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# The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of DEBRA JUSTICE

Born July 21, 1953 Started modeling in 1977

AMA #3416



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Written & Submitted by DJ (01/2003); Transcribed & Edited y SS (01/2003), Updated by JS (08/2006), Reformatted by JS (09/2009)

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## **Career:**

- Flew regularly in local contests in the Chicago area; currently competes in Texas Regarded as the first woman to compete in every club she was in and win first place in the competition
- Competed Quickie 500 events in Illinois
- Founded the MAC Flying Club (also known as the Miniature Aircraft Competitors) #1279 in October 1982
- Served as secretary, treasurer, newsletter editor and instructor of the MAC Flying Club #1279
- Served as the treasurer and newsletter editor of the RSM Flying Club in Chicago
- Served as District VI associate vice president from 1990 to 1998
- Served as District VIII education coordinator from May 1998 to the present
- AMA contest director since February 1985; also an AMA leader member
- Served as the AMA's intro pilot instructor from the program's inception until 1999
- Directed sanctioned and non-sanctioned contests in Chicago and in Texas
- Co-directed a paper airplane contest at a local high school in Illinois from 1990 to 1995
- She and her husband flew the Radio Controlled blimp for the Chicago Wolves hockey team from October 1994 to October 1997

## **Professional Career:**

- Taught Physical, Driver and Health Education at the following high schools:
  - Fenton High School, Bensenville, Illinois, 20 years
  - West Leyden High School, Schillar Park, Illinois, 2 years
  - Roberto Clemente High School, Chicago, Illinois, 2 years

## **Honors:**

- 1985: Presented an award from the Aero Honor Society for Newsletter Editors
- 1986: Carl and Beth Goldberg Vital People Award
- 1994: AMA Superior Service Award
- 1998: AMA Superior Service Award
- 2003: AMA District Service Award
- 2006: AMA District VIII Dirty Dozen Award

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## **The Beginning**

Started flying: 1977

Where: Chicago, Illinois

Taught by: My husband, Scott Justice, AMA number 1029

First plane: Sig Kadet (built from a kit by me)

- Covering: Monokote
- Engine: Super Tigre .46
- Radio: World Engine four-channel, frequency 75.640

Flew with my husband and friends. (*Debra's husband, Scott, also has a biography on file with the AMA History Program.*) I started around late July 1977 and soloed December 31, 1979 at the Woodland Aeromodelers Field in Lemont, Illinois.

## **Competition**

Fun Flies and Combat: Flew regularly in local contests with the “MAC” Miniature Aircraft Competitors, Radio Signal Modelers (RSM) Model Club and Woodland AeroModelers (WAM) – all in the Chicagoland area. Currently (2003) competing in the local clubs here in Texas. In every club I competed in, I was the first woman to compete and even won first place in each of them – even here in Texas.

Quickie 500: Competed in Rockford, Illinois, at the Rockford Flying Club and Palos Radio Control (RC) Club in Palos Heights, Illinois.

Illinois State Fun Fly Championships: Peoria, Illinois, August 20-21, 1983 and one in Flossmoor, Illinois (SAC Field) around 1986 or 1987.

## **Leadership**

Founder: MAC Flying Club (also known as the Miniature Aircraft Competitors) #1279, October 7, 1982. It was in Chicago, Illinois. It was a club up until the later part of 1999.

Club Officer: MAC Flying Club #1279

- Secretary, 1982 to 1985, 1989 to 1993, 1995 to 1997
- Treasurer, 1982 to 1987, 1996 to 1997
- Newsletter editor, 1982 to 1997, except for 1987
- Instructor, 1982 to 1998

RSM Flying Club #1289

- Treasurer, 1980 to 1982
- Newsletter editor, 1979 to 1982

Woodland AeroModelers #279

- Honorary Member

## **AMA Officer**

District VI: Associate vice president for Vice President Jim Sears from June 1990 until 1998. Associate Vice President for Vice President Charlie Bauer from 1998 until I resigned in 1998 when I relocated to Texas. Total term was April 1990 to July 1998.

District VIII: Educational coordinator for Vice President Dr. Sandy Frank from May 1998 to the present.

AMA: RC experimental aircraft inspector since April 13, 1989, appointed by Bob Underwood. AMA contest director (CD) since February 12, 1985. Leader member, but not sure when appointed that. AMA intro pilot instructor from its inception until 1999.

## **Contest Leadership**

Sanctioned Events: Contest director of the “Turkey Fly” event for the MAC Club of Chicago from 1984 to 1996. Was the CD for numerous non-sanctioned Fun Flys and Combats for the local clubs in Chicago.

## **AMA Awards**

- Carl and Beth Goldberg Vital People Award in 1986. I believe this was the first year for the award.
- Superior Service award in 1985 from District VI Vice President Jim Sears and in 1999 from District VI Vice President Charlie Bauer.
- Award of appreciation in 1997 for assisted flight official at the AMA Homecoming.
- First national meeting for associate vice presidents in 1993 from Toledo, Ohio.
- District Service Award in 2003 and the Dirty Dozen Award in 2006 from District VIII Vice President Dr. Sandy Frank.

## **Publishing Experience**

Editor: RSM Flying Club from 1972 to 1982; the newsletter did not have a name. MAC Flying Club #1279 from 1983 to 1997, except 1979; the newsletter was called “Speed and Scale News.” Both clubs were in Chicago, Illinois.

Award: Aero Honor Society for Newsletter Editors, March 21, 1985, from Jim McNeill.

## **Educational Experience**

Builders’ Night: The MAC Flying Club #1279 in Chicago had a builders’ night twice a week during the winter months. The club would select a plane for the students to purchase. The project was to completely build this kit plane from start to finish. The plane selected was a Super Stick from Balsa USA (no longer available). This was a good beginner plane as well as fun to fly for the more advanced pilot. This worked out well. There were 14 planes built and flown. For the second project for those who had already built the Stick were the Warbird short kits from Balsa USA. Only four of these were ever built. The place we built in was a garage that belonged to a member. The projects worked out well and students loved seeing the planes they built fly.

Paper Airplane Contest: I also co-directed in a paper airplane competition called the “Great Paper Chase.” This was at the local high school where my wife taught called Fenton High School in Bensenville, Illinois. This was from 1990 to 1995. The students could only use a standard-sized sheet of paper (8.5 by 11 inches) and a small paperclip for balancing. They could fly as many official flights as they wanted. The plane that stayed airborne the longest won. Model Airplane News magazine donated magazines every year for this project. Everyone that entered received a magazine. Then the first place student received a model airplane kit donated by Wheeling Hobbies and free help building and flying it. Gift certificates donated by Al’s Hobbies in Elmhurst and Stanton Hobbies in Chicago went to the second and third place winners.

## **Professional Education**

Northeastern Illinois University, Bachelor of Arts Degree

## **Accomplishments**

I received my FCC Amateur Radio License, "N9FPA," with general operator privileges, in 1978. Scott received his license, "WD9DPR," in 1976. The Chicago Wolves hockey team came out to the flying site in Schillar Park, Illinois, one day to watch people fly. They asked my husband and me to come to the arena one night because they were auditioning people to fly the new Radio Controlled (RC) blimp during halftime. This was the first year this was a team. We were hired and started flying opening night from October 14, 1994 until the beginning of the year in October 1997. We nicknamed the blimp “Wolfie.”

*(signed) Debra Justice  
January 2003*



*Deb and Scott, photo taken by AMA District VIII Vice President Sandy Frank. This photo was used on the District VIII website to show Deb and Scott as Education Coordinators.*



*1986: Deb and Scott receive their Carl and Beth Goldberg Vital People Award from MAC Club Secretary Lee Onopa.*



*1994: Deb and Scott with their AMA Superior Service Award from Vice President Jim Sears.*



*1999: Deb and Scott with their AMA Superior Service Awards from Vice President Charlie Bauer. This is a digital photograph taken by Sandy Frank.*



*While Associate Vice Presidents for District VI, Deb and Scott were responsible for the AMA booth at the Pot of Gold show in South Bend, Indiana.*



*Deb and Scott competing in a Fun Fly for the MAC Flying Club, AMA # 1279*



*Deb and Scott at their annual Christmas banquet*



*Scott flying the blimp for the Chicago Wolves hockey team*



*Deb flying the blimp for the Chicago Wolves*



*1994: Deb with the traveling trophy she won in Expert Class from the MAC Club, AMA # 1279*



*1997: Scott instructing at the annual AMA Hobby Exposition.*





*1997: Deb instructing at the annual  
Hobby Exposition.*



*Deb and Scott's Gremlins (Radio  
Control Combat airplanes.)*



*Trophies Deb and Scott won over the years.*



*Plaques the couple won from flying at Fun Flys and in Radio Control Combat events. Notice there is two of everything; both Deb and Scott compete.*



*Above are the AMA Awards Deb and Scott received so far, including two Superior Service Awards, the Carl and Beth Goldberg Award and the AMA Newsletter Award.*



*2003: Debra Justice with her AMA District Service Award from District VIII Vice President Dr. Sandy Frank.*



*2006: Debra Justice with her AMA District VIII Dirty Dozen Award from District VIII Vice President Dr. Sandy Frank.*

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