

Mark's News for District III --- 2017



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HAPPY NEW YEAR DISTRICT III !

AMA EXPO WEST 2017

For those that follow me on Facebook you probably saw I was in Ontario California January 5 - 10 for the annual [AMA Expo](#). This event is Toledo on the west coast. AMA is the main sponsor of the show and it's important for AMA to visit our members in the western United States. I would like to share some observations from the show. First, consumer attendance was down considerably from previous years. Also, vendor booths were down, most noticeably with Hobbico not in attendance. These things have a financial impact not only on the profitability of the show but also for AMA and the entire hobby industry. Several trends are apparent. The younger generation doesn't get excited about trade shows like you and I do. The information they need is on the internet and they make their purchases on the net. Vendors see this trend and say why spend money to go to a trade show. As popular as quads are there were fewer vendors displaying and selling them at this show than last year. I was amazed with the lack of quads at the Horizon booth however I was happy to see several [new aircraft](#) on display. One reason for lack of consumer attendance might be the gigantic Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas which was the same date as the AMA Expo. I believe all vendors selling "drones" for business or hobby were at the CES and not at the AMA show. On a positive note several [model clubs](#) had displays at this show promoting their facilities and events. Also, scale and soaring seems to be popular in California with several clubs promoting events. I talked to several vendors about their business at the show. Some were happy with their sales and others indicated they were down from previous years. If your following retail trends most brick &



and mortar stores. I was surprised to see several vendors who were not at the show last year. I was happy to see several new aircraft on display. One reason for lack of consumer attendance might be the gigantic Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas which was the same date as the AMA Expo. I believe all vendors selling "drones" for business or hobby were at the CES and not at the AMA show. On a positive note several [model clubs](#) had displays at this show promoting their facilities and events. Also, scale and soaring seems to be popular in California with several clubs promoting events. I talked to several vendors about their business at the show. Some were happy with their sales and others indicated they were down from previous years. If your following retail trends most brick &

AMA Membership Meeting



New AMA President Rich Hanson

AMA once again had a general membership meeting which was well attended. As you know we have a new [AMA President, Rich Hanson](#). Rich is no stranger to AMA and has been our government relations liaison with the FAA for several years. Rich is well respected in the full scale aviation world with the FAA and this is a positive thing. Rich pledged to give his best to lead the AMA in the coming years. One of the items discussed in the meeting was a new type CD license that will be introduced soon called "Event Manager". This

is designed for class C & D noncompetitive events. To obtain the license you take an on line course similar to the CD however it focuses mainly on safety and not competition questions. This is only for individuals who are not CD's now that would like to run a non-competition event and have it "sanctioned" by AMA. Watch for details on this new program the first quarter of 2017.

AMA/FAA MEETING

AMA had a public Q&A session with the FAA which has always been standing room only. This year a new representative for the FAA, Mr. Charles Raley, was on hand to answer questions. My observations from this meeting were our members this year were much calmer with respect to all things FAA. Last year, with mandatory registration the hot topic and fear of the unknown, our members were very edgy to say the least. I saw very little of that attitude this year. Second, from the FAA side, it was like night and day. The representative, Mr. Raley, answered

questions and was the most "pro AMA" of any FAA individual I have seen or heard thus far. Charles reiterated as long as our members fly under our safety code and are flying as a hobbyist that they have no intention in interfering with our hobby. Charles also said AMA is a community based organization and confirmed that some of our events like soaring and IMAC and pattern require us to fly higher than 400' and that's OK as long as we abide by the AMA safety code. While things seem calmer with in our modeling community vs the "drones" the fight is still not over. Already in 2017 there are over 100 new proposed legislation that are detrimental to our hobby according to Chad Budreau, AMA's Government affairs liaison. I urge all of you to keep your eyes and ears open in your local city, county and state for proposed legislation that is detrimental to our hobby. Many cities over react and attempt to make regulations that ground all aircraft of any kind. If you hear of this happening get in touch with me and I will get our AMA government relations team on it. Most times when these governmental agencies become educated on what we do they back off the legislation. Some of you have already been actively involved in your areas with this overreach of government and the AMA thanks you for your efforts.



AMA's Chad Budreau & Rich Hanson answer questions with FAA representative Charles Raley

Executive Council Meeting



AMA Public Relations & Government Affairs
Chad Budreau

Monday, January 9, was our first of four executive council meetings for 2017. We had a guest speaker, Mr. Jim Campbell of [The Aero News Network](#). This is a full scale aviation web based news video network however they are very pro AMA and consider us one of their partners in aviation. Jim spoke about the Consumer Electronics Show he had just attended in Las Vegas and commented the hobby segment of "drones" is sustaining and growing. The commercial sUAS segment is growing at a very fast pace and will continue to evolve rapidly in the future. Jim believes AMA should not ignore these trends and should consider having a booth at this show in the future to promote AMA to the emerging sUAS segment. President Rich Hanson kept our EC meeting moving in a very efficient manner and we covered a lot of territory. We had a long range planning

session that will be continuously evolving throughout the year. This brings me to some thoughts as to where our hobby is headed. AMA has been doing lots of polling and research of our current and new members and last year roughly 20% of our new members are the multi-rotor segment. How can you ignore it? Look at the FPV racing going on right now. Also, FPV with fixed wing aircraft is growing. As traditional modelers we shouldn't be alarmed, in fact, we should view this as an opportunity to grow our hobby. Invite these new enthusiast to you club fields and expose them to all the neat things we fly. We are hearing from clubs everywhere that some of these "drone" enthusiasts are flying fixed wing aircraft now. Let's get these folks involved and we will grow with new blood.

Let's encourage new members and clubs to do activities to promote our great hobby. AMA has many resources available at no cost to help you with this and I am happy to assist.


Final Thoughts

I want to assure you AMA has no intention of leaving any modelers behind. We do however have to recognize emerging technology and trends that will help guide the future of our great organization. That said I hope to see some of you at the new [AMA Expo East](#) on February 24-25-26, 2017. This show has a long history as the WRAMS and AMA was given the opportunity to become the title sponsor. This show will reinforce AMA's presence to members on the east coast. I know many District III members in Eastern PA attend this show because it is much closer for them than the Toledo show. The Akron OH indoor event is on Saturday March 25, 2017. Also, Toledo is April 7-8-9, 2017. I will again have a District III meeting and I hope to see you there.

Thank you for volunteering and making AMA and model aviation great. If you need anything to help promote model aviation in your area please contact me. I will do my best to help.

Sincerely,
Mark Radcliff
AMA District III VP
mradcliff@suddenlink.net

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FORWARD TO A FRIEND