



PLANE TALK

PROP MASTERS R/C NEWSLETTER



AMA CHARTER CLUB #397

NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

SEPTEMBER 2026

President's Message



September 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to Fall weather and some good flying days ahead! This season has been torturous with heat, humidity, and inopportune rain on otherwise good flying days! Not to mention the wind!

After two tries, our club picnic was cancelled due to inclement weather. Nonetheless, there was a lot of effort expended planning and organize this event. We are thankful to Dave Cairns, Mike Pettinger, Darrell Zeri and others for these efforts!

Training season is coming to a close at this time of year. In September, we had double digit participants at our last session which shows how healthy our program is! Thanks to all the instructors who helped out in this endeavor, especially Pete Fales who spends a lot of time planning and organizing our training program, in addition to the time spent at the field doing hands-on training.

Also in September, Prop Masters was officially recognized by the IRS! We now have our 1099 form which demonstrated official status. Our thanks to Bill Hickey for his dogged determination to make this happen. And to Ray Luchetti for his valuable input and support. This is truly a milestone event for our club!

Last but not least, we have begun procurement efforts for our year end Christmas Auction. You need to continue to earn your points by attending meetings, participation in show and tell, and by participation in other club events. Also keep in mind that WE NEED YOUR FEEBACK regarding prizes for the auction. We have more available funds this year, so you can expect some very nice items for you to bid on. Present you suggestion to me or any other Officer!

I look forward to seeing you at our club meeting Tuesday night at the church!

Your President,
Michael D. Pfeifer



Financial Report

Bill Hickey



Financial Report

8/01/2026 thru 8/31/2026

Description	Operating Fund	Field Fund	Total	Comments
Balance 08/01/2026	\$5,137.12	\$3,625.28	\$8,762.40	
Income:				
Dues		40.00	40.00	Welcome Cliff!
Swap				
Brand	15.00		15.00	
Total Income	15.00	40.00	55.00	
Total Cash Available	\$5,152.12	\$3,665.28	\$8,817.40	
Expenses:				
Funfly event food	(115.71)		(115.71)	National Night Out food
Board Expense				
Field Maint				
Year-end auction				
Brand Items				
Total Expenses	(115.71)		(115.71)	
Balance 8/31/2026	\$5,036.41	\$3,665.28	\$8,701.69	

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

treasurer@propmastersrc.org

We Are Collecting Dues for 2026

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.



Meeting Minutes

Mike Pettinger



Meeting Minutes – 8/25/2026

Opening:

Approval of Minutes as published in the newsletter.

Reading and Approval of the treasures report.

Buy a logo sticker!

Safety:

Safety has been good in general.

Safety topic: School is back in session. Watch out for kids.

When leaving field, watch out for kids on ebikes.

Bill H. - suggested moving the flight line to pilot line.

- SAD nominees: Chris H. - Loop at funfly into ground
- Mick P - Tried to fly to close to camera and cartwheel.
- (Winner) Bill B. - Took off and crashed immediately
- Dave C. - An electric stick went into tall grass and white smoked it.

Forest preserve: Contacted them about a fallen tree.

Publicity: We got publicity from local TV station.

Newsletter: Newsletter went out in two parts. Discussed nomination process.

Website: It's good

Library: Two CDs added to library. They are from old magazines.

Instructors report: Training is coming along.

Fun fly: Saturday at Noon. The Propmasters 500. Taxi down turn around taxi turn around take off 3 loops and land.

Discussion about qualification Sunday.

Discussion:

Old business: IRS update, we will be sending a letter in September.

New business: Tool box at field has set of hex wrenches missing. Please bring it back.

New Member: Cliff Byer

Picnic Plan: We are doing it. Darrel Z. will help. Sept. 19 as A date Sept. 26 B date.

Show and tell:

Bob S. - 3D printed airplane.

Pete F. - The latest toy- Atom RC Dolphin

Ben L. - Making a custom drone show.

Closing:



Fun Fly Features

Dave C. for Bill Hickey

Fun Fly Report – Prop Masters 500

We held our fourth fun fly of the year on Saturday, Aug 29th. Bill was enjoying a family event so Dan Nosek and Dave Cairns stepped in to “herd the cats” and get the event up and running.

It was comfortably warm, with moderate winds. Many users of the trails stopped to watch our fun from the shelters. Only seven (7) members attended, and the results are in the table below. The idea was a combination of ground handling, aerobatic flight, and landing precision, all against the stopwatch. Breezy conditions made for some dicey taxiing, although our Top Overall winner Audrey managed to handle it with a tailskid plane that she piloted without incident!

Alex was our first casualty of the grass alongside the runway, getting stranded and unable to proceed. Dave followed with a hectic flight that crossed the Safety Line and ended with an unplanned landing in the tall stuff without completing the circuit of the field. Mick flew the only fuel plane, a nice Kaos, which needed a longer take-off roll. Darrell had to scratch as his contest plane which had a mechanical issue during warm-ups. Pete and Dan were Steady Eddies and flew smooth attempts that earned Pete 1st in Advanced and Dan 2nd in Expert. Their times were only 1 second apart, so I guess Pete needs to fly Expert for the next event!

Open flying followed as the event concluded in less than 45 minutes. A quick, yet fun, event!

Member	Attend	Fly	Class - Placed	Time	Total
Dave Cairns	20	20	A- DQ	DNF	40
Alex Dribinsky	20	20	A- P2	DNF	80
Pete Fales	20	20	A- P1	1:25	100
Audrey Hopwood	20	20	E- P1	:59.8	100
Dan Nosek	20	20	E- P2	1:24	80
Mick Pfeifer	20	20	E- P3	1:34	70
Darrell Zeri	20	SCR	E	SCR	20

Thanks to everyone who came out for this Fun Fly and we encourage all pilots to make it to a future Fun Fly. These are great tests of our piloting skills and are truly fun to watch and participate in.

Dave Cairns

PS: More than one person asked if food was getting provided for this event (National Night Out spoiled us), so who know what secret incentive may be part of future events. Stay tuned.



Fun Fly Facts

Bill Hickey

Fun Fly Facts

In the past the Club has used a set list of flight maneuvers to establish a pilot's proficiency level. This list outlines the requirements for each level.

PROP MASTERS PILOT PROFICIENCY

Member:

Instructor:

Date:

ANY FLIGHT NORTH OF THE FLIGHT LINE IS CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION

ALL PILOTS ARE BEGINNER UNTIL ATTAINING NOVICE LEVEL

ALL MANEUVERS TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN ONE FLIGHT

NOVICE

- ___ Straight flight out, procedure turn, downwind flight back
- ___ Complete circuit at controlled altitude
- ___ 180° left and right turns while maintaining altitude
- ___ Stall Turn
- ___ Flat (horizontal) Figure-8

Upon completion, pilot moves to Novice Level

ADVANCED

- ___ One complete circuit within the field boundaries
- ___ Two Touch-N-Go's
- ___ Three consecutive rolls while maintaining altitude
- ___ Cuban 8 (¾ loop, half-roll, ¼ loop, half-roll, ¼ loop)
- ___ Landing on runway

Upon completion, pilot moves to the Advanced Level

EXPERT

- ___ One inverted complete circuit of the field
- ___ Two consecutive outside loops
- ___ Three-turn spin with recovery
- ___ Four-point roll while maintaining altitude
- ___ Spot landing within runway center circle

Upon completion, pilot moves to the Expert Level

August 7, 2026

DRAFT



Fun Fly Facts

Bill Hickey

10/3/2026 Fun Fly Event – Timed Flight

Timed Flight

This may seem to be one of the easiest events in our fun fly calendar, but don't be fooled! The event will be held at noon on **Saturday October 3rd** with a Rain Date of October 10th. The event will be postponed if the weather forecast is for rain, north/south winds greater than 10 mph or east/west winds greater than 15 mph. Please sign in when you arrive.

Here's how it works

The contest consists of taking off and counting down one minute with no outside aids. Then land back on the field after precisely one minute has elapsed. Time starts when wheels leave the field or the ship leaves a hand and ends when the craft next contacts terra firma.

For safety, any flight north of the "Flight Line" is cause for immediate disqualification from the event. No maidens. All flying shall be line-of-sight, i.e., no FPV (first person view) flying.

Points

- Each pilot who takes off starts with 60 points, but any flight time greater or less than one minute will subtract one point for each second over or under.
- Every pilot who flies will also be awarded 20 participation points.
- And everyone in attendance will be awarded 20 attendance points.

So, the maximum points awarded is 100 points - good luck!





Photos

Dave Cairns



BUILDER'S CORNER

Bill Hickey swapped engines on his Gee Bee Y plane.



"Swapped the 70cc glow radial in my Gee Bee Y with a 70cc twin gasser, mostly for better reliability. CG is right at design and weight is nearly identical at just shy of 26 lbs, but measuring the engine power reveals it'll have twice as much power! That'll move the ship from "scale" to "racer" per Reynold's loading diagram. Especially like the "AutoStart" – a brushed 550 motor that starts the engine.", says Bill.

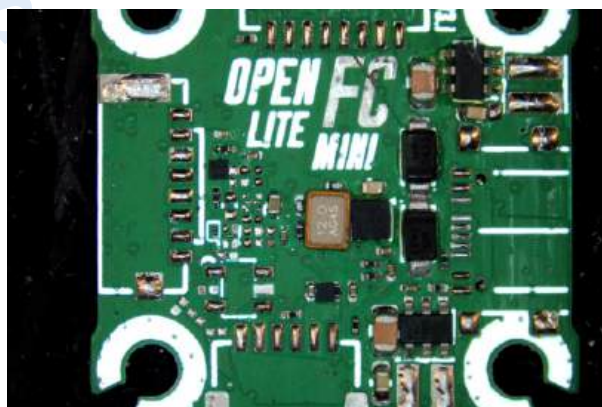
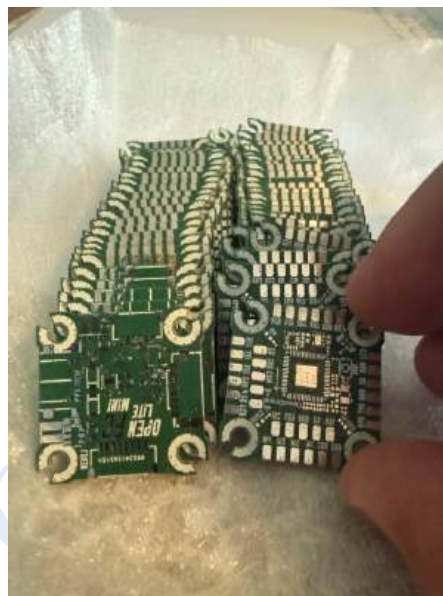


Photos

Dave Cairns



Ben La Monica is sharing details of his ambitious drone fleet project. His first build is shown with lighting installed, and it has begun flight trials. The other photos demonstrate Ben's work on his custom flight controller boards, and his soldering progress.



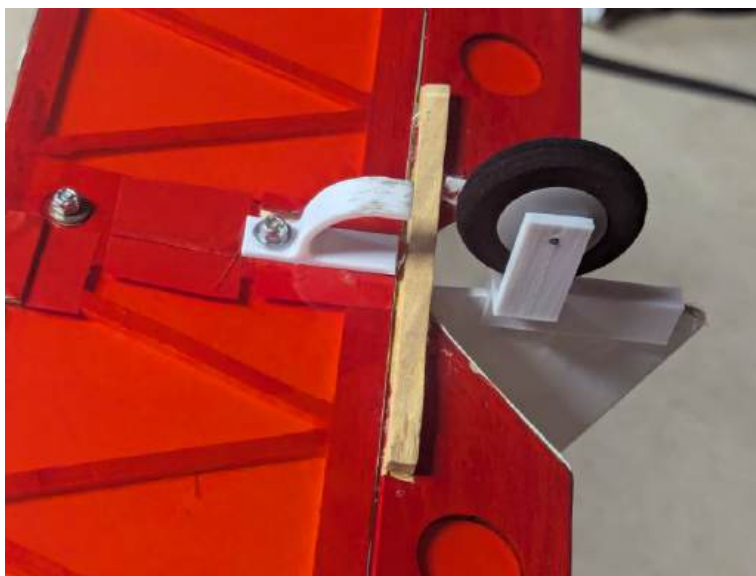


Photos

Dave Cairns



Pete Fales shares his 3D printed tailwheel that he added to his Micro Stick in order to compete in the Prop Masters 500 Fun Fly. The wheel helped him taxi better than the simple white skid.





Photos

Dave Cairns



At the Field – Fun Fly Prop Masters 500





Photos

Dave Cairns



Show & Tell August Meeting



Bob Sulla with his 3D printed plane



Pete Fales AtomRC Dolphin



Ben La Monica with Drone #1 of many



Photos

Dave Cairns



Instruction Program

Some of Our Introductory Pilot Program Students and Instructors



I wanted to share that we applied for an AMA 2026 Club Training Day Starter Kit, and were selected as one of seven Clubs in our District to receive the package. In the coming days we will be looking for students (or very new pilots) who show interest in participating in the build of the Kit, along with mentor support to aid in the project. It is intended that we will fully document this adventure and use the resulting information to promote our Club and our Training initiatives.

If you aren't aware of the AMA Program, please check out this youtube video, and the links in the transcript.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEPuk1b8JMM&t=272s>

Stay tuned for more info!



Photos

Dave Cairns



Tools, Tips & Techniques

Submit your ideas!!

Prop Masters R/C Aero Club



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

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, Sep 29th, 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.