_Dreams.pps](http://www.ppvolunteers.org/pdf_files/Biplane_Dreams.pps)



**Article con't. from page one....."A lifetime of Balsa and Glue"**

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 watercolors.

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.

**Article con't. page eleven...**

## Article con't. from page ten....."A lifetime of Balsa and Glue"

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.




**Editor's note...."This story is a look at the bygone days of modeling and building....**

**Some in the Club will remember fondly and others will give thanks that the hobby is much more advanced now"**

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL HOBBY SHOPS

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21768 E. Knox Dr.      Porter, Texas 77365

### Many thanks to the following who submitted articles this month.....

Jake Jacobsen, Richard Lewis, Nick Marson,  
Dean Nistetter, and Mike Rose

Please send your photos, articles, websites, news , want ads and just interesting stuff to me....

Diane Marson [dgmarson@earthlink.net](mailto:dgmarson@earthlink.net)

Hope to see you at the meeting next Wednesday, Oct. 1st at Valley Ranch Grill at 7 pm.

Come early and enjoy the tasty food and great fellowship.....

### SAVE THE DATES.....

You may have noticed the two events planned at the Sept. meeting  
(details page 2)

**Saturday, November 22, 2008 Survivor & Swap**

**Saturday, January 17th, 2009 Celebration/farewell to our current field**

