

AMA Expo East

Public shows are by no means dead, they just need revitalization.

Dennis Andreas

This past February the Northeast treated us to a handful of nice days as a tease of the spring weather to come. Along with the tease of spring fever there are local swap meets and of course the second running of the AMA Expo East. If readers remember from last year, the 40+ year running of the iconic WRAM show, as it was called, had ended. Realizing the importance of

the show it was in the 11th hour the AMA stepped up and took over. The AMA was already producing the AMA Expo West, so it was a natural to transform the WRAM show into AMA Expo East.

Considering its last minute intervention, the AMA, specifically District II Executive Vice President Eric Williams, did an amazing job and produced a wonderful show in the short amount of time available. Last year some vendors took a wait and see

stance before taking a bite and committing. This year it proved that the hard work of the AMA paid off and 111 tables filled were filled with 55 businesses. Of these there were approximately five who were exhibitors only with the rest selling their products.

As anyone who has organized a show knows, selling is what brings the visitors. In today's world of online ordering and consumer disappointments what it takes are products for a buyer to see firsthand, and for a consumer to touch, prior to laying down the cash for their latest need or for a new project.

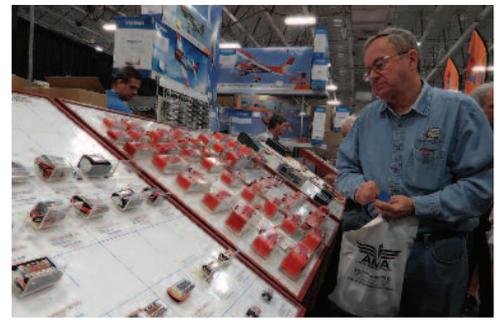
In addition to the vendor tables was the always busy Swap Shop area. This was an area of at least another 50 tables. The idea behind the swap shop is a modeler can rent a table for three days

and get free admission into the show. The items for sale ranged from complete airframes to the obscure part from back in the golden days of model aviation and there seemed to be everything else in between.

The big change from years past is the show was not targeting only the hard core modeler of which there were plenty present, but every person who owns or operates a hobby store knows the future of our hobby is in the hands of today's youth. To this end there

were plenty of hands on activities from Make-and-Take to an indoor pond that had everything floating from cartoon tugs to a scale model of the HMS *Titanic*.

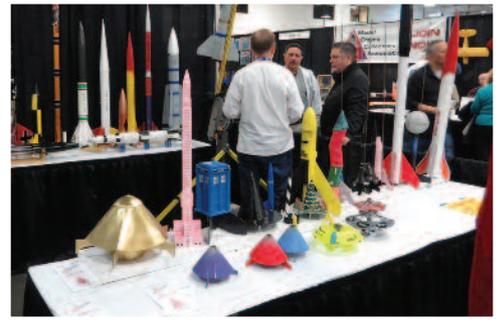
Throughout the three days of the show rubber powered aircraft were handed out and tables were filled with markers and stickers for the builder to use [I donated



cyanoacrylate adhesives and kicker from my booth to keep up with the repairs-DA]. Over the course of the expo an open area adjacent to the build tables was probably the busiest air-



space in New Jersey as models of all variations were test flown. The Make-and-Take area also extended into Rocketry, which was sponsored by Estes and the Central New Jersey Rocketry Society. There were no launches but each person took a model rocket home with them to continue the journey.



Probably my favorite moment of the show was watching the intensity of a young girl decorating her airplane with her father. When I asked her if she was having fun, she was not

short of words. If for some reason more than a few dealers are blind to this, it's what our hobby represents; past, present and the future of modeling.

As an AMA District II Associate Vice President I work with the clubs in the Long Island, NY, area. However a modeling family knows no borders and we all know each other, whether we're from New England or New Jersey and all parts in between.



I have spent a lot of words on the involvement it takes to produce a successful show or event. This is every bit as true when running a local event in your area or even when holding demonstrations in your shops. There must be something to appeal to everyone present so no one feels left out. To that end I believe this was a very successful 2018 AMA Expo East. **HM**



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