



# Tri City Flyers

## NEWSLETTER



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

**APRIL 2026**

**AMA #850**

### Your 2026 Tri City Club Contacts:

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### APRIL 2026 PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Hello everyone, I hope all of you are well. On March 13 & 14 we held our 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Swap Meet at the Garden Ridge Community center. It was one of the most successful fund raisers we have ever had. While our visitor count was down, we sold all of our table spaces and had a bit of a waiting list. While our volunteers, as always, made the event a success, part of the success is due to the contributions and efforts of Jim Rice. Jim solicited raffle prize donations from our members as well as some of our hobby shops, and these donations were then used a raffle prizes. All in all, well done to all of you who had vendor tables, all of our visitors and all of our club members.

As announced in our notice of our April meeting in the email message sent to all of you by Joh Franklin, we spent a good part of the meeting discussing our club's financial status. While we do have "money in the bank" we have, for the past three years, been spending more than we are taking in. The club officers have spent considerable amounts of time reviewing our financial position and I would like to thank them for their time and effort. After this in-depth review of the data, the officers have decided to recommend a dues increase for the calendar year beginning in 2027. Our Treasurer, Mike Zachau, compiled the financial Profit and Loss information for the past six years and this information was presented to the club members present. A number of the members in attendance participated in an in-depth and very meaningful discussion regarding our financial status and our current dues structure. We will have another opportunity to further discuss our finances as well as a proposed dues increase as recommended by our officers. I would like to encourage all of you that are able to attend to please attend the May meeting and make your voice heard.

On April 11, more than ten of our club members converged on the Kingsbury flying field to work on the public address system. The current system cabling and speakers have been in place for more than 18 years and the system was in need of an upgrade. Frank George designed the upgrade and we installed seven new speakers as well as all new cabling. We now have a wonderfully capable public address system that will serve our needs well into the future. So, I offer a heartfelt thank you to all of you who came out to dig trenches for the cabling and spent time on the lift replacing all of the speakers. A job very well done.

Finally, when you read this newsletter, wonderfully composed and edited by Frank George, we will only be about four weeks away from the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Warbirds Over Kingsbury. Please mark your calendars and try to attend the event to support our club.

That is all for now. I encourage each and every one of you to enjoy the hobby and the friendships of your fellow modelers. I hope to see you soon at one of our fields.

Sincerely,  
Ed

**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.

Tri City Flyers, Inc. Business Meeting Minutes April 9, 2026

**Call to Order:** Club President Ed Valls called the April meeting to order at 7:02pm. 20 club members, including 5 officers and 2 admin people, were in attendance. Ed briefed the members with an outline of important changes to club bylaws and policy documents.

**March Meeting Minutes:** The March club meeting was cancelled in lieu of the annual TCF Swap Meet. No minutes were taken; Frank George did publish a newsletter in March that is available on the TCF website.

**Guests/New Members:** Rusty Koehler presented 5 new members to be voted in at the meeting. William Elox was the only one present at the meeting. Rusty invited him to come forward and tell the members of his model airplane background. William told members that he had 5 years of flying experience including EDF Jets from 64 to 120mm in size. Rusty added the other 4 new members to the list. They are Lubo Droppa, a longtime model aircraft pilot with experience with propeller, EDF, and turbine jets. Mark Netherland renewed a lapsed membership and Levi Robinson, who wished to revive his past interest in R/C aviation. A motion was made by Rusty to accept all the completed applicants into the club. Johnell Holly seconded the motion. All of the new members were accepted by a unanimous vote.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mike Zachau presented the members with the financial report. He gave the membership the figures for the end of March. He also presented the March Swap Meet income and expense totals. Rusty Koehler moved to receive the Treasurer's report as written William Enox seconded and the report was received by a unanimous vote.

**Safety Officers Reports:**

Kingsbury safety officer Mike Fisher reported no incidents. Seguin safety officer Augie Santiago was not in attendance. Ed Valls reported there were no incidents at Seguin.

**Field Manager Report:** Mike Fisher reported the Kingsbury field to be dry but in good condition. He told members that the mower annual service was done and Gary Barrett had mowed 3 times this year. The mower is in good shape except for a tire that keeps going flat. Discussion followed, and it has been determined that solid tires would be the best course of action. Mike Zachau asked Mike Fisher to present an estimate of cost to install solid tires.

**AMA Business:** Frank George reported no AMA business of note in March.

**Unfinished Business:**

**Swap Meet Review:** Frank George presented the members with the attendance figures for the annual TCF Swap Meet. He told members that 148 paying guests attended the two-day event. He said that it was down from 255 at the 2025 Swap Meet. It was noted that women and youth are not charged admission, so families increase the actual number of visitors significantly. He also informed members that all

vendor tables and available floor space had been sold for the 2026 Swap Meet. He said that the event had many repeat vendors who often reserved more than one table. Frank said that more advertising should help increase guest attendance. He told members that the New Braunfels paper free advertising for nonprofit events appears to be limited to local events now. He thinks it results from the large population growth in the area. Frank has been the Swap Meet coordinator for the past 8 years and has shown increases every year since he took over.

Mike Zachau presented the attending members with the itemized financial figures for the Meet. He also said that the attendance income was down since last year. Table rental and raffle income have increased since last year. The kitchen profit was down because of increased expenses. A special thanks to Jeff Beehler for the donation of 8 dozen eggs to the kitchen. The Meet net profit was up slightly over 2025.

A new Garden Ridge policy this year is for their personnel to set up the vendor table layout using the customer's plan. This change was primarily for safety and liability concerns. Our experience was that TCF needed to adjust the initial layout and notify the manager that the layout was shorted a number of tables. That required a second visit to verify the final layout.

Finally, a very sincere thanks to, all who contributed to the Swap Meet raffle, and to the many members who helped staff the event - from setting up the room, to vendor traffic control, checking in vendors, collecting admissions, selling raffle tickets, helping in the kitchen, and the final cleanup. Yes, we did get our cleanup deposit back again this year!

**Warbirds Over Kingsbury:** Event CD, Tom DiCuirci, addressed the upcoming Warbirds over Kingsbury Fly-in. He told members that many of the same processes of last year's event were in place for this year. He has secured some of the raffle and contestant prizes for the event. He will also secure a caterer for the event. Tom will need volunteers to come forward to assist in various ways. He is expecting 55 pilots to attend the two-day event. The Kingsbury field maintenance will be performed the week prior to the Fly-in, on May 11. A larger raffle ticket tumbler is needed, and Matt Dirienzo said he might be able to help with that. Mike Fisher proposed that the pilot flying stations be consolidated into one location this year and, that an additional 2 airplane runway restraints be added.

**Kingsbury PA System:** The Kingsbury PA system will be updated on April 11th and 12th; Frank George will coordinate those improvements. Six new field speakers and one pavilion speaker will be installed. A new enclosed cabinet for the amplifier, mixer and all accessories will be part of the improvements. Volunteers will be needed for that effort, and Ed Valls plans to have the installation equipment at the field by 8 to 8:30 AM Saturday. He hopes enough volunteers will show up so the work can be completed in one day.

**New Business:** Ed Valls called for a short recess to distribute

supporting documentation for the club bylaws, policy changes and dues increase.

**Swap Meet Leadership:** Ed announced that Frank George needs to step away from the leadership role for the club's Swap Meets. He told members that a replacement for Frank needs to come forward by Sept. 1, 2026, or future Swap Meets would be cancelled. This requires everyone's attention because the Swap Meets are a major annual income source for the club. Frank has offered help with the transition to the position. Ed told members to contact Frank if they can assume the duty.

**Proposed Annual Dues Increase:** Mike Zachau informed the club members of the club Board of Directors' decision to raise the annual dues to \$120. The increase is supported by a document compiled by Mike that outlines the club's losses over the past 5 years. The outline also included the results of the increase, with and without the annual Swap Meet. The increase is also supported by Ed surveying several local R/C clubs to see what benefits and facilities they offered. TCF is the only local club to offer two separate flying facilities, and most others had higher membership dues than TCF. A detailed analysis of the clubs' income and expenses is available to anyone who wishes to see it. Ask an officer if you would like that info.

**Bylaws and Policy Documents:** Ed continued with an outline of proposed changes to the club Bylaws and the Policy Documents. Some changes are needed to address the outdated use of 72 MHz transmitters. Ed felt that since very few people fly 72 or the ham band that we no longer support the frequency control board and that those not flying the 2.4 g frequency would be responsible for the frequency control. Further discussion on the 72meg frequency issue will be held at the May club meeting with a decision on the final wording of the frequency issue. Other document changes included updating the TCF dues to a proposed increase to \$120 annually. Mike Fisher also expressed his desire to remove the engine starting, run-up clause #3, page 6 from the Kingsbury Flying Site Rules. Aircraft refueling rules are to be documented for both the Kingsbury and the Seguin flying sites. Ed also outlined steps for disciplinary actions needed in the event of repeated AMA or Club Flying safety rules violations. He noted that anyone observing an infraction can bring it to the field Safety Officer or any club officer. At that time the officer will address the infraction with the pilot, and ask that the behavior be changed. If the incident occurs a second time, a letter will be sent to the pilot requesting that they attend the next meeting to explain why the behavior continues. If the club member continues to violate the same safety rule the club will have no option but to ask the membership to vote on the revocation of the individuals membership.

**Broken Prop Award:** Mike Fisher nominated Ernie Swiontek for two separate crashes he had. Ernie explained to the members that one crash involved a V-1200 aircraft he recently acquired. The aircraft has a top speed of 145mph, and requires quick responses when being flown. The plane got

ahead of Ernie, and he lost control at a low level. That resulted in a wing tip striking the runway and cartwheeling the aircraft. Ernie said he had ordered a new fuselage and refuses to let the airplane defeat him. Mike Fisher stated that the engine outran the airplane. His next crash was from an equipment failure. He said he noticed some electrical connections that were melted on his EDF A-10 Warthog. He believes that the negative battery connection failed and the aircraft went straight in from 150ft. There is nothing but small Styrofoam parts left. All members voted and the A-10 crash took the award.

**Show and Tell:**

Gus Niver showed an airplane he built from the kit he acquired from the estate of a deceased friend. He told members that his friend designed the kit and that all the parts fit extremely well. The plane is called a Skylark 40, and Gus spent quite a while with a highly detailed covering job. The covering features several designs together with multiple colors.

Matt Dirienzo showed a T6A Texan II he bought in Corpus Christi as an ARF. He finished the model as the Air Force trainer. He discovered later that he has a niece who recently completed flight training in the T6A. She is now training to pilot the Air Forces KC135 aircraft. Matt said he has 6 flights on the plane and it flies very well.

**Adjournment:** Rusty Koehler made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Gus Niver. All voted ayes to adjourn.

**Upcoming Events:** ~~AMA Fun Fly in April 25<sup>th</sup>. All current AMA members can fly at this free event. Lunch will be offered for a small donation.~~ Cancelled due to conflicting Kingsbury Event.

May 2, 2026, Pioneer Flight Museums' Spring Wings and Wheels Fly-in. See website for more details.

May TCF Regular Meeting, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 7:00pm at the American Legion Hall; Converse, Texas.

Warbirds over Kingsbury, May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2026. Tom Di-cuirci CD. Field cleanup will be on Monday, May 11 and the field will be available to all warbird pilots beginning on Thursday, May 14. Prior to May 14, the field will be available for regular RC flying.

Hello again to all TCF members and friends. Spring has sprung, and - as usual - Texas weather is keeping us on our toes. Even so, there have been opportunities to get out to the fields and fly. If you have read Ed's President's Column, and the April meeting minutes, you know I am late with the newsletter. I apologize that some personal events, with which I won't bore you, slowed me down a bit. So lets get on with the news.

Our annual Swap Meet, as summarized in the minutes, was very successful again largely because of the members who stepped up to work the event. I refer you to the March Newsletter for my detailed swap meet news review with pictures.

Much meeting time was devoted to the proposed dues increase. I ask you to consider the proposal seriously. We had a modest \$5.00 increase in 2024, but our fixed expenses - those things we have to pay for every year - have increased significantly with both flying site lease renewals. Other costs have gone up as well. We have all felt that in our personal lives too. The May meeting dues discussion will determine the final dues increase, so be there if you want a voice in the discussion. Enough on that.

Most of you know Ron Wahl. Ed presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation for his many years of supporting RC model aviation in a variety of ways



Gus Niver and Matt Dirienzo brought us some very nice Show N Tell planes this month. Gus's plane, the Skylark 40, was originally sold as a short kit by Stengel Technologies many years ago. I found one link to the kit on e-bay for about \$100.00 plus

shipping. I didn't follow up to see if it is current. Here is a picture of the plane Gus built. He did a



great job with the covering. I admire his talent and patience with the iron on materials. Our second plane, from Matt Dirienzo, is his T6ATexan, finished in Air Force trainer trim. Matt always does a good



job with his models, and this is another example.

Moving on, the PA system upgrade got started on April 11, as noted in the minutes. New up to code underground wiring was installed with the help of a trenching machine. Old Pa speakers were removed and seven new ones were installed, and connected. Six speakers were mounted outside on the poles, and one in the pavilion. Following are some

pictures of the team and their work First, here is the



crew of volunteers, ready for work. After the hard work of running the trencher, and burying the cable, thanks John and all, it's time to hang the new speakers. Here, they are, being prepared for installation.



And finally, Mike Fisher boarded the cherry picker to mount the speakers on their pole locations. Four of the speakers face towards the flying field and two face the parking and spectator areas. A seventh speaker is mounted in the pavilion, above the kitchen. The system was turned on and both the audio mixer and power amplifier controls were set to the correct levels. The Kingsbury staff used the system for an event the weekend of May 5, and it were very satisfied.

A few "cleanup" details remain. However, we were informed that a major upgrade to the kitchen and pavilion is planned in the near future, so it was decided that the finishing touches should wait



until that work is finished. In the meantime, the new system is totally functional. Besides dressing up the



wiring a bit, we will install a new audio cabinet to hold all of the PA system equipment. All connections will be via a control panel on the end of the cabinet.



That's about all for the April news. Not much time for my OMP ARF project this month. I promise to continue in May.

As always, I will appreciate suggestions for content and improvements to your club newsletter

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