



October 2026

<https://bhrcp.org/>

AMA Chartered Club #792

The next club meeting is Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 7 PM at **The Other Place** on University Avenue in Cedar Falls. Arrive at 6 PM for dinner and conversation. Guests are always welcome.



Club Meeting !

Fall Field Day is Saturday, October 17, 2026, at 9 AM at the club flying field in New Hartford. We'll store the benches, picnic tables and water pump in the garage; service the mowers; and prepare the field for winter. The flying field will remain open through the winter, but the porta-potty will be locked after its final pumping.



The election of officers for the upcoming year takes place at the November club meeting each year. Nominations for club officers will be made at the October meeting. If you are

interested in being a club officer or know of someone who might be interested, this meeting is the time to make a nomination. If you have any questions about officer job descriptions or responsibilities, contact any current club officer.

The current club officers are:

Neal Leeper – President
Dave Ramsey – Vice President
Wil Breu – Treasurer
Justin Witt – Safety Officer
Lorne Bidwell – Field Marshall

AMA Executive Board Election – It's also time to elect your AMA Executive Board representatives. You should have received a ballot in the mail a couple of weeks ago. Terms of Office are for 3-years and a maximum of 9-years. This year we have an unusual situation with our incumbent District VII Vice-President, Randy Gibson, running for reelection and also running for Executive Vice-President. In his campaign statement, Randy said if elected Executive Vice-President, one of the Associate Vice Presidents would be selected to serve as District Vice-President. The candidate campaign statements are on the AMA website.

The Harvest Fly-In & Swap Meet was postponed by one day because of the weather, but conditions remained overcast and drizzly. Even so, about a dozen pilots attended, with an even larger group joining us for lunch. Guests praised the meal quality and price, and the event's welcoming atmosphere. Several airplanes and pieces of equipment found new owners.





AMA HQ in Muncie – I received a “heads up” email from the AMA that there’s a potential sale being considered of the AMA International Aeromodeling Center in

Muncie IN. This has little

effect on us, as I don’t know of any club members who have visited the site or participated in any flying events there. It’s also the home of the AMA staff offices and the National Aeromodeling Museum. I can only assume that the AMA has been approached with “an offer too good to refuse”.

Tip of the Month: Prevent a “Flipped Clunk” in Fuel Tanks. Keep the internal pickup line from folding forward during hard landings.

Has your engine ever gone dead stick with half a tank of fuel left? A common cause is the flexible internal fuel pickup line, or clunk line, flipping toward the front of the tank during a hard landing. If it becomes wedged in a front corner, the weighted clunk can remain above the fuel level. Here’s how to prevent that from happening:

1. Cut a 1.5-inch section of brass tubing with an ID the same or slightly larger than the fuel line OD and push it over the flexible internal fuel line.
2. Slide the brass tube to the middle of the line, leaving about 1/2 inch of flexible tubing exposed at both the tank-stopper barb and the weighted clunk.
3. The rigid brass sleeve acts as a spine, allowing the weighted clunk to swing freely with gravity while preventing the hose from bending back on itself.

R/C Radio Interference – I’ve heard of only one temporary radio-signal loss at our flying field, but the problem is growing elsewhere. In response, AMA has formed a committee of commercial stakeholders, R/C pilots, staff and Executive Council members to investigate. The group will examine cellular infrastructure and R/C radio

technology while remaining open to other causes.

An AMA club in Utah asked several experts including an Electrical Engineering PhD (a club member’s mother and college professor) with specific knowledge of spread spectrum systems to investigate frequency interference at its flying field. Nearby homes, a cell tower, high-voltage power lines and a police station made interference seem likely, but the actual cause of the control losses proved more complex.



Spread-spectrum radios, including the 2.4 GHz systems used by most R/C pilots, distribute their signals across many frequencies and filter out unwanted transmissions. Channel hopping and filtering make simultaneous disruption across multiple channels unlikely, even near WiFi networks, cell towers, and other transmitters. That reliability has made these radios the industry standard.

The investigators first used a spectrum analyzer to check for significant RF interference. They detected weak signals from nearby homes and infrastructure, but these were minor compared with the R/C radios’ strong signals. With interference ruled out, they turned their attention to another possible problem, “dead zones”.

They tested range and dead zones by recording frame losses and holds and monitoring RSSI (Received Signal Strength Indicator). RSSI measures the strength of the incoming signal at the receiver. Low readings can indicate weak signal strength with an increased risk of lockouts or loss of aircraft control.

For the field test, they mounted several brands of R/C receivers on a drone equipped with an RSSI measurement device. The largest signal drops occurred over a river bordering the field, with consistently weaker reception above, around, and beyond the water. Investigators concluded that reflections from water in the river were

scattering the radio waves and creating a dead zone. Because there is no simple fix, the safest approach was to avoid flying in those areas.

Testing showed no meaningful performance difference among radio brands. JR, Futaba, Spektrum, FrSky, and Radiomaster equipment all experienced similar frame losses, holds and occasional lockouts.

During their investigations, they also confirmed that the carbon fiber pieces inside our planes do not significantly interfere with the signal from the radio to the receiver. While a carbon fiber fuselage can affect signal transmission, the small amounts typically used inside RC planes for pushrods or reinforcement don't seem to pose any problems.

How can we reduce this risk, especially with a body of water just north of our flying field?

Proper antenna and receiver installation is essential. Antenna placement and orientation are especially important, and incorrect installation can cause signal loss even under ideal conditions. Keep these points in mind:

Antenna Placement: Position the antennas at the manufacturer recommended angles, usually 90 degrees apart, to improve reception and reduce dead spots.

Wire Management: Never coil or trim antenna or satellite-receiver wires. Changing their arrangement or length can weaken the signal and cause loss of control.

Battery Placement: Keep receivers and antennas away from batteries and metal objects, which can block or disrupt the signal.

These often-overlooked details are vital to reliable operation. Even the best radio system can fail if installed incorrectly, so following these guidelines gives you the best chance of maintaining smooth, uninterrupted control.

Many 2.4 GHz radios have telemetry that monitors signal loss. The typical signal loss measurements are:

Frame Loss and Holds: Frame loss refers to moments when the receiver fails to get a signal packet from the transmitter. Multiple frame losses in a row can lead to a "hold," where the receiver loses connection to the transmitter temporarily. Set your telemetry alarm for 1 Hold and land immediately if you get an alarm. This is usually due to poor antenna position and should be corrected before flying again.

RSSI Monitoring: Advanced radios may include an RSSI display on the transmitter, which allows you to measure the strength of the signal throughout the flight. If the RSSI drops significantly in certain areas, it is likely a dead zone where the signal strength was insufficient for reliable control. Turn on RSSI alarms on radios that have this feature and listen for an audible alert when signal strength becomes dangerously low.



Spektrum Receivers – Loss of signal and resulting loss of control has been reported by some Spektrum users. As a result, Spektrum has released FastBoot and Fast Boot Recovery, a new recovery feature designed for Spektrum airplane receivers (such as PowerSafe AR20410T, AR2410T & AS3X/SAFE enabled receivers like the AR630 & AR637T).

If a Spektrum PowerSafe or AS3X/SAFE receiver has a power glitch or brownout mid-air, it completely reboots and must re-initialize its gyros on the ground—meaning you lose AS3X and Safe Mode control until the aircraft lands.

FastBoot allows the system to skip full startup checks and immediately restore pilot control using stored stabilization calibration data without waiting for a stationary gyro calibration. When a FastBoot event occurs, it may trigger a telemetry alarm on your transmitter, XBUS connected sensors are disabled and Vario/Altimeter function is disabled.

FastBoot is active by default on newer stabilized receiver firmware versions (v3.4.19 and v3.4.22 or later). FastBoot can be disabled via your transmitter under Forward Programming. If you power the receiver directly through the servo rail (using an ESC BEC instead of dedicated battery ports on PowerSafe models), FastBoot is automatically disabled.

Spektrum PowerSafe and AS3X receivers do not shut down immediately. In fact, some receivers may be active for as long as 10 seconds after the power is disconnected. Quickly switching the airplane power switch “off and on” or quickly switching batteries may trigger a FastBoot recovery. AS3X/SAFE receivers should wait at least 10 seconds after shutdown before restarting. PowerSafe receivers must always use proper transmitter or button shutdown procedures rather than abruptly yanking the flight battery.

