



# Eagle Screams



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Monthly Publication of the Screamin' Eagles

January 2004

The Screamin' Eagles Giant Scale Model Airplane Club meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month. If you have any questions about club activities or meeting location please contact one of the following members.

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## January Meeting to be held at Rex's Innkeeper



The January Screamin' Eagles meeting will be held at Rex's Innkeeper in Waunakee on **Thursday** January 8, 2004 at 7:00 PM. They have good food and drinks so come early and grab a bite to eat there to show our appreciation for using their place as our new fall and winter meeting site. For those of you who were unable to attend the last meeting, please see directions to the Innkeeper on page 4 of this issue. Remember...the January meeting returns to our regular second **Thursday** schedule.



### *Prez Sez – By Bill Disch*

OK so you talked me in to this! So I will do my best as your Prez. The first thing is I want to thank Rob for the great job he did during the four or five years he was the chief. I know I will need some input from time to time from Rob and from the rest of the membership. I don't have more to say at this time but I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and I wish you all a Happy New Year. See you at the Innkeeper.



## Member Web Pages

- Carl Bachhuber - <http://www.carlb-rcplanes.com>
- LeRoy Brandt - <http://my.execpc.com/~lebrandt/>
- Mike Pirkel - <http://maddogaviation.com/>
- Roy Seals - <http://hppilots.com>
- Le Roy Stuczynski - <http://galleryofaviation.com>

***Never fail to recognize the supreme sacrifice our troops are making to protect our country's freedom!***

## December Minutes – By Roy Seals

Rob called the meeting to order for the last time as our president and thanked everyone for their help in making things go smoothly. He recognized Le Roy for his hard work. As always, Rob had a joke to share. We would like to take this time to thank Rob for his willingness to be our president for the past years. We'll miss him as president. I don't know whether or not we'll miss the jokes... :)

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**Minutes** – Continued from page 1

Bill Dish is our new president. Roy and Mark are going to share the secretary position. We met at The Innkeeper which was a really nice place to eat and it had a room that was conducive to our meeting.

The highlight of the evening was our annual raffle with prizes going to the following people:

- Tom won an 80" Robinhood and a JR servo
- Joel -- a JR receiver and switch
- Le Roy -- a JR servo
- Mark -- allen wrenches
- Wayne -- 4 1/2" wheels and a JR servo
- Lyle -- a dash, a volt meter and a fuel pump
- Rob -- a JR servo
- Charlie -- a servo lead, a servo extension
- Roy -- servo wire crimpers

Here's wishing everyone a great new year! I will not be at our January meeting as I will be in California at the AMA Convention. I will try to bring back some pictures and info.

Roy



**Trez/Ed Sez** – By Le Roy Stuczynski

Wow! Can you believe it's 2004? I just got back from my first flight of the year at the Lodi Area Radio Control Club New Year's day fly in. It went fine but I know it will be my last until the grass is green and the temperature is at least 60 degrees!

Engines don't run quite right and the fingers and thumb just don't like it. Maybe they do but **I don't**. Thank God for the good weather today?

Well it looks like we got all the officers in place for 2004. Thank you Bill for stepping up and accepting the presidency and I echo your thanks to Rob for doing a super job over the last years. Thanks Rob! Let's give Bill a hand in carrying out his new job.

Don't forget that the February meeting will be held at the Gallery of Aviation and will include food and refreshments so come with your appetite and an urge to explore the enormous amount of memorabilia. Directions are on page 3 of this issue.

It's with deep regret that I must announce that it is necessary for us to close the Gallery of Aviation at my mother's home. My mother has reached the point in her life where she is no longer comfortable living in an unassisted atmosphere. We are in the process of finding her a comfortable assisted living home where she will find the security and comfort she deserves. I thank you mom for the years you have so selfishly given me to play with the Gallery of Aviation since dad left us. Now, together, we are challenged with finding her a new home and a new home for the contents of the Gallery of Aviation. Together we will successfully carry out that challenge.

This transition will not take place immediately rather it will be done in a way where mom gets a new home that will afford her to handle her life activities in a more comfortable manner and allow us to continue to share the amazing contents of the museum with those who dad intended it to benefit. The museum is still open by appointment for all to enjoy in its current location.

The December raffle meeting at the Innkeeper was well attended in spite of the inclement weather that night. The new facility worked out great and Mark Johnson sent me a note saying that it was the closest thing to a club banquet he had ever attended without being an official banquet. I think we "dun good" with our decision. Of course we continue to be grateful for the past courtesy of JJ's to allow us to use their facility.

Don't forget the January meeting is back to our regular second **Thursday** of the month schedule and will be held at the Innkeeper in Waunakee.

I was just looking at the volume number on this first newsletter of 2004. It's hard to believe that I have been doing the newsletter for 4 years. Remember that it is a lot easier when I get some help in the way of articles. You wouldn't want your 4 year editor to get "burned out" ya know.

See you at the Innkeeper!

Le Roy



## Questions & Answers

*In response to my plea for articles for publication, Harold Blossom gave me an article which appeared in Sport Aviation titled Q&A. This particular Q&A article was devoted to World War II Historical Information. Each month, in this block, I publish one question and answer, some of which may be completely unknown. Ron Twellman of the EAA Aviation Foundation Boeing Library provided this information. **This is the final of 15 Q & A in this series.** Thanks Harold!*

**Question: What was the Cactus Air Force?**

**A -** The code name for operation on Guadalcanal was CACTUS. The pilots operating there dubbed themselves the Cactus Air Force.

### Have you paid your 2004 dues?

Most of you paid have paid your 2004 dues. However, if you have not, please plan on paying your dues at the January meeting. Also there were a few of you who didn't renew last year and we would like to see back with us again. If you can't make the meeting, please send your \$10 dues to me at my address on the mailing page of this newsletter. Thanks!

Le Roy



**Check out Carl Bachhuber's new website at:**

<http://www.carlb-rcplanes.com>

## *How did we survive?*

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of use who were kids in the '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s, or even the early '80s, probably shouldn't have survived.

Our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paint. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cabinets, and we rode our bikes without helmets. As children, we would ride in cars with no seatbelts or airbags. Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horror! We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from doing this.

We spent hours building go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned how to solve the problem. We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. No cell phones. Unthinkable!

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo 64, X-boxes, or video games at all. No 99 channels on cable, video tapes, surround sound, personal cell phones, personal computers, or Internet chat rooms. We had friends! We went outside and found them. We played dodge ball and sometimes, the ball would really hurt. We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. No one was to blame but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it. We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out any eyes nor did the worms live inside us forever. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door, or rang the bell, or just walked in and started talking.

Little League had tryouts, and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Some students weren't as smart as others, so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat it. Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected; there was no one to hide behind. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law. Imagine that!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers, and inventors ever. The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success, and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all. And to all of you who are part of this generation—congratulations!

from *The Fly Paper*  
South Bend Radio Control Club, Inc.  
Jack Allinger, editor  
South Bend IN

### *Quotable Quote*

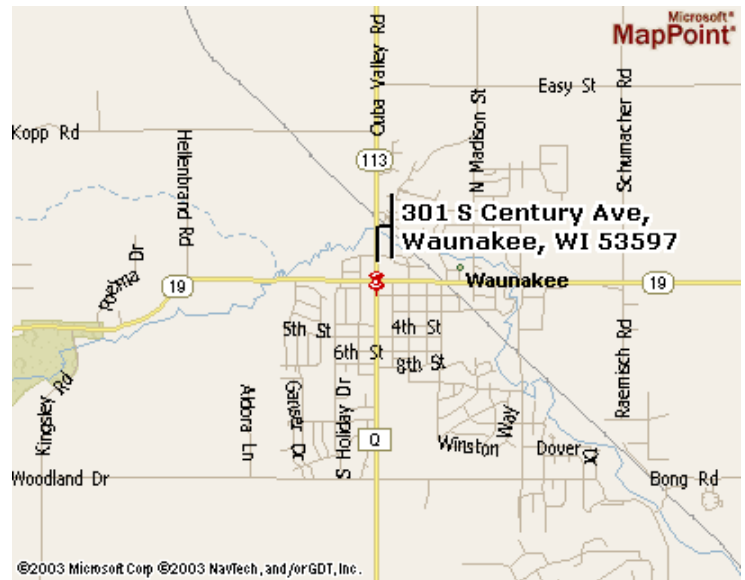
"The soaring problem is apparently not so much one of better wings as of better operators."

- Wilbur Wright as he observed buzzards in flight

(Funny how 100 years later that statement still holds true.)

## *How do I get to the Innkeeper?*

- Coming from Interstate 90/94, exit Hwy 19 west to Waunakee. Travel on Hwy 19 through Waunakee until you come to Hwy 113. There will be a Walgreens on the right hand side of the intersection. Turn right on Hwy 113 and the Innkeeper will be on the left about 1/10 mile or so.
- Coming through Madison, proceed as if going to JJ's but continue past JJ's on Hwy 113 until it intersects with Hwy 19. The road will curve to the left to Waunakee. Travel on Hwy 19 through Waunakee until you come to Hwy 113. There will be a Walgreens on the right hand side of the intersection. Turn right on Hwy 113 and the Innkeeper will be on the left about 1/10 mile or so.



If you get lost, call me on my cell phone at 335-1700 and I will guide you in for a landing. *Le Roy*

## *How do I get to the Gallery of Aviation?*

- If coming into Madison on US151, take the Aberg Ave. exit. If coming from I94 or I90 take the Hwy30 exit to Aberg Ave. Hwy30 will turn into Aberg Ave. At that point you should start seeing signs directing you to Dane County Regional Airport. The Bridges golf course and Shopko will be on your right. If you see these landmarks you're proceeding correctly.
- Proceed past Shopko on Aberg and exit on Hwy113 which will be Packers Ave. You will be going north. In slightly less than a mile Packers will become CV and 113 will veer to the left. Take the veer to the left which is called Northport drive. Soon you will see a Popeye's on the right and McDonalds on the left.
- Get in the right hand lane and proceed to the stop light at the corner of Northport and N. Sherman Ave. Turn right, going north, on N. Sherman
- Proceed north, about a block to the other end of East Bluff Condos and turn left on Troy Drive.
- The Gallery will be the first driveway on the right. You will see the Gallery of Aviation sign on the right. You are there! There is no parking on the Gallery side of Troy Drive.



## Facts About Balsa

Model airplanes are no different from any other type of flying machine, large or small. The lighter it is built, the better it will fly! With that in mind, it is easy to understand why balsa wood has been the standard material for model airplane construction since it first became readily available in the US in the late 1920s. Its outstanding strength-to-weight ratio enables hobbyists to construct durable models that fly in totally realistic manner. Balsa also absorbs shock and vibration well and can be easily cut, shaped, and glued with simple hand tools.

**Where does balsa wood come from?** Balsa trees grow naturally in the humid rain forests of Central and South America. Its natural range extends south from Guatemala, through Central America, to the north and west coast of South America as far as Bolivia, however, the small country of Ecuador on the western coast of South America is the primary source of model aircraft grade balsa in the world. Balsa needs a warm climate with plenty of rainfall and good drainage. For that reason, the best stands of balsa usually appear on the high ground between tropical rivers. Ecuador has the ideal geography and climate for growing balsa trees. The scientific name for balsa wood is *Ochroma lagopus*.

The word balsa itself is Spanish meaning raft, in reference to its excellent flotation qualities. In Ecuador it is known as Boya, meaning buoy.

**How does balsa wood grow?** There is no such thing as entire forests of balsa trees. They grow singularly or in very small, widely scattered groups in the jungle. For hundreds of years, balsa was actually considered a weed tree. They reproduce by growing hundreds of long seed pods, which eventually open up and, with the help of the wind, scatter thousands of new seeds over a large area of the jungle. Each seed is airborne on its own small wisp of down, similar to the way dandelion seeds spread. The seeds eventually fall to the ground and are covered by the litter of the jungle. There they lay and accumulate until one day there is an opening in the jungle canopy large enough for the sun's rays to strike the jungle floor and start the seeds growing. Wherever there is an opening, made either by a farmer or by another tree dying, balsa will spring up as thick as grass. A farmer is often hard put to keep his food plot clear of balsa. As the new balsa trees grow, the strongest will dominate and the weaker trees will die. By the time they mature, there may be only one or two balsa trees to an acre of jungle.

**How long does it take a balsa tree to grow?** Balsa trees grow very rapidly (like all pesky trees). Six months after germination, the tree is about 1 1/2 inches in diameter and 10 to 12 feet tall! In 6 to 10 years, the tree is ready for cutting, having reached a height of 60 to 90 feet tall and a diameter of 12 to 45 inches. If left to continue growing, the new wood grown on the outside layers becomes very hard and the tree begins to rot in the center. Unharvested, a balsa tree may grow to a diameter of six feet or more, but very little usable lumber can be obtained from a tree of this size.

The balsa leaf is similar in shape to a grape leaf, only a lot bigger. When the tree is young, these leaves measure as much as four feet across. They become progressively smaller as the tree grows older, until they are about 8 to 10 inches across. Balsa is one of the few trees in the jungle which has a simple leaf shape. This fact alone makes the balsa tree stand out in the jungle.

**How are balsa trees harvested?** While nature intended the balsa tree to be a short-lived nursemaid, humans eventually discovered that it was an extremely useful resource. The real start of the balsa business was during WW I, when the allies were in need of a plentiful substitute for cork.

The only drawback to using balsa was, and still is, the back-breaking work that is necessary to get it out of the jungle. Because of the way the individual balsa trees are scattered throughout the jungles, it has never been possible to use mass production logging procedures and equipment. The best way to log balsa trees is to go

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back to the methods of Paul Bunyan—chop them down with an axe, haul them to the nearest river by ox team, tie them together into rafts, and then float the raft of balsa logs down the river to the saw mill.

The logging team usually consists of two native Ecuadorians, each armed with a broad Spanish axe, a machete, and a long pole sharpened like a chisel on one end for removing the bark from the downed trees. Because of the hilly terrain, an ox team may only be able to drag two logs to the river per day. At the saw mill, the balsa is first rough cut into large boards, then carefully kiln dried, and finally packed into bales for shipment to the US via ocean freighter.

**Why is balsa wood so light?** The secret to balsa wood's lightness can only be seen with a microscope. The cells are big and very thinned walled, so that the ratio of solid matter to open space is as small as possible. Most woods have gobs of heavy, plastic-like cement, called lignin, holding the cells together. In balsa, lignin is at a minimum. Only about 40% of the volume of a piece of balsa is solid substance.

To give a balsa tree the strength it needs to stand in the jungle, nature pumps each balsa cell full of water until they become rigid—like a car tire full of air. Green balsa wood typically contains five times as much water by weight as it has actual wood substance, compared to most hardwoods which contain very little water in relation to wood substance. Green balsa wood must therefore be carefully kiln dried to remove most of the water before it can be sold. Kiln drying is a tedious two week process that carefully removes the excess water until the moisture content is only 6%.

**How light is kiln-dried balsa wood?** Finished balsa wood, often found in model airplane kits, varies widely in weight. Balsa is occasionally found weighing as little as four pounds per cubic foot. On the other hand, you can also find balsa which can weigh 24 pounds or more per cubic foot. However, the general run of commercial balsa for model airplanes will weigh between 6 to 18 pounds per cubic foot. 8- to 12-pound balsa is considered medium or average weight, and is the most plentiful. Six pounds or less is considered "contest grade," which is very rare and sometimes even impossible to obtain.

**Is balsa the lightest wood in the world?** No! Most people are surprised to hear that botanically,

balsa wood is only about the third or fourth lightest wood in the world. However, all the woods which are lighter than balsa are terribly weak and unsuitable for any practical use.

The very lightest varieties don't really resemble wood at all, as we commonly think of it, but are more like a tree-like vegetable that grows in rings, similar in texture to an onion. It is not until balsa that there is any sign of real strength combined with lightness. In fact, balsa wood is often considered the strongest wood for its weight in the world. Pound for pound it is stronger in some respects than pine, hickory, or even oak.

from *RC Propwash*  
Ocala Flying Model Club  
Dick Smith, editor  
Ocala FL

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### From an issue of Australian Aviation Magazine

- If you push the stick forward, the houses get bigger. If you pull the stick back, they get smaller. That is, unless you keep pulling the stick all the way back, then they get bigger again.
- Flying isn't dangerous. Crashing is what's dangerous.
- It's always better to be down here wishing you were up there, than up there wishing you were down here.
- The ONLY time you have too much fuel is when you're on fire.
- When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.
- A 'good' landing is one from which you can walk away. A 'great' landing is one after which they can use the plane again.
- The probability of survival is inversely proportional to the angle of arrival. Large angle of arrival, small probability of survival and vice versa.
- Never let an aircraft take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.
- Stay out of clouds. The silver lining everyone keeps talking about might be another airplane going in the opposite direction. Reliable sources also report that mountains have been known to hide out in clouds.
- Always try to keep the number of landings you make equal to the number of take offs you've made.
- You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck.
- Helicopters can't fly; they're just so ugly the earth repels them.
- If all you can see out of the window is ground that's going round and round and all you can hear is commotion coming from the passenger compartment, things are not at all as they should be.

