

Rio Grande R/C Flyers



The Fly Paper

January 2009
A.M.A. Chapter # 3723

News Letter
I.M.A.A. Chapter # 480

Editor: Bill Robinson: bill@rgflyers.org

Meeting Minutes January 7, 2008

Art Ratley, Secretary

The January 2009 meeting of the Rio Grande R/C Flyers was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by club President Bill Robinson. There were approximately 43 people in attendance at Rudy's BBQ restaurant in Pharr. The private meeting room was almost filled to capacity.

Membership cards were distributed, filled out and dues collected for the coming year by Roger Bell.

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December meeting as published in the Newsletter. Motion carried.

Roger Bell reported a balance of \$1791.00 in the Treasury. This includes dues paid up to the present time.

Safety Officer, John Bearden, said that there were no serious safety issues to report the past month, and that the barriers at the flight stations had added to the feeling of a more safe environment.

Bill reported that the concerns about the tree project at the field had been addressed. There were three trees planted on the west side of the road, with three more planned to be planted on the East side. As of now, the project on the East side has been put on hold.

The idea of a Grand raffle for the coming year was discussed. Bill suggested that the members be given a ticket for such events as attendance at the monthly meetings, Fun Fly's, clean up days and other special events. The amount of \$500.00 was suggested for the prizes, to be selected by a committee. The drawing would be held at the December meeting. Motion was made to accept the idea, voted on and passed. Ideas from the members for the selection of prizes will be welcomed. Rick Martinez was appointed chairman of this committee.

Bob Barry was appointed chairman of a committee to organize the club Fun Fly's for the coming year. Volunteers are welcome to contact Bob with their support of these events.

February Meeting Notice

**The February meeting
will be held on Wednesday
February 4th at
7:00 PM. The meeting
will be at Rudy's restau-
rant, located at 209 W.
Nolana In Pharr.
The club usually arrives
at 6 PM for dinner with
the meeting beginning
at 7 PM.**



Schedule of upcoming events:

Saturday January 17th - SMASH club swap meet in Harlingen. 2:00 P.M. Information on the website.

There is also a big swap meet in Georgetown, Texas this same day.

February 6, 7, and 8th - Weslaco Air Show. Rio Grande R/C Flyers plan to attend as a club. Plans to set up a tent with the club banner and participate all three days. No limitations on type or size of airplanes. David Mann reported that there will be a full scale air show on Saturday the 7th

Sunday February 15th - Fun Fly - Penitas field - 1:00 P.M.

A suggestion was made by Fred Mentzer to accept non-flyers as members of the club as guests for certain social events. A motion was made to have Bill appoint a committee composed of club officers, to study article 7, part 5 of the club Bylaws. This committee would report to the club any recommendation to accommodate those people at the next meeting. Motion passed.

One of our very special club members was presented a gift for his upcoming birthday in January. A shirt was given to Art Brock with his name and club logos embroidered on the front and back. Art was not only recognized for his birthday, but also for the many many years that he has supported, promoted, and actively participated in all the club activities. To show their appreciation to Art, everyone responded with a fantastic rendition of "Happy Birthday", which they had spent hours and hours rehearsing.

Next meeting will be Wednesday February 4th at Rudy's BBQ restaurant. Meeting adjourned without opposition at 7:30 P.M.



ON THE SAFE SIDE

From AMA District VIII

Cabbages and Kings

by Don Nix, Insider Safety Column Editor

"The time has come," the walrus said, "To talk of many things: of shoes and ships and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings ..."

-Through the Looking Glass (Alice in Wonderland) by Lewis Carroll

Or ... let's talk about safety, which can sometimes be about as interesting as talking about buying insurance or clipping toenails. However, we all know we need to do both from time to time, so let's start with a few thoughts and facts about safety when handling model engine fuel.

I owned a model fuel manufacturing business ("blender" would be a more accurate term) for a dozen years. For 20 years before that, I was involved in blending, packaging, and marketing a wide variety of flammable solvents used in the printing industry. Throughout those three-plus decades, I began to develop a healthy respect for the inherent dangers of flammable liquids—and a concern about the general lack of knowledge among even experienced users.

Flammable Liquids 101 (considerably oversimplified in the interest of brevity):

Flash point. Terrible sounding term, conjuring up all sorts of mental images. All liquids classified as either flammable or combustible by the U.S. Department of Transportation (and industry standards) have a listed flash point. Most often, the casual user assumes—incorrectly—that when the temperature of a particular liquid reaches that listed temperature, the liquid is going to explode or at least burst into flames.

Not so. That event would be the auto-ignition point, and in most cases is several hundred degrees F.

Briefly stated, flash point is the temperature to which a liquid must be raised before the vapors can be ignited by a source of ignition (spark, flame, etc.). Vapors—in engines, or in the open—are what actually ignite, not the liquid itself. To put things in perspective, here are the approximate flash points of some common liquids:

Gasoline: 45° F below zero!

Acetone: 0° F

Methanol: 50° F

Nitromethane: 95° F

Model engine lubricants: vary in the range of 350° F to 445° F.

Surprised? I knew you would be. So, as you can see, nitro methane, the baaaad-sounding ingredient in model glow fuel, is actually only about half as flammable as the methanol. The Department of Transportation classifies liquids with a flash point of 100° F or lower as “flammable;” higher than that as “combustible.” So, if the flash point of nitro were just 6° higher, it wouldn’t even have to carry the familiar diamond-shaped red label, because it would then be classified as combustible rather than flammable. Further, our hot glow fuel is actually far less flammable and dangerous than gasoline. Gas users, please take note! Flash point of typical sport glow fuels is around 60° F vs. the minus 45° F of gasoline.

Typically, people interpret stated flash points backwards ... a high flash point must be the most dangerous, right? Wrong. Here’s a simple memory device you will never forget: flash points are like paychecks—high is good; low is bad. Modelers typically fly in relatively warm weather, so if the ambient temperature is 60° F or above, glow fuel can be ignited by the presence of a spark or flame. The greater the difference between the flash point and the temperature of the liquid, the greater the danger; because, as the differential increases, the rate of vaporization increases dramatically.

Example: Suppose the temperature of your fuel reaches 90° from sitting in the sun, the back of your car, etc. That would be a 30° differential for glow fuel, but an astounding (and dangerous!) 135° for gasoline. Please, never forget that.

I’ve read reports where modelers had their fuel cans in the back of their vehicles, the starter battery contact points came in contact with the metal, shorted out and caused a dangerous fire. My personal opinion is that model fuel is safer in plastic jugs than in metal. Contrary to conventional wisdom, if the fuel blender has used the proper-type plastic jug, the fuel will remain just as moisture-free as in metal or better!

Toxicity 101

I hesitate to make a broad statement for fear someone will take it as license to do something stupid, but for practical purposes, the most toxic ingredient of glow fuel is the methanol. One of the big reasons is that—unlike many liquids



-methanol can be absorbed through the skin, and stated simply, it just ain't good for you. Ditto inhaling the fumes. No, it's not going to kill you on the spot, that day, or that month, but try to minimize your exposure. Finally, ingesting it could make you sick, possibly blind or kill you, depending on the quantity swallowed.

Dating back to about the time the earth cooled, methanol (methyl alcohol, referred to as wood alcohol in the dark ages) was always considered poisonous, and my recommendation would be to continue to treat it as such. Having said that, I'll add that about 15 years ago, the U.S. Department of Transportation decided it wasn't toxic, and not only rescinded the requirement to put the usual skull-and-crossbones symbol and written warnings on the outer shipping container, but threatened to fine anyone who shipped it that way. Trust me on that; it happened to a friend, and I had some shipments blocked until we removed the warning on the cartons.

I've been away from the glow fuel business for some years now, but the last time I looked, all the model engine fuel I saw still carried the same warnings on the fuel containers (plastic or metal, inside the box) to encourage users to be prudent. Please heed them.

When it comes to gasoline, I'll do what I wish our politicians would do more often: Admit it when you're not too knowledgeable about a subject. Nearly all my personal experience was with glow fuel, but I don't think I would go very far out on a limb by saying that when it comes to toxicity, gasoline is considerably less of a health threat than glow fuel.

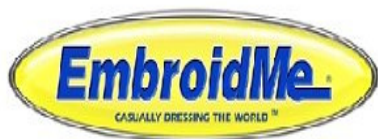


Club Shirts & Custom Items

The club has contracted with EmbroidMe for club related graphics and Logos. You can take your shirts to the store and they will embroider them for you. It takes about a week.

Price List :

- Option 1 Large logo on back Name on right chest \$23.00
- Option 2 Opt1 + Small logo on Left Chest \$30.00
- Option 3 Opt 1 & 2 + American & Texas flags 1 on each sleeve \$40.00



EmbroidMe-McAllen

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Here's what one source says: "No acute toxic health effects would occur during the normal course of using automotive fuels." Please note the bold, underlined, italicized emphasis. Water is the most essential substance on the planet to sustain life, but if one insists on diving into it and swallowing it, that person will die. Contrary to popular belief, gasoline is not just a single ingredient refined from crude oil. All of it contains varying amounts of many other chemicals, none of which would do your health any favors. Some states require gasoline pumps to carry a warning saying something like, "Gasoline contains ingredients known to cause cancer in certain ..."

That's enough for one session. Anyone who might care for more details, argue with me, or suggest subjects for future columns is free to do so at FLYERDON@aol.com.

