

WELCOME TO

The NAVIGATOR

ALAMO SQUADRON'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

MARCH 2026 Edition



**BUILT SOMETHING YOU'RE PROUD OF?
WHY NOT DISPLAY IT HERE?**
(U.S. COMBAT MEDIC FIGURE by Henry Nunez)

THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

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We invite you to showcase your work on our club's newsletter. Your projects highlight the talent and dedication of Alamo Squadron, and we're excited to share them with the community!

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The President's Corner

By Keith Rule



The election of the 2026-2027 club officer positions will take place in April, with nominations made at the upcoming March 5 meeting. We have three elected officer positions: President, Vice President, and Treasurer. The criteria for officers as described in our Constitution and By-Laws document is as follows:

1. The individual must be an active Life or Adult (dues current) member who has been a member of the club for at least one year.
2. The individual shall live within a 150 mile radius of the Alamo Mission.
3. The individual must display the ability and willingness to discharge the duties of the respective Executive Board position.
4. The individual must be a current member of IPMS USA and remain so during the term of office on the Alamo Squadron Executive Board or join IPMS USA prior to the date upon which the election for office of Alamo Squadron is conducted and remain a member of IPMS USA during the term of service on the Alamo Squadron Executive Board.
5. The individual must be an active model builder.
6. Members shall serve no more than three consecutive terms as an officer, being eligible for additional service after at least a one-year hiatus.
7. I have served three consecutive terms as President and, to be honest, am looking forward to the end of my term. David Auth has served 2 years as Vice President and Jim Norton 1 year as treasurer. Again, nominations for all three positions will take place at the March meeting.

Our next meeting is on **Thursday, March 5, 2026** at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church.

See Ya',

Keith

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February 5th 2026 Club Model Contest Winners

By Julio A. Caro



BOB STEIGEL
Collection of Battleships

**Congratulations to all our
February 5th Club Contest
winners!**

The competition as always was fierce,
but these three outstanding modelers
truly stood out.



KEITH RULE
1/25 1932 Cadillac v-12



JOHN NOLTENIUS
1/72 MQ-9 Reaper Drone

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February 5th 2026 Meeting Photos

By Julio A. Caro | Page 1 of 4



Our **February 5th, 2026** meeting brought many of our members together once again for an evening filled with creativity, craftsmanship, and camaraderie. Whether you were presenting, learning, or simply enjoying the atmosphere, the meeting was a great reminder of what makes our club so special. Enjoy the highlights Below.



Keith Rule kicks off the 2/5/26 meeting.



Dana Mathes brings up the topic of Judging changes.



Alan Larrumbide discusses the Model Summit Award Program and newsletter.



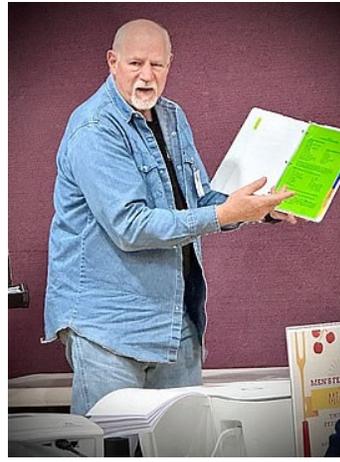
Jim Norton briefs members on the status of club finances.



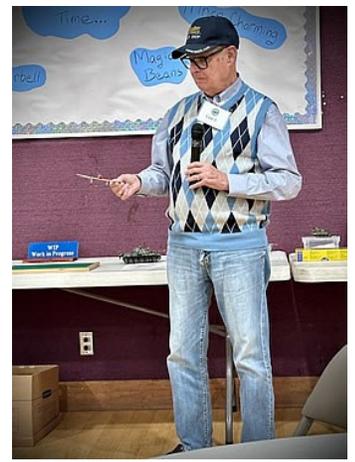
Mario Fernandez gives a demonstration on the new registration system.



Model of the Year Award for 2025 is formally presented to Keith Rule.



Rob Booth talks about the upcoming car build class at The Model Box Hobby Shop.



Lee Forbes discusses his Ki-61 "Tony" model he built back in 1964.

February 5th 2026 Meeting Photos

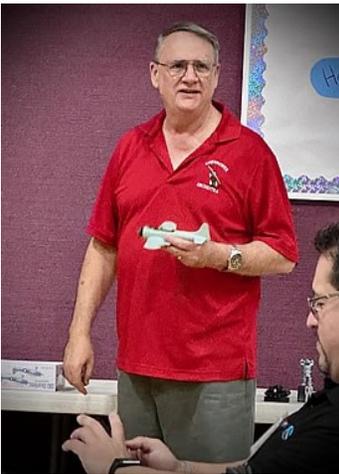
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Chris McLain describes his work with his Chaplain Jeep.



Chris Lenahan talks about some of the work his doing on his 3D printed figures.



Kent Knebel talks about the progress on his SDB Dauntless aircraft.



Michael Buckley is working on an old p-51 transparent kit and shares his progress.



Mario Fernandez provides details on several BC-12s planes his currently building.



Bob Steigel discusses several aircraft projects he's currently working on.



Joe Bianco talks on the progress of several P-51 kits his currently building.



Checked Follow Me Jeep and several other 1/48 scale armor kits by Rob Booth.

February 5th 2026 Meeting Photos

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1959 Cadillac El Dorado by David Auth on the Work in Progress (WIP) table.



AW Whitley BV Bomber built by Bob Angel on the contest table.



Bob Angel's B-25J Mitchell bomber proudly on display on the contest table.



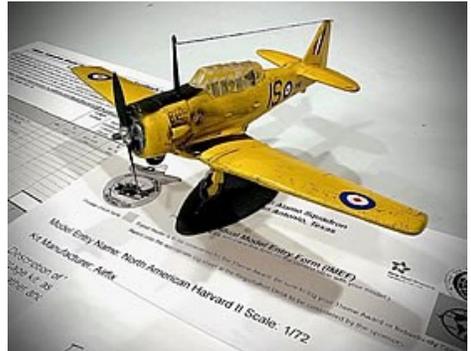
Chris McLain's Chaplains Willys Jeep on the WIP table.



3D printed figures by Chris Lenahan are showcased on the WIP table.



Impressive 1964 vintage Ki-61 "Tony" Japanese fighter built by Lee Forbes.



North American Harvard II aircraft on the contest table built by Gene Botkins.



Russian T-55 Tank with impressive Ethiopian camo built by Dana Mathes on display on the WIP table.



Joe Bianco's set of P-51 Mustangs that he currently working on the WIP table.

February 5th 2026 Meeting Photos

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First place winning collection of battleships by Bob Angel.



Second Place winner, 1932 Cadillac v-12 on the contest table by Keith Rule.



John Noltenius won 3rd place with his MQ-9 Reaper drone.



Here's a kit you don't come across too often, a Dehaviland DH-112 Venom.



Nicely built F-86A by Bob Angel on the WIP table.



Here's a vintage kit on the WIP table by Michael Buckley, a Monogram P-51 clear plastic model in progress.



SeaQuest DSV by Stacy Gaddis on the WIP table. This is going to be a fantastic model once built!



Mario Fernandez is working on a pair of BC-12 single-engine prop kits. Mario is a commercial pilot and flies these planes.



Dana Mathes is currently working a this 1/35 joint-venture tank project that the USA and Germany once worked on.

MARCH 2026 Edition

Phantoms Gathering:

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Phantom F-4 Group Build at ModelFiesta 44

By Alan Larrumbide, William Winmill and Devon McCollough | Page 1 of 4



Late last year, Alamo Squadron club member William Winmill began discussing the idea of putting together a group build centered on one of the timeless classics of military

aviation: the F-4 Phantom II. This build was not only meant to be fun, but it also serves as a tribute to a remarkable family and to the Phantom community at large.

In this issue, we focus on Devon McCollough's Vietnam-era F-4C finished in Southeast Asia camouflage. Several builds were displayed at Model Fiesta in January, where they were a big hit. However, Will has some long-range goals for this project, so we'll let him share the story in his own words.

William Winmill

"Well... it's a long story, starting in the foothills of Kentucky.

Seriously—it's Dana's fault... sort of.

Here's the background:

Club member Dana Mathis knows a church member whose husband, Captain Mike L. Faulkner (USMC), flew Phantoms in Vietnam. Her son, Dustin L. Faulkner, amassed a very large model collection, many of which were 1/48-scale Phantoms.

Tragically, both Mike and Dustin have since passed away, which is why we have dedicated the *Phantom Gathering* build to their memory.

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Mrs. Faulkner asked Dana if he would help sell her son's model collection, and that's where I came in. A few of us here in the Texas Hill Country started thinking: wouldn't it be fitting to do a memorial build in honor of both Mike and Dustin? I also know a number of Phantom drivers personally, so we decided to dedicate this gathering to all the pilots and crews who kept the 'Flying Brick' in the air.

I acquired the bulk of the Phantom kits and brought the idea to the Alamo Squadron. Knowing that group builds can be challenging—I build at a horrendously slow pace myself—I promoted this as a multi-year, annual gathering rather than a one-time event.

The only rule is that the model must be a 1/48-scale Phantom, as that was the scale Dustin built. At our inaugural gathering this past January at Model Fiesta, we displayed 11 Phantoms. Hopefully, next year I'll have a few of my own to add, along with more from others, and we should reach 20 or more. If other clubs decide to participate, the gathering will really start to gain steam.

I envision shepherding at least four more gatherings before handing the reins over to a junior member to carry it forward. Who knows what it might look like 10 years from now?

I still have several Phantom kits to distribute to those willing to contribute to the gathering over time.

Next year's theme is: *'World's Largest Distributor of MiG Parts.'*

Can you imagine 100 or more Phantoms on the tables? What a display that would be."

Kind regards,

William Winmill

Now let's hear about **Devon McCollough's** spectacular Hasegawa F4C.

Devon McCollough's F-4C Phantom

Devon began with the venerable 1/48-scale Hasegawa F-4C kit and has made several thoughtful modifications. These include adding wiring to the rear instrument panel and installing plastic blocking for the lower intake ducting. He also used what's billed as the "blackest black paint in the industry," Musou Black, inside the intake trunks to create the illusion of greater depth. To represent one of the Vietnam-era gunfighters, Devon added a 20 mm gun pod from the Monogram kit. He is also experimenting with aftermarket ejection seats—either from Verlinden or 3D-printed examples from Chris Lenahan—depending on how they turn out once painted.

Additional cockpit detail includes layered zinc chromate and Dark Gull Gray enamel paint over an Aqua Gloss-coated aluminum base on the cockpit floor.

Devon then used enamel thinner on a cotton swab to replicate the characteristic wear patterns around the rudder pedals.

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Devon has shared some truly “Phantastic” work-in-progress photos and we are thrilled to have seen the actual finished model at this year’s ModelFiesta 44 in January.

Devon’s work-in-progress photos:



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Preparing for painting - Black Base



Panel Lining and mottling



Painting first color of camouflage



Model with Camouflage completed

I hope you enjoyed this article and ... Keep on Modeling!

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Trumpeter's 1/72 Russian T-55 Build Review

By Julio A. Caro | Page 1 of 5



Greetings, styrene pirates! I've just wrapped up Trumpeter's 1/72 scale T-55 M1958, and today I'm bringing you my build review.

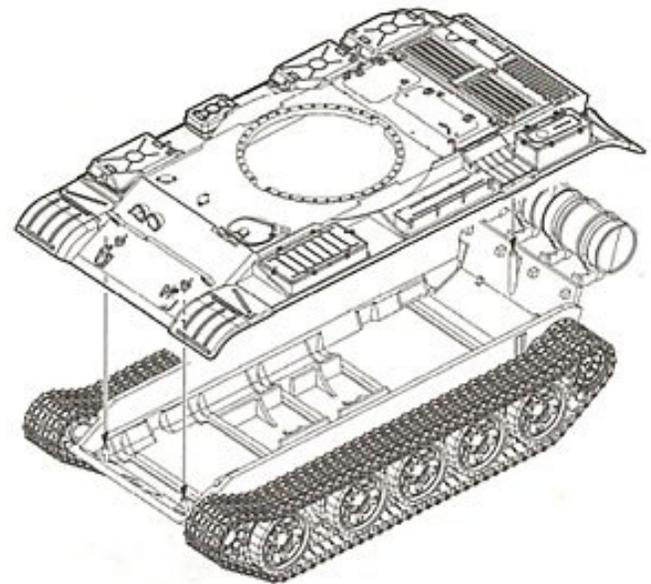
Trumpeter's **1/72 Russian T-55 Medium Tank M1958** (kit #07282) picture here for the most part captures the design of this historically significant tank. It features a detailed assembly process and is suitable for modelers with a skill level of 2 – although I'd personally rate it as a skill level 3 simply due to its minute size.



The Build Experience

Assembly

The kit features a one-piece slide-molded upper and lower hull, which makes assembly refreshingly straightforward. Reference illustration below:



Some modelers have reported fit issues with certain parts—particularly around the hull and turret—but I'm happy to say I didn't run into any of those gremlins myself.

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

Features	Details
Manufacturer:	Trumpeter
Scale:	1/72 nd
Length:	4.75 inches
Width:	1.8 inches
Height:	1.7 inches
Parts:	68
Sprues:	4
Tracks:	Black vinyl
Decals:	Water slide - Included

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What did test my patience though, was handling some of the smaller parts. These parts are so tiny – some as small as 1/16th of an inch in size, that anyone with stubby fingers like mine may find themselves teetering on the brink of madness. At one point, I was convinced the parts were actively trying to escape—either that or they were perfecting their disappearing act on the workbench floor.

I found myself inventing increasingly creative (and occasionally questionable) methods of gripping these microscopic pieces just long enough to apply glue. Tweezers became an extension of my hand, deep breathing exercises were introduced, and I briefly considered evolving smaller fingers. In the end, perseverance—and a fair bit of stubbornness—won the day.

Detailing

The model comes with beautifully detailed wheel assemblies and a crisply molded turret that looks the part straight out of the box.

At first glance, everything appears spot on. However, while researching the real vehicle (because of course I had to go down that rabbit hole); I discovered that the **handrails** included in the kit are slightly thicker and more robust than their real-life counterparts. Not wildly oversized—but let's just say they've been enjoying a steady diet of protein shakes.

Now, in the age of the internet, it didn't take long to find videos of heroic modelers who carefully replaced every single handrail with scratch-built versions made from perfectly scaled wire. Watching them bend,

measure, trim, and install each delicate piece with surgical precision was both inspiring and mildly intimidating. These are the kinds of people who probably alphabetize their paint racks and measure their glue drops with a micrometer – you know who you are.

After briefly considering joining their ranks, I took an honest look at my skills—and my patience—and embraced the noble out-of-the-box philosophy. I installed the supplied handrails. They may be slightly over scale, but from a normal viewing distance, no one will notice without magnification and some calipers. Preserving my sanity felt like the greater achievement. Reference photo below.



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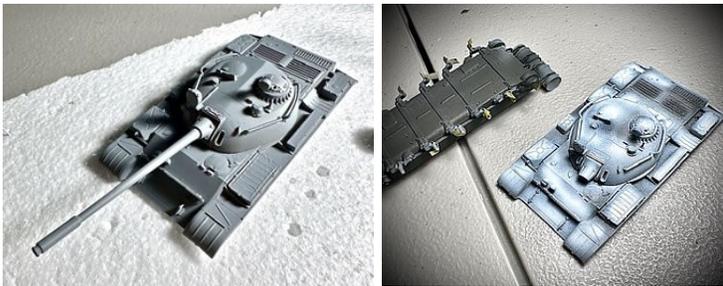
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Painting

The instructions come with a Paint Reference Chart with a painting and masking guide with color recommendations for Mr. Hobby, Vallejo, Model Master, Tamiya and Humbrol as seen in the illustration below.

Color	Mr.Hobby	Vallejo	Model Master	Tamiya	Humbrol
Russian green 俄国绿	H 136	823	-	-	-
Flat black 黑(哑光)	H 12 33	950	1749	XF1	33
Flat white 白(哑光)	H 11 62	951	1768	XF2	34
Steel(metal black) 黑铁色	H 18 28	864	1402	-	-

I began by priming the entire kit with AMMO One Shot Grey Primer by MIG. After it cured, I pre-shaded the more prominent areas of the tank using Vallejo Model Air White to create subtle tonal variation. You can see the result of that process in the following photos:



Pre-shading

After everything had dried, I airbrushed AK 3GEN Russian Green (thinned 50/50) in light coats, taking care not to overwhelm the pre-shading.

You can see the result of that process in the photos below.



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After I was happy with the initial results, I lightened the AK 3GEN Russian Green (80% green, 20% white), added a touch of yellow, and applied it to the pre-shaded areas to subtly enhance tonal variation. Here's the result with an initial gloss coat to seal my work:



Decals

After the paint and gloss coats had dried, I moved on to decals. Mercifully, there weren't many—just markings for a Czechoslovakian Army T-55. Armed with Micro Set and Micro Sol solution, I applied them without a hitch. They settled down beautifully, sparing me the usual decal-induced anxiety.

Weathering

Ahh, weathering—where the model really comes to life.

I started by applying panel liner to key areas using a 70/30 mix of Tamiya Brown and Black Panel Line Accent Color. After a couple of hours, I cleaned up any excess and let the model rest overnight.

The next day, I added dust and grime to areas where they naturally accumulate, focusing on the lower hull and running gear. I then lightly dry-brushed Vallejo Metal Color onto high-wear spots—latches, hinges, and panel edges—for a subtle metallic effect. Emphasis on *lightly*; I wasn't aiming for parade-ready shine.

Satisfied with the overall look (and resisting the temptation to add "just a bit more"), I sealed everything with a couple of coats of Micro Flat to eliminate the remaining sheen.

Here's how it looked afterward:



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Trumpeter's 1/72 Russian T-55 Build Review

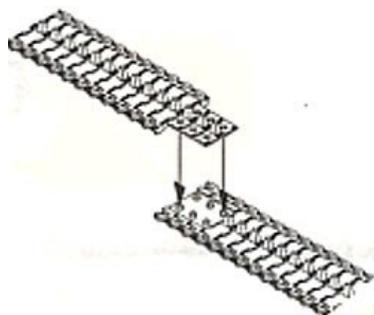
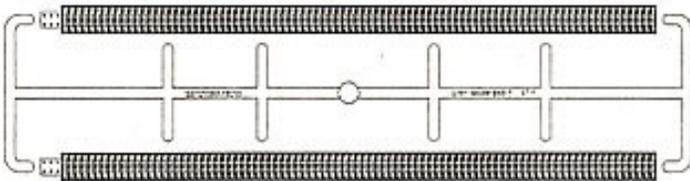
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The Tracks

As primarily an aircraft builder, I haven't ventured far into the world of armor, aside from a few soft-skin vehicles like jeeps and trucks. In fact, this T-55 is only the second tank I've ever tackled.

One of the main reasons I've avoided tanks for so long? Tracks. Specifically, the kind that require assembling each link individually. Those tiny, endless links have always intimidated me—staring at a pile of them feels less like modeling and more like a pop quiz in patience. But here I am, ready to tackle my "track phobia" and accept the future challenges that may come.

Fortunately, this kit comes with one-piece vinyl tracks that are supposed to be joined with plastic cement. I tried following the instructions, but the tracks just wouldn't hold tension over the wheels—they clearly had other plans. A few drops of superglue fixed the problem and saved both the tracks and my sanity. Reference illustrations below:



Missing Details

I found no significant issues.

Conclusion

Trumpeter's 1/72 T-55 M1958 is a solid entry for military vehicle enthusiasts. Despite a few minor fit issues, it builds into an attractive model straight from the box and offers plenty of opportunity for those who enjoy adding extra touches. In short, it's a rewarding build—with just enough room for creativity if you're so inclined and have the patience to work with such a small scale.

Here's the finished model on its custom display base:



I hope you enjoyed reading this article as much I did writing it. Warm Regards,

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MARCH 2026 Edition

Welcome to My Mind!

By Gene Botkins | Page 1 of 2

Here I go again with another model. Hope I do better this time. Let's see—a '69 Camaro SS 396. Looks awesome. Made by Revell in 2022. Let's do something really outside the box and read the instructions. Chevy entered the pony car market in 1967. Distinguished by the "ice tray" hood and 396 ci engine, only 311 cars were made.



Got to make a plan. Russians don't take a dump unless they have a plan. I'll start with my Master Builder Log Book (I got it from Amazon) to organize this. I'll list all the paint I'll need, as recommended. I like the box art, so I'll go with emerald green. Since, in Botkins' world, nothing is easy, the body color is a 75/25 mixture of Emerald Green and Silver Metallic—something new for me. I got a C in chemistry, just saying.

I have some aftermarket parts: a pre-wired distributor, battery wires, photo-etch for the same, and tubing for boots from Gofer Racing. Braided line is from Detail

Masters. I've got some seatbelts, but the decal sheet includes seatbelts too, so I'll use those.

Let's get started with the required basics and wash the parts. Some do, some don't. If the parts don't look oily, there's no reason to—except I wash anyway to establish good practices. I use my wife's casserole dish and some dishwashing liquid. Agitate a little, rinse, and air-dry.

To chrome or not to chrome, that is the question... whether it is nobler—aw, get back on track. Based on YouTube videos, this is a surprisingly controversial subject. I'm not going down this rabbit hole. I'm still experimenting and deciding what works. The box chrome looks okay to me, but I bought Alclad metals, so I'll try that. I'll use Purple Power to de-chrome the parts, Alclad's Black Gloss Backer for primer, then chrome, then gloss clear.

Inspect the body, deal with sink marks, seams, etc. Sand with 800 grit, then prime. I once asked my dad why he was painting the engine he rebuilt blue when no one would see it. "That's okay," he said, "I'll know." That's sort of how I feel about sink marks and ejector pin marks. I'm using a 70/30 mix of Emerald Green and Gold Metallic for the exterior. First coats look pretty good so far. Engine build progressing—working on spark plugs. I think I'm getting better at it.

The underbody and engine are now complete. I drilled the spark plug holes after the engine block was painted for ease of use, then added all the other parts. I used an aftermarket pre-wired distributor.

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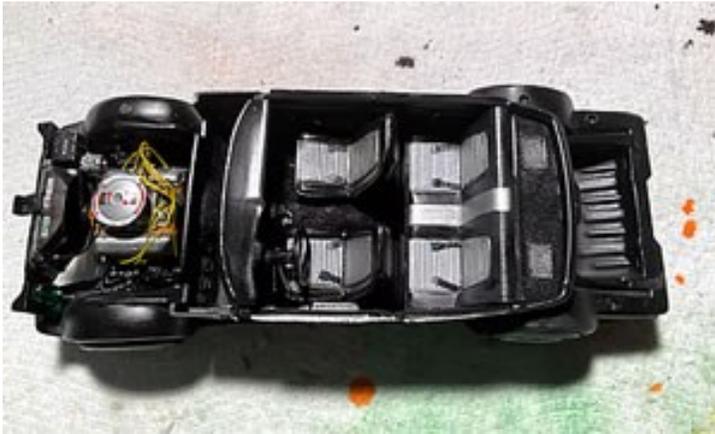
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Kit decals were pretty good, and the kit came with seatbelts and some nifty engine decals. Some flocking was added.



Now for the sad tale of woe. The initial bodywork went fine: primer, topcoats, wet sanding, etc. Gloss, decals—check. I masked off the car to prep for the chrome work when I noticed a couple of specks on top. After sanding, things looked a little faded, so I painted another coat (75% Emerald Green and 25% Silver Metallic). This is where the wheels fell off. After removing the tape, the paint on the sides looked wrinkled, and the top was scratched—and I don't know how that happened. Oh yeah, the decals came off too! Maybe I should have laid down the 2K clear first. David Auth opined that he lets 10 days go by. I tried massive sanding, which made the car look better, but not what it should be. So, a new kit was ordered, since I needed new decals and David recommended I start over again with the body. Oh bother.

Well, I tried 2K clear for the first time, and the lesson was a little painful. I laid it on too heavy and got orange

peel and wrinkles from sagging. It took a lot of sanding and polishing to get it to look halfway decent, and I'm fully prepared to be savaged by the judges. From now on—light coats only! Glass was installed, and I forgot to coat it in clear floor polish for protection. So, glue marks—but not as many as last time, so I guess that's progress.

Final Assembly

Not fun at all. No matter how many times I dry-fit, there always seem to be alignment issues. Hey! How did I miss those two holes in front? Doh! They're supposed to be there. Thanks, Jon. It always comes down to the bumpers. Dodgy bits, these. A lot of tweaking. The mirror doesn't want to stay glued. Some paint touch-ups here and there. More waxing. Calling this done. Oh well. Rome wasn't built and all that. I can honestly say progress was made in skills—but there's still a long way to go.



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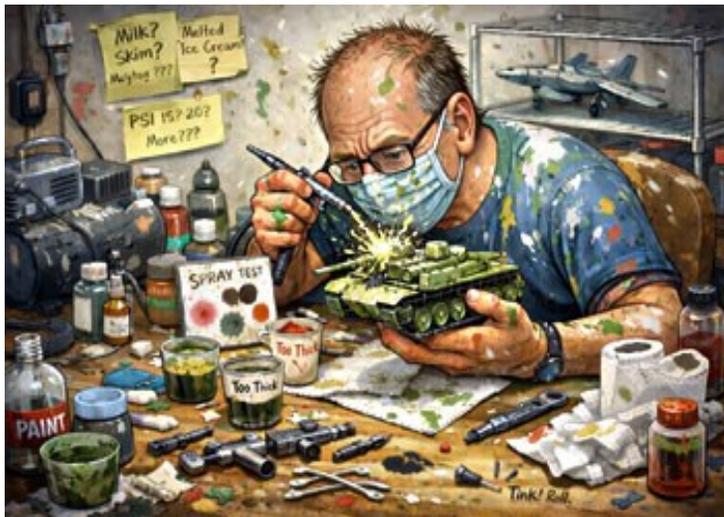
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When the Airbrush Wins!

By Julio A. Caro | Page 1 of 2



Until fairly recently, I painted most of my models using rattle cans. And honestly, they worked pretty well. I achieved finishes I was happy with and even managed to bring home my share of

bronze, silver, and gold medals at various shows. So it wasn't as if I *had* to change anything.

Still, in the back of my mind, I knew that if I really wanted to improve, airbrushing was the next step.

So why didn't I start sooner? Mostly because airbrushing seemed expensive, complicated, and just a little intimidating. Between the cost of the equipment, the mystery of paint-to-thinner ratios, and the idea of cleaning a delicate tool made up of flea-sized parts, it all felt like more trouble than it was worth. Rattle cans

were familiar. I understood their quirks, their limits, and how to get predictable results. Airbrushing meant starting over—and accepting that things might get worse before they got better.

Eventually, curiosity won out.

The first lie I told myself when I decided to airbrush a plastic styrene model for the first time was this:

"This shouldn't be so hard, 'cause a lot of other people do it too."

That lie was spoken while setting up a pristine workspace—fresh paper towels, a perfectly folded drop cloth, and a cup of thinner placed just far enough away that I swore it wouldn't get knocked over. I even felt smug for a moment. A professional, I thought. An artist.

Ten minutes later, there was paint on my fingers, my shirt, the table, the compressor, and—somehow—the dog too.

I quickly discovered that airbrushing is less a hobby and more a ritualized test of patience involving fluids and Ratio Anxiety™, that special form of stress reserved for paint-to-thinner mixes. Every guide, forum post, and YouTube video agrees on one thing only: none of them agree.

"Milk consistency," one says.

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When the Airbrush Wins!

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“Skim milk,” another insists.

“More like melted ice cream,” a third offers helpfully—before disappearing forever.

So I mixed. And remixed. And remixed again. Too thick, and the airbrush coughed like it had a forty-year smoking habit.

Too thin, and the paint behaved like it was actively trying to flee the model, pooling in corners and running down panels in dramatic, glossy streaks of shame.

I adjusted pressure. I didn't really know what I was adjusting it *to*, but I adjusted it anyway. Twenty PSI? Fifteen? Twelve? I settled on a number that “felt right,” which is airbrusher code for “*I have no idea, but I'm tired of guessing.*”

Then came the spray test. The first burst looked perfect!

Encouraged, I moved to the model—and immediately discovered that perfection was a trap. The paint spidered across the surface like it was alive. I pulled back. Now nothing came out. I pulled the trigger again. Still nothing. I leaned in closer.

That's when the clog cleared.

The airbrush released a concentrated blob of paint with the enthusiasm of a shaken soda can—right onto the most visible part of the model. I stared at it. The blob stared back. Neither of us blinked.

Cleanup followed. This involved cotton swabs, paper

towels, and the realization that thinner can dissolve paint *and* one's will to live. I disassembled the airbrush “just a little” and somehow ended up with parts spread across the table like a mechanical crime scene. One piece rolled away. I heard it hit the floor. I have never seen it since.

Somehow, after all of this, I tried again.

And this time—miraculously—it worked. Smooth coverage. Even coats. No runs. No splatter. I felt invincible. I rotated the model proudly, admiring the finish, and then—*psst*—my finger twitched. A faint overspray settled exactly where I didn't want it.

I briefly considered quitting the hobby.

Instead, I sighed, cleaned the airbrush *again*, and told myself the same comforting lie I always do:

“Next time, I'll get the mix right on the first try.”

And somewhere, deep in the drying rack, the model waits patiently—knowing full well that I'll be back, thinner-stained fingers and all, ready to make the same glorious mess again.

I hope you enjoyed my story. I'm pretty sure a lot of you out there can relate.

Until next time, keep on modeling!

Julio

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MARCH 2026 Edition

Theme Building: Working Boats

By Michael Buckley | Page 1 of 2

In previous Navigator articles, I focused on modeling themed categories such as “Modeling the Movies,” featuring Vietnam and other cinegraphic treatments, along with engineering masterpieces like the International Space Station, as published in the December 2024 IPMS Journal. This time, I’ve decided to feature a themed category on Work Boats. I hope you enjoy it!

Three Island Steamer



Classic freighter design from the late 1920s through the mid-1940s. The term “islands” refers to the three raised sections at the bow, midships, and fantail. As no commercial models exist of this type, this build uses a Lindberg tanker hull with a scratch-built superstructure—my first attempt at doing so.

Coastal Oiler



Designed for operations in the littoral waters along the

English coast, this vessel can access most shallow-draft harbors as well as channel ports. The model features an excellent fit and was a pleasure to build and paint.

Ocean Exploration



A well-known and superbly detailed model of **Calypso**, the converted minesweeper of famed oceanographer Jacques Cousteau, which became the iconic star of his mid-1950s and early-1960s television documentary series.

Continues on the following page...

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The NAVIGATOR

ALAMO SQUADRON'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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Theme Building: Working Boats

By Michael Buckley | Page 2 of 2

Harbor Tug



Harbor tugboats are the muscle behind approaches to port anchorages. This eBay-sourced model is old and poorly fitting, making detail attachment difficult due to ragged plastic surfaces; however, it successfully conveys the tug's brute strength and is the only model of its type I could find.

Deep Sea Recovery



This French deep-sea exploration ship was a co-discoverer of the Titanic and makes a sensible build of a vessel often overshadowed by James Cameron's famous ship.

North Sea Lifeboat



Box Photo and model of the my soon to be built Working Boat—a purpose-built north sea Rescue / Lifeboat . Model offers superb fit and detailed parts.

Comments and Other Sources

I know that working boats today would certainly include super-large oil and gas tankers and container ships, and I welcome comments on other historic models readers may know.



Warm Regards,

Michael Buckley
bucklmi@gmail.com

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Presenting *Hobby Show Manager*

By Mario Fernandez | Page 1 of 5

Aiming to simplify model show registration, judging and improve participant experience...



At the February meeting, I had the pleasure and opportunity to publicly announce and debut the latest beta version of Hobby Show Manager, a new web-based application designed specifically to support scale modeling events. The app is intended to modernize how shows handle registration,

judging, and event administration while giving clubs the option to either utilize the Alamo Squadron's new judging format or retain the traditional structure of competitions.

Hobby Show Manager was born out of my experience working on last year's ModelFiesta registration staff. I had an in-depth immersion in the process and realized I could help solve several of the challenges faced during the event. I began experimenting with the idea and learned how to use modern tools to program in PHP and MySQL, turning this brainchild into a reality.

During the presentation, attendees were guided through the platform's workflow, beginning with participant registration. Although a few hiccups were encountered, I was more than happy to assist members

who ran into issues. Once a person creates an account, they can enter their models ahead of time and manage entries online. The app supports proxy entries handled by registration staff, allowing participants who are unable to attend in person to still compete. It also supports junior class entries but requires an adult account to do so.

Because Alamo Squadron is one of the leading clubs nationwide addressing the new Gold-Silver-Bronze judging system, a key feature of Hobby Show Manager is how it manages the judging workflow. Judges are assigned to specific classes, ensuring that scoring permissions match their areas of responsibility. Scores are entered directly into the system, where totals and rankings are calculated automatically. This approach reduces paperwork and minimizes calculation errors while maintaining judging integrity.

On the administrative side, additional tools were showcased, providing organizers with centralized oversight of the event. From monitoring registration numbers to tracking judging progress, the dashboard allows staff to manage operations in real time. Event-locking controls and permission levels help ensure that data remains consistent once judging begins.

Another feature that drew interest was the use of QR codes tied to model entries. Depending on the level of access held by the person scanning the code, the link directs users to different destinations. If staff or judges scan the code, they can quickly access entry information without searching through printed lists, potentially speeding up both registration and

MARCH 2026 Edition

Presenting *Hobby Show Manager*

By Mario Fernandez | Page 2 of 5

evaluation during busy show periods. However, if a non-staff member scans the QR code, it directs them to the Most Popular Model voting page, streamlining that process as well.

The software is being developed to handle both updated judging procedures and traditional 1–2–3 judging criteria. This collaboration between technical development and experienced show organizers provides flexibility for multiple hobby clubs to use the app while allowing each club to tailor the system to its needs — from graphic design elements (such as event images) to functional details and specific features, including statistics. Although the app already allows clubs to control class and category names and define how they are judged, additional features can be incorporated as needed.

This partnership aims to ensure that the system supports established modeling standards rather than replacing them.

The club responded positively to the demonstration, noting the potential for a reduced workload for volunteers and a smoother experience for participants. With strong interest in seeing the platform used in a live event environment, it was determined that, beginning with the March club meeting, Alamo Squadron will use Hobby Show Manager to register monthly contest entries and conduct judging as part of an ongoing real-world testing phase. This continuous use will allow members and organizers to evaluate the system under actual meeting conditions, helping refine workflows and features as development progresses

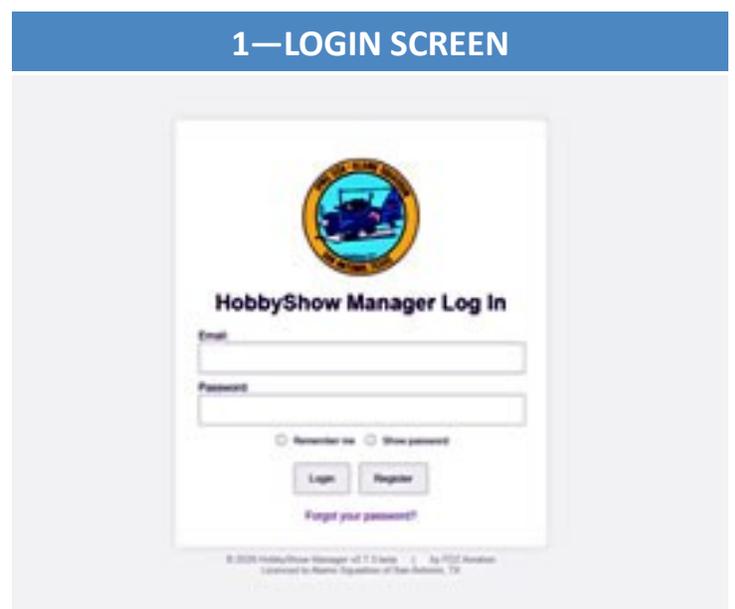
toward full deployment.

As a beta release, Hobby Show Manager remains under active development, with future plans including expanded statistics and enhanced reporting tools. The platform is already mature enough to support the management of multiple events.

The February presentation offered Alamo Squadron members a preview of how technology may soon assist hobby shows behind the scenes — helping organizers focus less on paperwork and more on the models themselves.

Let's explore Hobby Show Manager's user interface screens:

1—LOGIN SCREEN



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Presenting *Hobby Show Manager*

By Mario Fernandez | Page 3 of 5

2—PARTICIPANT USER HOME SCREEN

Welcome, Eustolio

Sand Box Profile | Logout

Corpus Christi, TX | 2026-02-20

Enter Model to Contest
Register your models. Enter up to 5, one model at a time.
[Register a Model]

Bring Display Only Models
Are you bringing display only models? If so, how many?
0 [SAVE]

My Registered Models

Entry #	Model Name	Class	Scale	Participant	Action
13-1	My Dad's Car	04 - Automotive	1/24	Eustolio Abaulló	[Icons]
13-2	Lady of the Lake	09 - Miscellaneous	1/12	Eustolio Abaulló	[Icons]

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4—ADMIN CONTROL PANEL

Welcome, Mario A. Fernandez

Sand Box - HobbyShow Manager v2.7.3 beta

Corpus Christi, TX, 2026-02-20

[Participants] [Models] [Classes] [Judging] [Jurisdiction] [Stats] [Event] [Users] [Home] [Logout]

Entered Models

Search by participant name or email [Search] All Classes [Export]

Entry #	Model Name	Main Class	Scale	Participant	Judged	Action
13-2	Lady of the Lake	09 - Miscellaneous	1/12	Eustolio Abaulló	[Icons]	[Icons]
13-1	My Dad's Car	04 - Automotive	1/24	Eustolio Abaulló	[Icons]	[Icons]
1-5	Platus PG-12	02 - Aerospace	1/72	Mario A. Fernandez	[Icons]	[Icons]
12-1	Buzz Lightgear	01 - Junior Modelers	1/6	Leonardo Fernandez	[Icons]	[Icons]
11-3	Bruce's 3rd Test Model	03 - Military Vehicles	1/35	Bruce Wornal	[Icons]	[Icons]
11-2	Bruce's 2nd Test Model	06 - Figures	1/18	Bruce Wornal	[Icons]	[Icons]
11-1	Bruce's Test Model	05 - Ships and Nautical Vehicles	1/700	Bruce Wornal	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-2	Ju 87D5	02 - Aerospace	1/35	Carlos Gonzalez	[Icons]	[Icons]
10-1	C-58 Galaxy	02 - Aerospace	1/144	Rob Booth	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-4	Desert Devil	04 - Automotive	1/25	Dana Mathes	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-1	T-34	03 - Military Vehicles	1/35	Carlos Gonzalez	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-3	PAC V hovercraft	05 - Ships and Nautical Vehicles	1/25	Dana Mathes	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-2	1/35 Type 58-2 Tank	03 - Military Vehicles	1/35	Dana Mathes	[Icons]	[Icons]
8-1	1/25 Tiger I	03 - Military Vehicles	1/25	Dana Mathes	[Icons]	[Icons]

3—MODEL REGISTRATION FORM

Model Registration - Sand Box

Registering models for: **Mario A. Fernandez** [That's not me!](#)

Up to 5 models may be entered per person. By entering models, you agree to be bound by the Official Rules and Terms.

Model Name: *

Scale: * Class: *

Manufacturer: *

Select Special Awards:

Theme Award Best Marvel Model Tamiya Award

Korean War Award USAF Award Artillery Award

Description of Work:

[Register Model] [Cancel]

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5—ADMIN CONTROL PANEL, Class Setting

Welcome, Mario A. Fernandez

Sand Box - HobbyShow Manager v2.7.3 beta

Corpus Christi, TX, 2026-02-20

[Participants] [Models] [Classes] [Judging] [Jurisdiction] [Stats] [Event] [Users] [Home] [Logout]

Class Settings

Main Classes

Class Name	Delete
01 - Junior Modelers	[Delete]
02 - Aerospace	[Delete]
03 - Military Vehicles	[Delete]
04 - Automotive	[Delete]
05 - Ships and Nautical Vehicles	[Delete]
06 - Figures	[Delete]
07 - Fictional Vehicles	[Delete]
08 - Gun/Fa	[Delete]
09 - Miscellaneous	[Delete]

Sponsored and Special Awards

Special Award	Sponsor	Show?	Delete
Theme Award	[Select User]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Best Marvel Model	[Select User]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Tamiya Award	[Select User]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Korean War Award	Eustolio Abaulló (sponsor)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Best Soccer related subject	Carlos Gonzalez (judge)	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
USAF Award	[Select User]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Artillery Award	Rob Booth (admin)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
WOW Factor	Eustolio Abaulló (sponsor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]
Checo Perez Award	Mario A. Fernandez (admin)	<input type="checkbox"/>	[Delete]

Add special awards.

New special category name: [Text Box]

New categories default to "Show?"

[+ Add] [M Save]

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Presenting *Hobby Show Manager*

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6—JUDGING HOME SCREEN

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8—EVENT SETTING PAGE

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Multiple event management as well as Grading system thresholds are defined here.

7—ADMIN JURISDICTION SCREEN

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NOTE: Judges will only be able to judge their assigned classes.

9—EVENT STATISTICS PAGE

Classes	Entries	🥇	🥈	🥉	X	Totals	% 🥇	% 🥈	% 🥉	% X
01 - Junior Modelers	1	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
02 - Aerospace	7	1	2	2	2	5	14.3%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
03 - Military Vehicles	4	0	0	0	4	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
04 - Automotive	3	1	1	0	1	2	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%
05 - Ships and Nautical Vehicles	2	1	0	0	1	1	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
06 - Figures	1	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

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These can be adjusted to the organizer's wishes.

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10—PDF ENTRY FORM COMPARISONS

The following is an illustration of the difference between the **Individual Model Entry Form (IMEF)** generated by Hobby Show Manager and the previous (and currently active) form used at ModelFiesta 44.

IPMS Alamo Squadron, San Antonio, TX
 a Modelers Without Borders affiliate club

ModelFiesta
 Model Registration Form

SCANS FOR ENTRY
 Entry No. 13-2

Model Name: Lady of the Lake
 Main Category: 09 - Miscellaneous
 Special Categories:
 Description of Work:
 Test Test

Scale: 1/12
 Manufacturer: Scratch Built

Participant Name: Eustolio Ataulfo
 Participant Hometown:
 IPMS Number:

Alamo Squadron ModelFiesta | IMEF ver. 3.8 10-03-25

Hobby Show Form

IPMS Alamo Squadron
 San Antonio, Texas
 a Modelers Without Borders affiliate club

ModelFiesta
 Individual Model Entry Form (IMEF)

SCANS FOR ENTRY
 Entry No. 13-2

Please check here if your model is to be considered for the Theme Award. Be sure to log your Theme Award or Individually Sponsored Special Award into the appropriate log sheet at the Registration Desk to be considered by the sponsors.

Model Entry Name: _____ Scale: _____
 Kit Manufacturer: _____
 Description of Work _____

(Note: Models that have been removed from the contest tables prior to the completion of judging are not eligible for further consideration.)

MODELFiesta STAFF ONLY →
 Please be sure this table remains visible to the judges.
 Fold under at the dotted line below:

Contestant # _____ Model ID _____ Class # _____

Contestant Name: _____ IPMS #: _____
 City/State: _____

Alamo Squadron ModelFiesta IMEF ver. 1.8 10-03-25

Current PDF Form

Navigator Contributors Wanted!

By Your Navigator Editing Staff



Writing for the Newsletter Writing for the Navigator newsletter is more than just putting words on a page— it's a chance to shape the voice of our Alamo Squadron community and beyond. Each submission brings fresh perspective, whether it's a humorous anecdote, a detailed build report, or a reflective piece on modeling or camaraderie. These stories not only entertain, they inform and inspire, showcasing the diversity of skills, styles, and personalities within our chapter.

When members take part, the newsletter transforms into something truly special: a collective showcase of creativity and shared passion. It becomes a publication we all own, reflecting the spirit and heart of our group. This sense of ownership builds stronger connections and invites new members to feel welcomed and engaged.

Varied writing styles and topics add texture and interest, turning each issue into a lively mix rather than a monotonous read. It's not just informative—it's inviting. Submissions also lighten the load for editors and help keep content fresh and dynamic. In short, writing for the Navigator isn't just helpful—it's powerful. It turns readers into contributors, and contributors into community builders. Let your voice be part of the journey.

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Upcoming IPMS Shows and Events

Mark your calendars and get ready to be inspired by the creativity and craftsmanship on display at these upcoming IPMS Region 06 model shows.



EVENT DATE	NAME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
03/14/2026	Rivercon XV - 2026	Shreveport, LA	One University Place, Shreveport, LA 71115
3/28/2026	Showdown 2026	Plano, TX	Willowcreek Fellowship Church 1804 P Ave , Plano , TX 75074
4/18/2026	Route 66 Model Expo	Tulsa, OK	The Park Church of Christ 10600 E 96th ST S, Tulsa, OK 74133
05/2/2026	ModelMania 2026	Stafford, TX	The Stafford Center 10505 Cash Rd, Stafford, TX 77477
05/16/2026	CALMEX 2026	Sulphur, LA	West-Cal Arena & Events Center 401 Arena Road Sulphur, LA 70665
August 5-8, 2026	2026 IPMS Nationals	Fort Wayne, IN	Grand Wayne Convention Center 120 W. Jefferson Blvd. Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802

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Monthly Club Meeting Information

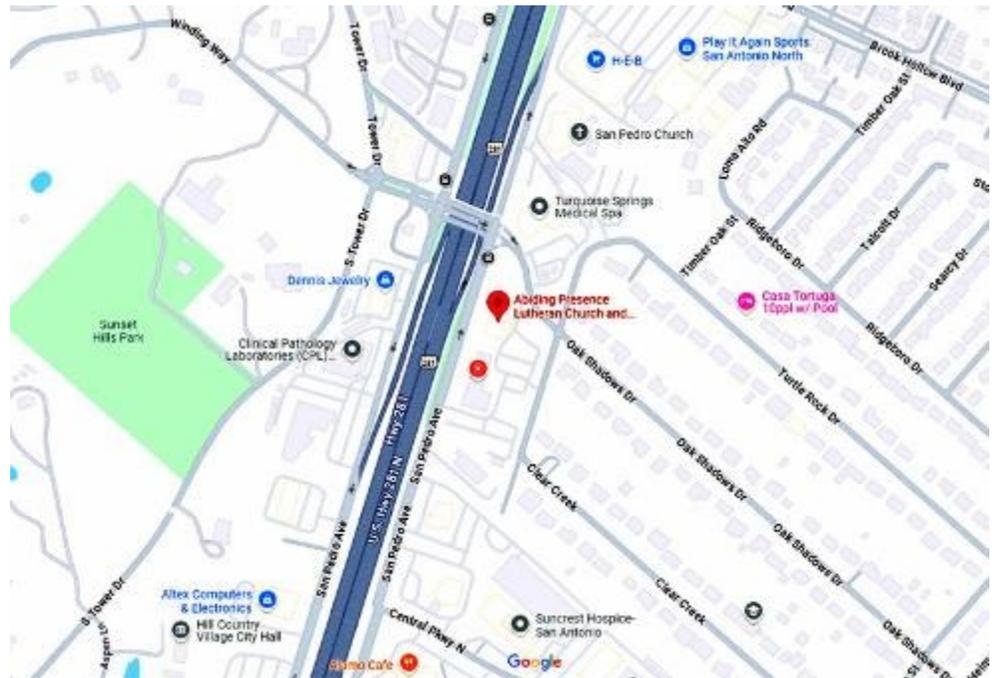
Alamo Squadron monthly club meetings are the perfect place to connect with fellow modelers to exchange ideas and learn new techniques to enhance your craft. Come share your latest projects, gain valuable insights, and enjoy the company of like-minded individuals who share your love for scale modeling.



Our monthly meetings are held on the **first Thursday of the month** starting at **6:30 PM** at

ABIDING PRESENCE LUTHERAN CHURCH

14700 San Pedro Ave.
San Antonio, TX 78232



*Our next meeting will take place on **March 5, 2026.***

IPMS Membership Information

Joining IPMS/USA is a great idea because it connects you with a dedicated community of scale modelers who share your passion. The society offers valuable resources, including detailed magazines, access to national and regional events, and opportunities for learning and improvement through workshops and contests. Membership also provides a platform to share your work, receive constructive feedback, and stay updated with the latest trends and techniques in scale modeling.



International Plastic Modelers' Society/USA Membership Application / Renewal Form

New Renewal IPMS#: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Chapter Affiliation, if any: _____

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Junior (17 years or younger) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$17.00 | Date of Birth _____ |
| Adult One year | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 | |
| Two years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$58.00 | |
| Three years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$86.00 | |
| Canada & Mexico | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 | |
| Foreign <small>Surface</small> | <input type="checkbox"/> \$38.00 | |
| Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult fee + \$5.00 | |
| | # of cards? _____ | |

Your Signature: _____

If recommended by an IPMS member, please provide his/her:
Name: _____ IPMS #: _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Cash Amount: _____
Check Check #: _____ Amount: _____

Where did you hear about IPMS/USA? Please check all that apply:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local model club | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet search |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> IPMS web site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ad in IPMS Journal | <input type="checkbox"/> I'm a former member rejoining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ad in other magazine | |

Applications should be printed and mailed to:

IPMS/USA
P. O. Box 452350
Omaha, Nebraska 68145-0235

Interested in joining IPMS?

Here is a copy of an IPMS Membership Application/Renewal Form. You can download the actual form from the IPMS/USA website at:

https://ipmsusa.org/sites/default/files/membership_application_0.pdf



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Hobby Stores and Other Links

Support hobby stores that support our club!

DIBBLES HOBBIES

1029 Donaldson Ave, San Antonio, TX 78228
(210) 735-7221

<http://dibbleshobbies.com>

OPEN: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 PM

CLOSED: Sundays and Mondays

HOBBY TOWN

1309 N. Loop 1604 W.,
Vineyard Shopping Center, Suite 101
San Antonio, TX 78259-4769
(210) 236-5527

<https://www.hobbytown.com/sanantonio-tx/l196>

OPEN: Monday-Saturday, 10:00 am to 8:00 PM

OPEN: Sunday, 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM

HILL COUNTRY HOBBY

9355 Bandera Road, Suite 118
San Antonio, TX 78250
(210) 681-2007

<http://www.hillcountryhobby.com>

OPEN: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 PM

CLOSED: Sundays and Mondays

HOBBY LOBBY

Visit the Hobby Lobby website to find the nearest store
to your location.

<http://www.hobbylobby.com>

LIONHEART HOBBY

5500 FM 2770, Suite 103,
Kyle, TX 78640
(512) 504-3404

<https://lionhearthobby.com>

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Monday - Thursday, 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM

Friday 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Saturday 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Sunday 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

KING'S HOBBY

7801 N. Lamar Blvd., Unit E188
Austin, TX 78752
(512) 836-7388

<http://kingshobby.com>

OPEN: Monday to Friday, 10:00 am - 6:00 PM

CLOSED: Saturday and Sunday

THE MODEL BOX

1022 N. Main St.
Boerne, TX 78006
Office: (830)-331-9144
Cell: (714) 323-4710

<https://themodelbox.co/>

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The Navigator
Editor & Production



Alamo Squadron Website

<https://www.alamosquadron.com>



Alamo Squadron FACEBOOK Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/114044928625406>



IPMS Membership Information

<https://www.myipmsusa.org/join-us>

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