

# Article in the Norwich Bulletin

## Model planes soar at Fun Fly in Salem

### Event held to memorialize late club members

#### Photos



**Mark Elliott, left, of Colchester, and Dave Pratt, of Norwich, start a scale model airplane at the annual RC Propbusters Memorial Fun Fly Sunday in Salem.**

Matt Brown / NorwichBulletin.com

The small sign near the entrance to the RC Propbusters field said, "Don't fly near Route 82."

And it's a good thing none of the 20 or so model airplanes gathered for the club's annual Memorial Fun Fly on Sunday did.

The sight of a 35 percent scale model airplane streaking low across busy Route 82 at more than 100 mph would be enough to strike fear into the heart of even the most jaded motorist.

The RC Propbusters club has hosted its annual Fun Fly for more than 20 years. After longtime club member Bob Berringer died about 12 years ago, it became an event in memory of club members who have passed on, said Fred Meyer, of Groton, the club's contest director.

Sunday was the second day of the two-day event.

Everything from small, store-bought, electric radio-controlled planes for beginners to large, "scratch-built" replicas of real planes filled the air above the club's field, nestled among fields of corn on leased land.

In a separate, smaller field nearby, model helicopters took to the air to do elaborate maneuvers.

Meyer explained that RC Propbusters club members attend many competitive events, during which they perform precision maneuvers in a set sequence and are scored by a panel of judges.

But this weekend's event was a "fun fly," which doesn't follow a format.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was the flight of Len Buffinton's ASH 26 Sail Plane, a radio-controlled glider with a 21-foot wingspan.

It was pulled to altitude by Robert Larson's Wilga airplane, a scale model packing a 100 cc engine.

Larson, like many of the event's participants, has been into flying model airplanes since he was a child.

"The older you get, the blinder you get, the bigger the airplanes get," he said. He said he often tows Buffinton's sail plane, which can remain aloft for hours if the wind is right.

Its flight Sunday was short.

Bill Mares, a club member from Lisbon, said the memorial fun fly event draws participants from "all over the area."

The Build Right Fly Right club from Wallingford kept the helicopter field humming all day.

Mares said the event is a great opportunity for enthusiasts of all levels to learn from each other.

"People will talk you through different things. If you want to learn a new maneuver, we'll talk you through it," he said.

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Read more: [Model planes soar at Fun Fly in Salem - Norwich, CT - The Bulletin](http://www.norwichbulletin.com/archive/x1223064250/Model-planes-soar-at-Fun-Fly-in-Salem#ixzz1RuAPxVcK)  
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