10/30/23

Members and Friends of NEPRCC;

The 2023 season is pretty much behind us now. As you may know the FAA has become an increasingly bothersome detriment to the wholesome hobby that we have enjoyed for so many years. Our safety record in the State Park has been exemplary considering our proximity to the N. E. Phila. Airport. As members of our club, we had to pass a TRUST examination and obtain registration under the FAA along with membership in AMA. Most of us are registered as recreational fliers under part 49 USC 44809 of the code for UAS, (unmanned aircraft systems).

   The FAA has gifted certain CBO's (community-based organizations) the privilege of applying for FRIA (federally recognized identification area) designation for its member sites. Those of us who have applied and been granted FRIA designation are free to fly at the site as we have in the past. Had the FAA not granted FRIA status we would all have had to install working broadcast modules in our UAS that send out pilot location, along with position and heading of the aircraft. To whom or what is anybody's guess. The initial compliance date was Sept 16, 2023. The enforcement component of the rule has been postponed until March 16, 2024, because broadcast modules are simply unavailable for the masses and the cost has been much higher than initially proposed. They will also be cumbersome to move from plane to plane.

   That being said it took a couple iterations to get this accomplished. I didn't tell the members that the first attempt was denied. I contacted my resources within AMA starting with Mark Radcliff our district V.P. He put me in touch with Lisa Johnson the AMA liaison for FRIA applications to the FAA. We worked together and I resubmitted the application with a more detailed map of our actual flying area. The initial form asked only for a GPS coordinate and a radius. There was a small check box to indicate that if a radius wasn't sufficient then someone from AMA would reach out to help. Well that's my story and It's now past history. FRIA status is good for 3 years, and the FAA will update us at that time as to any changes in code.

   I also want to take this time to acknowledge the faithful volunteers who devote their time every week to maintaining the site and helping with improvements.
 First off, I want to say thank you to Joe LaVanga, he moved out of the area in mid-summer. He was a faithful volunteer working alongside Jerry Blaszczyk for 17+ years! Let that sink in. the rest of the crew include in no particular order Ed Kelley, Jon Radway, George Bahler, Joe Adamusko, Gary Busler, Joe Castaldi, Lamar Frye, Leonard Crawford, Alexey Lomov, Ken Lenke and Mike Barson. Honorable mention to Skip Chernoff.
  Our club boasts a Pylon Racing 'Club 40' unit, that competes in a 6-race season on selected Sundays.
     Year To Date Results are currently as of this writing with 2 more races to go.
1st Frank Donnelly 59 points; 2nd John Saunders 49 points; 3rd Tim Stags 48 points;
4th Marty Rotkis 37 points; 5th Charlie Cerino 32 points; 6th Skip Chernoff 21 points[
7th Jose Rodriquez 15 points; 8th Dave Sagot 6 points; and 9th Go Kart Phil 5 points.
Honorary mention to Charlie Elwell, and Frank Konongowskii and also thanks to those who come out and assist with lap counting and cut judging. For updated rankings see their page on NEPRCC.club.

   We are currently accepting membership renewals and new joins for the 2024 season. I am aware that some of you have been holding out in lieu of our site achieving FRIA status, so if that's you there is nothing stopping you from renewing your membership. I hope to find us a location for a meeting in early spring. We haven't held a real meeting since COVID changed everything. I also want to locate a venue for indoor flying somewhere in the area. Some of us visited Cohoocksink rec center in Port Richmond last year and enjoyed indoor flying of various craft, including RC, free flight, rubber and capacitor powered planes. That venue is undergoing renovations limiting the club's dates to visit there.

Angelo Tata, President