

April 2019  
Vol 43, Issue 4

# The Pylon



The newsletter of the Western Reserve Chapter of the  
International Plastic Modelers Society

## Next Meeting:

Sunday, April 14  
Euclid Public Library  
631 E.222<sup>nd</sup> St.  
1:15PM

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**MEETING IS ON  
SECOND SUNDAY  
THIS MONTH!**

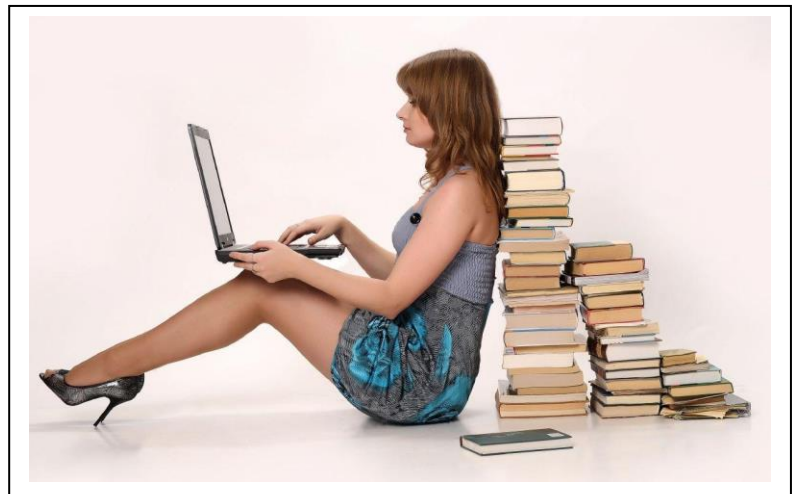
Quarterly Contest  
– Sea Animals



## From the President

Toward the end of last year, I found myself taking stock of my models, paints, tools and related supplies in preparation for the inevitable questions regarding my Christmas Wish List. In a relatively short period of time, I had managed to equip my workbench to an adequate level and, like most of you, I had amassed more models than I can comfortably build in the next few years. Noticeably lacking was a robust reference library. To be fair, I have several books detailing various building techniques and I receive a couple of periodicals. But a real reference library is an amazing thing and is a source of great personal pride. However, given that I have arrived at the “downsizing” stage of my life’s journey and that I have already purchased quite a lot of books related to other genres, I cannot practically assemble that desired comprehensive collection of literature, renderings and photographs that relate to modeling.

This past month a series of seemingly disparate questions arose that led me to believe that not having paper volumes at my fingertips might be okay after all. First, I really wanted to solve the March Pylon’s *What the Heck is That?* because that crazy, treaded USAF “mechanized manipulator” was unlike anything I had ever seen. Second, I found myself needing to know the color of several mid-60s Chevrolet suspension parts. Third, I wondered what the heck a Quamzin Ship was and how it related to the larger Macross universe in order to better understand a 1/20000 scale kit given to me by a friend (my interest in anime largely ended with Speed Racer in 1968). Finally, I was curious about a Tuskegee Airmen Memorial off I-95 in *South Carolina* (passed on a recent drive to Florida). As you might have already guessed, all the answers were just a few keystrokes away after opening my trusty search-engine on my desktop computer.



1. <http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread587951/pg1>
2. <http://www.348-409.com/chassis.html>
3. [https://macross.fandom.com/wiki/Quamzin\\_Kravshera](https://macross.fandom.com/wiki/Quamzin_Kravshera)
4. <http://lestweforget.hamptonu.edu/page.cfm?uuid=9FEC348F-9C4E-CEBE-63A3E914D72BC6B7>

And what a vast virtual library we all have at our fingertips! Since the early 1990s when commercial networks began to merge with existing regional academic and military networks (derived from the ARPANET), the modern Internet has had a sustained exponential growth. While the storage and communication capacities are constantly increasing and descriptions of their scope seem abstract (measured in exabytes and zettabytes?), a 2015 study estimated that it would take 2% of the Amazon rainforest to make the paper required to print out a single copy of the entire Web.

There are disadvantages, of course. Not having reference books on my shelves negatively impacts writers, publishers, and brick and mortar stores. But the positive aspects are amazing. Besides being available 24/7, one great feature of our common library is that it is brimming with educational and instructional videos. Further, this collection is extremely portable. I often have my iPad at my workbench, open to some relevant narrative or image. Another aspect is the ease of distributing information to others. For example, in the February Pylon, Joe Barteld and Dave Virant shared some great modeling tips, historic aircraft information and entertaining videos. Similarly, at a recent WR meeting, Ted Bamber passed on information about obtaining a free digital version of the aviation magazine *Wingleader* (how did we manage before .pdf files?).

So sadly, while I'll likely never have that great awe-inspiring collection of real aviation and automotive books, I will happily continue to use the expansive virtual library that we are all fortunate to benefit from. We truly live in amazing times and in that spirit, please, please continue to circulate those informative and entertaining weblinks!

See you at the April meeting.

Jim Wentzel

## Websites to Visit

And with surfing the web in mind, here are some more websites worth a look.

Dave V has sent along a number featuring the restoration to flying status of the XP-82 Twin Mustang:

<http://warbirdinformationexchange.org/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=3&t=67617>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SngyIPNTvw>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/experimentalaircraftassociation/sets/72157677442474637>

If you find a site worth sharing send me a link and I'll put here for the rest of the club to enjoy and distract from actual modeling.



## Meeting Minutes from March



We had 11 members in attendance at the March meeting which took place on Sunday the 17th. Kirk was unable to make the meeting due to obligations with work.

Ted gave us a Treasurer's report. The treasury is doing well. We talked about updates to the membership roster. If anyone has had a change of address (or email) please let us know so that we can update it. Recently one of our members moved and that is why the topic came up.

Club member and president of John H. Glenn and the founding father of the regional special interest group Divine Scale Society (DSS), John Vitkus, announced that he and his lovely wife Lisa will be moving to Salt Lake City, Utah, as his wife is taking a job out there. For all of those who know John this is a big shock. He has been highly involved for a long time with both of the Cleveland IPMS clubs and his current tenures as president of John Glenn and chairman of the CMS will certainly leave some big shoes to fill. It was John that took the DSS display builds to the various shows all over our region, sometimes going alone to promote our group builds -- such dedication! John won't be leaving northeast Ohio until the first of August so let's enjoy the time we have with him while we can!



We talked about the Quarterly Contest and how it will be moved to the month of April rather than March (*in order to ease the congestion of the December meeting all the Quarterly contests shifted one month - Ed*). Some people showed up with their models anticipating that the contest was indeed in March. Please bring your models to the April meeting and we will definitely be having a genuine bonafide contest. John Vitkus gave us a report of the recent SEMMEX Michigan model show that he and Phil attended. Under new business, we talked about the club's by-laws.



Tyrone talked about having a decal swap/decal bank for the club members to donate to and use. If you have some decals that you know you're never going to use maybe you can donate them to the decal bank. You never know, maybe you'll find something in there that someone else donated that you can use.



It's too bad Kirk was unable to attend the meeting because he was nominated for R4 newsletter editor of the year! Congratulations Kirk! His hard work and creative input has paid off again. We are all happy for you Kirk.

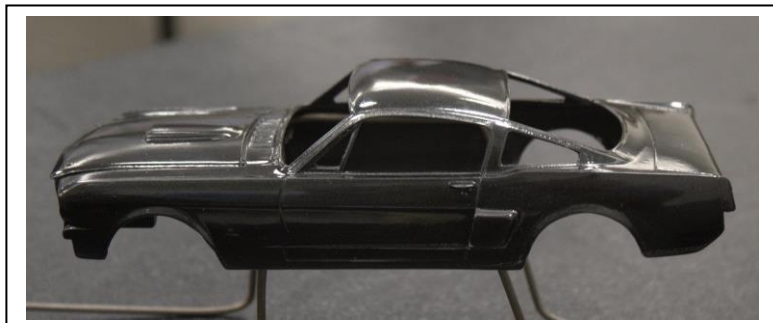
After that we took a break and then did table talk. Models on the table included Jim Davis' Eduard Bf 109 in 1:48th scale that he modified and converted to an H-2 high altitude variant -- wow! Jim extended the wingspan and modified the tail plus added an Aires resin engine and cockpit as well. Ted Bamber also built one of the Eduard 1:48th scale Bf 109s but he did his as an F-2 variant and used Eagle Cals aftermarket decals to depict a fighter based in Libya in 1941. Jim Davis also brought in a Monogram 1:12th scale 1967 Corvette that he is working on. This build is involving a large amount of scratch building! Tyrone Walker brought in a Polar Lights Godzilla and last but not least Don Nehez had his Italeri 1:72nd Do-217K. For show and tell, John Vitkus brought in a Tamiya Subaru BRZ sports car. This is to compliment his 1:1 scale version that he bought last month -- congratulations on your new car John! John also had a can of Testors color shift spray paint and he brought in a body from a model car kit on which he tried it.

John Camper rounded out the meeting with a demo on cleaning up clear canopies for aircraft. Ever notice how some modern jet kits have a nice clear canopy only to have that big nasty mold line running right down the middle of it? Well, that's what John addressed in his demo. He showed how with the use of sanding sticks, the Micro Mesh cloth system and some plastic polish (Novus, I believe) you can remove those seams with some patience, elbow grease and a little determination. Thanks John for doing the demo for us.

Well, since Easter Sunday falls on the third Sunday of this month (the 21st to be exact) we will be having the **April meeting on Sunday the 14th**. Having just written this a thought occurred to me. It recently turned over to April on our calendars as I wrote this on the 6th. The April meeting will be on the 14th, literally halfway through the month and in just a little over two weeks from the April meeting it will soon be May! Who says time doesn't fly?

See you all on Sunday April 14<sup>th</sup>.

Jon Hudak, WR Secretary



## What the Heck is That?

Last month the *What the Heck?* was the GE Corp “Beetle” Mobile Manipulator. The Beetle was designed and developed in the late 1950s to service atomic powered rockets, vehicles and equipment.

In May 1946, the USAF started the Nuclear Energy for the Propulsion of Aircraft (NEPA) project, which conducted studies into two different types of nuclear-powered jet engines, with the goal of powering aircraft such as the WS-125 bomber project, to be known as the B-72.

Some progress was made. The Oak Ridge National Laboratory researched and developed nuclear powered aircraft engines, succeeding in using two shielded reactors to power two GE J87 turbojet engines to full thrust. This system still exists at a facility south of the Idaho National Laboratory. Convair modified one of its B-36 Peacemaker strategic bombers into the NB-36H “Crusader” complete with an active nuclear reactor. The NB-36H completed 47 test flights and 215 hours of flight time during which the reactor operated for 89 hours, though the reactor never powered the aircraft in flight.

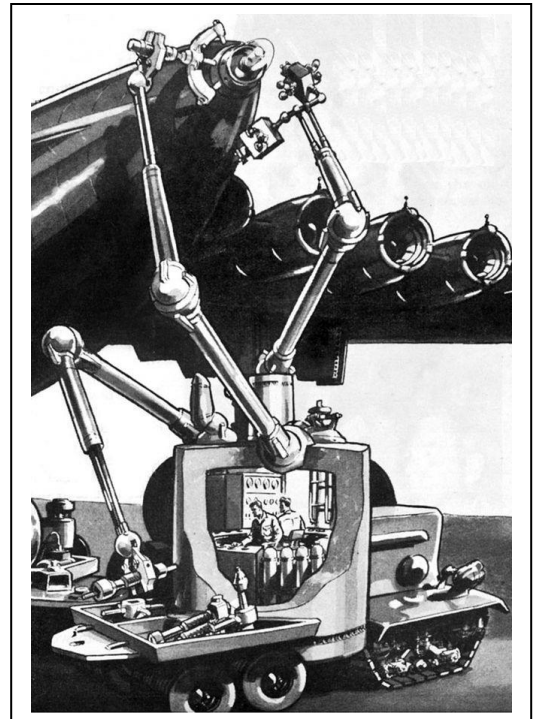
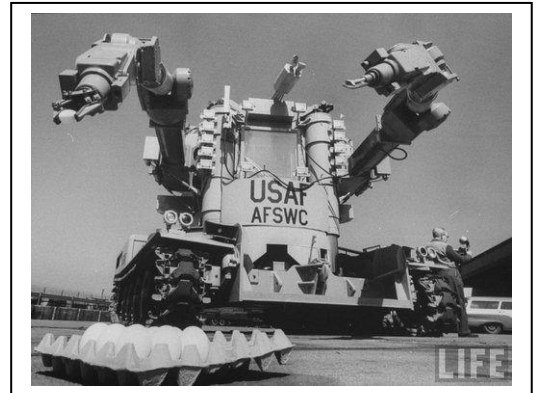
The idea of atomic powered aircraft began to fall out of favor as the 1950s wore on, as costs increased and nuclear missiles became the obvious best solution for delivering “special weapons” long distances. By 1961 the aircraft project was cancelled.

But with nuclear power still holding so much promise development of some related systems, like the “Beetle” Mobile Manipulator, continued. At least for a little while.

Begun in 1958, the “Beetle”, so named because of its pincer tipped arms, was built by Jered Industries for General Electric’s Nuclear Materials and Propulsion Operation division. It was 19-feet long, 12-feet wide and 11-feet high, weighing in at a massive 77-tons. The pilot inside was protected by a minimum of 12-inches of lead plating with an inch of armor outside and a half inch inside. The cockpit’s leaded glass was 23-inches thick. The cockpit hatch weighed 15,000 pounds and took several minutes to open.

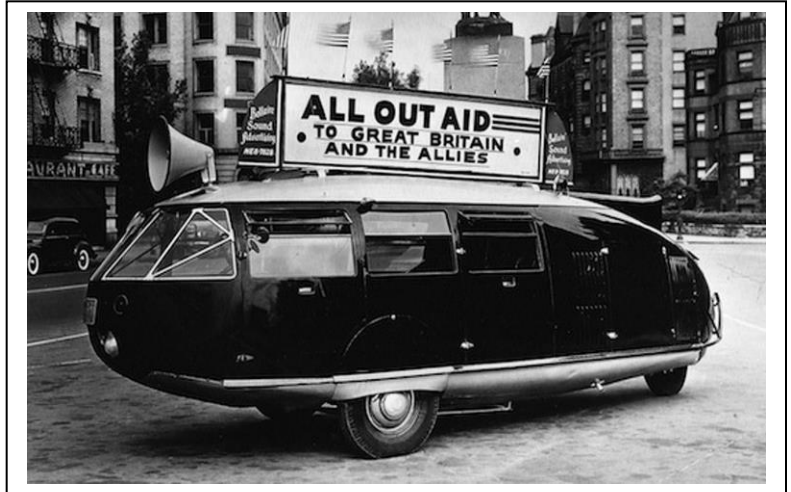
It was powered by a 500hp engine which got it up to eight miles per hour. Any faster would have damaged the delicate mechanics and instrumentation. The Beetle’s manipulators were reportedly dexterous enough to pick up a single egg out of a carton without breaking it. One of a couple pictures I found is at right.

Inside the Beetle’s claustrophobia-inducing cab, the human operator was kept company by nearly 3 metric tons of air conditioning to maintain a comfortable temperature. Other perks for the driver included eight hours of bottled oxygen and an ashtray. It took 640 kilometers of wiring to tie everything together.



Despite the Beetle's staggering US \$1,500,000 price tag (or perhaps because of it), the robot spent almost all of its time broken.

In 1962, the U.S. Air Force Special Weapons Center demonstrated the capabilities of the Beetle. Although the nuclear aircraft program was canceled in March 1961, the Air Force continued to plan for the next generation of radiation-hardened robots which would be smaller, lighter, and operated without a human inside. The fate of the Beetle is unknown. One source has it going to NASA while another says the Air Force kept it, but no one seems to know for sure.



Congratulations to John V, Robby G, Jim W, and Fred Horky. Thanks also to Fred for some of the info above. If you want to learn more about this monstrosity here are a couple of great sites:

- <http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread587951/pg1>
- <http://cyberneticzoo.com/teleoperators/1958-62-beetle-mobile-manipulator-q-e-corp-american/>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GE\\_Beetle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GE_Beetle)

This month we are going cruisin'. Good luck.

## Game Time! – Match the Company with their Hometown

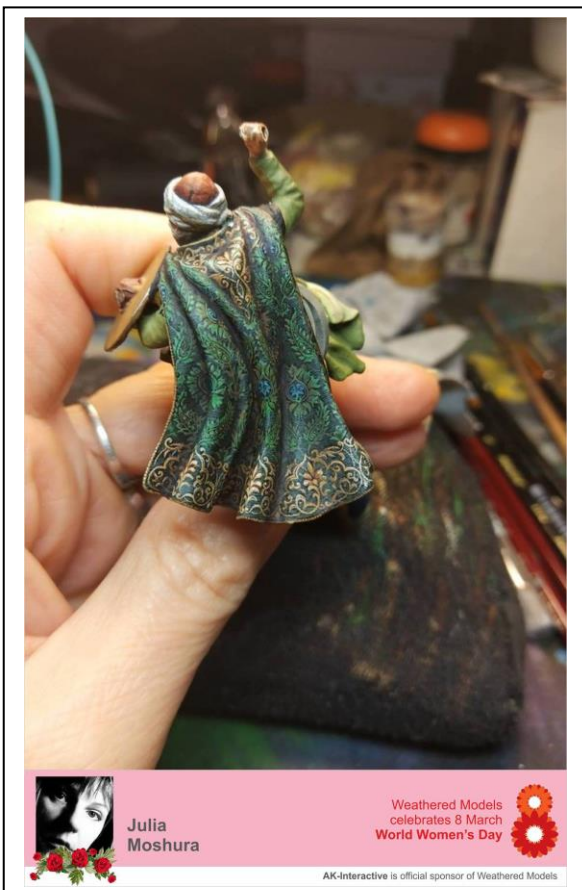
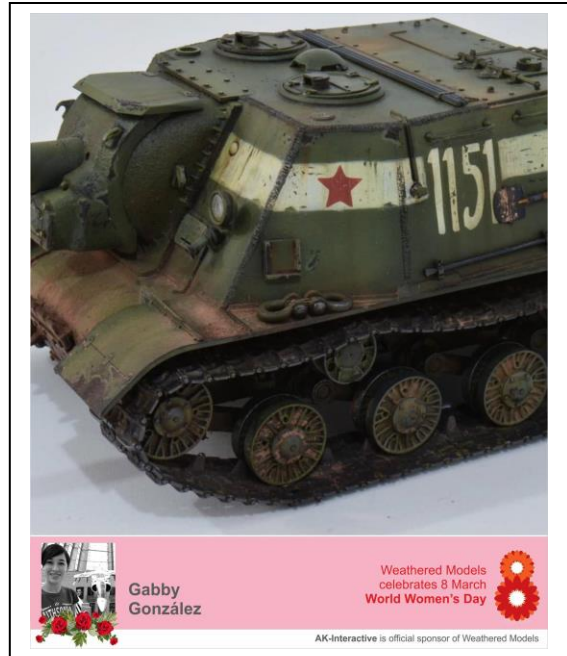
This time round I'm going with the Automotive Manufacturers. Good luck!

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Mercury         | Lansing, MI       |
| Willy-Overland  | Detroit, MI       |
| Chrysler        | Dearborn, MI      |
| Buick           | Southfield, MI    |
| American Motors | Willow Run, MI    |
| Pontiac         | Highland Park, MI |
| Studebaker      | Toledo, OH        |
| Oldsmobile      | Detroit, MI       |
| Kaiser-Frazer   | South Bend, IN    |
| Packard         | Pontiac, MI       |



# Weathered by Women

March 8<sup>th</sup> was World Women's Day and the folks at Weathered Models (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/weatheredmodels/>) and AK Interactive featured some beautifully weathered models by women modelers. Here are a few of them. Enjoy!



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*Region IV Newsletter Editor of  
the Year 2015, 2016 and 2017*

Visit us on the Web!

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[www.ipmsusa.org](http://www.ipmsusa.org)

The *International Plastic Modelers Society* is dedicated to promoting the hobby of plastic modeling through meetings, demos, seminars, conventions, contests and most importantly through friendship and enjoyment of the hobby.

Visit us on the web at or join, either online or with the form at right and enjoy the full color magazine, discussion forums and vast knowledge and experience to help you enjoy the hobby to the fullest.

## Upcoming Events

### Western Reserve Meetings and Events

**Apr 14, 2019**

General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Quarterly contest: theme of “Sea Animals”

**NOTE: April meeting is on the SECOND Sunday due to Easter.**

May 19, 2019

General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Build & BS Meeting (bring something to work on)

Jun 15, 2019

General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Seminar or Demo TBD

Jul 20, 2019

General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Quarterly contest: theme of “Land Animals”

### IPMS and Regional Events

*For any show listed go to the IPMS/USA Upcoming Events page for more information, or if you don't have web access contact Kirk Ballash*

#### 2019

Apr 14, 2019

Lorain County Spring Swap-n-Bull – Westlake, OH

May 9-11, 2019

AMPS International Convention – Buffalo, NY

May 18, 2019

MMCL Invitational – Louisville, KY

**Aug 7-10, 2019**

**IPMS/USA National Convention – Chattanooga, TN**

Jun 8, 2019

Mayfield Annual Car Cruise – Mayfield Village, OH

Jun 15, 2019

Willoughby 24<sup>th</sup> Cruise-In – Willoughby, OH

Jun 15, 2019

Summer Swap Meet – Sharon, PA

Sep 21, 2019

SVASMCN 35 Annual Show – Sharon, PA

Oct 19, 2019

CSM Annual Show – Cincinnati, OH

**Nov 3, 2019**

**Cleveland Model Show Annual Show – Cleveland, OH**

Know of an event coming up? Let me know and watch this space for more!

## IPMS/USA MEMBERSHIP FORM

IPMS No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ If Renewing \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (required by P.O.) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership  Adult, 1 Year: \$30  Adult, 2 Years: \$58  Adult, 3 Years: \$86

Junior (Under 18 Years) \$17  Family, 1 Year: \$35 (Adult + \$5, One Set Journals) How Many Cards? \_\_\_\_\_

Canada & Mexico: \$35  Other / Foreign: \$38 (Surface) Checks must be drawn on a US bank or international money order

Payment Method:  Check  Money Order

Chapter Affiliation, (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

If Recommended by an IPMS Member, Please List His / Her Name and Member Number:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ IPMS No.: \_\_\_\_\_

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