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WNYFFS June Update

1 message

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Greetings All,

It is with great sadness that I bring news of the death of Jack Barker. Jack had been diagnosed with cancer several months ago. He did not wish for there to be a general announcement of his condition but rather preferred to carry on as best he could with his new condition. Earlier this month I received word that Jack had been admitted to the hospital and a short time later, that he had passed away.

Jack had many hobby interests. Among others, he enjoyed restoring antique canoes, antique trucks, even making his own bows for archery. Although we spoke often of these and other interests, mostly I knew Jack as a longtime member of the Western New York Free Flight Society. He served as Vice President in the previous administration with Bob Clemens as President. Even after the end of his tenure as an officer, Jack continued to perform many services for the club. Perhaps the most sorely missed will be his wholehearted advocacy for free flight. He was always talking up the pleasure of free flight to anyone who showed any interest or inclination. I cannot begin to remember the many people Jack would introduce around the contests over the years as so and so who is interested in getting back in to Free Flight or trying it out for the first time.

Jack was interested in many disciplines of Free Flight. He seemed most enthusiastic for his two favorite SAM events of Ignition and 020 Replica as well as many FAC events. Jack frequently flew his Carl Goldberg Zipper with the Forster at contests, even when there were very few, or no, other competitors in the ignition event. Even when there were other entrants in that event, he would oftentimes fly the zipper with a shorter than allowed motor run. That made it hard to win but he was really flying the Zipper because he loved to see it go. It really was a beautiful thing to see; there were many among us who would turn watch and enjoy whenever we heard the Forster sputter to life. It seems also that Jack enjoyed 020 Replicas for just plain fun. They were fun to build and fun to fly. Of course Jack flew some rubber powered SAM events as well but of late his rubber powered flying seemed to center on FAC events. With the smaller, mostly rubber powered FAC models there as more opportunity to fly.

Whatever event he was flying, Jack was not a fierce competitor. He enjoyed seeing his models fly and he enjoyed other people flying their models. He loved to talk in the shade when he was just "too pooped" to fly again. He was always ready to offer advice or tell a story. He would frequently invite us over to his house to fly models from his back yard.

On my last visit to Jack's house, Mary Jo accompanied me because Jack had said his son John and daughter Beth were going to put on a concert with some of Beth's friends. After throwing gliders around for a bit we went in to listen to the music. What a pleasant surprise we had; not only was the music terrific, but most of it had been written by the performers. The musicians sat around the dining room table and Jack, Sue, Mary Jo and I sat in the parlor to listen and watch. As the evening floated by and we enjoyed the lively melodies I noticed a glow coming from corner of the parlor where Sue and Jack were seated. About that time Mary Jo asked me if it was getting late. I spotted a small clock on a nearby table told my wife not to worry as it was only a quarter to eight. The performance continued with very little break in the music. After several more rounds had been played, Mary Jo again asked again about the time. After checking the same clock, I laughed and told her not to worry, it was still a quarter to eight! While reporting the time, I noticed that glow again; Jack was just beaming with affection and pride as he watched John, Beth and her friends. His foot tapping time to the music, he noticed Mary Jo and me looking and he smiled with obvious pleasure knowing that we were enjoying the performance as much as he was. Eventually, after consulting a different clock, we called it a night and went home. On the way, we both remarked how smile lit up the event.

It was my pleasure to enjoy Jack's company on and off the field for many years. His smile, laugh and many stories will be sorely missed. He was always enthusiastic for our model flying. Even when, as he would often say, he was really too pooped, he would often times put in "just one more flight". Thanks Jack

Memorial Service

Jack's family is planning a memorial service in Late August. August 27 is the date which has been suggested. It is not clear that the date is solid yet. When the details firm up, I will send out more complete information.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Jack's family at this time. Thanks for sharing Jack all these years. When some aspect of a model was too complicated or confusing, Jack would sometimes say that it was beyond the scope of this course. For him, everything is now within the scope of his course.

The Wrap Up

Don't forget: National Warplane Museum airshow is on July 9 & 10 and the Flying Aces Nationals will be held in July with July 13 through 16. That's enough for now.

Mark C. Rzdca, Editor, Western New York Free Flight Society Thermal Journal.

2 attachments



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270K

 **image002.emz**
3K