District III—Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia

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On Saturday, July 7, 2018, I headed west to attend the annual Big Bird Fly-In hosted by the Celina Flying Sportsmen in Celina, Ohio. The Flying Sportsmen club field is located in Bunge Park with signage clearly marked, making it easy to find the facility.

The field was in superb condition with a long, wide grass runway mowed with golf green precision. In addition, I noted an extremely nice safety fence and a large aluminum awning near the center of the pit area that had electricity and several charging stations within it.

I was greeted by several club members, so I set up my AMA canopy and prepared for a great day of flying and fellowship. After a brief pilots' meeting, the field was open and a variety of aircraft flew all day. Several warbirds flew formation flights that entertained the spectators. I was impressed by the number of people watching the flying, and I was pleased to see that the club had a trainer airplane with a buddy box and several people trying RC.

A view down the flightline of the Celina Sportsmen event. Note the beautiful, manicured grass and the great safety fence.

Thank you Celina Flying Sportsmen for hosting a great fly-in and promoting model aviation. Your facility and hospitality should be a source of great pride to your club and community. Keep up the great work and I hope to attend more of your events in the future.

Flying Sportsmen club member Mike Lovett performed aerobatics with his biplane much to the crowd's delight.

On Sunday, July 8, 2018, I said goodbye to Celina, and headed east to attend the RC Eagles fly-in located in Bolivar, Ohio. The RC Eagles have hosted this event for many years. In 2014, it was renamed it in honor of Miles Reed, the club's well-known modeler.

In 2018 the club again experienced the passing of another well-known member, Gary Villard. Gary and Miles worked tirelessly to promote model aviation and were an inspiration to me and others not only in Ohio, but throughout District III and the entire nation. With the passing of Gary Villard, the club renamed its annual event as the Miles Reed-Gary Villard Memorial Fly-In.

It was an honor to attend this event knowing we were remembering and celebrating the lives of Miles and Gary. A special treat was the giant Weeks Solution biplane that Miles' good friend Ken Baker designed and built as a tribute to Miles. I was deeply moved and honored when Kenney asked me to fly it. It was only the airplane's second flight! As long as the RC Eagles club has its annual fly-in, Miles and Gary will not be forgotten.

Rest in peace Gary Villard (1942-2018). Photo courtesy of Lisa Zoldak.

Kenny Baker, Miles Reed's best friend, designed, built, and finished this beautiful Weeks Solution as a tribute to Miles.

Justin Gesquiere (L) flew his beautiful jet. Justin's nephew, Adrian Gesquiere (R), just recently soloed assisted.

Until next month, fly safely—fly AMA.

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