



# Lake County Modelers and Flyers Assn.

PO Box 398, Baldwin, Mi 49304

**Propwash**

**March 2026**

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**The next LCMFA Monthly Meeting is March 11 at 7:00 PM at the Baldwin Village Hall located at 610 Washington Street in Baldwin**

## Altitude Waiver Update

Currently we have an exemption from Remote ID and an Altitude Waiver up to 700' AGL. However, we have to issue a NOTAM for both of these waivers to be active. During May 1 to November 1, I issue NOTAM for the entire period. This leaves us issuing individual NOTAMs Nov 1 to April 31 of the following year. So, ...

If you plan to fly before May 1, then Mac or I need to know about when you will be flying w/o remote ID and/or above 400'.

On a positive note, the U.S. House has initiated a bill that could allow us up to 2,000' AGL. AMA has been working on this for several months. They also recently started lobbying the U.S. Senate for a companion bill. However, given the gridlock in the government, I do not see any relief this coming flying season. But, We still issue our NOTAMs for 2,000' AGL and the FAA continues to approve them.

If it comes right down to it though, we are legally bound to 700' AGL maximum until the federal government gets its act together. As it stands now, if you go over 700' and get challenged, you are on your own. But if you are above 700' our NOTAMs should keep everyone safe!

**Dues are due April 1**  
**First off, ... I thank all the members that have renewed their LCMFA membership. Without you, we could not exist. Thank you!**

**For the rest of our 2025 members who have not yet paid their 2026 dues:** Don't forget to mail in your LCMFA dues by April 1.

There is a \$20 Late Fee after April 1. Also, per the Dues policy: "In June of each year, any member who has not submitted their annual dues will be removed from the membership roster and communication lists. The President shall notify the involved member of these actions. and that they no longer have unlimited access to the RC Park. Past members may still attend events and evenings open to the general public."

If you wish to return as a member after April 1 of the following year, a new member initiation fee is also assessed.

## LCMFA 2026 Event Schedule

**Midwest Jet Pilot's Spring Fling - June - 9 - 13, 2026**

**West Michigan RC Expo - July - 7 - 11, 2026**

**Midwest Jet Pilot's Boondoggle - August 11-15, 2026**

**West Michigan Fun-Fly - September 11 - 13**

## Recent AMA Leader Member Meet

If you recall reading the last newsletter, I mentioned that I was putting pressure on AMA for better communications with the Associate VPs and Leader Members. This was brought up as I challenged the two Jet related rules that the JPO was trying to get the AMA Executive Council (EC) to pass. The rules were brought up on the EC's agenda shortly before the EC meeting and it appears that no one, except or District 7 VP, had solicited any comments on their proposed rules.

Anyway the District 7 VP was hammered by the long term EC members as to why he would solicit comments from the field. I responded to that EC action by slamming them in emails and our newsletter.

Anyway, it appears that the new AMA President is having a positive impact on the EC. A couple weeks ago, the Leader Members and Associated VPs were invited to a Zoom meeting. The agenda included a discussion on the status of the House bill that potentially could increase our altitude limit, which I discussed elsewhere in this issue of *Propwash*.

So, ... Somebody may be listening at AMA. However, there was also a movement discuss to directly help AMA with input regarding changes and improvements to the rules for turbine aircraft. Essentially this would be another Special Interest Group. The JPO is already supposedly covering jets as a SIG. But they still show either a disdain for turbine powered aircraft or they are just not willing to take the effort necessary to get input from the field. To top that, the old timers on the AMA EC may need some coaching on gathering comments before they just accept whatever comes their way. Lastly the EC should not chastise a District VP for seeking input on items he may or may not be directly engaged in. But it is never too late to change. Eh?? Maybe it is time for more fresh blood in the AMA EC!

## Recent Meeting with the Village Regarding Airport Operations

Eventually our asphalt runway will need to be replaced. Today I attended a meeting with the County Economic Develop Rep. and the Village President. We discussed a multitude of ways that we could potentially seek the funding needed to maintain or replace the runway's asphalt.

First off, everyone here knows that the Village can never afford the \$3+ million it would take to replace the Main Runway. Certainly our organization and donors can also never do that either. So we are down to looking for a collaborations with commercial entities.

Also, the commercial drone operators are looking for a drone corridor from Battle Creek to Traverse City. We potentially could be looked at as a hub for such traffic.

My first concern is we do not want to lose what we have in the RC Park. We have over \$220K invested in RC Park infrastructure. We are the only operation that keeps the Airport viable. The Village President knows this and is firmly behind our presence!

So we discussed what could be accommodated w/o compromising our operations. There is one company that wants to get the site certified as a Drone Testing Site. This has the potential to bring lots of \$s to the site. If they stick with multi-rotors, this could work. There is a lot of real estate there that does not impact us. Also, that real estate could have flight paths that would not enter into our flight box.

But fixed wing drones is another story. So I am planning to meet with that company and see what they propose. They also work with local students to get them Part 107 Certified. This could be a great opportunity for our students, etc.

Next month, I am planning to brief the entire Village Council on what we do just to make sure they all understand the value we add to the local tourist economy.

## Life In the Fast Lane

Well, ... I survived the knee replacement. I wound up the PT last week. I have no pain and am getting around at about 90%. I probably will never run again. But I am walking pain free. I am still working on going up and down the stairs to the shop. They are still a bit of a challenge.

My mother, at 105 years old, is getting along fairly well with her fractured arm recovery. This is the first week we have not had someone in every day to tend to her PT, baths, foot soaks and just good ole socializing. However, she can't hear and her eyesight is failing. I have to take care of all her schedules and communications to offsite people, shopping, etc..

Also, the new transmitters for the recently purchased Drone Soccer kits we not working correctly. They had a negative pitch that would not allow them to hover w/o creeping back at the pilot.

After about literally 10 person days figuring out what was causing the issue, recording all 12 drones' PPM readings and reprogramming them all, I had a document to send to Tech Support, who is in Colorado and is just a part-timer.

The problem was the transmitter sticks needed recalibration. But no one knew how to do that. The online videos went through the steps, but missed the critical step. The kit supplier did NOT supply any manuals and the only online manual was via a paid subscription service. Finally, I put the squeeze on U.S. Drone Soccer and they sent me a link to the free manual. After about ten minutes I had the first transmitter recalibrated and the issue was resolved. Then, ... I had to do the other 11.

So since the knee surgery I have been darned busy. I finally got to finish up on the two new jets and figure out their CG and batteries, etc.

## New Member Briefing Handbook

Recently we completed the New Member Briefing Handbook. Last year we identified a couple new members that never got the New Member Briefing. Consequently we had some complaints from our neighboring land owners.

So we tweaked the written rules a bit and consolidated the handbook down to 6 easy to follow pages. If a new member is brought into the club, that member must be briefed, The handbooks will be located in Building 1 and Building 2. If you use the last one in the building please let me know. The new member is NOT to get the gate and building combinations until the member is briefed.

The Bylaws and other policy documents are on the website. There are links listed in the Handbook. The documents in the Handbook pertain to the rules and regulations that we must comply with to be safe, obey the regulatory limits we have and help keep our neighboring landowners happy during some negotiated specific time periods.

For the current members, we will address the handbook content in the newsletter. This month please review the Operational Rules on the next page. The test on the content will come later.

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## Lake County Modelers & Flyer's Assn. Operational Rules



1. At all times, crewed aircraft have the right-of-way. Once it is apparent that a crewed aircraft is landing, taking off or taxiing to a full-scale runway, all RC aircraft are to make every effort to immediately land. Once the crewed aircraft has parked or taken off, RC flight may resume.
2. If for some reason your RC aircraft gets trapped in the air by a manned aircraft (e.g. Manned aircraft pilot not utilizing normal radio procedure,) then you are to loiter your RC aircraft in the areas at least 300' perpendicular to the approach/runway being used by the manned aircraft (e.g. 300' north or south of a manned aircraft using runway 9/27). Loitering is not intended to provide an excuse for not landing.
3. Whenever there is an RC pilot flying on site, a person in charge is required to monitor the manned aircraft radio (122.900 mhz) and control the airspace to ensure seeing and avoiding all manned aircraft as well as determine and take any other actions necessary to ensure the safety of manned aircraft, spectators, RC pilots and RC aircraft. The person in charge shall also ensure all AMA and local Operational Rules are followed.
4. If there is ever a time when there is no designated person in charge, the pilots onsite shall designate a person in charge. If there is only one pilot onsite, that pilot is the person in charge.
5. There are handheld aircraft radios for a person in charge's use in Building #1 (Pavilion area) and Building #2 (Main Event Area). The combination to the buildings may be obtained from Mac or Len. Call Mac at (231) 250 - 2551 or Len at (907) 903 - 3569.
6. A spotter is always recommended when flying RC aircraft. At events, spotters are required. A spotter's priority role is to see and avoid manned aircraft as well as inform the pilot of the location of other RC aircraft with respect to the pilot's aircraft. The spotter must be in close proximity (<20') of the RC pilot.
7. RC Aircraft are to be operated in compliance with current FAA altitude limits. If pilots will be flying above these limits you must contact the Airport Manager, or his designated representative, who will decide whether or not a NOTAM will be initiated. Information provided to request an exception to the altitude limit shall include specific date(s) and time window(s). Call Mac at (231) 250 - 2551 or Len at (907) 903 - 3569
8. Unless specific exemptions are authorized by the Airport Manager, the AMA National Model Aircraft Safety Code is to be followed at all times. All exceptions must be preapproved by the Airport Manager and appropriately posted.
9. If more than one RC aircraft is in the air, a pattern of flight will be determined by the RC pilots. The pattern of flight can be re-adjusted in the course of a day of flying based on wind direction, or other factors, and clarified with all pilots in attendance.
10. During events, all aircraft must stop the engine/turbine at the Xes on the ramps or be physically controlled (e.g. hand on the fin, etc.) by the pilot or spotter.
11. All fueling is to be done on concrete pads. Spilling fuel or smoke oil on the asphalt or grass is to be avoided.
12. Any person-in-charge, board member, Contest Director (CD) or Event Manager (EM) who observes any violation of our club rules and policies may immediately intervene by approaching an individual with a concern to discuss a resolution, including directing the individual to leave the site. After this intervention, the person-in-charge, board member, Contest Director (CD) or Event Manager (EM) can determine whether any further action is necessary and, if so, proceed with the Grievance Policy in filing a formal complaint. Through this grievance procedure, the end result could include revocation of unescorted access to the site or revocation of membership.
13. Members can use the RC Park facilities at any time. Because non-members do not get a new member briefing, policy changes, and other related correspondence, users of RC Park facilities must be either Village employees, LCMFA members or escorted by an LCMFA member.

## Get Your Lodging and Tent Reservations ASAP

During our events we typically fully book all the local motels that I would recommend staying in. Actually most of our pilots book a year in advance. Some of our sponsoring motels may already be booked! Below is the contact info for the three best motels I recommend.

The Outdoor Inn has been an LCMFA sponsor since day one! Brett and Millie are great hosts and they keep the motel clean and comfortable.

The Baldwin Creek Inn is another one of our sponsors. They have been with us for several years. They have some nice creek-side units. Bring your fly rod!

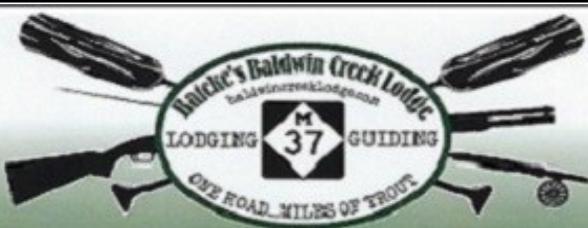
The Red Moose Inn is another great place. They are on the PM River. In the past, I have fished that area extensively.

Or come the weekend before and bring your golf clubs! The local golf course is a great course and the restaurant they have serves great food. It is one of the better kept secrets we have! Joe and Chris are great hosts! They are LCMFA sponsors too!



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We finally got the final design and sizes for the founding members' shirts. I just turned all the information over to Jamie, our supplier. I am having her do one shirt for me as a prototype, If that pans out, then I'll get the rest of the F.R.O.G.s' shirts done up. Getting a consensus on the design and getting sizes was like herding cats, ... well maybe F.R.O.G.s!

Now I want to get some feather flags made up for in front of our tents. I mean everybody has to know where our event home is. Right? How else are we going to shoot the B.S. with them. Besides it is hot in a lot of the places we go. I would hate to see someone drop over with heat stroke while talking to a F.R.O.G.!

Last year, one of the F.R.O.G. members took a picture of a frog that hopped onto his plane. The only problem was, ... it was really a TOAD. I hated to break it to him, but he apparently needed some new glasses to determine the difference between a FROG and a TOAD. Really, ... the darned thing was on/in his plane!

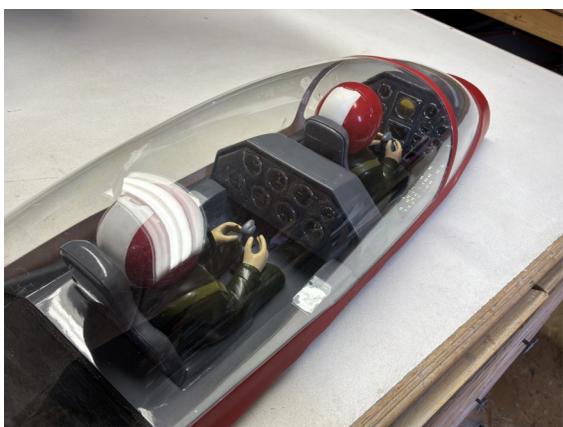
The last couple weeks. I spent a lot of time on the phone F.R.O.G.in' around with one of the F.R.O.G. members trying to get a dam receiver working! Finally had to hang up on him!

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## What R U Building?

Well, ... Marshal and Paul have been at the EDF Viper for quite a while. It seems that the manufacturer figured that the thrust tube could be fabbed up out of stiff paper! Also, given the size, the circuitry has to handle some rather large current loads, etc. But the below cockpit looks great!



On the other hand, I completed the BVM F-15. After fiddling with the CG and finding the right batteries, I finally feel confident in the CG. But, have you tried to order any batteries lately? Most of Horizon Hobby's batteries are not available for a couple months! I had to use what I had

and land the turbine's battery back by the turbine!

With all the issues I had figuring the F-15 out, it got me rethinking the new T One's CG. When compared to my previous T One, this one took a lot more lead to get the CG reasonable. That T One was back on the bench this morning. After remeasuring for the CG calculations, I now feel comfortable!

The school kids are done building their drones. They started flying last week. However, ... This week we have begun seeing our students being syphoned off to other school events. We may wind up our class early. But, we have a field trip scheduled this month to go to a Mason County school for a drone soccer demo!

Also, one of the older kids and I went to Tail Twister's indoor flying last week. I got the kid flying a FPV drone. He did rather well for his first time on FPV. He also met with one of our members who is Part 107 certified. Our student is highly interested in pursuing a Part 107 Certificate! To gage if he can handle the information, I am purchasing some books for him .

Also, we have a commercial operation interested in testing drones and holding drone competitions at the RC Park. This may be a good fit for us and find us a commercial contact that could lead to some new grant providers! This company currently operates out of Battle Creek. They want to establish a presence up here. They hire high school students and train them on their products! This could be a way to some buildings, more events and commercial contacts. It will take a commercial business to replace the Main Runway. We just have to make sure we can coordinate our activities with theirs! Time will tell if anything shakes out of this. But we are well seated at the table.

## Event Registration Changes

I am working with Horizon Hobby to get on-line registration going for LCMFA events. This will change how we register for our events and how we reserve tents and RV electric outlets. Once we have all the bugs worked out, I will open the website for you to make your reservations. With over 50 pilots and 13 tents we need to get our pilots used to a more organized method of registering and reserving our resources.

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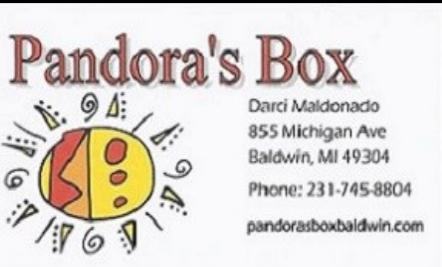


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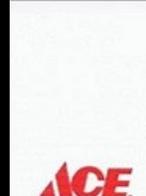
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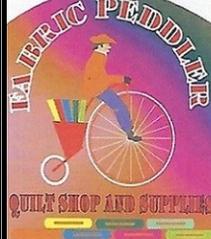
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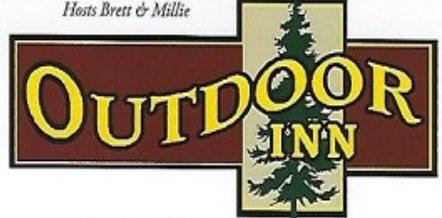


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