

January 16, 2004

A new year. A newsletter for the first month of the new year. This could (with some help) become a trend, once again. For a trend to develop, we need to get at least two newsletters in a row published.

Things have been pretty quiet on the CMA front for quite a while. Winter is here, although the weather can't seem to make up its mind if it wants to be cold, dry, wet, or warm. The bottom line is that whatever the weather has been since about mid-November, it certainly hasn't been FLYING weather.

Our annual elections came and went without much fuss. We didn't have to resort to picking candidates from the MILO can this year – that was an improvement over the past year.

We should be getting our re-chartering kit from the AMA any time now (probably early February. I'll talk with Larry Martinson and see if we have the sod farm again for the coming year.

The Cedar Rapids Skyhawks opened their new field just off C-Avenue and County Home Road this past summer. If you haven't been there – check it out. The field has to go through some growing pains, but if everyone cooperates and flies safely – this could be a really great place to fly for many years.

We – CMA – have a pretty small membership so far for 2004. I think we have 13 confirmed members, and a couple who are about to join. Last year I think we had 24 members – might have been as high as 28. In any event, our meetings are not that well attended, and the build sessions have only seen a few members. Is it time for the CMA to go on the offensive and start actively promoting itself around the Rockwell Collins plant? If you have any good ideas (heck, even bad ideas) let's hear them and see if we can build the membership and have some decent fun fly events for a change.

We didn't get ANY company sponsor \$\$\$ this year – nor did and other Rockwell sponsored groups. Makes the budget kind of tight, but then we don't really have much in the way of expenses.

Mark Woytassek tells us that we have a "locker" somewhere in the bowels of the Main Plant building in which the club can keep the stash of modeling tools we own. Only problems that I am aware of with regard to the locker is A) no one but Mark knows where it is, B) I've heard that the room it is in is locked so we can't get to it, and C) I don't know for sure what all tools and gadgets the club owns. We also need a way to get the stuff in and out of the building without the guards cuffing and booking us for absconding with something they think would be company property. As they say, the devil is in the details. Other than that, the locker should be a great addition to the club.

We should be thinking about the annual “Beauty Contest”. For those who don’t know what that is – in past years the club has reserved the 106 Auditorium for most of a day – and everyone who built a new plane (or planes) over the winter – usually at the build sessions – brings their winter projects in and we display them for the Rockwell populace. It’s a kind of show-and-tell about the hobby and the club. Last year, we combined it with the annual “Take Our Kids to Work Day” (TOKWD) event. That worked well, up to the point where we had to cough up half of the 106 N/S conference room for another TOKWD group. All of a sudden, 106 North got REAL small.

The Beauty Contest usually happens in early or mid-April, and the following Saturday is the first “official” day of the flying season at the CMA field. It also heralds the end of the winter building season, and April is the last of the scheduled build sessions until fall.

Speaking of winter projects...

...I’ve managed to build and finish the Goldberg Tiger 2 kit I won at our August Fun Fly. It is sitting in my garage, waiting for good weather. It was a fun kit to build, and looks like it ought to be a fun sport type low wing flyer. I’ve put a new OS 46 FX on it for power.

I’m now in the middle of building a Goldberg Skylane 62 kit. This is a kit I bought on Ebay three summers ago, and a kit that hasn’t been produced for something like 25 to 30 years. I built several back in my college and early days of flying and always enjoyed them. The last one died in 1983 – at a fun fly when I hit the Limbo pole. This one will be powered by a new OS 40 FX. It’s all framed, mostly sanded, and about ready to cover. I might be a bit Skylane crazy – as I’ve got the Top Flite 1/5 scale 182, the Goldberg Skylane 62, and even a Goldberg Skylane 42 (yet another Ebay find a few years back). I like the way the plane looks, and the way it flies.

On the helicopter front, last fall I picked up a Hirobo Freya heli, an OS 70 SZ-H, and a JR 8103 radio with digital servos. I was just getting it tweaked when the weather went bad last fall. It has seven flights on it, and is a real smooth flyer. I hope to get a lot of air time on it this coming season. I’ve read a lot of good reviews on this kit, and am anxiously awaiting the chance to wring it out.

Tom Gorman has been making great strides on his monster Sukhoi. His latest MonoKote scheme is ambitious, and frankly, looks superb. Tom does really good work with the film coverings.

Crist Rigotti emerged from a black-hole somewhere and has been coming to the meetings again. Welcome back, Crist. Crist is truly a master builder. He brought the wing to a new control-line stunt plane to the December meeting. Absolutely meticulous craftsmanship and design work.

Randy Aschbrenner (hope I spelled that right) isn't a member yet (at least that I'm aware of), but he brought a mostly framed, but not nearly finished Bud Nosen Citabria to the December build session. It had spent many many years in a garage somewhere, and was full of spider webs, spider parts, and lots of dirt. With some clean up work, and a bit of finishing, he will have a very well built aircraft on his hands. The CMA just needs to help get him started out on the right foot.

We had yet another potential member at the January meeting. I can't find my notes, so I don't have his name handy. He's new to the sport, and says he will be back to the February build session to see if we can get his ARF ready to go. He's from Rockwell Intertrade.

Last year, Geoff Barrance wrote a very good review/construction article for one of our few newsletters on the small electric planes he's built. I promised a couple of helicopter reviews...but didn't follow through. This year, I should be able to provide a review on the JR Venture 30, the Kyosho Caliber 30, and the Hirobo Freya. Not too sure how many heli (or potential heli) pilots we could have out there, but it sure is lonely being the only flyer in the club who's active in helis.

I'd like to see Mark Woytassek write a review on his Multiplex radios, and maybe something on pattern flying. Maybe Steve Plantenberg could let us know about his first year on the pattern circuit. Tom Gorman could certainly show us his stuff on covering with MonoKote.

Maybe some newsletter articles like those would help bolster the CMA membership and revitalize the club.

If I can find a decent way to put up thumbnails and put together a good picture gallery on our website – I'd like to try that this year. We've got a bunch of pics, but not a good way to post them. Gotta work on that.

Well – once again the winter weather is going nuts. It's about 11 PM on a Friday night, middle of January, and it is raining cats and dogs, with the promise of ice, sleet, and snow. Time to shut down the word processor and put this baby up on the website.

Oh – almost forgot. Larry Tjaden of the wood workers club developed a nifty calendar script which I've incorporated into the CMA website. Click the "Calendar" Button on the left-hand button bar to check it out. It's dirt simple to maintain and easy to use.

Time to start getting your gear checked out for the upcoming season. Radios, batteries, engines, airframes....check it out and get those repairs done now.

**Dave Shema
President - CMA**