

# FLY PAPER



Election 2025

The Flypaper is a monthly publication of

## The Fox Valley Aero Club

An Illinois not-for-profit Corporation

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AMA Gold Leader Club



Academy of Model Aeronautics  
Charter Club #252

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## Special Edition:

# ELECTION 2025



This "extra" is dedicated to the upcoming election for the Officers and Directors who will lead our club in 2026.

The voting is again happening by e-mail ballot this year. You will receive an e-mail from Dale with the voting instructions and link to the ballot on Thursday, November 20. Simply make your selections, and then submit to electronically cast your ballot. Voting will close at 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26.

This issue is intended to make you familiar with the candidates vying for your vote. The individual statements are in order by position, and second, alphabetically.

Paul Martin, Editor

### Candidates:

**President**  
**Dale Gathman** (incumbent-unopposed)

**Vice President**  
**Dave Murray** (incumbent-unopposed)

**Secretary**  
**Armin Weber** (incumbent-unopposed)

**Treasurer**  
**Scott Stampfli** (incumbent-unopposed)

**Safety Coordinator**  
**Jim Thompson** (incumbent-unopposed)

**Director-At-Large (six positions available)**  
**Art Alvarez**

**Dave Cotton** (incumbent)

**Steve Gawlik**

**John Howe** (incumbent)

**Mark Knoppkie**

**Rob Sampson** (incumbent)

**Bill Suhr** (incumbent)



## Dale Gathman for President (unopposed)

Thank you for nominating me once again to serve as president of our great club in 2026. If you are new to the club and would like to know a little about my history before FVAC, see the Meet the Members section of our September 2011 Flypaper, available on our website. Since joining the club in 2011, I have served one year as an At-Large Director, four years as Secretary, and the last nine years as President.

A heartfelt Thank You goes to our 2025 board members and all of the members who volunteered during

the year. No one person could possibly run a club of this size, and with the combination of our board members and all of the additional volunteers who step up and help, our club is always in great hands.

Our main goal for 2025 was to get our asphalt areas crack filled and seal-coated (runway, taxiways, parking lot). I am very happy to report that this has been accomplished, and the field looks amazing.

I am looking forward to 2026, starting with our Frozen Fingers event on January 1st and our SWAP meet in February. We will be following up with another full slate of events and activities. The board will be taking a hard look at the calendar and deciding if any of our activities/events should be cut or any new ones added. Please let me know if you have strong feelings about keeping or deleting any of the events/activities that we had this year.

As a board, we strive to make decisions for the club based on what is best for the club and the majority of our members. Please let us know your thoughts and wishes for the direction of the club. Also, keep in mind that we cannot make everyone happy all of the time, and as we have over 200 members, there will be some members who disagree with some decisions. We realize this and welcome all opinions and questions, but please know that at the end of the day, we are making the best decisions we can based on the majority of the members' wishes and the well-being of the club.

Our club is very strong, with new members joining every year. We have many members who have vast experience in model building and flying, along with some who are brand new to the hobby. This makes for a strong, active club with members of diverse talents who can help each other with just about any need we may have.

As in past years, I will do my best to stay informed of regulation changes and the state of the hobby and will keep you, our members, informed about what you can do to help our hobby. Obviously, we are stronger as a group than we would be individually, so thank you all for being members of our great club. Together, we can keep the Fox Valley Aero Club one of the best RC flying clubs in the country. Let's plan to have another fantastic year of Flying, and please remember our goals of Fun, Safety, Camaraderie and Unity.

I count it a privilege to have you as FVAC members and look forward to enjoying the hobby of R/C flying with you in 2026.

See you at the field or the meetings,  
Dale

## Dave Murray

for Vice President  
(unopposed)



and have helped organize past Kids Day and Festival of Flight events. I served as contest director for the 2014 - 2022 Warbirds & and Classics events. I am a member of the Warbird and Classics Alliance and attend several of the Warbird and Classic flying events.

My goal as an FVAC officer is to:

- Support the board in promoting a safe and welcoming environment for the membership, guests, and spectators.
- Support, and promote activities that engage our neighbors, and the local communities.
- Represent FVAC at flying events
- Balance the considerable need for safety, with the primary goal of this hobby, which is.... to have fun!

Thank you for your consideration for FVAC Secretary.

Armin Weber

## Armin Weber

for Secretary  
(unopposed)



Hello FVAC Members. My name is Armin Weber.

I currently serve on the FVAC board as Club Secretary and am running for the same position in 2026.

I retired recently after 44 years in Software Development. I saw my first RC airplane fly in the early seventies and have been hooked ever since. I build and fly many types of models, but my primary interest is large scale models, WW2 aircraft being my favorite.

I have been a member of several clubs over the years and have served in various positions. I have spent over 27 years with FVAC, and consider it to be one of the finest clubs in the Midwest. I have been a contest director for many years

*The viewpoints in this publication 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.*

## Scott Stampfli for Treasurer (unopposed)

My name is Scott Stampfli, I am your Fox Valley Aero Club incumbent Treasurer. I would appreciate your vote for 2026 FVAC Treasurer.

I have been a member of Fox Valley Aero since 2015 and fly electric, glow and gas. I am a Dad to two super cool teenagers. When I'm not at my day job I enjoy flying and lending a hand at our field with our various club events. I also travel to participate and represent Fox Valley Aero Club in local and out of state flying events.

Favorite activities include camping, golfing and going to art shows with my awesome, patient, saint of a wife Jes.

I appreciate the faith and trust you have in me through the years and I've enjoyed taking on the tasks of the treasury. I'd appreciate your vote and look forward to seeing you at the meetings and flying with you at the field in the New Year!

Here's to a great 2026 of flying and camaraderie at FVAC!



DOING THE  
MOST GOOD™

Angel tree

The Club is once again collecting donations to support the Salvation Army Angel Tree Program. Donations will be collected on two occasions: November 29th, at the Christmas Party at the VFW Hall in West Chicago, and Saturday, December 6th, at FVAC Field from 9 am until noon. Cash and gift cards are helpful in supplying gifts for older kids, who the Salvation Army normally struggles to find gifts for.

## Jim Thompson for Safety Coordinator (unopposed)

I am entering my 9th year as a Member of FVAC. Besides the fact that it's one of the premier RC Facilities in the Midwest, the members and the comraderie of this Club is "Second to None".

I come from a background in Residential/Industrial maintenance, with an emphasis on Safety Programs. At this time, I have approximately 18 yrs. experience flying assorted RC aircraft. You will usually catch me at the field, flying one of my many Electric Ducted Fan Jets, even though I started in the hobby flying "Glow" aircraft.

I am always willing to help my fellow members in any way possible. It is for this reason I have accepted the nomination for Safety Coordinator, so that I can continue assisting this Club and my fellow members in yet another capacity.



## Art Alvarez for Director-At-Large



I look forward to the opportunity to serve the members of Fox Valley Aero club. Flying RC since 1996, I enjoy sharing my knowledge and experience with fellow flyers. Active in this hobby for decades, I have been a flight instructor for thirty years and formally with FVAC for the past three years. I was president of Bayou City Flyers, for two years before moving back to Illinois four years ago. I participate in many of the FVAC events including fun flies, flying events, and parades. I enjoy flying scale warbirds and EDF jets.

If selected to be a board member, I would seek to provide integrity and clarity in the club decisions and share this insight with fellow club members. I would seek to represent the sport flyers and to promote the club within the community. I would like to ensure that the field operates in a safe manner and continues to be maintained to the standards that we have come to expect. I look forward to serving the members of Fox Valley Aero Club.

## Dave Cotton for Director-At-Large



David Cotton "Shooter" here. It's been since 2010 that I've been a member of the Fox Valley Aero Club. Perhaps you remember my friendly face at the field, and perhaps I helped you retrieve a couple of airplanes from the beans or corn stalks. I have been a Board Member at Large, Membership Chairman, and I have helped run the flight line during the Windy City Warbirds event for many years. I try my best to keep the field safe so that all the members can enjoy the leisure of flying at this fantastic facility.

As your At-Large board member, I seek to have and advocate for every member's complete trust, that I won't be serving any particular interest group and will strive to make our average pilots have the most access to our stunning field, as opposed to hogging the schedule with private events or special events.

We have a strong membership, almost all of whom want to see this club progress positively, particularly for the recreational flyers.

That is why I am seeking your vote for the Director At Large position in the upcoming elections.

Best,  
Dave Cotton

## Steve Gawlik for Director-At-Large



Hi. I'm Steve Gawlik and I have been nominated to serve as a Director at Large for the club.

I have been a Fox Vally member for over 25 years and have served as a board member for various clubs in the past.

Having retired from my architectural firm this year after 34 years I now have more time to devote to the club and the hobby. Hopefully I can get out more than just the weekends which has been the norm.

I started flying control line in 1963 and progressed to R/C in 1972. I fly all types of airplanes and even dabbled in Heli's. I enjoy traveling to the warbird events in the area and always try to promote the club. I look forward to serving on the board to help promote the club and keep the fun in flying.

Fox Valler Aero is the premier club in the area, and I will work to keep us on top.

## John Howe for Director-At-Large



My name is John Howe, I am running for a Director at Large position for 2026.

I have been in the hobby since I was 14 years old and am now 53 and have loved every minute of it. I am very lucky that my wife (Debbie) and daughter (Katie) love and participate in the hobby with me, so we are a flying family.

This year I (with my family) was the event chairman for our Windy City Warbirds event. I was excited to keep the event going and enjoy it with all our club members and guests. We travel during the year representing our club to Warbird and Classic events in many different states, IL, IN, OH, WI, MI, IA, MN and SC, where we have met many great friends along the way and have found that there is a wealth of knowledge to be learned from so many different pilots and I enjoy bringing back and sharing this with our FVAC club.

I hope to sit on the board this year and to work closely with everyone to make this year a great year and fun for all. We will hope to see everyone at the FVAC Christmas Party. Our family wishes a very Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all the FVAC family.

## Mark Knoppkie for Director-At-Large



Like many of you, I started building and flying u-control models in the 60's. I enjoy flying all types of aircraft, large, small, gas, electric, sailplanes, and float planes. I enjoy building both kits and from scratch. I also have many ARFs in my hanger.



I've been a member of FVAC for 23 years and I have served on the Board for several years. I'm constantly impressed by the talent and professionalism of our club members and how the club presents itself to the community. We have been blessed with insightful, hardworking, talented, dedicated, and skilled leadership. The Board constantly strives to find new ways to be active in the community and attract new members, both young and old. The club calendar is dynamic and full of many events targeting member participation and community involvement.

## Rob Sampson for Director-At-Large

I'm Rob Sampson. I attended the University of Illinois Institute of Aviation where I earned most of my pilot certificates, Airframe and Power- Plant mechanics license and graduated with a degree in Marketing.

During my 40+ years in aviation I've been a mechanic on WWII aircraft and worked in a simulator factory. I done flight instruction, charter flying, corporate jets and flew 34 years with the airlines, retiring 14 years ago.

The Board is constantly faced with a challenging balancing act and its decisions can't always please everyone, but they always strived to do what is best to ensure the survival of the club and our magnificent flying field.

The icing on the cake is the friendly, helpful members that make this club better each year.

I strive to be an actively involved member, helping on work days, festivals, family fly events etc. I also enjoy the social events and attending the monthly meetings.

It would be an honor to once again serve on the Board of such a great organization.

Thank you,  
Rob Sampson

## Bill Suhr for Director-At-Large

I have been nominated for and am currently a Director at Large for FVAC. I have been a club member for the last 14 years flying everything from small foamy's, warbirds, large electrics and turbines.

For my full time job I am a Captain flying a Hawker 4000 Executive Jet based at Chicago Executive Airport for the past 14 years and various other jets for the past 29 years.

I bring experience with working with the FAA and understand the airspace that our field is within. Having worked all of the FVAC airshows as a shooter, retriever, and air boss I know how to keep things safe and fun.

Thanks again for the nomination.

