

Valley R/C Flying Club
Membership Welcome Packet

Revised June 12, 2026



Welcome to the Valley R/C Flying Club. This packet summarizes the club membership process, field rules, dues, flight training information, preflight procedures, and the membership application.

From the President

On behalf of all club members, I am pleased to welcome your interest in the Valley R/C Flying Club and the radio-control aviation hobby.

You will soon become acquainted with many of our members, and we welcome your questions. Our club includes experienced kit builders, novice pilots, and members with many years of experience in fixed-wing aircraft as well as electric, glow, and gas-powered aircraft. Some members also have experience with helicopters, gyrocopters, and quadcopters. Others have a deep interest in scale aircraft and enjoy detailing their models as miniature replicas.

We understand that this may be new to you. Many of us were once in your position, and we believe every sincere question is worth asking. We want you to gain the knowledge and skills needed to be comfortable with building, repairs, flight controls, radio programming, and safe flight operations when the time arises.

We also hope you will participate in club events, become involved, and help the club continue to grow. Our events allow us to show the community how much fun the hobby can be while demonstrating responsible operation and sharing knowledge. These events are also an important way we raise funds to maintain our field, field equipment, flight training equipment, and facilities.

Like all successful club activities, our events depend on volunteers. We encourage you to be part of the activities that keep the club active and welcoming. I look forward to seeing you at the field.

Sincerely,

Kevin Grapes

Prospective Member Process

Initial Contact with a Club Member

When a prospective member contacts a club member, the prospective member should receive the following information:

- Valley R/C Flying Club brochure
- AMA membership application or instructions for applying online
- FAA recreational flyer registration and TRUST completion instructions

All prospective club members should be advised to apply for membership in the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) as soon as possible. Membership in the Valley R/C Flying Club requires proof of current AMA membership.

Sincere Interest in Membership

When a prospective member expresses a sincere interest in joining the club and officially requests membership, the club should provide information explaining club procedures, safety expectations, and the membership process. At that time, the prospective member should receive:

- Valley R/C Flying Club membership application
- AMA membership application or online application instructions
- FAA recreational flyer registration and TRUST completion instructions
- Basic club information and procedure flowchart
- Field rules and safety information
- FAA/AMA compliance checklist

Membership Approval

After the prospective member has completed a VRCFC membership application and provided proof of AMA membership, a 60-day probationary period begins. After the 60-day period has elapsed, the prospective member's membership will be voted on by the Valley R/C Flying Club membership at the next club meeting.

Upon an offer of full membership, the prospective member will be required to pay club dues within 30 days and will receive a membership packet that includes:

- Welcome letter from the President
- Information every club member should know
- VRCFC flying field rules
- Flying field schedule and hours of operation
- Dues schedule
- Club membership list
- Flight training card
- List of club flight instructors

Information Every Club Member Should Know

Welcome to the Valley R/C Flying Club. This packet summarizes the procedures and responsibilities that come with club membership. After reviewing this material, please contact a club officer if you have questions.

Board of Directors and Club Officers for 2026

President	Kevin Grapes
Vice President	Brett Haswell
Treasurer	Ron Scott
Secretary	Andrew Leckrone

Additional Officers and Directors

Safety Officer	Dennis Hohenstein
Directors at Large	Lynn Thacker and Chester Williams

Websites

- Academy of Model Aeronautics: www.modelaircraft.org
- Valley R/C Flying Club: www.VRCFC.org
- Facebook: Valley Radio Control Flying Club

FAA Recreational UAS Requirements

For FAA purposes, radio-controlled model aircraft, helicopters, multirotors, and drones are generally treated as unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). VRCFC requires all members with flying privileges, and all guest flyers, to complete and maintain the FAA/AMA compliance items below before flying at the club field.

1. Maintain current Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) membership and be prepared to show proof of membership when requested.
2. Complete The Recreational UAS Safety Test (TRUST) and keep a paper or digital copy of the completion certificate available when flying. The AMA is an FAA-approved TRUST test administrator. [Click Here](#)
3. Register through FAA DroneZone as a recreational flyer before operating any unmanned aircraft that weighs more than 0.55 pounds (250 grams). Recreational registration costs \$5, is valid for three years, and covers all aircraft in the member's recreational inventory. Members must mark each applicable aircraft on the outside with their FAA registration number and carry proof of registration when flying.
4. Comply with FAA Remote ID requirements for aircraft that require FAA registration, unless flying within an FAA-Recognized Identification Area (FRIA) or another FAA-recognized exception applies. If the club field has not been confirmed as an active FRIA, members should assume Remote ID compliance is required for aircraft that require FAA registration.
5. Operations conducted for compensation, business, or any non-recreational purpose are not covered by recreational flyer rules and may require an FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate and any applicable airspace authorizations.

Recommended club records: AMA membership number and expiration date; FAA recreational flyer registration expiration date, when applicable; TRUST completion date; and acknowledgment that the member understands Remote ID/FRIA requirements.

Meetings

The club normally meets on the first Tuesday of each month at Bridgewater United Methodist Church, 219 N. Main Street, Bridgewater, VA. During the summer months, meetings are held at the flying field. Unless otherwise announced, club meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.

Club meetings are canceled on days when the Rockingham County School System is closed. In the event of inclement weather, check with a club officer to confirm whether the meeting will be held.

Flying Site

The primary function of the Valley R/C Flying Club is to provide a flying site for radio-controlled model aircraft. The club currently maintains one flying location across from the Rockingham County Fairgrounds in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

All members using the field must know and follow the flying site rules and regulations. A routine preflight inspection should be completed before the first flight of the day. If the aircraft is new or has been substantially rebuilt, a maiden-flight preflight inspection should be completed before flight.

The field is for use by club members and bona fide guests only. A club member must accompany all guests. No VRCFC member may fly unsupervised until they have received their Pilot Proficiency Certificate. Any member sponsoring a guest flyer must require the guest to show proof of current AMA membership, except as otherwise permitted during sanctioned events.

Field and Flying Rules

Revised January 2025

These rules were prepared primarily for fixed-wing aircraft. The club recognizes other radio-control flying interests and, when appropriate, the Valley R/C Board of Directors will consider rule modifications to accommodate those activities. Any modification must maintain safety and must not interfere with the majority of club members.

1. Alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs are not permitted at the field or at any club-sponsored AMA-sanctioned event.
2. All model pilots must be members of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA).
3. All members and non-members must comply with the AMA Official Safety Code and all safety rules approved by the Board of Directors of the Valley R/C Flying Club, Inc.
4. All use of club flying fields is governed by the applicable lease agreements and all rules approved by the Board of Directors of the Valley R/C Flying Club, Inc.
5. All FM transmitters must be placed in the impound area with the antenna collapsed and the transmitter turned off.
6. A frequency pin must be attached to all FM transmitters, or be in the possession of the pilot and used while outside the impound area, before any such transmitter is turned on. If other pilots are on the same channel, limit use of the frequency pin to 15-minute intervals.
7. Always perform a preflight inspection of your aircraft before the first flight of each flying session. Test all transmitter, receiver, and accessory batteries, and perform a transmitter-to-receiver range check. Additional preflight recommendations are provided separately.
8. When engines or motors are started or run in the pit area, the aircraft must face directly toward the safety barrier, and the nose of the aircraft must be within four feet of the barrier. All bystanders must remain behind the arc of the propeller.
9. A landing aircraft has the right of way over an aircraft taking off.
10. A dead-stick aircraft, meaning one that has lost engine or motor power, has the right of way over all others.
11. When an engine or motor stops in flight, loudly announce "DEAD STICK" several times to warn others of the impending landing. If a flyer experiences a loss-of-control situation, shout a loud warning as often as practical.
12. Before taxiing onto the runway, announce your intentions to all other flyers and ensure they acknowledge your intentions. Likewise, announce your intention to land to all other flyers on the flight line.
13. Any member or non-member who causes damage to another person's aircraft or equipment is liable for all damages and/or repairs.
14. No person may attempt to fly a model without being accompanied by an instructor unless they have received a Pilot Proficiency Certificate, as established by the Board of Directors of the Valley R/C Flying Club, Inc.
15. An effective muffler or silencer is required on all model internal-combustion engines that are factory-designed to accommodate an add-on exhaust system. Maintain noise levels at or below 90 dB at 3 meters.

16. Pilots participating in dogfights or similar activities are responsible for safe flying and for the ultimate fate of their own aircraft.
17. Extended engine break-in in the pit area is not allowed.
18. The flying field and immediate surroundings must be kept clean of foreign matter. Trash receptacles are provided for this purpose.
19. Saturday mornings are designated primarily for flight training until 1:00 p.m. Instructors working with beginners have flying priority during this time.
20. Any pilot preparing to fly a new or previously rebuilt aircraft may request a “clear sky” for the first flight so the aircraft can be trimmed and so others present can remain vigilant in the event of a malfunction. During this check flight, no other aircraft may be flown and no engines may be started.
21. During periods when three or more aircraft are flying, pilots are encouraged to use a spotter to reduce the possibility of a midair collision or other hazard.
22. Intentionally flying over or behind the flight line and pit area is not permitted. The flight line is an imaginary line located at the edge of the runway nearest the pilot stations and pit area and extends to infinity in each direction. Anyone who repeatedly violates this policy may, at the discretion of the Safety Officer, be assessed a fine not to exceed five dollars per incident.
23. Small children must be closely supervised by their parents and may not roam freely. Pets must be kept on a leash at all times while anywhere on the flying site.
24. When more than one aircraft is flying, the runway is for takeoff and landing only. Training, touch-and-go landings, and other maneuvers over the runway are permitted when such maneuvers are announced and acknowledged by the other pilots flying.
25. Habitual offenders of any of these rules are subject to action by the Board of Directors.

Membership

A. Membership activation, resignation, and suspension are addressed in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Valley R/C Flying Club. Club officers and members of the Board of Directors can direct you to this information if needed.

B. Paid dues are an annual requirement for membership in the Valley R/C Flying Club. The January 2009 bylaw revision addresses the requirements to join and maintain membership. Prospective members must formally apply for membership, either in person or through a representative, by providing the following:

- Payment of club dues
- Proof of AMA membership
- Proof of FAA recreational flyer registration, if operating aircraft over 0.55 pounds, and proof of TRUST completion
- A completed applicant information form

Formal acceptance at the end of the 60-day period is voted on by the Board of Directors and/or the membership. Refer to the bylaws for additional information.

C. Mowing the club field is the responsibility of the membership. For the past several years, volunteers have maintained the field and cut the grass; however, members may be asked to help from time to time as part of their club responsibilities.

D. All-season Flyer patches will be purchased by the club, if desired, for members who provide documentation showing they flew at least once each month for a full year.

Dues Schedule

Revised September 28, 2012

Any renewal made after the regular February meeting must include an additional late-renewal fee of \$10.

Period	Adult & Senior Members	Associate Members	Junior Members
January-March	100% (\$50)	60% (\$30)	20% (\$10)
April-June	75% (\$38)	45% (\$23)	15% (\$8)
July-September	50% (\$25)	30% (\$15)	10% (\$5)
October-December	100% (\$50)*	60% (\$30)*	20% (\$10)*

* Dues paid by new members joining during October-December cover their dues obligations for the following year.

Conditions, Definitions, and Explanations

All dues shown above are based on the full-year Standard Adult Member rate. To establish new dues amounts, the club needs only to decide on the full-year Standard Adult Member rate; the other rates are calculated from that rate.

When new rates are calculated, all amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar. Part-year rates are for new members only. Renewals must use the appropriate January-March rate.

Dues for new members are based on the rate in effect on the day they complete membership application paperwork and submit dues payment.

Standard Adult Members are those who are 19 years old or older on July 1 of the membership year. AMA membership is required. Standard Adult Members may have flying privileges, hold office, and serve on the Board of Directors.

Senior Members are those who are 65 years old or older on July 1 of the membership year. AMA membership is required. Senior Members may have flying privileges, hold office, and serve on the Board of Directors.

Associate Members are those who are 19 years old or older on July 1 of the membership year. AMA membership is not required. Associate Members do not have flying privileges, may not hold office, and may not serve on the Board of Directors. To obtain these privileges, an Associate Member must become a Standard Adult Member or Senior Member.

Junior Members are those who are under 19 years old on July 1 of the membership year. AMA membership is required. Junior Members may have flying privileges, hold office, and serve on the Board of Directors.

Honorary Life Members are those who have been granted free lifetime membership in the club. Honorary Life Members may hold office and serve on the Board of Directors. AMA membership is required only if the Honorary Life Member wishes to have flying privileges.

Flight Training

A. Flight training is available for members who need assistance or who are determined by the Board of Directors to need additional training.

B. The names of the Valley R/C Flying Club's designated flight instructors are posted at the field so students know whom to contact to arrange training.

C. Designated Club Flight Instructors: Kevin Grapes, Tim Blankenship, Dennis Hohenstein, Chester Williams, and Lynn Thacker.

Field Use

If using a 72 MHz radio system, all applicable pilots must use the frequency-pin system for field safety. If more than one person is at the field and sharing the same frequency, please limit flight time to 15 minutes.

All pilots must have their AMA membership card available upon request while flying. Members who have not received a Pilot Proficiency Certificate from the Valley R/C Flying Club may not fly solo until cleared to do so.

The Valley R/C Flying Club Safety Director may impose a five-dollar fine for flying over the pit area. The pilot-box grass barrier is designated as the approved flight-line border. All areas west of this point are considered a no-fly zone.

The Valley R/C Flying Club considers 90 dB at 3 meters to be the acceptable sound level.

Persons with a current AMA license who are accompanied by a voting club member may fly for up to three days at a club field without being a club member.

Maiden-Flight Preflight Inspection

Internal Inspection (Remove Wing if Attached)

- Are servo mounts, servos, and servo arms secure?
- Are pushrods secure?
- Are the receiver and battery padded and secure?
- Check for loose items that could interfere with servo or pushrod movement.
- Check for fuel leaks and confirm the tank area is fuel-proofed.

Wing

- Check for breaks and warps.
- Ensure the center section is adequately reinforced.
- Check aileron pushrods and aileron clevises before securing the wing to the aircraft.
- Brief new pilots on the adequacy of rubber bands, if applicable.
- After the wing is in place, check for proper incidence and alignment as well as practical.

Power Systems (all powered airframes)

- Confirm that the motor is securely mounted and that all mounting screws are tight.
- Check that the propeller, spinner, prop adapter, and retaining nut are secure. Inspect the propeller for nicks, cracks, imbalance, or other damage before flight.
- Verify that the motor rotates freely and that no wires, cowl parts, or loose objects can contact the motor or propeller.
- Check the steering mechanism.
- Check cowl security.
- Check the engine for obvious thrust misalignment.

Power Systems (Fuel)

- Confirm the firewall area is fuel proofed.
- Confirm fuel/oil ratios are correct for engine specifications.

Power Systems (Electric)

- Inspect the electronic speed control (ESC) to ensure it is securely mounted and has adequate cooling airflow.
- Confirm that all battery, ESC, and motor connectors are secure, properly insulated, and free of corrosion, looseness, or heat damage.
- Check the battery condition before flight. Do not use a battery that is swollen, damaged, excessively warm, physically punctured, or showing signs of connector or wire damage.
- Secure the flight battery so it cannot shift during takeoff, flight, aerobatics, or landing. Check straps, Velcro, battery trays, and hatches.
- Verify that the flight battery is adequately charged, appropriate for the aircraft, and within the recommended cell count, capacity, and discharge rating for the motor and ESC.

Tail Section

- Check the vertical fin, rudder, and rudder clevis for security.
- Check tail-wheel security.
- Check the horizontal stabilizer, elevator, and elevator clevis for security.

Balance

- Balance the aircraft with the fuel tank empty, both laterally and for center of gravity.
- Show new pilots the proper balance point and balance technique.
- Explain the danger of a tail-heavy aircraft.
- Correct tail-heavy conditions before flight.

Range Check and Engine Starting

- Ensure that radio batteries have been adequately charged.
- Range Check: For 72 MHz radios, use the impound area. When the frequency pin is available, attach it to the antenna and range-check the aircraft with the antenna collapsed. Explain the reason for this procedure to new pilots.
- Range Check: For 2.4 GHz radios, perform the range check in accordance with the radio manufacturer's instructions.
- Confirm that all flight and engine controls move in the proper direction.
- Check that flight control surfaces are properly trimmed.
- Fuel the aircraft.
- Start the engine and explain the proper procedures.
- Tune the engine away from the flight line and explain the reason for doing so.

Routine Preflight Inspection

Internal Inspection (Before Wing Installation)

- 26. Check that servo mounts, servos, and servo arms are secure.
- 27. Check that pushrods are secure.
- 28. Check that the receiver and battery are padded and secure.
- 29. Check for loose items that could interfere with servo or pushrod movement.
- 30. Check for fuel leaks and confirm the tank area is fuel-proofed.

Wing

- 31. Check the wing for breaks, cracks, and warps.
- 32. Check aileron pushrods and aileron clevises before securing the wing to the aircraft.
- 33. Check that the wing is securely attached to the fuselage, using adequate rubber bands or wing bolts.
- 34. After the wing is in place, check for proper incidence and alignment as well as practical.

Engine Area

- 35. Check engine mount, engine, muffler, prop nut, and/or spinner for security.
- 36. Check the propeller for nicks and cracks.
- 37. Check the nose-steering mechanism.
- 38. Check cowl security.

Tail Section

- 39. Check the vertical fin, rudder, and rudder clevis for security.
- 40. Check tail-wheel security.
- 41. Check the horizontal stabilizer, elevator, and elevator clevis for security.

Balance

- 42. If any changes have been made to the aircraft, check balance with the fuel tank empty, both laterally and for center of gravity.

Range Check and Engine Starting

- 43. Ensure that radio batteries have been adequately charged.
- 44. When the frequency pin is available, attach it to the antenna and range-check the aircraft with the antenna collapsed.
- 45. Confirm that all flight and engine controls move in the proper direction.
- 46. Check that flight control surfaces are properly trimmed.

Valley R/C Flying Club Membership Application

Persons seeking membership in the Valley R/C Flying Club are encouraged to complete this application in full. This information will be used to provide the club membership with relevant information when voting on your membership.

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
72 MHz Frequencies Used (if applicable)	
AMA Membership Number	
FAA Recreational Flyer Registration Number (if applicable)	
FAA Registration Expiration Date (if applicable)	
TRUST Completion Date	
Remote ID / FRIA Requirement Acknowledged	

AMA membership, applicable FAA registration, and TRUST completion are required before exercising flying privileges at the Valley R/C Flying Club.