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

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AMA Expo East welcomed thousands of modeling enthusiasts from the Northeast to the show at the Medowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus NJ in February.

AMA Expo East was challenging for AMA. All of the work that goes into producing a new aeromodeling show was fit into several months after AMA decided to host a northeast version of its successful AMA Expo West.

Despite the abbreviated preparation time, AMA did an excellent job and attracted a record-breaking crowd during the three-day show. Vendors claimed excellent sales, as can be seen in the photos with many attendees holding shopping bags. Although Horizon Hobby's exhibit fixtures and all of its new products were mistakenly routed elsewhere, the company's sales representatives borrowed some tables and hobby items and succeeded in talking about their products.

There was a good representation of model aircraft of all types and scales, expertly built and finished, in static display areas. For those who wanted to see and experience RC flying, a large multipurpose netted cage had racing drones, foamies, helicopters, and FPV flying activity going on. Model boat enthusiast were not left out of the action, and many got to view and operate RC scale boats, some of which had smoke, lighting, and engine sound features, in a huge indoor 1-foot deep pool.

AMA took its RC Resale collection of donated model aircraft to the show's Swap Shop, where eager bargain hunters emptied their wallets to purchase the many items on sale. The money from the sales helps to support the AMA Foundation's charitable programs.

Speakers, including AMA Ambassador and astronaut Robert "Hoot" Gibson and U.S. Navy Commander Tom Huff, told stories about how model aviation influenced their lives and careers to many interested show attendees.

District I members were in abundance at the show and kept me talking nonstop every day. Nearly everyone told me they enjoyed the show.

District I associate vice presidents (AVPs) Steve Brehm, Tom Rocheleau, Daren Hudson, Andrew Figlar, Ted Wojcik, Thomas Puma, and Joan Liska were invited to attend the show and participate in a combined AMA officer meeting conducted by District II Vice President Eric Williams and me. Among the topics of discussion were developing initiatives to address clubs with declining membership; opportunities for membership growth; improving methods for collaboration between district officers, clubs, and members; identifying clubs that permit multirotor flying and those with drone race courses; and sUAS community education to deter unnecessary legislation. More information about these efforts are on the District I website at www.amadistrict-i.org.

Gabriel Carvalifo displayed his Scale CH-53 heavy-lift helicopter.

This World War II light jet was never manufactured, but Kerry Sterner built and flew his model.

District I and II vice presidents, Eric Williams and Andy Argenio, had a joint meeting with their AVPs to discuss district clubs and membership development initiatives.

AVP Steve Brehm always manages to find a Giant Scale airplane he wants, but could never fit in his midsize car. Nice Gee Bee!

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