

August 12, 2003

*It has been quite awhile since we saw a newsletter. Time to catch up a bit on what has been happening within the Collins Model Aviators.*

**AUGUST 9** saw the first fun fly of the year for CMA. It was a scrumptious day – little wind, not too hot, not too humid, and no bugs. Five of us showed up to fly, we began shortly after 2 PM, and were done by about 5:30 PM. The following prizes were up for grabs: A SIG LT-40 Kit, a SIG 4-STAR-40, a Goldberg Tiger 2, SuperTiger GS45 ABC, Tower Hobbies 46 ABC, a couple of Tower Hobbies tachometers, a half-dozen OS #8 glow plugs, 5-minute epoxy and builder's triangles. Prize distribution was accomplished using dice and luck. Who was there? Gregg Lind, Tom Gorman, Larry Kerns, Steve Wilson, and myself. Gregg took some pictures of the winners (all of us) and their spoils.

The August meeting happened at the field on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Gregg Lind, John Michael, Geoff Barrance, Larry Kerns and I were present. We discussed the upcoming fun fly, then headed off to do some serious flying. For his part, John Michael got airborne himself, flew out a tank of fuel, and with some coaching shot a decent landing. Gregg Lind was next, and he too got a couple of flights, and is also working on shooting landings. Larry Kerns borrowed my LT-40 and did a pretty decent job of keeping the wheel side down and the shiny side up. I managed to dork my Caliber 30 helicopter in the ground yet again when the engine sagged, then died. I guess I'm getting better at autorotations because the parts are costing me less each time I email Heliproz for replacements. I'd just prefer to practice dead-stick landings on my terms, not the heli's!

**Our next fun fly is September 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 PM – at the Sod Farm. Keep those fingers crossed for good weather.**

The club treasury is now empty. We're approaching the use-it-or-lose-it time of the year with regard to the Rockwell funds. We used it! We start next year with a clean slate. Let's hope that with all the budget cutting going on that the Rockwell Sponsorship continues to be funded.

*I received an email this past week from a teacher at the Marion Home School Assistance Program. Last spring I did a morning-long dog-and-pony show about RC modeling. This was in conjunction with the Fly Iowa promotion. The teacher is interested in the CMA running a program with their students over the coming school year – to build and airplane and learn to fly it. This is an excellent opportunity for the CMA to get recognition and to help a group of kids. I believe this would be a once per week evening class. It would involve students, teachers, and even parents.*

*I see the opportunity to teach the kids some useful life-long building skills, to have some fun, and to learn safely how to build, operate, and fly an RC plane. In addition*

**to the building, I foresee a “ground school” and teaching these kids flying etiquette and safety.**

**I sent an email to the CMA membership about this opportunity. I got two replies. Both of those people are willing to help, but can’t guarantee availability. I truly appreciate their offers. This effort does require a bit of dedication on the part of those who help. If I were to commit to this program, I would need backing from one or two people who could help out, and even substitute on those occasions where illness or other commitments might keep me from being at their site for a class or two.**

**I’ve contacted the K-12 program people to see if there are any funds available for this kind of project, but haven’t had a reply yet – Nancy Craig is out of the office until Wednesday of this week. Funding would be nice to pick up the necessary stuff – kits, engine, radio, accessories, covering, a flight simulator or two.....the usual stuff. Dependent upon the size of their group (and budget) I would suspect they could build up to two planes. At the end of the school year, the planes and equipment would be donated to the school.**

**I would be happy to help the Marion group with this project, but I’m not going to do it alone. If I don’t get some firm backing, I will suggest that she talk with the Skyhawks. They might be more interested. WHO’S WILLING TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE AND MAKE THIS PROJECT HAPPEN?**

**Speaking of the Skyhawks, flying at the Marion Airport is now a thing of the past. That flying site has been shut down because effective Sunday, August 3, 2003, their new flying site just off C-Avenue and County Home Road is OPEN FOR FLYING. I broke down and joined them that afternoon, and spent much of the afternoon flying there. I had been procrastinating all year about joining them. I believe I should have joined sooner! This field has great potential to be a great flying site for years to come. Some thought has gone into its layout, and operation. Parking is ample, there are rest-room facilities, and the runway is large and relatively flat.**

**I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ALL CMA MEMBERS TO SUPPORT THE SKYHAWKS IN THEIR EFFORT TO DEVELOP THIS FLYING SITE. This can best be accomplished by joining their club and becoming an active member. Year after year.**

**I heard speculation that part of the expansion could include a separate helicopter area, as well as some CONTROL LINE circles. Now THAT would be something to see.**

**Getting back to CMA stuff. The next meeting is September 4<sup>th</sup>, and weather permitting, will be at the field. We’re also approaching that time of year when the monthly build sessions resume at the main plant cafeteria (this will occur in October).**

***It's also time to start thinking about next year, and next year's slate of officers. The past couple of years have seen quite a bit of apathy among the CMA members. No one really willing to step up to the plate to be President, Vice President, or Secretary-Treasurer. I can recall one set of officers being selected using the famous MILO bucket to pick candidates.***

***Larry Kerns has indicated that he has had enough of being Secretary-Treasurer, and noted that his performance has been less-than-stellar in that post. He doesn't want to be an officer this coming year.***

***As for me, I am willing to run for President again – but with a few caveats. By now, you should all know something about what I think the club should be. I believe we exist as a club for a purpose greater than spending Rockwell's matching funds each year and flying from Larry Martinson's sod farm because it is an "exclusive" field. I am all for the club helping out with events like the "Take Your Kids to Work Day", "Fly Iowa", and the proposed Marion Home School program. I believe that club meetings should be attended by more than a couple of regulars, and that we should have some informative presentations at each meeting. I believe we should have a regular newsletter – and that members should actually participate in it by contributing to it. We haven't had regular newsletters for the past three years because every seems to want to have one, but are willing to let someone else contribute to it.***

***Take a look at our current membership. We have something on the order of 24 paid members. We rarely have more than four or five present at meetings. Build sessions are also poorly attended. The same small group helps with Kids Day year after year, attends meetings and fun flies, and works community outreach programs for schools. Very few of us actually fly!***

***The past three years our fun flies have been events where we simply show up and try to fly, any prizes are passed out by drawings, or games of chance. That is because the majority of our membership is made up of people needing help in learning the basics of flying, but the availability of someone to instruct has been spotty at best. I've recently volunteered to help as best I can with instruction and have been helping several members over the past few weeks get airborne. We have two ready-to-fly club operated trainer aircraft. We have a pilot proficiency program in place. We have rules about instructors, airplane inspections, people assigned to inspect new planes before their first flight. We have all sorts of procedures. But very few active participants. In a way, the CMA reflects our sponsor company too well, "we are really great at developing procedures and processes, we just never seem to be able put them to good use."***

***Imagine a fun fly with real competitive events. With more than five participants. Wouldn't that be great? With planning. And FULL club participation. Imagine club meetings with informative and interesting presentations. Imagine having the Annual Beauty Contest with more than three participants. Imagine an active membership***

***drive. Imagine build sessions with more than three or four people. Imagine having enough members who are competent enough at flying so that the trainer role doesn't fall on one person. Imagine a newsletter where the members actually contribute. Imagine having people willingly commit to being club officers, and having officers being picked by elections, not a drawing from a bucket with names in it. In short, imagine a truly active club!***

***The club was torn apart three years ago over the issue of helicopters. I didn't join CMA the first three years I was at Rockwell simply because helicopters were banned. When push came to shove, The Rockwell activities coordinator had to step in and lay down the law...as a result, half the membership took their toys and found another place to fly. Now we rarely talk to each other. Why? I fly airplanes, and I fly helicopters – and I hate to fly alone. Gee, I'd fly Control Line if we had a place to do it!***

***There you have it. My vision of what CMA ought to be. It's a far cry from that today. I'd be happy to be President of a club that was alive. One or two people can't make this club function. Think about it. Do something.***

***Dave Shema  
President - CMA***