

Charles River Radio Controllers

Flight Log

May 2026



Image Credit: Michael Whidden



May Meeting

Wednesday, May 20th, 7:30 pm

In Person at

Goodnow Library, Sudbury

President's Message

May is here and flying season is in full swing! Hopefully everyone has been getting out to the fields and enjoying the longer days.

Thanks to everyone who came out to the April meeting at Goodnow Library, and a special thank you to everyone who showed up for the Davis Field cleanup on April 18th. It's always great to catch up and see what people are working on, and it's even better knowing the field is in good shape for the season ahead.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, May 20th at 7:30pm at the Goodnow Library in Sudbury. We have a great program lined up — our guest speakers will be Van and Mary Livieratos, former CRRC members who will be sharing some fascinating lessons learned from their work in unmanned aerial systems (UAS). Should be a really interesting evening, hope to see you there!

Just a few days later, we have the Flea Market & Fun Fly on Sunday, May 24th at School Street Field. A great chance to pick up some gear, clear out the shop, and get some flying in. Mark your calendars!

As always, help with club events is appreciated — if you'd like to get involved, please reach out to a member of the Board.

Thanks,
Joe

Club Meeting - Wednesday May 20

Our May meeting is scheduled to be in-person at the Goodnow Library in Sudbury on **Wednesday, May 20th at 7:30 p.m.** Bring something to fly, something to show & tell, or just come for some friendly company.

This month, former members **Van and Mary Livieratos** join us to discuss their professional UAS expertise. They will share unique insights and technical takeaways from their work in the unmanned aerial systems industry.

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

Membership Renewals

Many of you have still not renewed, so please fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and get it to Adam Smith, or email it to membership@charlesriverrc.org.

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.

Upcoming Events

We have a busy summer ahead!

- **May 24 (12:00 PM) - Flea & Fly @ School St.:** Our newest annual tradition, a flea market and fun fly. Come hunt for deals or clear out your hangar.
- **June 13-14 - ALES @ Davis Field:** Altitude Limited Electric Soaring is back. Visit <http://fliesl.org/Contest.aspx?contestid=447> to compete. Volunteers are needed.
- **July 4 - Demo Day @ Davis:** Help us promote the hobby! We need volunteers for buddy-boxing, static displays, and chatting with the public.
- **July 18 - Military Service Day @ General Patton Homestead:** A great day for scale models and history. We need volunteers to man a table of static displays. Warbirds preferred.
- **July 25 - NERDS and CRRC Drone Race @ Davis**
- **August 29-30 - Fritz Bien Memorial Soar-In @ Davis:** A special annual tradition since 1973!

Volunteers Needed 2026

Our event season is well underway, and 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 STILL have a number of opportunities coming up, including the August Soar-In and of course club officer positions for 2026.

April Field Cleanup

It was a bit dreary, but that didn't stop some club members from tidying up Davis Field and getting in some flying on Saturday April 18th.



Flea Market & Fun Fly

Sunday, May 24

Bring your surplus gear to sell or trade, and enjoy a day of fun flying at **School Street Field**. Whether you're looking for that hard-to-find part or just want to fly and socialize, this is a highlight of the season.



Charles River RC (#339)

2026 Flea & Fly

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 12PM (NOT on Saturday as in prior years)

School Street Field
347 School St
Acton MA

- **Flea Market**
- **Buy, Sell, Trade**
- **Concessions**
- **Fun Fly**

Join us at the School Street Field in Acton, MA on May 24, 2026 for a model RC flea market and fun fly.

\$10 to sell. Bring your own table.

Register by Friday May 15th.
<https://charlesriverrc.org/contact/>

No charge to fly. No RemotID required.
Electrics only. AMA membership required to fly.



Remembering John Nilsson

From club member Dave Walter:

Earlier this year I received the sad news that longtime CRRC member John Nilsson had passed away on December 14, 2025. His son Erik sent me an obituary notice which I have attached to this message. His family plans to have a Celebration of Life for John on June 20 at the Mountainside Cafe in Princeton. I believe that location is just inside the entrance to Wachusett Mountain State Park. I plan to attend.

I first met John waaaay back in the 80's when I joined CRRC, and John was already heavily into sailplanes and other fixed wing aircraft. We shared many adventures together, and I have fond memories of repairing blown up gliders in John's workshop. We also shared an interest in amateur photography, and I still have many of John's photo images hanging on my walls at home. John gave up active flying a number of years ago due to worsening vision, but he never gave up his photo ambitions, attending conferences and hiking the Swiss Alps (which he most recently climbed in September of last year!) I kept pretty regular contact with John, and I was always amazed by his energy and focus. I will sorely miss him.

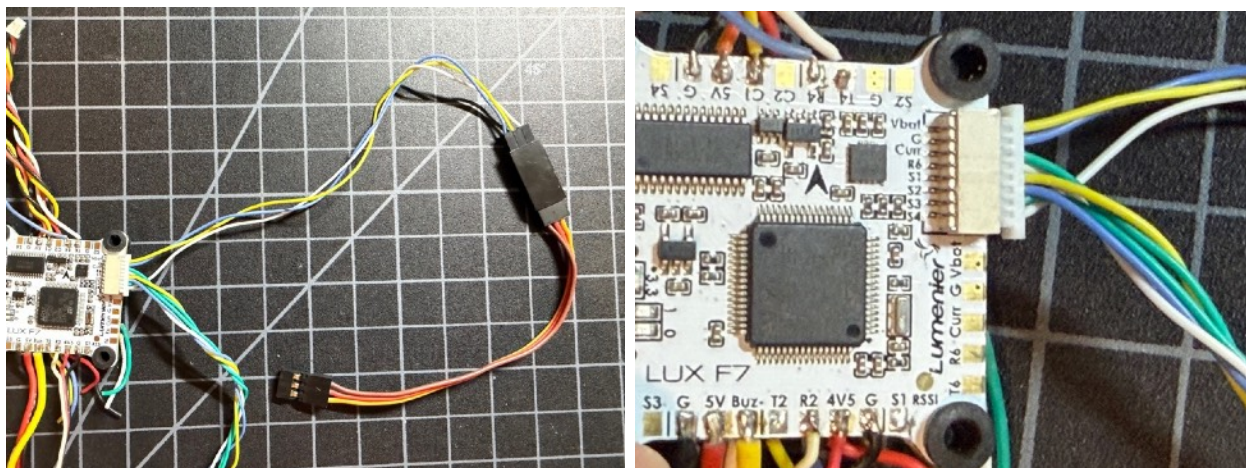
-Dave Walter

How to Program a BLheli_S Speed Controller

[Thanks again this month to David Spielman for another excellent article for your enjoyment - Ed.]

Ahhhhh! There that felt better. I have searched and searched to find instructions for programming my new airplane BLheli_S speed controller with little luck. Yes, I can figure out how to calibrate the throttle range of the speed controller by turning on my transmitter with throttle high, listen to the beeps and then move the stick to low. There are no instructions beyond that. Google AI search regurgitates garbage about the theory of manually programming the ESC with the throttle stick. I saw reference to using an Arduino to connect and use BLheli suite, but that is a bit expensive and I'm not interested in another hobby.

The solution: Break out a flight controller from an old drone and connect it to one of the ESC ports. Luckily, I have a flight controller and also have a ESC cable with sockets that fit a servo extension. I'm in business now! Connect the Vbat to the center pin, Ground and the correct edge and select one of the motor pins to the signal.

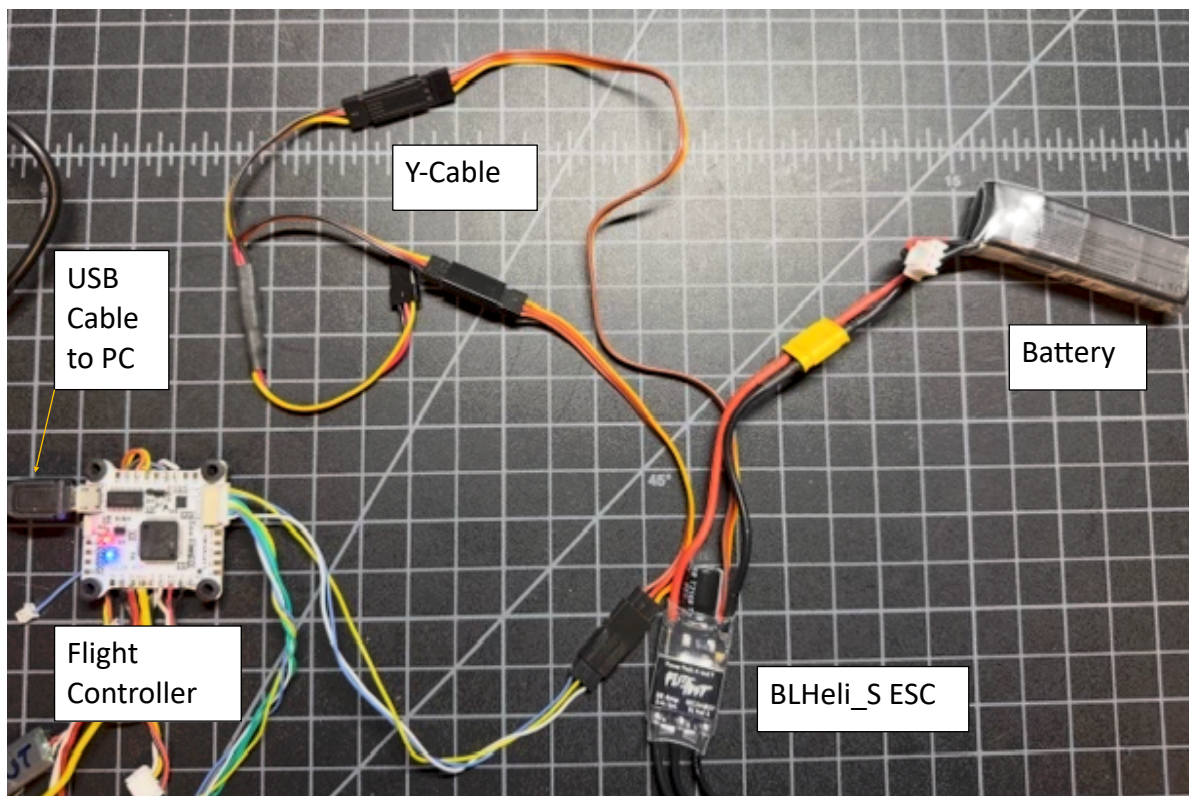


Connect the Flight Controller port to the servo extension. S4 motor is used.

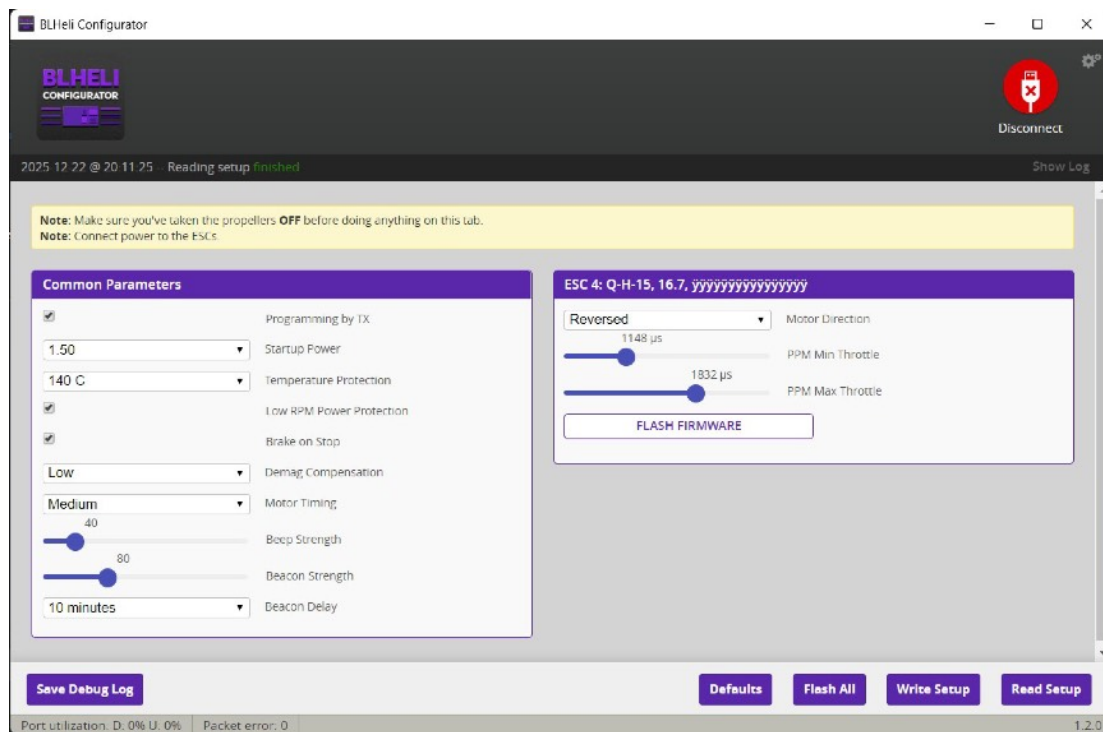
I need a gender changer to connect to the speed controller and I found a Y-cable works for that. Here's a list of what's needed to set up programming of the speed controller. Rube Goldberg setup here I come.

Parts List
USB Cable
PC with BLHeli Configurator
Flight Battery
Flight Controller (FC)
ESC Cable to FC
Servo Extension
Y-Cable

With this setup, you can change the ESC settings with BLHeli configurator. I want to change from No Brake to Full Brake. This great for gliders and flying wings without landing gear.



My BLHeli_S ESC is connected to the flight controller. The ESC must be powered



BLHeli Configurator has some basic ESC settings. After making changes, select the write setup button to store the settings. Once done, power down and disconnect the ESC.

April Meeting

Our April meeting at the Goodnow Library was a great chance to catch up as the flying season really starts to heat up.

Jeff DelPapa showed off a very cool mechanical model of a rotary engine made of laser-cut plywood. Charlie brought in his UMX Ultrix, while Gus showed off two gliders: a UMX Radian that shipped with a bad control board which EFlite replaced, and a DreamFlight LaBelle DLG. Gus also mentioned he's on the hunt for a carbon DLG.



Raffle Winners

- Tom David took home a new motor.
- Michael Whidden scored some epoxy.
- Jeff DelPapa won a foam board Spitfire kit.

15 Apr 2026 / 7:30 PM

ATTENDEES

In person meeting at Goodnow Library. Quorum met.

AGENDA

Business commenced at 7:45 pm

Last Meeting Follow-up

- None.

Business / Discussion

- Field Reports
 - School St schedule published
 - Cross over times with Cricket can be managed
 - Davis is the same as always, not too muddy. Clean up this Saturday at 9am
 - Dan S has some students at the field at noon for help.
 - Medfield, no one has been there. Ken Antonellis is the contact for keys.
- Membership
 - Approximately 81 paid members.
- Safety
 - No incidents
- Treasurer
 - Not present
- Noted that field rental rates will be going up for sure in Sudbury and most likely in Acton as well.
- Flea and Fly at School st on Sunday of Memorial Day weekend.
- Patton Homestead static display scheduled for July 18th

End of Business 8:10pm

2026 School Street Calendar

■ Standard (M/W/F 5PM-7PM)
 ■ Weekend / Custom Hours
 ■ Unavailable (Lion's Fair)

May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 5PM-7PM	2
3	4 5PM-7PM	5	6 5PM-7PM	7	8 5PM-7PM	9
10	11 5PM-7PM	12	13 5PM-7PM	14	15 5PM-7PM	16
17 2PM-8PM	18 5PM-7PM	19	20 5PM-7PM	21	22 5PM-7PM	23
24 8AM-8PM	25 8AM-8PM	26	27 5PM-7PM	28	29 5PM-7PM	30
31						

June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 5PM-7PM	2	3 5PM-7PM	4	5 5PM-7PM	6 2PM-8PM
7	8 5PM-7PM	9	10 5PM-7PM	11	12 5PM-7PM	13
14	15 Lion's Fair	16	17 Lion's Fair	18	19 Lion's Fair	20
21	22 5PM-7PM	23	24 5PM-7PM	25	26 5PM-7PM	27 ~4PM-8PM (rockets)
28	29 5PM-7PM	30				

July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5PM-7PM	2	3 5PM-7PM	4 8AM-8PM
5 8AM-8PM	6 5PM-7PM	7	8 5PM-7PM	9	10 5PM-7PM	11
12	13 5PM-7PM	14	15 5PM-7PM	16	17 5PM-7PM	18
19 2PM-8PM	20 5PM-7PM	21	22 5PM-7PM	23	24 5PM-7PM	25
26	27 5PM-7PM	28	29 5PM-7PM	30	31 5PM-7PM	

August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 2PM-8PM
2	3 5PM-7PM	4	5 5PM-7PM	6	7 5PM-7PM	8
9	10 5PM-7PM	11	12 5PM-7PM	13	14 5PM-7PM	15 2PM-8PM
16	17 5PM-7PM	18	19 5PM-7PM	20	21 5PM-7PM	22
23	24 5PM-7PM	25	26 5PM-7PM	27	28 5PM-7PM	29 2PM-8PM
30	31 5PM-7PM					

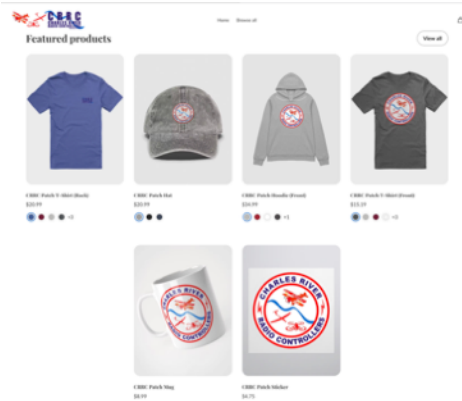
September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 5PM-7PM	3	4 5PM-7PM	5 2PM-8PM
6	7 5PM-7PM	8	9 5PM-7PM	10	11 5PM-7PM	12 2PM-8PM
13	14 5PM-7PM	15	16 5PM-7PM	17	18 5PM-7PM	19 2PM-8PM
20	21 5PM-7PM	22	23 5PM-7PM	24	25 5PM-7PM	26 2PM-8PM
27	28 5PM-7PM	29	30 5PM-7PM			

October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 2PM-8PM
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 2PM-8PM
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Noon-8PM
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 Noon-8PM
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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!

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 - 2026	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> Scott Ritter 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 / 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 2026 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 style="text-align: center;">Tom Hurney 508-272-7489</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sean Comer 781-444-1227 thescomer@gmail.com</p>

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Membership Application - 2026

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 it 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, 2026	After March 1, 2026
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>	