



# Tri City Flyers

## NEWSLETTER



[www.tricityflyers.com](http://www.tricityflyers.com)

**MARCH 2026**

AMA #850

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### MARCH 2026 EDITOR'S COLUMN

Hello TCF members, friends and guests. The content of this month's newsletter is a bit different because the March Business Meeting was cancelled in deference to preparation for the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Tri City Flyers Swap Meet.

Mike Zachau has provided his summary of the Swap Meet, including some general comments on the meet financials, in lieu of his normal Treasurer's Report. Additional details and pictures from the meet are in the general news section.

I will also begin something new this month. I plan to write a series on the assembly and completion of my latest ARF RC airplane. I hope you find it interesting and useful for your own building projects. Please give me your feedback, on whether you find it helpful or not.

In the meantime - get out there and Fly!

Frank George,  
TCF News Editor

**Club Meeting Reminder:** 7:00 PM on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the American Legion Post 593, located at 326 Legion Drive West, Converse, TX 78109. Unless otherwise informed, you can purchase a light meal at the Post prior to the meeting.



The 2026 Swap Meet is (as they say) in the books. The event this year, was once again in the Garden Ridge Community Center and was a great success.

The club officers would like to say "Thank You" to all the members who helped in setup and operation of the event. Also, we would like to thank all of the people who donated models and items for the Raffle and Donation sale tables. These acts of generosity allowed the club to reduce our cost and made for the best raffle profit we have had in the last 7 years.

Special thanks need to go to Frank George who was the event coordinator from start to finish. With Frank's efforts all tables (both days) were sold out and many more could have been sold if we had room for them. Also thank you to all of you who volunteered setting up, checking people in at the doors, and cleaning up after the event.

Special thanks to the Rice family (Gary, Linda, and Jim) for purchasing and preparing food, and serving in the kitchen. With their efforts, the kitchen was profitable even with the large increase in food costs over last year.

As mentioned above, the Raffle was the very successful and helped offset the reduced number of walk-in Buyers and Lookers. This success would not be possible without the special efforts from Jim Rice and Ed Valls. We had enough prizes to hold mini raffles throughout the swap meet. Thank you both, for all your efforts and especially to Jim Rice for running the raffles!

We also had a large donation to the club based on sales from the club tables. Thank you to all who donated items to sale and for Ed Valls and Jim Rice for managing the sales.

In summary, the club profits were significantly higher compared to the 2025 Swap Meet and we have our Membership and Friends to thank for that.

See everyone for the 2027 Swap Meet on March 12 and 13, 2027!

Mike Z.

Editor's Note: the annual swap meet has always been the club's most successful fund raiser. The year-to-year net income has increased each year since 2018, except 2021 when the meet was cancelled because of COVID, and the two years following. The move from February to

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
100%	+11.9%	+0.9%	COVID	-21.1%	-4.5%	+9.3%	+6.6%	+2.1%

March in 2025 did not interrupt the positive income trend, as this table shows.

Frank G.

Hello all and welcome to the tail end of March 2026. I hope everyone is getting some good "stick time" with the warmer weather this Spring(?). It certainly doesn't seem like a normal spring when the temperatures keep brushing up against, or setting, new high records.

Thanks to Mike Z. for writing his summary of the Swap Meet. He was much more like my co-manager for the event, rather than just the finance person. I appreciate all of his help very much. The meet has been successful financially, as well as popular with many vendors who participate year after year. The table added below Mike's summary shows a positive trend in net income from year to year, except just after the Covid interruption. The trend has since recovered from that setback. Enough talking about it. Here are some pictures from the 44th Annual TCF Swap Meet. The first one shows us all ready to go for our customers. Getting to this point



took a bit more effort this year, first because the City has taken responsibility for setting up the room. In addition, we were working with a new interim facility manager. So we provided our standard table layout chart in advance, and hoped to get the right setup. Also new, we were able to get the keys earlier in the week, to check the table setup. Good thing, because the table spacing was wrong and tables were not all there. Fortunately the City maintenance crew responsible for setting up the tables was easy to work with. So, we were ready for our vendors and customers.



Overall, we had a good swap meet this year. Every available space was rented, including the south patio.



And the kitchen was well stocked and taken care of again by Gary, Linda and Jim Rice.



Thanks to Jim Rice, Mike Fisher and others who helped collect raffle prizes, and those who donated from their own collections. We ended up with enough items for Jim to hold mini-drawings about every two hours throughout the meet. As a result, raffle ticket sales, and income, was an all-time high.

Finally thank you, thank you, to all the club members who helped with many tasks throughout the meet, from final table checking and numbering, vendor traffic control, vendor check in, admission collection, raffle ticket sales, kitchen duty, and finally, cleanup. A number of you had tables and still helped out. Others were there all the time, and some for most of a day. And my very special thanks to Johnell Holly for getting up early Saturday morning to open for Gary to start breakfast prep at 7:00 AM! Saved Mike or I from having to come from New Braunfels.

The 2026 swap meet ends my eight year run as event manager, after assisting Rusty Koehler. I will be happy to share my experience and help the next swap meet event manager get started.

As promised on Page 1, here is the first in a series of articles on assembling a new ARF airplane. Why do I “need” a new plane in my fleet? Last year I unfortunately lost my 59” AJ Slick after 10 years of faithful service. The landing was set up good, just a little high. So about 3 or 4 ft above the runway, with power off, I raised the nose slightly to bleed off altitude. Simultaneously, a sudden 90° gust lifted the up-wind wing resulting in a rapid nose down bank into the runway. Needless to say, after 10 years in the Texas summer climate, the very lightweight balsa and lite ply airframe was a total loss.

I really missed that airplane. Did I really need a 3-D capable plane? No, but set up for more conventional flight, it was great for traditional aerobatics. So - after a reasonable “mourning” period - I began “Frank’s Saga of Replacing a Favorite Airplane”. My first choice would have been a new AJ Slick, but their current one is a bit larger, and somewhat heavier than the old one. Besides, it seemed to be perpetually Out of Stock. Since Jim and Gary Rice both speak well of Buddy RC models, they became my next target. After reviewing their similar offerings, I settled on the Edge 540, 60” wingspan basic ARF, version. Not sure



why they chose this view, but you get the idea. The price was competitive, and shipping from Columbus, Ohio was very reasonable. The large package actually arrived safely two days before the promised date. Opening the end of the box revealed a very sturdy inner box that I named, the coffin.



This thing was 3/8th inch thick corrugated cardboard that completely protected



Here is a view of the box contents as I



the model. Next, I did a visual inspection of the airplane packaging and the components.

opened it



I examined each piece as it was removed from the box, and found no damage. The covering was perfectly done with no wrinkles or other touchup required. I was pleasantly surprised when I got to the wings, which were packaged in their own two compartment padded wing bag. Nice touch.



Finally, I laid each piece out on my table, while inventorying everything against the box contents list in the Building Manual. All listed items were accounted for, and there were even some spare small hardware pieces. That's it for the first month's installment of my build series.

Next month I will review the results of weighing each part to compare my actual airplane's airframe weight with the advertised number. I will also discuss several things the manufacturer has included to assist and simplify the completion of this ARF, along with some "just neat" touches.

I hope you will find something of interest as I continue my build, and talk about changes I make to the manual's instructions that I think improve the process, and suit my style.

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