

January 2019
Vol 43, Issue 1

The Pylon

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



Next Meeting:

Sunday, Jan 20
Euclid Public Library
631 E.222nd St.
1:15PM

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PAY YOUR DUES

Build and BS Meeting

"Novel Novelties"
Quarterly Contest



From the President

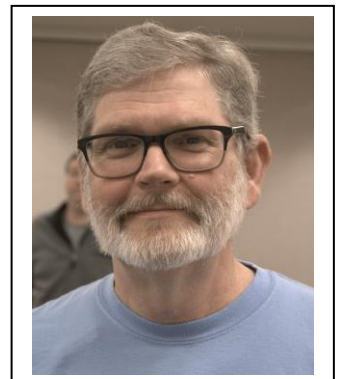
Happy New Year! I am both honored and humbled to begin serving as the Western Reserve Chapter's President. I wish to start by extending special thanks to Joe Barteld for his steady leadership for the previous two years. I would also like to congratulate Vice President John Camper, Secretary Jon Hudak, Treasurer Ted Bamber and thank them for their continued service. Lastly, I commend the excellence shown monthly by our award-winning Newsletter Editor Kirk Ballash.

Like most of you, I began building models when I was very young. My father is a life-long modeler, so many of my earliest memories include him assembling 1/72 scale aircraft in the MEK-scented basement of our Warren, Michigan home (he still builds, but is now in Kalamazoo and has a ventilated paint booth). My tendency was to build cars and motorcycles when I started out, but I switched to mostly aircraft in my teens with modern jet fighters being my focus. I moved to Ohio in 1982 to attend the Cleveland Institute of Art and haven't left. My favorite subjects now (judging from my stash of unbuilt kits) are Formula One cars although my current "under construction" kits include two automobiles, two aircraft, and a fleet warship from the animated *Macross* sci-fi franchise.

I am excited about 2019 as I used some of my Christmas gift-card loot to buy a kit for one of our upcoming Animal Kingdom Quarterly Contest themes (it's a *land* animal). I also purchased a vintage Dremel Model 219 Motor Speed Control Unit so that I can try my hand at John Vitkus' plastic pinning, thinning, and back-grinding techniques showcased in his excellent November demo. And finally, I look forward to working very hard for the members of the Western Reserve Chapter this year.

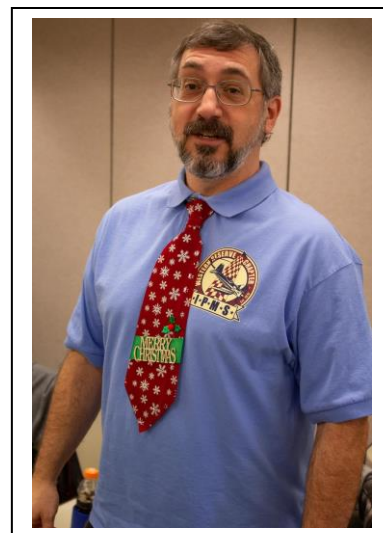
See you at the January meeting and happy building!

Jim Wentzel

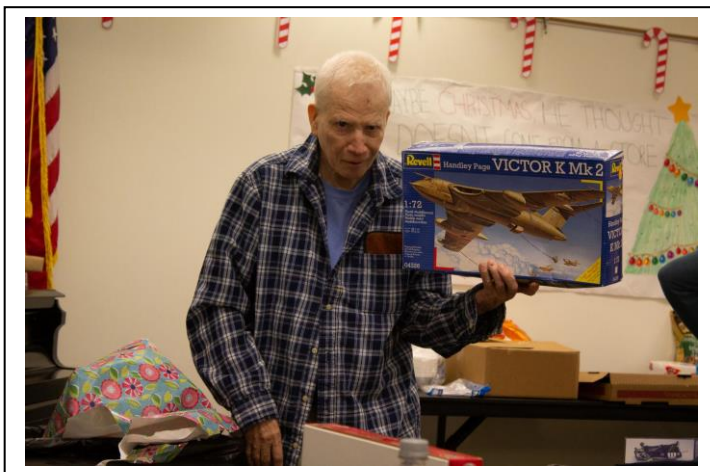


Meeting Minutes from December

Here we are more than halfway into the month and it's hard to believe Christmas and New Years are already over. I hope everyone's holidays were nice. For me one of the things I do when a new year starts is to look forward to a new year of building models. If I didn't have a good or as productive of a year as I had hoped the year before, then I tell myself I will have a better year this time. It's kind of an automatic thing for me as I am sure it with some of you. I think to myself that I have a whole full year ahead of me to build things for quarterly contests, personal builds of things I want to do or maybe even a friendly challenge from a fellow modeling chum. And with it being winter outside I don't have to really worry about such things as cutting the grass or yard work. Let's face it, winter is a prime opportunity to build! As we start this new year of 2019 off, here's to looking forward to another year of not only modeling but to our friendships and what new experiences and adventures we may have together. Things like going to the meetings and sometimes going out to eat after them, traveling to model shows or our get togethers like BABS and DSS.

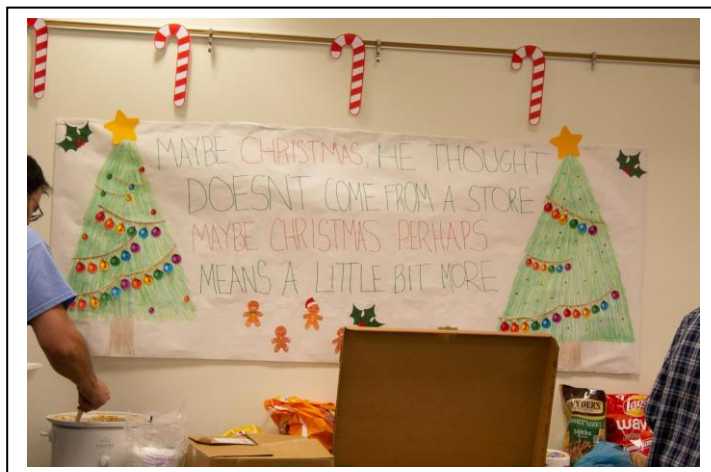


Sunday December 16th was the date for the last Western Reserve meeting of 2018. It was also our Christmas party and gift exchange, and we had 15 members in attendance. There was a bit of the usual small talk to start the meeting. Ted gave us a treasurer's report and we talked about old and new business. Kirk Ballash said although we were not quite officially chartered for 2019 (waiting for stamp in mail) we will be ready for 2019. If we weren't then I am sure we are all set for the year now. Thanks Kirk! Kirk also proposed to sponsor a category for the 2019 IPMS/USA Nationals. All were in favor of it and the cost to sponsor a category for the event is \$85.



Toward the beginning of the meeting everyone wrote their name down on a piece of paper and put it into the coffee can (more on this later). John Camper announced the Quarterly Contest themes for 2019. Perhaps our dear Vice President was listening to some vintage 1980s KISS albums! Maybe the "Animalize" album for instance? (*why not Pink Floyd's "Animals"?* - Ed.) Well the reason I say this is that all of the contest themes are "animal" related!

For March it is any animal that lives in the sea or the water. Now don't think this only revolves around ships or submarines. It also includes cars or airplanes. Just think of the Plymouth Barracuda for instance or a British Fairey Albacore biplane. You'll probably be surprised at what you can come up with if you put your mind to it. June's theme will be "land" animals. September is Flying animals so that would be a theme rife with opportunities for aircraft -- oh boy! It might be a little tougher for cars but if anyone makes a car model of a Pontiac Phoenix or a Buick Skylark or Skyhawk now is the time to build it! I'm sure a Ford Thunderbird would qualify too. I better stop doing your homework, no more hints! For December John said it will be all encompassing and it will allow insects as well like a Volkswagen Beetle for example (there I go helping you guys again!).



We also talked about elections. Though we covered it before in November and maybe October, everything was officialized this time around. We will be keeping nearly all of our current officers. The only new face as previously mentioned is Jim Wentzel for President. John Camper will stay on as Vice President, Ted Bamber as Treasurer and myself as Secretary for the next two years 2019-2020. So here is looking forward to another new year of modeling and friendships.

Well with all of the official stuff out of the way we could now let the festivities begin! Names were pulled one by one from the coffee can and everyone got to pick a white envelope with a gift certificate inside it from Stewart's Hobby Shop! There were different amounts ranging from \$5 to \$20 or more. Not only did everyone get to pick one but we had six extras and so six lucky winners got to pick a second ticket! After this we did the Dirty Santa gift exchange. You all know how it works and so I won't go into details here. Unlike our sister club John Glenn an item can only be stolen three times. I was more than happy to keep track too! :-). Some of the popular ones were the recent Airfix 1:48th P-40B/C, an M41 tank, and a Tamiya "Red Tail" P-51 Mustang. We had one extra kit left over and Don Nehez won it, lucky Don!

Along with the gift certificates and gift exchange we had plenty of food including pizza, chili and a deli tray for making sandwiches. There were chips, cookies and some desserts too. Once again the December Christmas party and gift exchange was a success and a good time. We shared together in camaraderie, laughter and fellowship. Really, who could ask for anything more?

Jon Hudak, WR Secretary





Hugo is wishing you a
Happy New Year.

Now get modeling!



Hey you! Pay your
membership dues.

From the Editor

Welcome to the New Year. Hopefully you all got some modeling related goodies for the holidays and are busy planning out your next project. I got some nice kits and detail bits to add to my stack, always with dreams of building them.

Keep in mind that I can always use articles for this wonderful publication, so while you're building your latest model take some pictures and write up an article. You've seen the ones last year from Jon and myself. Or perhaps you have a modeling related article like John Vitkus's "What's in a Name." Send it in. Everything is appreciated! Don't fret over the grammar or spelling. If Word doesn't make the corrections I will.

December Quarterly Contest is this Month

The December Quarterly Contest with the *Novel Novelties* theme is being held this month. Bring in your egg plane, super deformed or other silly subject along with all your Build and Bull supplies.

Clarification to the 2019 Quarterly Contest Themes.

During the meeting there was some question as to the intent of the theme choices, primarily whether to include insects in the first three Quarterly Themes. Contest Director John C says no, even though insects are technically animals, he didn't want them in with the Sea, Land or Air Themes. They are of course eligible for the Kingdom Theme at the end. So, think Fish, Mammal and Bird for the first three, then Insect and anything you didn't finish earlier in the year for the last.

I'm thinking perhaps the French destroyer *Bison*, then the German *Bison* tank, then the Soviet M-4 *Bison* bomber and rounding it out with the actual American Bison. A theme within a theme.

Corsair build challenge moved to November 2019

Also being postponed, mainly due to slow modeling progress of most everyone involved, is the *Dave Virant F4U Corsair Challenge*. The change from February to November gives you an extra nine months. Heck, even I could finish a model in that amount of time. John Camper might get *two* done in that amount of time.

Dues are Due.

Pay up and keep getting this award-winning newsletter. The cost is \$15.00 for the year for adult, \$12 for Juniors and \$20 for Family. Get your money to Ted soon or get dropped from the list and the Pylon. Thanks.

Kirk Ballash

What the Heck is That?

Last month the *What the Heck?* was the 15cm sIG 33 German Sturmpanzer I "Bison".

Robby provided this priceless description with his answer: *an assault gun intelligently designed to be top-heavy, overweight, underpowered, lacking any storage, and completely exposed from the sides/rear/air -- truly the pinnacle of German engineering!*

To be fair it was a quick fix meant to be a short term solution to a problem discovered during the invasion of Poland in 1939. The towed sIG 33 heavy artillery guns couldn't keep up with the armored units and mobile infantry during combat. To solve this the German company Alkett simply mounted the sIG 33 gun, complete with wheels and carriage, to the top of a Panzer I chassis. To provide some protection for the crew .50" plates were used to build a tall, open, on top and back superstructure. When I say "some" I really mean "bare minimum" as it only enough to protect against small arms fire and shrapnel, and only from the front and part of the sides -- since it was meant to operate a distance behind the battle line it was originally thought to be sufficient. In combat part of the sides had to be lowered for the crew to operate. The Bison had no room for ammunition so a second vehicle had to trail behind to carry the ammo. The weight of the gun was too much for the Panzer I chassis and so transmissions, shocks, wheels and tracks often broke down. The recoil of the gun would bounce the vehicle, causing even more abuse to the chassis.

The Bison I wasn't all bad though. It was able to keep up with the mobile infantry and tanks, didn't require any set up time and was easy to repair. The simple design meant it was easy to fix or even swap out either the gun or the chassis, or haul the sIG 33 off the tank and use it as a standard artillery piece. It also gave the Germans the experience they needed to build good sIG 33 self-propelled artillery vehicles like the *Grille* based on the Panzer 38(t) chassis.

Thirty-eight were built in the spring of 1940 with another handful assembled from supplied components in Russia in 1942. It served its purpose and they did well in France in 1941 and Greece in 1942 but by the time the Bison reached the Eastern Front in 1943 the few left were long obsolete.

Congratulations to Fred Horky, Robby Goldberg, Doc S, Jerry H.

This month we are traveling south for winter vacation – before the Interstate Highway System. Give me the manufacturer and model nickname in order to win; the model year and manufacturer's Model number will be considered icing on the cake. Good luck.

Kirk Ballash



A Bison under the "armor"



The Grille



The Accidental Collector

“You have *how* many model kits?” (mumble, mumble). “How many are built?” (mumble). “Where do you keep them all?” And then comes the hard question: “Why?”

The first two questions are easy – simple numbers. The third question I answer with some pride, having developed a very efficient and organized tracking, stacking and boxing system. But then comes that last one – why? That’s a stumper.

I didn’t start off to be a collector. I don’t mean to be one now, but alas I fear I am.

I started building when I was five because my dad was building. He went back to the days of stick and tissue models and small home-made solid balsa gliders that we spent hours flying in the yard. Plastic kits were better for uncoordinated little fingers and so my focus turned to them and, as I aged, my interest in details kept me in the polystyrene arena. Back in those days I built as fast as I could acquire and the only time I had a “stack” was Christmas and birthdays.

Then came a part time job. Half my paycheck went into savings, half into models and music. The stack began. I joined IPMS when I was 17 and discovered raffles, auctions, vendors and Squadron Mail Order. And the stack grew – a lot. My interest in modeling didn’t wane when my attention was further divided by cars and girls but my time building sure declined, dramatically fueling the growth of the stack.

About that same time I began to get serious about detailing and competing. I went from finishing ten kits a year to three or four, all the while still buying many more than I finished. By now I had gone from a single 6’ high x 3’ wide bookcase holding ALL my models, reference books and paints to four bookcases for just the models.



I didn’t buy anything I didn’t plan to build, with the rare exception like the Ringo Toys SM.55X that was too weird not to buy and too toy-like to want to build. But then came a period in modeling history where lots of kits were going out of production, or the molds were being sold and then reissued with a significant increase in price. Soon the attitude of “I’d like to build one someday, might as well get it now while its cheap / in production” set in. And so the stack grew even more.

Then came the flood of new releases. Suddenly many of my Monogram, Revell, MPC, Heller, Italeri, Fujimi and old Hasegawa kits were made obsolete as new releases poured forth from Tamiya, Trimaster and other foreign companies. Of course, I *had* to replace my Monogram Me 262 with the new Trimaster kit; but, since everyone else was too, my old Monogram kit (like many others) sat in my stack, unwanted by anyone. I accumulated a lot of duplicates this way during the 90’s as better versions came on the market. Not just duplicates of identical subjects, but new marks of those subjects in new scales. Sure, I had the P-39 Airacobra but it was in 1/48 scale, not in 1/72nd,



1984 – Where it all started

and it was an F model, not a Q, and Superscale just released a new set of decals with those particular markings I always wanted to do so I HAD to have that new kit. And then came the unusual subjects (I'm a sucker for oddities) like the Bf 109T. Order me one of those too!



But not everything got a new molding. Many of the old Heller and Italeri subjects were passed over in this wave of new releases and so I hung onto them. You never know when you feel the need to build (or find a contest theme for) a Dewoitine D.510 or Bristol 138. Selling the older kits in the days before the Internet wasn't a great prospect either since they weren't rare enough to be collectable but not quality enough to get more than 1/10th of the original cost. While not looking to make a massive profit I was loath to sell for such a loss and since I had still had room on the shelves

And so I became an accidental collector.

Long ago I gave up on the idea of building even half of the kits in my collection. I mentally divide them up now as "*truly want to and will most likely build*", "*want to build*", "*might like to build someday but certainly don't want to part with*" and finally kits I'll "*never get around to*." Every year I do a purge of sorts, collecting together the duplicates and the "*never get around to*" kits and then try to sell them at our local show. I can get rid of a couple dozen every year this way, but when I look back at my stack it never seems to shrink for very long.

I know I have a bigger stack than most modelers, though not nearly as big as others. The only saving grace are the detailed spread sheets I'll be leaving behind for Lovely Wife and Darling Daughter. Lists of which kits are sealed, which are started, which have the parts cleaned and ready for assembly or have aftermarket parts included, as well a rough value indicator to give them a fighting chance at selling them off once I've gone to the great hobby shop in the sky. I don't envy them the task.

When I meet a modeler at a show or hobby shop and they exclaim they have a "stack" of models at home -- "*I must have, like, 30 models in my closet!*" -- I just smile and nod, thinking of my current stack more than 50 times that number, and remembering that 30 kits is where it all started for me as well.

Kirk Ballash



1993 - Moving in to the new house. Five trips in my sister's Bronco = a five foot cube of models

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

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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

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Jan 20, 2019 | General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Build & BS Meeting (bring something to work on) and Quarterly contest: theme of “ <i>Novel Novelties</i> ” |
| Feb 17, 2019 | General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Seminar or Demo TBD |
| Mar 17, 2019 | General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Quarterly contest: theme of “ <i>Sea Animals</i> ” |
| Apr 21, 2019 | General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Build & BS Meeting (bring something to work on) |

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

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Feb 2, 2019 | “4M Mayhem” 2019 – Essexville, MI |
| Feb 16, 2019 | Blizzcon 2019 Annual Show – Columbus, OH |
| Mar 9, 2019 | SEMMEX 2019 Annual Show – Warren, MI |
| Mar 30, 2019 | TRIcon Annual Show – Pittsburgh, PA |
| Apr 5, 2019 | Region IV Convention -- Dayton, OH |
| Apr 7, 2019 | BuffCon 34 – Cheektowaga, NY |
| 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 15, 2019 | Summer Swap Meet – Sharon, PA |
| Sep 21, 2019 | SVASMCN .35 Annual Show – Sharon, PA |

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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