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**Ian's 1:144
scale A-10
won the
club's 1:144
scale
contest**



**Darryl's Robot
Monster won
the club's
"monster"
themed contest**

In September, there were 2 contests and 2 winners! Darryl Palmer's Robot Monster won the monthly club "monsters" theme contest. Ian Behenry's A-10 won the special 1:144 scale aircraft contest! Congratulations to both of these fine modelers. This edition has articles by Frank, Bruce, Jack, Darryl and Joe!



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Doug Spinney
President

Chuck Lassiter
Vice President

Frank Ahern
Secretary

Bruce Doyle
Historian

Doug Spinney
Webmaster

Bill Winter
Treasurer &
Newsletter
Editor

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Prez Sez.....

As many of you know I have several hobbies, primary are my motorcycles, followed by model building. I didn't make last months meeting because my wife and I were enjoying a vacation from retirement, in the car. Two days after returning home, I hopped on my CanAm motorcycle and took off on a 2800-mile, 8 state ride.

This was my first long ride on a trike, up to this point it was always on two wheels. I'll have to say, I liked the trike. No more worries about rock and sand parking lots, no worries backing up on an incline (I have reverse). The only complaint is that the seat is uncomfortable, even with a gel pad and wool cover. I could put an aftermarket seat on but, for the CanAm, they are very expensive. I'll think of something.

The first three days on the trip were brutal, 98 degrees, 103 degrees, 97 degrees. Riding on hot asphalt sitting on an 180-degree engine made it worse. After that the temps started cooling down. The first day heading home it was 48 degrees when we left. But I packed for cooler weather,

along with a purchase of a sweatshirt from Wally World.

What does all this have to do with modeling? Nothing. Not a thing. But I couldn't come up with anything else to write about on short notice.

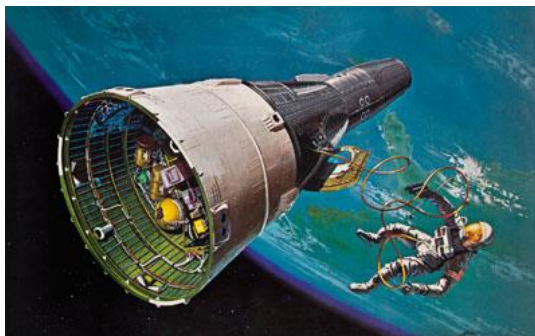
The theme for our October meeting is Real Space, hope to see a good turnout. Also, hopefully, Jack Mugan will be joining us.



- Doug

October – IPMS Gators

We will meet Tuesday,
October 20, 2025, at
6:30 PM at
Oak Hall Library



Minutes of the Club Meeting from Tuesday September 15, 2026

Vice President Chuck Lassiter called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. There were 15 members present including new member Jon Rouse and visiting former member Errol Whisler.

Chuck mentioned upcoming model shows. Modelpalooza in Kissimmee on October 9-11 and Ed Ingersoll and Bill Winter are hosting AMPS Florida Con in Orlando November 7 & 8.



Frank Ahern told the club that he is stepping down as Secretary in October due to a schedule conflict with an organization at his church. He will remain a member but will be unable to attend meetings.

Bruce Doyle raffled off one of his signed aviation artwork paintings based on a trivia question in his newsletter article.

The meeting paused for presentations from those who brought models.

The theme this month was "Monsters". There was also a club build contest for those who took 1/144 scale kits donated to the club last spring.

The theme contest was won by Darryl Palmer with a model of the "Robot Monster."

The club build was won by Ian Breheny with a model of an A-10 in mottled desert camouflage.

Next month's theme is "Real Space".

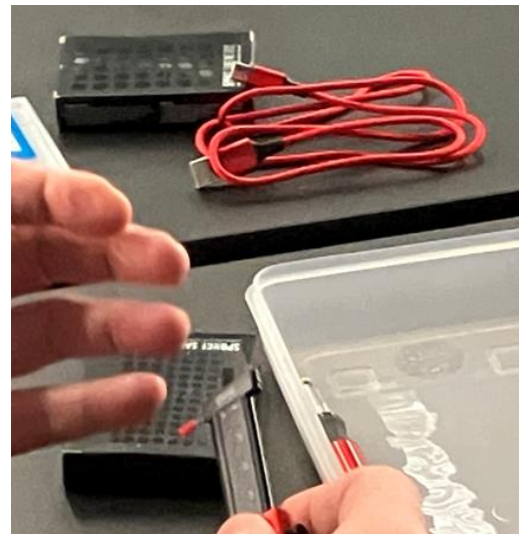
Attendance raffles were won by Jon Rouse, who selected a Sherman tank, and Mike Martinez, who took the German submarine.

In tool time, Pete Dawson showed a mold mark remover from a new company named DSPIAE which produces a number of modeling tools.

Club Historian Bruce Doyle concluded the meeting with videos of his collection of aviation artwork which he has displayed in his house and invited members to come visit for a complete tour.

The meeting concluded at 8:15pm

Submitted by;
Frank Ahern
Club Secretary





Space

Shuttle

Success or Failure?

By Frank Ahern

One of the defining moments of my career as a TV reporter was coverage of the first launch of the Space Shuttle in April 1981. It was the culmination of a 12-year NASA program marked by budget cuts, re-designs and changes in its mission. It's 30-year operational life was marred by 2 tragic failures that cost the lives of 14 astronauts. The successes include the deployment and repair of the Hubble Space



Telescope (photo left above) and assistance in the construction of the International Space Station (photo right above) as well as placing dozens of military and commercial satellites in orbit. So, the success/failure question is not simple.

There is no dispute that the two failures exposed a culture in NASA that needed to change. The "launch fever" mentality that ignored red flags and whistleblowers had to end. The shocking explosion of the Challenger in 1986 was revealed to be caused by failure of the booster rocket O-rings which prior launches had shown to be weak. NASA ignored warnings from the booster rocket engineers that the launch that day should be postponed due to cold weather.

Space Shuttle - *Success or Failure?*



The Columbia disaster was even more troubling because damage to the critical heat shield tiles was known on the first day of the 14-day mission, while there was time to work out a rescue plan. Once again,



those in charge of the mission dismissed warnings that the tile damage needed a complete visual assessment. The investigation into the tragedy coined the phrase "normalization of deviance" to explain how NASA overlooked warnings from engineers.

The success of the Apollo moon missions had created a sense of invincibility in NASA leadership that many of its engineers knew was not warranted. From the beginning, the whole Shuttle program was plagued by unrealistic expectations of launch frequency, overestimated cost savings and design compromises. On balance, the record of 133 successful missions means that the Shuttle was not a failure, but the loss of 14 lives argues that the cost of success was too high. Hopefully, the lessons learned will lead to a safer space program in the future.



Space Shuttle - *Success or Failure?*



Columbia landing



Columbia crew from STS-107 lost on re-entry on Feb 1, 2003.

I wanted to build the Shuttle Columbia because it represented both the high and low points of the program. My kit was an older Revell kit that wasn't up to the standards of their newer products. Since it's



Space Shuttle - *Success or Failure?*

a simple kit, I focused on making the paint and decals the highlights of the model. I purchased an aftermarket decal set that included decals to represent Columbia and the heat shield tiles, which were the most controversial part of the Shuttle design. Laying down those decals proved to be the most challenging part of the build, but worthwhile because the tile decals give the shuttle a more realistic look. Anyone who has seen a shuttle up close knows it looks like it was made of Legos rather than a sleek and smooth finish so, I was pleased with the result.



As a postscript, I want to add my thanks and appreciation to all the members of the club who have supported and encouraged me through my years as a Gatormodeler club member. I have decided to focus on another activity at my church that conflicts with my duties in the club and the monthly meeting. I plan to continue as a member and attend other events when possible. As the book of Ecclesiastes says, "*to everything there is a season*". When one season ends a new one begins. Happy modeling! - **Frank**



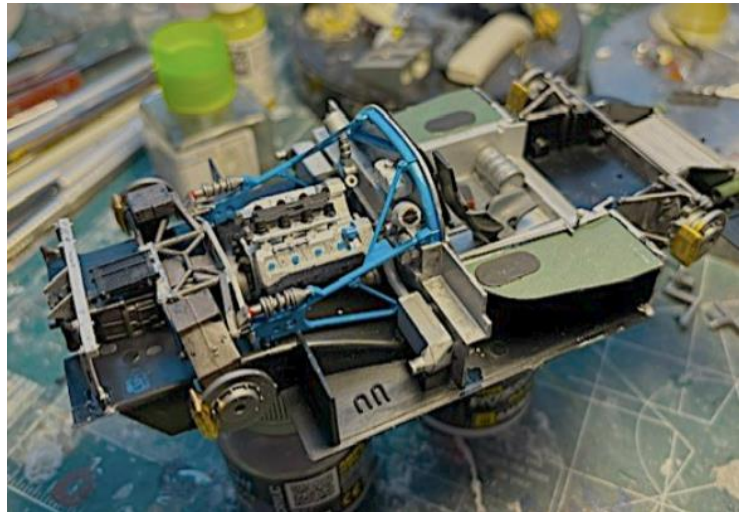
Building Tamiya's 1/24th scale Sauber-Mercedes C9

By Jack Mugan

If you have an urge to build a car model you can not go wrong with a Tamiya kit. They are generally loaded with detail, and everything fits as it should.

I recently acquired this particular kit from Mark Box who got it in one of his many deals and it's a beauty to say the least. The instruction sheet is easy to follow but you may have to work out your own solution to the painting instructions as they only give you Tamiya colors.

The nineteen steps start with the chassis, then the engine bay and rear suspension followed by the cockpit, front suspension, wheels and tires and finally the front and rear main body sections. In this particular kit there were minimal decals due to the lack of an elaborate graphic design scheme.



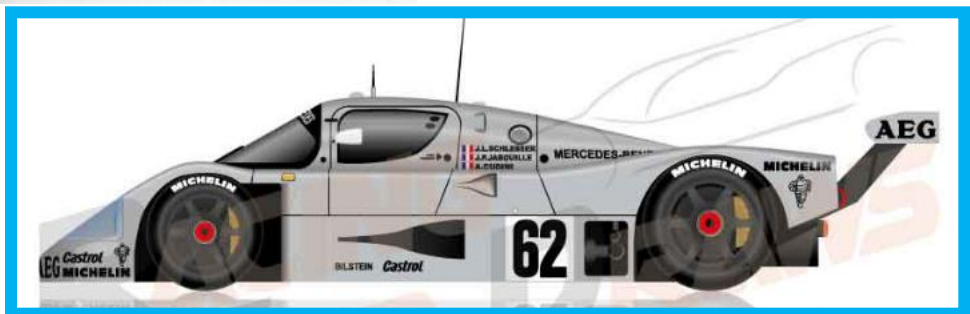


Building Tamiya's 1/24th scale Sauber-Mercedes C9

I usually have some kind of mistake or disaster in most of my builds, but much to my surprise I did not have to call on my damage control skills this time. My one disappointment was deciding not to add a few more details in the engine bay and I went with the out-of-the-box solution instead.

The body was painted with Tamiya Silver Leaf (TS30) spray can followed by Tamiya's Clear gloss (TS13), and the rest of the model was brush painted with Acrylics. I found the decals to be very thin, so great care was needed to avoid the decal folding over its self or breaking up.

Though I chose to keep this a simple build there are plenty of areas where detail can be enhanced if that is your desire. These days my shaky hands have dictated that less is more, and I am fine with that.



Fiddly Bits

Savannah Dreaming

by Bruce "Yard Modeler" Doyle, a.k.a. "Stretch Sprueman"
Club Historian & Club Co-Founder
and Self-Appointed Entertainment Editor



It occurred to me while I was writing this piece that Savannah, Georgia holds a very special place in my heart, and not because one of my favorite films "Forrest Gump" was filmed there. And not because of the Mighty 8th Museum which is located on the outskirts of town in Pooler, Ga., nor because of the Civil War



B-17 City of
Savannah | National
Museum of the
Mighty 8th Air Force



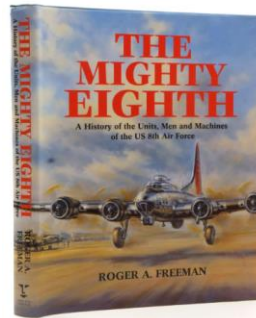
Fort Pulaski that sits on Tybee Island. No, but both play a large part in my cherishing my time there. It's because over the years I attended three consequential American WWII Organization's Conventions there, and I learned and experienced so much during that time.

The Mighty 8th Air Force was the reason for the first two events. The 8th A.F. was established in February 1942 at Hunter AFB in Savannah, Georgia, and in 1992 a 50th Anniversary birthday celebration was held there. The second event that I attended there was a reunion of the 384th Bomb Group Association who flew out of Grafton- Underwood as part of the 8th Air Force's Bomber Command. Perhaps I'll write more on both reunions later because the 384th's reunion resulted in a beautiful Ray Waddey painting of two of the Triangle "P" B-17s, signed by dozens of its members. But the two reunions shared something in common, something straight out of *Ripley's Believe it or Not*.



Fiddly Bits - Savannah Dreaming

On bombing missions Low Squadron B.G. (Bomb Group) bombers were constantly in danger of the High Squadron planes drifting over the top of them from the I.P. (initial point) to the target. This resulted in the High Squadron's bombs falling through the lower one's planes, sometimes with catastrophic, tragic results by the bombs hitting the bombers below them. This is what happened to the two B-17s carrying two of the tail gunners I met. The bombs sawed their planes in two at the waist gunner positions where they kept their parachutes because the tail gunner's position was too cramped to keep them there. This is what happened to the 384th's Arthur Osepelook flying in the B-17 Silver Dollar over Berlin on March 9, 1944 (picture in Freeman's *The Mighty Eighth*, p, 115) He told me he knew he was going to die. So, he lit a



cigarette and floated down to Earth like an oak leaf seed, trapped in what was left of the tail. The next thing he remembers is waking up in a Belgian Hospital, miraculously still alive. You just can't make this stuff up, and I got to meet not one but two of these miracle men!

Attending these two 8th A.F. Reunions I began to formulate a theory. Why was I able to meet veterans of the Missions that were flown by the aircrews between 1943, with inadequate fighter protection, and into early 1944 when drop tanks finally extended the escorting P-47's range and the long-range P-51s had come online? To a man it seemed to me when talking to these early Air War veterans their stories were one of being shot down and surviving the War in a P.O.W. Stalag. That was the reason that they were alive in the 1990's for me to meet and debrief them at their reunions. It's a theory that I can't prove, but I'm convinced that it's true.

But the Reunion / Convention in Savannah that is the one that I will treasure forever, and the one that also resulted in my favorite Ray Waddey painting, was the one held by the American Volunteer Group (A.V.G.), also known more popularly as The Flying Tigers. Crew Chief Chuck Baisden invited me to attend



Fiddly Bits - Savannah Dreaming

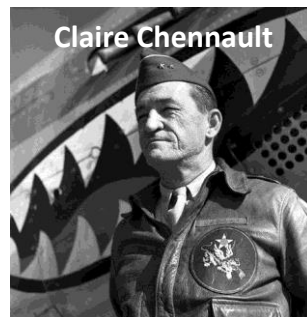
the East Coast version of the Tigers' biannual reunions, and I set off from Gainesville in an Enterprise Rental Agency Saab convertible, hardly believing my good fortune and anticipating a weekend in Tiger Cub Heaven (I had been adopted by the Tigers. Life doesn't get much better than that!) FYI: Did you know that a WWII Navy veteran that served on the Big "E" started the car rental company?

Ray and I had a deal. He would paint two paintings of R.T. Smith's No. 77 P-40, one for him and one for me under the condition that I take both to the reunion for the AVG guys to sign. Agreed. Not a problem. But how had I come to know the Tigers, and be so lucky to be invited to spend a blissful weekend with them? Where and when did I first come to meet them, and why did they consider me an honorary Tiger Cub and take me into their Flying Tiger family - Tex, Twisty Bent, Tiger Joe, Buster, Moose, et al?



Curtiss P40 Flying Tigers China
1942

Every Spring Larry Bayer and I would travel South to the Titusville / Cocoa Beach Airport (Tico) where the Valiant Air Command (VAC) put on an incredible Warbird Airshow and invited distinguished guests to their gatherings with all expenses paid. Groups like the Doolittle Raiders, the Eagle Squadron, and in March 1988 the Flying Tigers. OMG I thought to myself, these guys served in the same theater - the C.B.I. (China,



Burma, India), under the same commander as my father - Gen. Claire Lee Chennault - flying from the same bases: Kunming, Kweilin, and Yangkai. I knew nothing at this point about my father's service there, but these guys had been there, done that. When I began to ask questions they all answered that they were all gone (July 4, 1942) by the time he got there in September of 1944, but they would make inquiries and help me answer the questions that I posed. And there was an important key that finally unlocked the mystery I had struggled with for decades - I saw the emblem for the 14th A.F. Association there, and it was the next week taking my daughter to school that I saw that emblem on a sticker on the back window of a 14th A.F. Veteran's car turning into the school bus yard off Hawthorne Road. Eureka! (See the December 2018 article I wrote for a fuller discussion of my search for my father.)

Fiddly Bits - Savannah Dreaming

When I arrived at the Reunion I was greeted like the prodigal son who had finally come home. I found out at a 14th Air Force Association reunion that they had been looking for me all through the 1950's to give me a college scholarship that was funded by the Flying Tigers Airline. Humorously I offered to go back to school. And I learned an important fact from some of the wives of the veterans. If a member of the AVG was killed in action, it was incumbent upon his surviving comrades-in-arms to contact the family and tell them what happened, how their loved one was lost. I think that was why I was so graciously welcomed into the Tiger Family.

Now onto the painting. But first an explanation of some of the illustrations I pulled up from Google Image. The earlier tailless B-17 photo is the one from the 384th B.G., with the tail gunner trapped in the missing tail. The P-40 shows what remained of the plane after Ed Stiles banged Lou Schramm's knees with the



control stick by flapping the ailerons warning him that bombs were falling during a night air raid. I told the full story during my presentation at the last meeting. There also are contemporary photographs of the pilots I ate breakfast with the next morning, telling stories about flying the Grumman F3F biplane off the Carrier Ranger before the War: James Howard, "Tex" Hill, and Ed Rector. Life doesn't get much better than that does it? Why oh why didn't I bring a recorder of some sort with me?



James Howard. A. V. G. Flying Tigers and C.M.O.H. winner, ETO w/ 354th F.G., 9th A.F. "Pioneer Mustang Group"



WWII Flying Tigers Fighter Aces, left to right, Charlie Bond, Tex Hill, and Ed Rector

The plane painted in profile is one of the 100 Curtiss 81 Tomahawks shipped to Rangoon, Burma in the early Fall of 1941. Number 77 was R.T. Smith's aircraft, who happened to be the very first Flying Tiger I met. Again, it was at a V.A.C. event in either 1986 or 1987, and before the main AVG Reunion in 1988. R.T. was selling copies of his autobiography "Tale of a Tiger - The Adventure-Packed Daily Diary Of One Of The Flying Tigers' Top Aces." A mouthful, and yes, it is action-packed. R.T. was one of the main characters of the A.V.G., among many others who cut a wide swath in stateside America with the folks back home. And future Flying Tigers authors had a ready-made pun for their books - Tale of a Tiger, Tiger Tales, etc. The Flying Tigers became larger than life, featured in articles in Life Magazine, the newsreel The March of Time, and even a Republic potboiler movie "Flying Tigers" starring John Wayne. More on that below.

Fiddly Bits - Savannah Dreaming

I managed to get over fifty signatures on my painting, including nearly two dozen of the pilots and over a dozen of the A.V.G. Aces. The irony is R.T. Smith's autograph is not one of them. He didn't attend the reunion. But I did get him to sign the underwing of his Frog P-40B model that I built that's on display in my museum.

"**Bits-of-Tid**" that I picked after attending many bull sessions in multiple Flying Tiger Hospitality Rooms over the years:

***Bits-of-Tid 1:** Pappy Boyington is not the Marine Corps top Ace, Joe Foss is with 26 Victories (photo below). When Pappy was with the A.V.G.-esus (Ed Rector's nickname for the group) he claimed 5 kills



worth \$500 in 1942 money apiece, today worth \$10,000! But postwar research of the Flying Tiger's records show that three were ground kills that don't count for Ace status. So, Boyington ended up with 24 Victories. He might have had more if he had not been kicked out of the A.V.G., receiving a dishonorable discharge in April 1942. Now you're in the know. And therein lies the following tale (pun intended.)

It is well known that Boyington was an irascible drunk, ready to fight at the drop of a hat. One night in the Officers' Club in Kunming Pappy was really tanked, and as usual in a pugnacious mood. In walked Madame Chiang Kai Shek. Pappy started screaming at the top of his lungs "...*Something disrespectful....*" Pappy was on the first plane leaving Kunming the next morning.

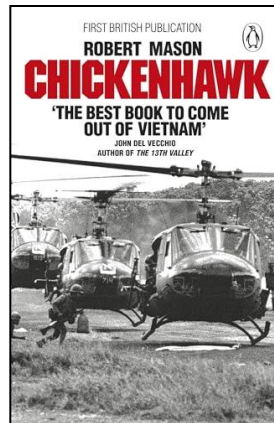
*** Bits-of-Tid 2:** The John Wayne 1942 movie "Flying Tigers". I rank this with "Pearl Harbor" as one of the worst two War Movies ever made. Wanting to cash in on the Flying Tiger's popularity in the States, Republic Pictures - a "B" Picture factory - decided to make a movie about them starring John Wayne, John Carroll, and Anna Lee to be released in September 1942. I learned from some of the guys that two members of the HQ Group were dismissed for failing the moral's clause in their contracts, or in the vernacular of the day they were "light in their loafers." These two went straight to Hollywood from China and signed on as 'technical



Fiddly Bits - Savannah Dreaming

advisors' looking to make a buck as well. Unfortunately, the film they helped to make is a joke. First off, the A.V.G. 's initial combat mission became a widespread misconception because the movie with the page-flipping- daily-calendar 'movie cliché' shows it's on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th. No, their first mission was on December 20th. There is also the obligatory love triangle between the lead actors which is hogwash (that's Hollywood.) The transport plane that appears in the movie is a real piece of work, literally. Apparently, it was put together with screws, not rivets according to an Air Classics article I read, and the film crew had to sweep up the screws inside the fuselage after every flight. Egads! Please do me a favor and avoid this dreadful 'movie' like I've asked you before to avoid the fictional "Pearl Harbor" piece of garbage.

Trivia Question: for a signed copy of my brother-in-law's Vietnam memoir "Chickenhawk." Can you name the town in Georgia where I attended so many meaningful events? Hint: No, it's not Atlanta where we went to so many incredible IPMS Conventions. Good luck.



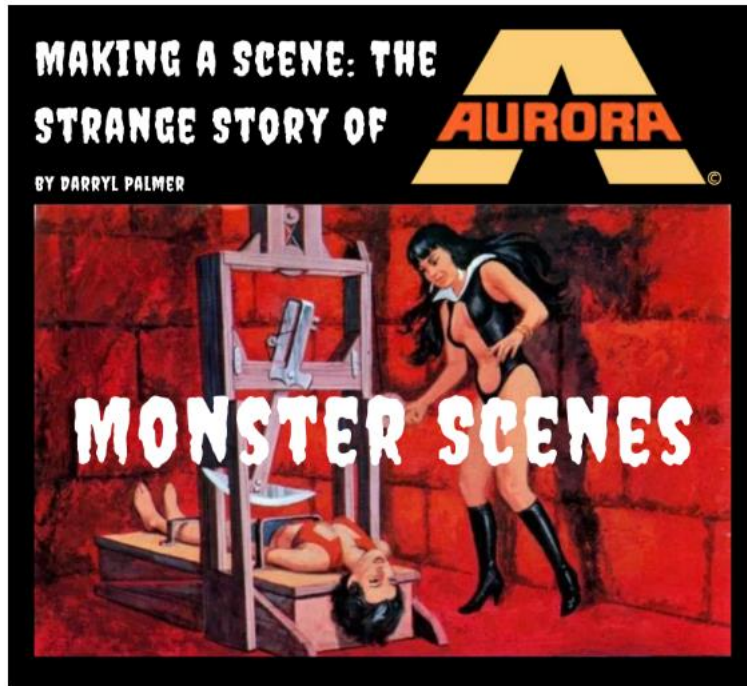
Last word. Because of a looming article deadline, and there being so many YouTube postings on the rebirth of my Gators to watch, I'm going to skip doing a Flying Tiger / A.V.G.-esus bibliography until next time. There are many excellent memoirs written by the members, and some histories, many of which are uneven in the treatment of the Group. Until then, stay tuned...

Bruce "Tiger Cub" Doyle

P.S. As a follow up to last month's article on my favorite YouTube Channels I've got one more as a bonus. Our daughter turned us on to the WeRateDogs Channel that has 3 or 4 minute hilarious episodes with dogs doing what dogs do best - acting goofy. Something to get a hearty belly laugh in these turbulent times.



Flying Tiger R.T. Smith

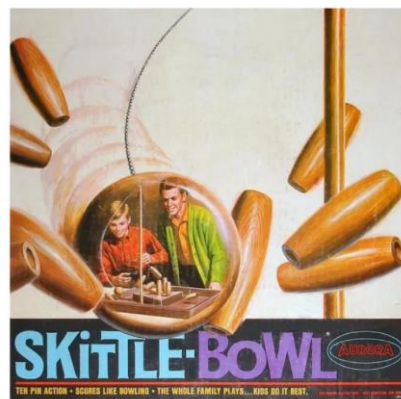
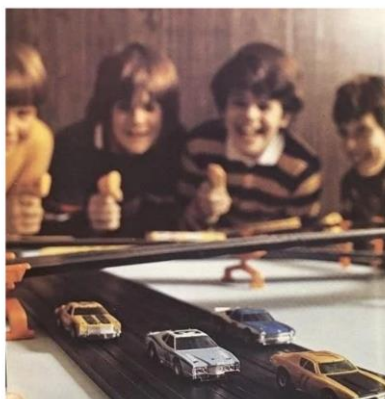


In 1971, Aurora tried to revive the success of their early-60s monster models with a new line of horror-themed kits—but it didn't go quite as planned.

Dick Schwartzchild, vice president of marketing at Aurora Products Corporation, took the call. It was a senior executive from Nabisco, Inc., and his voice sounded shrill. “We’ve got a crowd of feminists out here picketing our offices over your monsters,” he shouted. “What are we supposed to do about it?!”

Schwartzchild was at a loss. “I dunno. Pray for rain,” he said as he hung up the phone.

To understand this strange scenario—America’s leading cookie company and one of the big-three major model companies arguing about a protest led by the National Organization of Women over toys—you really have to go back a few years in West Hempstead, Long Island.



Two non-model hits for Aurora: AFX Racing (left) and Skittle-bowl (right)

Through the 1960s, Aurora Plastics had been riding a wave of successes, buoyed by their lucrative Universal monster kits and other licensed properties, from Batman to Land of the Giants (see October 16

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2025 issue). Then in 1968, they had a surprise hit with Skittle-Bowl, not a model but a game that involved swinging a wooden ball on a chain at some wooden pins. To company president Abe Shikes, this was proof that Aurora was ready to make the leap to toys and games. Co-president Joe Giammarino disagreed. What resulted was corporate backstabbing that would rival Game of Thrones. Shikes had the board of directors force Giammarino out of the company; Giammarino got even by selling his stock shares to a group of investors who in turn ousted Shikes. By 1970, Aurora was run by entirely new management.

The new president, Charles Diker, a 34-year-old Harvard Business grad and former vice-president at Revlon, was eager to remake Aurora into a modern, diversified products company. He started looking at how Aurora's models, already so popular with kids, could be transformed into toys.

One of the products already in development was Monster Scenes, which was set to be the next generation of monster models. Monster Scenes was the brainchild of Andrew Yanchus, who came to Aurora from the world of comics. He'd been a member of a Brooklyn group of comics fans who called themselves the Illegitimate Sons of Superman. Future famous artists like Len Wein and Marv Wolfman were fellow members.



Store display and catalog page for Aurora Monster Scenes. Bill Lemon did the sculpting of the kits; unlike James Bama's art for the 60s kits, box art was uncredited.

At 1/13 scale, Monster Scenes kits were almost half the size of the earlier monster lineup. They'd be snap-together kits, so parents needn't worry about junior sniffing glue. The line would feature both figures and dioramas with interchangeable, articulated parts, so they could be posed, customized and played with. Each base could interlock with another, so you could create whole monster...scenes! Instead of ordinary line-drawings, the instructions would be full-color comic books, drawn by Batman artist Neal Adams. The whole thing was so kid friendly, it practically screamed TOYS!

Diker immediately greenlit the project and Monster Scenes were rolled out at the 1971 conference of the Hobby Industry Association of America. At this wholesome-sounding event, the kid-friendly kits revealed to the world included Frankenstein (a classic!), Dr. Deadly (a mad scientist and hunchback in one—

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economical!), Vampirella (a scantily clad bloodsucker from Warren Comics—interesting choice), the Pain Parlor (sounds...kinky) and a girl in a halter blouse and daisy dukes whose name was...The Victim (wait, what?!).

As if these choices weren't questionable enough, Aurora's marketing department had gone all out. They'd hired fashion models to stroll the floor in sexy Vampirella cosplay. A huge banner spanning the display read, "Rated X—for eXcitement!" One of the Vampirellas incorrectly explained to the press that the interchangeable arms and legs represented chopped off limbs.



Marketing for Monster Scenes was created by comic book luminaries such as Neal Adams (left) and Wally Wood (right).

While all this seems fairly innocent today, in 1971 it was an uncomfortable reminder of middle America's worries about moral decay. Between the Vietnam War, the trial of Manson Family over the Tate-LaBianca murders, and the Attica Prison riot, violent atrocities were being beamed into living rooms nightly. Entertainment was following suit—the MPAA had recently enacted its rating system, but instead of discouraging depictions of sex and violence on the screen, it encouraged Hollywood to produce more R- and X-rated films. A Surgeon General's report found that children were exposed to more violent acts watching morning cartoons than their parents were during prime time. Concern was smouldering, particularly among women's rights and parents groups, that a sick society was harming children, and Monster Scenes was only adding fuel to the fire.

While Aurora was raising eyebrows at the HIAA, Charles Diker was pursuing his plans to expand the company. For that he needed capital, and he found it in the National Biscuit Company. Seeing limitless

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crossover potential between cookies and toys, Nabisco bought Aurora in May 1971. The makers of Cream of Wheat quickly found it troublesome that their new acquisition was selling “torture toys,” as the press called them, and persuaded Aurora to take *The Pendulum* and *The Hanging Cage* off the market. The other kits were hot sellers in the stores—Aurora sold 40,000 Monster Scenes between February and October, and Schwartzchild claimed that most of the mail they received were ideas for more extreme Monster Scenes. But with great sales come great visibility, and that’s when the National Organization for Women got involved.



NOW members protest Aurora’s Monster Scenes kits at Nabisco headquarters on Park Avenue, Nov 13, 1971.

Jacqueline Ceballos was a rising star in the New York chapter of NOW. With Betty Friedan, she had helped organize the *Women’s Strike for Equality* in 1970, and on the strength of a highly publicized town hall debate with Norman Mailer, she’d been made the organization’s eastern regional director. Ceballos’ activism focused on the sexualized and victimized representation of women in the media. The fact that a child’s toy female figure had no other name than “The Victim” was cause enough for protest; she also knew that when you protest, you take it straight to the establishment, and that meant Nabisco. Only about a dozen protesters turned up at Nabisco’s corporate headquarters in Manhattan, carrying signs that read “Sick Toys for Children Make a Sick Society,” and “Sadistic Toys Make Violent Boys,” but the high profile of the demonstration led Nabisco execs to put in panicked calls to Dick Schwartzchild and his boss. At a hastily convened board meeting, Aurora agreed to recall the Monster Scenes kits from shelves. The remainders were sent to their Canada division, where The Victim became Dr. Deadly’s Daughter.

Aurora eventually bounded back from the controversy with Prehistoric Scenes and Monsters from the Movies, but the company was only a few years away from insolvency. Charles Diker went on to found the Cantel Medical Corporation. Abe Shikes got his revenge by forming Addar models, which scored big time with Planet of the Apes kits. Jackie Ceballos became NOW’s representative at the 1972 Democratic Convention. After his experience with Aurora, Andy Yanchus returned to the comics, becoming a

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celebrated colorist for Marvel. He remained a model consultant and historian until his death in 2021. In 2014, he co-authored *Aurora Monster Scenes — The Most Controversial Toys of a Generation*, which sadly is out of print.



Andy Yanchus at home with his vast collection of models and toys, ca. 2014.

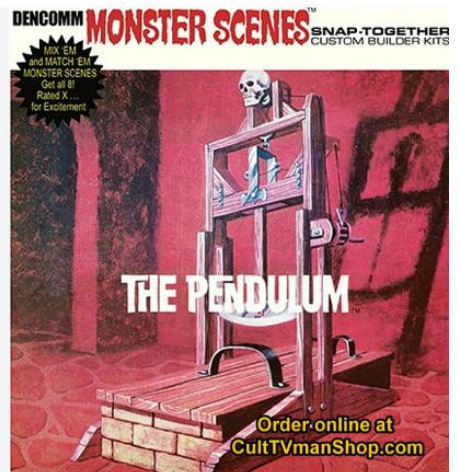
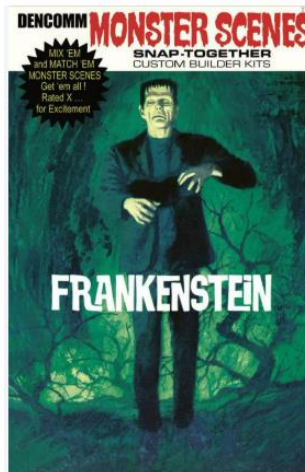
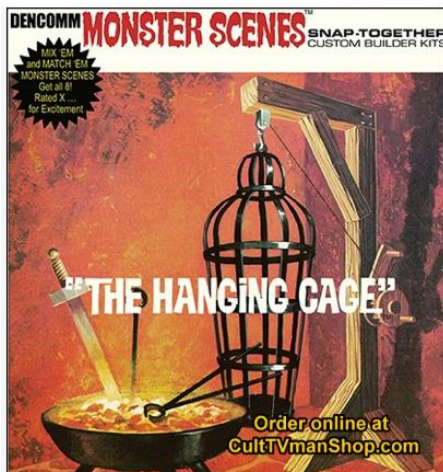
Even the Monster Scenes themselves got a second act. After decades of being high-priced collector's items, in 2026 Dencomm began re-releasing the entire line of kits. A second wave is expected later this year. You can order them on CultTVMan's Hobby Shop website, if you want to see what all the fuss was about.

References:

Brian Cronin. Longtime Marvel Colorist, Andy Yanchus, Dies at Age 77. *Comic Book Resources*, Oct. 14, 2021.

Thomas Graham, 2017. *Aurora Model Kits*, 3rd Ed., Schiffler Publishing.

Nabisco Picketed Over Monster Toys. *New York Times*, Nov. 16, 1971.



Newbie Corner

By Joe Swails



It's the beginning of October and all's well in the Swamp! As of this writing, the Florida Gators are undefeated and the Orange and Blue faithful are both optimistic and hopeful for a positive balance to the rest of the season. We are all familiar with the old saying that "Time will tell." That has never been truer than right now as we all wait in anticipation for what we hope will be several more victories under our new coach before the season is complete. Without wishing to incur the dreaded jinx, dare I say we may even be in contention for a bowl game in December or January? Keep those orange and blue fingers crossed, sports fans!

Moving on into the modeling world, things have been quite busy in the ol' Swails' household this past month. My wife grew tired of the hovel I had been using for my modeling endeavors. It was one of our no longer used bedrooms, since the boys moved out, that had grown to become rather unorganized as my hobby interests grew over the years. Old work benches, tables, desks, boxes, shelves, and the closet were pressed into use as more and more work and storage space was needed. There was very little planning involved: instead, it was a matter of piecemeal additions going into what little space was still available.

Taking pity on me and the condition of the room itself (I'm leaning more towards the room, myself), she suggested that we give the room a makeover so that work and storage spaces were adequately designed and utilized. To that end, we had everything pulled out of the room and closet so new flooring could be put down to finally match that of the rest of the house.



Newbie Corner

Then a closet makeover company designed, built, and installed all new cabinets, shelving, and counter tops, bringing a unified look of organization and functionality to the room. The appearance and the atmosphere of the room have changed entirely. With this new arrangement, I can keep those model kits waiting to be built stored nearby, but out of sight, (much to my wife's delight), tools and accessories have their own places, as do paints, adhesives, and everything else I need. It will be nice to work with plenty of room for building, painting, and storing.



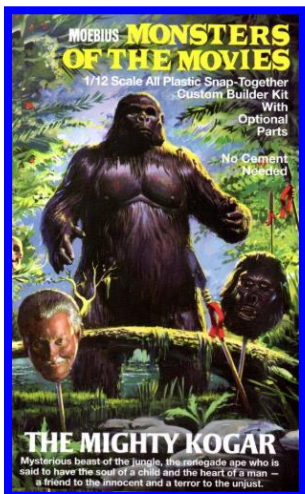
The room renovation, and the current time needed to organize it correctly have kept me from doing any building, lately, but once things are in their place, I will be back at it, putting glue to sprue!

Next month will show us just how well the gridiron Gators are doing at the midpoint of their season, what was encountered and discovered at the 2026 Modelpalooza show, how preparations are coming along for the AMPS show in Orlando, and what's going on with our midterm elections as politics nears its peak form! So much to look forward to!

----- *Contest Models in September* -----



Darryl Palmer's Robot Monster won the club's "monster" themed contest. Except for the gorilla body (from the Kogar kit), everything was scratch built!



A great part of Darryl's model is the scene that he depicted with various machines taken from the movie that were scratch built.



What is "Robot Monster?"

Robot Monster (also released as Monster from Mars)[1] is a 1953 American independent 3D science-fiction horror film produced and directed by Phil Tucker, and starring George Nader, Claudia Barrett, and George Barrows. The film follows an alien robot who, while on a mission to destroy Earth and humanity, betrays the orders of his master, the Great Guidance, by protecting a woman he was tasked to murder.

The film's production lasted only four days and took only \$16,000 to produce. Production subsequently wrapped on March 23, 1953. Due to the constraints of the film's minuscule budget, Tucker opted to hire Barrows who had made his own gorilla suit, along with other adjustments. It was shot in only a handful of locations including Bronson Canyon (a section of Griffith Park in Los Angeles). The finished film was also printed in a dual strip, polarized 3D, which many critics found to be very high quality, and also added an additional \$4,000 to the budget. While containing extensive stock footage found in other productions, Robot Monster notably also bore plot similarities to Invaders From Mars (1953), a film that was distributed by 20th Century Fox a month earlier. The monster himself was named "Ro-Man."



The film received mixed reviews from contemporary critics, and was a box-office success, grossing \$1 million. However in later decades, Robot Monster is often remembered as one of the worst films of all time, with its plot and production values receiving criticism.

In December of that year following the film's release, Tucker attempted suicide due to his lack of compensation for his work on the film. Tucker survived following detectives responding to his suicide note which he had posted in a newspaper prior. The reason why Tucker was not compensated remains unclear. Adapted from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robot_Monster and <https://moriareviews.com/sciencefiction/robot-monster-1953.htm>



George Nader tries to stop Ro-Man (George Barrows) from abducting Claudia Barrett



Ro-Man (George Barrows) in his cave with the Automatic Hubble Machine

Submitted by the Editor.

Bob Lundeen's 1:8 scale Moebius "Creature from the Black Lagoon"



What is "The Creature from the Black Lagoon?"

Creature from the Black Lagoon is a 1954 American black-and-white 3D monster horror film produced by William Alland and directed by Jack Arnold, from a screenplay by Harry Essex and Arthur Ross and a story by Maurice Zimm. It stars Richard Carlson, Julia Adams, Richard Denning, Antonio Moreno, Nestor Paiva, and Whit Bissell.

The film's plot follows a group of scientists who encounter a piscine amphibious humanoid in the waters of the Amazon. The Creature, also known as the Gill-man, was played by Ben Chapman on land and by Ricou Browning underwater. Produced and distributed by Universal-International, Creature from the Black Lagoon premiered in Detroit on February 12, 1954, and was released on a regional basis, opening on various dates.

Producer William Alland was attending a 1941 dinner party during the filming of Citizen Kane (in which he played the reporter Thompson) when Mexican cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa told him about mythical stories of the Yacuruna, a race of half-fish, half-human creatures said to live in the Amazon River. Alland wrote story notes titled "The Sea Monster" 10 years later, using Beauty and the Beast as inspiration. In December 1952, Maurice Zimm expanded this into a treatment, which Harry Essex and Arthur Ross rewrote as The Black Lagoon.

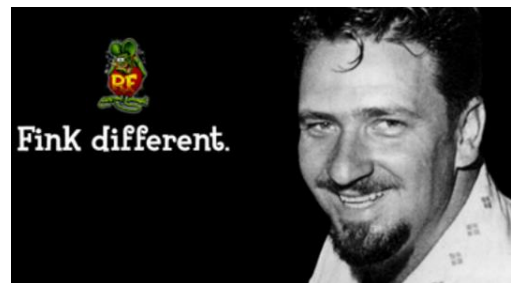
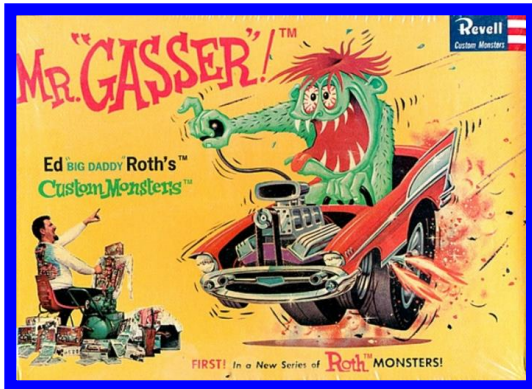
Milicent Patrick, formerly an animator for Disney, was the primary designer for the head and face of the Gill-man costume. However, make-up artist Bud Westmore downplayed Patrick's importance, and for half a century Westmore received sole credit for the creature's conception.[4] Jack Kevan, who worked on The Wizard of Oz (1939) and made prosthetics for amputees during World War II, created the bodysuit, while Chris Mueller Jr. sculpted the head.[5]

Adapted from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creature_from_the_Black_Lagoon

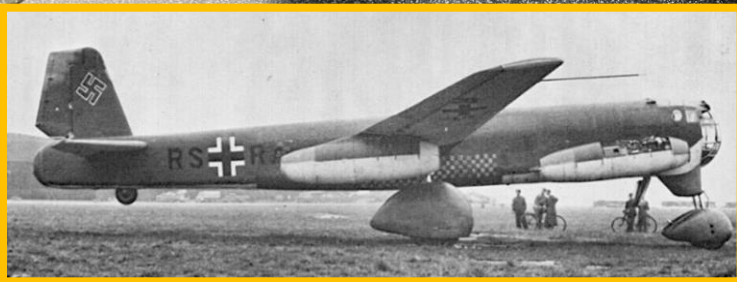


Clarence Synder's 1:20 scale Mr. Gasser

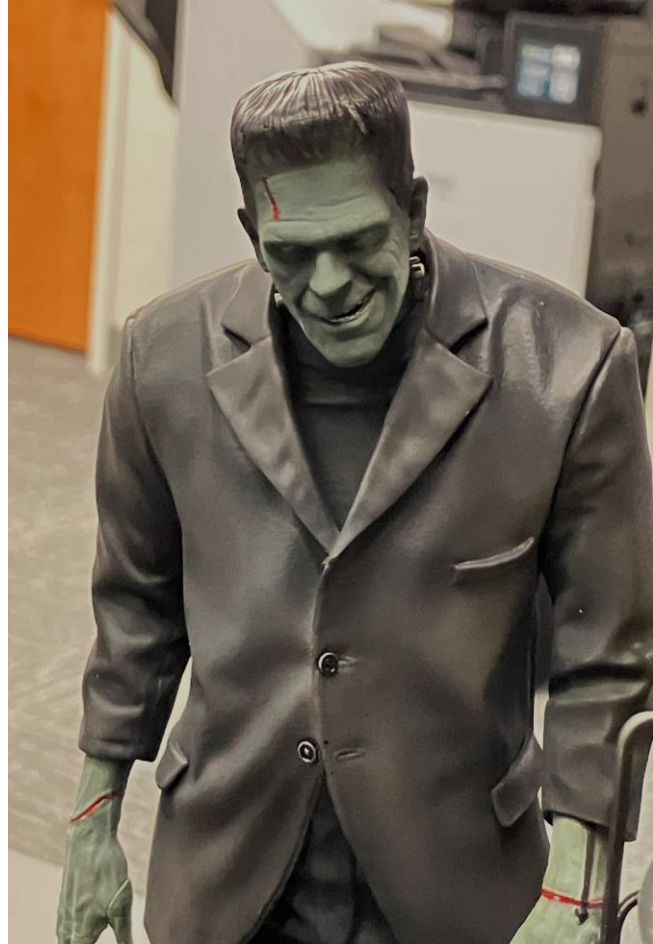


"Big Daddy" Ed Roth

Bruce Doyle's 1:72 scale Huma "Franken-jet" (Ju-287)



Bill's 1:8 scale X-Plus Universal Monsters The Monster Frankenstein



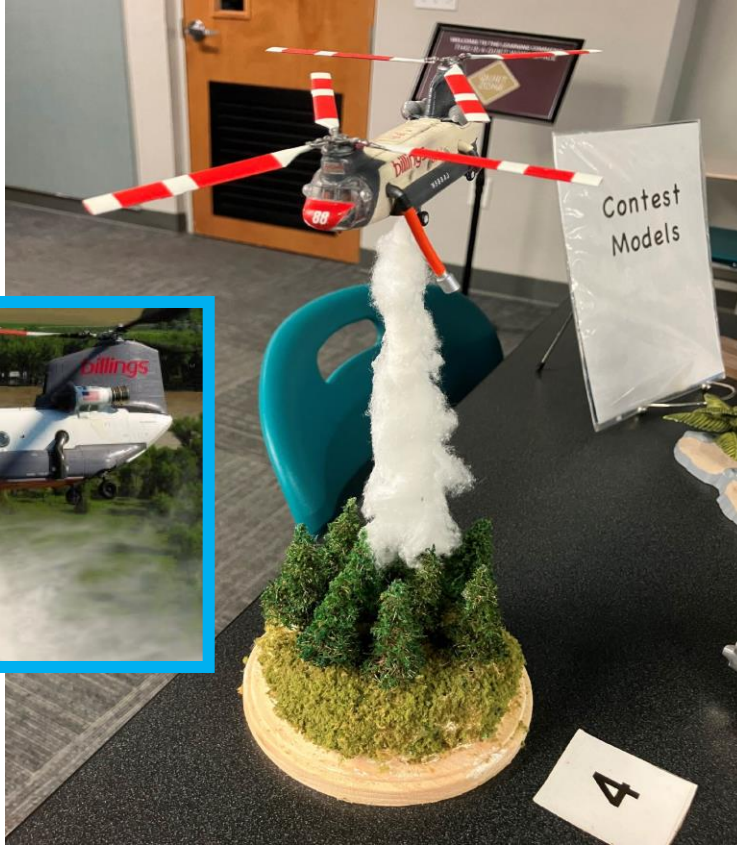
Best 1:144 scale aircraft --- > Ian Breheny's 1:144 scale Arii A-10
(OOB)



JAWS 1977



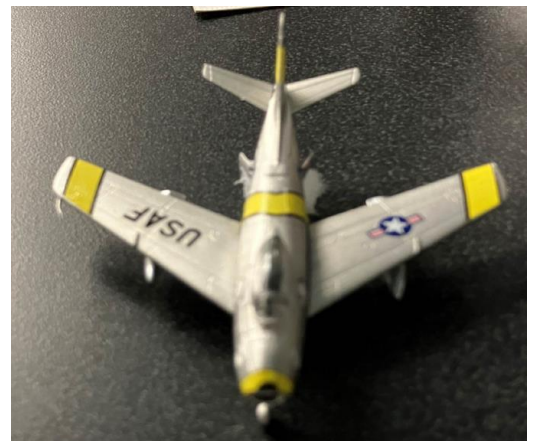
Darryl Palmer's 1:144 scale Chinook firefighting helicopter



Check out this link for more information:

<https://billingsflyingervice.com/>

Chuck Lassiter's 1:144 scale F86F painted in Alcad – used Microsol to set the decals



Clarence Synder's 1:144 scale F86 Sabrejet



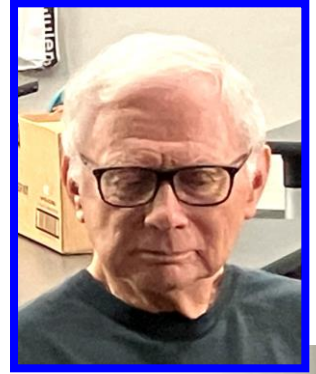
Other aircraft shared by Clarence Synder



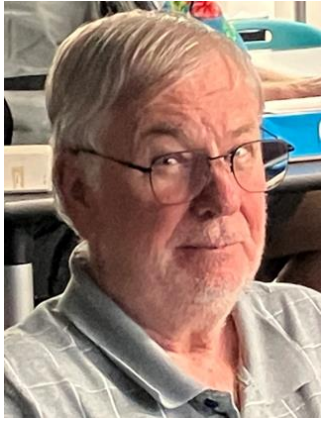
Bill's 1:144 scale DML EA-6B



Don Martin's 1:35 scale Evolution Miniatures Figures from the Apocalypse



Bob Lundeen's 1:48 scale ZM F-4J – Added P.E. seat belts



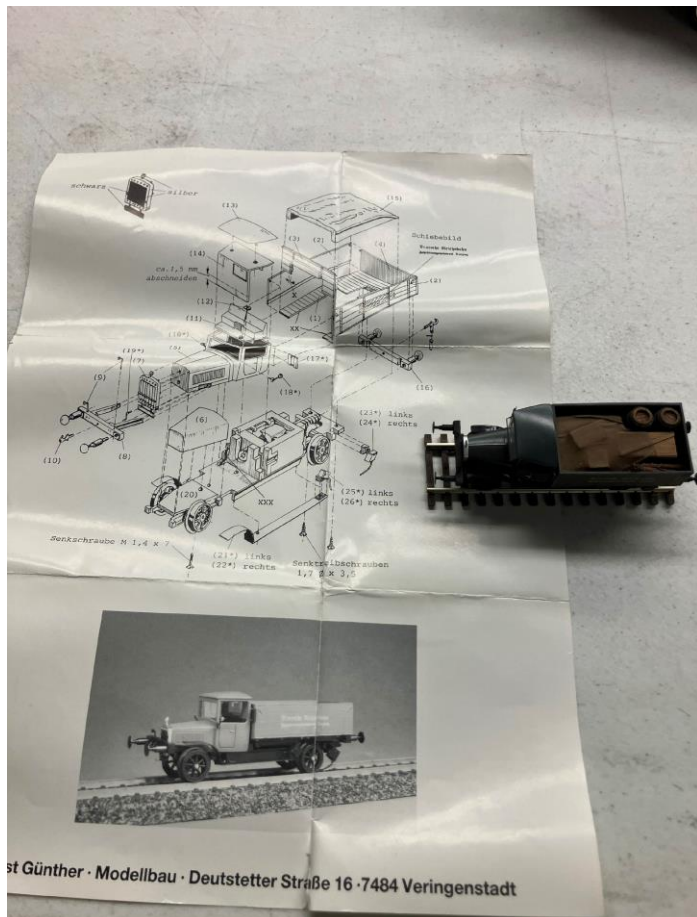
Clarence Synder's dually service bed pickup truck (WIP)



Clarence Synder's red pickup truck - finished



Pete Dawson's 1:87 scale Guenther Deutsche Reichsbahn catenary maintenance truck



Members and Friends in attendance at the August meeting



From the workbench of Clarence Snyder!

"One Piece at a Time" April 1976



"One Piece at a Time" April 1976



Upcoming shows



AMPS Florida Con



AMPS Florida and the Central Florida Figure Group present the **AMPS Florida Con / Figure World Orlando Show** on **November 7th and 8th, 2026** at the **Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld** (6677 Sea Harbor Dr, Orlando, FL 32821). Hotel rooms are \$169/night plus a reduced resort fee of \$15/ night.

<https://book.passkey.com/go/figureworldorlandoamps>

The hotel is immediately across the street from Sea World. By car, Disneyworld's Magic Kingdom and Universal Studios Orlando are each no more than 20 minutes away.

Contest registration will be *on-site* and will be open from 8AM until 3PM on Saturday, November 7th. Blank entry forms can be found at AMPS North Florida Facebook page. Vendor tables are available at \$55/table for the two-day show.

AMPS categories will include :

- Tracked armor through 1945, allied (as marked)
- Tracked armor through 1945, axis (as marked)
- Tracked armor, 1946 - 1991 (based on markings)
- Tracked armor, 1992 - present (based on markings)
- Wheeled vehicles and halftracks
- Ordnance
- Fictional, futuristic or proposed land-based vehicles (e.g., Mechs & Gundam on the ground)
- Vignettes
- Dioramas



You may register up to 4 entries that will be judged. AMPS volunteers judging 2 shifts (or the equivalent) will be provided with raffle tickets.

For more information see the AMPS North Florida Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1617151505610642/>) or contact Ed Ingersoll at: ingersoll2@gmail.com.

Pelican 27
Scale Model Convention and Contest
50th ANNIVERSARY
MAY THE SCALE BE WITH -YOU-
OF STAR WARS
Brought to you by the **Pelican MODEL CLUB** PelicanModelClub.org

Upcoming shows



VILLAGES
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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH 2027

THEMES:
80TH ANNIVERSARY USAF
50TH ANNIVERSARY STAR WARS
AMERICAN MUSCLE
SEMINARS AND GUEST SPEAKERS

PLEASE SCAN QR CODE FOR
FURTHER DETAILS



Scale Model Expo '27

April 24, 2027 @ The Savannah Center in The Villages



October 30th 2027

IPMS Spartanburg Scale Modelers

Feature Presentation

Filmed in "Cinema- Styrene"

IPMS USA Region 12 "The Carolinas"

"The Forbidden Regional"

Region Contest and convention.

10 division's, 82 + categories

Juniors, Aircraft, Spacecraft, Figures, Automotive, Armor,

Ships, Dioramas, Miscellaneous, and TV-Movies

1st, 2nd, 3rd awards

location

C.C Woodson Recreation center

210 Bomar Ave.

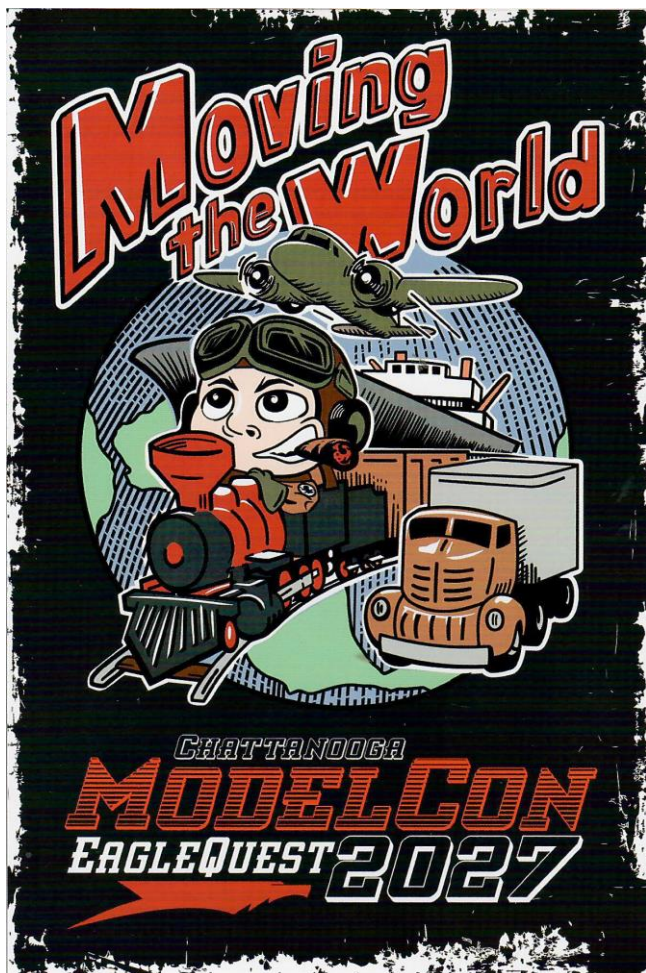
Spartanburg SC 29306

Contact

Tim Kirkland email kirklandmr6@aol.com

864 504 0745

Upcoming shows



A poster for Chattanooga ModelCon EagleQuest 2027. It features a QR code in the top right corner. The text "CHATTANOOGA MODELCON EAGLEQUEST 2027" is prominently displayed in red and white. Below this, it says "PRESENTED BY" followed by logos for Scale Models Chattanooga, Tamiya, and MMD Distributors. The event location is "Chattanooga Convention Center, 1 Carter St. Chattanooga, TN 37402". The dates are "APRIL 2-4, 2027". The hours are listed as "Friday: 1:00 - 6:00", "Saturday: 9:00 - 5:00", and "Sunday: 9:00 - 1:00". The theme is "SHOW THEME" in red. A paragraph explains the theme: "Moving the World means, if it carried cargo of any size we want it. From a dog with a pack to a super tanker, from a C-47 to the sci-fi space freighter and everything in between. Cargo carriers make the world go round so lets see what you've got!". It also mentions "SEE EXHIBITORS, VENDORS, GUEST SPEAKERS, AND THE FULL SHOW DETAILS AT" followed by the website "www.Model-Con.com".



AMPS 2027 International Convention

Thu May 20, 2027 to Sat May 22, 2027

Penn Harris Hotel, Camp Hill, PA



Upcoming shows

The Rocket City Nats!



2027 IPMS-USA National Convention



14-17 July 2027

Huntsville, AL

HUNTSVILLE

The High-Tech Heart of the Tennessee Valley and home to the Marshall Space Flight Center, U.S. Space & Rocket Center, the U.S. Veterans Memorial Museum, the Huntsville Botanical Gardens and Rocket City Trash Pandas!

The Huntsville Plastic Modelers Society and our partners in IPMS Region 3 are more than pleased to host all our fellow modelers in our home city, and share all of it's charm and excitement with you! If you want great food, history and culture, we have it here. And if you want to see more of what the South has to offer, Nashville, Birmingham and Chattanooga are just a short drive away!



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A modern convention center in downtown Huntsville. We'll have over 100,000 sq. ft. (9,300 m²!) of floor space for the largest hobby shop in North America, the IPMS-USA Model Contest, Tiger Meet, seminars and more! And the hotels are within walking distance!

Getting There



Huntsville
Google Maps



Huntsville
International Airport
(HSV)



Huntsville Visitors
Bureau



Von Braun Center



U.S. Space &
Rocket Center

Contest & Tiger Meet

Special Themes

- The Space Age: From Sputnik to Space Shuttle
- Six-Day War: The Middle East Aflame
- Star Wars: A Galaxy Far, Far Away
- Mecha: The Grunts
- Dazzled! Naval Camouflage from 1914 to Today
- Talladega!: "Boogity, boogity, boogity..."

Go to ipmsnationals.org for definitions.



Build It! Bring It! Show It!

Contact & Website

Contact

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Email: chairman2027nats@gmail.com
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Phone: 757-561-1718
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<https://ipmsnationals.org>

GATOR MODELERS

Frank Ahern, – Secretary – ahernf@gmail.com
Home: (352) 375-3723; Cell: (352) 226-6785

If you have a modeling tip you would like to share with your fellow modelers, please send us a copy so we can put it in the newsletter. We need articles for the Newsletter and the Web Site!

If you just opened up that new kit and want to give a box or build review, write it up and we'll put it in the newsletter and put it on the Web Site. Just read a good book, tell us about it! Got a great tip, share it with your fellow club members. This is your Newsletter and your Web Site and they're only going to be as good as YOU make them so contribute something to the cause. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance if you have something you want to share, we'll be happy to assist you in making it happen!



Don't forget to support your local hobby shop: Rob's Hobby World (Rob Stevely: Proprietor 8585 SW Hwy 200 unit 14) Ocala, FL 34474 www.robshobbyworld@MSN.com; Mon.-Fri.: 10 AM to 5:30PM; Sat.: 9AM to 4PM; Sun: Closed.

Please check out WWW.IPMSUSA.ORG for the latest information from IPMS National Headquarters and for information about joining IPMS.

Frank Ahern, – Secretary – Newsletter Editor ahernf@gmail.com
Home: (352) 375-3723; Cell: (352) 226-6785

UPCOMING IPMS EVENTS

October 9, 2026

Modelpalooza
Kissimmee, FL
Website: Modelpalooza.org

February 5-6, 2027

Jaxcon
Jacksonville, FL

March 6, 2027

Pelicon'27
Tampa, FL
Website: Pelikanmodelclub

March 20, 2027

AtlantaCon 2027
Marietta, GA

April 2, 2027

Chattanooga Modelcon 2027

April 24, 2027

Model Expo '27
The Villages, FL
Website: Scale Modelers of The Villages

UPCOMING AMPS EVENTS

Nov 7-8, 2026

AMPS FLORIDA CON & FIGURE WORLD ORLANDO
Orlando, FL
Renaissance Orlando at Sea World
Contact Ed Ingersoll for details
ingersollle2@gmail.com



GATOR MODELERS

It is of great importance, both at the local level (IPMS Gators) and at the national level, that all IPMS Gators members join IPMS USA. This membership includes six bimonthly issues of the IPMS Journal (which is better than ever) and the opportunity to participate in the IPMS National Convention. Joining IPMSUSA or renewing your membership are done on-line (or via hard copy – see form below). <https://myipmsusa.org/join-us>



Join IPMS/USA Today!

Join online at [MyIPMSUSA.org](https://myipmsusa.org), scan the QR code below, or mail in this application.

New ☐ Renewal ☐ IPMS #

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Junior (17 years or younger)	☐	\$17.00	Family US Address One Year	☐	\$35.00
Adult US Address One Year	☐	\$30.00	Two Years	☐	\$63.00
Two Years	☐	\$58.00	Three Years	☐	\$101.00
Three Years	☐	\$86.00	International One Year	☐	\$38.00
Canada or Mexico One Year	☐	\$35.00	Three Years	☐	\$110.00
Three Years	☐	\$101.00	International Family		
Canada or Mexico Family			One Year	☐	\$43.00
One Year	☐	\$40.00	Three Years	☐	\$125.00
Three Years	☐	\$115.00			

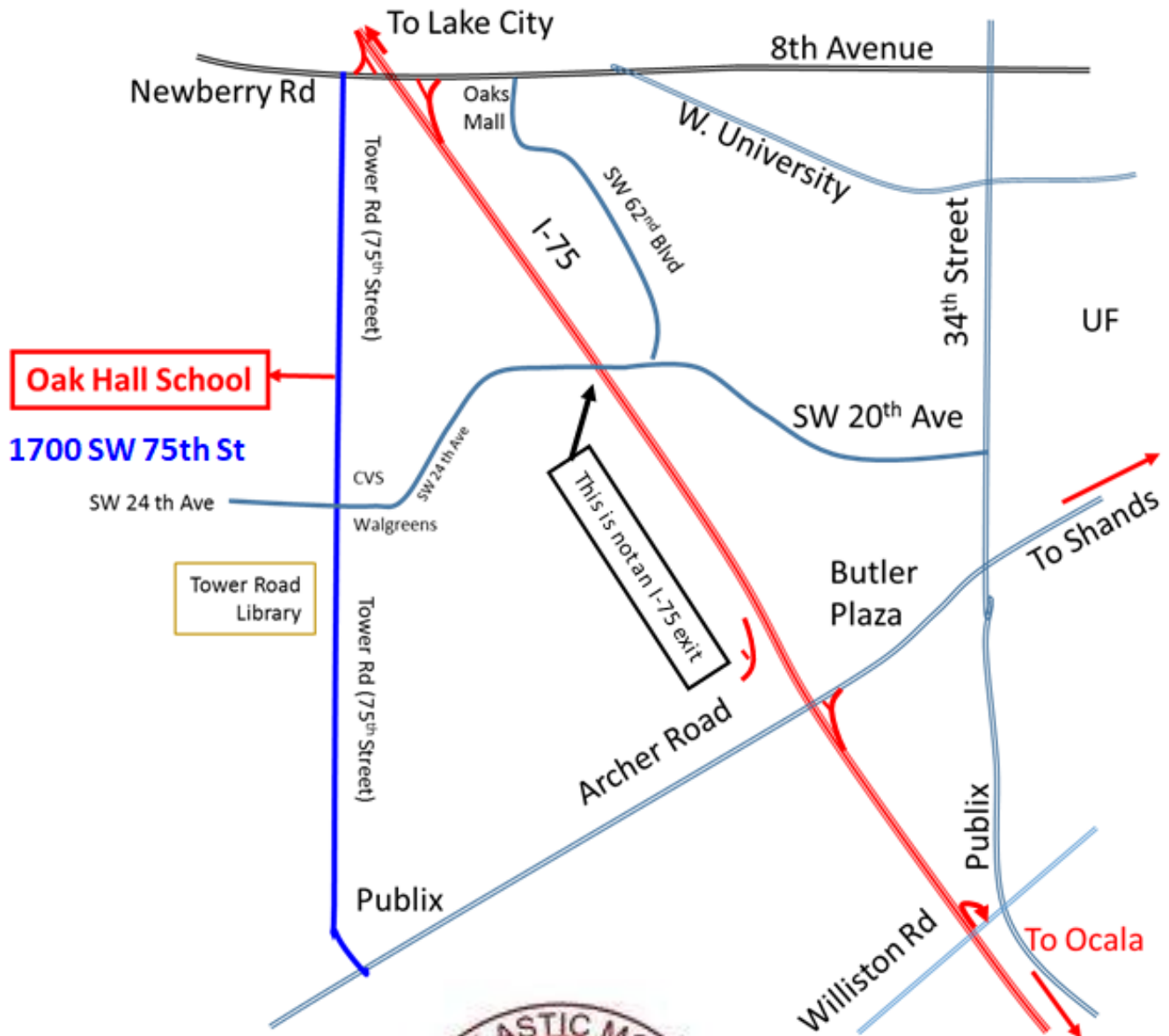
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Directions to OAK HALL (1700 SW 75th St, Gainesville, FL)

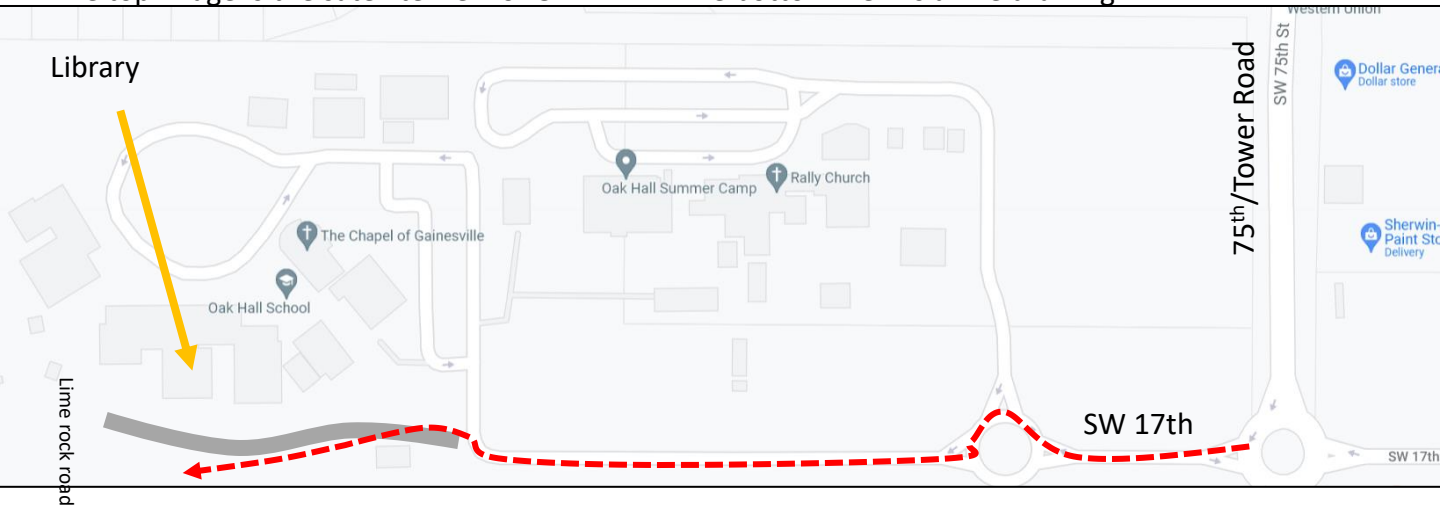


GATOR MODELERS

IPMS GATORS' MEMBERS: We will meet at Oak Hall on Tuesday October 20, 2026 at 6:30 PM in the LIBRARY.



The top image is the satellite view of OAK HALL. The bottom view is a line drawing.



A note about monthly themes for 2026

Oct. *Real Space*
 Nov. *Ships*
 Dec. *Amphibious*



Great Box Cover Art ... inspired by Jack Mugan



IPMS GATORS



Dear Readers – If you sent me something for the IPMS Gators' newsletter and I missed it, or if I misidentified any photos, please let me know. I'll try to fix it in the November 2026 newsletter. - Bill