SMOKE SIGNALS

How Many Marbles Do You Have? - *Found at* www.rogerknapp.com

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the kitchen, with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time.

Let me tell you about it. I turned the volume up on my radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning talk show. I heard an older sounding chap with a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business himself.

He was talking about "a thousand marbles" to someone named "Tom". I was intrigued and sat down to listen to what he had to say. "Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital. " He continued, "Let me tell you something Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles."
"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years." "Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900 which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime.

"Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part. "It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail", he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. "I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. "So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round-up 1000 marbles. "I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in my workshop next to the radio. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away.

"I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight. "Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then God has blessed me with a little extra time to be with my loved ones..... "It was nice to talk to you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your loved ones, and I hope to meet you again someday. Have a good morning!"

You could have heard a pin drop when he finished. Even the show's moderator didn't have anything to say for a few moments. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to do some work that morning, then go to the gym. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast." "What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. "Oh, nothing special," I said. " It has just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

SOMETHING TO REFLECT ON AT THE START THE YEAR 2012

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!

Dennis Osik

Boatlifters: The unknown story of 9/11 - By Katharine Herrup - The opinions expressed are her own.

Sal Richichi sent me the link to this incredible story, one which I never heard before. I know that stories about September 11, 2001 can bring back unwanted and unpleasant memories but I feel that the heroic deeds of the water people of New York Harbor, The New York Waterway, the Coast Guard, ferries, tug boats, private boats, party boats, small professional diving boats should be shared and applauded. The article comes from Reuters and the video is narrated by Tom Hanks. By the way I cried.

Much has been written and said about September 11, 2001, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, but one story much less known is the one about the band of boats that came together to rescue nearly 500,000 New Yorkers from the World Trade Center site on the day the towers collapsed. It was the largest boatlift ever to have happened – greater than the one at Dunkirk during World War II. Yet somehow a story of such large scale became lost in all the rubble. But a new 10-minute documentary called Boatlift by Eddie Rosenstein captures the boat evacuations that happened on 9/11. The film is part of four new short documentaries that were created for the 9/11 Tenth Anniversary Summit in Washington, D.C.

"Boats, usually an afterthought in most New Yorkers minds, were, for the first time in over a century, the only way in or out of lower Manhattan," says Tom Hanks, the narrator of the film.

New Yorkers don't really think of Manhattan as an island since everything from the basics to beyond your wildest imagination is so accessible — not typically a feature associated with island life. But on September 11, 2001, those trapped below the World Trade Center site who could not escape without swimming or being rescued by a boat were acutely reminded of that fact .

"People were actually jumping into the river and swimming out of Manhattan. Boats were very nearly running them over," says NY Waterway Captain Rick Thornton in the film.

The captains and crew of the fleet of boats who rescued so many on 9/11 came together with no idea what they would be getting into and no idea whether Manhattan would be attacked again let alone their very own boats. All they knew were that desperate people were in need of help and they couldn't turn their backs on them, even if that meant putting their own lives at risk.

"If it floated, and it could get there, it got there," engineer of the Mary Gellatly Robin Jones recalls.

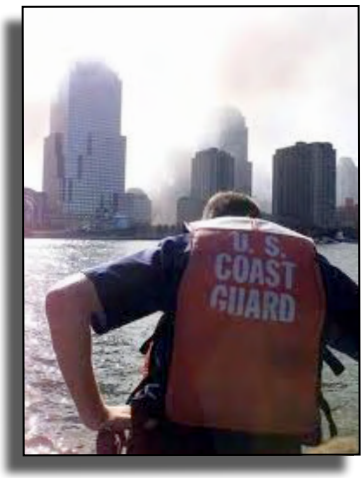
"I never want to say the word 'I should have'," says Vincent Ardolino, captain of the Amberjack V. "I tell my children the same thing, never go through life saying you should have. If you want to do something, you do it."

Boatlifters: The unknown story of 9/11

The New York Waterway, the Coast Guard, ferries, tug boats, private boats, party boats, small professional diving boats, and more ferried hundreds of thousands of people to Staten Island, Brooklyn, upper Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens in less than nine hours. Their crews are typical (in every best sense of the word) New Yorkers and ordinary civilians who came together after a distress call came in from the U.S. Coast Guard in New York.

"I've never seen so many tug boats all at once," captain of the Staten Island Ferry James Parese says. "I worked on the water for 28 years, I've never seen that many boats come together at one time that fast. One radio call and they just all came together," Jones said.

Perhaps one of the most amazing aspects of this mass-scale operation was that were no evacuation plans for such a rescue. "You couldn't have planned nothing to happen that fast that quick," Jones said.



It was the ethic code of the seas that made the boat rescues such a success. If a boat needed refueling, another one would pull up alongside it and give it 10,000 gallons of fuel with no questions asked or no one asking for payment. If a woman in a wheelchair needed to be lifted over the fence on the water's edge to get into one of the boats, there were more than enough hands to help lift her. If people were stranded on a ledge by the water, they would get picked up by a boat. No one was left behind.

One of the arresting images in the film was of a massive throng of people pressed up against and even hanging over the rails along the water waving their hands, hoping someone would come to their rescue. They were at land's end in downtown Manhattan, no easy place to conduct any sort of boat rescue since there aren't many docking places or spots to put a boat ramp.

It was a day that lots of local, ordinary people became heroes. It was a day that was supposed to tear America apart, but instead brought Americans together. It was a day that brought out the best in many people.

"We wanted to tell a story that reminds Americans that this is a country that bounces back from adversity," the President of the Center for National Policy Stephen Flynn, who had been a U.S. Coast Guard officer, told me. "Our national DNA is resilience. The key for us is to move forward with some key lessons and one of the lessons missing is the strength of civil society and how it responded when 9/11 happened."

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=MDOrzF7B2Kg

Assembling Your New ARF - from "Fly RC" by Scott Stoops

Although modern ARF aircraft are remarkably complete right out of the box, there are still many steps that require some workmanship to complete the model. This month's article will cover some of the different techniques to finish the airframe assembly, allowing you to match your efforts to the kit's high quality.

RE-SHRINKING COVERING

I recommend a covering iron for smoothing the wrinkles in your first few ARFs as it is much easier to control the heat.

Your model was almost assuredly built and packaged in a different temperature or humidity than where you live. It was also likely loaded on a ship for a journey across an ocean before reaching your door. As wood can be significantly affected by differences in climate, the model will likely change as it normalizes to your locale. The most noticeable effect is usually a slackening of the covering material in the form of wrinkles or bubbles. If you don't own a hobby iron and protective fabric sock, you'll want to pick both up the next time you are at your local hobby shop. Start at a relatively low temperature on the iron, slowly testing the wrinkles for activation of the covering. Find the minimum temperature that will shrink the covering and place a mark on the dial for future reference. You'll want to do this testing in open areas, avoiding seams. The most common mistake is using too much heat on the seams between two colors. This can cause the edge to release and create a wavy line or even a gap between the two. Work slowly, and avoid the seams if at all possible.

I also use a heat gun, but its proper use takes some practice and skill, so approach heat guns with extreme care. You will want to practice on scrap material with a heat gun, as it is very unforgiving. Once you're comfortable with it, though, a heat gun is much quicker than an iron. The best technique I've found is to move the gun relatively quickly holding it at an angle to the part so you can instantly see the shrinkage. Varying distance and speed will allow you to adjust the heat that reaches the surface almost instantly. The heat gun is even less forgiving around seams, so avoid them completely. Placing wet paper towels over the seams can protect them from excess heat that might release the edges. I've also used pieces of cardboard as masks when using a heat gun.

A heat gun can shrink the covering much faster than a covering iron, but you also run the risk of melting through your covering or having seams open up.

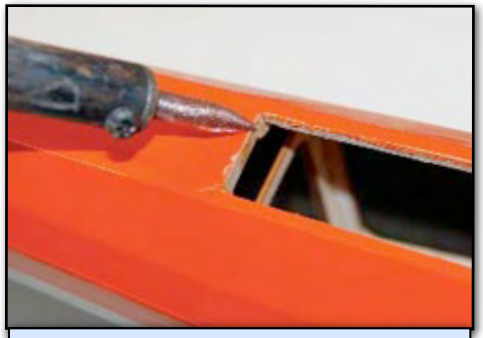
COVERING RELIEFS

Your model probably arrived with the fuselage, wings and tail covered, but with no reliefs to mount the tail, servos and wings. You'll probably need to remove the covering over those areas and there are several techniques that work great. The first step is to fully secure the covering with a sealing iron around the areas that you intend to remove. If you skip this step, it is likely that the covering will release at the edges. Second, any time you're cutting covering, be sure to use a sharp blade and replace it frequently. The covering material will tear if your blade is less than sharp.

My favorite technique, once the edges of the area to be relieved are sealed, is to use a clean soldering iron to "cut" the covering away. This technique seals the new edge, eliminating the need to come back later and tack down any remnant flaps of covering. This works well for larger servo openings, cabin window areas, wing tube holes and smaller stab and fin slots.

Assembling Your New ARF

For the servo openings, cut an X diagonally from corner to corner and simply push the servo into the opening. The edges will fold into the servo pocket and will be held in place by the servo. A soldering iron or a sharp blade can also be used to remove the covering over the area if you prefer. Be sure to add cooling holes if your model is electric powered. I generally cut out several small holes on the bottom of the fuselage to help promote good airflow through the fuselage.



A soldering iron also makes a great tool for removing the covering for a cooling air exit.

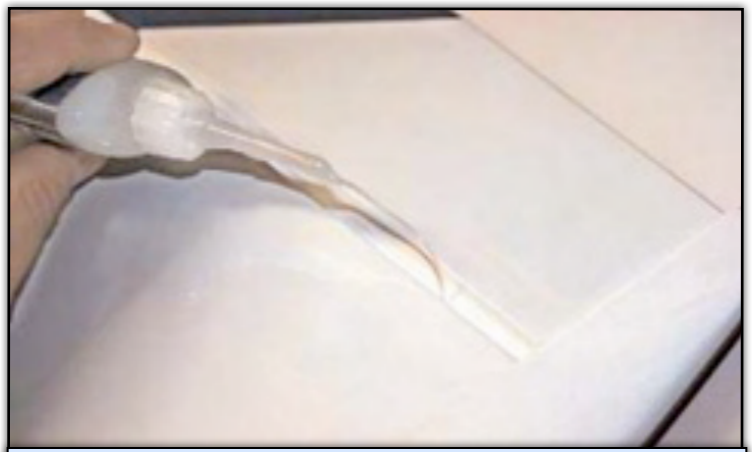
FLIGHT CONTROL HINGING

CA hinges are the most common ARF hinge because they work great and are easy to install. Your kit may include a sheet of CA hinge material to cut hinges from, they may be pre-cut and they can even be preinstalled in the control surface. CA hinges are a two-part hinge with a flexible plastic inner portion that is adhered to an external fabric coating. The fabric coating is very porous and absorbs thin CA readily. Thus, you should only use thin CA with this style hinge. Thin CA sets almost instantly, so you have basically zero working time for alignment. The surfaces to be hinged need to be completely aligned before you add glue to the joint. Also, as thin CA runs like water, I recommend adding a small extender tip to your glue bottle to better control the flow.

Two T-pins center a CA hinge in place during installing

Start by confirming that the precut slots in each flying surface and its matching flight control are deep enough to accept at least half of the CA hinge's thickness. Each hinge needs to be centered about the hinge line with roughly half of its width in each surface. The easiest way to center the hinge is to insert two Tpins centered on the hinge line and spaced apart from each other. With the hinge installed in the wing for instance, the T-pins rest on the hinge line keeping the hinge from being pushed farther into the wing when you install the aileron. The T-pins also help to set a reasonable hinge gap by not allowing the wing and aileron to fully touch.

With the two surfaces fitted together with CA hinges and T-pins, check to ensure that the aileron is set correctly at its tip and root. The wing graphics can also be a good tool to help set this spacing. You'll also want to ensure that you have a reasonable gap between the wing and aileron. I find 1/16-inch works best. This should allow full bevel-to-bevel control throws. Once you're absolutely sure that the flight control is aligned to your liking, remove the T-pins in one hinge and place two small drops of thin CA on the hinge. The CA will wick into the hinge and adhere almost instantly. Working methodically, remove the T-pins, and glue each hinge in sequence, ensuring that the hinge gap and alignment stay constant. With one side of the hinges glued, flex the hinge several times and add a few small drops of thin CA to the opposite side of the hinge. Again, more glue is not better. Thin CA can be a real mess if it runs onto the covering or your hands, so be careful!



Once you have the control and fixed surface mated, remove the pins, flex the surface to the maximum desire deflection, and apply thin CA directly to the hinge as recommended.

Assembling Your New ARF

SQUARING THE TAIL

The hardest step in any ARF assembly is generally installing the horizontal stabilizer. It needs to be slotted into the fuselage in the correct order with the elevator and squared in several axes before gluing. Do this wrong and the stab will be misaligned, which can alter the flying performance of the model, and will definitely mar its appearance. The technique that I use is to first level the stabilizer with the wing tube or complete wing.

Before you can go out and fly our new creation, you must ensure that the final assembly is straight. Each pair of dimensions should be equal.

I rarely find any stabilizer perfectly level with the wing tube, and often find the stab slots slightly loose, requiring a small shim to tighten it up for best adhesion. In the case of a loose slot, adding a 1/64 or 1/32 sheet balsa shim to the opening will tighten it up nicely. To level the stabilizer, you'll need to first compare it to the wing tube or wings viewed from in front of or behind the model. It is usually very obvious if the stab is askew when viewed from this angle. You'll need to shim the top of one side of the stab and the bottom of the other to adjust for level. In the case of a perfect fitting stab slot, you may need to sand the material opposite the shim to allow the stab to level fully. For this step, a Popsicle stick with sandpaper glued to one side makes a nice sanding tool. My favorite shim material is cardstock, as it is easy to layer, very thin, and readily adheres to wood and covering materials.

With the stabilizer shimmed level and centered in its slot in the fuselage, you now need to square it with the wing when viewed from above. I prefer to eyeball it initially as I generally get the alignment very close using this method. Once close by eye, I use four Tpins placed into the stabilizer against the fuselage at the leading and trailing edges to temporarily lock it in place. This ensures that if I accidently bump something I don't have to start the process over.

As a final confirmation, I measure from the aileron hinge line at the tip of one wing to a point on the stab, typically the elevator hinge line or an obvious point on the tip of the stabilizer. Compare with the other side, making small adjustments until I'm happy mathematically and visually with the alignment. A secondary measurement technique is to use string attached to a single spot on the firewall and measured aft to the tips/ hinge line of each stab. I find that by combining both physical measurement and visual observation that I'm able to align the components extremely close to perfect every time

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I prefer to wick thin CA for the final gluing instead of epoxy, but if you choose slow setting glue, you'll need to adequately mark the location on the stab itself for reassembly once the glue is applied. As a side note, if you are required to remove any covering, use a soldering iron to "cut" the covering instead of a hobby blade. It is very easy to score and weaken the wood with a blade

CONCLUSION

These are just a few of the many steps required to complete a typical ARF, but they are definitely the more critical steps that can noticeably affect the final outcome. Be sure to take your time and you'll be rewarded with a high quality, straight model that flies as designed. We will revisit this topic in the near future, touching on a more points worthy of your attention as you assemble your new model. Until next time, remember that learning is fun and fun is what this great hobby is all about!

AWARDS DINNER

Photos by Jeffrey Glasser

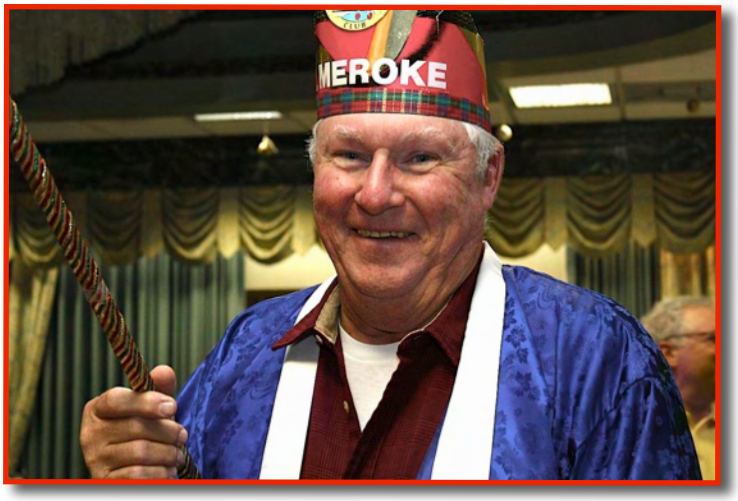
Last month on Friday December 9th the Meroke Awards Dinner was held at the Holiday Inn - Plainview. Chef Ernest Herzog did his fellow club members proud, serving a wonderful and diverse menu. Starting with a delightful array of appetizers and Champagne toast, courtesy of Chef Herzog, followed by a delicious dinner including 2 salads, Provolone Tortellini with Alfredo Sauce (a big hit, especially at my table), Sautéed Fresh Seasonal Vegetables not to mention Chicken, Pork, Grilled Sirloin with Mushroom Sauce and Tilapia with Shrimp Scampi Sauce and a wonderful variety of deserts and coffee to top off a great meal.

One highlight of the evening was the pleasant surprise of live music during the entire event provided by the trio of John Akios, Mark Martufi and Anthony Tramontana. The very talented musicians played a variety of stringed instruments including guitar, violin and mandolin. They filled the air with a pleasant mix of holiday and non holiday music which made this a very special evening.

Club President Ted Evangelatos again did the honors as host of the evening presenting the awards to the deserving Meroke club members who stepped up and made a difference by volunteering their time in a variety of ways in 2011.

The main event was the naming of "Mr. Meroke" for 2011. The honor was given to a surprised but truly deserving Ed Wiemann who was then honored with the traditional robe, staff and crown.

Congratulations to club member Ed Wiemann, who genuinely deserves this honor and who truly can call himself "Mr. Meroke".



Meroke Club member Ron Berg"s ART SHOW and EXHIBIT "A Retrospective of an Artist's Life" opens on Sunday January 8, 2012 at 1:30pm at the Merrick Library. For more information contact Ron Berg at rberg20@ymail.com

"A RETROSPECTIVE OF AN ARTIST'S LIFE"

RON BERG

Sunday January 8, 2012

1:30 - 4:30 PM

MERRICK LIBRARY
2279 MERRICK AVE.
MERRICK, NY 11566
TEL: 516-377-6112

THE EXHIBIT TAKES YOU THROUGH PHASES OF RON BERG'S WORK FROM COLLEGE STUDIO CLASSES TO THE PRESENT. IT CULMINATES WITH HIS RECENT PUBLICATION OF A CHILDREN'S BOOK WHICH HE BOTH AUTHORED AND ILLUSTRATED.

Novice Notes was originally published in the January 2006 edition of "Smoke Signals" by editor Russell Rhine. As a novice flyer I found this information very important and a good way to remember how to prepare my plane for "take-off",especially since I fly 72 MHz. I thought you might also find this information useful.

Novice Notes

R.U on T.R.A.C.K. ?

Even many experienced fliers have crashed their airplanes or had extreme difficulty controlling the airplane during takeoff. The following is a good lesson to be considered by novice and experienced pilots alike. Your airplane must be really ready when you advance that throttle to max.

Just remember the word **TRACK** and follow these steps:

T is for Transmitter trim. Look at the trim adjustments for ailerons, the elevator and the rudder. See that they are set to either the center position or how you set them on the previous flight. Check all of the switch settings on the top of the radio. If using a computerized transmitter, make sure you have selected the correct airplane.

R is for Run-up. This is the time to slowly and smoothly advance the engine throttle from idle to maximum RPM assuring the engine will provide maximum power needed for take-off. This will also clear the engine of excess fuel it might have ingested while tuning the engine on the stand.

A is for Antenna Check to see if the antenna has been pulled out to it's maximum extended length. This is also assuming that you have completed a successful range check of the radio system prior to starting the engine.

C is for Channel pin Insure that the channel number is attached to the transmitter antenna and plainly visible to other pilots on the flight line. Also insure that you have placed your channel pin into the "hot" position on the correct channel position in the impound. If there are other pilots with the same channel, it is a good practice to visibly check that their transmitters are in the impound and turned "off ".

K is for Kontrols (forgive the German spelling). Insure that all of your control surfaces deflect in the correct direction when moving the sticks on the transmitter. Also check that they adequately deflect to their defined throws without any binding. Be very critical of the ailerons as they travel in opposite directions. Remember maximum left aileron stick movement makes the left aileron travel upwards, etc.

Whenever you fly–try to remember **TRACK** and it might save an airplane.

Happy Flying!

Calendar

January 5, 2012

Club Meeting

January 19, 2012

Club Meeting

January 29, 2012

Nassau Flyers Swap Meet

Levittown Hall

The Meroke RC Club has reserved 1 table for its members exhibits.

Send all suggestions to:
newsletter@meroke.com

BIRTHDAYS

Jan 2	Philip Hajohn
Jan 5	Mike Ebers
Jan 6	Carl Russo Jr.
Jan 7	Gregory Bernard
Jan 7	Jerry Leibman
Jan 10	Matthew Comerford
Jan 13	Tony Pedalino
Jan 22	Charles Lando
Jan 23	John Raparelli
Jan 24	Charles Whalen

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Meroke club member Irving Kreutel. Irving's daughter informed President Ted Evangelatos that he passed away on his Birthday December 26, 2011, peacefully, with no pain and surrounded by his family. I am sure you all join me in sending our prayers and deepest sympathy to his family for their loss.