

District III—Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia



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Vice President

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Bill Pritchett, education director of AMA, told me about a District III club, the Fairmont Flyers of Fairmont, West Virginia, that was doing great things with model aviation education. For several years, the club has teamed up with the NASA office in Fairmont to educate students about aviation. He suggested I check it out and present the club with an AMA Education Award.

Upon my arrival I was greeted by the Bond brothers: Mike, club president, and Kevin, club secretary.

I met Jamie Ford, student workshop coordinator, and Todd Ensign, program manager of the NASA IV & V Educator Resource Center. NASA invites middle school students from every county in West Virginia to attend scheduled aviation days. The day includes a classroom session with simulators and a wind tunnel at NASA, a trip to the local airport to observe full-scale aviation, and a trip to Meredith Field for an RC buddy-box session.

The NASA educators are grateful for the Fairmont Flyers because the buddy-box flying ties classroom knowledge together and the students get to fly. The program educates hundreds of middle school kids about general aviation and model aviation.

Thank you Fairmont Flyers for donating your club's field and your time and talents to educate these students. Who knows, one day these kids may be future astronauts, aerospace engineers, or model aviators.

On Saturday, August 4, 2012, I attended a Giant Scale fly-in sponsored by the Miami Valley RC Club (MVRCC). This event is held in the scenic Miami Valley area, roughly 20 miles north of Cincinnati near Lebanon, Ohio.

I was impressed by a nice, 300-foot paved runway with an additional 300 feet of grass. After a brief pilots' meeting by CDs Rob Duley and Jim Martin, the flying began.

The weather was beautiful and attendance was strong with every airplane imaginable from World War I and II warbirds to all kinds of aerobatic aircraft and everything in between.

MVRCC has a huge clubhouse where hamburgers and hot dogs kept everyone fed. The club usually holds this annual fly-in on the first Saturday of August. If you're looking for a great Giant Scale fly-in to attend in a beautiful scenic location, I recommend this annual event.

It's sad to report that politics have reared their ugly head in our hobby. I received word that the traditional Labor Day weekend Dayton Ohio Giant Scale (DOGS) event and the Cleveland National Air Show has been canceled because of the government sequester.

As you may know, the DOGS event is held on the Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton and has been one of the premier District III events. The Cleveland show is primarily a full-scale air show; however, the model airplane clubs in that area have traditionally flown demonstrations during the air show.

Because of government cutbacks, these events were canceled. This is a sad day for model aviation. These events bring in thousands of visitors and their dollars to the economy surrounding Dayton and Cleveland, and educate the public about model and full-scale aviation. Let's hope this will be the only year these events and others will have to face this situation.

Until next month, fly and have fun! 🛩️



Mark Radcliff (R) presents an AMA Education Award to the Fairmont Flyers' president, Mike Bond. NASA employees (L-R) Eric Sorton, Todd Ensign, and Jamie Ford look on.



NASA employees don't just talk flying to visiting students, they also participate. Mike Bond, club president, is on the buddy box with NASA employee Jamie Ford.



Top Gun competitor John Boyko shows his award-winning Pitts Special to a group of interested observers at the MVRCC fly-in.

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