

WELCOME TO

The NAVIGATOR

ALAMO SQUADRON'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

OCTOBER 2026 Issue



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[Read Full Story](#)

A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER...



Folks, just a friendly reminder:

Our Annual club membership dues are due. If you haven't yet taken care of your dues, please see **Brandon Porter**, our treasurer, at your earliest opportunity. Thanks for your support.

OFFICERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Jim Norton • President
David Auth • Vice President
Brandon Porter • Treasurer
Don Weaver • Chapter Contact

Mario Fernandez • Webmaster
Julio A. Caro • ME & Publisher
Alan Larrumbide • Co-Editor
[Meet Our Staff](#)

NEXT CLUB MEETING: OCTOBER 1, 2026



MODELING TIP OF THE DAY:

If you can't find room for another model,
you're not looking hard enough!

The President's Corner

By Jim Norton, President

Christmas... in September?



I was sitting at work last week when an email came in on my phone: "Patreon Winner!" Like most of us, I get an overabundance of unwanted emails and almost hit delete. Last year, the Alamo Squadron started paying for a Patreon membership to the Model Geeks podcast to help promote ModelFiesta (you all are familiar with ModelFiesta!). It was "Patreon" that caught my attention.

I opened it and was informed that I was the Episode 131 Pro Geek winner. I've been called many things in my life, but never a Pro Geek winner! The prize? A Rye Field Model MiG-21MF Fishbed in 1:48 scale.



It seems my luck has been going pretty well over the last few months. My number was pulled in July for the monthly raffle, and I selected the Tamiya 1:35 scale M24 Chaffee. At the time, I announced that the model would be donated to the ModelFiesta Raffle, and the same goes for the MiG-21!

The bottom line is, we all enjoy receiving gifts, and we've all heard the saying, "It's better to give than to receive!" Now, I'm going to go way out on a limb and guess that a few of you (OK, maybe more than a few) may have a few "extra" kits lying around just waiting to be built.

The success of the raffle reflects the quality and quantity of the kits we have available. Peter Ortensi did a great job last year, and we hope to surpass last year's accomplishments this year. Yes, I'm setting the bar higher.

Everyone, please take a look at your stashes. Won't it feel good to see the joy on the faces of the people who win your kit? They'll take it home, open the box, and dream of how it will turn out. We all do that!

I have several on my list to donate this year. Spread the happiness and clean out the clutter before "spring cleaning" comes around. By doing this, three things will happen:

1. **You will have effectively brought joy to someone who was looking for "that" kit.**
2. **You will feel good about that!**
3. **You just freed up space on your shelf for another kit.**

It's a WIN, WIN, WIN!

So, help the club and help the future of the hobby by selecting a quality kit from your surplus stash and helping ensure the continued success of the ModelFiesta Raffle!

Questions, concerns, or inquiries about volunteering can all be handled by the ModelFiesta Director and his staff.

Work hard and have fun doing it!

Jim

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9/3/26 Meeting Recap

By Caro | Page 1 of 2

6:45 PM—President Jim Norton calls meeting to order.

The following topics were covered:

- Our November meeting date was changed from November 5, to November 12, 2026 due to a conflicting church function. Please mark your calendar accordingly.
- *The Navigator* was selected Region 6 Newsletter of the Year for 2025. Jim Norton presented the award to Julio A. Caro, Managing Editor and Publisher of The Navigator.
- The Squadron's Constitution and Bylaws are currently under review by Jim Norton, David Auth and Brandon Porter. Revisions will be made as necessary.
- Mark Verdi was nominated by Jim Norton for Alamo Squadron Lifetime Membership. Mark's nomination was unanimously approved by all members present.
- Members discussed several recent modeling events, including the 2026 IPMS-USA National Convention, Space City Shootout Model Car Show and others. Keith Rule won "Best in Show" at the Space City Shootout and David Auth won "Best interior".

- Treasurer Brandon Porter provided a financial report on the status of our club's finances. We're in great shape!
- Chris Lenahan, ModelFiesta Planning Coordinator, provided an update on the on-going preparations for ModelFiesta 45. Key points mentioned:
 - ⇒ The show's flyer design has been finalized and being handled by our Webmaster, Mario Fernandez.
 - ⇒ Joe Bianco will no longer be able to be in charge of our Raffle due to eye surgery. Therefore, volunteers to handle that task are needed.
 - ⇒ A sample of the proposed club shirt was shown to all members. The shirt will cost about \$25.
- Mike Williams discussed the Model Summit Award program.
- Dana Mathes and Mario Fernandez discussed the new HOBBYSHOW Manager model registration system that will be used to register all ModelFiesta 45 competition entries. Members were asked to create an account in that system as soon as possible.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Monthly Demonstration

At approximately 7:00 p.m., Keith Rule gave a presentation on how to achieve award-winning high-gloss finish on scale-model cars.

Club Contest

Our Club contest and judging took place concurrently with Keith's demonstration.

Monthly Raffle

At approximately 7:45 p.m., our monthly Club Raffle took place with Marc Smith taking home this month's prize. Congratulations, Marc!

Work in Progress

As soon as the raffle ended, we began the Work in Progress segment of the night.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., the results of our monthly contest were announced by Dana Mathes. The winners (each with a GOLD) were:

- Greg Hamon — 1/24 New Horizons Space Probe (GOLD)
- Bernard Tarin — 1932 Ford Tudor Sedan (GOLD)

8:35 PM—The meeting was adjourned.

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Navigator Selected Region 6 Newsletter of the Year for 2025

By Julio A. Caro

The Navigator Named Region 6 Newsletter of the Year for 2025



The award was formally presented to **Julio A. Caro, Managing Editor and Publisher of *The Navigator***, by Alamo Squadron President **Jim Norton** during the September 3 club meeting.

Over the past several years, *The Navigator* has continued to evolve in both format and presentation, with changes intended to give the publication a fresh, contemporary look while building upon the solid foundation established by those who worked on it before.

Julio has worked closely with **Co-Editor Alan Larrumbide**, whose contributions have been a significant part of each issue.

While the award may have been presented to the editors, it really belongs to **Alamo Squadron as a whole**. A newsletter is only as good as the material it has to work with, and *The Navigator* depends on the members and staff who provide articles, photographs, build reports, contest results, club news and the many other contributions that fill its pages. Without that participation, there would be no *Navigator* worth publishing.

Congratulations to Julio and Alan and thanks to everyone who helped make *The Navigator* a great success. ★



There was some good news for Alamo Squadron this summer when *The Navigator* was selected as the **IPMS USA's Region 6 Newsletter of the Year**

for 2025. The award was officially announced during the IPMS/USA National Convention in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on August 8, 2026.

This is the second time *The Navigator* has received the Region 6 Newsletter of the Year honor, having previously won the award in 2022.

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Mark Verdi Nominated for Life Membership

By Julio A. Caro

Mark Verdi Nominated for Alamo Squadron Life Membership



At the September 3, 2026 meeting of Alamo Squadron, President Jim Norton nominated longtime member Mark Verdi for Life Membership in recognition of his many years of dedicated service and contributions to the club. The nomination was unanimously approved by the membership.

Mark joined Alamo Squadron in January 2017 and, over the past nearly ten years, has become one of the club's most dependable and active contributors. His involvement has been especially prominent in **ModelFiesta**, where he has served in a variety of important capacities, including Contest Chairman and Vendor Coordinator. His organizational skills and attention to detail have helped make ModelFiesta the successful event it is today. In 2025, Mark again served as the Vendor Coordinator, helping manage the vendor area for ModelFiesta 44.

Mark's efforts have also extended beyond Alamo Squadron. He has represented the club within the broader IPMS community and has consistently supported the hobby through his participation in shows and events. His work as a vendor coordinator has earned particular praise from those attending ModelFiesta, with one recent account describing him as one of the region's outstanding vendor coordinators.

The Alamo Squadron bylaws state that Life Membership may be conferred upon a member for **unique and significant service**, with criteria including at least ten years of membership, active modeling, contributions to club activities, participation in ModelFiesta, representation of the club at IPMS events, and promotion of the hobby.

While Mark will reach the ten-year membership milestone in January 2027, the unanimous vote makes clear that his fellow members believe his years of service and contributions have already earned him this special recognition.

**Congratulations, Mark! Thank you for everything you've done
and continue to do for Alamo Squadron.**



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Keith Rule Demonstration on Model Car Shine

By Julio A. Caro

Keith Rule Shares the Secrets of a Show-Stopping Car Shine



If there is one thing that immediately catches your eye when you see one of Keith Rule's automotive models, it is the finish. That deep, smooth, glass-like shine has become something of a Keith Rule trademark—and on September 3, Alamo Squadron members got an inside look at how he does it.

Keith presented a highly anticipated demonstration on **achieving a high-gloss automotive finish**, sharing the paints, materials and tools he uses to produce the award-winning finishes seen on his models. He walked members through his techniques, from applying the paint and clear coats to the polishing and finishing steps that transform a good paint job into a truly outstanding one.

And Keith certainly has the competition record to back up his techniques. His models have earned numerous first-place finishes, special awards and **Best in Show** honors at automotive modeling competitions. Among his documented successes is a **1947 Chevrolet Fleetmaster** that earned **1st Place, Best Automotive and Best in Show**, along with multiple other first-place finishes.

His **Fiat Mefistofele** was selected as the club's **2025 Model of the Year**, the highest honor awarded through the Squadron's annual member voting.

The September demonstration was enthusiastically attended, with members eager to learn some of the techniques behind those spectacular car finishes.



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WHY ARE MODEL KITS GETTING SO EXPENSIVE?

A LOOK AT WHAT'S DRIVING PRICES HIGHER

WHY?

SMART WAYS TO STRETCH YOUR HOBBY BUDGET

- ✓ Buy selectively
- ✓ Watch for sales
- ✓ Swap meets & club raffles
- ✓ Build your stash!

PRODUCER PRICE INDEX
(MODELS, CRAFT KITS & COLLECTORS' MINIATURES)

Year	Index Value
1985	100
2000	~150
2010	~200
2020	~250
2025 (JUNE)	284.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (PPI Series WPU751N155)

THE BOTTOM LINE:
Kits cost more for many reasons, but the passion for building never goes out of style.

By Julio A. Caro | Page 1 of 2



If you've walked into a hobby shop lately and experienced a little sticker shock, you're not alone. Many of us have noticed that scale model kit prices have climbed considerably over the past few years. What once seemed like a relatively inexpensive hobby can now make us think twice before putting a kit on the counter.

So, what's going on?

Production Costs

Today's kits are often considerably more sophisticated than those produced decades ago. Highly detailed tooling, hundreds of precisely engineered parts, slide-mold technology, photo-etched components, extensive

decal sheets and multiple marking options all add to the cost. Modern tooling itself can be a major investment, particularly for manufacturers producing relatively small quantities of specialized subjects.

Inflation & Manufacturing

Like almost everything else, the cost of manufacturing model kits has increased. Materials, labor, energy and other production expenses eventually find their way into the price we pay.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics maintains a Producer Price Index for models, craft kits and collectors' miniatures. That index reached 284.8 in June 2025, compared with a base of 100 in 1985—illustrating how dramatically costs in this category have risen over the long term.

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Why are Model Kits Getting So Expensive?

By Julio A. Caro | Page 2 of 2

Shipping & Distribution

Many of the major manufacturers we buy from are located overseas, including Japan, China, South Korea and various European countries. Those kits have to travel thousands of miles before reaching an American hobby shop. Fuel, freight, warehousing, insurance and distribution costs all become part of the final price.

Tariffs & Trade

More recently, tariffs and changing international trade policies have added another layer of uncertainty. Because the U.S. hobby market depends heavily on imported products, changes in trade costs can eventually show up on the shelf.

Getting More For Our Money

There's another factor worth considering: we expect more from our kits today.

Compared with many of the kits we built 30, 40 or 50 years ago, today's products can offer vastly improved accuracy, engineering and detail. The price may be higher, but so is what we're getting inside the box. For example, an IPMS/USA review published in January 2026 listed Tamiya's new 1/72 F-14D Tomcat at an MSRP of \$50. And that is just one example among an increasing number of highly detailed kits that can easily reach the \$50–\$100 range.

So, Is The Hobby Getting Too Expensive?

Perhaps—but that doesn't mean we have to stop building.

Modelers have always been a resourceful bunch. Sales, swap meets, club raffles, online marketplaces, used kits and simply being more selective about what we buy can all help stretch the hobby budget.

And perhaps the best strategy is the oldest one of all: Build what you already have!

With hundreds of kits sitting in many of our stashes, there may already be a small fortune in plastic waiting for us to put it together.



The next time you see a \$70 or \$100 kit, you may still cringe a little – I know I will. But at least you'll know there is considerably more behind that price tag than just a box full of plastic.

Cheers and happy modeling,

Julio

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Through the Looking Glass and Down the Rabbit Hole

— Article by Gene Botkins —



"Begin at the beginning," the King said gravely, and go on till you come to the end: then stop."

—The King of Hearts—



As modelers, we're all a little OCD. We love history, and some of us have a mania for accuracy. Some of us go through the looking glass and down rabbit holes in the name of authenticity and aftermarket parts. I know I do.

The other day, I was doing a little research on my 1/32-scale Revell F-4E. I was planning a future build. I located the correct SEA camouflage quickly enough, but I was puzzled by the tail markings, which feature the squadron identifier "UK" and the numbers "AF 70" and "334."

The "70" means the aircraft was procured with 1970 funding, and "334" is the serial number. So, I asked Google AI about the markings, and I went through the looking glass and watched a rabbit hole begin to open.

It first told me that this was a common mistake and that "UK" was actually "FC" or "FG," which indicated the 21st TFW and, when viewed at a glance, was often mistaken for "UK." I responded by pointing out that the decal sheet had "UK" in solid lines, not segmented into sections.

Its response was that "UK" meant British squadrons.

I tried various variations of the search and got squadrons from Thailand, Elmendorf, and Seymour.

This was going nowhere fast, and I was already three feet into the rabbit hole.

I tried looking up decal sheets for F-4 squadrons and got Turkey, Greece, Poland, Malaysia... well, you see where this is going.

My efforts to find a replacement sheet were unsuccessful.

What I should have done—and what I did—was reach out to the Phantom Whisperer, **Devon McCollough**.

We made arrangements for me to come over, and I spent all morning getting a master class in tail painting, tips, and tricks.

We addressed and fixed some minor issues, including the tail markings. I didn't know Devon could print stencil markings. I wish I could do that, but I'm not that technically minded. No matter. I left feeling that I had taken a significant step forward in my abilities.

Huge shout-out to Dev!

I eventually decided to go with the 110th Tactical Fighter Squadron with the 131st Tactical Fighter Wing out of St. Louis, Missouri. Later, they would trade in their F-4E's for F-15 Eagles and ultimately, B-2's and change their name to 110th Bombing Squadron.

Now, about that stupid Revell F-4 kit.... ★

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By Fred Horky©, *Life member IPSM USA, #6390* | Page 1 of 3

During my last Vietnam tour I was fortunate to see the legendary Bob Hope Christmas Show when his entourage came through the 25th Infantry Division's base camp at Cu Chi, just before Christmas, 1967.

Hope's show was, of course, the biggest and most famous of the travelling "official" USO shows. For decades, beginning in WWII, Hope had entertained troops in different parts of the world, especially during the weeks before Christmas. The TV era brought the opportunity for these shows to be edited into Hope's signature, hour-long TV Christmas special; greatly anticipated every year by the public and no doubt further enriching the Hope fortune, which was considerable.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force at Dayton includes a prominent display of Hope USO show memorabilia, centered on a continuous loop video which samples his many shows over many years, and from many wars, both cold and hot.

Along with many photographs and other items, it gives Americans today a taste of the legend of his annual adventures. But that display is a particular thrill for many older visitors, like me, who were among the thousands of young military men and women that Hope entertained.

In December 1967, Hope came to Cu Chi, home of the 25th Infantry Division to which I was attached. I saw his show, but was so far from the stage that I needed binoculars. As Air Force airlift advisor to the 25th, I had first made sure there were no glitches unloading his two C-130s full of entertainers, musicians, and equipment at the airfield (all 2,800 feet of it) and that it was transported to the open-field show site on time.

At that open-air site, a human sea of several thousand 25th Infantry Division troops had been waiting all afternoon for Hope to appear. By the time I had followed the show entourage to the site, I would have had to wade through an ocean of green jungle fatigues to get near the stage. One of my Army friends told me that he'd saved me a seat ...but

didn't, since I wanted to get away quickly AFTER the show to get back to the airfield to make sure that Hope & Co. DEPARTED with no snafus.



This "tail number" of Hope's C-130 (63-7887) seemed familiar when I scanned my picture years later... My personal log book revealed why. In 1964, I had flown **Hugh Downs** and his **NBC "Today Show"** film crew from England to Naples, Italy. They were in Europe to tape a "meet the troops" show, to be broadcast later on Thanksgiving in the US. Downs couldn't have known it, but missed a really good "scoop": a few days after we left him at Naples, our entire squadron, including this airplane and myself, were suddenly involved in a very nasty little civil war in Darkest Africa! You can Google it at "**Dragon Rouge Congo.**"

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There's Always Hope!

By Fred Horky©, *Life member IPSM USA, #6390* | Page 2 of 3



Raquel Welch, Christmas, 1967

(Not my picture, but found recently on the internet)

About seven or eight THOUSAND ...nobody really had an accurate count ... G.I.'s had long since arrived and staked out their "seats" while waiting to sit in the tropical sun most of the hot afternoon.

Thus, I wound up waaaaaay in the back, behind the cheap seats, which in my case meant clambering up to sit on top of the windshield frame of a big 5-ton diesel tractor-trailer truck. It was at least a hundred yards from the stage.



That's me on the top left in the photo above.

I'm REASONABLY sure that I saw Raquel Welch at Hope's show that day. I really can't be sure. Bob Hope SAID it was her: only I recently found proof.

We were told she was wearing a white blouse, blue mini-skirt, and white boots.

The Army show planners had carefully lined up row upon row of empty 105mm artillery ammo boxes as sort of ersatz bleachers. Of course, instead of sitting on them, the G.I.'s had quickly stacked them up, and then climbed on top "...to better see the show." Thus, by the time I got there, it was necessary to climb up to the top of the biggest truck I could find, to see over THEIR heads.

In my picture with text added, below, check out the guy ahead of us. He stands behind a sea of jungle-fatigue green, balancing as if a high-wire act on the precarious, wobbly roof bows of a big "deuce and a half" truck...



I found this great photo of Bob and Raquel at the Cu Chi Christmas '67 Bob Hope Show on the internet.



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There's Always Hope!

By Fred Horky©, *Life member IPSM USA, #6390* | Page 3 of 3

By the Vietnam Warhis third major war, with countless "Cold War" appearances around the globeBob Hope was already such a part of the American culture, because of his decades of USO efforts, that it would have been 'Un-American' to NOT enjoy the show. And I really did.

It was nearly dark when we got his show back at the airfield, and loaded to depart. It was a fairly complex operation with many people and vehicles involved. There was one final anecdote worth mentioning.

Much earlier in the day, long hours before the Hope show had even arrived, a Huey pilot had reported that he THOUGHT he'd HEARD machine gun fire directed at him outside of Cu Chi's perimeter barbed wire. Appropriate countermeasures had been taken, and "Charlie", if he had been there at all, was either gone or keeping his head down.

Then, Hope and Company arrived in the flurry of attention already described, did its show, and left; all without appreciable incident. Their takeoff was just before the sun went below the horizon.

This resulted in my rather dramatic photo below, showing Hope's C-130, framed against the sunset, climbing away from Cu Chi's sixty-foot wide aluminum runway.



Obviously, if any shooting had been going on at the time, I would NOT have been just standing there, taking pictures! But all was quiet.

However, among Hope's entourage, his Public Relations flacks had heard an idle comment about the possible gunfire reported much earlier that day. (Not too unusual; we were in a combat zone, after all!)

His TV show writers quickly folded this bit of "intelligence" into the script that Hope would narrate on his very popular TV show, back in the 'states several weeks later in January ...the show that all the mommas/wives back home watched intently for a glimpse of their Johnny G.I. sons/husbands. (Of course they would be watching: son/husband had written saying he had personally been to the famous Bob Hope show! This link will take you to that 1967 show.)

That year's annual "Bob Hope in Vietnam" TV special, always a highly promoted major event on NBC-TV, appeared several weeks later in early January. My wife Linda, back in Warner Robins, Georgia, of course didn't miss Hope making his typically flippant "voice-over" comment during the Cu Chi segment, mentioning that his show had departed "...in a hail of bullets!"

Today, the Bob Hope shows are personally remembered only by an older generation: it's "Bob who?" to the younger set. But Hope was the biggest and most famous of all USO shows for decades, and will likely remain such as a part of American history. No G.I. ever turned down a chance to see his show, and in fact would conspire mightily to get there. Today, the number is fast dwindling of friends or relatives: brothers, fathers, uncles, and grandfathers, who fondly recall being entertained by Bob Hope. He truly did bring "Hope" and entertainment to generations! © ★

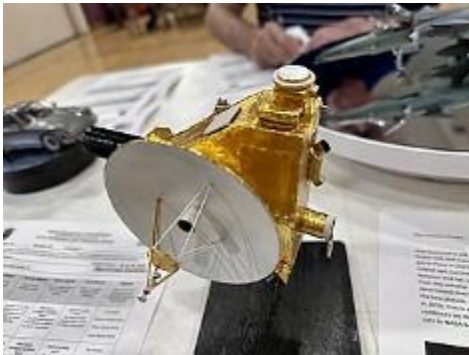
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9/3/26 Monthly Club Contest

By Julio A. Carol | Page 1 of 2

No theme. No limits. Just modeling.

The Monthly Club Model Contest is open to every Alamo Squadron member and every qualifying subject—from aircraft and armor to cars, ships, figures, spacecraft, and more. Judging is based on established **IPMS standards**, using the **Gold-Silver-Bronze method of judging**. Every entry will be individually evaluated and awarded a Gold, Silver, or Bronze based on its own level of achievement. Craftsmanship, attention to detail, and any extra effort invested in a build all factor into the final results. Judges will select the winners based on their evaluation of the best among the winners. **Here are photos of all entries:**



New Horizons Probe by **GREG HAMON**



1932 Ford Tudor Sedan
by **BERNARD TARIN**



1964 Shelby Cobra by **JOHN KRESS**



Voyager 1 & 2 Space Probe
by **GREG HAMON**



CHUCK BLAIR built this vignette of a German 37MM Anti-Tank Gun and its crew in action.



This cool F-21A Lion Aggressor Fighter Jet was built by **GENE BOTKINS**

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9/3/26 Monthly Club Contest

By Julio A. Carol | Page 2 of 2



Demonstration Soviet T-62A Tank by
DANA MATHES



Pioneer Probe by **GREG HAMON.**



Porsche 911 Carrera 3.2 Coupe
by **GENE BOTKINS**



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9/3/26 Club Contest Winners

By Julio A. Caro

Congratulations to all our September, 2026 Club Contest winners!
These two models tied for First Place each earning **GOLD** making them eligible to compete for **Alamo Squadron's Model of Year!**



BERNARD TARIN
1932 Ford Tudor Sedan



GREG HAMON
NASA's New Horizons Spacecraft

Congratulations

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SuperCon 2026 Show Winners

Arlington, Texas | September 12, 2026

By Julio A. Caro



The following pages feature a selection of award-winning models from the recent **SuperCon 2026 Model Show** held in Arlington, Texas, on September 12, 2026. These entries were submitted by members who chose to showcase their work in our newsletter. **Congratulations to all award recipients for their achievement!**

SuperCon 2026 Model Show (Arlington, Texas)

PHOTO	DESCRIPTION	SCALE	AWARD(S)
	MICHAEL WILLIAMSON PBR 31 Mk. II (Pibber) Best Southwest Asia Award (1964-1975)	1/35	
	BRETT SCHOLTEN 1/144 C-5A Galaxy	1/144	
	BRETT SCHOLTEN RQ3a Darkstar Drone	1/48	

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Because Models don't build themselves!

The Work in Progress table gives Alamo Squadron members a chance to share what they're currently building, no matter how far along the project may be. Members bring their models to the table, then take a few moments to tell the club about their builds, techniques, challenges, and plans for completion. It's a great way to see what's taking shape on our members' workbenches—and perhaps pick up an idea or two along the way.

9/3/26 WORK IN PROGRESS PARTICIPANTS

Participant	What are they working one?
CHRIS LENAHAN	Various 3D-Printed Figures
CHUCK BLAIR	Various 1/35 Figures
DAVID AUTH	1932 Ford Tudor Sedan
GENE BOTKINS	F-4 Phantom Jet
GEORGE ORTEGA	Formula 1 Race Car
JOHN KRESS	Ford 3 LITRE G.T. Race Car
MARC SMITH	X-15 Rocket Plane
MARIO FERNANDEZ	Ford GT Race Car, PC-12 Pilatus Plane
MIKE VERDI	2017 Corvette Grand Sport
RICHARD LARRUMBIDE	Vickers VC-10 Airliner
ROBERT STIEGEL	Polish PZL-P4, USAAF A-20, Spitfire Mk. I Photo Reconnaissance aircraft , F9F-8P Reconnaissance aircraft, USS Yorktown CV-5 Aircraft Carrier
STACY GADDIS	Churchill Tank

See photos on the following page

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9/3/26 Work in Progress

By Julio A. Caro | Page 2 of 4



CHRIS LENAHAN is working on various 3D figures.



CHUCK BLAIR is working on various figures.



DAVID AUTH tells club about the 1932 Ford Tudor kit he just finished.



GENE BOTKINS briefs club on the his progress with the F-4 Phantom Jet group build.



GEORGE ORTEGA brought in a Formula 1 Race Car his working on and shares his progress and experiences with our members.



JOHN KRESS tells club about the Ford 3 LITRE G.T. car he's currently working on.



MARC SMITH tells members about the X-15 Rocket Plane his currently building.



MARIO FERNANDEZ talks to members about the GT Race Car he's working on.

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9/3/26 Work in Progress

By Julio A. Caro | Page 3 of 4



RICHARD LARRUMBIDE describes the Vickers VC-10 airliner he built.



ROBERT STIEGEL is working on various model from planes to an aircraft carrier.



STACY GADDIS talks to members about a the Churchill Tank he worked on.



JOHN KRESS is working on this Airfix kit of a Ford 3 LITRE G.T. Number 34 Race car.



GENE BOTKINS has indeed been very busy building! He is also building this Hasegawa 1/48 F-4 Phantom Jet which will be part of a group build project for ModelFiesta 2027.



ROBERT STIEGEL is also putting together this F9F-8P Reconnaissance Jet on display on the WIP table.



ROBERT STIEGEL is working on this Spitfire Mk. I Photo Reconnaissance aircraft.



Churchill Tank by none other than **STACY GADDIS**.



DAVID AUTH built to great 1932 Ford Tudor Sedan.



ROBERT STIEGEL's Polish PZL-P4 on the Work in Progress (WIP) Table.

9/3/26 Work in Progress

By Julio A. Caro | Page 4 of 4



Fellow modeler and pilot **MARIO FERNANDEZ** is building this PC-12 Pilatus aircraft that he pilots.



USAAF A-20 Aircraft by **ROBERT STIEGEL** sits on the WIP Table.



Vickers VC-10 Airliner by **RICHARD LARRUMBIDE**.



USS Yorktown CV-5 Carrier by **ROBERT STIEGEL**



CHRIS LENAHAN is working on these 3D printed figures.



Set of great figures in progress on the **CHUCK BLAIR**.



MIKE VERDI is building this 2017 Corvette Grand Sport model kit for a friend.



Ford GT Race Car in progress by **MARIO FERNANDEZ**.



Formula One Race Car by **GEORGE ORTEGA**



MARC SMITH's X-15 Rocket Plane.

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9/3/26 Monthly Raffle Winner

By Julio A. Caro | Page 4 of 4

Good prizes. Good causes. Good fun!

Each month, Alamo Squadron holds a raffle to help support ModelFiesta and other club activities. Members get a chance to take home some great modeling-related prizes while helping fund the events, programs, and activities that keep our club going strong. It's a win for the lucky ticket holder and a win for the club!

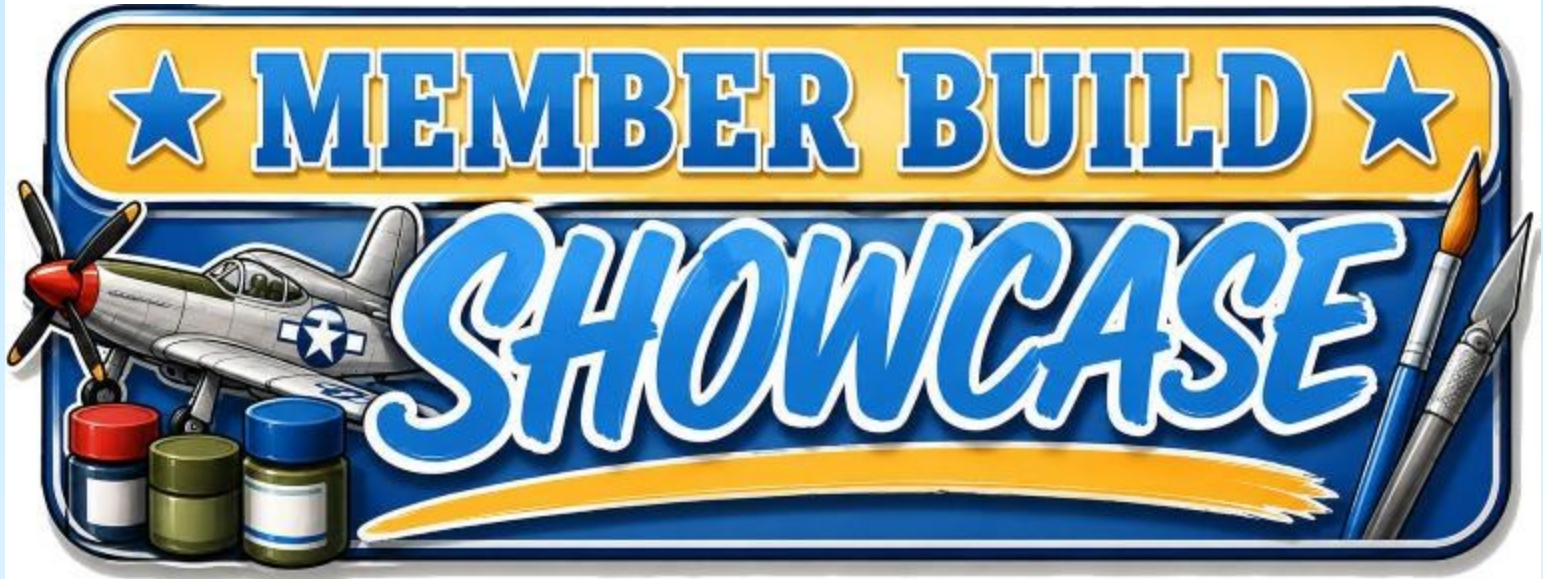
This month's lucky raffle winner was



MARC SMITH
Congratulations, Marc!



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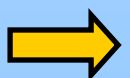
Each month, a build by a member of Alamo Squadron will be featured here giving us an opportunity to learn more about the people and models that make our club so special. This month's featured build is a

Tamiya 1/48 WWII German Nashorn Tank by **JUAN NOLTENIUS**



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[Read the full story](#)



MEMBER BUILD SHOWCASE

By Julio A. Caro | Page 2 of 3



For this month's **Member Build Showcase**, we turn our attention to

Juan Noltenius, an avid and prolific Alamo Squadron modeler whose interests encompass a wide variety of subjects.

Although armor is his primary specialty, Juan regularly builds aircraft, ships, figures, science fiction and other genres. His versatility and skill have earned him numerous awards at Alamo Squadron and other regional competitions. At the 2025 AMPS Centex Armor Expo alone, Juan earned Gold for his **1/35 Panzer II Ausf. F** and Silver awards for several other armor subjects, including his **1/48 M10 IIC Achilles and Matilda Mk. III/IV**.

A Nashorn With a History

Juan's latest project is Tamiya's **1/48 scale German Self-Propelled Heavy Anti-Tank Gun Nashorn**, kit #32600. His model is part of a special Alamo Squadron group project involving **ten members**, all building the same kit for competition and display at **ModelFiesta 45 in February 2027**.

While everyone started with the same kit, the finished vehicles will be anything but identical. Each modeler is selecting individual markings, camouflage patterns and weathering to represent different units, theaters of operation and battlefield conditions. The result should provide an excellent demonstration of how differently ten modelers can interpret the same subject.

For his contribution to the project, Juan selected **Nashorn "131," assigned to the 1st Company of Schwere Panzerjäger-Abteilung 525**, operating in the **Cassino/Liri Valley area of Italy**. The historical reference for this particular vehicle places it in **January 1944**, during the intense fighting in Italy. See photo below.



The choice is particularly appropriate for Juan, given his demonstrated interest and success in building German armor. The Nashorn was a formidable tank destroyer, mounting the powerful **8.8 cm Pak 43** on a lightly armored, open-topped chassis. Schwere Panzerjäger-Abteilung 525 was one of the German heavy tank-destroyer units equipped with

Nashorns and saw extensive service in Italy during 1943–44.

Juan's Approach

For his Nashorn, Juan first primed the model with **Vallejo German Red Brown (73.605)** shown below.



He then applied the base coat with **Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown** and the camouflage pattern using **Tamiya XF-89 Dark Green 2** and **Tamiya XF-88 Dark Yellow 2**. See photo below.



Rather than simply reproducing the kit's box-art version, Juan is using the historical vehicle as the basis for his own interpretation, paying particular attention to its distinctive camouflage and markings.

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MEMBER BUILD SHOWCASE

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He is currently putting the finishing touches on the project by creating a **customized display base** for the Nashorn. The completed base will provide an appropriate setting for the vehicle and further enhance its presentation when the model makes its debut at ModelFiesta 45.

With ten builders interpreting the same Nashorn kit in their own individual ways, this group project promises to be one of the more interesting displays to look for at ModelFiesta 45. Juan's historically inspired **Nashorn 131** will be one of those interpretations.

KIT AND BUILD DETAILS



Tamiya 1/48 scale Nashorn kit (#32600) source kit.



The finished Nashorn with the applicable unit and location markings.



Photo of a Nashorn tank unit in Italy, spring 1944.
Source: German Federal Archives



SUBJECT:	German Sd.Kfz. 164 Nashorn
SCALE	1/48
KIT:	Tamiya No. 32600
VEHICLE:	"131"
UNIT:	Kompanie, Schwere Panzerjäger -Abteilung 525
LOCATION:	Cassino/Liri Valley, Italy
DATE PORTRAYED:	January 1944
PRIMER USED:	Vallejo German Red Brown (73.605)
CAMOUFLAGE PAINTS:	Tamiya XF-89 Dark Green 2 / XF- 64 Red Brown
REASON FOR BUILD:	Group Build Project for ModelFiesta 45

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Upcoming Shows and Events

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



EVENT DATE	NAME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
10/3/2026	OKCMetroCon 2026	Oklahoma City, OK	Oklahoma National Guard Museum 3301 N.E. Grand Blvd Oklahoma City, OK 73111
10/12/2026	Cajun Modelfest 38	Baton Rouge, LA	LSU 4H MiniBarn Building Ag Center Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70803
11/14/2026	Austin Scale Modelers Society 2026 "Capitol Classic"	Taylor, TX	Williamson County Expo Center 5350 Bill Pickett Trail, Taylor TX
01/23/2027	Winterblitz 2027	College Station, TX	19124 State Highway 6 Frontage Road, College Station, Texas 77845
02/20/2027	MODELFiesta 45	New Braunfels, TX	New Braunfels Civic Center 375 S Castell Ave New Braunfels, TX 78130
03/13/2027	RiverCon XVI—2027	Shreveport, LA	LSUS University Center One University Place, Shreveport, LA 71115
04/03/2027	TigerFest XXXII	Harahan, LA	WFW Post 3267 1133 Hickory Avenue, Harahan, LA 70123
05/01/2027	ModelMania 2027	Stafford, TX	Stafford Centre 10505 Cash Road, Stafford, TX 77477

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HOBBYSHOW Manager Model Registration

By Mario Fernandez

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR CONTEST ENTRIES WITH

HOBBYSHOW MANAGER

Planning to enter a model in this month's club contest? Please take a few minutes to register your entry using Hobby Show Manager before the meeting.



Hobby Show Manager is our club's online registration system designed to make entering the monthly contest quick and easy. By registering your models in advance, you help streamline the check-in process, reduce paperwork on contest night, and ensure your entry information is accurate.

If you know you'll be bringing one or more models to the meeting, please log into Hobby Show Manager and register them before arriving. It only takes a few minutes and makes the process smoother for everyone involved.

You can access the Hobby Show Manager portal via the internet from your phone or computer by visiting the following website:

www.hobbyshowmanager.com/alamo

Once loaded, you'll see the Hobby Show Manager Login Screen. Reference the following example:

Thank you for helping us keep our monthly contests organized. We look forward to seeing your models on the contest table!

Happy modeling!

Mario

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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
OCTOBER 1, 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)	☐ \$17.00	Date of Birth _____
Adult One year	☐ \$30.00	
Two years	☐ \$58.00	
Three years	☐ \$86.00	
Canada & Mexico	☐ \$35.00	
Foreign Surface	☐ \$38.00	
Family	☐ 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:

☐ Local model club	☐ Internet search
☐ Friend	☐ IPMS web site
☐ Ad in IPMS Journal	☐ I'm a former member rejoining
☐ Facebook	☐ Other _____
☐ 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.



<https://ipmsusa.org/>

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>

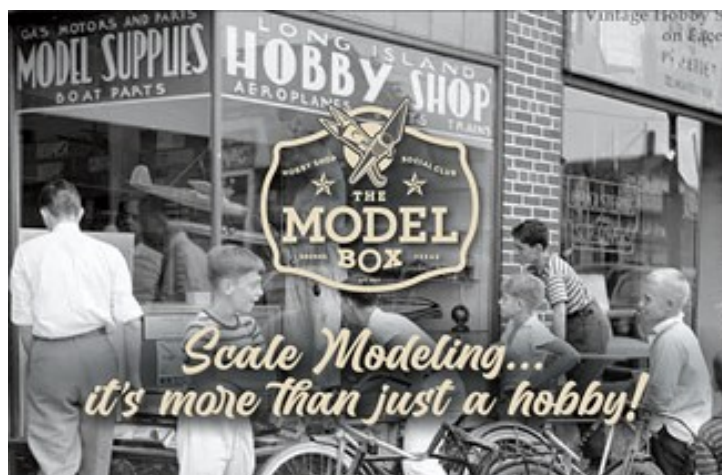
OPEN: Monday to Friday, 10:00 am - 6:00 PM

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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Meet our Club Staff

By Jim Norton, President | Page 1 of 2

JIM NORTON, President



Jim has been a member of Alamo Squadron since June 2022, and he quickly became an active part of the club. He

has served as our Treasurer and, in April 2026, was unanimously elected to serve as Alamo Squadron's President.

Jim's modeling interests lean toward aircraft—an especially fitting choice considering his real-world connection to aviation. He's not only a pilot and flight instructor, but also flies what many would consider one of the most essential aircraft in the U.S. Air Force inventory: the KC-135 Stratotanker.

So, when Jim builds an aircraft model, he brings a little more to the workbench than just a love of the hobby—he brings the perspective of someone who actually knows what it's like to fly them.

DAVID AUTH, Vice President



David has been a member of Alamo Squadron since June 2022 and an active part of the club ever since. He

is currently serving his second term as our Vice President, having been unanimously re-elected by the membership during our April 2026 Club Officer Elections.

Given David's passion for automobiles, it probably comes as no surprise that cars are his favorite modeling genre. And he's certainly no slouch when it comes to building them. David is widely regarded as one of the club's finest car modelers, a reputation backed up by the many Gold Medals he has earned over the years.

Whether it's the subject, the finish, or the attention to the smallest details, David brings the same level of skill and enthusiasm to the workbench that has made him one of Alamo Squadron's standout car modelers.

BRANDO PORTER, Treasurer



A prolific modeler, Brandon has become one of the club's more accomplished and versatile

competition modelers. He currently serves as the Squadron's **Treasurer**.

When it comes to modeling, Brandon is not exactly easy to put into a box. While armor may be among his favorite subjects, his impressive body of work demonstrates an interest in just about anything that catches his eye. His builds have included aircraft, armor, military vehicles, ships, spacecraft, science fiction subjects, and even some rather unusual subjects that might leave the rest of us wondering, *"Where did he find a kit for that?"*

Brandon is also no stranger to the competition table. His impressive record includes numerous Gold awards and special recognitions at shows throughout Texas and beyond.

DON WEAVER, Chapter Contact



Don has been a member of Alamo Squadron since September 2019. In May 2025, he was elected

Chapter Contact, a position he was re-elected to in April 2026, continuing his service to the Squadron.

When it comes to modeling, Don has a particular fondness for 1/72 scale jets, especially those from the colorful 1950s through the 1970s. As Don puts it, he enjoys the "colorful jets," although he occasionally ventures into the more modern—and decidedly grayer—era of aviation.

And Don's interests don't stop with aircraft. A self-professed Trekkie, he also enjoys building Star Trek kits, adding a little science fiction to his modeling repertoire.

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Meet our Club Staff

By Julio A. Caro | Page 2 of 2

Mario Fernandez, *Webmaster*



Mario has been a member of Alamo Squadron since April 2022. In late 2022, Mario volunteered to

take on the role of **Alamo Squadron's Webmaster**, bringing with him a wealth of experience in web design and development. When he took over our website, Mario didn't simply maintain it—he went to work rebuilding it.



His efforts have clearly paid off, with the Squadron's website earning

multiple Region 6 Website of the Year honors and being named IPMS/USA Website of the Year for 2023 and again for 2024.

Mario's primary modeling interest is civilian and naval aircraft, but he also enjoys building Formula 1, IndyCar and other race cars, with the occasional science-fiction subject finding its way onto his workbench.

And there's a particularly fitting connection between Mario's profession and his modeling. He currently flies BC-12 single-engine propeller aircraft. In fact, Mario has been known to build models of the very aircraft he flies!

Julio A. Caro, *Managing Editor & Publisher, The Navigator Newsletter*



Julio A. Caro has been a member of Alamo Squadron since May 2017 and currently serves as *The*

Navigator's Managing Editor and Publisher, overseeing the production of the Squadron's monthly newsletter. Alan Larrumbide, the former Managing Editor, now serves as Co-Editor, and together they continue to bring their experience to the publication.

Julio is also a frequent contributor to *The Navigator*, writing articles ranging from model-building reviews and historical subjects to modeling techniques and personal experiences from his own workbench. For him, writing is simply another way to share his enthusiasm for the hobby and connect with fellow modelers.



His efforts with *The Navigator* helped earn the publication **IPMS Region 6 Newsletter of the Year** for 2025.

When he's not working on the next issue, Julio is primarily an aircraft and military vehicle modeler, with the occasional rocket or spacecraft finding its way onto his workbench. For Julio, scale modeling is about more than building models—it's

about learning, sharing, and enjoying the hobby with others.

Alan Larrumbide, *Co-editor, The Navigator Newsletter*



Alan Larrumbide has been part of Alamo Squadron and the San Antonio modeling

community for many years. He has served as *The Navigator's* Managing Editor and now works alongside Julio A. Caro as Co-Editor, continuing to contribute his experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm to the Squadron's monthly publication.

Alan is also an accomplished writer and regular contributor to *The Navigator*, where his articles and features cover modeling, history, events, and the people who make up Alamo Squadron. His dedication to both modeling and the newsletter has made him an important part of the Squadron's effort to share knowledge, preserve its history, and keep members connected.

Alan is an avid aircraft modeler, with modern military aircraft among his favorites. He has built such subjects as an Israeli F-16 and USMC AV-8A Harrier, both of which earned top honors at ModelFiesta 43. He has a particular interest in F-4 Phantoms and helped establish the annual Phantom gathering at ModelFiesta.

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Links and Other Resources

For club resources, IPMS-USA membership information and other useful links, see below.



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>



Modellers Without Borders

<https://modellers.org/>



HobbyManager Portal

www.hobbyshowmanager.com/alamo



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ModelFiesta 2027 Flyer

50 YEARS OF IPMS ALAMO SQUADRON

MODELFiesta45



The graphic features a large, ornate, gold-colored frame with a scalloped border. Inside the frame, at the top, are the dates '1977' and '2027' flanking a small airplane. Below this is a banner that reads 'WE'RE GOLDEN!'. In the center is a shield with a blue top half containing a white star, and a bottom half split into red and white. Below the shield is a large, stylized '50' with a circular inset showing a model airplane. At the bottom of the frame are small silhouettes of various model aircraft.

★ **COME AND CELEBRATE WITH US** ★

FEBRUARY 19 - 20, 2027
Friday: Seminars, Vendors
Saturday: Contest, Vendors
New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center

THEME: WE'RE GOLDEN
Entries at least 50% Gold color
Number 50 prominent in model
Subject directly related to 1977

visit modelfiesta.com



A row of logos for sponsors and partners: a globe logo, 'Help Read Veterans', 'HobbyFaves', 'LIONHEART HOBBY', 'MODEL BOB', 'DIBBLE'S HOBBIES', 'HILL COUNTRY HOBBY', and 'HOBBY SHOP MANAGER'.



A square QR code located at the bottom right of the flyer.

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