



# The R/C Flyer

Volume 36, Issue 12

December 2011

Christmas Party – December 8, 2011, Clear Lake Park Building– 7:00 PM



## IN THE PITS

by Michael Laible

This is issue #12 of The RC Flyer. That means it is the last one of the year and the Christmas party is right around the corner. The party is a good time to mingle and meet fellow members. Come and share some stories of the years flying adventures. See flyer at the end of the newsletter.

At the Christmas party one event that has been very popular is the Model of the Year. The MOY entries are MOM winners throughout the year. Once again we have a variety of models that won MOM and are eligible for MOY. In fact, we had 29 models brought to club meetings this year. Way to go guys!!!

This month I want to bring up two items that has happened to me at the field. Both are lessons learned.

The first is - know your plane. It seems I was getting my P-40 ready for some flights and the reception was acting funny. I did a battery check and 5.3 V – fully charged. It seemed like it was worse during full throttle. I thought maybe I was having Tx problems. I

tried the battery again under a load but the battery showed 2 V under load and 5.3 V without load. Hummm! Tried a different volt meter with the same results. A lot of discussion pursued on surface voltage, versus internal voltage and etc. I have charged a lot of NiCad's and never had one go from 5.3 to 2.0 V under load. Strange.

Time to take her home. When I got home I took the battery out and cut the wrap off. The pic below illustrates what I found. I marked on the battery 2009, so all I can guess is I used one from my Hellcat crash (I cycled the battery numerous times for integrity) and several dead sticks with the P-40 finally fatigued the tabs.

Lesson: It will never get better in the air.



The other item is those nasty APC props. Don't get me wrong, they are the best flying

props but boy are they sharp. I use wood props exclusively but I grabbed an old 3D flyer that I had an APC on. I was kneeling and priming my carb with my starter motor and slit my knee – OUCCCHH! I used a band aid for a butterfly. When I got home I used some liquid skin to close it up.

Lesson: Carry liquid skin in your flight box (and watch those APC props)

That's all for now, see you at the Christmas Party and as always,

Godspeed and safe landings

Mike L.

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## **THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT DID**

*by Terry Dunn*

NASA routinely receives thousands of applications to fill precious few astronaut vacancies. I'm not really sure how the agency ultimately decides whose dreams will soar and whose will be crushed, but it certainly must be an unenviable task. I imagine a panel of wizened, salty veterans who use the calculated callousness of an insurance adjuster and the misty clairvoyance of a psychic to whittle down that stack of applicants to just a few names; names that can be counted on in stressful situations; names that will be engaging ambassadors; names that will not squander the exceptionally rare human experience of a voyage into space.

Whatever the real selection process may be, USAF Lt. Col. Robert (Bob) Behnken made the cut in 2000 and has since flown on STS-123 and STS-130. I worked with Bob while providing crew training support for both missions. As the STS-130 launch neared, Bob pulled me aside and offered to carry a personal item of mine on the flight. The initial

flattery of his offer masked the challenge that I had been given. Hours later, as I pondered my choices, I suddenly felt a strong kinship to that tormented panel of astronaut selectors.

How do you choose an object worthy of such an experience? This widget of my choosing would endure all the visceral contortions of a Space Shuttle flight: The uneasy "twang\*" just before liftoff, the cacophonous shove of the Solid Rocket Boosters and the majestic awkwardness of zero-G, just to name a few. While my inert trinket would lack the cognitive ability to appreciate these events, it would—much like an astronaut—be forever altered by its unworldly experience.

In the end, I chose a Cox .049 Baby Bee to represent the many ways in which the aeromodeling activities throughout my life have served to shape my current position as an adult. It was a Cox engine that provided my first taste of powered flight. The tiny buzzing engine pulled a plastic Fairchild PT-19 through meandering circles, as I stood in the center fighting off vertigo. In later years, a stable of Baby Bees powered countless projects that cultivated my fascination with flying machines. Those engines also endured my fearless compulsion to disassemble and investigate all things mechanical.



I may have cursed the Cox's cantankerous nature at times, and I still bear scars from periodic aloofness towards whirling 6-inch propellers. However, I can think of no other

engine that could have powered my explorations of the intricacies of flight within the skills and budget of a 12-year-old. I also have no doubt that it was those experiences that cemented my ambition to study engineering and enter the space program.

With my personal Space Shuttle payload chosen—actually, NASA called it “ballast”—my relief was short-lived. I no longer owned any .049s! I had given away my entire stash after converting my fleet to electric power several years earlier. I sent a hasty email to my inner circle and was soon offered multiple examples. The fact that I had never used the particular engine chosen was of no concern. The purely symbolic gesture of sending any Cox .049 into orbit was satisfaction enough.



When the orbiter *Endeavour* launched in the early morning hours of February 8, 2010, I viewed the event on a TV monitor shared with other support engineers at Johnson Space Center. We all cheered loudly as the shuttle broke free of its Earth-bound shackles. Privately, I chanted one more silent “hooray” for that Baby Bee. Nestled somewhere atop the columns of flame, among the people, parts and provisions bound for the International Space Station, was my tiny engine. Despite its current, tacit state, this motor was at the beginning of its greatest flight— an unlikely adventure made possible by the journey its many brethren had provided me.

*\*“Twang” is astronaut jargon for the swaying motion caused when the Shuttle’s three main engines fire while it is still attached to the launch pad, about six seconds before the two Solid Rocket Boosters ignite to initiate liftoff.*

## **THE B-24**

by Michael Laible

The bomber project is coming along and a light at the end of the tunnel is visible. The fuselage is completely covered with cloth and epoxy. The outer wing panels are complete and the inner wing is getting covered as you read this.

I’m not fooling myself, a lot of work remains, but a light is visible.

Next we will sand and fill, assemble, add little details, complete the turrets, complete cockpit, and yadda, yadda, yadda. We are shooting to be ready for final; detail and painting by the first of the year.

First wheels rolling should be end of March or April. Below are a couple of pics with the wing and tail bolted on. Herman was so excited he had to run down and put on his Sunday clothes!!





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## **OCTOBER MODEL OF THE MONTH**

*by Michael Laible*

For only the second time this year – no Model of the Month

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## **NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES**

*by Kent Stromberg*

Guests: Koichi Wakata and Blake Chamberlin

Mike McGraw will get 55 gal Garbage bags for garbage and also a Gallon of hand Sanitizer for the Port o Potty to be kept at the Pin bench or thereabouts

Fun Fly will for Oct – That was postponed will be cancelled due to being so close to Christmas.

Christmas Party will be Dec 8<sup>th</sup>. Everyone to bring side dish or dessert or some sort of finger food.

Electric now at the field

No treasurers report as he was absent

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## **BEST ELECTRICS IN SOUTH TEXAS**

*by Terry Dunn*

October 7-8 was the annual Best Electrics in South Texas (BEST) event at the Tri-County Barnstormer's field in New Waverly (just north of Conroe). This is a big electric event and attracts a lot of modelers from Houston, Dallas, and all points in between. Per my usual method, I headed up on Friday the 6th to stake out a spot on the flightline. I arrived before lunch and there was already a good crowd gathered at the field. Unfortunately, there was also a strong breeze blowing 90-degrees across the runway. The wind never let up during the next three days.

Despite the wind, there was a lot of flying and a lot of very cool models to see. My friend Keith Sparks from the Dallas area always brings cool stuff and this year was no exception. He brought a huge A-10 ducted fan as well as a scratch-built 1/4-scale P-40 that weighs only 17 pounds! Keith's company [www.parkflyerplastics.com](http://www.parkflyerplastics.com) recently released a series of "cartoon" warbirds that are made of sheet foam and molded plastic parts. Keith spent a lot of time during the weekend sharing his build techniques for these little birds.



On Saturday, fellow JSCRCC members, Bill Schwander, Billy Schwander, Randy Stone, Don White, and John Hirosaka rode up in Billy's RV for the day. We all had a good time chatting under the canopy, doing a little flying, and checking out the other models. One of my favorite things about best is the large variety of models always present. Big, little, scale, profile, fast, slow...it's all well represented and everyone plays well together.



My buddy Lee Ray was also there and we put in several aerotow flights with his Piper Pawnee/Multiplex Easy Glider combination, as well as my C-47/Waco CG-4A duo. With the strong wind, the gliders became airborne as soon as the tug moved forward. Luckily we defeated the wind and put the gliders right back on the runway at the end of each flight.

Lee, Keith, and I camped at the field so that we could do some night flying after the sun

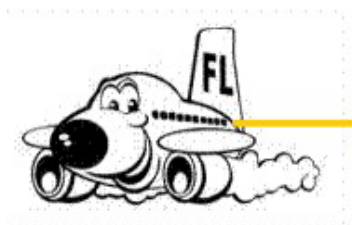
went down. Several other modelers had the same idea, so there were a lot of very creative lighting set-ups to admire. The only downside to camping was the extremely hard and course ground that made sleeping fitful. Where are Billy and his RV when you need them!



On Sunday morning, the talk at the field centered on an approaching storm. So we broke down camp and put in a few last flights before the rain arrived...and boy did it arrive! I know we really needed the rain, so I won't complain. At the awards ceremony, I was pleased to learn that Lee and I won the Pilot's Choice and Technical Achievement awards for our aerotow flights. That was a nice surprise to top off a great weekend of RC fun that refused to be bullied by the wind.



If you have any interest in electric flight, plan to attend BEST next October. I'll be there.



JSCRC Club Cordially invites all Club members and their families  
to the Annual Christmas Party

December 8, 2011 at 7:00 pm (2nd Thursday) at our normal meeting site  
in the activities building at Clear Lake Park.

The main course will be provided (Tony's BBQ) and we  
ask that each attending family bring either  
a finger food snack or a desert for approximately 6 people.

To make sure we provide enough BBQ, an RSVP to  
Kent Stromberg at **281-480-0095**  
or email **wkstromberg@comcast.net** with the number  
of attendees in your family would be appreciated.

Please come and help share in the Holiday spirit  
and celebrate another year of flying fun.



## Upcoming Events

12-10 Texas City – Heli Fun Fly

## Club Officers

### President:

Mike Laible 281-474-1255(H)  
281-226-4192 (W)  
mrlaible@sbcglobal.net

### Vice-President:

Phil Elting 281-333-1125 (H)

### Treasurer:

Dave Hoffman 281-479-1945(W)  
832-689-620(Cell)

### Secretary:

Kent Stromberg 281-480-0095(H)  
281-724-3762(W)

### Membership Committee

Herman Burton 281-474-7133(H)

### Safety Officer:

Dave Bacque 281-486-1695(H)

## Instructors

### Chief Instructor:

Dave Hoffman: 281-479-1945 (W)  
832-689-6201 (Cell)

### Fixed:

Mike Laible: 281-474-1255(H)  
281-226-4192 (W)

James Lemon: 832-385-4779

Clay Bare: 281-488-2992

Herman Burton: 281-474-7133

Mike McGraw 281-844-5431

### Heli & Fixed:

Brian Campiano: 832-524-9590 (H)

## The R/C Flyer

Articles and Want Ads may be submitted to the Editor, Whoever that may be

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### Club Homepage

<http://www.jscrcc.com>