

50th Anniversary Picnic Review

By Vicar Hernandez

The Aero Modelers of Perrine is officially fifty years old. On Sunday, July 12th, 2009 we gathered at our magnificent flying field to celebrate this momentous occasion with a day of flying, great food, and above all sharing the camaraderie of others that enjoy the aero-modeling passion.

We arrived at the field around 7:00 AM and were surprised to find the gates closed. Soon after, a few members started gathering and by 11:00 AM we had a field full of people. Although we have plenty of covered areas, many of our members brought their own pop-up tents and extended the pit shelters down to the east.

Flying is what brings us together and there was plenty of that. We saw everything from small park flyers to giant scale airplanes, tiny to fully detailed scale helicopters. Electric and gas powered aircraft, experienced to beginners pilots, everyone had a chance to fly. There were a few mishaps but we are used to it. We know they will eventually break and there is no way to prevent it, it is all part of the hobby.

Although food arrived at about 11:30 AM, we had to prep everything for service. Humberto Zambrano and Bob Cox took on the job of cutting the ribs and chicken while Mike Laughlin, my wife Diana and I prepared the other items. About 12:30 PM we started eating Reverend Gay's southern style ribs and chicken. I must admit that while the ribs were being cut I took the liberty to test them (many times) to make sure they were properly prepared and seasoned.

Through out the day we had a bounce-house available for the kids to play. They were also treated to cold snow-cones. I want to make a special recognition to JC Alvarez, one of our newest junior members, who quickly figured out how to operate the ice crushing device and started serving everyone. His shirt showed the signs of syrup...

I would like to mention the individuals that volunteered to help make this event a success. **Cliff Root** manned the drinks station, and gathered and disposed of the mountains of trash left behind. **Nick McCord** sat all morning at the parking entrance breathing dust and directing cars to the proper parking area. **Alex Chan** sold a bunch of t-shirts and raffle tickets. **Humberto Zambrano** demonstrated great dexterity with a knife, cutting stacks of ribs and chicken. **Diana Hernandez** helped serve lunch and clean the main shelter. **Mike Laughlin** expeditiously kept the serving trays full so the chow line could continue moving. **Mike Cipolato** made several runs to get ice and other last minute items. **Mrs. Cox** (Bob's mother) spent a lot of time cutting a cake that refused to be cut. **JC Alvarez, Jr.** quickly mastered the snow cone machine making kids and adults very happy with the cool treat. **Keith Joy** provided a generator to keep the bounce-house inflated.

I must also mention our president Bob Cox, who dedicated lots of hours to the planning and execution of this event. He was at the field first thing in the morning and was the last one to leave. He took care of purchasing the cakes, deliver drinks and ice and oversee everything. We saw him with water hose in hand cleaning the mess left behind in the main shelter.

There are a few other people that I would like to thank because their contributions, although not directly related to the 50th Anniversary picnic, have helped make our field what is today. Mike Ball gave the club the field entrance sign. Reinaldo Fernandez gave us the palm trees that adorn the parking area. Celso Pizano donated the Silver palms flanking the frequency board and the parking entrances. Viani Navarrete and his company ADiMATiONS contributed the frequency board and signs you see around the field. And last but not least, Juan Carlos "JC" Alvarez (Universal Concrete) who generously donated the pavers now under the shelters. JC also donated the sand and concrete used to complete the pavers installation and was seen expertly handling a shovel while the concrete was being poured. Thank you all that in one way or another have helped with the construction of the new facilities, the best in Florida, maybe the nation...

Of all the events I have been directly involved with, this is the one I am most proud of. It was not only a momentous occasion, our club is one of the oldest clubs in the nation, but it brought together members, families and friends to celebrate our hobby. Let's hope that the next generations can be as pleased as we all are and gather again in 50 years to commemorate the 100th anniversary.

See you at the flying field.