



The Flightline



Volume 46, Issue 2 Newsletter of the Propstoppers RC Club AMA 1042 February 2016



President's Message

Dwayne Myers will give a presentation on charging and maintain your batteries at the next monthly meeting.

C/A field is closed till the snow melts they piled the snow on the road to the gate.

Till the snow melts we still have indoor Tinicum Feb 12th and March 4th Brookhaven Feb. 20th March 19th

We will talk about community day for the township for Sat. May 14th. They have asked for us to be there. I will check with the township about where we can fly.

Show n tells are welcome for this meeting, see you there.

Agenda for February 9th Meeting At At the Church Room, CA Field Meeting 7:00pm till 8:30?

1. Show and Tell
2. Membership Report
3. Finance Report
4. Club Calendar Review
5. Middletown Pride Day Program
6. Care and Maintenance of Batteries

Dick Seiwell. President

Minutes of the Propstoppers Model Airplane Club January 12, 2016 at the Christian Academy meeting room

Call to order took place at 7:25 PM by President Dick Seiwell following membership registrations Roll call by membership chair Ray Wopatek showed 18 members and one junior present Minutes of the December meeting were approved Treasurer's report by Pete Oetinger was presented

Old Business:

President Seiwell reminded everyone about our indoor flying opportunities. Several members led a discussion of potential new flying fields.

Show and Tell:

Ken Merlino showed a recently built biplane with an OS 40 glow engine.

Larry Woodward showed two new rubber models. One is a dime store balsa model that only flew 10 seconds indoors. He is bashing it to work toward 1 minute. Currently he has done 30 seconds and is still improving. The second is similar but built from scratch with balsa stick and paper plate wing and tail. It is much lighter than the first but looks similar.

Adjournment took place at 8:30 PM.

Dick Bartkowski Secretary

Indoor Season

Tinicum; February 12, March 4, 2016
Brookhaven; 2/20, 3/19 2016
All 6:30-9:30 pm

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Calendar of Events

Club Meetings

Monthly Meetings

Second Tuesday of the month.

Gateway Community Church at the Christian Academy. Doors open at 7:00

Next Meeting; 9th February at Church Meeting Room

Tuesday Breakfast Meeting

Tom Jones Restaurant on Edgemont Avenue in Brookhaven. 9 till 10 am. Just show up.

Flying after in the summer at CA or Elwyn Field 10 am. Weather permitting.

Indoors at the Brookhaven Gym in bad weather 10:30-11:30 See dates allowable.

Regular Club Flying

At Old Christian Academy; **Electric Only**

Monday through Friday after school till dusk

Saturday 10 am till dusk

Sunday, after Church; 12 pm till dusk

At Elwyn Field; **Gas or Electric**

Monday through Saturday 8 am till dusk

Sunday 12 pm till dusk

INDOOR Flying, see attached dates.

Special Club Flying

Saturday mornings 10 am

Wednesday Helicopter evening in summer

Thursday evenings in the summer

Tuesday mornings 10 am weather permitting after breakfast.

Check our Yahoo Group for announcements;

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/propstoppers/>

Beginners

Beginners using due caution and respecting club rules may fly Apprentice or similar models without instructors at Christian Academy Field.

The club also provides the AMA Introductory Pilot Program for beginners without AMA insurance.

Propstoppers RC Club of
Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

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Show and Tell

Ken Merlino with his OS 40 powered biplane. Should be a rocket!



Larry Woodward with his indoor rubber powered free flight models. Read about Larry's challenge below.



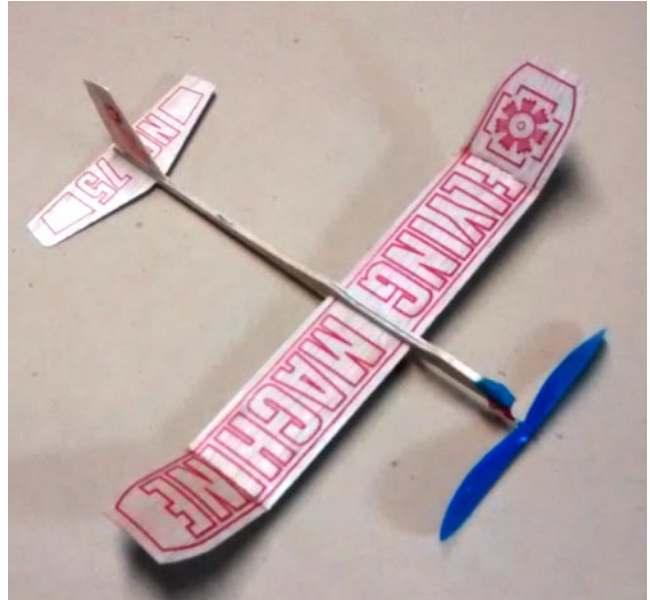
THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET FOR 2016 INDOOR FREEFLIGHT

Larry Woodward

With the start of winter indoor season, the gratuitous extended outdoor season notwithstanding, I found myself getting bored with flying a Mini Vapor in circles around the gym. And, discovering that I lack the skill to control even the most gentle of pattern planes indoors, I took notice of the work in rubber powered freeflight taking place by Murray Wilson, Joe Paradine, and the incomparable

Mick Harris. Discovering a few old Guillows kits on a shelf in the basement I planned to join in. But the thought of building one of these delicate stick and tissue models was not encouraging given my history of ham-fisted light balsa disasters. So, my interest settled on one particular box, the Guillows No 75 "Flying Machine," a simple sheet balsa and stick ROG toy.

Out of the box and after a few trimming flights I was getting a pretty nice run of a couple times around the gym for 10-12 second duration. Not bad, but not great I thought. The question was, just how much "performance" can you get out of a stock design like this. I new that the indoor freeflight competitions were above one hour flights. But this was with super light construction and very large spaces. Neither of which were in my future. So it was a question of stock car racing versus formula one.



I set myself a challenge to see if I could get this model design, the Guillows No 75, to stay up in our gyms for one minute.

Of course, where model aviation knowledge is concerned, I always start with RCGroups.com. On the Freeflight Forum I could see that there was not much interest in these lowly models. So I started my own thread with the simple idea, can I get a "toy glider" to stay up for a minute. And the www did not disappoint. My forum thread was quickly picked up by a few dedicated freeflight gurus who have been supporting my efforts now for several weeks. I am in deep now and learning soooo much about light weight construction, rubber motor design and optimum flight trim. All of which I am seeing is directly applicable to my larger RC projects. If you would like to tag along for this PhD course, just log on to RCGroups at <http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=2566602>.

Update: 01-26-16. At the Tuesday morning indoor session today at Brookhaven I made my goal of a one minute flight, just barely. Thanks to Chuck Kime for acting as "Official Timer." Unfortunately, I did not have my head cam working and don't have video of the flight. But, the latest post of my RCGroups Thread has a nice video of the runner up flight of 55 seconds.

But, what about the rest of you? How can I make this even easier? Well, Dave Harding found the solution when he sent us all the link to Endlessflight.com and the "Snowflake." This design is so simple even I can build one in under an hour. All you need is a balsa stick, four 9" plastic foam picnic plates and any rubber band prop assembly from a dime store toy plane. The link that Dave found, <http://www.endlesslift.com/make-your-own-snowflake-a-rubber-band-powered-foam-plate-airplane/>, contains a very detailed build guide, in fact so detailed it is a little intimidating. Don't be, just skim the process and get started. The guide gives dimensions, but no plans. So, here is a pdf file of the plan I drew up.

I built my Snowflake prototype already as shown at the January meeting.

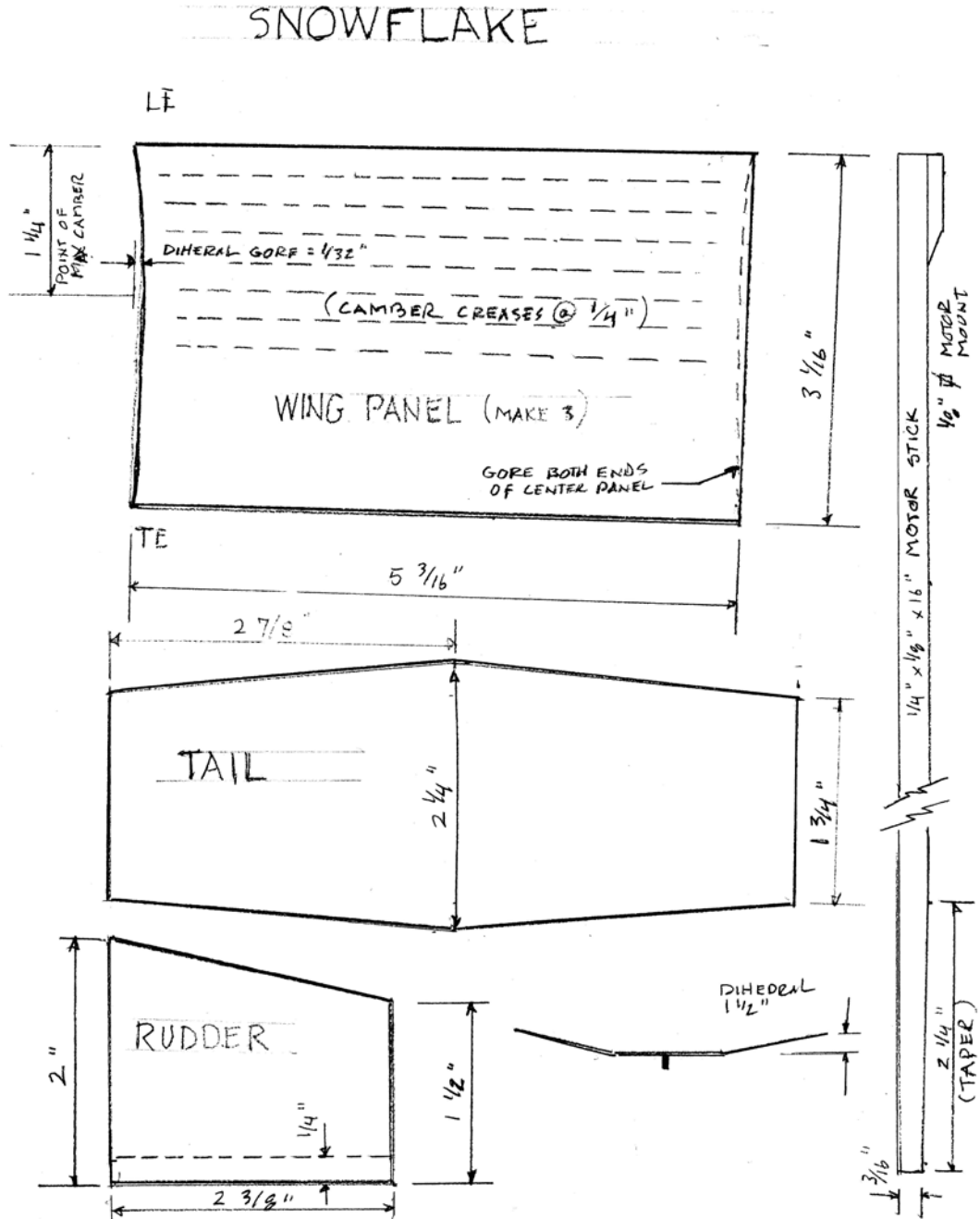
At the 01-26-16 Tuesday morning Brookhaven session, Chuck timed me with the Snowflake at 30 seconds.

This time I did have the head cam turned on.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUBGWLL3u_o

Let's see who can emerge this spring with the best Snowflake flight of the season. Rules are simple, you must use a balsa stick and foam picnic plate flight surfaces only, you must conform to the overall design dimensions. Otherwise, do all you can to get the most out of this "stock" design.

LET THE CHALLENGE COMMENCE!



National Free Flight Society Indoor Event

Ready for this challenge Propstopper Indoor Flyers?

**West Baden Springs Hotel Event
Rantoul Hangar
2016 Indoor Nats**

**Premier Indoor Free Flight Event
West Baden Springs Hotel
French Lick, Indiana
March 19th and 20th, 2016**



<http://www.frenchlick.com/hotels/westBaden/>

Built in 1909, the West Baden Springs Hotel has the largest open atrium ever built. The hotel was restored by the Cook family of Indiana. It was done as a gift to the people of Indiana. They restored the hotel to its original state. It's pristine.

There's nothing like it. You'll be amazed. And you can come and fly indoor rubber free flight here for 2 days. I think it's the grandest site in our country for this activity. It's a great privilege to be able to do this. The other flyers you'll meet are great people that are always willing to help out. If you're a first time flyer, don't hesitate to come.

My flying buddy and I started at this event. The flying group helped us no end to get started. You can stay in the hotel if you like. We have a special rate for our flyers. It is truly one of the great life experiences if you love to fly indoor rubber.

Please send an Email to Bill Gowen at wdgowen@gmail.com



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Educational Product	
Educators & Students	Grades K-4
EB-1999-03-002-DFRC	

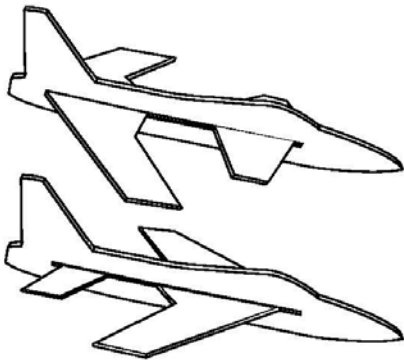
Educational Brief

X-Gliders: Exploring Flight Research with Experimental Gliders

Objectives

The students will:
Build a glider.
Learn how to change the flight characteristics of a glider.
Conduct an experiment to answer a question.

Standards and Skills



Science
Science as Inquiry
Physical Science
Science and Technology

Mathematics
Measurement
Problem Solving

Science Process Skills
Making Models
Investigating
Predicting



Background Information

A look at the research aircraft flown by NASA and its predecessor, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), since the 1940's reveals an evolution of wing designs. In fact, each of the first series of NACA experimental research aircraft ("X-planes") used different wing and tail configurations to tackle the problems of supersonic flight.

These early jet aircraft had straight wings (X-1), wings that angled (swept) toward the tail (X-2), triangular (delta) wings (XF-92), and wings that could be moved in flight to change the angle of backward sweep (X-5). Each design added to our knowledge of high-speed flight.

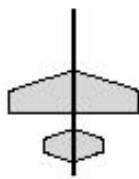
The original X-planes (1947-1952).



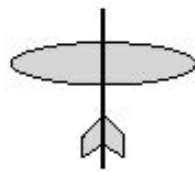
AD-1(1979-1982)



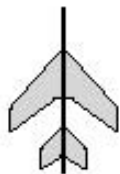
X-29 (1984-1992)



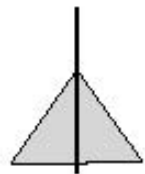
straight wing



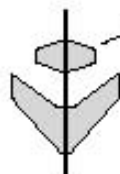
elliptical wing



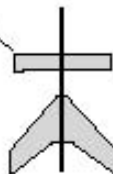
swept-back wing



delta wing

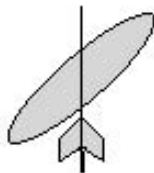


swept-forward wing

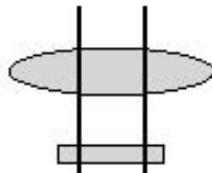


swept-back wing

canards



oblique wing



twin fuselage

More recently, aircraft designs have incorporated wings that sweep forward (X-29), and even wings that sweep forward and backward at the same time (AD-1 oblique wing aircraft). The X-29 and X-31 also made use of small wing-like control surfaces called canards which are located ahead of the main wings. The X-36, which was flown during the late 1990's, used canards and swept-back wings but had no vertical tail. (For additional background information see the *Aircraft as Research Tools* page at the end of this Educational Brief.)

The templates supplied with this activity allow educators and students to build and experiment with all of these basic wing/tail/canard configurations. Eight different plastic foam "X-gliders" can be built using these templates (see illustrations, left), but the total number of variations is only limited by the imagination of the "designer."

Materials for building airplanes must be lightweight, strong, and readily available. These qualities make plastic foam a good material for the construction of flying models. Introduce the X-Glider Activity by discussing with the students some reasons for using plastic foam in the construction of a model glider. Most real airplanes are made from another lightweight, strong, and readily available material called aluminum.

X-Glider Materials

Plastic foam food tray, about 28 cm X 23 cm (Size 12)

Cellophane tape

Paper clips

Binder clips

Ball point pen

Plastic knife or scissors

Toothpicks

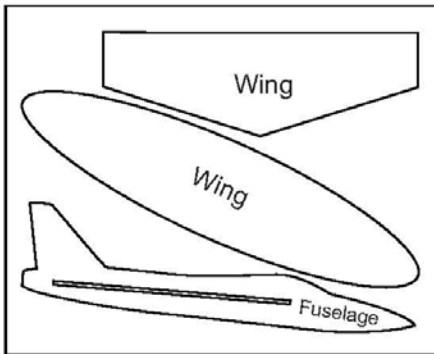
Goggles (eye protection)

Emery boards or sandpaper

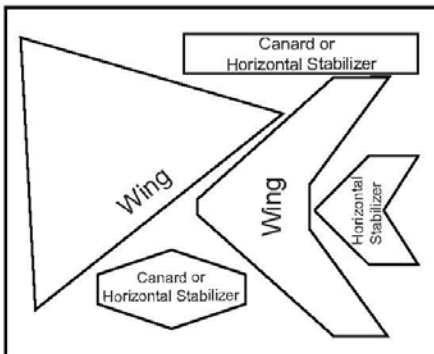


Activity

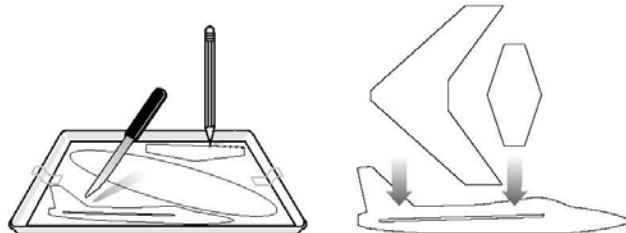
template 1 key



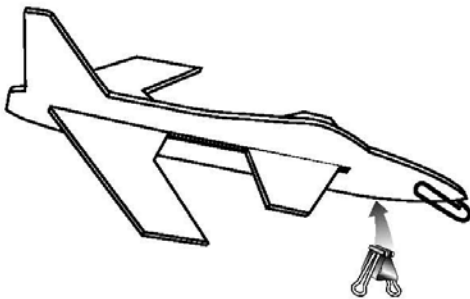
template 2 key



1. Provide the student with a word list for parts of the glider: *fuselage, wing, rudder, horizontal stabilizer, canard* (see template keys).
2. Distribute plastic foam trays and copies of each X-glider template.
3. Ask the student to write the name of each airplane part on the template.
4. Tape the glider template to the food tray.
5. Cut out the airplane parts using the templates. Plastic foam can be cut using scissors, a razor knife, or a serrated plastic knife. It can also be cut using a sharp pencil or round toothpick to punch a series of holes approximately 2mm apart around the outside edge of the part. The part can then be pushed out from the tray. Educators of K-2 students may want to cut out the glider parts ahead of time.
6. If there are any rough edges around a part, they can be smoothed using sandpaper or an emery board.
7. Carefully cut a slot in the fuselage. Slide other parts into it to finish the glider (refer to the X-glider silhouettes for the basic designs; another fuselage is needed to make the "twin fuselage" glider).



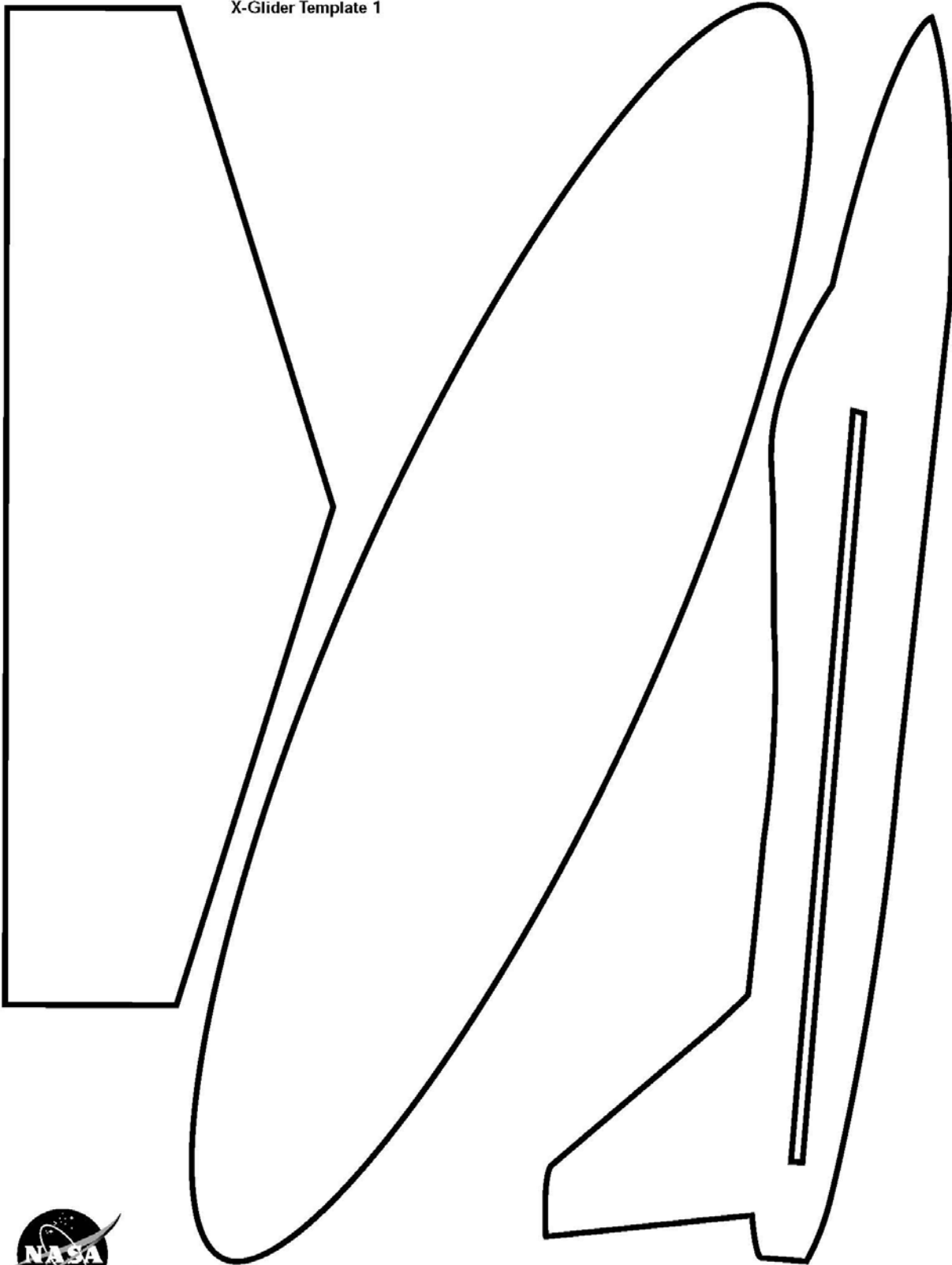
Extensions



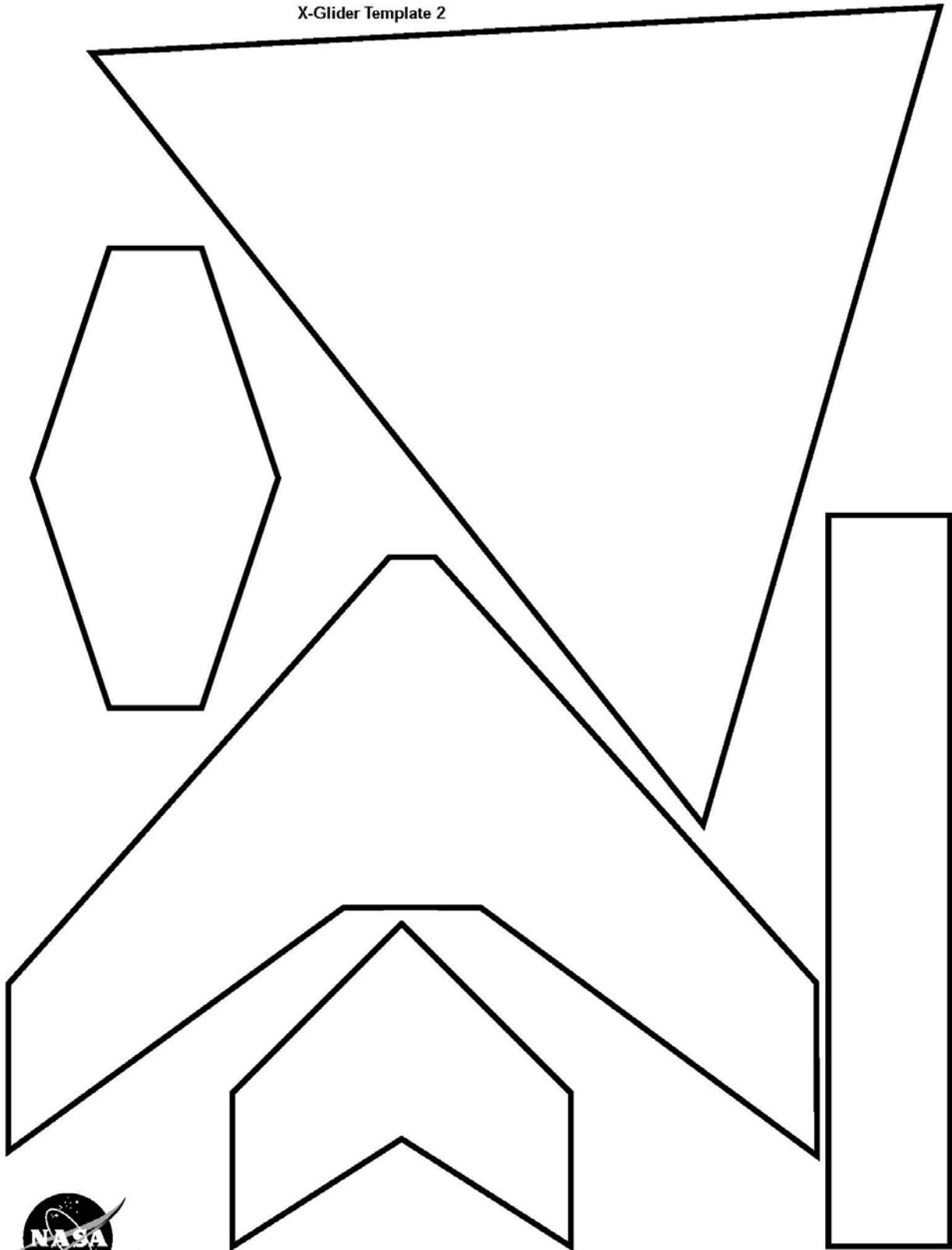
1. An airplane's weight must be properly balanced for it to fly safely. The same "weight and balance" principles apply to models. The students can determine the proper weight and balance by attaching a paper clip or binder clip to the fuselage. Students should vary the position of the clip with each flight until the glider flies the greatest distance in a straight line. Additional clips might be needed to improve the glider's flight performance.
2. Weight and balance is also determined by the position of the wings, canards, and other surfaces along the fuselage. Have the students move the wings, stabilizers, and canards to different positions in the fuselage to determine the settings that make the glider fly best.
3. Have students measure and record the distance of each flight, and compare the results with each change in the glider's weight and balance.



X-Glider Template 1



X-Glider Template 2



"Another Long Story"

From my friend and fellow SAM flyer Van Wilson from Willow Alaska, Dave



Another long story. This one about my experiences involving dropping stuff from an airplane.

Back in the early '60's, when the ink was still wet on my private pilot's license, I had several light airplanes. Starting out with a Cessna 140 that I put over 700 hours in the few years I had it. Then a couple Champs. A 7EC and a S7EC. Lots more hours in each. Wheels, skis and floats.

A couple of my friends and I, (All low time pilots) were competing in several events trying to sharpen our flying skills. One was commonly an event in local air shows.

Flour bombing; We would try to drop a lunch bag of white flour as near to a target as possible.

As it was sponsored at the air shows, a circular target was made on a runway and all contestants flew over it throwing out a bag of flour and judges marked it and measured it's closeness to the target.

We carried this out in private practice at remote airstrips several times to perfect our accuracy.

Soon, we came up with the idea that it would be even more competitive if the target was a moving one. So, we would have a friend release a lightly weighted balloon on the surface of a lake that had a mild wind. it only took a pebble the size of a standard marble to hold the balloon on the surface of the water. But, the wind would make it move across the lake enough that it was always under motion.

I got rather cocky about my success at it.

One April I was contacted by relay message that an old geezer neighbor living on a lake next to where my cabin is on Long Lake, here in Willow, was outta beer. This old geezer was the only guy that I ever knew that had been in all the branches of the military over the years and had been busted outta most of 'em for alcoholic consumption to excess. So, I get the idea that when he was outta beer it was for him a disaster!

Well, at that particular time, we only had jeep trails from our poor road to our cabins. And those trails were under what we call 'Break-up' conditions; thawing mud so thick and deep that wheeled vehicle travel is near impossible by the then common types of vehicles.

Likewise, the lake ice was thawed around the shorelines and dangerously thin in the middle of the lakes. So, landing was iffy at best. Plus, the ice thaws near land faster than it does ways away from shore. So, there was enough open water around the shore that it would prevent access on foot from either the land to the ice or vice versa.

Well, no problem says I. I grabbed a couple 6 packs of his favorite brew and took off from Anchorage in my personal plane and flew up to his lake on Saturday morning. It was a beautiful day; Sunny, Calm. Severe clear. Little over a half hour and I found him relaxing in his bathing suit on a lawn lounge chair on his South facing dock, sun bathing. I lined up for a low approach over the ice directly at him. At the critical time I loosed a 6 pack out my open door. When I circled back I saw him standing with a beer in his hand and waving a tight fist at me. There were other cans of beer floating near his chair in the open lake water. What I later found out was he was mad as all hell at me because the beer had landed in the water, right beside him and splashed icy water all over him. But he didn't even hafta get outta his chair to reach a beer.

O.K. Now you've got the picture.

Well, in real life later on I had some competition. One of my bosses when I was in the Troopers air dropped a 6 pack of beer to a dog sledder while the dogs were in full 'go mode' on the frozen Yukon River. The beer landed in the sled within reach of the driver that was standing on the runners behind the sled.

On one occasion while on patrol out Bethel, I learned that the President of Chase Manhattan Bank was on a 5 day float trip down the Good News River. This was a beautiful run. I had done it several times in smaller rafts. At that time it was as remote a place as you could find. It ran 90 miles from Good News Lake to Good News Bay in Western Alaska. That river held all 5 species of Salmon, Rainbow Trout and record Grayling. Ponds within easy walking distance from the river also held Northern Pike in several spots along the trip.

This was a guided trip for his party and a class act of great care by the outfitter. Constant radio contact was maintained throughout the trip between the river party and the base camps at both ends.

I regularly checked in with the base camps and tried to watch out for the safety of the rafters. On this occasion as I asked the caretaker at the upper camp about the folks on the river, I was told that their only problem was that they had run outta scotch the day before and had a couple more days to go. The folks in that operation all knew me. That included the river guides as well as the camp staff and the master guide that owned the entire show.

Well, now for some, this dilemma might be small potatoes. But, for a man of that stature, I could imagine that anything I could do to help would be appreciated. I happened to have a bottle of some pretty good stuff back in my room in Bethel. Plus, when I got back to the office there was an assignment to fly fairly close to where they would likely be while I would be enroute to my next challenge, the next day. So, I packaged up my sealed bottle in sufficient Styrofoam with bright orange streamers aplenty loosely wrapped to the outside that it should survive whatever it landed on.

Somehow that found its way into the Department of Public Safety Cessna 185 on Edo floats that I hadda drive the next day. Keep in mind that this airplane has a distinctive paint scheme with the words 'Alaska State Troopers' conspicuous all over it with large decal badges decorating it's every surface.

The next day I was airborne at dawn and found the Goodnews river downstream from where I suspected this party would be and followed at tree top height up river with that package wedged in the partially open passenger door till I saw my target. As I passed overhead I bumped the door enough for that package to fall clear of my floats as I pulled up and away. Looking back over my shoulder I could see it hit and splash just above their position where they could hold up a minute or two and collect the goodies.

A few days later there was an inquiry from my bad assed Captain in Anchorage wanting to know exactly what kind of medicine I had air dropped to the ailing members of that float party. Seems there was an 'attta boy' letter sent in to the Colonel about me that his secretary told me about. But, I never got a copy of it.

Another one didn't turn out so well. One of our new officers fresh outta the Academy was floating down the Deshka River here in the Susitna Valley. He did have a portable radio and relayed a message that somehow he had broken his paddle.

So, to the rescue I went. In a float equipped Super Cub I flew up that river till I found him in a narrow, crooked, fast water channel surrounded by high Cottonwood trees. It was going to be a tricky drop since I couldn't land even close to where he was. So, I set up down river with the side door of the Cub open full. It is a clam shell type of door like in a J-3. It is two pieces each hinged separately. The upper half is hinged on top. The lower half is hinged on the bottom. The plane will fly just fine with both open. It's just rather drafty inside the cockpit.

I maneuvered the paddle to rest on the front of the wing strut right outside of the door, half way balanced against the prop wash while I held a tight grip on it. I then flew up river above these tall trees until I thought "This is the place" and I pushed as hard as I could on that paddle expecting it to fall free and land in the river where the new guy could get it.

No dice. That dammed paddle balanced against the wind and rocked its way out that wing strut all the way to the upper end where it finally unbalanced enough to fall off someplace a mile or more away from the river. Someday, someone may find that canoe paddle way off in the tundra and wonder what the heck it's doing out there.

Van...

You can't make this stuff up.

stop press (as they said in English newspapers when adding late braking news).

Friend Van just lost his cabin to fire while he was away. Many people have offered help and condolences and here is his response;

Hi, guys,

I only have a couple minutes use of this computer at the Public Library here in Willow. Gotta keep rollin' the company stock. Appointments to keep.

I'm O.K.

Worst loss that is replaceable is my 'TO BUILD LIST'. It was over 5 feet long. All else that was inna cabin is gone, for sure.

I'll be making housekeeping inna shop till spring. Then probably empty out my biggest shed and make it into a cabin.

Losses too many and too valuable to itemize right now.

I have no idea what might have caused the fire. The Fire Chief thinks it might have been some damage from last weeks earthquake that did something to my heater or the electrical system. ??????

Biggest problem I am having is keeping my 2 cell phones charged. I am constantly getting calls from folks wanting to say "Sorry" and offering everything under the sun. Trying to offer help. Etc. These calls are coming in from all over the country. Some of the ones from the East coast have been inna early morning here. Some from outta this country late at night. Different time zones ya know. I never realized I had so many friends. I am truly a rich man.

It's just a bump in the road. I'll get past it in time.

Thanx for everyone's concern. But, what I still need is COMMON SENSE! if I had it I'd be in lots better shape. I've been looking for it for years and I now realize it damn sure isn't out there in traffic.

Maybe it's time to take a break and write that book.

Gotta go make some more miles.

Van...

Not enough time right now to read all the comments on this site. I can imagine, tho.

The FAA Mess ~ A Status from Various Sources

(Editor's Note; Those of us that fly SAM competition or gliders worry about the 400 ft altitude limit in the FAA registration)

AMA - FAA Advocacy Meeting January 15 and 16

For decades, the AMA has had a tremendous safety record. For this reason, and based on the protections from **Section 336** that we helped pass into law, we do not believe that our 188,000 members should be subject to the UAS registration rule. **Section 336 is part of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act in which Congress recognized the effectiveness of community-based safety guidelines and exempted recreational/hobbyists from any new regulations.**

The AMA is working with Congress and looking at legal options to address registration. On a parallel path, we are advocating on behalf of our members directly with the FAA to find a solution. On January 15 Rich Hanson, Bob Brown, Gary Fitch, Chad Budreau, and AMA's legal counsel conducted a meeting with the FAA. During the visit the AMA discussed several issues impacting the modeling community including registration. We brought a list of our members' concerns and asked the FAA for a clarification or a resolution to our concerns.

We raised multiple questions around the guidelines pilots must agree to during the registration process, **such as the requirement to stay below 400 feet.**

The FAA acknowledged that AMA members should continue to follow AMA's community-based safety code. We also discussed and the FAA confirmed that the language on the FAA registration site is a guideline, not regulation. This guideline is not directed at the AMA community but rather, it is a simplified set of safety guidelines geared to the general public.

We specifically addressed the 400 foot altitude limitation and explained how under appropriate circumstances some modeling activity necessarily occurs above 400' and other activity occurs at altitude to protect modelers and spectators on the ground. The FAA understands that this community flies higher than the guideline and acknowledged that AMA pilots can abide by their own safety code which is proven to provide safe aeromodelling operations

We also raised concerns with the FAA about a possibly stricter registration process for large model airplanes over 55 pounds such as requiring an "N" number. The FAA acknowledged these concerns and we discussed possible ways to revise the large model aircraft registration process going forward.

In addition, we discussed the numerous affiliate AMA members, non-US citizen or non-US resident competitors, and citizens who are currently away from the states who have not been able to register on the FAA site. The registration site so far has not accepted foreign applications, foreign addresses or foreign IP addresses.

The FAA shares our concern about this and is working on a solution, which is expected in early February. Many of our members have raised concerns about the privacy and security of the federal registration database. While we know that the database will be searchable by federal registration number, we do not know yet what additional information will be publicly available. We expressed strong concerns with the release of personal information, especially the personal data of AMA's youth members. We will continue to press the FAA to safeguard the security of our members' personal information.

We understand there are AMA members who do not have a computer or do not want to submit a credit card during the application process. We discussed with the FAA the use of a paper application, which currently is only available at local FAA Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO). To make these paper applications easier to obtain, AMA is working to acquire these documents, which we can send to members who request them. As for members who are willing to register online, but cannot or do not want to submit credit card information, the FAA has agreed to accept gift credit cards such as Visa or Mastercard.

For those clubs that own a model aircraft as an organization and not as an individual, we requested clarification as to how to register the model. We concluded that those models should be registered under the registration of one of the club leaders. To protect that club leader who voluntarily placed his number in or on the club aircraft, the member should have a written document from the club indicating he or she should not be held responsible and is simply providing a registration number on behalf of the club.

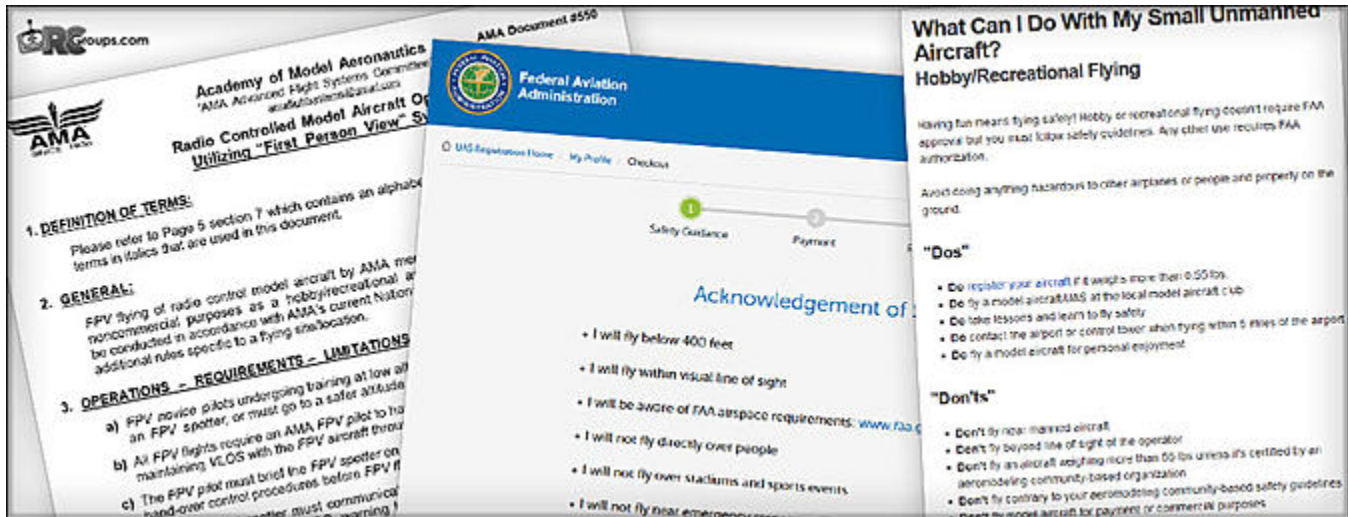
At the end of our meeting with the FAA, we invited FAA representatives to join the AMA leadership at a nearby flying site to showcase firsthand AMA's safety protocols, demonstrate club camaraderie and mentoring, and provide the opportunity for the FAA to speak with AMA members in-person.

- [special Events Model Aircraft & Drone Advocacy Article](#) AMA's Safety Code Trumps FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance

AMA's Safety Code Trumps FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance

The AMA says it's ok to fly above 400 feet, FPV as long as members adhere to the AMA Safety Code. Is the FAA ok with that? Let's find out.

[Article](#) By [Matt](#) | Jan 13, 2016, 12:28 PM



Who's Safety Guidelines Should Modelers Abide By?

Let's start off with a fact: model aviation has a nearly impeccable safety-record. Given the sheer numbers of radio-controlled aircraft operating in the National Air Space, the actual instances of collisions with manned aircraft are surprisingly low; we're talking *count-on-one-hand* low. There have been a few reported collisions in Europe over the years, and who can forget the full-scale biplane that struck the hovering giant-scale aircraft at the charity fly in, and the poop-storm of finger pointing that ensued from both sides? Yes, a few bad apples and a quadcopter with a flame thrower roasting a turkey make for sensational media headlines, but all joking aside, we've kept our noses pretty clean since the beginning.

So here's where our hobby made a u-turn and headed south for the winter. The FAA, standing behind 700+ unsubstantiated reports of near misses with drones, and peppering in some fear-inducing statements about 'millions of drones under Christmas trees', reacted with emergency action to push through a UAS registration process aimed at combating this perceived threat to the National Air Space. Before we as modelers had time to digest or even comment on the registration process, it was implemented and set into motion. The Federal Aviation Administration must have had selective amnesia with regards to the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012... you know, the act containing section 336 that prevents The FAA from regulating hobby model aircraft? In case you forgot, here's what section 336 states:

Section 336 prohibits the FAA from promulgating "any rule or regulation regarding a model aircraft, or an aircraft being developed as a model aircraft" if the following statutory requirements are met:

- the aircraft is flown strictly for hobby or recreational use.
- the aircraft is operated in accordance with a community-based set of safety guidelines and within the programming of a nationwide community-based organization.
- the aircraft is limited to not more than 55 pounds unless otherwise certified through a design, construction, inspection, flight test, and operational safety program administered by a community-based organization.
- the aircraft is operated in a manner that does not interfere with and gives way to any manned aircraft; and
- when flown within 5 miles of an airport, the operator of the aircraft provides the airport operator and the airport air traffic control tower ... with prior notice of the operation....

The FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance

Since the registration process began, the FAA has claimed they aren't violating section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, that model airplanes have always been able to be registered, which isn't technically *regulation*... who comes up with this stuff? So we begrudgingly rolled over just enough to show our bellies, as a small percentage of the total modelers in the USA began signing up and registering themselves with the FAA. Law suits have begun to pop up here and there, legal experts have weighed in with optimistic outlooks on the FAA losing this battle, and grassroots letter-signing campaigns have been making their rounds on social media and the modeling forums. **(editor's note: FAA claim they are responsible for ALL aircraft, including models. Dave)**

But wait just one minute there, FAA. You say you're not making any new rules or regulations? I beg to differ! In order to register, the helpless modeler must agree to the *Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance*, a page in the registration process requiring you to check a box labeled "I have read, understand, and intend to follow the safety guidance". But what exactly does the safety guidance say?

The FAA Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance states:

- I will fly below 400 feet.
- I will fly within visual line of sight.
- I will be aware of FAA airspace requirements.
- I will not fly directly over people.
- I will not fly over stadiums or sports events.
- I will not fly near emergency response efforts such as fires.
- I will not fly near aircraft, especially near airports.
- I will not fly under the influence.

Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance

- I will fly below 400 feet
- I will fly within visual line of sight
- I will be aware of FAA airspace requirements: www.faa.gov/go/uastfr
- I will not fly directly over people
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[The FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance](#)

A few of those sound like new rules and regulations to me. They aren't laws per-se, but the ambiguous wording leaves the true nature of the guidelines very much open to interpretation, especially in a legal setting. Most of the above safety guidelines are common sense and covered under the [AMA's Safety Code](#), but what about flight above 400 feet and FPV? By checking the box, could the rules of the Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance be held against you in civil or federal court? These are real questions that modelers are asking, and fortunately the AMA has stepped in and said otherwise. **(Editor's Note; But will that be accepted by the lawyers? Dave)**

The AMA Safety Code to the Rescue?

The AMA recently updated their Government Relations Blog with a couple of answers to frequently asked questions that take aim at the FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance, specifically the 400 foot and FPV rules. Here's what they said:

Q: Am I permitted to fly above 400 feet? What if I had to check a box saying otherwise on the federal registration website?

A: Yes. AMA members who abide by the AMA Safety Code, which permits flights above 400 feet under appropriate circumstances, and are protected by the Special Rule for Model Aircraft under the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act. Checking the box on the federal registration webpage signifies an understanding of the 400 foot guideline. This is an important safety principle that all UAS operators need to be aware of, and is the same guideline established in AC 91-57 published in 1981. However, the placement of this guideline on the FAA website is intended as an educational piece and more specifically intended for those operating outside of AMA's safety program. We have been in discussions with the FAA about this point and the agency has indicated that it will be updating its website in the next week to make clear that this altitude guideline is not intended to supplant the guidance and safety procedures established in AMA's safety program.

Q: Am I permitted to fly first person view (FPV)? Can I fly at night?

A: Yes. AMA members are still protected by the Special Rule for Model Aircraft, which is part of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act. As long as AMA members continue to follow AMA's safety guidelines for these activities, they can continue to fly. The guidelines listed on the FAA UAS website do not negate the modeling activities and related safety procedures established in AMA's community-based safety program.

So as long as AMA members abide by the AMA Safety Code and specifically AMA Document #550 for FPV operations, the FAA's Acknowledgement of Safety Guidance with regards to the previous mentioned rules is not valid. But how does the FAA feel about this blatant null-and-void rendering of their own "rules"? Apparently, they're ok with it.

The FAA Actually Tells Modelers to Follow the AMA's Rules

Just when you thought all the wrenches had been thrown into all the gears, the FAA further confuses modelers by saying we should indeed abide by "aeromodeling community-based safety guidelines", the very same guidelines that allow for flight over 400 feet and FPV. You can read the do's and don't [here](#). And if that wasn't the icing on the cake, Forbes editor John Goglia posed the same question in an article. You can read the article [here](#), in which he asks an FAA spokesperson about the obvious discrepancies between the FAA and AMA safety guidelines. Essentially, the spokesperson replies that modelers should follow the AMA's rules.

I wanted to jump into this discussion to try to help clarify the 400 ft **guideline**. I have been involved with the AMA's Standards Work Group headed by Rich Hanson for about seven years. The group has helped generate some ideas on safety standards to make the FAA more comfortable with model aviation. In 2012 the AMA's efforts moved into the political arena and got the model aircraft exemption (Sec 336) incorporated into Public Law 112-95.

See this link: http://www.modelaircraft.org/files/hr658_020112.pdf

After that the work group has continued to give suggestions to the AMA on dealing with the FAA. We had a conference call last Tuesday with Rich and Chad Budreau about the status of some of the issues, registration, 400 ft, working with congress to clarify the language in Sec 336 and pending legal action opposing the FAA interpretation of Sec 336.

Note that Public Law 112-95 does not include any altitude restrictions. And that the FAA may not create any new regulations regarding recreational model aircraft. The FAA claims that registration is not a new regulation because all aircraft have been required to be registered and that PL112-95 and a court case defined model aircraft as aircraft for FAA purposes. Now the line in the registration process that has everyone worked up is the **guideline** below:

"I will fly below 400 ft"

It does not say "I will never fly above 400 ft" or "I will always fly below 400 ft".

All flights begin and end below 400 ft! In my opinion the FAA choose to use "will"(which is not a binding term like "shall" in the government world)to get people to fly below 400 ft without making a new regulation that would be contrary to PL112-95. Note that they do use never I the guidelines that are consistent with Sec 336(Never interfere with manned aircraft). So I do not believe that registration constitutes a "sworn statement" to never fly above 400ft.

Here is a portion of the link from Dave Mathewson's message.

We raised multiple questions around the guidelines pilots must agree to during the registration process, such as the requirement to stay below 400 feet. The FAA acknowledged that AMA members should continue to follow AMA's community-based safety code. **We also discussed and the FAA confirmed that the language on the FAA registration site is a guideline, not regulation. This guideline is not directed at the AMA community but rather, it is a simplified set of safety guidelines geared to the general public.**

We specifically addressed the 400 foot altitude limitation and explained how under appropriate circumstances some modeling activity necessarily occurs above 400' and other activity occurs at altitude to protect modelers and spectators on the ground. **The FAA understands that this community flies higher than the guideline and acknowledged that AMA pilots can abide by their own safety code which is proven to provide safe aeromodelling operations**

The highlighted portions should indicate that there is nothing in Dave's message limiting flying to 400 ft. The AMA is trying to get the wording of the registration guidelines changed based on the meeting with the FAA.

There is another discussion of the 400 ft guideline by the soaring guys in the link below.

<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?t=2565526>

A lot of opinions on both sides are expressed, but there are posts with info from the AMA saying follow the safety code and 336 and you can fly above 400 ft. See and avoid is the most important thing. We have demonstrated to FAA personnel more than once that it works at all altitudes where the pilot has visual line of sight with the model aircraft.

John Lueke

AMA Message 25 January

Dear Members,

Last month the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that it would require owners of model aircraft to register with the agency by February 19. AMA participated in the task force designed to provide recommendations to the FAA on the registration of small recreational unmanned aircraft, and we urged the FAA to exempt AMA members from registration. AMA also recommended the FAA consider several factors, not just weight, when determining which model aircraft would need to be registered.

Instead of exempting our community, the FAA created an unnecessary burden for our more than 188,000 members who have been flying safely for decades. As you know, AMA members already abide by a voluntary registration system that fulfills the safety and accountability objectives of the federal registration system. We made this point very clear to the FAA and other task force members.

We are exploring all options to alleviate this burden on our members and we are actively engaged in talks with the FAA. For now, the requirement is federal regulation and therefore we must advise all of our members to comply by the February 19 deadline.

We have an existing petition with the US Court of Appeals regarding FAA's 2014 interpretation of the "Special Rule for Model Aircraft" and we will continue our advocacy work in Washington D.C. Recently, our leadership brought representatives from the FAA to one of our flying fields to witness AMA's safety protocols, observe club camaraderie and mentoring, and speak with AMA members firsthand about their concerns. In addition, this week

AMA staff and the Executive Council will arrive at Capitol Hill to speak to members of Congress and their staffs about the importance of protecting model aviation for future generations.

We will continue to work on behalf of our members, but since a solution to the registration requirement is unlikely by February 19, members should register at www.faa.gov/uas/registration. Once registered pilots will receive a Federal registration number that is to be placed on or within aircraft over 250 grams (0.55 lbs.). Members are encouraged to continue placing their AMA numbers on their aircraft as well. Members only have to register once, they do not have to register each unique aircraft. The FAA requires registration regardless if you fly a multirotor, helicopter, fixed wing, or any other type of radio control model aircraft that uses a ground control system with a communication link, such as a transmitter. You can read more in our Frequently Asked Questions at www.modelaircraft.org/gov.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can ensure the future of our hobby.

Membership Renewal For 2016

Membership renewal for 2016 is now required. You can renew by mail or at the club meeting in February.

Don't lose your club privileges!

Bring cash or check and your AMA card.

Dues are \$60.

Please send a check to;

**Ray Wopatek
1004 Green Lane
Secane, PA. 9018**

**Please enclose a *copy* of your current
A. M. A. Membership card,**

**And Please, Please enclose a
Stamped self-addressed envelope.**

Ray Wopatek Membership