



December 2012

# Thunderbolt

Ray Field LAT: 42.5062 N LON: 83.5987 W

## Editor's Note:

December.....football schedules have been completed, Christmas, New Year's and the bowl season all start this month. For RC advocates, it's repair and build season. What projects are Ribcrackers working on? I would like to publish them in upcoming issues. Send me your pics.

Marshall Stern has taken over the raffle coordinator's job. Look for his note on page 2. He replaces Warren Wells who did a marvelous job for the past three years. Thanks Warren - the club appreciates your efforts. It is a big part of club meetings.

For the hearty "all season" flyers, Scott has some useful suggestions on page 3. Last winter was rather mild for Michigan enabling more flying days and more pilots took advantage of them. Hopefully this winter will be a repeat. It's not too early to start your strategy for First Flight of the year bragging rights.

Last December Leon Narozny organized a club get together at a local restaurant. There were a lot of laughs going around and a good time was had by all. Let's have another - who is in for setting it up?

It's election time - again - for the Ribcrackers, new officers will be elected at the December meeting. Every successful organization has good leadership to guide it's members to accomplished the goals for an on going program.....*and there in lies the rub.....*few people are willing to volunteer. As past president Alex Alexopoulos stated in his farewell note in the Thunderbolt....."great things happen when people put their minds together and there are no limits to what a group can accomplish and achieve when they all truly care".

The Ribcrackers Model Airplane Club is over 50 years old, the club has accomplished and achieved - it's still up and running. Who will lead it next and beyond?

Have a very Merry Christmas and a fun-packed New Years Eve and Day. See you at the meeting.



## December Club Meeting

Monday, December 3, 7:30 pm

Livonia Senior Center 5 Mile & Farmington Road

# Ribcrackers November Meeting Minutes—November 5, 2012

November meeting called to order at 7:41

Previous meeting minutes approved as written.

**Treasurer** – Last grass cutting has been done. Porta Potty will stay in place but there is no service until spring so use sparingly. Still have money in the bank. There will be a full reporting of our finances at next month's meeting.

**Secretary** – Student night was a rousing success this year. Congratulations to Josh for getting signed off.

**Vice President** – Canopy should have been taken down to avoid damage during the windstorm. In addition to the canopy there were other signs of damage. Possibly vandalism or the result of the storm? End of year field cleanup worked out great. Much was accomplished. Thanks to all that participated.

**President** – Is there someone that would be able to store the tarp over the winter?

- There was a suggestion that we build something similar to what the Midwest club has which allows the tarp to be retracted when not in use to prevent damage.
- Over all it looks like it was a good year with good participation
- With the build season starting we need to start thinking of possibly a winter club project.
- Talked about setting up a private swap meet at John Shoemaker's house
- Looking for ideas to replace the field box. Maybe having a smaller one will reduce the amount of garbage that accumulates inside. Still need the frequency board because there are still several people that fly 72 Mhz
- Can we post a list of members and their contact information so that it is easier to coordinate flying times?
  - Roger suggested that there are several ways that this can be accomplished such as a facebook forum, emails, encrypted page on Ribcrackers site
- How about technical discussions covering batteries, pattern flying, etc.... Maybe pick one topic per meeting and have it lead by a knowledgeable member from our club or from outside.

## **Model of the Month**

Dennis Kirkwood brought in a Pilot RC 26% Yak with a 73" wingspan and DLE 35 gas engine. Plane purchased from Chief Aircraft

## **Raffle**

Marshall won the blue ticket

Gus won the 50/50 prize

Stan Harrison picked up the glow igniter

*Gerald Klose*

## **Raffle News**

Upcoming club meeting raffles will feature a brand new ARF (Cap 232 by Seagull), but need to sell near \$100.00 in tickets to let that go. Other items that will be in the next couple raffles will be a transmitter case made by Hobbico, a Dremel clone, Dremel accessories, Great Planes CG balancer, 2 matching Hitec Carbonite servos, Nankin gift cards to name just a few. Also, donations of items for the raffle are always welcome.

*Marshall*

## **UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS**

Dec. 3 – Ribcrackers Club Meeting –  
Officer Elections

Jan. 27, 2013 – RCCD Swap Meet



# Some Options for Cold Weather Flying



Well, it's time to face the ugly truth...the nice warm flying weather we've been enjoying is likely gone until next spring. Perhaps we'll get lucky and have some unseasonably warm weather like we had this past winter that will allow us to do some comfortable flying, but drawing to fill an inside straight probably has better odds. I don't know about you, but I hate to completely give up flying for the winter, and that leaves just a few alternatives:

- 1) Fly indoors. I've tried this, both with helicopters and small indoor airplanes, but it just doesn't seem to quite scratch the itch. It helps keep your reflexes alive, but then so does flying on a simulator, and neither one appeals all that much to me. Besides, most of the indoor flying venues are so crowded on flying night that it's like flying in a swarm of angry hornets; you really can't do much more than fly circuits and try to avoid collisions.
- 2) Go someplace sunny and warm to fly. Now, this solution has a lot of appeal, and it's fairly easy for me because I have a second home in southwest Florida, but it also has its drawbacks: a) it's expensive; b) it's hard to drag your airplanes and equipment on a long trip, especially by air; c) your significant other may have other ideas on how to spend your vacation time in the sunny south; and d) you need to find a club near where you're staying that will allow you to fly as a guest.
- 3) Give mother nature the one-finger salute, brave the elements, and fly outdoors anyway. There are plenty of winter days when it's nice and sunny and the field is clear of snowpack, but it's just darn cold. Nice warm boots, long johns, a thick parka, a thermos of hot fluid, and some kind of embarrassingly goofy hat take care of keeping most of you warm enough, the main problem has always been, what do you do about your hands while you're twiddling the sticks?

I've tried lots of different types of gloves, but I've never found any that are warm enough, yet thin enough to give me good control of the sticks, it's sort of like driving on black ice: you can do it if you have to but it's pretty scary, and if you do it long enough, you know what the eventual outcome is going to be. I've also tried using gloves with the fingertips cut off. That gives you the fine touch you need, but it seems to concentrate the cold right at your fingertips, and makes it feel even colder than if you wore no gloves at all. A couple of years back I found a solution that really works, and it's a lot cheaper than a ticket to Florida.

Several companies make insulated nylon bags that are specially designed to enclose your hands and your transmitter. These go by various names such as transmitter mitt, tranny bags, radio warmer, etc. The one I have is made by RaydioWarm, and seems to me to work best among the brands I've tried. The RaydioWarm transmitter mitt is made of heavy denier ripstop nylon and has a large clear vinyl window in the top that allows you to see your transmitter while you're using it. There are two short "sleeves" on the ends that include elastic cuffs. These fit over your wrists and effectively keep the wind and cold from getting into the bag. The front edge of the bag seals with Velcro and allows you to easily slide your transmitter into the bag and quickly seal it in. An adjustable shoulder strap clips onto the bag at the balance point to support the weight

of the bag, the transmitter, and your forearms. It's kind of like resting your forearms on a table while you fly. The sides and bottom of the mitt have stiff inserts in them to keep the top of the mitt from resting on the transmitter, and give you room to move your hands around.



**Keep your hands toasty warm while flying in frigid weather with a transmitter mitt. The Velcro closure in front opens so you can slide the Tx in and out easily.**

I've used my transmitter mitt while flying in temperatures down to about 10°F, and I've found that my hands stay toasty warm. If you really want to roast your hands, you can toss one of those disposable chemical hand warmer bags inside the mitt and it will get downright hot in there. If you use a LiPo battery in your transmitter, you probably know that its performance is dramatically reduced by temperatures below freezing; the mitt helps solve that problem too.

While we're on the subject of LiPos and cold weather, here's another item I've found that is very helpful for cold weather flying of electric airplanes. If you've ever let your LiPos get cold at the field and then tried to fly with them, I'll bet you were shocked by the result. Once they've gotten cold-soaked, even brand new, fully charged LiPos will barely deliver any power at all. I found this out when I first started flying electric helicopters several years back. I loaded my helis and flight batteries into the car one cold morning, planning to fly after work. When I got to the field that evening and tried to take off with the cold-soaked batteries, the motor would barely turn the rotor!

To get around this problem, you can leave your batteries in the car with the engine running and the heat on while you fly. This has the advantage that you can climb inside to warm yourself up periodically. If you don't want to go that route, here's a better solution. I found this electric food cooler/warmer at Target selling for \$19. It's just the right size to fit a six-pack of pop or beer cans, or a day's flying supply of LiPo batteries. It's basically an electric thermal siphon that can be set either to heat or cool, and runs on 12 volts DC from your car cigarette lighter, so you don't need an inverter. It's advertised to keep food warm at about 120°F, but like most things, the claims are a bit exaggerated. I've found that when fully filled with LiPos, it keeps them at about 80°F on a 20°F day, which is perfect. In the summer, you can use it to keep your pop cold at the field. It barely draws any current, so it won't run your car battery down if you let it run for several hours.



*Scott*

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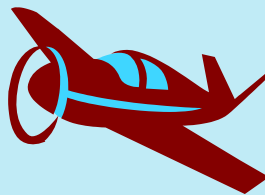
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