



PLANE TALK

PROP MASTERS R/C NEWSLETTER



AMA CHARTER CLUB #397

NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

OCTOBER 2026

President's Message

The President's Message will return next month.



Prop Masters R/C Aero Club



Announcement

Bill Hickey

Club Leadership for 2027

The next two meetings will determine our Club leadership for 2027. We'll confirm nominees for Officers, Directors & Key Roles at the October 27th meeting, then elect Officers & Directors at our November 24th meeting. The new Board can then appoint members to Key Roles as appropriate.

On the right is a list of the Club Officers and Directors, which members currently hold each position, and who are nominated to serve next year.

Note that Mick is stepping down as President, and Mike Pettinger has agreed to take his place. Also, Bob Sulla has stepped up to become Club Secretary. As all officer candidates are running unopposed, a simple voice vote in November will put them in their roles.

As past President, Mick will move into one of the Director-at-Large positions, and we have four candidates for the remaining three spots. Those 2027 Director positions will be filled by a secret-ballot election to be held at the November meeting.

Role	2026 Current	2027 Nominees
President	Mick Pfeifer	Mike Pettinger
Vice-President	Pete Fales	Pete Fales
Secretary	Mike Pettinger	Bob Sulla
Treasurer	Bill Hickey	Bill Hickey
Safety Officer	Dave Cairns	Dave Cairns
past-President	Jeff Cowan	Mick Pfeifer
Director	Esther Bourassa	Jeff Cowan Ray Luchetti Dan Nosek Darrell Zeri
Director	Darrell Zeri	
Director	Dan Nosek	

Role	2026	2027
Chief Instructor	Pete Fales	Pete Fales
Newsletter Editor	Dave Cairns	Dave Cairns
Social Chair	Byron Dodson	Byron Dodson
WebMaster	Jeff Cowan	Jeff Cowan
Fun Fly Director	Bill Hickey	Audrey Hopwood
Lead Recruiter	Bill Hickey	Bill Hickey

Key Roles are filled by Board appointment, and there is one proposed change – Audrey is nominated to become our new Fun Fly Director, pending approval by the new Board.



Financial Report

Bill Hickey



Financial Report

9/01/2026 thru 9/30/2026

Description	Operating Fund	Field Fund	Total	Comments
Balance 09/01/2026	\$5,036.41	\$3,665.28	\$8,701.69	
Income:				
Dues		40.00	40.00	Welcome Carlos!
Swap				
Brand				
Total Income		40.00	40.00	
Total Cash Available	\$5,036.41	\$3,705.28	\$8,741.69	
Expenses:				
Funfly event food				
Board Expense		(76.32)	(76.32)	
Field Maint				
Year-end auction				
Brand Items				
Total Expenses		(76.32)	(76.32)	
Balance 9/30/2026	\$5,036.41	\$3,628.96	\$8,665.37	

Bill Hickey, Prop Masters Treasurer 305 White Oak Drive Naperville, Illinois 60540

treasurer@propmastersrc.org

We Are Collecting Dues for 2026

We Are Now Collecting Dues for 2026. If you pay your dues by the January meeting (on the 26th), Pete will give you another 100 points to use in the 2026 Year-End Auction!

When paying your dues, please complete an updated membership form if any of your contact information has changed and either mail the form with your payment to me or turn it in with your payment at the meeting. A copy of the membership form is included with this newsletter.

Checks should be made payable to "Prop Masters R/C Aero Club" and sent to the address shown above.

Alternatively, you can send the funds to my PayPal account treasurer@propmastersrc.org.

Please send them as "Friends & Family" and include a short note with your name so we know whose dues are being paid.



Club Information

Pete Fales

Overview of the Club Points Program

A long-standing tradition of the Prop Masters RC Aero Club is the "Points Program." The idea is that members earn "points" throughout the year and then "spend" those points at a year-end auction, which typically takes place the following January. We hope that members will support the club because they find the activities fun, personally meaningful, and beneficial to the club. The goal is to provide a small tangible reward to members that support the club, and there are a lot of different ways to do that - serving as an officer or a board member, helping with an activity or community outreach program, or taking care of the field. Being active as a club member can earn points as you attend our monthly meetings (10 pts), bring something to "Show and Tell" (15 points), or come to Club activities like Fun Fly's (points depend on the events).

Earning Points

The Vice-President manages the Club point system and publishes it in the January Newsletter. Below are activities and those cryptic three-letter codes on the reports given to members listing their points.

MMA	Monthly Meeting	WPS	Web Page Submission	COM	Committee
SNT	Show 'n Tell	PCA	Pilots Choice Award	FIP	Flight Instructor
FFA	Fun Fly Attendance	QRQ	Qualification	MIS	Miscellaneous
FFE	Fun Fly Enter	COP	Club Officer	SEP	Special Event
FFF	Fun Fly Finish	BMP	Board Meeting	NMP	New Member
NLS	Newsletter Submission	BCP	Beauty Contest	DUE	Dues Bonus

Please consider those descriptions as a guideline but not cast in stone. Some we don't use very often (when was the last time we had a Beauty Contest?) and others change over time. In practice, many points we give out fall into the "Miscellaneous" category – the President and Vice-President award points for special or unique activities such as fieldwork, cleanups, or civic activities. We make a real effort to recognize and reward folks for those contributions. For example, a few things we've awarded points for this year include: Set up tables & chairs for monthly meetings, striping the field, building field equipment, mentoring students, drone-assisted model rescue missions, shopping swap meets for club items, maintaining club trainers, coordinating bulk fuel purchases, Community outreach i.e. Cavalcade of Planes.

Spending Points

So, what can you do with those points? At the end of each year, the club holds an "auction." Items are purchased throughout the year from funds the club has raised, and the only way to "buy" them is with your points. Clearly the members who are most active and involved will come away with the best stuff! There are a few "rules" associated with the auction:

- Points cannot be given to another member. If a member cannot be present, they can appoint a proxy to bid for them, after informing the Vice-President.
- If acting as a proxy, you cannot combine points.
- Each person only knows their own point totals; we don't share how many points each person has.
- To keep things moving, each person is on the honor system to keep track of points they have used.

If anyone has questions about how many points they have, or how they earned them, I'm happy to share that information privately.

- Pete



Club Information

Pete Fales

Club Branded merchandise

At long last, we are ready to start taking orders for Prop Masters "merch!" Refer to the catalog link below. Mark the items you want to purchase and provide payment to Bill Hickey by the November 24, 2026 club meeting.

No orders will be placed for items for which we have not received payment!

The catalog pdf is on Slack in the General channel.

Pete will bring a few extra paper copies to the next meeting.

https://bit.ly/PM_2026_Merch





Meeting Minutes

Mike Pettinger



Meeting Minutes – 9/29/2026

Opening:

Approval of Minutes as published in the newsletter.

Reading and Approval of the Treasurers report.

Buy a logo sticker!

Safety:

Darrel Z. recounted a safety incident. He mislaunched an airplane and got cut by the propeller. Learnings:

1. Don't fly alone.
2. Emergency contact list.

October is Fire Safety month.

SAD winner: Max Janda

Forest preserve: Mick will contact them to figure out striping on field.

Publicity: Currently no publicity person.

Newsletter: Still being published.

Website: It's good. Still bring in people.

Library: No report

Instructors report: Several busy days. Katie Franklin solo'ed!

Fun fly: Saturday at Noon. Prop Master 500 had low attendance.

Timed flight event. From takeoff to landing it should be 60 seconds.

Qualification Saturday will not be pursued.

Discussion:

Old business:

Branded items.

Bill H. got our IRS status resolved.

New business:

New Member: Carlos

Solicit Nominations. We need people!

Points Program:

Details will be in the newsletter. Points encourage participation.

Show and tell:



Meeting Minutes

Mike Pettinger



Joe B - Time Scale model Wright WP-1

Audrey - Extreme Flight Turbo Bushmaster

Bill H. - Diesel Engines

Carlos - 405 flight controller

Closing:

Propmasters R/C Aero Club



Fun Fly Features

Bill Hickey

Fun Fly Report – Timed Flight 10/03/2026

We held our fifth fun fly of the year at noon on Saturday, 3rd of October. It was a gorgeous day, with a occasionally stiff winds out of the south. Seventeen members attended, and the results are on the table on the left. The basic idea was to fly for exactly 60 seconds with no timing aids. Some sang a tune to themselves; others counted in their heads.

Dan Nosek managed a perfect score, flying for just 60.2 seconds. And Katie Franklin (who just soloed last month) tied with Mike Pettinger (watched to ensure he didn't check his drone timer) with 99 out of 100 possible points.

Afterward there was open flying, and many planes took to the air. Thanks to everyone who came out to join us!

Member	Attend	Take-Off	Time	Total
Bob Aksamit	20			20
David Cairns	20	20	50	90
David Engel	20	20	62	98
Pete Fales	20	20	44	84
Katie Franklin	20	20	61	99
Dennis Grillo	20	20	DQ	40
Bill Hickey	20	20	53	93
Chris Hoekstra	20	20	58	98
Audrey Hopwood	20	20	76	84
Max Janda	20			20
Ray Luchetti	20	20	62	98
Dan Nosek	20	20	60	100
Mike Pettinger	20	20	59	99
Michael Pfeifer	20	20	53	93
Bob Sulla	20	20	51	91
Carlos Talbot	20	20	91	69
Richard Wells	20			20



News Article – Landing Approaches

Submitted by Mike Pettinger

How do you get better approaches and landings at our flying field? How do you know you are lined up for the runway? If you're too high, you will land late and roll into the grass at the end. If you're too low you will hit a tree! How do you know when you are past the flight line? I have had these questions for a long time, but never really had a way to answer them until recently.

I purchased a DJI mini 4k and I was able to take pictures and video from different points around the field. These different vantage points allowed me to get a better estimate of the distance and direction the model airplanes were from the field. I also monitored the flight path of airplanes around the field while they practiced some approaches. I started with safety first; the flight line.

I started by trying to figure out where the flight line was when the airplane was off the field. I flew the quad to the west and positioned it over the flight line facing east. There is a yellow square located near the gravel. It is located approximately in line with the flight line and about 500ft from the end of the runway.



I then looked at the position of the drone. The drone was a small dot 500 feet out. The angle from the first pilot station was slightly south. If you can turn your head to look at the airplane and keep your shoulders parallel to the runway you are likely south of the flight line. If you have to turn your shoulders to comfortably keep sight of the airplane or you can see the pilot stations you are too far north!!

The next thing I wanted to know was how far out are our downwinds? If we lose an airplane, how far should we have to walk? Pete was training a student so I positioned my drone to monitor the location of their downwind flight path. I found that a comfortable downwind pattern was usually over or slightly outside the first row of trees to the south. The distance line in the picture below shows the approximate location of where a good downwind seemed to be.



News Article – Landing Approaches

Submitted by Mike Pettinger



After confirming the downwind location I then wanted to know how do I know I'm on glide path for the runway? How low can I get without hitting the trees? I began an analysis of the east side of the field.

I monitored a few approaches. First, I found that the tendency was to turn and fly further south than was required. This usually meant people were landing in the grass south of the runway. In discussions with Pete I also found people overestimate how far east they are. All of the approaches I saw the airplanes were turning base, north bound, well inside the trees out to the east.



News Article – Landing Approaches

Submitted by Mike Pettinger

There is a small group of trees to the south east of the field. To the east, these are probably the only trees that are a serious concern of hitting. The two pictures below indicate the location of the trees. The first is from the drone; looking west and slightly south. The second shows the direction and distance from the first pilot station.





News Article – Landing Approaches

Submitted by Mike Pettinger

To the west is a different story. Below is a picture of the drone over the east side looking west.



The next picture is the google maps view with a line extending collinear with the south edge of the field.





News Article – Landing Approaches

Submitted by Mike Pettinger

The west side of the field has a narrow gap; too far south you are in the trees and too far north you are over the flight line. If you're approaching from the west, I recommend making sure you are nearly on top of the flight line before descending.

I will continue flying the DJI mini 4k and making observations. If you interested in having your pattern spotted, just let me know.

Editor Note: In this article the author uses "Flight Line" in reference to the "Safety Line". They are interchangeable terms for this article. Please note that the Safety Line is marked on the field, approximately half way between the Pilot Stations and the north edge of the runway. All flying should be done south of the Safety Line.



Photos

Dave Cairns



BUILDER'S CORNER

Stay tuned for a future article on our Student Builder Project. Our Club was awarded an AMA Training Day Kit that encourages new pilots to start building, as well as flying. The Willy Nillies Spirit 250 kit is a quick and easy project that our Student will tackle with support from club Mentors. More to come!



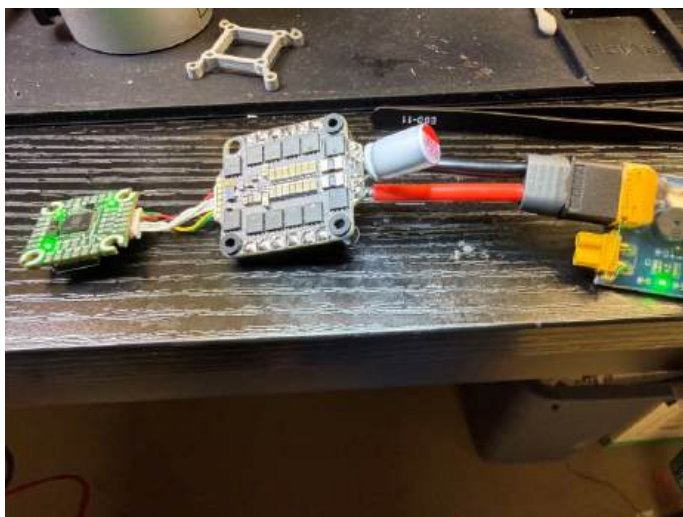


Photos

Dave Cairns



Ben La Monica is sharing details of his ambitious drone fleet project.
I'm not sure what all of this does.
Watch for it at Show N Tell!



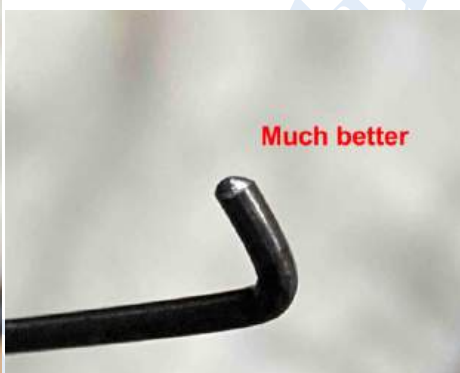


Photos

Dave Cairns



Bill Hickey hates nasty ends on control rods. Clean that up!



Max built a plane rack for the wagon - or a pipe organ?



Photos

Dave Cairns



At the Field

Pete got a catapult!
He put two auto-launch planes to the test.





Photos

Dave Cairns





Photos

Dave Cairns



A member of the public brought out 2 scale heli's



Flyer of the Day award ^ Who dat? >



Photos

Dave Cairns



At the Field – Timed Flight Fun Fly





Photos

Dave Cairns



Show & Tell September Meeting



Katie Franklin earned her Solo Certificate! Great work!



Joe's Wright WP1



Bill w/ diesel engines



Carlos w/ flight controllers



Photos

Dave Cairns



Audrey's Extreme Bushmaster



Chris w/cycle speedo's

Tools, Tips & Techniques

Submit your ideas!!



Club Announcements

2026 Calendar

Date	Event Type	Event Details	Notes
January 1, 2026	Fun Fly	Polar Bear Fly — 12:00 Noon	Fly, then to 75 th St. McDonald's
Jan 27, 2026	Monthly Meeting	Annual Christmas Points Auction at the meeting	Spend those hard-earned points
Feb 24, 2026	Monthly Meeting		
Saturday March 28, 2026	Special Event	Snag-A-Deal Auction	
March 31, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
April 28, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
May 2, 2026	Fun Fly	Touch N Go — Noon	
May 26, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
Sat May 30, 2026	Fun Fly	Noon	Climb & Glide
June 6-7, 2026	Special Event	10:00am — 4:00pm	Cavalcade of Planes @ Clow
June 30, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
FUN FLY ALERT	Fun Fly		No FF after June Meeting
July 28, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
TUESDAY Aug 4	Fun Fly	→ 6:30 PM ←	National Night Out
Aug 25, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
Sat Aug 29, 2026	Fun Fly	Noon	Prop Masters 500
SAT Sept 26	Club Picnic	11:00am until 2:00pm	CANCELED
Sep 29, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
Sat Oct 3, 2026	Fun Fly	Noon	Timed Flight
Oct 27, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
Nov 24, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
Dec 29, 2026	Monthly Meeting	7:30PM	
FRIDAY Jan 1, 2027	Polar Bear Fun Fly	Noon	Weather may delay this event

Newsletter Contributions

- ✓ Send newsletter contributions to the Newsletter Editor at editor@propmastersrc.org
- ✓ The deadline for submissions is the second Tuesday of the month.
- ✓ Past Club Newsletters are posted at the club website: www.propmastersrc.org



Prop Masters Organization & Contact Information

Board of Directors/Officers

Position	Name	Email address
President	Mick Pfeifer	president@propmastersrc.org
Vice President	Peter Fales	vice-president@propmastersrc.org
Treasurer	Bill Hickey	treasurer@propmastersrc.org
Secretary	Mike Pettinger	secretary@propmastersrc.org
Safety Officer	Dave Cairns	safety@propmastersrc.org
Board/At Large	Jeff Cowan	board@propmastersrc.org
Board/At Large	Esther Bourassa	board@propmastersrc.org
Board/At Large	Dan Nosek	board@propmastersrc.org
Board/At Large	Darrell Zeri	board@propmastersrc.org

Key Roles

Lead Recruiter

publicity@propmastersrc.org

Bill Hickey

Cavalcade of Planes Coordinator

cavalcade@propmasersrc.org

Dhruvan Kambhampati

Harlan Davis

Member Engager

membership@propmastersrc.org

Byron Dodson

Snag-A-Dealer

Mick Pfeifer

Webmaster

webmaster@propmastersrc.org

Jeff Cowan

Raffle Master

raffle@propmastersrc.org

Mick Pfeifer

Instruction

learntofly@propmastersrc.org

Pete Fales – Chief Instructor

Mick Pfeifer

Ron Monsen

Mike Pettinger

Jim Mendygral

Jeff Cowan

Audrey Hopwood

Alex Dribinsky

Dave Cairns

Newsletter Editor

editor@propmastersrc.org

Dave Cairns

We Are Now Collecting Dues for 2027. If you pay your dues by the January 2027 meeting (on the 26th), Pete will give you another 100 points to use in the 2026 Year--End Auction!

Also, it's that time of year again - please consider stepping forward to help out with the Club, either as an Officer, Director, or in one of our Key Roles.

Visit the Prop Masters R/C Club Web Site at www.propmastersrc.org

Support your local Hobby Shops!!

Leisure Hours Hobbies
16300 South Lincoln Highway
(US Rte. 30)
Plainfield, IL 60568
815-439-1477

HobbyTown USA
341 N. Randal Rd.
Batavia, IL 60510
630-587-1256

Walt's Hobby Shop
2207 Plainfield Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-741-0043

HobbyTown USA - Orland
15551 South 94th Avenue
Orland Park, IL 60462
708-349-8697

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, Oct 27th, 2026 at 7:30pm

United Methodist Church
20 N Center St.
Naperville, IL 60540
In Fellowship Hall

Prop Masters R/C Aero Club Membership Application

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

AMA #: _____
(required)

In addition to Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) membership, a valid DuPage Forest Preserve Permit and Federal UAS registration is needed to fly at the Springbrook Prairie Model Airplane Field. The Club will gladly explain and assist with these requirements.

Please Choose Between:

- ☐ Youth Membership (Age 1 to 21): \$15.00,
- ☐ Full Membership (Age 22 or Older): \$40.00, or
- ☐ Family Membership (Two or more living at the same residence): \$50.00

Additional Member Name(s): _____

Additional Member AMA #: _____

There are two ways to pay your dues:

1. via personal check payable to **Prop Masters R/C Aero Club**

Please mail check to Treasurer – Prop Masters R/C Aero Club
305 White Oak Drive
Naperville, IL 60540

2. or via **PayPal** payment to “treasurer@propmastersrc.org”

Please make PayPal payments as “Friends & Family” (that is, no fees to Club) and also email your application form to treasurer@propmastersrc.org

DUES SHOULD BE PAID BY April 1st,

dues paid after October 1st carry over to the following year.