



The *Flypaper* is a
monthly publication of
**The Fox Valley
Aero Club**

An Illinois not-for-profit
Corporation

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New This Issue:

President's Address Page 3
Safety Officer Page 6

Page two

Dennis McFarlane–newsletter@foxvalleyaero.com



The January board of directors meeting is always a long meeting, and for this reason it's always held off site and there's a reason for this. It's the meeting when your board plans the year, sets a basic budget; for instance field improvements, mowing, etc., and also finalizes the year's calendar.

There are several notable changes happening in 2014. After years of service to the club, Karl Griesbalm is stepping down as safety officer. The general membership most likely has no idea of the commitment it takes to hold a position on the board of directors, and Karl is to be applauded for his service to the club. Karl will still be handling the club's apparel, but Tom Siwek has stepped up to fill the position of Safety Officer.

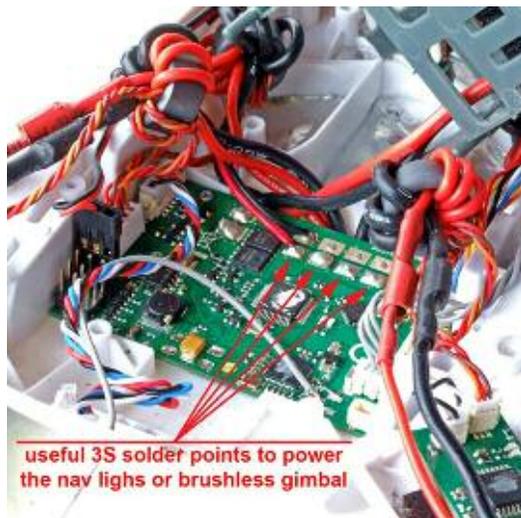
John Fischer has asked if he can add a warbirds and classics event to the roster. I've made the trip to Muncie for Warbirds Over the Heartland several times, so I'm familiar with the format. John has named the event Windy City Warbirds and Classics, and is looking for volunteers to work with him as a planning committee.

Dale Gathman asked the board if he could host a night-fly. I quickly nudged Cindy and asked if we could tag Dale's night-fly onto her helicopter event, to which she heartily agreed. Dale is asking for Saturday, but we're going to encourage him to put together a schedule for both nights of the helicopter fun-fly. A helicopter night-fly has been part of heli event for years, we're just adding airplanes and Dale's incredible ability to organize. This will definitely be a good time. If you've not tried night flying. Add some LEDs to an airframe and join Dale, Cindy and I at the field the night's of June 20/21. You'll have an absolute ball.

On a personal note I'm still having a lot of fun using an aerial platform for a camera mount. Locating an inexpensive dual axis stabilized camera gimbal that would fit the Blade 350QX was easy. Mounting the unit and finding a power source was a little more complicated. Simply to put the unit in service the first few flights with the gimbal were made by tapping into the balance plug on the flight battery. This worked and had no effect on the cells or the packs internal balance, but it wasn't the ideal solution.

With the unit apart, and a voltmeter in hand, the Blade's board was probed until 12V was located. With an easy to access power source that is activated when the quad is turned on all sorts of possibilities for the gimbal and additional LED lights exist.

It's a hobby, experiment and enjoy it;
Dennis



Presidents Address

Alvin Cole-president@fvac.com

Happy New Year. Can you believe we have already had our first event of the 2014 flying season? Frozen Fingers, held on New Year's Day, was well attended by many enthusiasts just like myself, or perhaps it's just that we're all a little crazy. Arriving at the field I watched the silhouette of a "foamy" fly in a crosswind and heavy snow. This speaks volumes of how passionate we are about this great hobby.

The first meetings of 2014, board and general, were also very well attended. We are off to a great start this year, complete with new excitement and fresh ideas. I wish to extend another welcome to our newest board members who have been entrusted by you, the membership, to continue to make this one of the best flying clubs around.

Speaking of best flying clubs, we have introduced a new focus for 2014, CSF. What does this mean to club members? It simply means we will have a Courteous, Safe and Fun environment at FVAC.

- Courteous: How many members do you know by first name?
- Safe: Is the foundation for how we fly and what we do.
- Fun: We will enjoy ourselves at FVAC.

Leadership by example is often used in these situations, and you can expect myself and the Fox Valley Aero Club Board of Directors to live and promote this culture.

I'm really looking forward to another superb year sharing the air with others who are just as enthusiastic (crazy) about the hobby as I am.

See you at the flying field;
Alvin



The viewpoints in this newsletter are solely those of the individual authors. They may not necessarily represent those of the Editor, Officers, Board or Membership of the Fox Valley Aero Club.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Paul Jacobs — treasurer@foxvalleyaero.com

I Hope everyone had a great Christmas and a Happy New year. The annual treasury report was submitted to the board at our January meeting and was accepted by all. If anyone would like to see the details, just

ask me at a regular meeting and I will go over it with you.

Basically our cash position is down a bit due to some major expenses during 2013 for a new sign board; resurface the runway, and purchasing a mower. The dues increase will cover this as well as the upcoming increase in rent for the field so for now the treasury remains in good shape.

Dues are now due both for the club and the AMA so if you haven't yet done so, now would be a good time to sit and write out the checks. Flying season is less than 75 days away so let's get everyone current.

My DC-3 project is moving along nicely as the fuselage is complete and I am moving on to the wing. They call this an ARF but I must have 20 hours just in the tail feathers and servos. Strobe lights in the fuse but the wings were not designed for the lights so I may have to leave them off. The wings are prefabricated fiberglass with a lot of internal ribs and bracing which makes running wire impossible. Anyway my goal is to bring it to the March or April meeting if all goes well.

Don't forget the annual maintenance on your fleet including cycling your Ni-cads for those still using them. Now is the time to get ready for a great flying season.

Until next month,
Paul

FVAC Membership Renewal 2014

Dues are now due

Annual dues are now \$125

Family members* are an additional \$25 each.

* Must be an AMA member in the same household.
Children must be 17 or under.

Make all checks payable to the FVAC and send them to:

Fox Valley Aero Club
P.O. Box 837
St. Charles, IL 60174-837

or

Paul Jacobs
1010 Bankfield Ct.
Naperville, IL 60540



Safety Officer

Tom Siwek–safety@foxvallyaero.com

As we enter 2014, we will take a fresh approach to the subject of safety. As many know safety is my profession. I've investigated hundreds of power tool accidents over the past few years and have come to learn that there are a few universal truths that apply to safety. One of which I feel applies directly to the practice of this hobby is that many accidents occur because we become familiar and comfortable in the building an operation of our models. This ultimately can result in complacency, which leads to accidents.

We will have a monthly topic that will be discussed at club meetings. I will select topics that are timely and encourage collaboration. We have a lot of experience in the room that can be utilized. If one member learns something new from a discussion topic that helps them avoid an injury, we have succeeded with this venture.

Our topic at the January meeting was safety of electric models. With dome flying in full swing and E-Fest around the corner, this seemed like a timely topic to cover. The first topic was propeller safety. The safety recommendations included:

- Setting-up your speed control and motor with the propeller off the airplane. Many people have experienced instantaneous start-up when switching servo channel direction for the throttle. The propeller should be installed only when everything is set-up and operating properly. Motors can be run for short periods of time without the cooling from the propeller.

- Always assume that the motor could energize the moment you connect the battery pack. Arming functions in the speed control could fail or you simply could bump the stick as you're handling the model. If the model is unrestrained, you or someone else could be injured.

- If running the motor in the workshop, insure you do so in an area where items will not be blown around. You can be injured (your eyes in particular) if something were to fly off the bench and strike you as a result of the prop-wash.

February's Topic – Battery Safety

Until then, stay safe;

Tom



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dale Gathman–secretary@foxvalleyaero.com



Fox Valley Aero Club
Member Meeting Minutes
Hilton garden Inn

Annual Christmas Party/Member Meeting Minutes

The evening was planned and organized by John and Pam Turner. Music for the evening was once again provided by **Alvin Cole** on the bass, Alvin's son, **Alvin Jr.**, on the drums, and **Jamel Kimbrough** on the keyboard. Thanks Alvin for your generosity and your great band. Photos from the past years events and planes in flight were being projected on the wall, for all attendees to enjoy. This year, President **Tom Spriet** decided to draw raffle prizes at various times throughout the evening, and a few were drawn prior to dinner being served.

Tom Spriet next called on **Walt Thyng** to deliver the evening's blessing. In so doing, Walt reflected on memories of a fun season of flying, and reminded us of the passing of John Horvath and Mark Hamilton. At the conclusion of the blessing, dinner was served. As Dinner was being served, Tom Spriet asked **Bill Sponsler** to come forward, and awarded him with the 2013 President's Choice Award for the time and effort Bill spent working on the flying field lease renewal with the City of St. Charles. Great work Bill. Thank You. We can look forward to flying at our field for at least the next ten years.

Soon after, Tom called on **Doug Swanson**, the 2012 recipient of the Top Gun Award, to award this year's Top Gun. Doug explained that the Top Gun Award is voted on by a group consisting of the previous Top Gun award recipients, and this year, the Top Gun Award is being bestowed upon a member who has served on the board as a director and as secretary. He pitches in at all workdays and is always willing to help out. He also serves as one of the club photographers helping fill the Flypapers and web site with photos. Doug called **Dale Gathman** to come up and presented him the Top Gun Award for 2013.

Next a large painting of a Spitfire that was donated to the club by one of our members to raffle was awarded to the winner, **John - JT - Turner**. The proceeds of the raffle were added to the Christmas gift the club is going to give Tim White, (our neighbor to the west) and inturn the money will be donated to Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital where Tim works. As dinner was drawing to an end, Tom called on Secretary **Dale Gathman** to announce the winners of this year's board election. Dale stated he received 103 ballots this year and called up the elected board members. He also announced the president appointed chairperson positions
(continued on page 8)

January 1 January 9	First in Flight Fun-Fly FVAC Member Meeting	10:00 AM FVAC Field 6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall
February 13 February 22	FVAC Member Meeting FVAC Annual Swap Meet	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall Kane County Fair Grounds
March 13	FVAC Member Meeting	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall
April 10 April 12 or 19	FVAC Member Meeting Member Work Day	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall FVAC Field
May 8 May 26	FVAC Member Meeting St. Charles Memorial Day Parade	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall Time TBD
June 7 June 8 June 12 June 20 & 21 June 22 June 26, 27, 28	Kids Day & Rocket Fest Fun-Fly & Pig Roast FVAC Member Meeting Al's Helicopter Fun-Fly Geneva Swedish Days Parade 2014 Windy City Warbirds & Classics	FVAC Field FVAC Field 6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at FVAC Field FVAC Field Time TBD FVAC Field
July 10	FVAC Member Meeting	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at FVAC Field
August 2 & 3 August 14 August 23	Chicagoland IMAC Challenge FVAC Member Meeting Festival of Flight	FVAC Field 6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at FVAC Field FVAC Field
September 11	FVAC Member Meeting	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall
October 9 October 19	FVAC Member Meeting Fun-Fly & Turkey Fry	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall FVAC Field
November 13	FVAC Member Meeting	6:30 Board 7:30 Regular at Township Hall
December 5	Annual Christmas Party	Hilton Garden Inn

2014 Fox Valley Aero Club Calendar of Events

(continued from page 6) and the following members will be your club's officers, directors and chairs for 2014:

2014 Board of Directors

<i>Officers:</i>	President	Alvin Cole Sr.
	Vice President	Dave Murray
	Treasurer	Paul Jacobs
	Secretary	Dale Gathman
<i>Directors at Large:</i>		Bob Boen
		John Fischer
		Cindy McFarlane
		Joe Pedone
		Sal Perno
		Doug Swanson
<i>Past President</i>		Tom Spriet
<i>Chairpersons:</i>	Field Chairman	Mark Knoppkie
	Safety Chairman	Karl Griesbaum
	Government Relations	Tom Siwek
	Membership Chairman	R. Thomas Flint
	Flypaper Editor	Dennis McFarlane



Gifts were distributed to all attending ladies. A big thanks go to **Pam Turner** for acquiring the gifts. New President **Alvin Cole** took over the mike, and had fun finishing out the raffle prize drawing. Alvin then asked for a round of applause for **JT** and **Pam Turner**, who planned and directed the Christmas Party. They took over this responsibility from Paul and Dorie Jacobs, and did a great job. Thanks JT and Pam for your hard work to pull off this great party.

As business concluded, Alvin gave a big Thank You to **Cindy McFarlane** of **Al's Hobby**, and **Ken and Sharon Kaiser** of **HobbyTown** St. Charles for their generous help and discounts given during the prize acquisition. The "Big Dog" winner this year was **Dale Gathman**, who received a check for \$1000. He said he plans on getting the radial engine for his Corsair with the money.

The great evening wound down with music, dancing, and good conversation between friends who share the interest of radio control aviation.

Respectfully submitted;
Dale

Fox Valley Aero Club

Member Meeting

St. Charles Township Hall

President Alvin Cole called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm, welcomed everyone, and thanked them for making the journey to the meeting. He then asked the board members to stand, so that the members could see who the 2014 board members are. He announced that the President appointed board positions (Field Chairman, Safety Chairman, Membership Chairman, and Flypaper Editor) had been confirmed at the Board of Directors meeting on January 7, 2014. Tom Siwek was appointed to the Safety Chairman position, to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Karl Griesbaum. The Government Relations Chairman, also an appointed position, is currently vacant.

Secretary Dale Gathman asked for any additions or corrections to the November 15, 2013 Member Meeting Minutes. None were voiced and the minutes were accepted as presented.

President's Address Alvin Cole acknowledged **Tom Spriet** for his service as president to our club, stating that Tom basically "gave him a cart that was moving full-speed-ahead and said 'you drive now'". The club's appreciation of Tom's service was recognized with a rousing round of applause. Alvin then presented his vision for the 2014 club year. He said that there are three things he wants us to focus on this year:

Courtesy – Not just to the people we know, but everyone at the field. At this point, Alvin called on several members to tell us about a new person they met tonight, along with that person's favorite airplane (Alvin handed out cards to each attendee as members arrived to facilitate getting this information).

Safety – We need to 'try' to be safe, and really focus on safety this year, by being very mindful of what we are doing.

Fun – Have fun this year. It is great to be around people that are having fun.

Treasurer Paul Jacobs reported that the checkbook is pretty low for this time of year, but he hasn't made all of the deposits yet. **Dorie** is accepting dues tonight, and we now have the FVAC 2014 Member

stickers for those who have paid their dues. Paul, Dale Gathman and Tom Flint have the stickers, and members may get their sticker from one of them. Paul stated that the board went over the banking summary for 2013, and that any member may see the statement by contacting Paul. **Bob Boen** moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented, seconded by **Sal Perno**. Motion passed.

Christmas Party Organizer John Turner reported that this past year, he and his wife Pam were in charge of organizing the Christmas Party. He felt that all who attended enjoyed it. We had raffles, a good dinner, and the dancing was phenomenal. Mark Knoppkie mentioned that 'the music wasn't bad either', which elicited a round of applause for Alvin and his band who provided the music. John asked whether everyone liked the Hilton Garden Inn location, which everyone responded they did. John then stated that he will reserve the same location for the 2014 Christmas Party, and that he would need to pay a \$250.00 down payment to hold the room. Paul will provide a check for the down payment. John may look into getting a comedian as the entertainment next year, to give Alvin a break. He then mentioned that Cindy McFarlane from Al's Hobby Shop donates part of the money that the club members spend at her store back to the club to purchase raffle prizes for the party. HobbyTown in St. Charles also discounted raffle prizes that were purchased there. John reminded us to remember to support Al's and HobbyTown when making our hobby purchases.

Field Chairman Mark Knoppkie announced that the field is going pretty well. We will basically maintain what we have this year. Steve Baker will continue with the rolling as he has in the past. The gravel is working and the grass is fine. One project we will complete this year is to fix the holes in the pavilion roof and coat the roof. Mark also said that we would do something with the bench tops to seal them, or we may replace the top boards. The field workday will be April 12, with a rain date of April 19. Mark will get bids for the mowing, and recommended that we stay with the same mowing service if they hold the same price as last year. We will try to work with the city to get the two large sinkholes on the west ensconced by Sal Perno. Motion passed.

Past President Tom Spriet explained that he and Alvin went to visit our neighbor to the west, (Tim White) in December to give him a \$200 gift certificate to Fresh Market. Tim refused the certificate asking

Tom to cash it back and donate the money to Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital where he works as a nurse Tim actually took care of Dominic Saverino when he was a patient at Marianjoy). Tom told him the club would gather a donation in addition to the \$200.00 to give to Marianjoy in Tim's name. Tom explained to the members present that there is an anonymous club member who donated \$500 it to Marianjoy. Dale Gathman will come up with a jar to use for the collection.

Tom also stated that he and Alvin asked Tim what his preference would be in the event one of our planes landed on his property. Tim explained that he would really like to know before someone comes onto the property to retrieve their plane, as he has a dog that he needs to control. Tom will give Tim's phone number to all of the board members, and a few of the 'regulars' at the field. ***Any member who has a plane land on the neighbor's property to the west must contact a board member, Cliff Fullhart or Dan Compton, before retrieving their plane. The neighbor (Tim White) must be contacted before the plane is retrieved.***

Flypaper Editor Dennis McFarlane explained that he just got the software for publishing the newsletter, and he will need some time to get familiar with it. He doesn't plan on trying to 'fill Doug's shoes', who produced an outstanding newsletter for the last three years. All news articles, photos, etc. can be submitted to Dennis at hobbypub@aol.com.

Safety Chairman Tom Siwek mentioned that he is taking over for **Karl Griesbaum**, who has done an admirable job as Safety Chairman for many years. Tom works as a safety professional, so safety is very familiar to him. He stated that it is important for us to put an emphasis on safety. Over time, we become familiar with our hobby, and familiarity breeds complacency, and that is when accidents can happen. Tom plans to bring a topic and discussion to us each month at our member meeting, so that safety can remain at the top of our minds while we are enjoying our hobby. Tom then presented our topic for tonight, 'Safety Aspects Associated with Electric Airplanes' (See Tom's article in the newsletter). Tom stated that he will cover the topics in expanded form in articles he submits to the Flypaper each month. Also, he asked anyone who has ideas or topics they would like to see covered to email him with the suggestion.

Swap Meet Organizers Joe Pedone and **John Turner** mentioned that the Swap meet will be on February 22. They have about fifty tables sold so far. Tables are \$18.00 for one or \$15.00 each for two or more if reserved by February 1. After that they are \$20.00 each. They will need help on Friday, February 21 to help set up for the swap.

Show and Tell Tom Flint had a question on a sheeted wing that he is building for his 81" Beech Bonanza V-Tail. After gluing it and removing it from his board, the wing had a twist to it. He asked if anyone knew how to remove the twist. Bob Boen explained that one method is to 'spritz' the hell out of both sides of the sheeting with a 10% ammonia 90% water mix. Lay the wing flat on the board, and weight it down. Leave until it is completely dry, and the twist will be gone.

Membership Chairman Tom Flint then reminded attendees that he now has the 2014 FVAC Member stickers for everyone who has paid their 2014 dues. Alvin asked if there were any new members present. Alan Fields, a friend of Rob Sampson, was introduced, and stated that he is interested in joining the club. Welcome Alan.

Dale Gathman announced that the board has appointed a Constitution Rewrite Committee. The committee will consist of Dale Gathman, Joe Pedone, and Tom Siwek. The committee will be cleaning up errors, adding procedures that are not covered, and making sure that everything in the Constitution is in agreement with how we actually operate. Anyone who has suggestions for modifications should see one of the committee members.

Alvin Cole announced that the board has appointed Doug Swanson to handle our website photo administration. Anyone who has photos that they would like to see posted on the club website should forward them to Doug for Posting. Also, Paul Makowski has volunteered to handle our YouTube video channel. Anyone who has videos that they want to see posted on our site should contact Paul Makowski for editing and posting. Alvin then announced the club will be re-instituting Fun-Flys this year. Alan Gale has volunteered to be the Fun-Fly coordinator for 2014. The Fun-Flys will be held in May, June, July and September, with dates and details to be announced.

Show and Tell Rich Gabrys explained that he is a biplane lover, and one that he is fond of is Sean Tucker's Oracle Challenger. Rich wanted to build an Oracle Challenger to certain specifications - basically he wanted it to be exactly eight feet long to fit in perfectly in his truck. Rich taught himself to do CAD drawing, then contacted Sean Tucker and the guy who built Sean's airplanes. He took things off of the web and then drew his own set of plans. The spinner came out to be six inches in diameter. Rich started making the custom sized cowl by gluing a piece of his drawing to a piece of plywood. He used wood and foam to glue up and sand a cowl plug, and then covered it with epoxy and fiberglass. The resulting plug is gorgeous. He now needs to make a mold from the plug, and will use the mold to form his cowls. Rich then displayed some of the ribs that he created during the design testing phase. He will power the plane with a DA-170 engine. The scale of his plane came out to 43%. We are looking forward to seeing the completed project sometime in 2014 or 2015.

Joe Pedone and Dennis McFarlane came forward to show Joe's DJI Phantom and Dennis' Blade 350 QX quadcopters. Joe got his Phantom from his wife for Christmas. Both of the quads have GoPro cameras mounted to them. Dennis has a fully articulated arm for the GoPro, which he hasn't had time to mount yet. The arm allows the camera to always point in the desired direction regardless of the orientation of the copter. Dennis added a couple of safety ties to his camera mount to keep the camera in place even during hard landings. Dennis then showed his new Spektrum DX9 talking radio, which he is having a blast with. He has voice statements assigned to almost all of the switches. Dennis then alerted us to the fact that there have been problems with GoPro Wi-Fi and 2.4 GHz radios. The GoPro Wi-Fi will interfere with the 2.4 GHz radio signal, and cause loss of control or loss of bind. This is a well known problem at this time, and Dennis stated that - **Under No Circumstances should a pilot use the GoPro Wi-Fi feature when the camera is mounted to an aircraft running 2.4 GHz.** Dennis next announced the Fox Valley Aero Club Night Fly will be held in conjunction with Al's Helicopter Fun-Fly. The night fly is scheduled for Saturday night June 21, details to follow. Joe stated the Phantom has LEDs on the bottom so the pilot can see

where the front and back are. If orientation is lost it has 'intelligent orientation', which, at the flip of a switch, basically changes the orientation of the Phantom to match the direction you are facing. At that point, the pilot just has to pull their right stick down to get the copter to return to them. Dennis said that the 350 also has something similar, and that the pilot can basically just 'fly the transmitter' and the 350 will respond to the required direction regardless of its orientation. Both quads have automatic homing also. **Mark Beezhold** asked if pilots flying planes at the field who fly on 2.4 GHz need to worry that another pilot's GoPro Wi-Fi will interfere with their signal. Dennis assured us that it would not, and explained that he believes the interference has to do with the proximity of the camera to the receiver.

Alan Galle showed us his 3D Spirit by Green RC Models. It has a 39" wingspan, a Park 480 1020kV motor, a Castle 36 ESC, and has an ARF weight of 9.4 ounces.

Alvin Cole then announced that the board has a few changes to the calendar for 2014 to propose. The first event of the year was the First-In-Flight 'Frozen Fingers' event. Joe Pedone has gotten the trophy upgraded, and it now sports an airplane on the top. Sebastian Kowalski was the 2014 winner, but he did not make it to the meeting to receive the trophy. Congratulations, Sebastian.

The biggest changes to the calendar this year will be the following:

- 1: Kid's Fly and Rocket Fest will both be held on the same day June 7.
- 2: We will be adding a 3-day giant scale event, called 'Windy City Warbirds and Classics', to be held June 26, 27 and 28.
- 3: The Festival of Flight will be changed to a one day event and will be held on August 23.
- 4: Three Fun-Flys will be held in May, July and September (dates and details to follow).

Cliff Fullhart suggested that we start a tradition of having a 'Cub Fly' as a yearly event, on the day of our August Member Meeting. The Cub Fly will start in the afternoon, before the meeting.

John Fischer next talked about the new Windy City Warbirds and Classics event which he will pattern after the Warbirds and Classics Alliance events. We will not be part of the alliance this first year, but may be able to join at a later time. Many of the large scale 'greats' will attend this event as it will be limited to warbirds and classic planes that are IMAA legal. Monoplanes must have a wingspan of 80 inches or greater of be 1/4 scale. Muti-wing planes must be of 60 inches minimum wingspan or 1/4 scale. Warbirds may have been flown in any war - WW I, WW II, Korea, Vietnam, etc, or in any theater of any war. Classics must be scale planes modeled after a full-scale airplane that was flown before 1974. there will be a \$20 advance registration fee for pilots, or \$25 at the field. Armin Weber has volunteered to be the CD. John is forming a committee of about eight people to plan the event. If you are interested please see John. John's goal and vision is to get our event into the Warbirds and Classics Alliance calendar in future years.

Chuck Noyes explained he needs some help. He has an ARF he is trying to get flying, but due to spinal surgery he has some years ago his hands no longer work like they used to. He would love to get his plane flying this season and would greatly appreciate it if one of the members could help get his plane finished and flying. If anyone has some time on they could spare to help out Chuck would really appreciate it.

Hearing no further business, **President Alvin Cole** asked for a motion to adjourn. **Doug Swanson** moved and **Dave Murray** seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32pm.

Respectfully Submitted;
Dale Gathman - Secretary FVAC



FROZEN FINGERS 2014

First In Flight by Dale Gathman

Our annual First-In-Flight event, titled 'Frozen Fingers 2014' was held on January 1 at 10:00 am, at the field. The weather was blizzard conditions, about 10 deg. F., with about a 10 mph wind straight out of the east. There was also six inches of powder snow on the ground, which would prove to be a challenge for most of the airplanes.

The goal of the event is to be the first pilot to have your airplane leave the ground once the starting signal is sounded. The pilot must then complete a minimum of one pattern flight approximately the length of the runway - 800 ft - and land successfully. Sounds easy, right? The winner of the annual event gets to take home the FVAC First-In-Flight trophy, which will have a plaque with the pilot's name and year of victory. The trophy is a 'roving trophy' and contains winner plaques from all the past winners. The winner gets to keep the trophy until next January 1, when it is awarded to the next year's winner.

When I arrived a little after 9:00 am, the driveway was deep in snow. A few of the members were already in the shelter, and had the propane heater running. As the start time neared, more and more members showed up, some to fly and some to watch. By 10:00 we had 11 competitors in all, with a total of around 25 members and spectators.

We decided to start about fifteen minutes late, as a couple of members called saying they were running late due to the snow. By start time, we had a total of seven competitors, with four dropping out due to various mechanical problems.

During the pilots meeting, the pilots were instructed that we would be taking off straight east down the runway (or grass, we really couldn't see the runway). This year, all pilots were required to fly from behind the safety nets. Their assistant could be on the runway to hold the airplane until take-off, but were instructed to get off the runway immediately after take-off.

The final starting line-up was as follows:

John Turner – Twist 46

Tom Bean – Lanier Mariner

Jason Boettcher – Twisted Hobbies Slick

Rob Sampson – White unknown Foamy

Sebastian Kowalski – Parkzone T-28 – **Winner 'First-In-Flight 2014'**

Alan Galle – West Michigan Park Flyers Mako

Tom Flint – Parkzone Super Cub LP

Dorie Jacobs and Cindy McFarlane were once again enlisted to be the visual judges for the event, instructed to especially watch for false starts and run-up prior to the start signal. Doug Swanson and Paul Makowski manned the still cameras, and Brandon Makowski shot video. Thank you all for your assistance.

At the start signal, due to the snow, only one airplane got off the ground immediately. Most of the airplanes either pulled themselves deeper into the snow, or had too much drag due to the powder to get enough speed to take off. We did have a total of 3 pilots actually get in the air and complete their flights. Dorie and Cindy are very good at picking the correct winner, but we usually verify their 'call' with the still camera shots and video.

This year, we did not have to check the still photos or video, as Sebastian Kowalski clearly was the first to leave the ground (by about a full minute or more). He made a beautiful flight and landing to complete the requirements to win the title of 'FVAC First-In-Flight 2014'. He then took off and flew for a few additional laps, some inverted. When he finally landed so that we could award him the trophy, the front of his radio was almost totally covered in ice (He said he did not have time to put the fowl weather cover on before the start). CONGRATULATIONS SEBASTIAN. Great Job.

After the trophy was awarded, we once again placed any scrap wood airplane parts from the previous years crashes on a dead Christmas tree, and tried to burn it. Due to the tree not being dead enough, we had to add lighter fluid, and then about a gallon of old Omega that was laying around. We finally got all the plane parts torched, and about half of the tree. Next year, we need to find a drier tree.

At the conclusion of the event, Sebastian and I stayed for another hour or so, and flew our T-28s in formation (sort of), in between charging of batteries. We eventually got cold, and decided it was time to call it a day.

Overall, this was a very interesting event. It was the third time that I coordinated the event, but the first time that snow was on the ground. It definitely enlightened the members to the different preparation and configuration that is required to be successful when the snow is soft and deep, it is cold, and it is snowing. What makes this event interesting is that in our climate we never know what the weather conditions will be. I can't wait to see what next years 'Frozen Fingers 2015' brings us. Hope you can attend.

Christmas at Rookies



Frozen Fingers



Radio Control Swap Meet

Hosted by:



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Saturday, February 22, 2014

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