

## Response to Mr. Bowen's letter from Camille Page:

### I am dismayed.

There is no reason to denigrate fellow club members. Mr. Bowen's rebuttal assailing Mr. Holland's letter was brash, inaccurate, and inconsiderate. At school we call that type of behavior "bullying." This causes me great disappointment.

Our last club meeting was on August 17 and included the vote to CONSIDER a fabric runway. Mr. Holland voted to consider the idea but made it perfectly clear he was not voting FOR a fabric runway at that time. Dave was being open-minded to researching a geotextile runway. Most of the club members present voted to consider more information. There were four people who voted against even looking into the concept.

A day or two later at the TCRCM field, I heard profanity directed at my husband and I regarding a geotextile runway. Only one person has sincerely apologized for hateful things said to us. Truth be told, there were several pilots with the fabric runway idea. I will not mention names for fear of retaliation. Other fellow club members have confided they would like to see the adoption of a geotextile runway but do not want to rankle old friends and potentially ruin long time friendships as retribution. I'm afraid damage has already begun. Let's not have another split of TCRCM.

Mr. Bowen said, "In hindsight the leadership team should have taken a more aggressive runway repair approach to fix the damage..."



The leadership team, especially Mr. Bob Anderson, has been diligently working to improve field conditions. He should be commended. I do not interpret Mr. Holland's letter as "extremely critical." He stated some facts and his opinions. I believe the geotextile discussion morphed from the desire to help fix the damage.

The decision to install a geotextile runway should be made before funding is acquired. It's not like we are going to have it installed by Halloween. This may seem backwards to some people, but there are several ways to get funding. It does not have to be from dues increase or assessment. The decision can be made in advance and then let fundraising begin. Having a goal in advance makes fundraising much easier. At least five club members have committed to making sizable donations. AMA funding can be approximately 25%. Also,

replacement costs are far less than the original installation (about one-half) as replacement geotextile fabric can be placed OVER the original. There is no need to save \$2000 a year for five years.

**The US Navy installed US 230 geotextile runways for their UAV's at Dahlgren Airforce Base and were pleased with the results. That is the exact same type of geotextile fabric used by RC clubs.**

When the current TCRCM field was being developed, grass or dirt were the only options. The lease with the City of Richland prevents using a permanent surface such as asphalt or concrete. Now we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with more options. For at least 30 years I have been hearing how the hobby needs to attract young people. Times have changed, as well as model aircraft, transmitters, power, and fields. It's no longer 1972 and that old stereotypical scenario will not entice new pilots. What can a club offer the young? They get most of their RC needs met as Park Flyers. Why should they pay \$100 to fly on our grass?

Going out on a limb, I support a half geotextile and half grass runway to accommodate current and future RC growth. Pattern plane pilots can still have their grass as well as the fabric. Any pilot who has achieved solo status can land on half of our runway. It doesn't have to be the middle half.

Let cooler heads prevail.