



# The THUMB PRINT

## Thermal Thumbers Of Metro Atlanta

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



**AMA**  
Charter # 1834

**Editor**  
**David Mills**  
(404)-509-4209  
[DavidMillsAtl@gmail.com](mailto:DavidMillsAtl@gmail.com)

**Publisher**  
**Brook Dixon, Jr.**  
[brookdjr@charter.net](mailto:brookdjr@charter.net)



**NFFS**

January -February 2010

---

### HEADS UP

Welcome to the first issue of 2010 and it carries some very valuable information, including the remaining indoor schedule and the upcoming outdoor schedule. Mark your calendars, accordingly. A full report of the recent annual banquet follows, along with a good spread of photos, courtesy of Barf. Karl provides a good rationale and plea for increased local club competition in an article that follows, which happily coincides with a change this year in the club's method of high point tabulation. Don't forget about the Southeast Model Show in Perry the March 5 and 6. It's the world's largest model aviation swap meet with over 1000 tables, and be sure to attend. Cracker pride. (Those backbenchers in Hershey, PA can kiss my grits!)

This is it from me for now from here. Glue some sticks together and show up somewhere. Daylight's burning.

### THE DUST HAS SETTLED

For a variety of reasons the Peter and Stephanie Brown's decided to leave TTOMA and start their own club. After a period of unease, real and/or imagined, it became clear the club they've founded, the SouthEast Air Chasers, isn't necessarily a competitor to TTOMA, but rather, has a different mission entirely.

Specifically, SAC is looking to find homes for our area's park fliers, fun CL'ers, model rocketeers, indoor RC'ers, and others, emphasizing family activities with an outreach toward kids and home-schoolers. Not exactly TTOMA's bailiwick. Personally, I wish them well. Who knows, maybe they'll recruit some fresh, competition-oriented free flight modelers for us.

However, this sudden change of circumstances did require a rearranging of the club's leadership and re-assigning of a few responsibilities. At this pecking, everything we needed to do to get the old momentum back is in place and underway, to one degree or another. We encourage everyone to show up for the next meeting during the Feb. 21 contest at the Ward Rec Center and be brought up to speed on the changes. An important item to be discussed is an update of the club bylaws; much time as passed and recent events have shown that technology and circumstance has rendered big chunks obsolete. We'll circle the wagons around lunchtime.

### TIME TO RENEWAL

True to past performance, there are many of you who haven't renewed their memberships and we're all staring at the month of February already. As you know, a late penalty to the dues is

going to added pretty soon, so now is your chance to avoid the extra freight. You know who you are and we know where you live. Send Don Brown (477 Safari Circle, Stone Mountain, GA 30083) a check for \$20.00 payable to TTOMA. A membership form follows with the details.

### **A CALL TO ARMS**

The club needs a new webmaster. Chris Stoddart (Knoxville, TN), a new member and my fellow FFQ editor, has handled the transition from Liz Brown in a smooth and efficient fashion. However, we need a new and locally-based webmaster to assume those duties fulltime. Chris is very pleased to offer a good training program for the new guy/gal/kid. I figure it's a great opportunity for someone to learn a new and hip skill set. I'm told the Google system is very intuitive, heavily pre-formatted, and very clickable throughout. Contact El Presidente Barfield if you're interested.

### **BEHIND CLOSED DOORS**

Here are the dates for the remainder of the indoor season at Ward Rec Center: Feb. 21, March 14, and April 10 (FAC) and 11. Note the April dates are for the Peach State Indoor Champs, a two-day affair. A map can be found on the website. The gym is easy to find; it's at Cobb County's Lost Mountain Park on Hwy. 120/Dallas Hwy. about a mile east of Mars Hill Rd. Be there.

### **UNDER THE CATHEDRAL OF THE BIG BLUE SKY**

Dohrman has laid out the upcoming 2010 outdoor season and the sanctions are in process, so mark your calendars thusly: April 25, May 23, June 26 (FAC) and 27, July 11, August 29, September 25 (FAC) and 26, October 24, and November 7. Once again, we'll enjoy the good graces of the nice people at the N GA Turf Farm. I cannot overstate how lucky we are to have the use of this field for the club's outdoor flying site. Ergo, we need to continue to behave ourselves and do the right thing by the owners. Be there and be square.

### **BANQUET REPORT**

We had lousy weather and the cold, sodden skies kept a few away. Williams Bros., their food and facilities, didn't disappoint. My ribeye was great and Dohrman's pulled pork didn't stand a chance. I'm guessing we had about forty attendee. Show and Tell offered about twenty examples, quite a bounty. Fortunately, Al and his better two-thirds remained at home, safe and sound, in AL and all our models looked pretty good as a consequence. A special treat was Dohrman's Cessna Birddog all done up in South.Vietnam livery.

(Dohrman, likewise, was all done up in Saints livery and was able to watch his beloved "Ain'ts" trounced all before them toward meeting the Colts in the Super Bowl. He was very worried he would miss the game. Bowing to decorum, he only wore his fan-boy starter set gear. Who dat?!)

The guest speaker was a real winner. Captain Ray Fowler, a F-15 jockey and airline pilot in real life, is one of the big cogs in a group of WW II aircraft restorers down in Douglas, GA. (It's about thirty miles east of Tifton, for you transplants, deep in the heart of Coffee County.) The group has finished many projects by now, but the subject of most interest is the recent restoration of the *Liberty Belle*, an 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Corps B-17. Also, of much interest is a current work-in-progress, a P-40B! Several of the restoration crew were also in attendance, including the Schneider's son, Rodney. Acorns and oaks.

(I wonder how big and busy is the Douglas airfield? Enquiring minds want to know. It was a bomber training base in WW II, so there must be a couple of long runways at the very least. Douglas is about 200 miles south of ATL and there are plenty of cheap motels and places to eat in Tifton.)

The awards ceremony featured a parade of fresh and young faces, rather than the usual suspects. Young Kayla Brown took the George Perryman Perpetual High Point Award, narrowly besting her sister Liz. Barry was first in the adult category, with Dohrman and Karl trailing. Kayla also won the Grayson Anderson Mass Launch Trophy. Al won the Model of the Year Trophy with his trusty Keil Kraft Senator. Young Matt Brown took home the Bob Baker Old Timer Trophy with his fine-flying Phantom Flash. Barf won both the Spirit of Comet and Scale High Point Awards. For a host of reasons, the Norm Purdy Service Award was given to the Peter and Stephanie Brown family.

### **THUMBS ON THE MARCH**

Several Thumbs went to the Gathering of Turkeys last October in Pensacola and did some damage. Graham flew in many power events and had podium finishes in 1/2A NosGas, A/B Gas, A/B Classic Gas, and E-36. Ed had a good weekend in the rubber events and had podium finishes in Large Rubber Stick, Large Rubber Cabin, Moffett, and Mulvihill. Al flew in many rubber events and had a podium finish in Small Rubber Stick. Gary Morton had a great weekend and probably won't be invited back; he had podium finishes in P-30, Commercial Rubber, HLG, Embryo, and Jet Catapult Scale.

### **THUMBS IN PRINT**

Bill Gowen reprised his appearance in the October issue of *Free Flight* with another one in the November issue of same. This one concerns his world record-breaking flying session with his F1L at the Lakehurst hangar last August. As I recall, the new record was set by wide margins, too. The article features a brief report of conditions and a good technical description of the model and trim scheme.

In the same issue, your trusty editor put on his NFFS South Region VP hat and wrote an editorial about our club's recent success with its new website. I also harangued the laggard clubs out there without one and admonished them to give the Google system a try, as we did. When logic fails, perhaps shame will win out.

Speaking of shame, those of you who are NFFS members already know all of the above. Those who aren't, don't. Knowledge is power. Don't be weak.

### **TIME TO STEP UP**

To assist in your intellectual fitness program, Carl Bakay, NFFS Membership chairman, was kind enough to mail a recent, sample issue of *Free Flight*, the digest of NFFS, along with a cover letter from yours sincerely, to all TTOMA members who aren't members of NFFS. We know who you are and where you live. I'll encourage each of you to enjoy the issue and join for the variety of very good reasons outlined therein. Our hobby and sport needs you. Time to step up.

### **MAKING A LIST, CHECKING IT TWICE**

Be hereby advised a change in the tabulation of high points at our contests is now in effect. Basically, the George Perryman rule is revoked. Henceforth, a contestant will get a point for each official event flown in and for any contestant bested with an official flight in that event.

For example, a flier will be awarded one point when he is the only flier in, say, Mulvihill, and three points, say, for winning Mulvihill, when there are three official fliers. Note: entry count doesn't matter, only official fliers.

The intent of the change is to encourage more activity at the flying field. Before anybody gets too ambitious, one might recall the decades in which George won the club's annual tourney with well in excess of two-hundred points. Also humbling is the fact that the last few years we've all been beaten by teenage girls.

### **WHILE THE GETTING IS GOOD**

There isn't much left from the Perryman estate, just a few dozen models, some old trophies, and a few other things. One item that might be of interest to the membership is a handful of original vellums done in the capable hand of our late OFB Dave Raymond. I'm going to be mailing them soon to the AMA Museum for safeguarding in their plans collection. I can make a copy of them at Kinko's or wherever if you're really, really interested. You'll have to reimburse me, pronto, because I'm broke right now. Better yet, wait until the AMA has them set up for reproduction and sale. Anywho, here's the list:

Small Giant Speckled Bird (1/2 size), Dawn Unlimited  
Sparrow Hawk Speckled Bird, P-30  
A Little Bit Raunchy, Pee Wee 30  
Raunchy, 1/2A NosGas  
The Little Fat Pot Bellied Peg Legged Tub of Lard Speckled Bird, Embryo  
CO2 Speckled Birp, old rules CO2  
Southerner 29 (much reduced), B NosGas  
Stephanie's Acute Gull Speckled Bird, HLG  
Electrifying Speckled Bird, E-30

### **ABANDON ALL HOPE YE WHO ENTER HERE**

Occasionally, you run across a website that is just so enthralling and magnificent that you know you're going to blow countless hours therein. Much will be delayed and deferred, but the rewards will be worth it, if you're the "smell the flowers" type. In any case, you know you're doomed.

I accept no personal responsibility for the consequences of my recommendation of <airrace.com> to the readers. Talk about black holes for your leisure time. Good grief. It's the website of the Society of Air Racing Historians and what a cruel seductress it is, too. I won't bother to describe the contents in any detail because they're too vast. Warning: your honey-do list is in serious peril!

For those of you with some time and money on their hands, the website has just posted the announcement for their 26<sup>th</sup> annual symposium the weekend of April 30-May 1. It's being held at a hotel at the Cleveland airport. I've spent a little time in Cleveland many, many years ago and found it to be a lot of fun. The Great Lakes area in the spring is delightful and there is lots of good ethnic food in Cleveland. The people were very friendly and mighty glad to see you because, frankly, they don't get a many tourists.

### **MORE ABANDON, LESS HOPE**

I actually feel a little guilty about passing this along, but we're all adults here. The Virtual Aviation Museum website out of Estonia has been around for a while, but getting onto it has been difficult, and at times impossible, requiring shifting intermediary sites to process through. Still, it was always worth it because of the vast amount of text, photos, and three-views available, many of which are exotic to western eyes, being from the former Soviet Union, Third World countries, and elsewhere.

This magnificent resources is now directly assessable through <aviastar.org>, then "Links", then "Virtual Aviation Museum". Not only do you have the vast resources of VAM at your disposable, but they've now links to other aviation-minded obsessives and compulsives across the globe. If this won't cause problems at home, I don't know what will. Godspeed, brother, and please don't forget you still have a job, marriage, and hobby.

## YOUR AND MY TWO CENTS WORTH

We're in a free flight rules change cycle and the latest batch of proposals can be found on the AMA website. We've a bumper crop this time with twenty-four, twenty for outdoor and four for indoor. All seem to be serious proposals by serious people. I've read through them all and will offer a comment on those I consider within my field of interest and expertise. There are many that aren't and I'll only recommend them for further review, by your own baddself.

There're many dealing with the electric rulebook events that seek to redefine battery sizes, engine runs, maxes, and more. These proposals will substantially change things. Clearly, something must be done because the technology being thrust aloft has far outpaced the rulebook. I'm content to leave the A and B Electric classes to the specialists. Changes are past due, though, to this pilgrim.

There're a few that deal with the removal of the Builder of the Model rule (BOM) for **outdoor** events, **except** for indoor and scale. My position on all this is well known and won't be belabored here, other than to say I favor of removing the BOM, except for indoor and scale. Many will argue, free country.

There's a proposal to tighten up the requirements for putting your AMA number and other personal information on your model toward limiting the potential for shenanigans. I have no knowledge of such things happening, but the requirements are reasonable and what most people are doing already. I say "yea".

There's a proposal to delete the AMA's free flight scale rules entirely, which I favor. This only reflects the present, working reality of free flight scale modeling in the USA. Everybody uses the FAC rules, not the AMA's. This one is easy.

There's a proposal to substantially increase the max times for Mulvihill to shorten the amount of flying done at contests and lessen off-field excursions. The maxes for the first three flights are lengthened greatly, as is the fly-off max time. Right now, I'm in favor of this, but let me ponder it a little bit.

There's a proposal to create a new and smaller Mulvihill event for Category III fields that reflects the present day reality of our smaller field sizes. The basic boilerplate goes as follows: 20 gm. rubber max, 200 sq. in. max wing area, and a starting two-minute max. Let me think about this for a bit, but I'd vote yes if pushed right now. Let's face it, a full-bore, 300 sq. in. Mulvihill on a field the size of ours and most club fields is like teats on a boar hog.

There're a number of proposals for gas power that makes sense to me, but I'll let those that fly gas comment on them. In this same vein, there are two indoor proposals to make F1M and A-6 official AMA rulebook events.

There's a proposal to remove the ROG requirement in Moffett. It ain't broke, so don't fix it. No, no, no!

Likewise, there's a proposal to change the P-30 rules to require five (5) official, 120 sec. max flights before the fly-offs. Briefly and again, ain't, don't, no, no, no!

There's a proposal to outlaw "motorized lofting" at contests. For those still on the turnip truck, that's the use of circling motorcycles under a model to generate a thermal. Not a factor around here, I'll let the west coast contingent fight over this one. Although, I'm a big fan of the Mad Max movie (the second one, puh-leez) and would find it very entertaining.

There's an interesting proposal to allow radio-assisted engine shut-off in conjunction with RDT. Coached as a safety issue, it makes some sense. My only worry is the possibility of cheating and other slickness. Let me ponder this one for a bit.

### **STILL BANG FOR THE BUCK**

Speaking of rules and regulations, I just received my 2010 FAC rulebook in the mail, and as I was about to publish a big article on FAC Jet Catapult Scale in FFQ in a few months, I turned to that section in full cover-my-posterior mode. I was surprised to see some big changes in the catapult specification. The days of the reckless and unrestricted yank are now over. I guess someone was afraid we were going to poke someone's eye out. At least they don't make us wear helmets.

The new rules use the catapult specification of the AMA's catapult glider as a point-of-departure, but thankfully, they got a little creative. The dowel length is unchanged at six inches. But, don't despair, the rules allow more power than the AMA spec, precisely **twice** the power, specifying the use of **two** loops of ¼ inch strip, or **four** loops of 1/8 inch, the **loops** not exceeding the standard nine-inch length. This might be fun.

### **A REMINDER**

Just a parting nag, the club's outdoor Model of the Year (MOY) is the Earl Stahl Hi-Climber and the Event of the Year (EOY) is the FAC Embryo. Several Hi-Climber's are under construction as we peck and we've already a bunch of Embryo's ready for action. Both events will be hotly contested. If you're not sufficiently seduced to build a Hi-Climber yet, take a peek at the photo of same that follows from yours sincerely. Ooh, baby!

### **NEXT ISSUE**

Look for something in early April. We'll carry the flyer for the Peach State Indoor Champs, the latest news on the upcoming outdoor season, and a report on the Southeast Model Show in Perry. I'll once again beseech the multitude for contributions in the forms of plans, photos, yarns, and bombast.

Ciao, y'all!

Campbell's Custom Kits is a Commercial friend of TTOMA  
<http://www.campbellscustomkits.com>



FRESH FROM THE WORKSHOP



Dohrman's Cessna Birddog



David's Earl Stahl Hi-Climber

# Annual Banquet



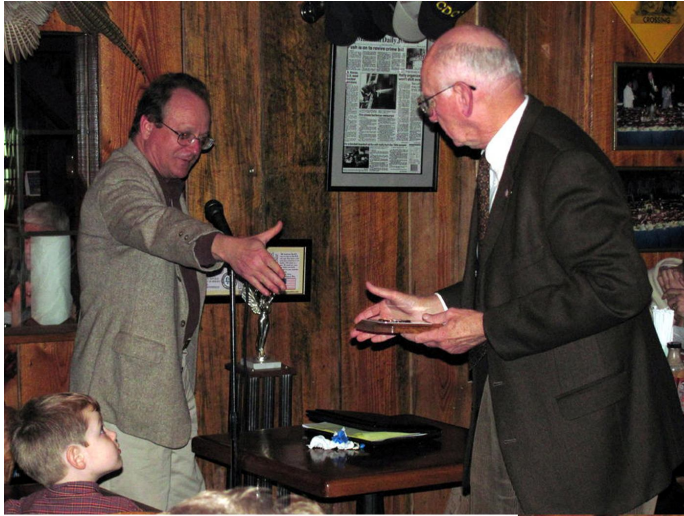
Captain Fowler And Crew



Howard and Clarence



# Annual Banquet



David Helping Karl  
To The Podium

Pete  
Accepting Norm Purdy Service Award  
For The Brown's



Kayla Brown Accepting  
The Perryman Highpoint Trophy



# Annual Banquet

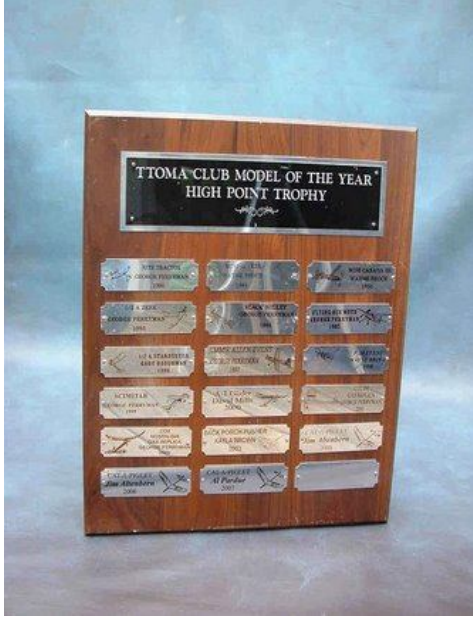


*The Schneider's*



## Why Not Try Club Competition? by Karl Hube

I fondly recall the golden days of the early 1960's when I lived in Tullahoma, Tennessee and flew with the local club. We had a handy field for practice and we looked forward to our annual contest in August. Most summers there were contests in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Courtland (Alabama) and Atlanta. Many of these gatherings were day trips that made the whole process a low-cost operation for each flyer. Today, we don't have such luxuries and the most active venues for us are Pensacola, Florida and Muncie, Indiana. These trips require a long ride and a couple of night's hotel cost. Our best antidote to this is local club competition.



In a recent TTOMA survey asking members what they wanted in club activity, some respondents said that our flying sessions were more like “fun flying” and trimming tests rather than a contest. Since none of us get to fly very often, a lot of our time will be spent trimming and trying new models and tactics. Because our hobby and sport has so many model classes, our member's interests tend to be spread thinly over the events with the result that most club events have few entrants. However, there is an answer to this problem, too.

Early in my engineering and business careers, I learned that the first thing you do to measure your performance is to benchmark yourself against yourself. That is, establish a baseline performance and then continuously try to improve on that baseline. You can score points toward one of the club trophies even if no one flies against you. So, fly your favorite model and gain points at the same time. Some popular events like catapult glider, P-30, and Embryo often bring out a good-sized group of competitors, especially at our June and September two-day contests. Also, note the special Model of the Year (MOY) and Event of the Year (EOY) activity TTOMA has every year. You could make a full season out of just focusing on these two competitive events.

We are lucky to have the North Georgia Turf Farm to fly on, but you have to take a practical approach to flying on the sod farm because of its proximity to the Chattahoochee River and Snake Creek. You have to think through your tactics about where to launch and how to dethermalize the model to get back on the ground before reaching water or trees. In the past five years, I have personally lost three good models to the water (two to the river and one to the creek), and in every case, the loss was caused by a misjudgment of about ten seconds in the DT setting. Flying on the sod farm makes it unwise to fly complex, expensive, high-performance models. So keep your designs simple, easy to repair and/or replace, and move toward replacing fuses with timers that will give a bit more accuracy in setting DT times.

Any kind of competitive activity usually costs more than casual sport flying. I am concerned that some prospective free flight modelers have been scared off by stories of high-priced kits and engines. Like most activities, you can spend as much as you want to on models and auxiliary equipment, but

that offers no guarantee of competitive success. To manage your costs, build from available plans or design your own. Plans are available on the Web, from plans services, and from your club mates. Materials for an Embryo, catapult glider, or P-30 cost very little and produce good performance. If you choose to fly a power model, it helps to have a fire-breathing engine that slurps down sixty percent nitro, but that's probably not what you have. So, dig out your old engine and match it with a model of the size and weight that can give a reasonable performance. As an example of what can be done, a 1/2A Nostalgia model can also be flown in Classic Gas and AMA gas. With one model, you could post nine official flights over three events and fill a summer day with fun and score points! Note that almost any rubber model can be flown in the Mulvihill event, which means that you can fly two or more rubber events with the same model. Don't forget the wide array of Flying Aces Club events which generally are filled with low-cost models well-suited to a field the size of our sod farm.

Any competition involving mechanical equipment requires that you learn to produce consistent and predictable performance. Work on your engines, timers, DT mechanicals, and all moveable parts because the air above you will cause enough problems without having something fail on the model! Time after time, it has been shown that the highest performance model can be defeated by a simple design that can produce a solid, steady performance.

I soon plan to submit a proposal for modification of the existing club point system for the High-Point Award and to introduce a parallel Scramble System that will allow different types of models to compete in a common point pool. It is hoped that more members will be interested in posting official flights under a revised point system. So, glue up some sticks and prepare to do battle!!!

**Tail Spin Aviation is a Commercial friend of TTOMA**  
[www.tailspinaviation.com](http://www.tailspinaviation.com)

**2010 TTOMA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **AMA #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

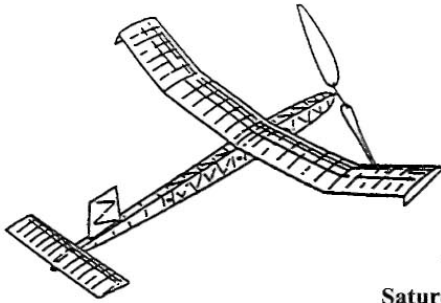
**State and Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Family Members and AMA #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

\$20.00/yr. adults, plus \$1.00/yr. for all juniors and for additional family members in same household. Send check, payable to TTOMA, to Don Brown/477 Safari Cir./Stone Mountain, GA 30083/404-292-0379.





MODEL AIRPLANE CLUB  
OF HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA  
**MACH WINTERCOUPE EVENT**

Sanction Class A # 10-0050

**Pensacola, Florida Navy Helicopter Field Site 8A**

**Saturday, February 13 and Sunday February 14, 2010**

Directions to Site: Take I10 West from Pensacola. Take Exit 5 to Alt 90 and continue west approximately 2 miles to the field

Enter the 21st annual MACH Wintercoupe Event to be held in Pensacola, Florida at Navy Site 8A. .  
**Contest start-stop times are 0800-1600 on Saturday and 0800-1500 on Sunday**

This is a National Cup event for HLG,CLG,TLG and P-30  
\$15 Entry Fee. Fly any or all events. Plaques to third place

---

**Saturday Events:**

**ENTRY FORM**

- Hand Launch Glider
- Catapult Launch Glider
- Classic Towline Glider — Any glider 750 sq inches max total area projected; No weight requirements; BOM applies; No circle tow; fixed surfaces except for glide rudder; zoom launch OK; No tow time limit

**Sunday Events:**

- Coupe d'Hiver — 70 gm airframe; 10gm rubber; 5 flights, 2 minute max
- P-30 Rubber — 40 gm airframe; 10 gm rubber; 3 flights, 2 minute max
- Commercial Rubber — 36" max wing, freewheel prop; 3 flights, 2 minute max

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ AMA #. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

CD — Bob Thoren, 10002 Bluff Drive, Huntsville, AL 35803, Tel 256-880-8099 email dthoren3@comcast.net