



BCRC Flyer

Monthly Newsletter of AMA Chartered Club No. 4779

May 4, 2024



Making a Classic Aeromaster Lighter

Bryan Swank Shares His Project in Progress

Bryan likes the silk covered Aeromaster he bought from Pete Lavengood in the early 1980s. He repaired a broken wing then and later replaced the engine. The original production of this model, released in 1966, was the favorite of RC competitors for many years. Bryan says, "this plane even today stands out as one of the greatest sport biplanes produced." He is still flying it today but says, "The plane for it's size I always felt was too heavy." Despite several plusses and minuses for less weight, it is his philosophy that "if it can't be damaged by really aggressive aerobatics it is good enough."

Bryan has embarked on a project to create a light-weight version of the Aeromaster. With a few exceptions, he will maintain the original external dimensions. His goal is to remove a lot of weight from the inside while keeping the plane indestructible in the air. The pictures in this story show the parts made so far. The captions are his own. In a few weeks, he plans to start the assembly process.

[Your non-flying editor had a lot of questions for Bryan. Not wanting to assume too much, I will share some of them here along with his answers.]

Q: What is in the manila folders?

A: The folders are for the different areas of the plane: wing, fuselage, engine area, landing gear, cabanes and tail section, and weight and balance. They include a lot of measurements that had to be taken from the old plans which are full size but do not have any dimensions.

Q: Q: Is balsa wood still the material of choice for model building? (I assume for the light weight.)

A: Balsa wood is hard to beat relative to its strength and weight ratio. High-tech materials like carbon fiber have a better ration and better tensile strength but they involve making castings using molds and the material is very hard, and much harder to work with.



Lou Andrews with his famous Aeromaster airplane. It was released as a kit in 1966 and became a plane of choice for RC model competitors for many years.



"Notice all the manila folders in the background. All but three of them are for this build. No wonder the world has moved to ARF's (Almost Ready to Fly) models!"

Story continues on page 2 —>

Bryan's Aeromaster, continued

Q: As in the "olden days," do you still use tissue paper patterns to determine where to cut the wood?

A: I don't use tissue paper but instead use copies of the original plans and place pins on them to mark critical points, then connect the dots. If it is a shape, I will just trace around the template. For some of the unique internal parts I create a computer CAD drawing and then print it out full scale, again using the pin and trace method. I also make some hand drawings of a few areas like the tail section. For that, I use my own attachment method where the assembly is held together by a single bolt rather than glueing it together as the plans suggest.

Q: What tools do you use to cut the shapes you need? Especially on this large scale.

A: I use quite a variety of power and hand tools to shape the balsa. Typically, I cut the rough shape with a band saw and then sand to the final shape. I have an assortment of small files that I use to shape small areas like the 1/8" cutouts in the rear formers. Also, I frequently use what is called a razor saw which is simply a small saw with teeth so small they are hard to see.

Q: I appreciate the way you displayed the items on your dining room table for the photo shoot, but that begs the question: where do you work on the model?

A: My method of working is very strange, even to me! To Becky's dismay, during a project like this **I work all over the house**. You may find me working in the kitchen or on the pool table in the basement, at my chair in the living room while watching TV, outside if I am using a small belt sander, sitting in an Adirondack chair outside my workshop if I have hand sanding to do, or in the dining room. There is a lot of debris...



Wing rib jig for making several ribs at a time.



A lot of cutting and shaping involved for the rear formers.

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Bryan Shares More: The cores of large wind turbine blades are made of balsa!

There was a time when balsa was in short supply because the turbine industry was consuming such a large amount. The picture shows one half of one of three 265-foot blades being constructed for a wind turbine. They put a layer of fiberglass in the mold and before it cures, they layer blocks of balsa on it...after that cures, they will put a final layer of fiberglass inside on top of the balsa blocks. Then they will remove it from the mold and glue it to a mating half. It is amazing that just these three blades will consume about **6 tons of balsa**. So, it is easy to understand why this created a shortage.





Prepare for the May Meeting: Read the April Minutes

Minutes from the April 2, 2024 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Rob Weismiller at 6:30 p.m., in the banquet room of the *El Nopal* Mexican restaurant on National Road, Columbus, Indiana. Four other members attended the meeting: John Vinson (Treasurer), Nick Firestone, Ken Erickson (Publicity), and Mark Dudley (Safety Coordinator), and Bob Cundiff. Guests were Henry Erickson (Ken's grandson), Bentley Weismiller (Rob's son), and Cynthia Scott (newsletter editor).

OFFICER AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

MINUTES of the previous meeting: John Vinson moved to approve them, and Mark Dudley seconded. Minutes were approved.

FINANCE: John Vinson said that "we are solvent."

SECRETARY: Secretary Mike Bealmear was recently in the hospital and is in recovery from a sudden illness. John Vinson passed the word from Mike that membership cards are ready for distribution.

WEBMASTER: Colin Mowery asked Rob to report that he is still working on the "Contact Us" page. He has posted seven photos of officers and key appointees but is waiting for one more. Good web design and promotional practice suggests that each photo is accompanied by a brief "bio." Those are pending.

FIELD: John Vinson mowed the field four or five days before the meeting when conditions were dry enough. He has been keeping up with the earlier-than-usual growing spurt so far.

FUNDRAISING: Rob Weismiller confirmed there is no fundraising happening now and no new plans pending.

PUBLICITY: Ken Erickson discussed results from new pilot recruitment. One new member has not renewed his dues. Ken mentioned that the AMA requires us to submit information about new youth members (introduction pilots) within 48 hours of recruitment. We need to keep good records of our youth members, not only for ourselves as a club but also for their parents.

SAFETY: Mark Dudley has safety rules ready but will delay reading them until the next meeting when (we hope) more members will be present. The rules are posted at the field on the North side of the Frequency Board.

EVENT COORDINATION-- Rob Weismiller and Ken Erickson shared news:

- ◇ Our indoor flying program has ended for this year.
- ◇ Earth Day returns to Bartholomew County on April 26, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at their recycling center: 720 S. Mapleton Street, Columbus. We need volunteers to show kids how to make airplanes from recycled materials.
- ◇ No plans to have a club viewing of the eclipse; excessive traffic anticipated.
- ◇ No "Fun Fly" dates planned yet.
- ◇ The Joe Grube Fly-in will be on July 13 (date agreed upon during this meeting). The hope is that people driving to the Petersville Disposal Station on Saturday will become curious and drive up the road to see our event. We need to inform the AMA about our plans. We have seven club volunteers so far but need many more to make this happen.



Minutes from the April 2, 2024 Meeting, continued from page 2.

- ◇ Rob is still hoping to host an IMAC (International Miniature Acrobatic Club) contest in September, on either the 22nd or 23rd.

OLD BUSINESS

- ◇ The **Jim Murray field sign** has not been picked up from the maker yet by Mike Bealmear, due to illness. He will update us later.
- ◇ The Russ Kuhn **F4F Wildcat** airplane offer is still pending.
- ◇ Plans to purchase a new prefabricated **shade pavilion** for near the flight stations are pending. Mike Bealmear and Rob Weismiller found cost estimates ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,600 or \$2,000. Not sure the budget can cover it. We might vote on this next month.
- ◇ We await further news from Mike Marthaler about an October 20 **swap meet**. We did learn that Bartholomew County has raised their space rental rates at the fairgrounds. We may have to find another venue.
- ◇ Club voting on **by-laws changes** is pending. Two topics are youth membership and penalties for late payment of dues.

NEW BUSINESS

Bob Cundiff wondered if we should get more **Geo-Tex fabric** to cover the existing runway layout. Comments centered on cost increases since our original installation and whether patching can be continued. The subsurface is a factor; it needs to be smooth and level. Right now, there is soil erosion and at least one big rut to fill in. Members concluded that since there is not a lot of use in that area, the Geo-Tex is in good enough shape for now.

SHOW AND TELL

Ken Erickson showed his “cute as a bug’s ear” **WACO Bi-plane**. It is a red and white Styrofoam model with 14-inch wingspan offered by Horizon Hobby for \$180. It has a 3-cell milli-amp battery which makes it a fast flier. Ken says it does okay indoors but must have full stabilizer control. When John Vinson asked if it could be launched, Ken felt that would be too dangerous and he would never try it. He prefers take-offs.

Rob Weismiller brought in the balsa wood fuselage frame of his very large winter project, still in progress. It is a **123-inch AJ Laser 230-Z** competition model that can use a 220-cc engine. When assembly is completed, the plane will weigh 43 pounds. Rob bought it from a person who crashed it against a fence post, shearing and destroying a wing. Rob stripped it down and will make all new wings, rudder, and aileron. He says there will be two 32-ounce fuel tanks and Futaba servos. He bought ten servos directly from the maker in Japan at great cost savings, even with shipping added. He plans to have this ready to fly in the IMAC event. See photos taken by Nick Firestone in the newsletter.

Bob Cundiff unpacked his new personal drone, a **TGU Mini-2**. He uses it to take videos of construction sites for work, but also for hobby flights. If he is outside the 5-mile airport radius, he needs no special permission to fly it. The camera features such as zoom, speed, and resolution are controlled via his Apple iPhone.

These minutes composed in behalf of the Secretary, Mike Bealmear, by Cynthia Scott. See the **RAFFLE** report on next page.



April Meeting Winners —submitted by Ken Erickson

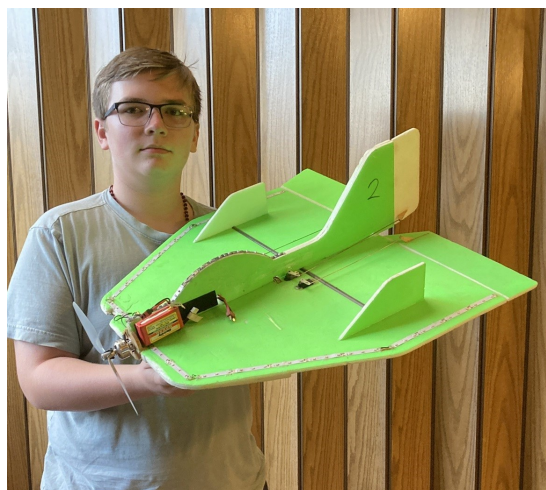
There was a very small attendance at the meeting on April 2. Raffle prizes consisted of \$79.63 of newly purchased glues, drip bottles for 5 prizes and 7 donated prizes. That meant we had 12 prizes from which to choose. I had sent info and announced that we would draw 10 tickets. Only \$30.00 worth of tickets were purchased by the members of the small crowd present at the meeting.

Mark Dudley won 5 times. He chose the 30-minute Epoxy, the Super Gold Foam Safe Ca, and the 3 Monokote Trim Sheets for himself and gave 2 of his wins to youths present. Bentley Weismiller chose the National Air Races Program Book and Henry Erickson chose the Pizza Box Flyer. Nick Firestone won 4 times. He chose the Gap Filling Medium CA and the Thin CA for himself and offered the other two wins to Cynthia Scott, who chose the WW1 German Spandau Machine Gun Kit and Henry Erickson, who chose the Model Wheel Chocks. The other ounce of Super Gold Medium CA was chosen by Bob Cundiff. There does not seem to be any demand for a Davis Deisel Conversion Kit for OS .60 and .61 Engines.



Mark Dudley with his newly-won Monokote Trim Sheets.

Our "Thanks!" to Nick Firestone for these photos !



Henry Ericson liked the Pizza Box Flyer.



Mark Dudley and John Vinson with some handy glues and fillers.

Preview List of May Raffle Prizes

BSI Odorless Foam Safe CA, 1-oz.;
Inst-Cure+ Gap Filling CA, Medium, 1-oz.;
Inst-Cure Thin CA, 1-oz.; 30-minute
Epoxy, 4.5-oz.; 30-Minute Epoxy, 4.5-oz.
(Another)

DuraPlane, Dura Trainer 40, an easy kit.
2 metal, 1 Nylon & 1 plastic Spinners.
Two 4-cell, one 8-cell NiCds and Charger.
Pair of 2 ½-in wheels and a 2 3/16-in wheel, NEW.
A Nice Bunch of Balsa.

Show and Tell

At April Meeting 2024

What is **your** current pride and joy?



Rob Weismiller brought in the frame of a **123-inch AJ Laser 230-Z** competition model that can use a 220-cc engine. When assembly is completed, the plane will weigh 43 pounds.



Bob Cundiff unpacked his new personal drone, a TGU Mini-2.



Ken Erickson showed his “cute as a bug’s ear” WA-CO Bi-plane.

Field Report

John Vinson has been mowing enthusiastically between rain storms. At one point before Mike Marthaler could get parts to fix the Zero-Turn carburetor, John had to use the Wheel Horse. Partway into the job, he needed fuel and a battery charge. Saving his back and a lot of steps, John drove his car out next to the mower to do the servicing. The old Wheel Horse works, but cuts a narrower swath than the Zero-Turn. It took him more than two hours. Thank you, John, for going the extra mile!



Mike removed the crumbling plywood floor of the club utility **trailer** and replaced it with treated decking planks, screwing them to the metal frame. He says this one should last several years.



Fundraiser



The profile F4F Wildcat that late (Charter Member) Russ Kuhn donated to the club to sell. The starting price is \$175.

Remembering June Vinson (1940-2024)

Obituary excerpts from Barks-Weaver & Glick:

June M. Vinson, a longtime resident of Columbus, passed from this life at age 84, Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at Columbus Regional Hospital.

June was born and spent her formative years in Chicago. Her family relocated to Columbus in the early 1950's in time for her to enter the newly constructed Columbus Senior High School, quickly becoming an integral part of student life and the wider community.

With June, no one was a stranger. Her magnetic personality, interest in people and inquiring mind brought her friends wherever she went. Among her numerous activities outside the home was Welcome Wagon hostess; it could be said she knew almost everyone in Columbus.

Her life will be cherished by her husband of 57 years, John; children Debra Cahill and Michael Frohman; grandchildren Timothy, Gregory, Sarah and Katie; brother Steven; and her niece, Margaret Deli.

Memorial contributions may be made to Columbus Animal Care Services.



John Vinson thanks the club for the cards and flowers at the memorial service on April 13.



About the BCRC Fliers

Flight Leaders

President — Greg Emerick
Vice President — Rob Weismiller
Secretary — Mike Bealmear
Treasurer — John Vinson
Field Marshall — Mike Marthaler
Safety Coordinator — Mark Dudley
Public Relations — Ken Erickson
Webmaster — Colin Mowery
News Editor — Cynthia Scott

Regular Club Meetings

BCRCF usually meets on the first Tuesday each month at *El Nopal* Mexican restaurant on National Road. Business starts at 6:30, but arrive by 6:00 if you want to have dinner and some social time.

But Wait!

Weather permitting, our **May 7** meeting will be **at the field!** If the weather is “uncooperative”, the plan is to hold it at the **Atterbury Bakalar Museum**. STAND BY FOR UPDATES: we will notify the membership Monday afternoon via Email and Facebook.

Bring your Show and Tell items as usual. And, yes we will also have a raffle.

We Were There!

Columbus Bartholomew Recycling,
April 26, 2024



Mike M. lays out the egg-carton gliders. Ken E. explains our activities to a prospective member. Nice day (editor got a sunburn), but few visitors to our area on this weekday.

For Sale

Travis Perry has a box of helicopters and parts he would like to sell for \$100. There's a **Raptor 30 nitro** with lots of extra parts that have never been opened. Also I have **3 Blade helicopter** and one small **TRex 100S** by Align. The Trex is new and has never flown.

He hopes this “good deal” price might get him some instruction on flying RC helicopters in the future. Feel free to text or call his cell number if interested. He lives in Columbus and would be happy to meet and go over everything with anyone interested. **812.343.6103**

