



# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of FRANK GARZON Modeler, Control Line Speed Flyer, Record Holder, President of N.A.S.S.



June 9, 1934 - June 12, 2010 Started modeling in 1947  
AMA #8831

Written & Submitted by FG (02/1997); Also written by AMA staff (12/2011); Transcribed by NR (03/1997); Edited by SS (2002); Reformatted by JS (08/2009); Updated by JS (01/2012)

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## Career:

- President of the North American Speed Society
  - AMA Contest Director
  - Frank holds the AMA Open D mark at 212.43 MPH
  - He turned the highest D speed time ever in 1985 at 215.48.
  - Garzon has flown in and competed in almost all classes of speed jobs in classes 1/2A, A, B, D, B-PROTO, JET & FORMULA-40
  - 2011: Inducted into the AMA Hall of Fame
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*The following is a reproduction of the biography that was published in the 1990 newsletter, N.A.S.S. Speed Times.*

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## Frank Garzon

Long Island, New York

**Occupation:** Technical Trainer

**Employed by:** City of New York

**Years Modeling:** Since 1940

**First Model:** Unknown (Age 6)

**First Speed Job:** *Hell Razor*, 1949

**Favorite Speed Model:** *Big Blue* (Orig. D)

This month we are spotlighting our NASS Vice President (circa 1990 - now President). Frank of course has long been the number one driving force behind speed flying in the East Coast since the mid-1960s, having originally started serious contest speed flying back in 1957.



*Frank Garzon*

Frank was actually born in Fort Worth, Texas but grew up around the New York area attending New York Aviation in high school and then on to the USAF technical school for aviation electrician studies in 1953.

Frank worked for 14 years at SMS Instrument Co. where he was supervisor for the electrical shop. He has been with his present employer, The City of New York, for the past 20 years where he trains mechanics in Hydraulics, Electrical and Computer work.

Frank is married to Fran and has one son Frank Jr. Fran helps out speed flying at the Nats (Nationals) and other meets with tabulation and Championship points accounting. Frank Jr. likes speed flying, too, and competes in 21 Sport and other events.

Garzon has flown in and competed in almost all classes of speed through the years having built over 30 speed jobs in classes 1/2A, A, B, D, B-PROTO, JET & FORMULA-40

His first Nats top three finish occurred in 1966 at Chicago where he turned a strong 180.03 MPH in B speed for second just behind the team of Stegens/Dodge. In 1970, Frank started his long string of wins and high placings in the big block events of Class C (now D speed) .65s for which he is best known. He took third in 1970, 1st in 1971, 3rd in 1972, 2nd in 1973, 1st in 1976, 1980 & 1982. He took second in 1984 and then four 1sts in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989 followed by a 3rd in 1990. That's a lot of big block winning and experience and Frank, of course, holds the AMA Open D mark at 212.43 MPH and turned the highest D speed time ever in 1985 at 215.48.

He has also done well in F-40 with many Nats trophies and of late has been running strong in the 21 Sport event. Over the years Frank has held or co-held the National open 1/2A SPEED, B-PROTO, FORMULA-40, D SPEED and 21 SPORT SPEED records. At the Nats and other meets Frank is much sought after as the needle man for the howling 65s – many a guy has won a Nats because Garzon set the needle not to mention the technology developed by him and passed on to the rest of the troops.

In 1984 during the formation of the NASS Franks name was tossed up for a strong candidate as vice president, he got the nod and has held that post since then.

Frank and Fran's help at the Nats has been invaluable to the NASS regarding the speed grand championship operation and tabulation of results for the newsletter. Frank regards his favorite people as the speed fliers from all over the world. We are sure most speed fliers feel the same about Frank.

Garzon from New York

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*The below information comes from Garzon's work-related resume.*

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**LIFE EXPERIENCE:**

**Hobby:**

I race model airplanes in competition. I am the current national record holder in Class D speed with a speed of 212.43 MPH. My most recent achievement was winning the National Championships with a speed of 207 MPH. The National Championships were held in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the first week of August 1986.

I own a lathe and milling machine. I machine my own pistons and cylinders; most of my spare

time is spent on my hobby.

*(signed) Frank A. Garzon*



*Frank Garzon (far left) with friends*

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*The following was printed in the January 2012 issue of Model Aviation by AMA staff. Frank was inducted into the AMA Hall of Fame in 2011.*

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## **Frank Garzon**

Frank was born in Fort Worth, Texas, but grew up in the New York area attending New York Aviation in high school and then on to the USAF technical school for aviation electrician studies in 1953.

Frank worked for 14 years at SMS Instrument Co., where he was supervisor for the electrical shop. He was employed by the City of New York for roughly 20 years where he trained mechanics in hydraulics, electrical, and computer work.

Frank has more Speed records and has won more contests than one can imagine. He has been a contestant in national championships each year he could attend for roughly three decades. If nobody wanted to go with Frank, he went by himself and most of the time drove all night. His wife, Fran, often went with him and volunteered at the registration tables at the Nats.

His first Nats top-three finish occurred in 1966 at Chicago where he turned a strong 180.03 mph in B Speed for second place. In 1970, Frank started a long string of wins and high placings in the big block events of Class C (now D Speed) .65s for which he is best known.

Frank has done well in Formula 40 with many Nats trophies and, of late, has been running strong in the .21 Sport event. Throughout the years, Frank has held or co-held the National Open 1/2A Speed, B-Proto, Formula 40, D Speed, and .21 Sport Speed records. At the Nats and other meets, Frank is much sought after as the needle man for the howling .65s. Many have won a Nats because Garzon set the needle, not to mention the technology developed by him and passed on to

the rest of the troops.

In 1984, during the formation of the North American Speed Society (NASS), Franks' name was tossed up for a strong candidate as vice president. Frank was named as such and held the position for many years. He also served as NASS president.

Frank and Fran's help at the Nats has been invaluable to the NASS regarding the Speed grand championship operation and tabulation of results for the newsletter. Frank regards his favorite people as the Speed fliers from all around the world.

Frank was a dedicated builder and flier. He would make his own pistons and sleeves on his lathe and sometimes the piston would melt after one run. He got a nickname as the "Needle Man" because of how he could hear if the engine was running at its peak.

Frank's Hall of Fame sponsor, Ray Juschkus, wrote:

"Frank's willingness to step forward and serve places him in a very small group of people who donate their spare time to enrich this hobby for the rest of us."

Frank passed away last year and will be missed by many.

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