

July

# Skywriter

2013



**SKYMASTERS RADIO CONTROL CLUB  
OF MICHIGAN**

AMA Chartered Club #970  
16 Year Gold Leader Club

[www.skymasters.org](http://www.skymasters.org)



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### From the President...



The flying season is now in full swing. Student night has been well attended when the weather hasn't been awful. We had 40 student pilots at last count. And we signed off at least one new pilot at the last Student Night. Hopefully we can sign off a bunch more before we become

victims of our own success! The field is in great condition and people seem to be taking full advantage of it.

The theme that I have been promoting since taking over as president is inclusiveness. We have tried to include all members in as many activities as possible. We have tried to include the public, the Bald Mountain staff and

other groups such as Cub Scouts in our activities. I like to think we have achieved some of our aims with this policy. We have added some new members, made some significant improvements to the field and engaged members of the public when they show up to see what we're about.

As I do in almost every communication that I send out to the club, I will ask you here to keep up the good work. Keep volunteering. I think most people find it very rewarding and it helps to promote unity and personal connections within the club. This is a social activity, after all. We have a full slate of events coming up and we'll need all the help we can get.

One last thought for those who interact a lot with

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younger members, visitors and student pilots (let's say those under the age of 12). Please remember that the atmosphere can be intimidating to them. They're dealing with a situation where they're surrounded by adults, some of them seemingly "gruff" older men (no offense intended, but it's how they sometimes see us). Please think about how they see you. Try to put on a friendly face and if you have to correct their behavior, flying or otherwise, do it gently if at all possible. We can't compromise safety in order to be nice but not all

issues need immediate and aggressive attention. If your knees and back can take it, maybe you can get down to eye level with them while you explain something to them. Please continue to have a safe and enjoyable summer. I hope to see you at one of our many events.

**Ken Gutelius**

*President, Skymasters*

kennanc@msn.com



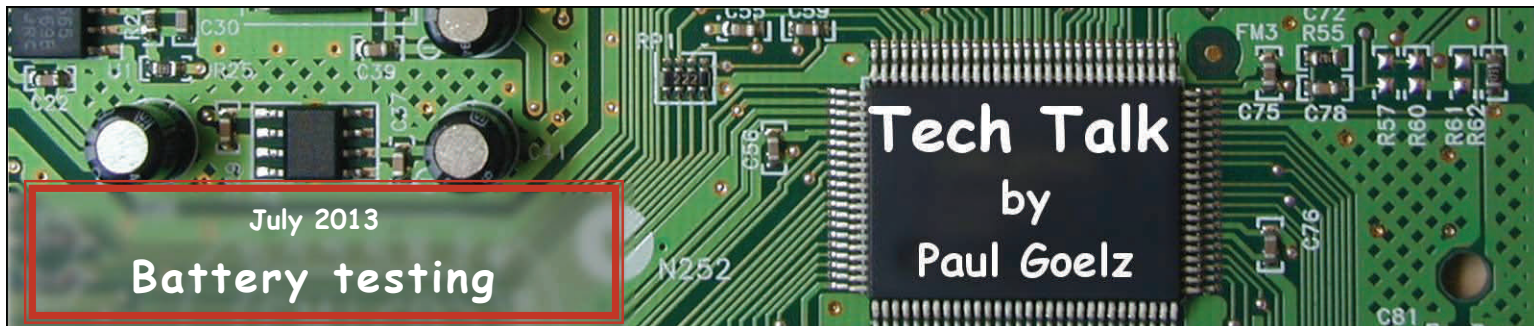
Joey Baran with his new Sukhoi SU-26 ultra micro on his maiden flight. This was his Christmas present that has been waiting to fly. And he flew it like he's been flying it for years too! Nice job



**Front Cover:**  
From the Chet Brady Memorial Float Fly, May 19th.  
*Fred Engelman photo*

Flying off into the sunset at the field.... A beautiful Sig Antoinette built by Dave George and flown by Joe Hass.

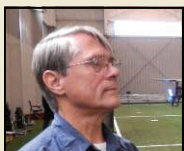
Chris Hass photo



July 2013

## Battery testing

# Tech Talk by Paul Goelz



Hello Skymasters, Paul Goelz here. This month we continue the electric theme that Teo Terry set for us the last several months.

I would like to spend this month's column talking about testing and evaluating batteries. This applies specifically to NiCd and NiMh batteries used as receiver packs. The receiver pack is a relatively inexpensive component but it is the heart of any RC aircraft and if it fails, you will lose your plane.

As the 2013 season gets into full swing, I have been around several pilots who questioned the state of their receiver pack. Sometimes it was a pack that had been in storage over the winter and sometimes it was a pack that was purchased in unknown condition along with a used plane.

The common method to assess a pack is to measure its voltage. This does indeed measure the resting voltage, and if it is at or above the nominal voltage for the number and type of cells (1.2V/cell for NiCd and NiMh), most people assume the pack is OK. Unfortunately, and especially with used packs, this is not always the case.

A pack can produce a normal voltage AT REST but the voltage can fall to dangerous levels under load. This can happen either immediately, or after a shorter than expected time.

The first problem is that the "load" that a "load tester" applies is usually nowhere near the peak load demanded by multiple servos all moving at the same time and is therefore insufficient to assess the true state of a pack.

The second problem is that no load tester can use a single measurement to assess the discharge capacity and the self discharge rate. Both can be severely deficient in an older or defective pack.

The bottom line is that without the combined information from several different tests, you DO NOT know the true state of your receiver pack and can be misled by a simple voltage measurement.... even a voltage measurement under load.

So what to do? It is actually not that hard to get a comprehensive picture of the state of your pack with a

couple easy tests.

1. Fully charge the pack using a slow charger for at least 150% of the pack capacity divided by the charge rate. For a standard 1/10C charger, call it 24 hours to be safe. DO NOT use a fast charger.... even a fast charger at a "slow charge" rate.... for this first charge. Fast chargers will terminate the charge when they detect the "peak" in pack voltage. If the cells are out of balance, this peak can occur prematurely and the charger will fail to fully charge ALL cells. The best choice here is the simple "wall charger" that came with the radio. Find the pack capacity, divide that by the charge current and multiply that by at least 1.5 to arrive at the minimum time to fully charge the pack.
2. Discharge the pack using a charger/discharger that can measure the discharge capacity. The discharge capacity should be at least 80% of the rated capacity or higher. This step is important... without it, you simply will not know how healthy your pack is.
3. Fully charge the pack again. This time it is OK to use either a fast charger or a slow charger.
4. With the pack fully charged but resting off the charger, wait a week or more.
5. Without recharging, discharge the pack using a charger/discharger that can measure the discharge capacity. The discharge capacity should be close to the capacity measured in step two. If it is significantly less than the capacity measured in step two, consider the pack suspect. A pack that passes step two but fails this step has an excessive self discharge rate and could self discharge to the point that it can crash your plane unless you charge it immediately before flying.

A pack that passes the above tests can be considered healthy and safe to fly.

Above and beyond any of the testing above, I consider it good practice to simply NEVER use a used / unknown pack. It is the heart of your aircraft and any issue can crash your plane. Better to be safe than sorry.

Until next month.... Paul Goelz



# Chet Brady Memorial Float Fly (Trout Lake)





# 2013 Fish Fry and Student Night

June 19th, 2013

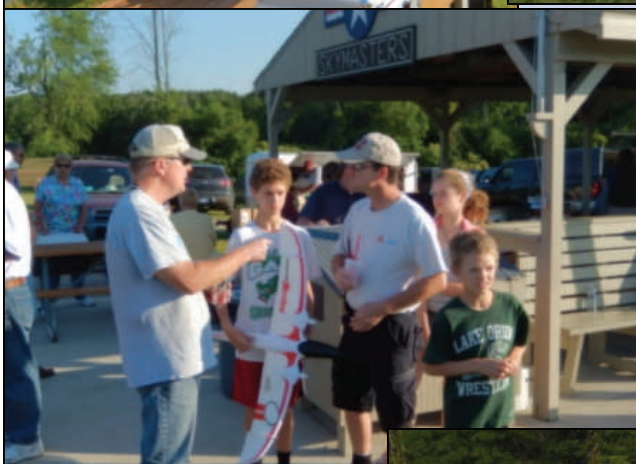
The 2013 Fish Fry was a HUGE success! We had so many cars that they were parked down the access road. The weather finally cooperated, so it was not only a good day for the Fish Fry itself, but also a great day for flying. We had tons of students... so many that it was hard to find them all. Much of the time, there were four and even five flight stations in use, which hopefully gave everyone some air time but did make things a bit chaotic.

When it was time to eat, the spread was fantastic. There was something for everyone including the non fish eaters. A big THANKS to Bill Dezur, Greg Cardillo and Pete Foss and the whole kitchen crew for a job well done!





# Fish Fry, continued





# From the camera of Bob Chapdelaine







# Addison Oaks Float Fly

Not a Skymasters event but it looks like it was fun!







[www.romeoskyhawks.org](http://www.romeoskyhawks.org)

# STONY CREEK FLOAT FLYING

SPONSORED BY THE ROMEO R/C CLUB  
AND THE  
FRASER FLYING CLUB



[www.flyfraser.net](http://www.flyfraser.net)

## Every Wednesday, May thru September

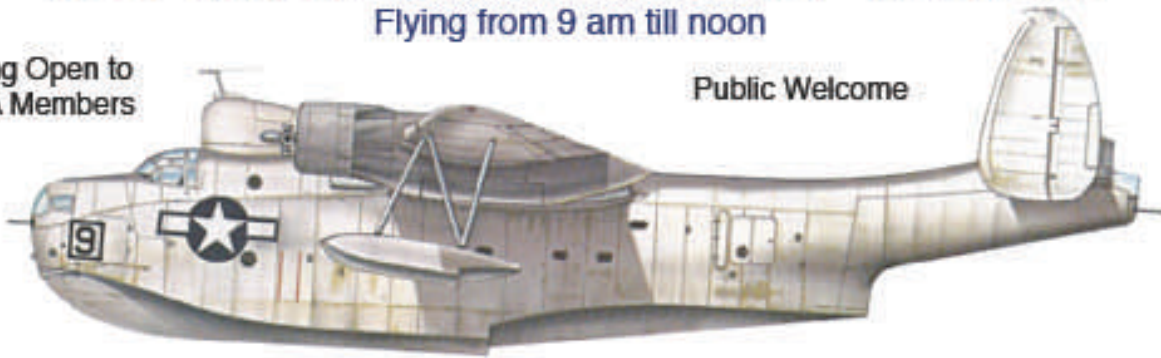
On June 19th and August 21st we will be flying at Addison Oaks Park, Buhl Lake

## Stony Creek Metropark at Winter Cove 4300 Main Park Road, Shelby Township

Flying from 9 am till noon

Flying Open to  
AMA Members

Public Welcome



- \* \$5 per Day Retrieval Fee or \$30 Season Pass
- \* Plenty of Free Parking
- \* Great Chance to See This Exciting Hobby
- \* Main Park Entrance on Shelby Road at 26 Mile Road
- \* Follow Park Road to Winter Cove
- \* Plane Retrieval Boat Provided
- \* All Cars Need Annual/Daily Metropark Sticker - Available at Entrance
- \* No R/C Boats During Flying Times
- \* Weekly Email Notification of Flying Status



For more information call Jim Held at 248-641-9724 (H) or 248-835-4491 (C)

[jimwheld@wowway.com](mailto:jimwheld@wowway.com)

Edited by Jim Held

Created by Douglas Norris



Skymasters Fourth Annual

# Helicopter FunFly

Sunday, July 28th 2013

The event is held at the Skymasters Scripps Road field in the Bald Mountain recreational area, Lake Orion MI. North of Silverbell and west of M24. See map below.

Large shelter and tables for shade and repairs.

Restroom onsite.

Recreational park pass required for park entry. If you do not have one, it may be purchased at the event for \$10 from the park rangers and is good for the whole year.

For more information, contact the event director, Paul Goelz at paul@pgoelz.com or call 248-933-5814.

Skymasters web site:  
www.skymasters.org



- **REGISTRATION OPENS AT 9AM**
- **FIRST FLIGHT AT 10AM**
- **FIELD AVAILABLE UNTIL 8PM**
- **3D, SCALE AND SPORT FLYING ENCOURAGED**
- **ELECTRIC, GLOW, GAS AND TURBINE POWER WELCOMED**
- **THREE FLIGHT STATIONS PLUS A HOVER AREA**
- **NEW ADDITIONAL HELI FIELD WITH TWO FLIGHT STATIONS**
- **NO LANDING FEE... THIS IS A FREE EVENT**
- **AMPLE PARKING AND SPACE FOR CANOPIES**
- **FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE**
- **PROOF OF AMA MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED**
- **RECREATIONAL PARK PASS REQUIRED (SEE SIDEBAR)**
- **72MHZ AND 2.4GHZ OK. NO IMPOUND FOR 2.4GHZ**
- **FEATURING VISIT BY A FULL SCALE HELI**

## SCRIPPS ROAD FIELD



*Spectators are encouraged at this event!*





# ON THE WING

## Heli pilots...

Come try out our new exclusive heli-only field. We are still trying to get grass to grow but in the mean time, come check it out. Recreational passport, AMA and Skymasters membership are required but if you have current AMA you can be a guest of a Skymasters member for a couple visits to see if you would like to join the club.

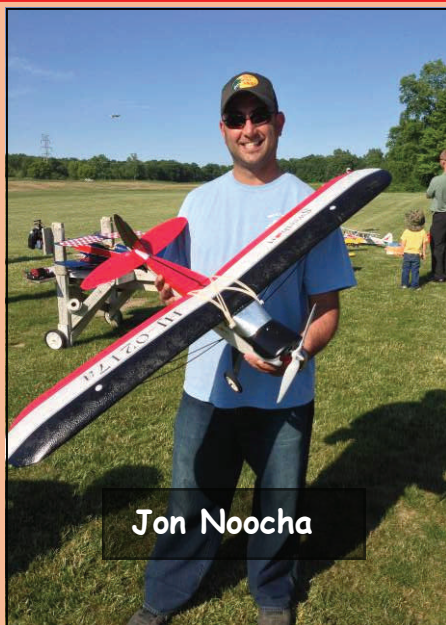


## Next Skymasters Meetings...

Wednesday, July 10th

Wednesday, July 24th

(Informal meetings at the Scripps Road field, around 8PM)



Jon Noocha

Welcome two of our newest signed off pilots!



David Whitaker (center), with instructors Russ Oliver and Greg Brausa



# July 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 Stoney Creek float fly Student night and pot luck, 5-8 PM At the field	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Stoney Creek float fly Student night and pot luck, 5-8 PM At the field	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Stoney Creek float fly Student night and pot luck, 5-8 PM At the field	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Stoney Creek float fly Student night and pot luck, 5-8 PM At the field	25	26	27
28 Heli Fun Fly 10AM to 5PM	29	30	31 Stoney Creek float fly Student night and pot luck, 5-8 PM At the field			





# Skymasters Information...

[The Skymasters field is located in Lake Orion, within the Bald Mountain Recreational Area](#) on Scripps Road (see map). A state park permit is required and can be obtained from the Park Headquarters located on Greenshield Road or at club events. Or, you can check the box on your tab renewal for a "Recreational Passport". Flying is permitted from 10 AM to 8 PM. The noise limit is 94 dBa at 10 feet. This noise rule is strictly enforced.

**Wednesday evening (through August) is Family Night** with flying and a pot luck buffet. Bring something for the grill & a dish to pass.

**Wednesday 5PM to 8PM is also Student Night (through August)** but there are usually instructors around all day. Meet the instructors and arrange for more instruction time together on other days. Our Chief Flight Instructor is Greg Brausa, 248-373-8949 [cgbrausa@gmail.com](mailto:cgbrausa@gmail.com)

From June through August, **Club meetings** are held at the field, on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 8 PM. A great chance to fly and socialize. **Winter meetings** (September through May) are usually held at the Orion Center, 1335 Joslyn, in Lake Orion. Check the calendar here or on the [web site](#) for

specifics. Bring a model for Show and Tell, enjoy coffee and donuts and listen to the speaker of the evening.

The Skywriter newsletter is available online at the Skymasters web site and is free to all. It may also be printed from the web site if desired. All contributions are welcome. Please send photos and articles to [newsletter@skymasters.org](mailto:newsletter@skymasters.org) If you know of anyone who may be interested in R/C Aviation, please give them a link to this newsletter or give them a copy of an AMA magazine. It may spark their interest!



**Newsletter Submissions**  
 Please send all articles, photos and announcements to the Skywriter editor at:  
[newsletter@skymasters.org](mailto:newsletter@skymasters.org)  
 Deadline is the 20th of each month.  
 The Skywriter newsletter is published monthly by the Skymasters Radio Control Club of Michigan  
[www.skymasters.org](http://www.skymasters.org)

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