

# AV8R



## UPD8

### NEWSLETTER OF THE TRI-VALLEY RC MODELERS

### SANTA MARIA, CALIFORNIA

### CELEBRATING SIXTY YEARS OF FLIGHT

### 1965 - 2025

### AMA GOLD LEADER CLUB

### VOLUME 12, ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2026

## MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2026 MEETING:

President Mark Carlson opened the meeting at 6:20, a couple minutes early. Thirteen members present. First thin was to remind all that the \$80.00 annual dues are due; apparently there's an issue with paying them on the website, so either catch up with Treasurer Bill Korn or pay Mark. Have to find out why we no longer seem to have a PayPal account.. While you're at it, make sure your AMA Membership and FAA Registratio are current!

Feedback from the Christmas Party at Aj Spurs was highly favorable. It does seem the we tipped the servers pretty well, some intentionally, others by not realizing that there was already a gratuiry added to the check... Anyway, they should be happy to have us back. One side note was that Mike Noble won a nice big T-28 Trojan model. The rub was that Mike had donated the plane to the club as a raffle plane... It was up for sale online the next day, and apparently the new owner crashed it almost immediately. So it goes...



Former member Alan Sewell donated several planes and other stuff to the club; thank you very much. Alan is in his 90s and while he's still OK mentally, he's not very mobile. Jim McKean and Bill McKindley gave the planes a new home.

The box Mark is leaning on is the current Raffle Plane, an Arrows Marlin EDF jet. Didn't sell enough tickets to raffle it off this month, so it rolls to February. So buy a ticket! See Jim McKean!

The Runway extension project was completed in December, it cost a bit more than planned, about \$4000, but a large donation from an anonymous donor offset much of the cost. I'll be getting the AMA Field Improvement Grant submitted in the next week or so, now that we have the final numbers in. If approved, AMA may reimburse us up to 25%.

Jody McCoy, Vice President and Bill Korn, Treasures both agreed to continue in those roles, thank you, gentlemen!

Mark announced that we have booked the site at Lake San Antonio for three Float Flies this year: 12-15 March; 16-19 April and 5-8 November. The big Turlock event at Lake McSwain will be in October, and we didn't want to conflict. If you need more of a float fly fix, SAM will have four FFs at LSA: 10-12 April; 15-17 May; 11-13 September and 23-25 October. Check with Bob McGregor at SAM ([xpilotwon@gmail.com](mailto:xpilotwon@gmail.com)) before you go.

Jody is still trying to come to agreement with Elks Rec for the Giant Scale Fly-In for July. He's calling almost daily, hopefully we can get an agreement soon, it's not that far off.

The attendance drawing (\$10.00) was won by Steve Bircher (!), the 50/50 (\$25.50) by Rhonda Cardinal. Raffle plane rolls to next month.

Next meeting will be Wednesday 04 February, usual time and place.

# *PLANES OF FAME MAKING PROGRESS!*

***I went by the PoF site a couple weeks ago and they have a lot of concrete and steel going in. Can't wait for them to get the new facility open! My wife gave me a PoF membership for Christmas...***



## *CARBON CUB ALTITUDE RECORD*

On October 28, 2025, a CubCrafters Carbon Cub UL, piloted by [Jon Kotwicki](#), climbed to a GPS altitude of 37,609 feet over the California coast, setting an unofficial world altitude record for Cub type aircraft.

This was not a stripped down or bare bones flight. The airplane stayed very close to its stock configuration, flying with its full bush plane setup including 29 inch Bushwheels. The main changes were adding an oxygen system (thanks to [Mountain High](#)), a few minor adjustments to the [Rotax 916 iS engine](#) to handle the low pressure at altitude, and of course some camera gear.

To put it into perspective, in about 30 minutes the Cub climbed from sea level, where the air pressure is about 14.7 psi and it was a nice 70 degree day, to more than 36,000 feet, where the pressure drops closer to 3 psi and the temperature is around -51 degrees Fahrenheit. This is not a normal environment for a Cub, and as Jon said, "It was pretty dang cool to be in a tube and fabric bush plane that high."



### **INSIDE MISSION CONTROL**

The Cal Poly ground station (pictured above) resides inside Aerocrafted's Hangar 38. Paulo Iscold can be seen directing the flight with help from Cal Poly students and a few of us from Aerocrafted. From the ground station we could view the flight status, communicate with Jon and help coordinate with Air Traffic Control (ATC).

When airplanes climb above 29,000 ft, they've entered into Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum airspace (RVSM for short). This is where aircraft are spaced only a thousand feet apart vertically. To operate there, an airplane has to meet specific equipment and calibration requirements to prove it can hold altitude precisely; or it needs special authorization from Air Traffic Control.

That's where this flight got a bit more complicated, as Cubs aren't equipped with systems required for RVSM. The team got authorization for a block of airspace, but every step had to be carefully coordinated with ATC to make sure the aircraft had the separation it needed. While Jon was ultimately responsible for the flight, the ground station acted as a second set of eyes, tracking data, managing comms, and helping ensure he made it up and back down safely

## SUPPORT OUR "TOP GUNS!"



### 2025 TVRC CLUB OFFICERS

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