
American Airlines Gas Model Club

- The Plane Facts -

AMA Charter 1983 - Founded March 30, 1938 - Cleveland, Ohio

May 2004

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Will be on Friday, May 7th, at 8:00 p.m. in the North Community Room of the Busch Funeral Home at 7501 Ridge Rd, Parma, OH.

The **American Airlines Gas Model Club** meets here on the 1st Friday of each month during the winter. The **AAGMC** welcomes visitors at all regular meetings.

2004 AAGMC OFFICERS

President	Paul Bianco (440) 845-5954
V.Pres.	Dick Matejka
Secretary	Jim Knodel
Treasurer	Henry Horn
Sgt. at Arms	Mike Labosky

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Elec. Media Coord. Don King  
Newsletter Editor Phil Hilbert  
Club Photog. Ed Muckley  
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2004 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Open Members	\$50.00/yr.
Senior (17-18)	8.00
Junior (<17)	5.00

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Web site > <http://www.aa-gmc.org/> <  
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Here we are already. The flying season officially began last Saturday the 24th. I got a report that Marvin and Don King as well as Dennis Kedziora and Jim Knodel were out flying at the field that day. I have suspicions that they were trying to get the jump on some of the other electric guys by practicing the new F5J event that is part of the Electric Competition this year. The field report from Saturday indicated the runway starts off as wet on the east and continues to get more wet as you go west. Only the east half was useable as the west half was submerged.

I enjoyed my month off as Editor and spent my time in Cape Coral, Florida while you were at the Toledo show. I took time from my busy schedule of sunning myself to visit the local R/C club. The Cape Coral R/Sea Hawks have a field to kill for. They also enjoy year round flying weather that rarely is below 50 degrees. Their field is located within a City owned recreational area and has a concrete runway about three quarters the length of ours. I don't believe they pay a cent to lease the site. Obviously they pay for the field upkeep and improvements, but with 241 members this year they can afford it. It is truly a first class site. They even pay to have the grass cut, Don!



R/Sea Hawks runway and pit area. Check out the permanent aircraft stand. One at each flying box!

For quite a few years now the Sea Hawks have hosted a Rally in the middle of March. This year they had 4300 visitors for the rally including 70 pilots. I'm not sure where they packed them all. I hope to start going to Florida next year a few weeks early so I can catch this event. Up till now I've been tied into Easter school break, but next year my girl is on her own.



Spectator watches 46% Ultimate at Sea Hawk Rally

Florida is getting to be quite the place for some major events and that's understandable considering the climate. I had thought that the summer would be way to hot to fly, but talking to the pilots, they simply shift the time to early morning or late afternoon and avoid the worst of the heat. If you are looking for a nice quiet place to vacation in the off season you might consider Cape Coral. I call it a

working town. It has very few tourist compared to it's sister city across the river, Fort Myers. It is about the size of Parma and still growing. I'm hoping to get a plane or two in residence so I can spend some time flying when I'm down there. If you would like more info about the Cape Coral R/Sea Hawks visit their site at:

> <http://www.rseahawks.org/> <

Special Announcement:

There will be a work party at the field on May 8th, preceding the electric contest. The scope of work and required tools will be announced at the Friday meeting. At least show up with one or two good hands.

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**- FROM THE BOARD -**

**From the Pres.....**

Well, we had an interesting March club meeting to say the least. Although Chris from Parma Hobby had to cancel his annual show and tell program again (his car broke down while he was out of town) we did hear that one of our neighbor R/C clubs, The Erie County Flyers, lost their flying field recently. Unfortunately, many AAGMC members can remember living through the same nightmare TWICE. Our March meeting resurrected many of those bad memories and prompted lengthy conversations about safety and sound issues at our flying field. Basically, many members feel that we need a "tune-up". In other words, let's ensure we are remaining PROACTIVE when it comes to safety and sound COMPLIANCE at the field. For example, flying high speed passes over the runway. No one disputes how dangerous this is, so if you have the urge to fly them low, move those high speed passes out north of the runway by the tree line. Although the Executive Board already addressed the inherit dangers of pylon racing, a quick reminder can't hurt. Pylon racing can still occur, but with one exception. If there are other members or spectators present, those wishing to pylon race MUST ADVISE everyone of their intent so those members and spectators can move to a point of safety. Lastly, there have been numerous conversations since the March meeting about the sound or DB levels of our engines and our long time club rule of 95 DB @ 9 feet. Although our club rule still stands, the Executive Board did have an emergency meeting on this same subject shortly after the March meeting. I will report on that at our May meeting, but here is something to think about until then. There are TWO rare items in our hobby. One is a beautiful flying site and the other is having youth in the club. Currently we have both. Let's not lose either one. PARMA HOBBY will be at our May meeting! (This time it is guaranteed). So come on down for their annual show and tell.

Toledo Show report: thanks to Mike "raffle man" Labosky, I just received a big box from AMA filled with many donations for our club raffle!!! You see, Mike threaten the folks at the AMA table at the Toledo Show (I was embarrassed) and ended up with some donations. Nice guy .....now our AMA dues will sky rocket! Kidding...Thanks Mike! See you at the meeting.

**Minutes Of Meeting March, 2004**

*Executive Board Meeting:*

The club sound level requirement of 95 DB at 9 feet is going to be enforced and this means planes will be checked. Every one is responsible to keep the sound level down so we don't lose the field. New houses are being built in the area. For the one day Buzzard fly in neighbors will be contacted for their approval. Members must be willing to accept the fact, if their plane is checked and found to exceed the sound level, without animosity and make the necessary corrections. Tower Hobby has a muffler with a baffle that will fit many engines. Also a silicon tube on the exhaust may improve the sound level.

*Notices and Communications:*

- Marv King reported on the field condition. There are no visible stones on the driveway. There has been washing out at the culvert and repairs will be required. The road is drivable up to the trailer. No horses have been on the runway but it is very wet.

- The old web site was closed on March 1.

- There is no schedule for flying at the dome.

- Dave Naylor described how the 110 member Erie County Flyers lost their field.

*Old Business:*

- There is \$660 in the gravel fund and we now have 32 paid members. We expect to have 46 members for the year.

- For 2003 the raffles made \$468 and there was \$620 in donations. The club ended the year \$180.82 in the red.

- The rules for the electric contest have been completed and are available.

- No meeting or newsletter for April because of the Toledo show.

*New Business:*

- Any good magazines or articles should be shared with the members.

- Parma Hobby donated raffle prizes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Jim Knodel, Secretary

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Club raffle:

Ed Pomnitz, Antonio Lacerda and Jim Knodel won the raffle prizes.

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**Electric news**

The 2004 Electric Contest started with a whimper not a bang. The only bang we had last Sunday was thunder. The contest was canceled and will be rescheduled when we have fairer weather. If you are interested in participating in the contest this year, don't hesitate to send me an email or give me a call. The next contest date is Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Marvin King sent two excellent documents for spring cleaning your aircraft. Please read ahead. Most of these things are well known to the more experienced, but it doesn't hurt to go through a comprehensive check list just the same. We ALL forget things from time to time.

Hi all,

This is a little late in the spring to be doing your battery and airplane maintenance but it still needs to be done. So if you have a battery discharger get it out and run thru your receiver and transmitter batteries. If you have not done anything with your batteries since last year they will need to be cycled three times to see if they still have at least 80% of the rated capacity. If they do not cycle up look to replace them before you fly. This is for NiCads only. The NiMH batteries one cycle should do it, twice maybe then go get some new ones if they do not come up. There is no need to cycle Li-ion or Li-poly batteries. If you are using the Li-ion or Li-poly batteries follow the recommended charging procedures to the letter. These batteries have lots of power stored in them but are very touchy on how they are charged and discharged. Do not charge these batteries when you are not there to watch them. Even if you have all the right equipment there still can be a problem. The last article I read on them was to charge outside of you car and in some type of container that would not burn. I would think that using a container all the time would be a good idea; you might want to protect your house too. So now your batteries are ready but are your airplanes. I somehow got to my airplane maintenance before Christmas. I put it on my list before building anything. I did not get to building anything this winter so it seems like a good thing. Some of batteries are getting cycled as I write this. Airplane maintenance should include checking just about anything that moves or should not move. I will run thru a list but it will not be a complete list. The list will vary by type of airplane. Check all the linkages, the servo gear play, the servo wheel to clevis, ball link what ever, Clevis, ball link to control horn, control horn to flight surface. Do the servos have all there mounting screws? The wing mounts in the fuse, in the wing. Check rudder and elevator attachment to the fuse. Did that last hard landing break it loose? Check the wing by gently seeing if will flex? If it is questionable take some covering off and check more closely. Replacing some covering is better than starting over with a new kit. Is the motor properly attached to the firewall? Is the firewall still securely attached to the fuse? Is the landing gear still in proper working condition? I think that will give everyone a good starting list. Twenty minutes a plane now will save many an airplane and hours later. Let's have a safe and enjoyable summer! If anyone has questions call, write, or e-mail me.

Marv

### Model Aircraft Safety Inspection Checklist

1. Overall appearance of aircraft for obvious safety flaws.
2. Engine and prop for security in mounts (wiggle it).
3. Prop for cracks or damage.
4. Cowling (if applicable) for condition and security.
5. Left wing panel for cracks or loose covering.
6. Left wing strut (if applicable) for condition and security.
7. Left wing aileron hinges (pull on it).
8. Left wing for obvious warps.
9. Fuselage for general condition.
10. Tail group for security cracks, loose covering.
11. Elevator for condition, cracks, loose hinges (pull on it).
12. Elevator control horn(s) for solidity (wiggle it).
13. Elevator control system for slop in the connections.
14. Rudder for condition, cracks, loose hinges (pull on it).
15. Rudder control horn(s) for solidity (wiggle it).
16. Rudder and tail wheel control system for sloppy connections.
17. Right wing panel for cracks or loose covering.
18. Right wing strut (if applicable) for condition and security.
19. Right wing aileron hinges (pull on it).
20. Right wing for obvious warps.
21. Check mounting and connections of all servos.
22. Landing gear and wheel for security and condition.
23. Batteries, cycled, and check condition.
24. IF FEASIBLE, do range check and control surface movement check. This should also be done before every flight session.

If this check list is used to, check out all models before the first flight of the season and thereafter every few weeks, many problems could be avoided before they become crashes. Now, if there was only a test for "dumb thumbs".

This will be the last meeting at Busch until the Fall as well as the last regular newsletter. I will most likely publish a Summer update issue at the beginning of July as well as a calendar of events as soon as the dates are final. Hope to see you all at the field soon. Hope you have an enjoyable season and please fly safe.

Your comments are welcome. Send them or any news I can use in the newsletter to: Phil Hilbert  
email: > [igli@att.net](mailto:igli@att.net) < or phone: (330) 273-3792

### Special Notice:

Please read and follow the safety alert that the AMA has issued concerning Lithium Batteries. There has been quite of ongoing discussion within the club during the past year. The AMA is the central governing body for all RC clubs and they are generally conservative in matters such as this. I think the fact that they issued this alert speaks for itself. I included it as the last page of this month's newsletter.

## **EMERGENCY SAFETY ALERT**

### **Lithium Battery Fires**

Lithium batteries are becoming very popular for powering the control and power systems in our models. This is true because of their very high energy density (amp-hrs/wt. ratio) compared to NiCads or other batteries. With high energy comes increased risk in their use. The, principal, risk is FIRE which can result from improper charging, crash damage, or shorting the batteries. All vendors of these batteries warn their customers of this danger and recommend extreme caution in their use. In spite of this **many** fires have occurred as a result of the use of Lithium Polymer batteries, resulting in loss of models, automobiles, and other property. Homes and garages and workshops have also burned. A lithium battery fire is **very hot** (several thousand degrees) and is an excellent initiator for ancillary (resulting) fires. Fire occurs due to contact between Lithium and oxygen in the air. **It does not need any other source of ignition, or fuel to start**, and burns almost explosively.

These batteries must be used in a manner that precludes ancillary fire. The following is recommended:

1. **Store, and charge, in a fireproof container**; never in your model.
2. Charge in a protected area devoid of combustibles. Always stand watch over the charging process. **Never leave the charging process unattended.**
3. In the event of damage from crashes, etc, carefully remove to a safe place for at least a half hour to observe. Physically damaged cells could erupt into flame, and, after sufficient time to ensure safety, should be discarded in accordance with the instructions which came with the batteries. **Never attempt to charge a cell with physical damage**, regardless of how slight.
4. Always use chargers designed for the **specific** purpose, preferably having a fixed setting for your particular pack. Many fires occur in using selectable/adjustable chargers improperly set. Never attempt to charge Lithium cells with a charger which is not, specifically, designed for charging Lithium cells. **Never use chargers designed for Nickel Cadmium batteries.**
5. Use charging systems that monitor and control the charge state of each cell in the pack. Unbalanced cells can lead to disaster if it permits overcharge of a single cell in the pack. If the batteries show **any sign of swelling**, discontinue charging, and **remove them to a safe place outside** as they could erupt into flames.
6. Most important: **NEVER PLUG IN A BATTERY AND LEAVE IT TO CHARGE UNATTENDED OVERNIGHT.** Serious fires have resulted from this practice.
7. Do not attempt to make your own battery packs from individual cells.

These batteries CANNOT be handled and charged casually such as has been the practice for years with other types of batteries. The consequence of this practice can be very serious resulting in major property damage and/ or personal harm

**Safety Committee**

**Academy of Model Aeronautics**

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