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AMA CLUB #792

CLUB CALENDAR

Tuesday, October 28th — Club Meeting at 7PM at The OP on University Avenue. Come early for dinner at 6PM.

First indoor meeting of the fall.
Officer Nominations

Tuesday, November 25th — Club Meeting at 7PM at The OP on University Avenue. Come early for dinner at 6PM
Officer Elections

Tuesday, December 16th — Christmas Meeting at 6PM at The OP on University Avenue.
No Business Meeting this month

Tuesday, January 27th — Club Meeting at 7PM at The OP on University Avenue. Come early for dinner at 6PM
Planning for 2026

Iowa City Swap Meet
Date to be determined

BLACK HAWK R/C PILOTS – SEPTEMBER 2025

From the President — The next club meeting is on Tuesday, October 28th at 7pm at **The Other Place** on University Ave in Cedar Falls. Come early for dinner at 6pm. This is the first indoor meeting of the fall.

We will be accepting nominations for next year's club officers at the club meeting. Let me know if you are interested in being a club officer.

The **Harvest Fly-In & Swap Meet** was a success with lots of items being bought and sold. We had a couple of guests from New Hampton come for the day.

The **Fall Field Day** was last Saturday. The garage was cleaned out and a lot of junk disposed of. The picnic tables and most of the benches have been put in the garage for the winter. Lorne and Graham will be servicing the mowers when the mowing season is over. The porta-potty is still functional. Once it's pumped out, the door will be locked until spring. Thanks to everyone who helped out at the Field Day.

Hazel Sig-Hester died on October 10th at age 103. Hazel was a legend in her own time and an inspiration to many. I sent out an email with links to her obituary and Model Aviation article. There will be more about Hazel's life and contributions to our hobby in the January edition of Model Aviation magazine.

FAA Approved Altitude—As reported earlier, the FAA has granted waivers to fly above 400 feet AGL at AMA flying sites. Clubs with fields in Class E airspace are approved for 700 feet AGL while club fields in Class G airspace are approved for 1200 feet AGL. We are fortunate to be in Class G airspace and therefore approved to fly up to 1200 feet AGL. About half of the AMA clubs in Iowa are only approved to fly up to 700 feet AGL. Those limited to 700 feet include: Marshalltown RC Flyers, New Hampton RC Crossed Signals, and Cedar Rapids Skyhawks.

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Club Meetings

The winter club meetings are at 7PM at **The Other Place** on University Ave in Cedar Falls
Come for dinner at 6PM.
Guests are always welcome.



Commercial Drone Pilot's License—I will be teaching a class at Hawkeye Community College (Cedar Fall Campus) starting on Monday, November 3rd. The class is 4 two-hour sessions on Monday and Thursday evenings at 6PM. Advance sign up is required on the Hawkeye website.

Why would you want a Commercial Drone Pilot's License? Recreational R/C pilots have several limitations. For one, you cannot do anything with an R/C airplane or drone that earns you money. New rules are coming that will allow commercial drone pilots to fly beyond the visual line of sight. Drones now have the capability to fly up to 5 miles from the operator, which is well beyond line of sight. Anyone wanting to fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) will need a commercial drone pilot's license. Flying multiple drones by once (i.e., a swarm) also requires a commercial license.

More Drone News—Presidential Executive Orders were recently signed increasing federal enforcement and prosecution of anyone violating FAA air restrictions or endangering the public. The Executive Order stated that drones (and model airplanes) pose a growing threat as criminals, terrorists, and hostile foreign actors increasingly weaponize these technologies to endanger public safety and national security. The latest tools for detecting, tracking, and identifying drones will be made available to law enforcement, the Joint Terrorism Task Forces that are present for mass gathering events, and private operators of critical infrastructure.

The FAA Administrator is instructed to make Notices to Missions (NOTAMs) and Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) freely available online for drone geofencing and Aircraft Navigation and Guidance system purposes. (Editor's Note: These already are available for free online.)

The FAA Administrator is to publish an updated roadmap for the integration of civil Unmanned Aircraft Systems (aka drones and model aircraft) into the National Airspace System, and use artificial intelligence tools to streamline and expedite drone waiver reviews. In other words, streamline the process to allow drones and manned aircraft fly together in the National Airspace.

Chinese Drone Ban—DJI, Autel Robotics and other Chinese drone manufacturers are on the verge of being banned in the United States by federal lawmakers who accuse the company of a variety of infractions, including benefiting from unfair subsidies and being a cybersecurity threat. Representative Elise Stefanik (R-New York) placed a provision into a defense bill that would ban the sale of new drones by Chinese companies in December 2025.

Sales could continue if a national security agency determines that the foreign drones do not "pose an unacceptable risk to the national security of the United States." But the bill did not state which agency is responsible for making that assessment, and so far, none have publicly taken on the task.

If the ban goes through, it will prevent new Chinese drones from receiving FCC licenses to fly. It would not immediately affect the hundreds of thousands of Chinese drones that already have permission to fly in the US. But over time, Chinese drones would fade away in the United States, as customers would not be able to repair or replace them. DJI is the world's largest drone manufacturer and has about 80% market share in the US.

Happy flying!

That's all for now. See you at the club meeting.

Neal Leeper

President, Black Hawk R/C Pilots