



# **Astrowings**

## **AMA Charter Club #1167**

**www.astrowings.com**

### **February 2015**

**Astrowings club officers:**

**President-Steve Tarney: [pres@astrowings.com](mailto:pres@astrowings.com)**

**Vice President-Jeff Thompson: [vp@astrowings.com](mailto:vp@astrowings.com)**

**Treasurer-Dick Husting: [tres@astrowings.com](mailto:tres@astrowings.com)**

**Secretary-Jim Hendrickson: [info@astrowings.com](mailto:info@astrowings.com)**

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If you have suggestions, or submissions for the newsletter please contact Jim Hendrickson at [toolmanjh@wi.rr.com](mailto:toolmanjh@wi.rr.com).

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**Meeting notes:**

The Astrowings January membership meeting was held at the Grafton Senior Center on January 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 7:30 PM.

Opening: President Steve Tarney opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Treasurer's report: The treasurer's report was read by Dick Husting and approved.

Field condition: The field was reported to be in good winter condition.

Old Business: Jim Hendrickson reported that the sanction application for the fun fly was in progress. Jeff Thompson discussed the option of including the Wounded Warrior Project as a part of the event. Tom Johnson suggested radio receivers and servos as raffle prizes for the event as all flyers can use them.

New business: Steve Tarney reported that the MSOE lift competition team would be coming to the field to test fly as weather permits.

Demonstration: Mike Thompson gave a demonstration of his home built foam flyers which use only the lift generated from a square of foam board to fly. He flew planes in sizes from almost too small to see to an 18" wingspan. It was a very good demonstration of the principles of flight, and very fun to watch!

Raffle: Raffle prize winners included:

Jim Mikkelson-Spectre X Quadcopter.

Steve Tarney-Hobbico cutting mat.

Jason Florio-CA glue.

Don Weigend-Soldering iron and a pack of assorted balsa.  
Adjournment:  
The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

## Announcements:

2015 membership dues are now payable. Please get them to Dick Husting ASAP, this will help him with record keeping and the club charter.  
The date for the 2015 Fun Fly has been set. The Fun Fly will be held on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the field. Please mark the date on your calendars, and plan to attend and help.

A rumor has been circulating that Happy Hobby is closing the 76<sup>th</sup> St. location. Lauri Jones has spoken to members and told them this rumor is not true. They are open for business and welcome our members.

The next Astrowings membership meeting will be held at the Grafton Senior Center February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM. Bring in your winter project or Christmas present for Show and Tell and get a free raffle ticket!

## MSOE lift competition team holds test flights at the Astrowings field:

On January 24<sup>th</sup> the MSOE lift competition team assisted by Astrowings members Steve Tarney and Gary Keup test flew their plane at the Astrowings field. Four successful flights took place. As they fine tune their equipment, more test flights may be needed in the future, hopefully in warmer weather...



**Gary Keup and the MSOE lift competition team.**



The MSOE team prepares for a test flight.



The MSOE aircraft.

Mike Thompson demonstrates his foam flyers:







January membership meeting raffle prize winners:



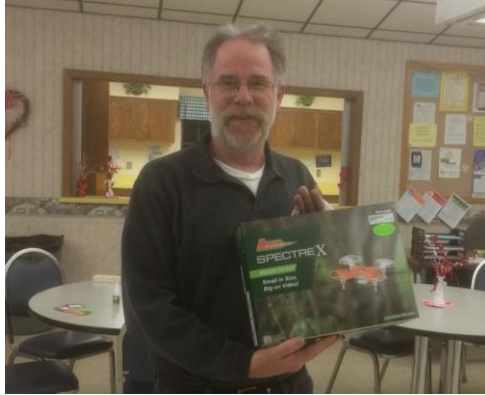
Jason Florio wins CA glue.



Steve Tarney wins the cutting mat.



Mike Thompson wins zip ties.



**Jim Mikkelsen wins the Spectre X quadcopter.**



**Don Weigend wins the soldering iron.**

## **Greenfield News and Hobby closing after 50years**

Reprinted from "MARKS Remarks" newsletter of the Milwaukee Area Radio Kontrol Society, Inc.,

Charles Reich, editor, Franksville, WI, February, 2015

**Greenfield.** Greenfield News and Hobby, for decades a destination store for area hobbyists and readers of some of the most-obscure magazines, is poised to shut its doors. The planned closing of the shop, which grew from its roots in Cudahy into something of a local landmark, stems from a combination of business and personal reasons, owner Jay Gordon said.

"Sales have fallen steadily from their peak eight years ago, and interest in pursuits such as model railroading and plastic-model building is fading," he said. Magazine sales have been steady - the store carries more than 2,000 titles, from Harper's and Glamour to Crappie World and American Atheist - but account for only 10% to 15% of overall revenue.

Meanwhile, he said his wife and co-owner, Kristine, want to do other things after a lifetime running a high-maintenance store. "It's been like a 2-year-old that needs constant attention," Gordon, 56, said Thursday. He said they put the business up for sale last March but have found no takers. "Couple little nibbles, nothing that came to fruition," Gordon said. "A key problem in marketing the store, which occupies a 15,000 square-

foot building at 6815 W. Layton Ave., is the long slide in sales, which have fallen by about a third from their pre-recession peak," he said.

Gordon said his business broker has received a few calls since word emerged that Greenfield News is closing, but Gordon doesn't expect a buyer to emerge. "It's kind of late in the game," he said. If he does indeed move ahead with his plans as expected, it will add one more name to a growing list of long-standing, locally owned Milwaukee-area retailers that have closed over the last few months or announced they will close.

**Aging customer base.** Across the country, the ranks of hobby stores have been thinning over the last 10 years or so, said Jeff Reich, editor of Model Retailer, one of the magazines of Waukesha's Kalmbach Publishing Co. The biggest reason he said, is probably the aging of the market. "A lot of kids aren't picking up these hobbies either because they're being priced out, or because they'd rather go to online or home video games, and it's hard to counteract that," Reich said.

Gordon said much the same thing. He guessed that the average age of his customers is over 50. The one segment that attracts large numbers of younger people is radio-controlled aircraft and cars, but that's highly competitive and comes with a catch.

"They're not building anything anymore," Gordon said. "Everything is ready-to-run, ready-to-fly. That has taken the grass-roots out of the hobby industry. People aren't buying balsa wood, they aren't buying glue, they aren't buying covering material. They aren't buying the hinges and the hardware and stuff to build an airplane 'cause they already come pre-built."

The decline in revenue has put Greenfield News and Hobby on shaky ground, profit-wise, with prospects none too bright. "We haven't taken some wages some months, just to make it go," Gordon said. "But we don't want to put our dollars into it, and that's what we foresee for next year it might be."

Instead, the Gordons are looking forward to visiting their adult children, kayaking, bike riding and hiking. "There are so many, things I want to do," Gordon said.

**Roots in the 1960s.** The business began in the mid-'60s when Gordon's parents added a selection of magazines and models to a liquor store they bought on Packard Ave. in Cudahy. Not long afterward, they decided to abandon liquor and concentrate on hobby equipment and magazines, jamming their little shop with inventory. Gordon and his wife bought the business in 1980.

"It's all I've known," Gordon said. "I've never had another job, never done anything else but the hobby shop."

In 1998, he and Kristine opened the much-larger and more central Greenfield location, and ran both stores until closing the Cudahy shop four years later. The business has 18 employees, including eight who work full time. "We made the right move when we moved from Cudahy to here," Gordon said. "It was absolutely the right thing to do. We would have died in Cudahy years ago."

While sales grew steadily through the mid-2000s, Greenfield News never developed the capability to sell more than a minimal amount of product over the Internet. "We had a couple people try it, and they just didn't do that well," Gordon said.

But he said that while he could have done some things better, "I'm glad of the business we've built up over the years. We really built it into a beautiful, beautiful business."

Gordon has hired a liquidation company to help sell off the store's inventory beginning Feb. 4. He expects to close in late March. The store address is 6815 W. Layton Avenue, Greenfield, WI 53220. 414-281-1800. Hours are Open 7 Days a week. Mon.-Fri. 10AM-9PM, Saturday 10AM-5PM; Sunday 12 Noon-5PM

**See you at the meeting! Remember, summer will be here soon...**







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

# 8th Annual All R/C Swap Meet

**K**ettles  
**A**rea  
**F**lyers



Saturday, April 18, 2015

8:00 AM until Noon

at the



Sheboygan County Airport  
Highway O & TT Just North of Hwy 23

**Featuring all types of Radio Control Hobby items!**

Airplanes - Cars - Boats - Helicopters - Trucks

Kits - Radios - Motors - Parts - Accessories



**Raffles!**

\*\*\* Drawings at NOON \*\*\*



**No Table Fee!**

Admission: \$5 12 and under: FREE

A pancake breakfast will be available for a nominal cost  
served by the EAA Chapter 766!