



The Pinnacle

Volume 57 Issue 93

January 2025



The Official Journal of the 495th R/C Squadron
Tewksbury, MA

AMA Gold Leader Club, Charter #340



Photo by Mike Wall

This newsletter is e-mailed to whomever wants a copy each month. If you would like to be added to the list (or if you are receiving a copy and would like to be removed from the list) please contact the Editor at sales@advancednotebook.com

In This Issue:

495th Club Info	2
From the Editor	3
2025 Event Calendar.....	4
From The President (John Morley)	5
Pinnacle Street Flying Field in Winter	9
Flying with Du-Bro Skis (Mike Wall)	10
MIT Aero/Astro Students Flight Testing.....	12
Frozen Fingers Fun Fly (Mike Wall)	13
Club Photos (Mike Wall)	14
Alton Bay Ice Runway (John Morley)	16
RC Snow Plow (Mike Wall)	17

495 R/C Squadron, Inc.

Next Meeting **Wednesday, Feb 5th 7:30 P.M.**
 Next Events Italian Banquet
 Club web site <http://www.495thsquadron.org>
 Club Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/495th-RC-Squadron-240759615414>

495 R/C Squadron, Inc. - Club Officers:

President	John Morley	978-821-0258	pres@495thsquadron.org
Vice-President	Bob Goulet	978-957-5236	vp@495thsquadron.org
Secretary	Bob Merlino	978-640-3854	sec@495thsquadron.org
Treasurer	Bob Merlino	978-640-3854	treas@495thsquadron.org
Chief Instructor	Mihran Tenekedzhyan ..	617-461-2271	chief@495thsquadron.org
Director	Bill Smeltzer		combatflyer15@aol.com
Editor	Calvin Hsieh	617-719-5929	sales@advancednotebook.com

From the Editor

Newsletter is for everyone. If you have great ideas, stories and photos to share, please do not hesitate to contact me @ (sales@advancednotebook.com)

This month's newsletter is all about winter! Frozen fingers flying, Flying with Skis, Mike's Remote control Snow Pow, John landed his plane on rice runway..... What is your winter project?

Well, let's wrap it out in the next few weeks because Club's Show n Tell is around the corner. Look forward to seeing all your hard working projects in 4/2 club meeting !

Still pretty cold outside and more snow to expect, stay warm and enjoy reading!

Calvin Hsieh
495th R/C Squadron Newsletter Editor



Snow Storm 2/09 (8" in Burlington, MA)

2025 Club Calendar

Please be sure to check the 'Events' page on the club website on a regular basis, and stay up-to-date with all the fun and important activities we have planned this year

Date	Location	Event Description
Jan. 1, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	New Years Day Flying!
Jan. 8, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Feb. 5, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Italian Banquet!
Feb. 8, 2025	Ogonowski Field	Frozen Finger Fun Fly!
Feb. 22, 2025	Hudson, MA	American Heritage Museum Field Trip!
Mar. 5, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
April 2, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Winter Project Show-n-Tell!
April 15, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Car Night Begins for 2025!
April 17, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Training Night Begins for 2025!
April 19, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Opening Day and Field Cleanup!
May 7, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
May 10, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Spring Fun Fly!
May 17, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Heli Fun Fly!
June 4, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
June 7, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - 'Kid's Day' Fun Fly and BBQ!
June 14, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Summer Fun Fly - Mike Pangione
July 2, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
July 12, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Scale Fun Fly!
Aug. 6, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Ice Cream Social!
Aug. 9, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - National Model Aviation Day!
Aug. 16, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Multi-Club Fun Fly and BBQ!
Sept. 3, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Sept. 13, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field - Annual Member Picnic!
Oct. 1, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!
Oct. 11, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Ogonowski Field Work Party!
Oct. 18, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Fall Classic Car Rally!
Oct. 26, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Andover Pack 76 Rocket Day!
Nov. 5, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - Annual Business Meeting and Elections
Dec. 3, 2025	Tewksbury, MA	Club Meeting - TBD!

View From The Left Seat

By

John Morley, President, The 495th R/C Squadron, Inc.

I hope that everyone had a great holiday season, and is enjoying the winter season! As I write this column, it is already the 1st of February, so hopefully the worst of the winter is behind us! I was fortunately to spend the first 3 weeks of January in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Thailand, and South Korea), so I managed to miss the dreadful cold temperatures of January in the Boston area. It was a balmy 85F in Malaysia and Thailand, and a chilly 40F in Korea! Now that I'm back, I'm focusing on finishing up a couple of modeling projects for the 2025 season, including my 122" Cessna L-19, a 26cc gasoline powered Whiplash helicopter, an R/C Skydiver, 'Steve', and a 92cc 36" blade chainsaw! I hope that all of you have a winter project to keep you occupied, and to help pass the long cold winter nights! I look forward to seeing all your projects at our *Winter Project Show-n-Tell* this spring!

On Sat., Feb. 22nd, the club will conduct a winter field trip to the New England Air Museum in Windsor Locks, CT. This museum is the premier air museum in the New England area, and is well worth a visit! Departing from the Tewksbury area at approximately 8AM, and returning around 5PM, this will be an all day trip. We will car pool to the museum, which is located about 2 hours away. If sufficient demand exists, we will also consider renting a van so that we may all travel together. There is a sign-up page on the website accessible via the Home Page, so please register in advance if you plan to attend!



Coming up at the March 5th meeting, a friend of mine, Larry Banks W1DYJ, will offer a presentation entitled "Ham Radio: A Lifelong Hobby". Larry has been an Amateur Radio operator, or Ham, for

more than 60 years, and will offer his unique perspective on this exciting hobby! Following his presentation, Larry will entertain questions from the membership! Refreshments will be served!

As you may know, we had an 'incident' at the Pinnacle St. field back in October. A member, flying an E-Flite Turbo Timber, crashed onto the roof a condo unit adjacent to the field. Of course, this is completely unacceptable, and we must do better to prevent these type of accident! To be clear, this pilot was flying both beyond the treeline, and behind the flightline when the mishap occurred. At that orientation, the pilot became disoriented and lost control of the airplane. This would never have happened if the pilot had not allowed the airplane to deviate from the approved flight area. Wind and sun position may have been factors, but the bottom line is that we as members need to do a better job of remaining within the boundaries of the flying field! The BOD takes incidents like this very seriously, and we are working on a handout presentation over the winter to highlight these concerns! Always keep in mind that **safety is our number 1 priority at the field**, for our members and our neighbors alike!

I want to remind everyone that there are **four things** required to fly at the Ogonowski Memorial Model Flying Field. (1) The first requirement is AMA membership. (2) The second requirement is club membership. (3) The third requirement is FAA registration of your UAS/Drone. (4) The fourth requirement is a TRUST certificate. The first two items will be strictly enforced this year at the field. The FAA registration (FAADroneZone), and the TRUST (The Recreational UAS Safety Test) certificate administered by the AMA will be 'self-certify. We expect everyone to comply with these requirements, but we will only enforce AMA and club membership!

A recurring safety concern keeps being raised at the field, so I'd like to take a moment to address a few things. First, all airplanes are to be started (gas/glow airplanes), and 'armed' (electric airplanes) on the 'starting benches' that are provided for this purpose. These airplanes are then to be taxied or carried directly to the runway entrance to the left of the #1 pilot station stand. At no time are airplanes to be started or armed anywhere else, and running or armed airplanes are **prohibited** anywhere in the area behind any of the pilot stations. Likewise, when exiting the runway, this should always be done adjacent to the #1 pilot station. In the past, members have been starting or arming planes on the benches along the guard rail, or on the picnic tables. To be clear, these are **spectator areas**, and airplanes are not to be started or armed in these areas! Once your airplane has been started, or is armed, always maintain positive control of the airplane, and never leave it unattended! These are just common sense safety precautions, and we expect everyone in the club to adhere to them!

The Event schedule for 2025 has been posted to the website! A number of Events are already on the schedule, and more will be added throughout the year as details are firmed up! Please be sure to check the website frequently so that you are up-to-date on all the latest club happenings!

As the new year begins, please keep in mind that AMA and club memberships expired at midnight on Dec. 31st! This means that unless you've renewed your AMA and club memberships before then, you are no longer eligible to fly at our club fields beginning on Jan. 1st, 2025! Please don't wait, and get your renewal done as soon as possible!

Again, a reminder that each month the BOD will meet on the **Wednesday** evening immediately preceding the regular club meeting. Our meetings are held at the Tewksbury 99 restaurant on Rt. 38 in Tewksbury, and begin at 7:30PM. Occasionally, the BOD does not meet in a given month due to schedule or calendar conflicts, and every effort will be made to notify the membership by email when this happens. As always, there is plenty of room at every BOD meeting, and the atmosphere is informal, so we invite interested members to attend! The next regular BOD meeting will be held on Wednesday Feb. 26th, 2025 at 7:30 PM.

I hope you see all of you at upcoming club meetings, and at the field!



John Morley
President, The 495th R/C Squadron, Inc.

Feb 1st, 2025

Officer Elections 2025

On Nov. 6, 2024, the 495th R/C Squadron, Inc. held club officer elections for the 2025 season. The following officers were elected by a unanimous vote of the membership.



President: John Morley



Vice-President: Bob Goulet



Director: Bill Smeltzer



Treasurer: Bob Merlino

Pinnacle Street Flying Field in Winter

Here we are at the beginning of February, and the warm weather seems too far away to contemplate! I made a trip to the field early on the morning of February 2nd, 2025, and found a cold, snow covered field under a gloomy, overcast sky that did not look the least bit inviting! I know the winter season will eventually come to an end, but scenes like this sure make me wonder what it is about New England that we all like so much! Seriously, I know this is a great area to live, but sometimes these cold winter days give us pause to reflect a bit!



Pinnacle Street Flying Field on a cold February morning! – February 2, 2025

Submitted by: John Morley

Date: February 2, 2025

Flying with Du-Bro Skis

Mike Wall

The air is cold and crisp and a fresh blanket of new snow whitens the scene at Pinnacle Street. Even with winter upon us, there are still many days of good flying. When the field is covered with snow and the smaller diameter wheels on your landing gear just won't handle the frozen surface, it's time to put on a pair of Du-Bro skis to float over the snow covered runway. These snow skis extend your flying season, helping to keep your spirits high when the days are short and darker. Du-Bro makes several varieties of snow skis, ensuring that there is the right size for at least one of your planes during the snow filled winter months.

I picked up a pair of their Snowbird Snow Skis for my 1.3m Eflite Valiant. The two main skis fit perfectly on this plane, but they also make a ski for a nose wheel and for smaller park fliers. You can pick up a pair for your own planes directly from the Du-Bro website or from any other retailer that carries their products.



Du-Bro Snowbird Snow Skis attached to my E-Flite Valiant

Assembly was fairly straight forward, although attaching and adjusting the spring and set screw did take some effort to get right.

If luck is on your side, the skis may be a direct fit onto your current axles. Depending on the diameter of your axles, you may need to drill out the hole a bit on the skis so that they will fit onto your plane. For my Eflite Valiant, I had to use some machine screws for the axles because of the way the stock landing gear were attached to the plane. The Du-Bro website has an instruction video to help guide you with the installation process. Be sure to check for prop clearance once your skis are installed in case your plane now sits a little lower to the ground. Set your new snow skis so that they are parallel to the fuselage when flying straight and level. The springs will flex a bit when settling onto the snow when landing.

Flying with the snow skis attached did not seem to affect the performance of the plane. Once established on a stabilized descent, landing with the skis was very smooth and after touching down the plane seemed to effortlessly float over the snow. Turning while taxiing at slower speeds can be challenging because of the slippery surface compared to being on grass or our fabric runway. The skis allowed the plane to slide effortlessly over smaller bumps and holes in the snow, but watch out for the bigger holes as the skis can get stuck just like the wheels on your landing gear. Once a ski manages to find a larger hole, I found it almost impossible to get out of the holes.

To keep up with your flying during the winter months, I would definitely recommend picking up a set of these Du-Bro skis for at least one of your planes. My Eflite 1.3m Valiant is very light and pairs nicely with these snow skis. It is super fun flying in the winter with these skis.

See you at the field!



Valiant sitting on top of the snow with the Du-Bro Snowbird Snow Skis



Mike Wall

MIT Aero/Astro Students Flight Testing at the Ogonowski Field

The 495th R/C Squadron, Inc. has been very supportive of educational institutions and commercial entities that wish to use our flying field for flight testing. Recently, the Aero/Astro folks from MIT have been flight testing a design intended to compete in the 'Design, Build, Fly' contest to be held in Tucson, AZ in April.

This contest, conducted by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) is open to all undergraduate college aerospace engineering programs, and is held each year. The contest consists of a number of assigned 'tasks', such as demonstrated flight stability over a defined course, captive autonomous glider drop testing, and a payload carrying demonstration, among other things. The winner is determined to be the team with the highest overall score! Congratulations to these dedicated aerospace engineering students, and good luck in April!



MIT *Design, Build Fly* Participants flight testing at the Ogonowski Memorial Model Field!

Submitted by: John Morley

Date: February 2, 2025

Frozen Fingers Fun Fly

Mike Wall

February 8, 2025 was a typical winter day in New England. The crisp winter air settled to just over the freezing mark with relatively light winds under partly cloudy skies. Conditions were perfect for this year's Frozen Fingers Fun Fly. Several club members, bundled with gloves, hats and hand warmers, braved the chilly weather to take their planes to the sky. A few even had transmitter mitts to keep their hands warm while flying on this clear winter day. The snow was crunchy with a layer of ice blanketing a few inches of snow. The runway was smooth, void of footprints, ruts and big bumps. The radio controlled planes, equipped with skis or water floats, glided effortlessly over the frozen surface, as long as you only needed to go straight ahead. A light crosswind made taxing back to the starting benches a challenge at times, as some of the lighter RC planes tended to windvane in the light breeze.



Winter flying can be a tranquil experience with the freshly fallen snow dampening the sounds normally heard during the warmer months. The colder air seems to deepen the color of the blue sky making for enhanced visibility of the planes in the sky. But be sure to bring your sunglasses (preferably with polarized lenses) as you will need to shade your eyes from the bright sky and the solar glare reflecting off the snow. The only thing to make winter flying better is when a group of club members share in the experience. And this was what winter flying was all about today. A few days ago the members shared in a delicious Italian meal, enjoying the food and conversation. Today was the second course, continuing with the socialization between flying friends while getting some much needed time on the sticks.

Taking the time to freeze our fingers on this February day whets the appetite for the next flying season. It is easy to get some flight time using a simulator in the warmth of your home, but nothing can replace time on the sticks at the flying field. If you can, charge up some batteries and head to the field to get some time in the air. With snow in the forecast for the next couple of weeks there will surely be some nice winter flying left this year.

See you at the field!

Photos by Mike Wall





Alton Bay Ice Runway

John Morley

Each winter, weather and ice conditions permitting, an FAA sanctioned Ice Runway is opened on Alton Bay, NH at the southern most tip of Lake Winnepesaukee. This runway, FAA identifier 'B18', opens each winter whenever the ice depth is 12" or greater. This year, the ice runway opened on Saturday, Feb. 25th for the first time in 3 years! Over 150 airplanes flew to Alton Bay on the opening day, including a pilot who flew his Cessna 172 from Texas (!) for the experience! I was tied up on the 25th, so I flew my Beech Bonanza to Alton Bay on Sunday, Feb. 26th instead. Unfortunately, while Saturday was sunny with light winds, that Sunday was cloudy with blustery winds. In spite of the challenging weather conditions, I landed successfully on the ice, and had lunch with several friends before departing.

It's quite an experience to land on ice because obviously braking action can be expected to be poor at best! The 'procedure' is to land at the slowest practical airspeed, and then to maintain centerline with gentle rudder pedal deflections until the airplane comes to a stop. Very light braking is actually effective as the runway tends to have a hard, granular ice surface which does afford some braking action! Regardless, everything must be done very carefully and deliberately!!



Beechcraft Bonanza on the Ice at Alton Bay, NH – January 2025

Submitted by: John Morley

Date: February 2, 2025

RC Snow Plow

Mike Wall

The winter season is also the building season for many RC hobbyists. A few years ago I had an idea to build a snow plow for one of my rock crawlers. Using my old SCX10 and a short shopping list from Home Depot, I set out to build a scratch built snow plow for my RC crawler. At the time there were some snow plow options for RC trucks but most of these were only capable of raising the blade up and down. I wanted to build a plow that would also angle to the left and right just like the full size winter plows that clear our roads during winter snowy weather.

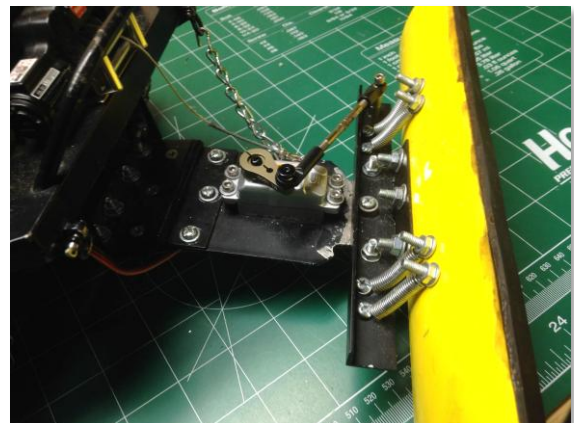
To begin the build I cut a 4-inch PVC pipe to use as the plow blade. The curve seemed to be the right scale for the SCX10 crawler I was using for this project. To protect the bottom edge of the plow I attached a thin brass strip and I cut a piece of a rubber squeegee for a snow guard along the top edge. Two trimmed plastic zip ties were glued to the sides of the plow as marker guides.

Some thin sheet aluminum was cut to make the body of the plow and to make the brackets to attach the plow to the frame of the truck. The center of the body was cut to allow a low profile high torque servo to be installed. The servo would serve two purposes. Firstly, it would change the angle of the snow plow from left to right when pushing the snow. Secondly, the metal case of the servo would add to the rigidity of the snow plow body.

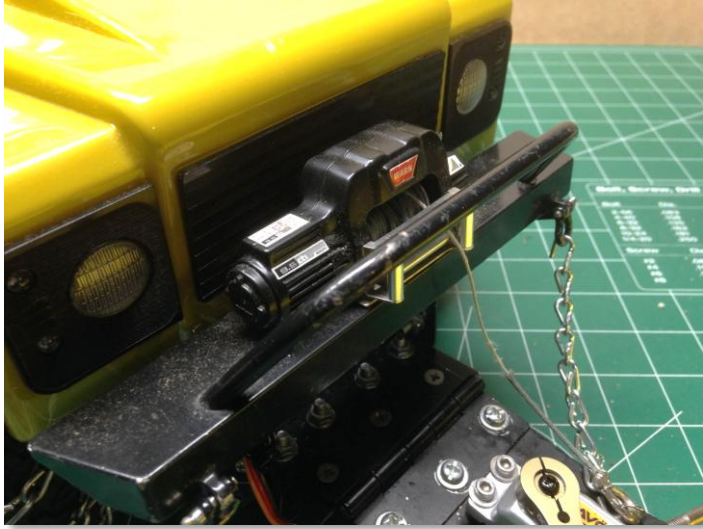
The plow was attached to the body using some right angle aluminum, a couple of bushings and two small metal door hinges. Using one of the door hinges, the body of the plow was made to articulate up and down from the brackets that attach the plow to the frame. A metal servo arm was attached to the right angle aluminum so that the blade of the plow could move from left to right. To protect the servo when it undoubtedly would hit cracks, ice, and other obstacles while plowing, a series of springs were attached to allow the blade of the plow flex to prevent jamming the servo. The plow was able to pivot up and down using the second door hinge. Some trimming of the metal components were necessary to make it all fit into place.



SCX10 in the snow with the scratch built snow plow.



The snow plow is attached using right angle aluminum and springs to allow the plow to flex when hitting obstacles.



A winch was used to raise and lower the snow plow.

A pair of holes were drilled into the frame rails of the truck so that the snow plow could be easily attached to the truck. To connect and disconnect the plow from the truck's frame, some threaded metal rods with plastic ball links were used. A winch was attached to the bumper of the truck to raise and lower the plow. The extra weight of the plow caused the front end to sag a bit, but making some adjustments to the front suspension alleviated this problem. To complete the look, the PVC pipe was painted yellow

to make it look a bit more realistic, and the rest of the aluminum was painted black.

A four channel receiver was needed to control the motion of the snow plow. My discontinued Spektrum 4-channel radio had just enough channels to raise and lower the plow and to angle it from the front and to right and left. A three position switch was used for both of these functions. Using only a 2 cell LiPo provided plenty of time to clear a dusting to an inch or two of snow from the driveway and walkway.

The snow plow worked better than expected but at times even small amounts of snow was challenging to maintain traction. To remedy this issue, I made four pairs of scale snow chains for each of the tires using some stock chain from Home Depot. This was a long, tedious process, but well worth the results. The added traction from the tire chains, combined with the full time four-wheel drive and locked differentials, really made the plow come alive. The scale snowfall was now more easily pushed aside from this little beast of a truck.



Homemade snow chains for added traction in the snow.



Mike Wall



RC snow plow clearing some snow from the street.

Club Calendar

Club Events

- Feb. 5 Club Meeting - Italian Banquet!
- Feb. 8 Frozen Finger Fun Fly!
- Feb. 22 New England Air Museum Field Trip
- Mar. 5 Club Meeting - TBD!
- April 2 Club Meeting - Winter Project Show-n-Tell!
- April 15 Car Night Begins for 2025
- April 17 Training Night Begins for 2025
- April 19 Opening Day and Field Cleanup
- May 7 Club Meeting - TBD!
- May 17 Heli Fun Fly
- June 4 Club Meeting - TBD!
- June 7 'Kid's Day' Fun Fly and BBQ
- June 14 Summer Fun Fly - Mike Pangione
- July 2 Club Meeting - TBD!
- July 12 Scale Fun Fly
- Aug. 6 Club Meeting - Ice Cream Social
- Aug. 9 National Model Aviation Day
- Aug. 16 Multi-Club Fun Fly and BBQ
- Sept. 3 Club Meeting - TBD!.
- Sept. 13 Annual Member Picnic
- Oct. 1 Club Meeting - TBD!
- Oct. 11 Ogonowski Field Work Party
- Oct. 18 Fall Classic Car Rally
- Oct. 26 Andover Pack 76 Rocket Day
- Nov. 5 Club Meeting - Annual Business Meeting and Elections
- Dec. 3 Club Meeting - TBD!

R/C Suppliers:

ABC RC & Hobby 11 Rockingham Rd, Windham, NH https://www.horizonhobby.com http://hobbyking.com https://rcexcitement.com https://twistedhobbys.com https://innov8tivedesigns.com https://fpvlab.com/ http://www.crashtesthobby.com https://www.towerhobbies.com http://www.amazon.com	(603) 458-6481 All Around All Around Cars Profile Foamies Great Motors FPV Equipment Toughest Planes All Around Extra All Around
---	---

Handy Links:

Renew Your AMA Membership Online
<https://www.modelaircraft.org/joinrenew.aspx>

495th Membership Application
http://www.495thsquadron.org/PDF_Files/Membership_Application.pdf

Online Groups
<http://www.rcgroups.com/forums/index.php>
<http://www.helifreak.com>
<http://www.wattflyer.com/forums>
<http://www.rcuniverse.com>

Local R/C Groups
<http://www.mcrcf.org> Billerica, Mass
<http://www.burlington-rc.com> Burlington, Mass
<http://www.nhflyingtigers.com/> Derry, NH
<http://www.snhfcc.org> Hudson, NH
<http://www.snhflyingeagles.org> Merrimack, NH

R/C Related Podcast
<http://allthingsthatfly.com/> Excellent electric power help
<http://rctodayshow.com/> Mixed group with great advice