

# RedStar Pilot's Association

## Board of Directors Meeting 11-20-07 3:00 pm PST

### In Attendance:

Darrell Gary  
Ron Lee  
Terry Calloway  
Jim Goolsbey  
Byron Fox  
Gordon Witter  
Joe Griffith  
Shane Golden  
Dan Fortin  
Stephen Fox (part of the call- Red Alert)  
\*Heather J. Frantz - Notes\*

### Absent:

David McGirt  
David Mills  
Terry Slawinski

Darrell opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation and briefly addressing some of the transitional issues that have affected the RPA in recent months, noting that the transition has been painfully slow due to the lack of organizational structure necessary to support such a large organization. In order to operate as a corporate entity, maintaining good records and establishing a good business model are imperative to the success of the organization. Addressing these concerns now will ensure easier transition the next time around. All business/organizational records are being assembled in a format that will be easy to pass on to the next Board of Directors.

Darrell also touched on the agenda topics to be discussed, including financial issues, website updates and additional corporate resources provided by Windstar.

Regarding the website, Darrell expanded on the use of corporate resources to fund/build/re-structure the RPA site to make it more user-friendly for members and maintaining open communication & interaction with the RPA store. Also on the agenda for updating the RPA website is to make more facets password protected (manuals/member roster, store etc). The manuals are a direct result of member labor and only members should have access. Also, in an effort to streamline communication, Darrell would like to expand the ability to contact people. For instance, have regional email lists set up (on website?) so that with the click of a button, a msg goes out to the intended members, either region specific or all members. (note: this aspect is already available on Maildog BUT you have to be able to navigate the not-so-user-friendly e-com set up).

Darrell then turned the floor over to Ron Lee (RPA Treasurer) who's been working to get control of the bank accounts and re-construct all the necessary financial information to ensure the RPA is financially sound.

Ron began by providing a summary of the three checking accounts currently held by the RPA, reminding Board members that he sent the balances/income statements to them via email for their review. In addition to actual cash flow, the RPA currently has projectors valued at \$2000 as well as a new laptop valued at \$181 that was donated to the RPA and will be passed on to the next generation of leadership. Additionally, Ron added that he'll begin sending out a monthly balance statement email to the Board for review.

The next concern is the circulating debit cards. While the debit cards were a great idea in terms of providing seed money for events, they've actually had a negative impact on finances. At meeting time, Ron indicated that he was aware of at least 6 debit cards in circulation and recommended that we try to retrieve these due to the large number of overdraft charges that have accumulated due to too many people using the cards and not being aware of funds available. Per Ron, the amount of money wasted on overdraft charges was ridiculously high, meaning less money for actual RPA events, etc.

Ron proposed canceling all debit cards and Darrell approved. Moving forward, it was suggested that members use their own credit cards or submit invoices to Ron who would in turn cut a check the next day to reimburse them. Additionally, the idea of getting approval for a specific amount of seed money ahead of time was raised. Darrell would like to see the Regional Directors more involved in this regard, with the authority to reside at a regional level (ie: regional directors should be aware of any events in their region and could request funding from National RPA account and then pass on to event organizers, etc. This idea follows Darrell's vision of the National facet of the RPA supporting the Regional divisions.

Additionally, utilizing the National Treasury (a 501 (C) 3) is good for sponsorship reasons due to tax treatment and the transparency of the process. It also relieves event organizers of accounting headaches and reassures donors that their money went where it was intended.

Included in this line of discussion was how to go about securing rooms for Osh. Jim Goolsbey raised concerns re: the rooms set aside at the college and the need for a \$2500 deposit for 50 rooms. Due to many unknown factors at the time of the meeting, this issue was not thoroughly resolved and a solution is pending as soon as Ron gets in contact with the college directly to find out the details re: how the security deposit works and what (if anything) is refunded should rooms go unused.

On another note, membership continues to rise. In June alone, there were 23 new members and included the Starfighters who fly F104's in air shows. The appeal of RPA seems to be a high level of organization in terms of our events (which are also more fun) and better training resources for members (formation etc). Also, some T38 and T34

pilots were planning on attending Desert Thunder IV, implying that the RPA is a sought after organization that's attracting pilots beyond the general scope (yaks, cj's, etc)

Continuing to build membership is key as more members equal higher visibility and more money. In terms of marketing the RPA, Darrell would like to de-emphasize Soviet planes in an effort to make the organization more approachable to other formation pilots. One suggestion was to encourage membership by having a tiered fee schedule for events. Members get one price whereas non-members are an additional \$50 (this is an example). In structuring it this way, it would make more sense for a pilot to join the RPA for the membership cost and have access to website, all the resources, lower member event fees etc.

Next, Byron Fox touched on RPA store issues, adding that he had a surplus of RPA gear (t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc) in his garage and offering it to any Board Members who may be able to incorporate it into their events, etc. New items are also being added, including a 110 page spiral bound formation manual (also available for download) which is more accessible as a reference should any questions arise re: formation. These will retail for \$25 and per Byron, there's no need to stock these as

Following Byron was Steve Fox who works on Red Alert Magazine. Per Steve, **Red Alert** NEEDS more submissions (articles, pictures, etc) from members. **Red Alert** is an excellent magazine and a great tool for members but more resources are needed. To that end, \$8000 of national RPA funds have been earmarked as support for expanding the content of **Red Alert**, however, even with the financial resources, stories and pictures are in short supply. Steve emphasized the need for an inventory of pics/articles to fall back on and encouraged Regional Directors to urge their regional members to contribute. As far as specs, all photos need to be a minimum of 300 DPI. Basically, anything less than 1.5 MB is useless. These can be jpegs or more ideal in raw eps format, however, they need to be large. If it's too big, it can re-sized. Picture submissions should include the following information: who, what, where & when (a caption. Articles need to be kept between 700-1000 words (no more than 2 pages) and should be on any topic relevant to RPA members.

Also up for discussion re: **Red Alert** is the need for advertisers. Steve encouraged all Board members to seek out potential advertisers via their connections with folks in the aviation industry, including parts supplies, fuel providers, etc. One suggestion was that if an advertiser runs a ½ pg or better; give them a link on the website as a "preferred vender."

Finally, there seems to be an ongoing problem re: mailing issues for the folks in Canada as well as overseas members. Dan Fortin (NW Regional Director) has not yet received a **Red Alert** in 2007. Additionally, in the past when he did receive, it was generally much later. Mailing issues re: Canada need to be sorted out to ensure that our Canadian pilots are receiving the full benefit of being an RPA member. As far as overseas members, until the mailing situation is worked out, a pdf of the most recent issue will be emailed to those people.

Darrell also briefly touched on the need for more sponsors to fund events. However, more corporate sponsorship means we need to be very diligent in all accounting aspects (ie: what money is taken in, where it's spent, etc). Having additional sponsorship at events will free up some RPA funds that can then be applied to another aspect of the organization.

Jim Goolsbey touched on Check Pilots, noting that the F.A.S.T. manual is available on the web for downloading and hard copies will be available for purchase through the RPA store. Additionally, 1 new check pilot was added (Vlado Lenoch).

Next on the agenda, Darrell raised questions about the structure of RPA events and how events should unfold in terms of planning, sponsorship, seed money, publicity, etc. Overall, the National Organization supports the regions and in terms of seed money for events, regional directors can submit a request for funds to the National leadership who will in turn authorize x amount of dollars to be appropriated to that event. In doing so, all accounting aspects will remain in the hands of one person (Treasurer) to avoid any confusion as to where money is going, etc. Additionally, in terms of sponsorship, one possibility may be to have the RPA (as an organization) act as an official sponsor.

On that note, the RPA is prepared to provide support where needed which at the time appears to be Red Alert magazine, Oshkosh CJ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Red Star program. At the time of the meeting, funds were already set aside to apply to Red Alert. As for Oshkosh, additional sponsorship is needed along with roughly \$2500 allotted specifically for the event. As it stands now, per the EAA Warbird Board, 1 40x40 tent can be put up; however, it can't be by the flight line because of vehicles needing to provide service. In the tent (wherever it ends up), lunch (sandwiches) will be catered daily. The EAA also said it was OK to post banners on the tent (ie: free advertising for sponsors).

Also concerning Oshkosh is transportation once at the airport. There is already a shuttle that picks up from the college and drops off at the airport however, there's no transportation from there to the actual site which would be a 20-40 minute walk. If possible, some kind of transportation between where the shuttle drops you off and where the actual site is would be ideal. Some other details re: Oshkosh were the banquet room at the Hilton which cost \$500 for the evening (food not included) and the need for a speaker of some kind. Additionally, suggestions were made to have an exclusive fuel deal with one of the fuel providers (O'Ryan & Bossler) with Bossler currently being id'd as the primary vendor.

Finally, the idea to have a "sponsorship package" seems to be popular. However, the package/levels need to be determined. Such as if you sponsor the event with \$2500, you get xyz, if you sponsor with \$5000, you get xyz and pdq.

Following the discussion re: Oshkosh was the plight of the Red Star Program and whether or not the RPA should continue putting money into it. In the past it's been a component of the RPA but has floundered somewhat in recent months. The original

intent of the Red Star Program was to stop flying for free with just gas and room paid for and it was noted that many air shows are inviting individual pilots to fly vs. groups of pilots. Terry Calloway who helps head up the Red Star program wants to continue with RPA support for this arm of the organization to help market the Red Star team as a mass formation display, for instance provide 4-6 planes and set a regular fee, etc. Per Terry, many RPA pilots are willing to fly in this forum however, standards need to be put in place regarding fees, scheduling, etc. **(See Footnote # 1)**

The final topic of discussion centered on ICAS and whether or not the RPA would be sending representatives to the event to man the booth. The kiosks are awarded based on seniority and because the RPA has been in on it for a while, we have a good position. However, some concerns are the need for a better presentation at the actual kiosk with more promotional materials in order to create more of an RPA presence. Without that, we end up just being a couple people sitting at a booth and don't garner as much attention/notice as some others. That being said, is it still worth it to spend the \$500 to attend or is it a waste of money since we lack materials and may come off looking amateurish? As noted earlier, because of the seniority factor, if we don't participate, we lose our spot and have to go back to the back to the bottom. So the question remains, if we do plan on continuing to support Red Star Program (which the majority of the Board agreed to) then it would be in our best interest to maintain our kiosk spot, even with the lack of presentation materials. Overall, we need someone to take the lead on this. Zoe Albrecht has gone in the past and would be happy to go again; however, we need someone to head up getting some marketing materials organized.

Based on some feedback in the meeting, Air Show promoters are already familiar with the Red Star Program and will seek out the RPA booth even without all the flash. While no shows in the SW region happened as a result of attending, many pre-existing relationships exist based on the RPA's history/participation at ICAS which are valuable to the RPA. Based on all these factors, the Board agreed to continue to support the Red Star program and to follow through with participation at ICAS to maintain our kiosk spot and continue to nurture the relationships already generated. It was suggested to still send Zoe along with 2 pilots, even with minimal presentation materials. Some suggestions for the kiosk include a Red Star Banner, video and possibly some kind of handout (if possible). Looking ahead to next year, the Red Star program will need to design/produce more promotional materials for a bigger impact.

Last on the agenda was a brief discussion regarding the upcoming Regional Directors elections (next year) and the need to clear up confusion make it easier for people to vote than it has been in previous elections. **Red Alert** may be utilized to alert members and provide more information re: procedures. Darrell also reached out to the current Regional Directors for potential recommendations for their successors (ie: people that are willing to put in the time/effort to make a positive impact on the organization).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:25 pm.

(See next page for Footnote)

**Footnote #1:**

It was subsequently determined that Larry King (an air show pilot from SE region) would represent us at ICAS. He will be assisted by volunteers. The RPA will fund up to \$2000 to support this effort. Our Treasurer Ron Lee will provide video materials for the kiosk and Zoe Albrecht will forward the RPA banner.

The product to be offered will be “on demand” air show elements. Depending upon location, budget and resource availability, the RPA can provide air show organizers with two ship static displays, waivered formation aerobatic acts or mass formation fly-bys.