District I—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

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Carl Vogel, a District I associate vice president (AVP) for more than a decade and the one I chose as my replacement, passed away in 2014. He was the best AVP anyone could ask for.

Carl submitted multiple club and district event reports, and organized and directed many flying events and activities. Carl will be missed by all who knew him. Don Brown, president of the South Shore R/C Club sent me the following story about Carl, his life, and his RC brother Ken Crane's endearing friendship.

"We talk about the fantastic friendships that we form in this hobby. I've come to realize that our addiction to the sport is consuming, sometimes to the point of not knowing much about our friends' lives other than what they do in RC. Before you know it, a friend is gone and you realize how little you knew about him.

"That is the case with, Carl Vogel. Carl was diagnosed with cancer in 2008 and at the age of 62, on August 15, 2014, he died. His wife had unexpectedly passed away in January 2014. They had no children and Carl found himself alone to fight an unwinnable battle. That's when I witnessed an amazing story of RC friendship. I sat on the board of our flying club with Carl and Ken Crane. One day Ken said to me, "I'm going to help Carl. I'm going to be there for him and take him to his treatments. For eight months Ken was at Carl's side. Although many of us got a chance to visit Carl, Ken made sure he was well taken care of.

Our good friend Carl Vogel, AVP.

"As a result of these new bonds, the unknown history of Carl's life unfolded. All the years we thought we knew Carl, we had no idea. He served on multiple club boards, was president of Discover Flying RC Club, and was out AMA District I AVP, but we knew little of the man.

"Carl started flying full-scale airplanes at age 16, and during his first solo in a Citabria, he flew it inverted! During his first tour in the service, Carl flew an F-4 Phantom in the Vietnam War and he served a second tour as a navigator. In 1978, he became a commercial pilot, flying for Trump Shuttle, US Airways, and Island Air before retiring in 2013. Between 1978 and 1990, he also flew his Pitts Model 12 on the acrobatic circuit with the likes of Leo Loudenslager, Art Scholl, Gene Soucy, Patty Wagstaff, and Walter Extra. He also flew in the International Aerobatic Club.

"In 1965, Carl started Control Line flying and soon got the RC bug. He was an avid collector of vintage RC gear. Over the years, he advanced to Giant Scale RC planes and flew regularly.

"Carl retired in 2013 after learning his condition was terminal. He told Ken that his plan was to just fly and be free. Carl asked Ken if he would help him to build a new plane. Ken's response, 'Let's do it, brother!'

"Carl was an excellent RC pilot. Ken advised him to order a PAU Edge 540 and DA-120. The building went slowly and Ken was patient, waiting for Carl's good days when they could work on the project together. Unfortunately, when the plane was ready to fly, Carl had lost part of his vision. Carl knew he would never fly his new bird, so he decided to give his new plane to a young man who was coming up in the ranks. At only 16 years old, Colton Lubbe received a surprise from Carl: his new Edge 540. Colton and Carl formed a friendship in the last months of Carl's life and Colton helped on the final build of his plane.

"Even while bedridden in hospice care, Carl asked to go to the field. He could barely stand, but Ken took over and, along with Colton's mother, Carl was taken to the flying field. Upon arriving, he stood and looked around smiled and after a few tears, he watched Colton rip the sky with that Edge, cutting patterns and screaming effortlessly through the air.

"This took place before 11:30 a.m. because there was a flight restriction after that. As if it was a final sendoff, the President of United States was heading for his vacation on Martha's Vineyard, flying over the Cape Cod Otis Model Aircraft Club field at the moment that Carl was there. The Lead Chinook helicopters came over first, not more than 3,000 feet in the air, with supporting jets and Air Force One. Imagine the odds!

"There was a moment of silence as these wonderful aircraft flew overhead. Then, as if a shadow passed, Carl was done, his energy drained from him and he was exhausted. After that one last request and the satisfaction of that day, he decided it was okay to go. Carl died five days later.

"Let's all reflect a bit on the importance of our friends, get to know a bit about them, take the time to help them, and reach out to them. As Ken learned, you can have a lot of things in this world, but you cannot have another minute with your friends when they are called to go home. Godspeed, Carl. You will never be forgotten."

Ditto!

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