From the President

Challenge Yourself and Enjoy the Hobby More

I bought myself a new PC for Christmas. The old one's sound board went out some time ago. When I tried to load Real Flight, a simulator for small aircraft, it gave me an error message. So, finally I got to load it on my new machine and play with it.

For those of you who have enjoyed a recent version of Real Flight, you know it's a blast. It lets you fly all kinds of aircraft. I've been flying quads, with and without assist, helis, and lots of neat airplanes, like the Sbach. The thing is, you can do all kinds of crazy things and the only cost if you mess up is you have to press the Reset button.

So I've been practicing on helis and quads mostly. One thing is for sure, you better get good with that left thumb! For most of us airplane pilots, it's a little used digit. On everything else, skill is mandatory! Now I can fly my MSR Blade (without AS3X), without crashing in to the dog or the Christmas tree (or myself). Hooray!

All this made me realize again, something I really appreciate about this R/C hobby. The satisfaction comes from challenging yourself to learn and do new things. From the first time you picked up that transmitter with your precious model on the end of that radio wave, you knew there was risk; risk of failure, but you chose to try it anyway. And if you are reading this, you were most likely successful at learning how to fly, whether it was a plane, helicopter or multi-copter.

Wasn't the satisfaction of accomplishing that rewarding? I have known many folks who began this hobby and lacked persistence (some say hard hardheadedness), and they dropped out. Maybe they flew the same plane for one, two or five years. Somehow, the bloom fell off the rose. My guess is that there was no challenge left in it for them. (continued)

From the President (continued)

The adrenaline rush didn't happen any more. Too bad, because there is so much more to be had.

Last month I decided to study for the FAA Part 107 pilot rating. This rating allows you to fly aircraft under 55 lbs. for commercial purposes. Most of the time, that would be to photograph something for a commercial reason. As far as I can tell, it's a very similar test to getting a private pilot license. You have to know and read charts, lots of safety information, and a whole bunch more. This is a serious challenge, but I'm going to give it a go and see if I can get certified.

Challenging yourself is a great reward. I remember learning to fly model planes (before flight simulators). I questioned whether I would ever get the hand-eye coordination necessary to fly a Falcon 56. I looked around at all the other pilots standing next to me on that cool April, 1980 day; Vic Leerhoff, Boyd Bowdish, Darryl Zempel, Tom Tolstead and Doug Brueshaber. If they learned how to fly, so could I. At least, that's the challenge I put in front of myself. I'm glad I stayed with it. It changed my whole life in so many ways.

Now, I think I'll go back to doing some more outside loops with my 40% Sbach.

This Issue's Clippings
**Gyros for R/C Airplanes**

At the December meeting, Paul Johnson gave a presentation on gyros developed specifically for use in R/C Airplanes. R/C Helicopters have been using gyros for many years; to keep the tail boom from spinning uncontrollably to counter the force generated by the main rotor. But adapting heli gyros to use in planes often resulted in resisting the pilot’s input.

Paul saw a pilot in AZ that he says could “fly a brick and make it look good”. That pilot was using a gyro made for airplanes; the Aura 8 by Flex Innovations ([www.flexinnovations.com](http://www.flexinnovations.com)). Paul calls it “Awesome”. This gyro will not fight the pilot inputs.

The gyro reduces the small corrections you have to make for wind and other conditions; it will “crab” automatically in a crosswind, and input aileron when the attitude is close to a stall. Paul says it will make your plane feel like it’s much larger; a 60” wingspan will feel like a 90” one. The Aura does not require a separate power supply; and you can have multiple flight mode configurations in your transmitter. You can have 6-axis of orientation set up.

For certain configurations, the Aura only requires satellite receivers; no main receiver is needed. The Aura can be set up directly from your transmitter, or you can connect it to a computer, and use the menus to guide you through the setup. Paul demonstrated both methods.

- Awesome!

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**John Steinbeck’s Vietnam War Helicopter Experience**

In 1966 and 1967, John Stenbeck, the Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Of Mice and Men*, and many others travelled to Vietnam, documenting his experiences of the War.

Below is an excerpt from one of those dispatches, dated January 7, 1967, describing his admiration for the Huey helicopter pilots he often rode with.

“Alicia, I wish I could tell you about these pilots. They make me sick with envy. They ride their vehicles the way a man controls a fine, well-trained quarter horse. They weave along stream beds, rise like swallows to clear trees, they turn and twist and dip like swifts in the evening. I watch their hands and feet on the controls, the delicacy of the coordination reminds me of the sure and seeming slow hands of [Pablo] Casals on the cello. They are truly musician’s hands and they play their controls like musing and they dance them like ballerinas and they make me jealous because I so much want to do it, Remember your child night dream of perfect flight free and wonderful? It’s like that and sadly I know I never can. My hands are too old and forgetful to take orders from the command center, which speaks of updrafts and side winds, of drift and shift. Or ground fire only indicated by a tiny puff and flash, or a hit and all of these commands must be obeyed by the musician’s hands instantly and automatically. I must take my longing out in admiration and the joy of seeing it. Sorry about that leak of ecstasy, Alicia, but I had to get it out, or burst.”

From: *Steinbeck in Vietnam, Dispatches from the War*
Edited by Thomas E. Barden
University of Virginia Press, Copyright, 2012
Page 23.

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Paul Johnson’s Spendor airplane, with the Aura 8, accessories, and Laptop used for setup.
Do You Know Who This Is?

From King Kong Hobbies Facebook Site:
This person was shown on video shoplifting an Inductrix FPV RTF, and leaving in the van shown. If you recognize either, contact the Coon Rapids Police.

It’s a Bird; It’s a Plane; - It’s an Unmanned Aircraft System

City of Eagan, Minnesota - Government
January 3 at 3:48pm

If you, a relative or friend live in Eagan, this recent post on Facebook may interest you:

Eagan Parks & Recreation now offers a convenient permit sticker for your Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). This permit is offered to Eagan residents only and is valid for the life of your UAS. All UAS can only be flown at Lexington-Diffley Athletic Complex located at 4201 Lexington Avenue, George Ohmann Park located at 4730 Pebble Beach Way and Rahn Park located at 4425 Sandstone Drive due to FAA regulations. Upon purchase, your permit sticker will be mailed within 5-7 business days.

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