The THUMB PRINT

Thermal Thumbers Of Metro Atlanta

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AMA Charter # 1834

FLYING ACES club

SAM

NFFS

Jan.-Feb., 2025

HEADS UP

Welcome to the first issue of the year, and we're off to a roaring start in 2025. We can congratulate ourselves for our good work in 2024. That said, let's not rest on our laurels and face our challenges and do even better in 2025. We can always use more members and build and fly more model airplanes. For sure, we'll continue to rock steady Under the Cathedral of the Big Blue Sky at NG Turf. We'll continue to paste together an active indoor schedule Behind Closed Doors at our three indoor venues. We should increase our participation in Free Flight's major regional and contests, and the membership should especially rally for the Muncie Outdoor Nats and Johnson City Indoor Nats. So, my fellow Thumbs, get back to your workshop, glue some sticks together, show up somewhere with a model airplane and fly with us.

It's time for me to get out of the way. Ciao, y'all!

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO, PEOPLE TO SEE

You'll find the year's first calendar listing below, and it's long and full of portend. You can't say TTOMA doesn't provide plenty of things to do on the weekends. So, mark your calendars and show up somewhere with a model airplane and fly with us. Kudos go to Dohrman Crawford for the shoe leather and elbow grease. Time is short, and youth is fleeting—get busy! Note CDs are needed!

Feb. 28-March 1: GAMA Southeast Model Show, Georgia State Fairgrounds, Perry, GA
March 15: AtlantaCon, Atlanta IPMS Contest and Trade Show, 1032 S. Marietta Pkwy, Marietta, GA
March 30: Irish Open, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Jim Conery
April 5-7: Jim Richmond Open (World Cup). West Baden, IN
April 27: April Fools, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Dohrman Crawford
May 18: May Daze, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. **CD needed**.
May 17-18: Midwest States Indoor Champs. Kent State University, Kent, OH
May 24-26: AMA USIC Indoor Nats. East Tennessee State University. Johnson City, TN
June 21-22: Chattahoochee Challenge, two-day outdoor contest. NG Turf field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Jim Altenbern **and another co-CD needed**
June 30-July 1: Tagliofico Open/USIC (World Cup). Kibbie Dome, Moscow, ID
July13: Country Fried, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-David Mills
July 21-25: AMA USOC outdoor Nats. Muncie Nats, IN
Aug. 17: Fizzle While You Sizzle, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Jim Conery
Sept. 14: Summer's Swan Song, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Doug DeMasie
Oct. 19: Last Fling Until Spring, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field. Whitesburg, GA. CD-David Barfield
Nov. 2: Turkey Shoot, outdoor contest. NG Turf Field. Whitesburg, GA. **CD undecided**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NAG

Yes, friends, it's nagging time now. You had your chances with prior, mere announcements, but some opted for forego their spiritual obligations. Now is a time of reckoning to renew your memberships to our merry band. Harsher words from this writer will beckon in coming issues, and he shall not relent. There'll be no more rainbows and unicorns, and any forthcoming steam of consciousness cannot remain in the holster much longer. So, avoid this future flak and stroke that check, made to the amount shown, signed on the line that is dotted, and mailed to the address so indicated. James "Diamond Jim" Martin is awaiting your moral surrendser. You know who you are. Eyes on you! The membership form follows.

THUMBS ON THE MARCH

The Finn family and David Barfield made the trip to the last King Orange International down Florida way. This just in from Josh Finn: "Team J&H flew the 70th and final King Orange in January. It was a whirlwind, for Hope and I returned from a Science Olympiad meet in Hawaii the morning before for the contest started. We retrieved Paul and Caleb from their Nanna and Papa, zipped south and overnighted in Palatka. We arrived at the field mid-morning on the first day and put in a full day of flying.

"Weather was cold and windy all three days, a frustrating situation on a field with heavy encroachment from multiple invasive vegetation species. Nonetheless, we flew a lot, as did many other great fliers from Florida and elsewhere. Gas models filled the sky all three days, harkening to the days of yesteryear when the KOI was a premier event for all the top fliers.

"Paul and Caleb flew five rounds of F1P and managed to avoid any crashes in the strong winds. Jama Damier was the lone F1A flier and put on a spectacular show for us all. Paul and I filled out the lower placings in AMA and NosGas against the pros, but we learned a bit and didn't break too many airplanes. And most importantly, we had a ton of fun.

"Hope flew her AMA rubber events and did great other than getting bested in P-30 by young Caleb, who also grabbed a Kanone in Scat Jet. Paul pulled out his Blue Ridge Special at the end of the day, and put up three perfect flights to beat out the pros and notched himself a Kanone.

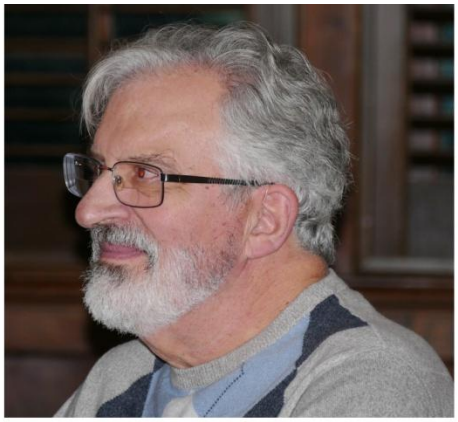
"My biggest joy for the whole time was watching my kids rocking at AMA and FAI Power. The future of Free Flight remains bright. Kids love fast power models, gliders, etc. We just have to show them the way." (Boys, toys and noise!—DM)

THUMBS HAVING AN ANNUAL PARTY

Well, we held another winner, such was the consensus, and this writer can't argue. Many thanks go to Dohrman Crawford for the arrangements. Attendance was a little down from last year, but not by much. The Lost Corners Preserve venue remains both charming and ridiculously cheap. The catering by City BBQ didn't disappoint, as always. (That chocolate cake is downright decadent.) The raffle giveaway was a hoot, and all of us left with more that we brought, always a good outcome.

The awards ceremony offered a few surprises, if you weren't paying attention during this year's contest trail. The George Perryman Perpetual High Point Award was carried off by young Caleb Finn by a good margin. An even younger Paul Finn made off the second place. An adult made his first appearance with James Martin taking third. Josh Finn and your editor tied for fourth. Doug DeMasie carried off sixth place, and the scores fell sharply after him. A total of twenty fliers made official flights last year in our high point tourney, quite impressive, and upwards of a dozen more flew with us for the pure joy of Freedom on the Wing. Gary Morton was justly bestowed the Norm Purdy Service Award. Caleb Finn reprised his walk to the podium with winning the Bob Baker Old Timer Award. James Martin won a hard fought, narrow victory for the Wayne Brock Scale Award. There was a tie for the SCat Jet Trophy and was shared by Jim Conery and Dohrman Crawford—"never has a category promised so little and never failed to disappoint".

We're in the beginning of a New Year, and Fame and Glory beckons. So, get back to you workbench, glue some sticks together and show up somewhere with a model airplane. The game's afoot!













Photos and collage by David Barfield

THUMBS IN THE NFFS NATIONAL CUP

Every year the National Free Flight Society runs an exhaustive, national postal contest whereby contest results in many categories are recorded across the country and tabulated, and rankings are announced at year's end by our OFB Bob Hanford. These are hard fought efforts, and the accolades are justly awarded. We're proud to boast here that several Thumbs figure into the results this year.

Concentrating on the top five placings, here we go: Josh Finn won National Cup Grand champion and scored firsts in Small NosGas and Glider, plus a third in Classic Gas. Hope Finn scored a first in AMA Rubber. Young Caleb Finn won Youth Champion, and Paul Finn followed in third. Frank Perkins and your trusty editor are listed in a couple of lower rankings, making an effort but short of any acclaim. We'll try harder next year. The game's afoot.

What, you say you haven't heard of the NFFS National Cup? Could it be you're not a NFFS member? Well, shame on you, pilgrim! The membership form follows, and you know who you are. Some navel gazing on any such poor soul's errant ways should be forthcoming. Eyes on you!

THUMBS VISITING

Every so often but not frequently enough, David Barfield and your editor pay a visit to our OFB Bill Brown. Such was the case recently, and it was a real treat. Bill is doing fine and boasting a full 95 years on this good earth—not too shabby. He has a few "getting around" issues, but beyond those usual inconveniences, he's doing great. We caught up on mutual news and views and enjoyed several hours of each other's company. I'd call it a great visit.

Bill took the opportunity to clear out a few modeling items with a pledge from us that we'd find good homes for everything. No problem! The dozen or so kits, the several boxes of rubber and a few tools await new masters, so stay tuned for announcements on the behest of these goodies.

The trip back from the more pastoral parts of the Athens area back to Atlanta was without much mishap, avoiding the rush hour traffic there and back. However, the Google Sky Wizard did us no favors leaving Bill's place. There was a lot more "artificial" than needed and not nearly enough "intelligence" in that AI, mister. Eyes on you, Oligarchs!



THUMBS MAKING PLANS

We tried a special event last year, that being Guillow Scale, flown under Simplified Scale rules. . We had good participation and much fun. Several models were built and flown, and a few kanones earned. We all suspect we'll continue to fly it in 2025.

Why not try something new and exciting in 2025? I can't think of a reason why not, so here we go: let me introduce the "Big Rig Bugaloo". What's that you say? Well, a good handful of us already have newly built and somewhat trimmed Large Rubber Cabin jobs of the SAM Old Timer persuasion, like the *Super Snooper*, *Korda Wakefield* and the mighty *Ying*. I say we fly this class in a somewhat "organized" manner this year for Fame and Glory. Yes, our flying field might be challenged sometimes by the brute power of these beasts, but fear not for we know when Discretion is the better part of Valor. And yes, we'll need a few stalwart members to build a few additional models. Plans and kits abound, many of which have hiding places in your man caves.

None of the previously mentioned behemoths strike your fancy? Well, other choices abound. You might want to check out the *Heeb Blunder Bus*, *Earl Stahl Gypsy, Burd Korda* and the monster cabin job of them all, the big *Lanzo Cabin*, all 300 squinches of it, and it's not for the faint-hearted.

I say liberate the long forgotten and the ashamedly untried; make a serious dent in your balsa supply; glue some big sticks together; get on the road to NG Turf; and come fight gravity with the rest

of us. What say y'all? Oh, and check your rubber supply. These brutes work well north of high-20 strands by the meter, or the yard in Freedom Units.

THUMBS IN ERROR

Imagine this writer's surprised when informed by David Barfield that his *Flying Aces Moth*, labeled by me as such in the last ETP was actually an Easy Built *Junior Commercial*. Persons of a thinner skin might be outraged on this slip of journalistic integrity, but the guilty party currently pecking at this keyboard will settle for simple embarrassment and for good reasons. Reposed in only modest regret, I'll volunteer for a pay cut. I will, however, offer this lame excuse: don't all those cutesy-poo, small cabin jobs look an awful lot alike? Yep, that'll do.

Was it not ever thus? And frankly, given the current state of journalism in this country, widely evidenced by the laziness, inaccuracies, falsehoods, abject bias and all of it, this writer will get over it quickly. Don't get me started, another tirade for another day.

A GATHERING OF THE TRIBES

Every year GAMA holds the world's largest model aviation swap meet at the Georgia State fairgrounds. (Eat my grits, Hershey, PA!) The Southeast Model Show in Perry is an easy drive and right off I-75. This year's rendition is on Friday, February 28 and Saturday, March 1, and you won't be disappointed. How large is it? Well, over 1000 tables are leased and stacked with models, engines, kits, books, tools, you name it. It draws a huge crowd, and usually several Thumbs attend. FYI, Friday is the busiest day and recommended for the best deals and selection. Also, most vendors start bailing out around noon, Saturday, probably the main reason everybody prefers Friday.

The vast majority of the goodies are RC-oriented, yes, but Free Flight nuggets are abundant enough to make the effort. Also, the AMA has a big booth and presence there, so feel free to praise or harangue the big shots to your heart's content. Most of the Thumbs set up base camp at Josh and Hope's tables, so rest and relax there and maybe help them sell something. Be there or be square!

SAME CHURCH, DIFFERENT PEW

The Atlanta metro area is a national center of model building, writ large. This activity includes the many varieties of plastic modeling, model rocketry, model railroading, as well as model aviation in the form of RC, CL and Free Flight. One of the best events of the year is the Atlanta IPMS chapter's AtlantaCon, a very well attended contest, trade show and swap meet. Hundreds attend, and there's plenty to see with lots of eye candy, and the hundreds of models on display are amazing. The trade show and swap meet offers a huge amount of model kits, tools and accessories to marvel at and maybe take home. The prices are pretty reasonable with the kits and most everything else selling for much less below retail. Last year's admission for adults was five dollars, American, and kids got in free. There's a pretty juicy raffle if you feel like taking a few chances, and a lot of high end merchandise could be yours. You can't beat the price for all that entertainment. Last year about five Thumbs showed and had a good time. You can, too.

THE RULES, THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

The latest issue of the *Flying Aces News* arrived the other day, and it opened with a discussion by our Commander-in-Chief of some recent, major rules changes, which are to be available soon for download in the new rulebook. You're encouraged to study it so you can stay on the straight and narrow. At first blush the ones discussed seem reasonable. Be advised and buckle up for this writer is about to hold forth on this or that legislative item within that blurb.

The futuristic visage of the radio DT was under a spirited review, and was approved by a narrow margin. It'll be allowed **provisionally**. No one can doubt its usefulness in the preservation of our airborne treasures; however, many are wary of its use, possibly betraying the FAC spirit of doing things. An important point was made that its use would be more vital in smaller flying fields where verdant dangers await at the nearest tree line, while the more expansive west offers a lot more wandering room—a reasonable pair of conclusions. Its provisional status would allow us to muck

about with it and in time gauge its propriety. Stay tuned for some gnashing of teeth and poisoning of wells. Play nice, y'all!

The end cap date for FAC Old Time Rubber Fuselage and Stick was extended to December 31, 1950. Finally! It's a wise move which matches the end cap dates of SAM and the onset of NFFS Nostalgia era jurisdictions. Now these brackets coincide across tribes. The resulting 1944-to-1950 interval opens up a lot of good models for our use, some of them British and enticing. The Keil Kraft *Ajax* and *Senator* come to mind, and much of their hallowed Lightweights can get in the mix. More models, more fun, why not?

However, it's worth noting that the Brits and others followed the FAI rules for Fuselage and Stick models during this interval, and it differs from what the AMA was doing. So, some scholarship may be advised, but don't get too lawyerly. We're supposed to be having fun.

A broad discussion took place on the liberties a surly few take in the provision of blast tubes that distort the original design intentions of the original designers. We're talking big, fat nose jobs. It's not much of an issue with scale models, but rather it is for those of the non-scale duration stripe where thicker and longer motors are especially useful—you can't have too much "up ". Well, reasonable people do reasonable things. But, that genie is out of the bottle, but where there's smoke, there'll be a genie out running amok. A not-very-subtle warning was issued by the C-in-C. **Abusers beware!**

Let me offer this bit of advice: if your model has a restrictively narrow maw, try winding the motor **outside** the model. The entire indoor community and rubber FAI guys do this all the time, and those techniques are widely accessible off the interwebs. And if all your tubing is sized cleverly, you're coincidentally installing a wobbly peg on the march. I see no reason why this technique can't be applied to FAC models. That road ahead is well paved. Arrive alive.

We await the publication of the new rulebook. We'll see what drama further awaits. Will there be angels or devils therein? Time will tell . . . .

THE FINAL HIGH POINT RECKONING

The club's final high point totals follow for your information and illumination. This is the vigor you'll face in 2025 under the Cathedral of the Big Blue Sky and Behind Closed Doors, so gird your loins, lads and lassies. The game's afoot.

Caleb Finn 72	Dohrman Crawford 29	Jimmy Jordan 9
Paul Finn 62	Gary Morton 18	Stephen Griggs 9
James Martin 60	Hope Finn 16	Joe Ryan 7
Josh Finn 45	Frank Perkins 14	Richard Schneider 4
David Mills 45	David Barfield 13	Nick Ray 3
Doug DeMasie 42	Jim Altenbern 13	
Jim Conery 32	David Fletcher 10	

NEXT ISSUE

Look for something in April. We should have a couple of outdoor contest reports and maybe some good word on some indoor dates. There's an outside chance we'll have our Chattahoochee Challenge FAC contest flyer therein. As always, I beseech the multitudes to forward anything you have in the way of articles, photos, plans, rants or raves to these humble offices. Don't make me work too hard! Ciao, y'all.

JANUARY INDOOR CONTEST REPORT

Great Hall, St Lukes Presbyterian, Dunwoody, GA

We kicked off the New Year with an indoor contest St. Lukes, but the event was not without its challenges. It took us almost an hour to gain access to the church and HVAC system ran continuously throughout the day. Never the less, we had 5 members in attendance, plus 3 SciOly

fliers. Several complete models from the Bob Watson estate were handed out, and those very well made models found new and appreciating homes! Dohrman put some good air under his bestowed, double-decker Pennyplane! CD Nick Ray, reporting.

No-Cal Profile Scale
James Conery Lacey M-10 1:43
Doug DeMasie Chambermaid 1:35

Hanger Rat
Doug DeMasie 2:57
Dohrm Crawford 2:04

Sport Flyer
Doug DeMasie Avenger 2:50



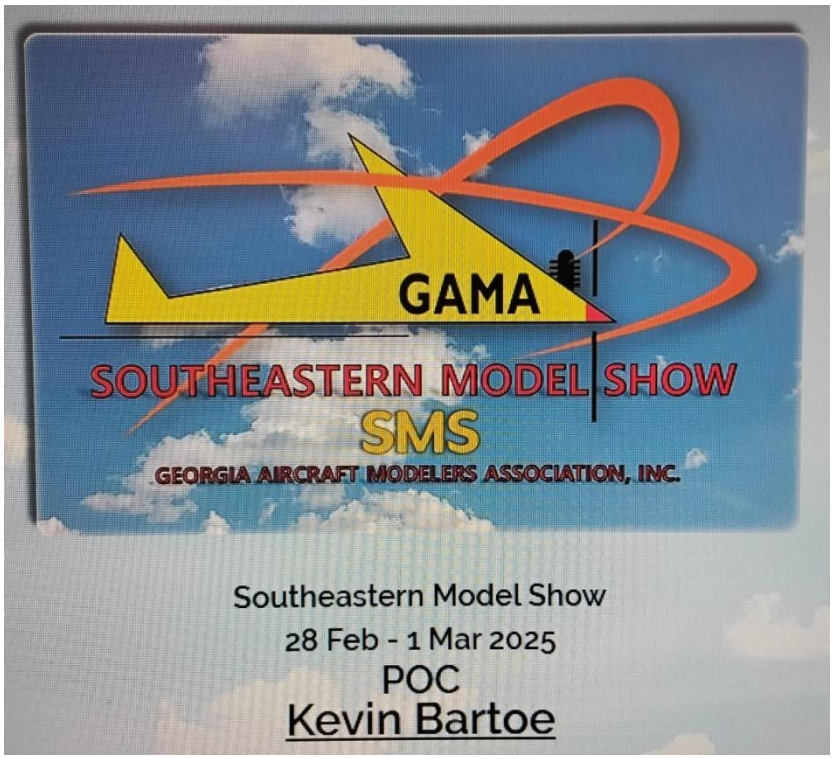





My Heart Goes Soaring

by Charles Rushing

When did I know that flying free flight models uplifted me so?
When first I soared, when was it, how long ago?
When did I first succeed?
which model lit the spark burning in me still?
I can't recall, I only know flying free always will.
What was the challenge?
Was it design or the how?
I do know that flying free then, is the same now.
Was it the building, the balsa, the shapes?
My mother said,".....it's the Ambroid, the mess!"
No mother, that is love-hate.
Maybe it was the gathering, the contests, the crew.
But flying is so self-contained, so solitary; the model, you.
It is the flying.
When I go alone, sometimes, the wind is low,
Stillness all around. That is when my heart goes soaring,
it is me, and my model, you know?



Mark your calendar for . . .



AtlantaCon 2025

Scale Model Show & Contest

March 15, 2025, 9am-4:30pm

IAM Local 709 Union Hall

1032 S. Marietta Parkway, Marietta, GA 30060

Web: www.ipms-atlanta.org

Facebook: AtlantaCon IPMS Model Show

Vendor Contact: dlock3155@gmail.com

General Information: ipms.atlantacon@gmail.com

IPMS Atlanta

IPMS Marietta Scale Modelers



NFFS MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL APPLICATION

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☐ 1 year $40 ($14 Youth*)

☐ 2 years $76 ($24 Youth*)

☐ 5 years $185
(Not available for youth memberships)

☐ Life Membership $650

*Youth: Age 18 & under as of July 1 of the current year. Birthdate required.

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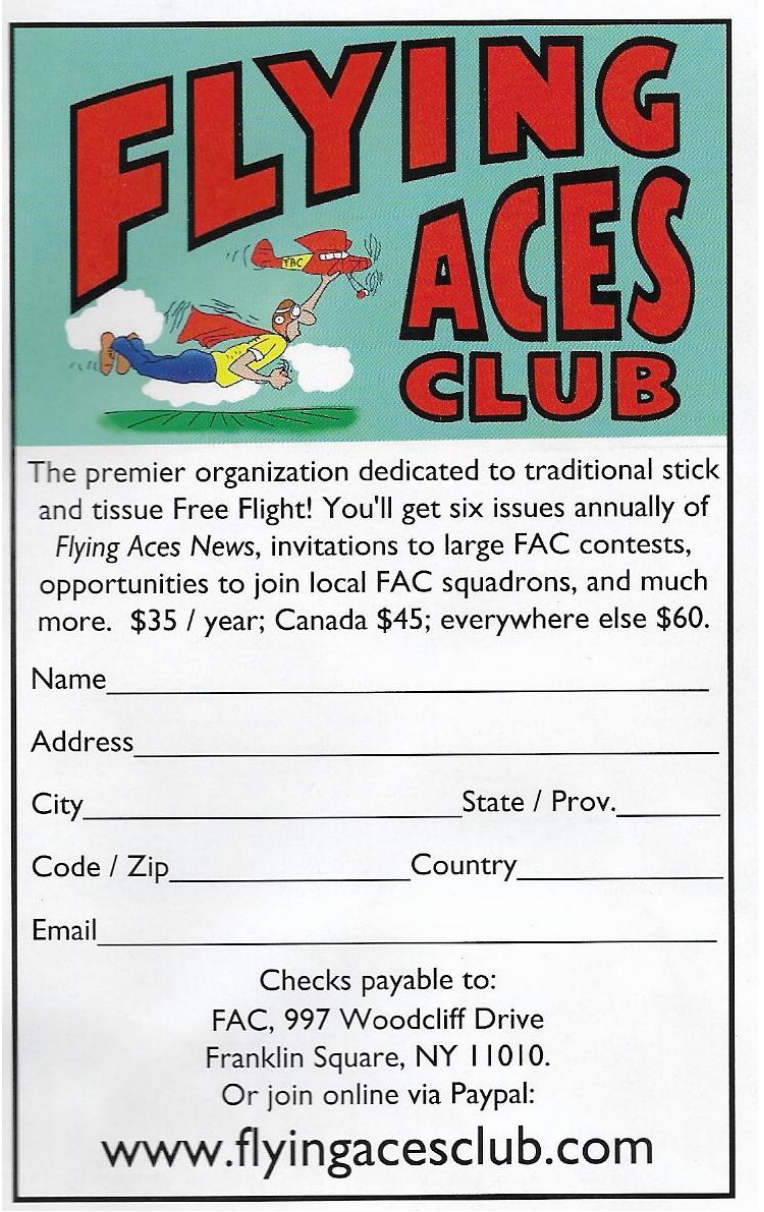
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Other Family Members and AMA #_____

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$20.00/year for each adult in family, no charge for all 18 years or under. Send check payable to TTOMA to James “Diamond Jim” Martin/3901 Bays Ferry Trail/Marietta, GA 30062/ jhnmartin1963 @gmail.com /404-632-7226