

M.A.R.C.S. SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Madison Area Radio Control Society
Madison, Wisconsin AMA Charter #665

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Come Fly With Us

MARCS meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 P.M. in Room 201B of the Madison Labor Temple, 1602 S. Park St. in Madison. Visitors are always welcome. We think we have a great hobby and we invite you to come and see and consider joining us.

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Contribution of articles for publication is encouraged.

Deadline for publication is the 20th of the month.

March 4, 2004 MARCS Meeting Minutes

No business meeting occurred. This meeting was the annual MARCS swap meet and auction.

Philosophy 101

She's the kind of girl who climbed the ladder of success wrong by wrong.

Mae West

A Memorial Tribute

By Chris Spierings

The club recently lost one of the folks who seemed to always be there for it. Bob Miracle passed away on February 26, 2004. I've only known Bob for about the last 12-13 years, but I know he had been in MARCS much longer than that. Most folks know that Bob was always around when the club had work it needed done but I wonder how many of our members know the role he played in revitalizing our club's training program.

When I joined MARCS in the early 90s getting an instructor was a catch as catch can. I think four people officially said they would instruct and about 24 people needed instruction. If you weren't one of the students of an existing instructor and if you were lucky you might find someone willing to give you some stick time using a buddy box. Maybe they would even coach you on how to do some of the little things, like landing wheels first. I think during my first year I got to fly on a couple occasions. One person even offered to teach me for \$20 per 15 minute flight.

The next year I managed to work my way to the top of the waiting list and got a call from a guy, Bob Miracle, who said he would take me on as a student. We agreed we would meet one evening after work until sunset and at least one morning on the weekends each week. At the end of May, Bob felt I was a small enough risk to myself, the airplane and anyone on that end of Dane County that he cut me loose.

A couple years after that I "volunteered" to run for club office and found myself an officer while Bob got elected to the board of directors. At the first board meeting for that year he expressed that he didn't think the club was doing so hot with training. Bob brought the issue to the table and said he'd take the lead in trying to improve things. Bob dug up an old MARCS training manual got it into a word processor and

MARCS 2004 Calendar of Events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Field Work Day	May 1	Kettle Field
Big Birds Fly In	June 12	Kettle Field
Thermal Soar	June 19	Long Island Sod Farm
War Birds Over Dane	June 26	Kettle Field
Electric Fun Fly	July 24	Kettle Field
1.5 Meter Hand Launch	August 14	Long Island Sod Farm
Ken Kindschi Scale Rally	August 15	Kettle Field

updated it and had a bunch printed up. Bob led the effort to track down more instructors and helped them understand what they needed to teach. Bob also took the reins of matching students to instructors and managing this effort for a couple years. On top of all that he also managed to teach at least 3 or 4 folks to fly that year and for a number of years after.

Others have since picked up where Bob left off and a lot of people have learned to fly through the MARCS training program which has been run more or less like Bob revamped it a decade or more ago.

So what is my point in writing this? First to say thanks to Bob for teaching me how to fly. Second to point out to others the role Bob played in sharing the hobby with others by his work with the training program. Finally to point out that he did so much for MARCS for so many years. MARCS will miss him.

The Verona Site vs. MARCS Dues

By Scott Schwandt

Hey, I'd just like to let you know that I have talked to someone I work with who flies at the Verona field and was considering joining MARCS. An issue for him is the fact that they have NO frequency control and people are hogging the channels. This coworker stated that he lives just a few minutes away from the field, but it has become very crowded during the time he can fly and he is getting pretty nervous because people just show up and turn on their radios without checking to see if anyone else is on their channel.

He has considered joining MARCS before but the drive across town has been keeping him from it. All it's going to take is to lose a plane because of someone's lack of common sense and the cost of a MARCS membership will look pretty cheap.

We have an outstanding field that is regulated not only by club rules that are followed and enforced by its members but also by the AMA. In the future it will cost me the price of 2 memberships because last year I started

teaching my 9 year old son Nicholas how to fly. When you think about the experience you get from being a member and learning to fly from the other members of this club, the cost of being a member is very small. Here is a good example: Fred Bast instructed Ed Beuchner...Ed instructed me... now I am teaching my son...

I have learned so much and have saved so much money from unneeded repairs from what Fred taught Ed and what Ed passed on to me that I feel I have saved at least the cost of dues. I have been a member since 1995 (I think) since Jerry Buss and the late Milt Alswager gave me some free advice on how to get started chasing a life long dream.

The other benefits are endless. How about the "Living History" you get first hand from the real life aviation experience of some of our members? How many veterans are in this club? From them I have learned so much about things the history books don't tell. How about the club members who have competed at the national level in this hobby. A lot of people don't realize that this is a sport too and how much skill and practice it takes to control a model while performing "scale" maneuvers in front of hundreds of people. No matter how much the AMA tries to make sure that the crowd is protected it always comes down to the skill of the pilot flying a damaged plane that keeps it from getting out of hand.

I have clipped 2 trees, missed the creek 2 times, searched the weeds 6 times, not only for my plane but to help others, I have done minor damage to my own plane 4 times, lost 1 plane that has never been found and saved David Lesch's trainer a few years ago from an in-flight mechanical failure. I have spent many hours just walking around the field either cutting weeds or picking trash in between flights, and yes, what some say the real reason I come down to the field for....SHOOTING THE BULL....THE REAL VALUEPRICELESS!!! Verona doesn't even get close. THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!!! I hope there are more to come. Even at \$60.00 it would be a steal!!

More About Dues, etc.

By Nelson Warhead

Building model aircraft and flying them has been, and is, a thrill I have enjoyed for almost seventy years. Finding a place to fly these models has sometimes been a problem. I flew from almost deserted country roads. If you were lucky, you would find a field with weeds only up to your knees, anywhere to launch a model and watch it in flight. My point of all of this is to bring to light a part of this wonderful hobby that seems to be ignored. I would hazard a guess, that at least ninety percent of MARCS members, have never been without a place to fly. Think about it " NO PLACE TO FLY".

Some clubs have a waiting list, just to be inducted into the club as a member. Dues for many clubs are significantly higher; several hundred dollars or more. MARCS has one of the best fields around. Many clubs and individuals who have visited our field have praise and a bit of envy for our site and the facilities we enjoy; All this due to the hard work of a nucleus of dedicated members, who give their time and energy to make this club work. As mentioned in a previous newsletter article, some other club bennies we have are two and a half million dollars of liability insurance, an AMA charter, an emergency 911 phone, and total facilities along with many other benefits that are clearly visible if you care to look about the area.

.O. K., what's bugging me? DUES!!! For just three bucks and change a month, a six pack of Pepsi a month -- an adult beverage once a month. That's all we pony up for all the privileges we enjoy. The dues are low, and that's a given. Our field is second to none, and should be financially secure, Come on membership!! look at how good you have it. Lets kick in with a few more bucks a month, and keep a wonderful club in the black. Thanks!

Sparks -- Electronically?

A few years ago I did a cost-benefit analysis of sending Sparks to you electronically. Based on the data available then it looked like it would cost more to do it that way. The bulk mail rate costs us \$0.22 per copy (plus a \$150 annual permit fee) versus \$0.37 if sent first class to those who are not online. A bulk mail requirement is that we must have 200 pieces per mailing and if some were sent electronically, we wouldn't meet that requirement. At that time, I was only able to ask for responses on who would accept Sparks by e mail, since we had no e mail address file. Based on what we know now about who could get it electronically, it could be very cost beneficial to do it that way. We can thank Ed McDonald for collecting this address

information, by the way.

According to my count, using the club roster, we now have 188 members of whom 117 are listed as having an e mail address. We mail an average of about 210 copies of Sparks per month. Last month it was 218, but it will drop to 200 or so when we purge off last year's members who did not renew. The difference between the number mailed and 188 members is accounted for by mailings to other clubs whose bulletins we also get, the AMA, certain RC suppliers and a couple former members who have moved away, but want to stay in touch. The list of nonmembers needs to be assessed. Perhaps some should be deleted, but all or most can probably receive e mail.

Following is the math, assuming three different monthly levels of hard copy distribution of a bulletin having four pages, eight sides, the normal condition:

<u>Volume</u>	<u>Printing</u>	<u>Postage</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Saving</u>
210 copies	\$114.00	\$48.20	\$12.50	\$172.70	
90 copies	49.02	33.30		82.32	\$90.38
120 copies	64.98	44.40		109.38	63.32
150 copies	80.94	55.50		136.44	6.26

Issues to be resolved include whether we say that if you have e mail, you automatically get Sparks that way or if you may elect to still receive a hard copy. If some elect to get a hard copy, how many would do so? If many could get it by e mail, but still want hard copy, perhaps we should consider a special level of dues at, say, an extra \$10 per year for persons in that class? Another issue is creating and keeping the address list current. Such lists are usually obsolete in some part the day after they are created.

These issues will need to be addressed by the Board of Directors, of course, but to give them information to work with and in keeping with trying to do the thing to the satisfaction of at least a majority of members, I'm asking those of you who have e mail capability to send me a message ASAP at jbuss@itis.com. In the reference line, state: "e mail yes" to signify that you would be willing to get Sparks electronically only, or state "e mail no" to show that you would still want to get a hard copy. If you want to add comments in the body of the message, that's fine and I will pass them on to the Board, but I will be tabulating the results from the reference lines.

Please reply within 10 days. **If I don't hear from you and the roster shows that you have e mail, my default assumption will be "e mail yes."** Note that the Board may still decide to limit distribution to e mail only to those who can receive it that way and you may wish to comment on that

and/or the special level of dues notion.

In deciding how to vote, consider that any decision on how much dues are going to have to increase next year will be heavily impacted by how much Sparks cost can be reduced. Consider, too, that if you like to have Sparks for bathroom reading material, you can easily print it or selected pages of it.

And (More) Speaking of Dues

If you haven't paid your 2004 dues, now is the time to do so. First of all, you need the new card to fly and the season for that is at hand. In addition, this is last copy of Sparks you will receive if you aren't paid up by the time the May issue goes to the printer.

Address Corrections

The e mail address change given for Bill Disch last month was wrong. It should have read **bdisch@merr.com**. Wendell Hottmann's address was given with only one "n." It should be **whottmann@isthmusorg.com**.

Adopt-A-Highway

After several years in the saddle, Bill Disch has decided to step down as the club's Adopt-A-Highway coordinator. So guess what! We need a volunteer and the last I head we don't have one. The county gets testy if an assigned roadway isn't picked up three times a year and our name on the road sign is good PR in the 'hood.

Will someone please step forward and take over? It's not a hard job. The weekday morning flyers are always willing to pitch in and perhaps one of them who often goes out on pick up missions anyway would be a good candidate. If you are willing to do so, just give Vince a call.

Field Work Day

If you haven't already done so, mark your calendar for the annual field work day, May 1.

Field Safety

By Chris Spierings

In a board meeting last year I brought up some concerns I have about safe RC flight at Kettle Field. In the course of discussing these issues I was asked to write up an article for our newsletter to get those of you who bother to read it thinking about safety.

Our current field regulations have thirteen sections.

Yet it seems that three of them are the areas where we have repeated issues. The big three to me are numbers 4, 6 and 11 (*field regulations text presented in italics*) here they are in order:

4. Pilot Boxes: One pilot and crew shall occupy a pilot box. Each pilot box is defined by a concrete pad within the pilot box area. Pilots must use the pilot boxes. The pilot box area is defined on the field map.

I, like many of us, am not always conscious of where my feet are when I'm flying. I've noticed a propensity for a lot of us to crowd the low fence which separates the pilot box area from the part of the field we take off and land on. At face value that doesn't seem so bad. However when doing this you present a visual obstacle to others who are using the pilot boxes. New Year's day our first day of flight for the new year was a great example of what can be seen on any day at Kettle Field. We had several people using the pilot boxes and others standing in the entrances to the field and even on the field while they flew.

6. Prohibited Flying Area: No flying is permitted south of the flight line or any adjacent prohibited flight areas indicated on the field map. The flight line is the line of separation between the pilot box area and the runway area, separated by the northernmost low fence. The flight area is defined on the field map.

Sometimes violation of this rule is a result of an accident or emergency or just having your hands full with a new plane. However, a few folks in our club repeatedly and knowingly violate this rule, particularly on the ends of the field where people don't usually frequent. The East and West ends of the field, south of the flight line fence carried to infinity, are not sanctioned flight areas. They are not the spot to do turn around maneuvers.

What is the big deal with this rule? First, we have the obvious safety implications of planes regularly flying over people, traffic or county property. Second we have our lease.

What does the lease have to do with this rule? Folks who work for the county have already commented on the peril they felt working at the Verona site while folks were flying RC. We rely on the same folks who run Verona's landfill site to permit us access to our current field. We also know plenty of vehicle traffic travels those roads any time the landfill is open. Certain times of the year we have other activity like cross country meets taking place. What do you think the repercussions of an airplane or helicopter hitting a vehicle or a person in those areas would be? I suspect that the scrutiny from the County and City risk management folks related to our lease would be sufficient that the City would

break the lease or elect not to enter into negotiations to renew it.

11. Etiquette: Every courtesy will be extended to other club members. Any concerns about field regulation violations or breaches of courtesy should be addressed after the pilot has landed and secured the aircraft unless the violation places the safety of others at risk.

I think this is the single biggest safety issue we have at Kettle Field. If you read this rule you'd think it has very little to do with safety unless someone is committing a violation of the other field regulations.

It seems that within our membership we have an increasing prevalence of the attitude of "I've paid my dues and I'll fly when I want and how I want". Just because your frequency is available doesn't mean it's a good idea to fly. What if there are already a half a dozen planes flying? This might or might not be a problem if they have similar performance and all the folks flying are comfortable with some congestion. On the other hand consider the situation if those planes flying consist of a mix like, a couple trainers with low time pilots or still on the buddy box, maybe a couple 60 sized sport planes and then an aerobat or two and/or very high speed plane like a pylon racer or perhaps a helicopter.

The point I'm driving at is that different types of aircraft fly different ways and at times the way they fly is not conducive to flying with other planes with dissimilar performance or flight styles. Throw in a pilot or two who can't or won't fly the same pattern as the others and you have a diverse mix of speeds, maneuvers and experience all wanting to play in the same area with the likelihood of a mid air being quite high.

This year on numerous occasions I've witnessed and even heard people say, "its time to go stir things up" or my favorite "they'll get out of my way". Somehow it seems that by flying a higher performance plane some of the pilots feel that others must make way for them. This issue cuts both ways though, if you've got a plane that doesn't mesh well with those currently flying maybe its better to wait for a few of those other folks to come down so you can fly in a more relaxed environment.

I realize I just kicked a hornet's nest by suggesting that some of us hold a "make way" attitude. I'm in no way trying to suggest that certain types of aircraft should be prohibited. I'm saying use your head, will waiting ten minutes to fly be that much of a burden and conversely is it unreasonable to ask people to keep flight length moderate when they know others are waiting to fly?

While I've got one foot in a hornet's nest I guess I

might as well stick the other in a fire ant hill. What makes a fly by or maneuver more impressive when it is done so close to the flight line that the wind sock moves? Technically this is not a violation of the flight regulations. In reality it simply confirms to all that the pilot has impaired judgment moderated only by excess arrogance.

While these in your face fliers may be impressive and the aircraft might be equally impressive, consider the following. What is the pilot going to do if a bug gets between his sunglasses and face or in an eye? What happens if a servo or battery fails? It is less than 20 feet from the pilot boxes to the flight line. Even a trainer covers that amount of ground in a hurry. Ever hear of dumb thumbs?

I've seen people executing blistering fly bys within a few feet of the wind sock and crossing the flight line on both ends of the field. Would the exhibition of pilot skill and airplane performance be any less impressive 50 feet further out over the field? I find it hard to believe that it would be less fun for the pilot. I do know a serious or mortal injury at our field could cost us a friend and be little fun for the pilot.

So what do we do? You can take just a second or two to think about these rules every time you prepare to fly an airplane. If some of our members don't have the maturity to play by the rules and be courteous to other flyers then how about walking down the flight line and letting the violator know you'd feel better about things if they visited with you in the pits or if they stood in the pilot box or kept their plane north of the flight line. Notice I'm not recommending you charge up to a flying pilot and start chewing on somebody for the way they are flying. Let him land, then approach him and express your concern as rationally as you can.

We all know bringing up a concern like this has the potential for tempers to flare, feelings to get hurt and create rifts between club members. If you do take the time to talk with someone about something that makes you nervous and they get belligerent or continue to violate our field regulations then its time to involve the club's officers. More often than not though I think you'll find that the behavior will stop because the individual probably just wasn't conscious they were out of line.

From past experience as a club officer and having been faced with these issues you often hear about them after they've gone on way too long. The questionable activity has gone on so long that some even claim it is an accepted practice. Some use the unsafe activity of others to justify copying the activity. If a pilot can't follow the rules nor listen to the constructive advice of a friend, let the club's officials know about the issue right away. Send the club an e mail; give the president or safety officer a call. Detail your concerns and the who, what, when and where of it.

By taking the initiative to deal with these issues you've served several purposes, first it shows you are concerned about the issue and you've given something tangible to the officer to work with. Second, the club can begin to document the situation should it be necessary to proceed with sanctioning the member for continued violation. Finally it shows that you are concerned enough about this activity to take an interest in seeing the club deal with it. If we spend a little time thinking ourselves and reminding others when necessary our field will be a lot safer place. I think we'll all have more fun too.

Flying the Mail

By Jerry Buss

When the US Post Office in cooperation with the US Army launched the world's first regularly scheduled daily air mail service in May of 1918, the idea was by no means new. Indeed, it was 125 years earlier that the first air mail message was carried and hundreds of thousands more transmissions had already occurred all around the world.

On January 9, 1793, a Frenchman, Jean-Pierre Blanchard, made the first balloon ascension in the Western Hemisphere from a prison yard in Philadelphia. It was witnessed by such worthies as Alexander Hamilton, Martha Washington, Betsy Ross Claypool and John Jay. Blanchard spoke no English, so to assure his safe passage George Washington handed him a "passport" written in his own hand, asking whomever came upon him to give him such aid as he required.

Blanchard lifted off shortly after 10:00 a.m. and an hour later he landed near Woodbury, New Jersey. Washington's note served its purpose and the local citizens escorted him back to Philadelphia as a hero. Unfortunately, the note, or passport, was lost. It would be priceless today to collectors of such memorabilia.

The French have had foul luck with their wars for nearly two centuries, having never won a significant battle since Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815. Not the least of their chagrin occurred at the hands of Otto von Bismarck's kraut snapping army (which, I believe, included my *grosspapa*) in 1870-71, during the Franco-Prussian War. Paris was surrounded and totally cut off from all outside communications. On the morning of September 23, 1870, a large cotton bag christened *LeNeptune* was filled with coal gas and launched. It was piloted by one Jules Duruf and it carried about 275 pounds of mail. The easterly wind that blew that day carried it about 75 miles to the village of Craconville, outside of Prussian held territory, where the mail was turned over to postal authorities and sent on its way. Pleased with the results, the Parisiennes made four more such launches before the end of the month and continued flights until the end of the siege, whenever the wind was right. The Prussians soon took to taking pot shots at the balloons, compelling the French to switch to night flights. A few balloons simply fell short and came down in enemy territory. Two were blown out into the Atlantic and the pilots were never seen again. One ended up in Norway and is today displayed in a museum in Oslo. Yet another found a 180 degree wind shift once aloft and landed in Deutschland.

An interesting innovation was developed during these

flights. A process to create microfilm was developed that could allow dozens of letters to be reduced sufficiently to allow them to be carried by a single homing pigeon. Pigeons were then carried out of the city with the outgoing mail and then sent back with film. The film was projected on a wall, like slides, copied by a battery of female scribes and the results were then sent on to their intended addresses.

From 1894 to 1896 two brothers named Zahn operated a homing pigeon service between Avalon, on Catalina Island, and Los Angeles. Although they charged fifty cents to a dollar per message, they went broke. In 1898 a similar service was in use between Auckland, New Zealand and Great Barrier Island. There were many other examples of pigeon messaging services around the world.

We saw in the story of Charley Taylor that Cal Rodgers carried mail on his Vin Fiz flight. The letters bore a stamp indicating they were flown by him from town A to town B, where Mrs. Rodgers turned them over to the post office to be sent on to their destinations, usually the sender, as souvenirs. This was a common practice among the pioneering barnstorming pilots of the day to turn a few extra bucks to pay for fuel and repairs. In 1911 souvenir mail was carried by air from London's Hendon Aerodrome about 20 miles to Windsor Castle over a 16 day period to celebrate the coronation of George V. In all, about 113,000 pieces of mail were involved. The public regarded letters carried on these primitive flights as we regard moon rocks today and envelopes bearing evidence of having actually been carried in an airplane were treasured. They are treasured still by philatelists. Like mail sent by pigeon and balloon, this kind of barnstorming activity went on in many countries between about 1910 and the onset of the Great War.

During the war, both Italy and Austria developed continuing but unscheduled air courier service that primarily carried military dispatches, but was also available for civilian mail. In fact, the Italians created the first postage stamp especially for air mail in 1917.

In 1911, US Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock proposed to Congress that \$50,000 be appropriated to establish experimental air mail service in Alaska. Unfortunately, the best available plane was a flimsy Bleriot that was capable of less than 60 mph, with a range of less than a hundred miles. This would have been useless in so vast and rugged a territory and the proposal was denied. Still, a couple of years into the Great War attitudes toward aviation had undergone a great change, as had the capabilities of the machinery. In 1917, at Woodrow Wilson's urging, Postmaster General Albert Bursleson again approached Congress for money and \$100,000 was tacked on to the Post Office's steamship and barge appropriation to provide an experimental, regularly scheduled, daily, air mail service between New York and Washington with an intermediate stop in Philadelphia.

Second Assistant Postmaster General, Otto Praeger, whose job was supervision of transport services became the father of operations. His chief problem was airplanes and pilots, for the Post Office had neither. Moreover, none were available since the

country had recently entered the war and everything that could be produced was needed by the army and navy and so the notion lay dormant. Praeger argued strenuously that experience gained by Army pilots in terms of stick time and cross country navigation would be worth the cost of a few planes. After months of haggling, Praeger, with strong support from the President and the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics, finally reached an agreement with the War Department in February 1918. The Army would provide pilots, planes, mechanics and a landing site in Washington. The Post Office would provide landing sites in Philadelphia and New York, fuel and clerical staff. A date of May 15, 1918 was agreed upon to commence operations.

On the Army side, Major Rueben Fleet was placed in command of operations, with Captain Benjamin Lipsner, a non-flyer, as his administrative aide. Six pilots, all recently soloed and newly commissioned second lieutenants, were selected. On May 6, Fleet, with permission from the Army's Chief of Air Service Production, called the Curtiss Airplane Company and ordered six JN-6's for delivery in eight days. Front seats and controls were to be removed to provide a hopper in which the mail could be carried. Since the Jenny only had endurance enough to last about 88 miles on 19 gallons of fuel, a second 19 gallon tank was to be added. The open cockpit machine's 150 hp "Hisso" engine gave the Jenny a top speed of 80 mph and a cruise of 66. Its construction was flimsy, there was a great paucity of instrumentation and the compass that it did have was highly unreliable. But it was the only game in town.

On May 15, Fleet picked up Jenny 36262 at Bustleton Field, a polo field in Philadelphia, which was to be the terminus in that city. It had been delivered from the Curtiss factory on Long Island only the day before, fresh out of the factory door. At 9:30 he shoe horned it into the Polo Grounds in Potomac Park in Washington. This field was an oval, about 1,000 feet long by 600 feet wide. At one end were 60 foot high trees and at the other a grandstand took up precious space needed for take off and landing. Present were such dignitaries as Alexander Graham Bell, Secretary of War Baker, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, his assistant Franklin D. Roosevelt and a host of others, along with a large crowd of plain citizens. An awed hush fell over the assemblage when President and Mrs. Wilson, along with their Secret Service entourage, arrived.

Lt. George Boyle had been selected to take off for Bustleton at 11:30. His selection was not based on his flying ability, for he had little having quite recently soloed, but rather on his being the son-in-law of Judge Charles McCord, an Interstate Commerce Commissioner to whom the Post Office owed a debt of gratitude for quashing a proposal to have parcel post carriage contracted to private carriers. After a 140 pound mail bag was put aboard and Mrs. Wilson finished ceremonially presenting him with a spray of flowers, Boyle climbed into the rear cockpit and strapped in. A mechanic stepped up to the prop and called "Contact." Boyle toggled the ignition switch and replied "Switch on." The mechanic pulled the prop through. The engine coughed, sputtered briefly and died. Several more attempts were made, but to no avail. Mechanics swarmed over the plane, checking possible

causes of failure, but found nothing. Again an attempt was made to start, but the engine was dead. More frantic problem solving attempts followed. From the crowd a voice was heard to call out, "We're losing a lot of valuable time here." It was the voice of POTUS -- the President Of The United States.

Following a lot of head scratching, a mechanic checked the fuel tank. No one had thought to refuel and with the plane parked in a tail down position, no gas was getting to the pickup. Now a new problem arose. No one had thought to bring any fuel to the field either. With fuel siphoned from a couple of other planes, the engine caught at once. Observers thought that Boyle cleared the trees at the end of the field by at least 3 feet, but he was on his way with the world's first regularly scheduled air mail delivery ---- or was he? Philadelphia is northeast of Washington, but Boyle flew away to the south.

Army maps were bare bones and highly inadequate things that were never intended for aerial navigation. Boyle was supposed to follow railroad tracks, but found none. Being unable to match the terrain with his map, he put down in a plowed field to seek directions from the locals. The Jenny nosed over in the loose soil just enough to shatter the prop and so the world's first regularly scheduled air mail delivery was to be delayed in a most ignoble manner. To add to his chagrin the field turned out to be adjacent to Otto Praeger's farm near Waldorf, Maryland.

Meanwhile, at noon in the infield of Belmont Park Race Track in New York, Lt. Torrey Webb took off for Bustleton before a goodly crowd of local dignitaries. A little over an hour later, he handed off his mail sack to Lt. James Edgerton, who, within six minutes, was airborne to Washington, arriving at 2:50, only 20 minutes late. Lt. Paul Culver had waited in vain for Boyle to arrive at Bustleton before finally receiving orders to take off anyway. At 3:30 he arrived safely at Belmont Park with a skimpy mail load. So ended the first day of regular air mail service.