

## Intro

If you have any ideas, articles, or stories for the newsletter, please email me, or call me to get it submitted. [grippm@bellsouth.net](mailto:grippm@bellsouth.net)

Just a reminder that the club dues for 2004 are due by 28 February, 2004. We moved it up one month due to renewal requirements with the AMA for the club.

## Club Officers

The elected officers for WTRC for 2003 are:

President: Tim Treneff  
Vice-President: Jeff Layman  
Secretary: Mike Grippin  
Treasurer: Anthony Harden  
Safety Officer: Dave Huff  
Field Marshall: Jeff Cowan

## Rants & Raves from the Safety Officer

What is safety?

Webster's Dictionary describes it as follows:

Pronunciation: 'sAf-tE

Function: *noun*

Inflected Form(s): *plural safeties*

Etymology: Middle English *saufte*, from Middle French *sauveté*, from Old French, from *sauve*, feminine of *sauf* safe

**1** : the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss

**2** : a device (as on a weapon or a machine) designed to prevent inadvertent or hazardous operation

**3 a (1)** : a situation in football in which a member of the offensive team is tackled behind its own goal line that counts two points for the defensive team

**b** : a billiard shot made with no attempt to score or so as to leave the balls in an unfavorable position for the opponent

I would like to bring your attention to number 1. "The condition of being safe from undergoing

or causing hurt, injury, or loss". Let's see how this relates to us.

I don't think there is a person among us that would intentionally cause harm or injure any of the rest of us. But what about un-intentionally? How does my flying behavior effect those of my friends as far a safety is concerned? It can greatly effect their safety by causing them to deviate from their normal routine to keep an eye on something that scares them.

When a person's routine is interrupted, we mentally miss a step, and that's when accidents happen. It's kind of like losing your place on the page of a book when you get interrupted by something and having to re-read what you've already read to catch back up or, worse yet, jumping ahead and missing something. If we miss something while prepping a plane for flight because we get rattled, we can lose fingers! We can lose track of our own planes if we're already flying. And yes, we can potentially die. Sounds pretty grim doesn't it, well, it is. This is the bad part of an otherwise fantastic hobby.

Let's examine our equipment. An RC airplane is dependant on several things for safety. Mechanical, electrical and structural integrity are the biggies. Mechanical integrity, all of the complicated linkage and nuts bolts and screws are present and tight. In other words, we didn't bluff our way through the mechanics of the plane when we assembled it, right? We didn't leave anything kind of, well, half done, right? Could it stand up to an FAA inspection? All the "T's" are crossed and the "I's" are dotted I'm sure. If they are not, correct them. Our safety depends on it. Electrical integrity, all of our batteries are good, servo connections properly secured, and we have range tested our Rx and Tx right? Structural integrity, this is where it get's a little difficult. Most of our planes are covered so we can't see anything but a very small amount of the structure. So how do we know if it's structurally sound? We don't. Just because it took all we could dish out at it last weekend doesn't mean it will take all of that this weekend. I'm reminded of an episode at Skyfest where Tim Treneff was flying for the crowd doing a routine he had done hundreds of times with a plane that had done it hundreds of times and the wing folds up! He trusted the plane to keep on doing what it always has. No one was hurt because he planned ahead and was flying well away from everybody in a direction that wouldn't intersect with anyone. Imagine what would've happened if he'd been flying his trusty Laser toward the crowd and pulled up fifty feet away! I'll repeat it, just because it was fine last time you flew it doesn't mean it'll be fine this time! It's up to the individual pilot to have enough consideration of his fellow fliers to keep this in mind. These planes have a lifespan and will choose to "kick the bucket" when **THEY** want to, not when we want them to.

These planes can malfunction at any given moment and it is up the the pilot to plan not only where it's going but where it will end up. The best pilot in the world cannot control an airplane that is disintegrating! If your plane kills someone are you going to shrug it off and call it an accident when you could've planned a manuver where if it decides to "give up" it will be nowhere near anybody but the runway? I couldn't.

From our own flying site rules:

"All flying to be conducted in accordance of the AMA National Safety Code."

From the AMA National Safety Code:

"Where established, I will abide by the safety rules of the flying site I use, and I will not willfully

and deliberately fly my models in a careless, reckless and/or dangerous manner."

Willfully and deliberately doing a maneuver in a careless or reckless manner is something we need to be aware of. Even if the plane doesn't hit someone, we can still cause injury by someone getting spooked because of our actions. Remember it!

If you have any questions about safety, please feel free to ask me, or any club officer, as well as our trainer pilots as we are all well versed on the subject.

Thank you,

Fly hard, fly safe....

Dave

## **President's Corner**

Now that the holidays are over, it's time to start planning for the 2004 year. I say start planning, but WTRCF has already been in action.

It's only the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the year and the club has already put a new web site in place. It will be a few weeks before it's re-populated with the old content. Our intent is to update the site weekly with field pictures and as any special interest items the club desires. Go to <http://www.WTRCF.org> . Note that we are .org and not .com since we are a non-profit organization.

It looks like our first Fly-in of the season will be May 22<sup>nd</sup>. We'll work on details in the coming month.

In recognition of the skill sets required to fly helicopters, we are now issuing WTRCF Helicopter Solo Certificates. To qualify for one of these certificates you

must pass a solo flight for Rickey Gateley whom we designated to be the official club Helicopter trainer pilot.

We voted to put another load of gravel on the old road to make it passable even though work should progress on the new road this spring.

We bought a new lock for the building and it came with a new combination. Any member that has paid dues for the 2004 season will get the new combination. (See Mike Grippin or Tim Treneff)

We have Jimmy Gibson working on getting the WTRCF logo digitized so that we can get new hats and shirts in time for the spring flying season. (Help me remind him...please).

We also elected/appointed Jimmy Gibson, Jim Wilson, and Jeff Milam to be the 2004 intro/trainer pilots. This is a huge responsibility and burden on these three guys, so we all need to help train new pilots have an AMA license.

This month constitutes the nomination and election of next year's officers. They take effect March 1<sup>st</sup> (ignore the April 1<sup>st</sup> typo in our bylaws- will fix the typo soon). Contact Herve if you desire to run for an office.

Once the new officers are in place we can work on plans for a sun shelter to be built in April.

Mike Grippin informs me that he will commence field maintenance in a week or two.

I want to thank everyone who shows up at the field to fly and provide the great fellowship that makes our club a premier flying club that I have been proud to

participate and serve. Otherwise our club would just be a pretty field!

Tim

### **Field Notes**

Just another reminder from last months newsletter.....Please use common sense and courtesy when going back to the field this time of year. The ground stays soft and damp most of the time due to increased precipitation, but also because the ground freezes during the nights, then tends to thaw back out during the day. Coming off of the gravel too fast, turning too sharply, or pulling out too quickly causes damage/ruts that will take several hours to fill back in, and a full season for the grass to grow back into it. Please, Please, Please, before pulling down to the rope line, park on the gravel, get out, and walk down to see just how soft the ground is. If in doubt, just stay parked on the gravel and walk your items down to the pit area.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The Model Aviators of South Arkansas, El Dorado, Arkansas will be having their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual swap meet on March 6, from 9 to 5. Two dollar admission. For more information or directions, see their website at [www.home.earthlink.net/~gjjg2066/masa/masaHome.html](http://www.home.earthlink.net/~gjjg2066/masa/masaHome.html)

The ROCKET CITY RC Club of Huntsville, AL is having their annual winter swap meet on March 20, 2004. It will run from 9 am to 3 pm. To see the flyer for this event, go to their web site at [www.rocketcityrc.com](http://www.rocketcityrc.com)

The GA Aircraft Modelers Association will be having the Southeastern Model Show in Perry GA on March 5 & 6, 2004. Check out the web site at <http://www.gama.rcclubs.com/georgia.html> . For those of you that have never attended, this is a great swap meet, ton's of stuff. If you don't buy something after walking through the buildings, then you really aren't a true RC enthusiast. As a personal note, I will be going, so if anyone would like to share the costs of the ride and hotel room, let me know.

### **Chop Talk**

## Building & Repair Tips

I want to take this month's column and talk about something NOT TO DO. This isn't really building or repair related, but I've heard so much talk about it lately that I just have to jump in and make sure everyone completely understands. The item up for discussion is changing the crystal in your RC Transmitter (radio). The simple answer to this is **DO NOT DO IT**. I know that there are going to be several of you to jump forward and say it's no problem, been there done that, no problems. However, just in case you don't know, it is a violation of US law to change the transmitter crystal in your RC Radio. The specific law is FCC reg 95.645, part b. I'm not going to quote it here, you may go to the [fcc.gov](http://fcc.gov) website and look it up yourself. This issue has been beat to death on RCUNIVERSE and other forum type websites that I browse, and the conversations there get ugly at times, but in every case, the law is cited and the end answer is **DO NOT DO IT**. All of the major manufacturers of our radios have all checked in on this issue and every one of them say **DO NOT DO IT**. I'm not going to argue the merits of whether this law is good or bad, but here is a simple list of why we should obey the law:

1. Neither the AMA, nor us, as unlicensed users of these frequencies in the 72 mhz range, "own", or have exclusive rights to broadcast on these frequencies.
2. There are in fact "licensed" users of frequencies in the 72 mhz band that do "own" the frequency, mostly remote control construction equipment, but also some demolition equipment.
3. The law is not in place to keep us from shooting down each other's planes or helis, but is in place to keep us from interfering with the PRIMARY "licensed" user of the frequencies.
4. If a RC aircraft caused an accident or injury, and later found that the transmitter had been changed, your AMA insurance would not cover you for any liability.
5. You void the warranty on your radio when you change the transmitter crystal.
6. We could lose our club charter if we "knowingly" allow a pilot to use a transmitter that has not been retuned by a certified tech after changing the transmitter crystal.

Now I know that a lot of you are going to say "But they sell the transmitter crystals on the open market". Yup, true fact, but I refer you again up to the FCC reg that spells out the law. In almost every other country in the world, it is legal to change the transmitter crystal, so yes, companies make them available. I guess the best thing I can equate it to, is, you can buy a vehicle that will do 180 mph, but there isn't any public road here in the US that you can legally drive it at that speed.

I don't want to try to bore you with technical details, and I am not an expert on RF modulation, but I think I have a little experience with it to try to explain it. Basically, your radio has an RF circuit built into it (or in some case a RF module), that is where the "base" modulation takes place. That modulation is then applied to the transmitter crystal, which causes it to vibrate rapidly. In the case of channel 32, that would be 72.43 million vibrations per second. That sets what frequency I am transmitting on. Now when your radio leaves the factory, the RF module is "tuned" to that particular crystal that was placed in it. So now you've gone and replaced that 32 crystal with a 16 crystal, but since the base modulation still wants to vibrate your old 32 crystal, you now may end up getting 72.12 vibrations as opposed to the 72.11 that should be channel 16. That puts you halfway into our channel 17, but more importantly, would put you into a frequency that some industrial user may be using. I know they won't care cause you normally won't cause them any problems, but when your 33% Cap 232 goes spiraling into the ground, oh, I'm gonna run behind the port-a-potty, and have a good laugh at your expense. I'm trying not to make this a long winded discussion about it, so I'll close this column by simply saying **DO NOT CHANGE YOUR TRANSMITTER CRYSTAL YOURSELF.**

## FOR SALE ITEMS

Ryan STA-M with new O.S. 1.20 FP and Futaba 6X-A radio. It is ready to adjust the engine and go fly. It has been flown a couple of times by Jeff Layman and it flies great. 850.00 gets the whole outfit.

Stearman Bi-plane with .90 Thunder Tiger. Servo's in wings. No radio. 250.00

Scratch built racer with .60 Thunder Tiger. Has flaps. Servo's in wings 250.00

Raven with 1.08 Magnum. New engine. Plane needs a small amount of work for it to be ready to fly. 300.00

Joss Stick ARC NIB. 175.00

If anyone is intrested, call me at 664-2237, 697-7303, or e-mail at [anthony61@earthlink.net](mailto:anthony61@earthlink.net).

## Donation lookout

We're always on the lookout for anything good that can be used at the field.

Hand tools would be nice, we have some, but could stand to have a few more things. A hammer, drill bits, etc. If you have something you'd like to donate, look in the shed to see what we are lacking.

### **Next Club Meeting**

Next meeting will be Tuesday February 10, 7 pm at Shoney's. This meeting will be for the elections for the year 2004, please make an effort to attend and make your vote count. So far the only nominations are the current officers, but also Tim Blakenship has been nominated for Field Marshall.

### **Links**

Here are some links to some pretty helpful websites:

[West Tennessee R/C flyers rc planes remote control airplanes r/c r-c flying aircraft wtrcf](#) – our new and improved website, courtesy of Alex Treneff.

<http://rcbay.net/>

our very own combat site by Alex: <http://webpages.charter.net/combatcrazy>

<http://rcgroups.com/>

[RCUniverse - The Ultimate RC Forum! - Buy, Sell, Trade and Discuss RC Airplanes, RC Helicopters, RC Cars, Boats, Engines, Radios, Park Flyers and more plus RC Classifieds](#)

[Radical RC](#) This is a great place to buy batteries, switches, harness and all kinds of goodies, go take a look.

[R/C Battery Clinic](#)

[Academy of Model Aeronautics](#)