

## DECEMBER 2014

PO Box 3561 El Paso, TX 79923-3561 www.kint98.com

## D R O N E S GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS.

in Communiqué

Dec 1, 2014 by Lou Frenzel

What is your take on the booming drone movement? Is it positive or negative? Like most technological developments, drones have their upside and downsides. Growth of the drone business has been spectacular the past few years and it is now so influential that the government is ready to act to regulate it. The decreasing prices have let business adopt

them and are producing a whole new class of consumer hobbyists. This has led to some misbehavior that could produce some unexpected disasters. I'm not a big fan of government regulation, but this seems to be one area that needs some oversight.

The good news about drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), is that they have had a very positive impact. Military drones have been highly effective in surveillance activities saving lives and protecting property. And military drones are the ultimate way to attack the bad guys cheaply and safely. Drones are also doing a great job of patrolling the U.S. borders. Police departments use drones to hunt for lost persons and to improve crime prevention and fighting. Commercial uses of drones have also been effective in farm crop and environmental monitoring, weather-related observation and mining surveying. Movie companies and commercial photographers are using drones to get spectacular aerial videos and photos to aid their businesses. The iconic drone is a quadcopter with a video camera. Even video camera maker GoPro will offer its own version in the near future.

The bad news is that some individuals are misusing the technology. So what else is new? With the cost of a quadcopter drone with video camera now priced below \$1000, even individuals have taken up the drone "sport" just like radio controlled model airplanes have been a sport for decades. This is not bad in itself, but it has lead to some unsafe and unsavory practices by a few reckless individuals. Spying on neighbors or competitors is one questionable use. Hunters are using drones to stalk animals.

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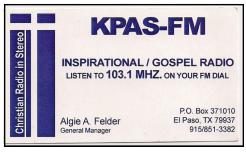
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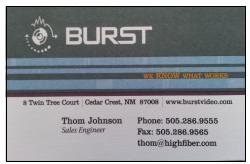
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**NEWS CONTINUES IN PAGE 2** 











More worrisome is drone usage near airports. Already commercial pilots and tower controllers are reporting a significant increase in sightings and near misses. While a typical quadcopter is no competition for an airliner, it could have disastrous outcomes if it is sucked into a jet engine or otherwise causes pilot over reaction. Since plastic quadcopers do not show up on radar, this is a problem. No wonder the government wants to regulate this.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has already declared that commercial use of drones unlawful. This is very restrictive as there are many beneficial applications of drones that deserve a chance. The FAA has also indicated that recreational use of drones is OK except that users must stay at least five miles away from an airport or report flights to the airport and keep the drone flying below 400 feet and within sight. That seems reasonable to me but not to some who have obviously violated these guidelines.

The FAA is in the process of developing some formal rules and regulations that we won't see for a while. These new policies are expected to require drone operators to have a license to fly. This seems like a good idea given how tricky a quadcopter is to fly safely. It is a learnable skill but still like flying a plane. While formal rules won't stop unlawful use of drones, it may curtail it. Let's encourage the FAA to speed up its efforts to define what we can and cannot do with drones. And let's hope it is fair and reasonable So that the commercial uses of drones can prosper.

## SBE CHAPTER 38 OFFICERS

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Web Site Committee: Norbert Miles

<u>Sustaining Membership</u>: Antonio Castro <u>Program Chairman</u>: Warren Reeves

Newsletter: Antonio Castro

EAS Chairman: David Halpering

Executive Committee: Antonio Castro Carlos Sosa Walter Hanthorn



EL PASO, TX CHAPTER 38 MEETING MINUTE DATE 11/11/2014 LOCATION: COMO'S ITALIAN REST..

*MEETING CALLED TO ORDER*: 12:32 PM, BY ANTONIO CASTRO, THERE WERE 8 MEMBERS

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**: MINUTES ACCEPTED BY DAVID HALPERIN, 2nd BY CARLOS SOSA.

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER**: CURRENT BALANCE OF \$ 5,535.66 ACCEPTED BY NORBERT MILES, 2nd BY ELIAS VENTANILLA.

**REPORT OF THE CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE:** NO REPORT

**REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: NO REPORT.** 

**REPORT OF THE FREQUENCY COORDINATOR COMMITTEE:** NO RE-PORT.

**REPORT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: NO REPORT.** 

**REPORT OF THE WEBSITE COMMITTEE:** 1768 HITS LAST REPORT, NOW 1788 (20 MORE FROM LAST MONTH).

**REPORT OF THE EAS CHAIRMAN:** BOTH MONTHY, TX AND NM TESTS WERE RECEIVED AND RELAYED

**REPORT OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE:** FOR DECEMBER, GBS AND RF SPECIALTIES OF TEXAS WILL HOST THE HOLIDAY PARTY

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** DAVID HARPERING REPORTED THAT THE INTERFERENCE TO FAA FROM XEPM SOUND CARRIER CEASED. WILL RE-CHECK IN ONE MONTH. STILL PENDING TO RESOLVE

*NEW BUSINESS OR ANY ITEMS FOR THE CHAPTER INTERES:* NONE

*NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION*: DECEMBER 8, 2014, DIN-NER AT THE OLIVE GARDEN, 7 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: AT 13:23 PM.

## Note from the Chairman:

WRITE IN YOUR CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 8, 2014. IT WON'T BE OUR REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING, BECAUSE THIS IS THE TIME TO CELEBRATE THE HOLYDAYS WITH OUR FRIENDS HOSTING THE EVENT: DAN SESSLER AND DAN GEISLER AND SPONSORED BY NAUTEL, ORBAN AND ANYWAY COMMUNICATION. PARTY WILL BE AT THE OLIVE GARDEN RESTAURANT, SUNLAND PARK AT 7 PM

