



A Monthly Publication of Collins Model Aviators November 2004

President's Corner

By Dave Shema

Daylight savings time has come to an end and sunset is around 5:00 PM now. That puts an end to any thoughts of flying after work and severely limits the hours one can get out and fly on Saturday or Sunday. Couple the above with some wind, rain, temperatures in the middle 40's and it's easy to see that flying season is winding down here in Iowa. What follows is a litany of things we need to be aware of, things we need to do, informational stuff, and most of all, a sincere plea for help from the CMA membership to actually become involved in this organization.

BUILD SESSION: Building season is now upon us. CMA build sessions have started up again. They are the second Thursday of each month, and are held in the Main Plant cafeteria. Typical hours are 6:00 PM until 9:00 PM. What's a building session, you ask? The answer is simple. If you are starting to build a kit or are starting to scratch build that plane for next season, have some repairs to make to an existing project, or just need advice on how to install, cover, paint or maintain your current fleet, bring it along and work on it. The October and November build sessions were attended by only two or three people. Let's see if we can get some more participation in December (next build session is December 9). Hope to see you there.

MEETING: The next regular meeting of the CMA is December 2 at 5:00 PM in the Main Plant cafeteria. Meetings have been sparsely attended, as well – averaging three to five members.

ELECTIONS: A word on CMA elections is needed here. The nomination period for club officers for the coming year opened with the

October meeting, and ended with the November meeting. We had three nominees – one for each office. Yours truly – Dave Shema – offered to run for another year as President, Dave Hoban – a “new guy” this year, stepped up and nominated himself (after being promised that the position required no work) for the office of Vice President, and Tom Gorman offered to stay on as Secretary-Treasurer. No other names were submitted during the nomination period. Subsequently, I sent an email out to our known membership with the following question: “With only one person nominated per office, is it necessary to hold elections, or do we just go ahead and install these people into their respective offices by acclamation.” The overwhelming response (if you can call thee or four email replies overwhelming) was to forego the official election process and install the officers by acclamation.

COMMENTARY: It's quite disconcerting to see a club with something on the order of 25 members having no more than 20% of its members active (that translates to about 5 people on a good day). Meetings, build sessions, elections come and go, the same handful of people end up doing the bulk of the work, and taking on the bulk of the responsibility. This is discouraging to the “club faithful” but especially discouraging to new members.

Is our choice of weekday and time inconvenient for meetings and build sessions? Do we need to rethink the times and dates of these events? **Or is it just that no one really cares anymore?** Is it the CMA has the Martinson sod farm to fly from and beyond that, who cares about the club?

We've had the opportunity to recruit some new flyers this year. Dave Hoban, Tom Clark, Bob Wendell come to mind. I've gotten Dave and Tom in the air with a combination of their

planes, and my trusty LT-40 this year. Bob is a seasoned flyer. Jamie Johnson began the season by emerging from wherever he has been the past few years, and was seen early on at the sod farm. As the summer wore on, he disappeared again.

I've been flying at least one day each weekend this past summer, but not at the sod farm. For the most part, I've been out at the new Skyhawks' field as it is closer to where I live, has rest room facilities, but most importantly, I can pretty much guarantee that I won't be the only person out flying. Mark Woytassek and Steve Plantenberg spent a lot of time at the Skyhawks' site, as well, this summer. Flying, at least for me, is not a solitary sport. The sod farm is a great place to fly. But being the only person in the middle of all that space is not all that fun. Especially since one has to make a great number of trips from the parking lot to the pits to get set up to fly. It's just not worth hauling the chair, the water jug, a bunch of aircraft, etc., just to stand out in a big, empty field and fly alone. It's also not particularly SAFE to do so.

SUGGESTIONS on how to increase club participation are welcome. Ideas on how to get people interested in coming to meetings and build sessions, and to fly are badly needed. It would actually be fun to see elections where there is more than one person nominated for each office, and those nominated truly want to serve.

NEXT YEAR: If you look at the club calendar on the website, you'll notice I'm trying to schedule at least one club fun fly day a month. At this point, they are not planned as competitive events, but just a way to get more than one or two flyers out at the sod farm at the same time. Dates have been arbitrarily chosen. The intent is to encourage participation in the club, get more people trained so they can fly solo, and maybe someday, grow CMA.

UNFINISHED Business: It has been at least three, maybe four years since the CMA was ripped apart by what I understand was a pretty intense internal battle that was brought to a head by the desire to include helicopter flyers in the CMA fold. Being a heli pilot for many years, and having been in the midst of some of the "plank vs. heli" discussion at other clubs, I really can't understand how an issue like that can cause such a long lasting and deep divide between parties who used to have the same goals. In any event, helicopters are welcome, as well as

sailplanes, electric powered aircraft and any other form of radio controlled aircraft that may come along. It's time to build the club back up, to recruit new members and offer the level of training and proficiency programs we used to have. Any thoughts on how to grow the club over the next year are welcome. But be prepared, you may be asked to help pull it off!

CMA/AMA Memberships: It is time to renew both your AMA and your CMA membership. AMA is pretty straightforward, and I believe you can renew on-line this year. As for CMA membership, send your \$20 and a completed membership form (get it from the CMA website – www.collinsclubs.com/cma) to Tom Gorman, Mail Stop 108-227. You MUST be an AMA member to be a CMA member. Also, this year, since we're no longer getting \$\$\$ from Rockwell, I would suggest that membership is open to family members, as well – the hassle we've had in the past over "associate" members, kids, spouses, etc. is gone. This is a family sport, anyway.

NEWSLETTER: If you've visited the CMA website over the past six months or so, you may recall seeing the notice "Whoever said no news is GOOD news never tried to publish a newsletter." That's there for a reason. The reason you aren't seeing a monthly newsletter is due to the fact that there never are any submissions of stuff to print in one. Steve Plantenberg tried earlier this year to resurrect the "Flightline", and I began submitting a "President's Corner" article. Steve looked for interesting stuff to put in as well, but in the end, we got a sporadic newsletter at best. Even I became lax about my submissions as it just doesn't seem worth it, to be the only contributor along with Steve. This newsletter is the first attempt at publishing a newsletter since June 2004. And it's not any easier to write this one than any of the previous ones. Help. This is YOUR club, too.

WEBSITE: I continue to update the website – at least with meeting and build session dates, as well as putting stuff on the front page occasionally to let you know it is still alive and well. There is a hit counter at the bottom of the page so I can tell how many times the site is visited. At least people are going to it, but I have no idea what they are looking for, or how useful the site is. Any suggestions on how to make it better, more useful, and more informational is

welcome. Let me know.

REC CENTER PHONE: The website has a note on it about calling the Rec Center phone number (295-8888) for current flying conditions, flying times, etc. Having not called that number in many moons, is this a service we need, or want? What is the current message found on it? Are we still inviting people to come to the Summer 2001 Fun Fly?

CMA NEWSGROUP: Believe it or not, the CMA has a newsgroup that is accessible within the company through Netscape or Internet Explorer. I looked at it yesterday. It hasn't really been used since 2002 or so. I posted an invitational letter yesterday for anyone who might be surfing the Collins newsgroups to come on down and join the CMA. This can be a good forum for club members and very useful for rekindling interest within the club. Why not go out and subscribe to the newsgroup and USE it.

FLYING SITE: With some luck, we will again be able to use Larry Martinson's sod farm next year. I'm not certain, but I've heard nothing to indicate that we won't be welcome back.

CLUB TOOLS: A couple years back, when we still had Rockwell \$\$\$ to work with, the club purchased some common building tools. I don't even know what we have at this point, but I believe whatever they are, Steve Plantenberg has them. At one time, we were supposed to be working on getting a storage location at Main Plant to keep the stuff so it would be available,

similar to checking out books from a library. That never seemed to happen successfully.

BROWN BAG BEAUTY CONTEST: The month of April has traditionally seen the end of the build sessions, followed by a half-day long display of our winter handiwork in the 106 Auditorium. This display was known as a "Brown Bag Beauty Contest" and was a way to show off what we had built over the winter to our fellow Rockwellians. It was also an opportunity to hype the CMA within the company and maybe get some new recruits. A couple of years ago, it coincided with "Take Our Kids to Work Day". Is there enough interest to have the annual BBBC this coming April?

TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK DAY: The CMA has been asked for the past several years to put on a display for the annual TOKWD festivities. It has been reported to be the kid's favorite stop along the way of all the activities planned for that day. I suspect we will be asked to help out again this year. Last year, we did not participate, as the request from HR came with very little notice, and we had nothing prepared. Let's plan ahead this time. We will need volunteers that day to help out. Think about it. Help out.

BUY-SELL-TRADE: Another popular Rockwell newsgroup. From time to time you can run across someone selling RC equipment. Visit the site and use it.

Dave Shema – CMA President ✈

HEADS UP, CMA ACTIVITIES

JANUARY 2005

6 JANUARY 5 - 6 PM MEETING

13 JANUARY 6 - 9 PM BUILD SESSION

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