

Charles River Radio Controllers

Flight Log

September 2025



Photo Credit: Dave Walter



September Meeting
Saturday, September 20th, 9:45 am

In Person at
Davis Field, Sudbury

President's Message

Hi everyone,

I hope you all had a great summer. Over the last few months, we've had a number of great events including the Flea & Fly in May, the July 4th Demo Day, ALES, the Patton Homestead event, NERDS 2025 and finally the Fritz Bien Memorial Soar-In a few weeks ago. We also had good turnouts for our outdoor meetings / Saturday flying sessions over the summer that were a great way to get people together.

As most of you may have heard, long time club member Dick Williamson passed away a few weeks ago. He held numerous positions in the club over the years. In addition to being a great advocate for the club with the town of Sudbury, he was also instrumental in the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project and a member of the Sudbury Parks and Rec Commission. There will be an event to remember Dick on Sunday, September 14th at 3pm at Davis Field.

Our next outdoor meeting will be Saturday, Sept 20th at Davis Field. Next month, we are looking into having our final outdoor meeting of the year be a "Fall Fun Fly" on Saturday October 11 at School St. We will be inviting other clubs to join us and possibly hold a food drive for a local food pantry. More details will be sent out as we firm up the details. After October's meeting, we will be resuming our meetings at the Goodnow library.

Thanks!

Joe

[Be sure to see below for an article about Dick Williamson written by John Epling, and more details about the memorial event on September 14th - Editor]

Club Meeting - Saturday September 20

Our September meeting is scheduled to be ***in-person at Davis Field in Sudbury at 9:45am***. Bring something to fly, something to show & tell, or just come for some friendly company.

Club meetings are open to the public, we welcome visitors and guests to learn about model aviation and CRRC!

Remembering Dick Williamson

By John Epling

Dr. Richard Cardinal Williamson, known to most of us as Dick, passed away on August 9, 2025. Dick, a long-time member of CRRC, held various CRRC board positions. He held the chief instructor position for many years. When I joined the club in 2007, Dick was my flight instructor. More than teaching people how to fly, Dick was very good at helping a new pilot with the inevitable repairs that would be needed. He was great at making the repairs seem less daunting to someone that never worked with balsa aircraft. He was a great source of knowledge and experience: from how to repair broken landing gear plates to how to use 3M packing tape and laser printer to make labels - print on laser paper, put tape over the printed part, trim to desired size, rinse and rub the paper under cold water to dissolve the paper leaving the toner on the sticky side of the packing tape, and place on your model! Dick was also known for his education and outreach. After I started the July 4th Demonstration event



back around 2010, Dick was the emcee of the event for many years and would keep the crowd entertained with explanations of the demo activities and all the models that were being flown or displayed. In more recent times, I tried to be the emcee for a few years, but I would quickly run out of things to say. Dick had a gift for imparting knowledge without sounding as if he was lecturing you. He was also known for his STEM outreach in a long career at MIT's Lincoln Laboratory. He was well known for his liquid nitrogen demonstrations at Lincoln Labs "Science on Saturday" events as well as at Cub/Boy Scout meetings and at various schools.



In the 2010s, he was very active as a spokesperson for the club and the RC activities at Davis Field. He interacted easily with spectators that would stop to watch the flying activities. With his friendly demeanor, Dick easily formed relationships with the dog walkers and other users of Davis Field. That helped to create public pressure to help head off Sudbury's plans to turn Davis Field into a dedicated baseball athletic field. Dick successfully ran for the Park and Rec Commission of Sudbury for 12 years and advocated for rail trails as well as other resources for fitness and recreation. Dick was an avid biker, and

his dream of the Sudbury Rail Trail is now used by many in Sudbury as well as those from surrounding communities.

Dick was an avid glider pilot and some remember him riding thermals so high that he would lose a few planes, but that never seemed to diminish his enthusiasm and love of the hobby. In recent years, as his health was declining and he was not driving, he would pack a lunch and catch rides with various CRRC members and come to Davis Field and spend the day at the field, even when he didn't bring a plane to fly.

Dick was an original, and he will be missed.

- John Epling

All are welcome to celebrate the life of Richard Williamson at 3 p.m. at Davis Field in Sudbury on September 14th. A small remembrance will be held afterwards along the Rail Trail at Broadacres Farm. For more info, reach Heidi Williamson (daughter) at heidi@heidiwilliamson.com or 617-461-7641.

Heidi would love it if folks who knew Dick would say a few words during the event. If you would be willing to do so, please let her know at the contact above.

[Photos from CRRC Archives and David Spielman]

Fritz Bien Memorial Soar-In

Fritz Bien Memorial ALES Competition Report

by Tom David

Forecasts of windy conditions did not deter 10 pilots who showed up to fly in the Fritz Bien Memorial ALES electric-launched soaring competition August 23 and 24. Attendees from CRRC welcomed competitors from western Mass, Maine, Rhode Island, New York and Virginia.

The contest kicked off with first flights at 9:30 on a fine, breezy, sunny Saturday morning, but the forecast proved accurate and the wind began to pick up strongly by the second round. For the rest of the day, pilots were searching for the elusive big lift. Sometimes it was there, but many times we tried to ride thermals that were broken up by the wind or blew downwind so fast we had to leave them and try to return upwind to look for another. Plenty of flight groups ended with all pilots down early and some having to hike to retrieve planes that landed down in the bowl. Most competitors did not have planes built for strong wind or capable of carrying much ballast, so it was a struggle. Nevertheless there were plenty of flights that made the 10 minute target, and pilots felt the great satisfaction of making successful flights in tough conditions.



Sunday started where Saturday left off with winds around 12 mph and frequent gusts to much higher speeds. We flew 4 rounds before lunch, and as the wind continued to rise, we voted after lunch to wrap up rather than risk carnage. As we packed planes, tents and gear into the cars, the wind.... calmed right down. Of course. So some elected to stay and fly a while for fun in the huge thermals that were now popping.

Early Sunday when we were short of timers, a teenage spectator allowed himself to be drafted to help out. He ended up staying on for the rest of the contest and beyond, timing and absorbing soaring knowledge. When the wind died down, Dave Walter got out his Radian and gave George a little stick time. We're arranging to get him a used plane to be donated by the author.

Podium finishers on Saturday were Josh Glaab in first, Tom David second and Jim Rochette third. Results on Sunday were exactly the same. Josh went home with the Weekend Grand Champion award, and the Handicap Award went to Steve Kranish, the only pilot to fly a balsa plane in this contest.

Thanks to everyone who participated, and we hope "The Fritz" will continue to be a popular and successful contest into the future.

Looking Back: Origins of the Fritz

Bien Memorial Soar-In

From the CRRC archives, as found by Adam Smith, please enjoy this article on the origins of the annual CRRC Soar-In, now named in memory of the author, Fritz Bien.

By Fritz Bien

12/09/04 - I came to Massachusetts from California in Feb. 1971, with a big box of airplanes, including several slope soarers. Being into the hobby for all of my life, the first thing I did whenever coming to a new town was to check out the entire hobby shops in the area. I found Fisher R/C in the Yellow Pages, but didn't know it was in the basement of somebody's house. I was still driving a rental car, and I remember it was snowing, so tromping around in a residential neighborhood leaving footprints in the snow while asking about the location of a hobby shop didn't look like a great idea. I drove back to the hotel, and called Fisher R/C the next Monday morning, in what I thought would be normal store hours (10:00AM). The woman on the line told me Bob was at work until 6:00PM told me the store hours and how to get there, and admonished me for not going in the Friday night before.

Once I found the hobby shop, I asked about slope sites and glider flying in New England. Bob Fish told me what to do with the gliders (get somebody to tow you up), and put me in touch with Dick Janssen, a published local expert on model sailplanes. (He designed a neat Galloping Ghost transmitter published in at the time the technical rag Grid Leaks). Dick and Bob were both Charles River Radio Controllers (CRRC) members so I joined. CRRC was flying at the Wayland High School where Bob said I could stretch out a high-start over the Wayland Swamp. He was able to sell me a high-start if I was willing to wait a couple of weeks for delivery. Since my box of airplanes hadn't come from the West Coast yet, I waited.

When the high-start arrived, it was mud season in New England and the Wayland Swamp was –a swamp. Fortunately, in 1971 Massachusetts had contests in the area. There was the spring contest in Northern CT, local contests in Canton and Hadley, and the New England Championships in Orange. There were also 3 other contests in Connecticut, one within the ECSS circuit. The local contests were mainly attended by power flyers who tried their hand at gliding... This was the way I was able to launch my sailplanes without setting out a high-start over the Wayland swamp. We went to Cape Cod in the spring and also sloped out of Plymouth in 1971. The prizes usually consisted of the top 3 places splitting up the entrance fees. Stu Richmond, Bob and I had several nice dinners from all of our winnings. Stu flew a Graupner Amigo II, Bob flew a Glass-craft Phoebus, and I had my trusty Graupner Cirrus.

HISTORY OF THE CRRC SOAR-IN

In 1972, I talked Bob Fish into running a glider contest. Since I was putting most of my hard-earned money into the hobby, he agreed to run a club contest. That became the first CRRC Soar-In. Bob donated kits that had sat on his shelves for more than a year as prizes. The winners that day included Grant Cary, John Weigel, and I. We also tried to run a Frozen Finger soaring contest that winter, off the ice on Lake Cochichuate next to Bob's house. For those who haven't tried, stretching a hi-start on pond-ice is great fun. Unfortunately, it snowed the night before the contest and we couldn't find the anchor points for the high-start on the day of the contest.

I became CRRC President in 1973, just after CRRC got permission to fly at Callahan State Park and built its then new field (1972). Being young and stupid, the guys talked me into running a bunch of contests at the "new field". Since I was railroaded to become president, I railroaded others to run contests. We ran Scale, 2 H-Ray Pylon events, a Fun-Fly and a glider contest. We had a rule at the time that Contest Directors were not allowed to fly in their own run contests. We thus split the duties so that we could fly in the contests that we were most interested in. Bob Fish and I each ran an H-Ray Pylon race, Al Spievack ran the Scale, Bob ran the Fun-Fly. Jim Peghiny ran our first Open CRRC Soar-In. Dick Janssen supplied the winches, one gas powered, and the other based on the Ford Long-shaft. This is the winch I have to this day. The motor has been changed twice, the frame 3 times, different switches, solenoids, and cables over the years, but the same winch. We called the contest a Soar-In to try to encourage people not interested in competition to still enter.

HOW THE CRRC SOAR-IN BECAME PART OF THE ESL

When I came to the East Coast, the big contests here in the east were Valley Forge, DCRC, Trumbull CT, and Elmira. They were in a group called the ECSS; (East Coast Soaring Society) which included clubs all of the way into Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. York and Lancaster started having contests in 1972, the same time as CRRC. These contests formed the nucleus of the old ECSS. Otto Heithecker was the reigning ECSS champion, and he came from the Greater Detroit Soaring and Hiking Society. In order to get year-end points people, like Ray Hayes, would travel from Indiana to compete with the locals. CRRC aspired to have the glamour of hosting a large ECSS contest also. This was particularly being pushed by Dick Janssen.

The group out in Chicago was pushing for a national soaring event and started having the "Soar-Nat's". Mark Smith from Los Angeles went to the event and cleaned everybody's clock with his Windward and Windfree. By 1973, the big rivalry between the East and West was in full swing and talk was to have a unified soaring group. The ECSS merged with the West Coast and the Inter-Mountain clubs in about 1975 to form the National Soaring Society (NSS).

CRRC became a member of the NSS and as such, the Soar-In went onto the national calendar. East Coast contests were held in Brewster, Pine Bush, Binghamton and Elmira NY, Wyckoff and Lakehurst NJ, Wilmington and Dover DE, York, Lancaster, Reading, and Valley Forge PA, Trumbull CT, Manassas VA, and Pittsfield and Framingham MA. A classic line written by Neil Liptak in Flying Models about that era was "How do you tell your secretary on Monday morning that you just spent 12 hours in a car coming back from a toy airplane contest?"

The NSS sort of faded away with infighting between the East and the West. The East Coast group formed the ESL, to which CRRC was a de facto member from its NSS membership. The first years of ESL we had contests in Pine Bush NY, Syosset, NY, Pittsfield MA, and CRRC at Callahan Field in Framingham, 2 contests in New Jersey, a contest in Valley Forge and Daniel Boone, one in York, and furthest south we had one at DCRC at Manassas. We had an annual awards dinner on Saturday night after the WRAM Show in White Plains NY.

October Swap Meet, Ellington CT

Our friends at Northern Connecticut Radio Control Club invite you to their annual swap meet on Saturday October 11th (rain date October 12th). Sellers are \$10.00 per car, buyers are free. AMA members with their ID card can fly at the field.

R/C
SWAP MEET

★ *Buy*
★ *Sell*
★ *Trade*

**Northern Connecticut
Radio Control Club**

*Gear up for winter projects
or sell for new ones!*

**SELLERS
\$10.00
PER CAR**

SATURDAY
October 11th, 2025
Start: 9:00 AM--Set up at 7:00 AM
Rain Date: OCT 12

LOCATION
NCRCC Flying Field *Everyone
Welcome!*
190 Green Road
Ellington, CT 06029
For Directions Visit
www.ncrcc.org

Visit the NCRCC website for event updates.

CD's Mike Maznicki & Len Marchese, CD Contact info mikemaz@att.net (Mike) & lpMarchese@yahoo.com (Len)

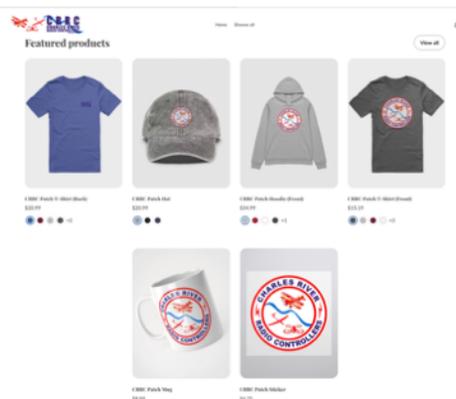
Volunteers Needed 2025

Our event season is over, but it's never too soon to start thinking about how you can support this club in one of the most important ways: volunteering. Without volunteers, we don't *have* a club. If you see someone helping out, say thank you, and if you see a way to help, please do! We will need help organizing an auction and all the 2026 events that need planning, and of course club officer positions for 2026.

Club Expenses

You might be aware that our club membership is down from our highs, but field costs continue to be our primary expense. We have reserves, but dues alone are not sufficient to cover expenses. The club always accepts donations, which you can send in with your membership dues, bring to a club meeting, or send with PayPal to membership@charlesriverrc.org.

Online Store!



Did you know that our webmaster has been quietly hard at work maintaining our website *and* bringing online the new Charles River RC online storefront? If you've seen Shawn and Roger at the field wearing CRRC "swag" and felt a twinge of envy, you can visit <https://shop.charlesriverrc.org/> or click the link on our website.

Proceeds benefit the club, so stock up!

RC ACES Summer Auction

It's not really a "summer" auction, but the RC ACES club in North Hampton, NH asked us to share information about their auction this month.

Summer Auction

Saturday, Sept 13TH

Rain Date: Sunday, Sept 14TH



Public Welcome
Food, Soda and Water available
Please bring your own chairs

Setup and viewing @ 9:00 am
Auction Starts @ 11:00 am
Admission: \$2.00 per person

Bring a table to sell your small under \$20 items
(Please pay 10% of sales to the Club)
Auction sales commission 10% -\$20 max/per item
Please no side deals

50/50 Raffle

Come to buy - sell or just watch

**Time to dust off those RC Items stored under the bed,
out in the garage or in the back closet and bring them to:**

HOME OF THE RC ACES

Hobbs-Martin Field

(formerly RC ACES Flying Field)

The field is accessed from behind Joe's Meat Shop at 229 Atlantic Ave (Rt. 111). Look for the access road entrance on right side of parking lot across from fuel storage tanks. Follow the unpaved access road that runs along the west side of the new Rail Trail north for about 400 yards.

Watch our website www.rcaces.org for announcement of "Rain Date" activation or auction cancellation/rescheduling



www.rcaces.org

Club Contact: Don Chase
dhchase@comcast.net

School Street Flying Schedule

Thank you to John Epling for drawing up this calendar.

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

SCHOOL STREET FIELDS 2025

CRRC (ALL DAY)	ROCKETS
RC (EVENINGS)	CRICKET (AM) / CRRC (3-7 PM)
CRICKET (ALL DAY)	ACTON TOWN FAIR
CRICKET (EVENINGS)	COMMUNITY EVENT

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL							MAY							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30								
26	27	28	29	30	31							30	31																												

JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	30									

FAA Registration

Please remember to visit <https://faadronezone.faa.gov/#/> to check and renew your FAA registration ID. Also, beware some commercial entities who are claiming to process registrations - often for increased prices. The FAA charges \$5 for a three-year registration, or extension.

Check your registration when you mark each new plane/drone, so you don't miss a renewal!

TRUST Test

The FAA has authorized several organizations including the AMA to administer the knowledge and safety test required by congressional action.

You are now required to show proof of passing the test (along with your FAA ID number) to law enforcement or FAA representatives upon request.

The test is free and can't be failed! Take it at:

<https://trust.modelaircraft.org/>

CRRC Membership Renewal

Support CRRC by renewing your annual membership! See the last page, or contact Adam Smith (membership@charlesriverrc.org). Ages 75 and over, and under 19, are free for CRRC membership (AMA membership required to fly at fields/events, and discounted for juniors). Sixty-and-over receive a \$10 discount. Donations to the club are always welcome.

Make sure you have a current card to bring to in-person meetings and get a free raffle ticket!

Club Information

Officers - 2025	Instruction	General Info
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>President</i> Joe Sicree president at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Vice President</i> Dan Sullivan vicepresident at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Treasurer</i> Dave Marshall treasurer at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Membership Secretary</i> Adam Smith membership at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recording Secretary</i> Roger Silva secretary at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Webmaster</i> Shawn Silva webmaster at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Newsletter Editor</i> Mike Whidden newsletter at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Interim Chief Instructor</i> Scott Ritter chiefinstructor at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Safety Coordinator</i> Jimi Two Feathers safety at charlesriverrc.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Raffle Chairman</i> John Epling exofficio at charlesriverrc.org</p>	<p>To inquire about instruction please contact Interim Chief Instructor, Scott Ritter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Types of instruction</u> B = Building G = Glider E = Electric F = Fuel H = Helicopter Q = Quadcopter/ Multirotor</p> <p>John Weigel - B Natick - 508-655-2138</p> <p>Richard Gammon - B,G,E,F West Boylston - 508-835-2049</p> <p>Ken Antonellis - G,E,F Natick - 508-653-8369</p> <p>Lincoln Ross - G,E Waltham - 781-891-0332</p> <p>Dave Walter - G Hudson - 978-562-5400</p> <p>Jon Leehey - F Wayland - 508-358-5721</p> <p>Tony Davids - H Stow - 978-568-9598</p> <p>Scott Ritter - Q Sudbury - 978-443-2373</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Flying Sites</u></p> <p>Go to charlesriverrc.org and select the Flying Sites tab to see the various sites. CRRC reserves time seasonally on Davis Field in Sudbury, and shares Bill Martin Field in Medfield with the MMAC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Keys to Medfield /</u> <u>Bill Martin Field</u></p> <p>To get a key for Bill Martin Field in Medfield please email key-master Ken Antonellis at kxa@verizon.net.</p> <p><i>The key for 2023 will be updated in late April by MMAC. Keys may also be available at the monthly meeting. A \$5 deposit is required the first time you receive a key.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Tree Climbers</u></p> <p>Tom Hurney 508-272-7489</p> <p>Scott (Sudbury) 508-203-3845</p> <p>Stephen Canessa The Tree Guy 978-460-1000</p> <p>Hartney Greymont (Medfield) Sean Comer 781-444-1227 thescomer@gmail.com</p>

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Membership Application - 2025

Name					
Street					
Town		State		Zip	
Telephone			Email		
AMA No.			Birth Date		
I agree: []	Club membership and activities are bound by the CRRC handbook, available at: http://charlesriverrc.org/newsite/Documents/CRRC%20Handbook%202020.pdf				

IMPORTANT: You must be an Academy of Model Aeronautics member to join CRRC. **AMA Jr membership is discounted!** <http://www.modelaircraft.org/membership/youth.aspx>
By submitting this membership application you agree to comply with the AMA safety code, including documents 550 and 560 found at: www.modelaircraft.org/documents.aspx

To receive a membership card, bring this application to a club meeting or mail to the membership secretary:

Adam Smith
Membership Secretary CRRC
460 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720
membership@charlesriverrc.org

You may pay by check or use PayPal. Make **checks** payable to **Charles River RC**, or send **PayPal** to the email above.

Member category	Before March 1, 2025	After March 1, 2025
OPEN Member	\$60	\$65
SENIOR member If age 60 before July 1st	\$50	\$55
SENIOR member If age 75 before July 1st	Free if AMA member <i>(Voluntary donation appreciated - e.g. \$50)</i>	Free if AMA member (Voluntary donation appreciated - e.g. \$50)
JUNIOR Member Under 19 before July 1st		
NON-FLYING member If age 75 before July 1st	<i>(Voluntary donation appreciated)</i>	(Voluntary donation appreciated)
Full time STUDENT	\$40	\$45
Family member additional to OPEN membership		
<i>Additional / optional donation (supports field rental)</i>	<i>Voluntary \$10 / \$25 / \$50 / etc</i>	