District II—New Jersey, New York, Europe

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Vice President

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On October 1, 2017, I attended the Flying Knights Model Aircraft Club's (FKMAC) annual Pumpkin Fun Fly. The FKMAC invited modelers of any AMA-legal aircraft to come and enjoy the day. And enjoy they did!

The Pumpkin Fun Fly didn't disappoint. More than 50 aircraft participated, with some modelers driving 3.5 hours to attend. All types of aircraft flew including scale, sport, aerobatic, foamies, turbines, and more. The club included a 20-second takeoff-to-motor-shutdown event, with many contestants earning free lunches.

The Pumpkin Fun Fly pilots.

Critical to the FKMAC's event, as it is with any club's activity, was the volunteerism of club members. With the coordinated efforts of FKMAC members, Pumpkin Fun Fly pilots and spectators enjoyed a beautiful day of flying with good food, a beautifully groomed runway, and a fantastic day of flying. The FKMAC will likely gain several new members from this event.

A couple of the Pumpkin Fun Fly contestants.

(L-R) Eric Williams with Jer Milosek and his FKMAC raffle prize.

(L-R) Gene Lezatte and Mike Berghela, the FKMAC chefs.

In 2017, the FKMAC celebrated 60 years as an AMA club. The group formed in 1957 as a Control Line club. Throughout the 1960s and '70s, RC became more dominant and, like many clubs, the FKMAC found itself moving to various flying sites. Today the club has found stability at its present flying site of 25-plus years, and it invites all forms of model aviation.

Flying events are good for clubs, help build club membership, and support good community relations. If you'd like ideas or assistance in creating a club event, please drop me a line.

Model aviation and full-scale fliers alike have lost a legend. On October 12, 2017, District II AMA member Henry "Mr. Gee Bee" Haffke passed away. An avid water-skier, snow skier, and roller skater, Henry's real passion was aircraft, full scale and otherwise. Modelers benefited from Henry's love of Scale aircraft when he became a designer and product expert with the Coverite company.

Trips with his father to the Springfield, Massachusetts, airport, in Henry's youth led to his love of aviation throughout his life. In his teens, Henry started building model airplanes and he obtained his pilot's license at age 16. Henry's real love was designing, building, and flying competitive Scale models, including the Golden Era Gee Bees that he had watched flying at the Springfield airport.

Henry's designs were regularly published in national and international model aviation publications. He wrote and published *Gee Bee: the REAL Story of the Granville Brothers and Their Marvelous Airplanes*. More recently, Henry was honored for his life's work by the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) and inducted into the AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame. Henry was respected by modelers and the full-scale community as the world's foremost authority on Gee Bee aircraft and their Granville brothers designers.

Henry receiving his NAA Award of Merit.

Click here to read more about Henry Haffke through AMA's History Project.

Remember, it's not about what you fly, it's about the friends you make.

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