



The Pinnacle

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The Official Journal of the 495th R/C Squadron
Tewksbury, MA

AMA Gold Leader Club, Charter #340



This newsletter is e-mailed to whomever wants a copy each month. If you would like to be added to the list (or if you are receiving a copy and would like to be removed from the list) please contact the Editor at sales@advancednotebook.com

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495 R/C Squadron, Inc.

Next Meeting **Wednesday, December 3rd 7:30 P.M.**
Next Events Winter Meetup, December 13th
Club web site <http://www.495thsquadron.org>
Club Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/495th-RC-Squadron-240759615414>

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From the Editor

Newsletter is for everyone. If you have great ideas, stories and photos to share, please do not hesitate to contact me @ advancednotebooksolutions@gmail.com

In a few of the club's meetings for model building, I noticed that several members were asking questions about workshop setup. I remember that back in 2022, club member Bob Melino wrote an article about his first project after retirement: a new workshop.

I believe it's a good idea to republish that article, and the purpose is simple—to motivate those who want to get into building during the cold weather and have something to show off in the spring. Bob's workshop features climate control, great lighting with preferred color temperature, a dust-collection system, and everything needed to keep the place nice and neat—enough to pass wife's inspection. I'm sure every one of us would like to have a setup like that, but Bob made it happen. Check out his inviting and comfortable workshop—uncluttered and pleasant. I can't wait to visit and go over all the details with him.

Enjoy reading, and stay warm!

Calvin Hsieh
495th R/C Squadron Newsletter Editor



1st Winter Meetup @ Mary Ann's Dinner
Salem, NH (2025.12.13)

2026 Club Calendar

Please be sure to check the 'Events' page on the club website on a regular basis, and stay up-to-date with all the fun and important activities we have planned this year

Date	Location	Event Description
Dec. 3, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Scale Building with Jack Buckley!
Dec. 13, 2025	Windham, NH	Winter Meetup! Breakfast & ABC Hobbies
Jan. 1, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	New Years Day Flying! - 12 Noon!
Jan. 7, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Jan. 17, 2026	Hampton, NH	Winter Meetup! Hampton Airfield Cafe Lunch!
Feb. 4, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Italian Banquet!
Feb. 7, 2026	Ogonowski Field	Frozen Finger Fun Fly!
Feb. 14, 2026	Windham, NH	Winter Meetup! Breakfast & ABC Hobbies
Feb. 21, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Auction!
Mar. 4, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Mar. 21, 2026	Hudson, MA	Winter Meetup! American Heritage Museum
April 1, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Winter Project Show-n-Tell!
April 14, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Car Night Begins for 2026!
April 16, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Training Night Begins for 2026!
April 18, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Opening Day and Field Cleanup!
May 6, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
May 9, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Spring Fun Fly!
May 16, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Heli Fun Fly!
June 3, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
June 6, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - 'Kid's Day' Fun Fly and BBQ!
June 13, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Summer Fun Fly - Mike Pangione
July 1, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
July 11, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Scale Fun Fly - John Morley!
Aug. 5, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Ice Cream Social!
Aug. 8, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - National Model Aviation Day!
Aug. 15, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Multi-Club Fun Fly and BBQ!
Sept. 2, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Sept. 12, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Annual Member Picnic!
Oct. 7, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Oct. 10, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field Work Party!
Oct. 17, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Fall Classic Car Rally!
Nov. 4, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Annual Business Meeting and Elections
Dec. 2, 2026	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!

View From The Left Seat

By

John Morley, President, The 495th R/C Squadron, Inc.

It's hard to believe that the Thanksgiving Holiday has already passed, and that the 2025 flying season has come to an end! Soon, the Christmas and the New Year holidays will be upon us as we get ready for 2026! Each passing year seems to go by faster and faster! I'm not sure if that is a consequence of getting older, or of just being busier than ever? Now that the flying and driving season is mostly over, I hope that everyone has switched into 'winter project' mode! Anyway, it's going to be a long winter, so I challenge my fellow club members to take on their own winter projects! I recently acquired a Seagull Models 30% (71" wingspan) RV-8 model, which I will be powering with a Desert Aircraft DA-35 gasoline engine. I've always loved the classic lines of the RV-8 airframe, and have considered a full-scale version as a 'retirement' project! Maybe Someday! I hope that you will undertake a similar project to help pass the long winter!

Field Procedures & Safety Guidelines

Board of Directors Meeting – Approved Sep. 24, 2025

Field Marshals – Lew Sanderson & Jerry Pacelli



*It is the responsibility of **all club members** to abide by these simple guidelines.
If you observe someone who isn't, please ask them to cooperate. The following guidelines
were designed to make our field the best and safest:*

Many of you are aware that we recently updated our Pinnacle St. airfield 'Field Rules', but many may not know why. Earlier this fall, a non-member showed up to the field on a Saturday morning believing he could fly as a 'guest' to check out our field. This individual had heard some favorable reviews of our field from some recent new members, and wanted to see for himself. This individual proceeded to assemble and fly his giant scale 100cc gasoline airplane. For context, this is probably the **biggest model airplane** ever flown at Pinnacle St.! By all accounts, the flight was 'memorable', but not in a good way! Flying well outside the boundaries of the field, and in close proximity to the nearby noise sensitive condo complex, our intrepid pilot put on a dizzying display of airmanship, so dizzying in fact, that several observers commented 'he's going to crash', which he proceeded to do in spectacular fashion near the tree line and in close proximity to the roadway. To say that this flight was a public relations disaster for the club would be a massive understatement!

Bob Merlino and I have spent weeks rebuilding our hospital and neighbor relationships that were left in tatters by this ill-advised stunt, and the negative effects may yet linger for a long time to come! The worst thing for me is that a number of club members – some who absolutely should have known better - witnessed the whole thing, and they all collectively sat on their hands as this truly unfortunate situation unfolded! How a totally unknown individual with a truly giant airplane can show up to our field, and proceed to terrorize the neighborhood without a single member asking 'is

this a good idea', or engaging such an individual before they fly is absolutely beyond me! If I've said it once, I've said it a million times, the safety and security of our field is the absolute responsibility of every member! The bottom line is that if it's not important to you to preserve our access to the Pinnacle St. field then I don't think we want you as a member!

The biggest take-away from all this is that we have now instituted a strict **'No Guests'** policy until further notice, and we are now requiring all members to display membership badges at all times! We also have two new 'Field Marshals', Lew Sanderson and Jerry Picelli. These guys will be the 'tip of the spear' for rules enforcement as we tighten up our flying activities at the Pinnacle St. field in the future! This is NOT to say that we can't all have fun and enjoy our model flying passion, but we need to do it in a manner that recognizes and respects the reality of the changing conditions around our field!

In order to help pass the long winter 'off-season', the club will be conducting several 'Winter Meetups' over the coming winter months. These winter gatherings will generally include a meal, and an aviation themed venue. On Dec. 13th, the club will meet at 10AM at Mary Ann's restaurant in Salem, NH for breakfast, followed by a visit to ABC Hobby in Windham, NH. ABC will be offering a 10% merchandise discount to all club members. On January 17th, we will be meeting at 12 noon at the Hampton Airfield Café in Hampton, NH for lunch. On Feb. 14th, the club will meet at 10AM at



Mary Ann's restaurant in Salem, NH for breakfast, followed by a visit to ABC Hobby in Windham, NH. Finally, on March 21st, the club will meet at 10AM at Victor's 50's Cafe restaurant in Hudson, MA for breakfast, followed by a visit to the American Heritage Museum in Stow, MA We will be sending email reminders as these events approach, so stay tuned!

Winter Meetup @ Mary Ann's Dinner

Salem, NH (2025.12.13)

In addition to these proposed field trips, we will also be having a couple of Events at the Ogonowski Memorial Flying Field. The first, on Jan. 1st, will be our annual 'First Flight' event at 12 noon! The idea is for as many members as possible to fly on the first day of 2026! Frankly, while it's a totally impractical event, it does give our participating members 'bragging' rights for the entire year! Hot dogs and hot chocolate will be served for all who can make it! Later in the winter, we will host a 'Frozen Finger Fun Fly' on Feb. 7th at 10AM. Stay tuned for more info! Finally, we have a lot of great meeting entertainment lined up for the winter months, and we hope to see as many members attending as possible!

At the November business meeting, the club voted unanimously to re-elect John Morley as President, Bob Goulet as Vice President, and Bob Merlino as Secretary/Treasurer. The club also voted to re-elect Bill Smeltzer as Director, and elect Mike Chase and Mike Wall as new Directors! I would like to personally welcome the 'two Mikes' to the leadership ranks of the 495th R/C Squadron. As an all-volunteer club, we depend on the folks that step forward each year to undertake the tasks necessary to keep the club running. These tasks range from the mundane chores of bill paying and event planning, to helping to plan the future direction of your club. It's all vitally important, and I sincerely appreciate all those who volunteer to make our club the exciting and vibrant place it is for all members!

Coming up at the January meeting on Jan. 7th, the club will welcome Andy Stewart KB1OIQ of Westford, who will be discussing antique radio restoration. Andy's subjects include AM, FM, ham radio, and shortwave receivers! This is sure to be an exciting and informative talk! Coming up at the February meeting on Feb. 4th, will be the annual *Italian Banquet and Awards Ceremony*! Beginning at 6:30PM, we will be serving a full Italian meal consisting of Spaghetti and Meatballs, Salad, Rolls, Soft Drinks, Dessert and Coffee, all for the price of \$5 per person. This event will require pre-registration to allow for the purchase of an adequate amount of food. Sign-ups are already live on the website!

I want to remind everyone that there are **four things** required to fly at the Ogonowski Memorial Model Flying Field. (1) The first requirement is AMA membership. (2) The second requirement is club membership. (3) The third requirement is FAA registration of your UAS/Drone. (4) The fourth requirement is a TRUST certificate. The first two items will be strictly enforced this year at the field. The FAA registration (FAA Drone Zone), and the TRUST (The Recreational UAS Safety Test) certificate administered by the AMA will be 'self-certify. We expect everyone to comply with these requirements, but we will only enforce AMA and club membership!

The Event schedule for 2026 has been posted to the website! A number of Events are already on the schedule, and more will be added throughout the year as details are firmed up! Please be sure to check the website frequently so that you are up-to-date on all the latest club happenings!

After a long hiatus, the 495th R/C Squadron will be hosting an R/C Auction on Saturday, February 21st at the Tewksbury Congregational Church. Setup for the Auction will begin at 10:30AM, with viewing available starting at 11AM. The actual Auction will start promptly at 12 noon, and run until 3PM. The kitchen will be open at 11AM for coffee and donuts, as well as hamburgers, hot dogs, pizza and soda. We will be having both a merchandise and a 50/50 cash raffle during the event! This is sure to be a fun event, so please plan to attend, and pass word! Stay tuned for more details as we get closer to the 2026 Auction date!

As the end of the year approaches, please keep in mind that AMA and club memberships expired at midnight on Dec. 31st! This means that unless you've renewed your AMA and club memberships before then, you are no longer eligible to fly at our club fields beginning on Jan. 1st, 2026! Please don't wait, and get your renewal done as soon as possible! AMA renewals are now being received, and we will continue club membership renewals at the January 2026 club meeting! As in past years,

we also plan to host several membership renewal events at the field starting in December. Please stay tuned!

Again, a reminder that each month the BOD will meet on the **Wednesday** evening immediately preceding the regular club meeting. Our meetings are held at the Tewksbury 99 restaurant on Rt. 38 in Tewksbury, and begin at 7:30PM. Occasionally, the BOD does not meet in a given month due to schedule or calendar conflicts, and every effort will be made to notify the membership by email when this happens. As always, there is plenty of room at every BOD meeting, and the atmosphere is informal, so we invite interested members to attend! The next regular BOD meeting will be held on Wednesday Jan. 14th, 2026 at 7:30 PM. Note: This a rescheduled date due to the New Year holiday.

I hope you see all of you at upcoming club meetings, and at the field!



John Morley
President, The 495th R/C Squadron, Inc.

Dec. 8th , 2025

Officer Elections 2026

On Nov. 6, 2025, the 495th R/C Squadron, Inc. held club officer elections for the 2026 season. The following officers were elected by a unanimous vote of the membership. Club sincerely appreciate all those who volunteer to make our club the exciting and vibrant place it is for all members!



President/Chief Instructor
John Morley



Vice-President
Bob Goulet



Secretary/Treasurer
Bob Merlino



Director
Bill Smeltzer



Director
Mike Wall



Director
Mike Chase



Field Marshall
Jerry Picelli



Field Marshall
Lew Sanderson



Scratch Build Cessna C337 Skymaster

Oct. Member Meeting – Wednesday, Oct. 1st. – Club member and good friend Bob Merlino will be showing his latest build, the *Cessna C337 Skymaster* at the October meeting. Bob is a very skilled model builder, and his builds never disappoint! While not yet complete, Bob will discuss the planning and execution of a scale model project such as the C337. Refreshments will be served at the meeting!





Fall Classic Car Rally 2026

The 495th R/C squadron, Inc. hosting a *Fall Classic Car Rally* on Saturday, Oct. 18th, 2025. Registration and practice begins at 9AM, with racing taking place between 10AM and 2PM. This informal car racing event will feature a noontime BBQ, a raffle, and on-site technical experts to help you with your car setup questions!





Photos by Rita Smeltzer



Model Building and Scale Competition

Special Guest: Top Gun Winner Jack Buckley

On Wednesday, Dec. 3rd, at 7:30PM at the Tewksbury Congregational Church! We will have a special guest speaker, Mr. Jack Buckley, to discuss scale model building and scale competition. Jack is a long-time scale competitor, and a Top Gun winner. Jack will be presenting a ¼ scale Fairchild Model 24, and will be sharing some of his secrets for successful scale modeling. Jack will be happy to answer any questions following the presentation!





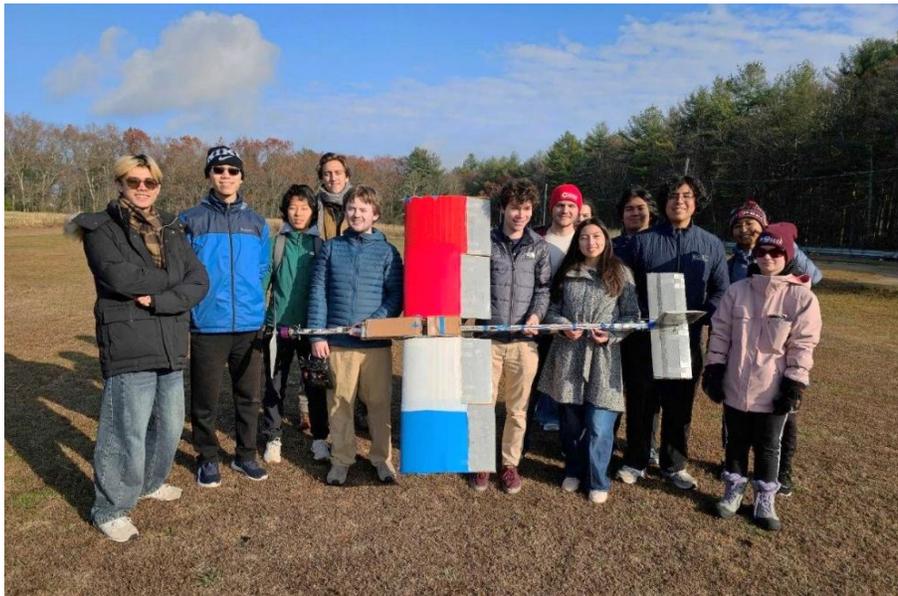
MIT Design, Build, Fly

The 495th R/C Squadron has always been supportive of educational and commercial groups wishing to use our facilities for flight testing. One such example is the MIT *Design, Build, Fly* team, a group of under-graduate and graduate students at MIT that develop aircraft for the annual AIAA (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics) Design, Build, Fly competition.

Student teams will design, fabricate, and demonstrate the flight capabilities of an unmanned, electric powered, radio-controlled aircraft which can best meet the specified mission profile for the contest that year. The goal is a balanced design possessing good demonstrated flight handling qualities and practical and affordable manufacturing requirements while providing a high vehicle performance.



Banner Deployment over Ogonowski Field



The 2026 MIT Design, Build, Fly team at Ogonowski field

A New Workshop

(Original post in August 2022 Newsletter)

Bob Merlino

Well, it's been a long time coming, but I finally have a new workshop for my hobbies. For many years my R/C modeling and electronic projects took place in a corner of my unfinished basement. This was only meant to be a "temporary hobby space", but you know how things go... I ended up using this makeshift shop for much too long. The place was cluttered and dusty with non-optimal lighting. The worst, however, was always the coldness of the basement in the winter. During the coldest part of the winter I found myself either avoiding going down there altogether or endure working on a project wearing a coat, with a space heater by my side. A hobby space should be fun and inviting... this was definitely not!



But no more! Earlier this year, it was time for action. Nothing exotic, I planned the construction of a finished room in the same corner of the basement. Just big enough, about 14'x13', but this time with all the comforts of home:

- Dry wall finish all around, suspended ceiling, laminate floor, window and door
- Electric baseboard heating
- Optimal lighting
- Dedicated vacuum system
- Two workbench setups: one dedicated to R/C modeling, the other to electronic projects
- Tool cabinet and a miscellaneous cabinet

I debated how to get the work done. I had two choices: do all the work myself or bring in a contractor and watch his crew do all the work, while I sipped on a cappuccino... I went with the cappuccino approach. A wise decision! Main construction was over in a week. The next step was the suspended ceiling. I did this myself... well, at least I can say I did something.

The lighting was next. Having been a sore spot in my old shop, much better lighting was a key requirement here. I ended up selecting two Lithonia 4' direct LED units, one over each workbench. Each unit delivers 3500-7000 lumens (selectable brightness), with a color temperature of 4000K. Perfect, properly lighted workbenches at last!

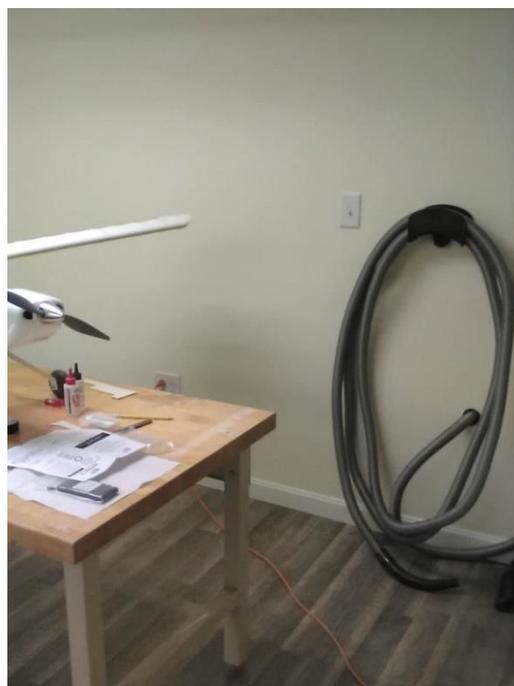
The heating was also critical. I spent too many winters freezing. An oversized electric baseboard with a digital thermostat was a simple and effective solution. The baseboard was purposely oversized so that the temperature in the room comes up quickly when I go in the shop.



The next order of business was the dedicated vacuum system. Building planes constantly generates dust. Dragging the shop vac into the workshop every time I want to clean up is a big hustle. Instead, I just wanted a vacuum hose hanging in the shop, with a switch next to it. When I want to do a quick cleaning, I just grab the hose and flip the switch. The vacuum unit itself sits outside the shop, avoiding clutter and noise inside the shop. I selected a Bissell Garage Pro unit, which comes with 32 feet of hose, perfect for my application.

The Garage Pro has multiple filters and a sizable dust collector. Of course, for my needs, it would have been perfectly fine if I just left at that. But that would have been too easy, after all this is a gadgeteer's workshop. As a suggestion from my electrician, I started reading about how professional wood shops manage dust. I quickly discovered that they use something called a "dust separator" to prevent their heavy duty vacuum systems from quickly becoming clogged and overwhelmed by the large amount of saw dust generated. The Dust Separator is a clever passive device, which is installed inline before the vacuum unit. The hose is the input to the separator. The output of the separator goes to the vacuum unit.

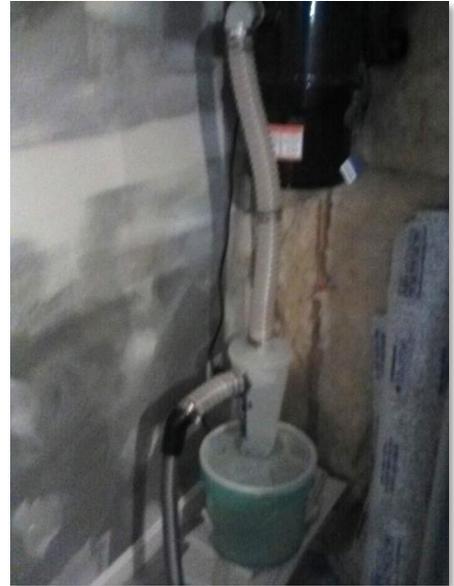
The separator has its own dust collection bucket. The pressure and dust received from the hose spins in a cyclone vortex inside the separator, causing virtually all dust to drop into the separator collection bucket, before it has a chance to travel to the vacuum unit. Since virtually all dust is prevented from going to the vacuum unit, the latter keeps working at full capacity, without degradation due to clogged filters.



Sure enough I found Oneida Systems that sell the “Dust Deputy”, a small cyclone suitable for DIY dust separator... couldn’t resist, had to get one of these. It’s working as advertised, so far it has collected an inch of wood dust in the separator bucket and virtually nothing has reached the vacuum unit.

But my luck continued. My wife agreed to paint the room. She can outdo a professional painter... yes I know... I’m lucky.

And so, I now have a very inviting and comfortable workshop. The goal is to keep it uncluttered and pleasant. The planes I build will have to take residence somewhere else in the basement. I should have done this sooner!



Bob Merlino

Winter Meetup

On Dec. 13th, the club will meet at 10AM at Mary Ann's restaurant in Salem, NH for breakfast, followed by a visit to ABC Hobby in Windham, NH. ABC will be offering a 10% merchandise discount to all club members ! (Photo by Calvin Hsieh)





@ ABC Hobby



Club Calendar

Jan. 1, 2026	New Year's Day Flying!
Jan. 7, 2026	Club Meeting
Jan. 17, 2026	Winter Meetup! Hampton Airfield Café Lunch
Feb. 4, 2026	Club Meeting – Italian Banquet!
Feb. 7, 2026	Frozen Finger Fun Fly!
Feb. 14, 2026	Winter Meetup! Breakfast & ABC Hobby
Feb. 21, 2026	Club Action!
Mar. 4, 2026	Club Meeting
Mar. 21, 2026	Winter Meetup! American Heritage Museum
April 1, 2026	Club Meeting Winter Project Show-n-Tell!
April 14, 2026	Car Night Begins for 2026
April 16, 2026	Training Night Begins for 2026
April 18, 2026	Opening Day and Field Cleanup!
May 6, 2026	Club Meeting
May 9, 2026	Spring Fun Fly
May 16, 2026	Heli fun Fly!
June 3, 2026	Club Meeting
June 6, 2026	'Kid's Day' Fun Fly and BBQ
June 13, 2026	Summer Fun Fly
July 1, 2026	Club Meeting
July 11, 2026	Scale Fun Fly
Aug. 5, 2026	Club Meeting - Ice Cream Social
Aug. 8, 2026	National Model Aviation Day Fun Fly
Aug. 15, 2026	Multi-Club Fun Fly and BBQ!
Sept. 2, 2026	Club Meeting - Annual Swap Meet
Sept. 12, 2026	Annual Member Picnic!
Oct. 7, 2026	Club Meeting
Oct. 10, 2026	Field Work Party!
Oct. 17, 2026	Fall Classic Car Rally
Nov. 4, 2026	Club Meeting- Annual Business meeting and election
Dec. 2, 2026	Club Meeting

R/C Suppliers:

ABC RC & Hobby 11 Rockingham Rd, Windham, NH https://www.horizonhobby.com	(603) 458-6481 All Around
http://hobbyking.com	All Around
https://rcexcitement.com	Cars
https://twistedhobbys.com	Profile Foamies
https://innov8tivedesigns.com	Great Motors
https://fpvlab.com/	FPV Equipment
http://www.crashtesthobby.com	Toughest Planes
https://www.towerhobbies.com	All Around
http://www.amazon.com	Extra All Around

Handy Links:

Renew Your AMA Membership Online
<https://www.modelaircraft.org/joinrenew.aspx>

495th Membership Application
http://www.495thsquadron.org/PDF_Files/Membership_Application.pdf

Online Groups
<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/index.php>
<http://www.helifreak.com>
<http://www.wattflyer.com/forums>
<http://www.rcuniverse.com>

Local R/C Groups
<http://www.mcrcf.org> Billerica, Mass
<http://www.burlington-rc.com> Burlington, Mass
<http://www.nhflyingtigers.com/> Derry, NH
<http://www.snhfcc.org> Hudson, NH
<http://www.snhflyingeagles.org> Merrimack, NH

R/C Related Podcast
<http://allthingsthatfly.com/> Excellent electric power help
<http://rctodayshow.com/> Mixed group with great advice