



WAM Member Handbook
www.woodlandaeromodelers.org
April 2026 v5



Woodland Aero Modelers (WAM) is AMA (Academy of Model Aeronautics) Chartered Club #279. We have about 60 members of all ages, and new members of any age and experience are always welcome.

This handbook will provide useful information, whether you are new to the hobby, or a veteran flyer. Please speak to, or email one of the Executive Committee Members if you are unsure of anything.

This is your Club, so please get involved where you can. Volunteers are needed to run the Club. The Executive Committee loves to hear about new ideas whether they are about new Club activities, events, participation in non-Club events, reaching out to prospective members, or anything related to the Club.

Have fun flying; read, understand and follow the Flying Field Rules, but please remember that above all SAFETY COMES FIRST, and that includes yourself, fellow WAM Member pilots, and the general public using the Forest Preserve.

Field Access

Exit east off Lemont Rd onto Bluff Rd. In approximately half a mile you will come to a locked gate. WAM's padlock is #1113. A Member you will get a key. When you arrive and leave, always re-lock the gate making sure to only link our padlock to one chain link. If there is someone behind you when entering, ask who they are; do not presume they are a WAM Member and just let them in. The padlock is changed once a year, usually the day after the March meeting. New keys will be available at the March meeting, or at any meeting after that, or from the Club Secretary. To receive a new key, your Club and AMA memberships must be current.

Parking

Please drive slowly and considerately along Bluff Rd from the gate to the parking area. There are often pedestrians, cyclists, other vehicles, and deer on the road. The railway is "live" and in use, although the trains are infrequent, short and travel slowly. Take care when arriving at the parking area as the path that pedestrians and cyclists use merges with our parking area. If parking on the east side, park perpendicular to the wire rope fence, leaving access to the path to the flying field. If parking on the west side, park parallel to the grass verge.

Access Hours

The following are rules laid down by the Forest Preserve. We can access the field when Waterfall Glen preserve is open to the public - one hour after sunrise until one hour after sunset. Electric motor planes can fly after 8 am. Gas and glow engine planes may fly after 9am. We can fly seven days a week.

Pits Area

The pits, as detailed in the field layout diagram on page 8 of this document, are a NO flying or taxiing zone. In the pits, you will find six flight stands, a large table, the storage unit with table top, two picnic benches, and folding chairs. Members of the public are allowed in the pits, but should be supervised around running engines and motors.

If using one of the flight stands, or the large table to work on your plane, please remove the plane once you have finished using it to allow others to use the flight stand. Do not leave planes unattended on a flight stand, especially if it is windy.

Planes should be carried from the pits to the flightline and not taxied. The exception to this is for large scale planes that are parked at the far south or north ends of the pits. Gas and glow plane engines should be started in the pits, and then carried to the flightline.

Storage Unit/Table

Your gate key will also open the aluminum door to the storage unit. Inside you will find two pop up canopies, eight canopy leg weights, a large magnet (for finding dropped metal fasteners in the grass), and various bits in the pull-out drawer, including guy-ropes for the canopies for when it gets very windy. Remember to put everything away and lock the door when finished.

Metal boxes on the wind sock pole

There are two boxes mounted on the pole. The upper box is also opened with your gate key, and most importantly, contains a **first aid kit**. The kit is checked regularly and refilled, but contact an Executive Committee Member should you use anything or find it is missing anything. The lower box is the "Instructor's" box and your key will not open this. Useful emergency numbers and information are posted on the side of the box.

Flying Area

Our Flying field is on DuPage County Forest Preserve (FPDDC) land within the Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve. The field has two grass runways - 400 feet North-South and a 300 feet East-West. There is also a 160-foot diameter control line area. The flying zone map on page 6 of this document shows where we are permitted to fly, and where we are not. These are Forest Preserve Rules and must be adhered to. The circle behind the pits is for control-line flying only, and not for drones or helicopters.

FAA Recognized Identification Area (FRIA)

The field is an FAA Recognized Identification Area (FRIA), meaning RC model aircraft can be flown at this field without remote ID equipment required by the FAA to fly unmanned aircraft outside of FRIA sites.

Flying Rules

Please read the Club's full set of flying field Safety and Operational Rules on our website and understand them and how they relate to planes, helicopters and drones. Up to five pilots may fly at any one time, but if more than one person is flying make sure to follow the correct flying pattern for the current wind direction. ALL pilots must make loud and clear calls to alert other pilots of their intentions, including: "Taking Off", "Landing", "Going Around", "On the Field", "Off the Field" and "Dead Stick". Other pilots on the flightline should acknowledge these calls.

There is a Forest Preserve path just off the south end of the main runway. Pedestrians and cyclists have right of way and no pilot should take off to the south or land from the south if anyone is on the path. If people have stopped in the middle of the path to watch, then politely ask them to move to either side, or come into the pits area to watch. **Do not yell at them; it's their Forest Preserve too.**

Finder System

The Club owns a handheld receiver from Communications Specialists Inc. www.comspec.com/rcplane/index.html. Transmitters that are mounted in planes and used with the receiver are no longer available. For those members who own transmitters, the handheld receiver is kept in the metal box. Other options are now available, such as VIFLY Finder and Apple AirTag.

Forest Preserve Permit

All FPDDC fields require an FPDDC Model Aircraft Permit to fly. FPDDC requires proof of insurance for their permit, such as provided by an Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) adult/full membership. Permits are free to those over 65 and Veterans. The permit application and flying site Rules and Regulations can be found at www.dupageforest.org/things-todo/get-outdoors/model-crafts or at the FPDDC headquarters office, 3S580 Naperville Road, Wheaton, IL 60189.

AMA Membership

Woodland Aero Modelers club members must have a current and full membership of the AMA. An AMA Park Pilot Membership is not sufficient. AMA Membership for those 19 and under is at a discounted rate. WAM membership for those 19 and under is free.

Membership of the Club expires at the end of December. If your AMA expires at any time other than 31st December, you must present a copy of your renewal to the Club Secretary to continue flying for the remainder of that calendar year.

FAA Registration

FAA refers all RC model aircraft types with their radio equipment as Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). They also use the term "drone" to refer to all types of RC model aircraft, including airplanes and helicopters. Most model aircraft pilots qualify as recreational flyers. <https://www.faa.gov/uas/recreational-flyers>. The FAA requires that all recreational flyers pass an aeronautical knowledge and safety test and register their drone aircraft www.faa.gov/uas/recreational-flyers. You only need to register once, and are then permitted to own and

fly as many aircraft as you want, if they are each under 55lbs. Registration is currently \$5 for three years. You must display your FAA registration number on the outside of your aircraft(s).

More information is also available at www.knowbeforeyoufly.org which is co-produced by the AMA.

Club Officers

The following Officers are elected every year at our December meeting: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations are accepted at the previous November meeting. One new Trustee is also elected each year. Appointed roles include: Executive Director, Safety Coordinator, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster. Full information on these roles and their duties are in the Club's Bylaws which is on our website.

Everyone is encouraged to get involved with the running of the Club or one of its various activities throughout the year. If you are interested in finding out more contact one of the current Executive Committee who are listed on our website.

Club Merchandise

There is a variety of WAM logo merchandise for sale. The current list and pricing are available on the website, including details on how to order items.

Membership List

The Club Secretary keeps an up-to-date list of all members. WAM does not make any membership data available to third parties.

Reward Points

Our club has a "points system" designed to encourage members to get more involved in our various club activities. For example, members receive 10 points for each club meeting attended. Participation in club presentations, picnics, open house events, and the annual club swap meet are just a few other examples. Points accumulated during the year are then converted to "bidding tickets" for the auction held at our April Club meeting. Brand new items such as aircraft, building supplies and auxiliary support items will be available to bid on. Members with the greatest participation will be rewarded with the greatest "bidding power".

WAM Website

The Club's website is at www.woodlandaeromodelers.org and is regularly updated. The website includes all Club documentation such as By-Laws, Flying Field rules. There is information for new and prospective members including trainer airplane recommendations and our information flyer. Contact the webmaster wam@baderman.co.uk if you want anything added or have ideas for new pages or sections.

Club Events

The Club holds a monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at the VFW on Belmont Road just south of the Downers Grove train station. Meetings start at 7:00pm. We are always looking for Club and Guest speakers to talk on anything aviation related. Other Club events include

summer evening social flying, Fun Fly competitions, a summer family picnic, a holiday lunch, an Open House for the public. Full details are on the website. Ideas for new flying and non-flying events are always welcome.

Facebook

The Club Facebook page is currently inactive. Future plans are uncertain. A volunteer is needed to manage a Facebook site for the club.

Newsletter

The Club has a newsletter which is edited by Ed Miller secwamclub279@gmail.com
Please contact Ed with any ideas or content that you may have, such as photos, articles, items for sale, hints & tips or anything that you think our Members may be interested in.

Indoor Flying

When the weather gets too cold, and we can't feel our fingers anymore, there are several options for indoor flying over the winter months. The locations and times often change so look at our website for current information. If you know of any places that we have not included, let the webmaster know so that they can be added to the website.

Drones/Quads/Multi Rotors

The Club follows all rules as set out by the AMA plus any additional ones in place from the Forest Preserve. Drones are not to be flown from the control line circle, but from the regular flight line.



WAM Flying Field

