

THE LEADING EDGE



Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Rocketry Association, Section #117
Volume 12, Number 2 - March/April 1989

Winter Trustees Meeting

by Bunny

The 1989 Winter Board meeting went back to AMA HQ in Reston, VA, February 10-12. Twelve trustees, the largest number since the Lakehurst meeting of September 1980 attended and made major decisions.

Prior to the meeting, the AMA and NAR insurance committees met to hammer out a new insurance arrangement between the two organizations. AMA counsel was concerned that AMA could be forced to pay taxes on insurance reserves because of the existing Risk Transfer Agreement (RTA). They were also concerned about possible undue exposure arising out of particular aspects of the RTA.

The new arrangements, currently having administrative details finalized at both headquarters, have NAR members paying \$7 and becoming affiliate AMA members. Sections would have to have all members be either affiliate or full AMA members prior to being allowed to charter and purchase additional insured coverage. After approving the proposal, the NAR Board delegated implementation authority to the Insurance Committee.

The Board moved next to its major agenda item, a long range goal setting session. Ed Muccio applied 15 years of planning experience at

(continued on page 4)

Tower Field Box Product Review

by Bunny

Tower Hobbies in Champaign provides RC products at discount prices through mail and phone orders. Most rocketeers couldn't care less about the fuel, propellers and airplane kits they sell, but Tower's products are outstanding and deserve a second look. Having watched NIRA members parade to our club launches toting their equipment in a variety of cardboard boxes, I decided, after 22 years of the same, to invest in a Tower Field Box.

RC flyers use a field box to carry their fuel, transmitter, starting battery and tools to the flying field. Tower's box looked ample enough at 10 x 12 x 14 with four large compartments and a separate box for other tools. Regularly priced at about \$35, I got mine for \$25 when they were on sale.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The box consists of 20 or so pieces of mahogany plywood, a 1" dowel for the handle and the nails, screws and hinges needed for assembly. Six pages of illustrated instructions are included. No parts were missing from my kit, and the plywood parts were of high quality. You have to supply a hammer, screwdriver, drill, glue and sandpaper.

(continued on page 5)

T Minus 1 - NIRA Events

MONTHLY MEETINGS

March 3, 1989

April 7, 1989

Discuss MASCON travel plans, review our spring launch schedule, and plan for the 4-H Fair in April.

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Our activities this year will take place at the regular launch time, i.e. the **THIRD SUNDAY** of the month. All activities start at 2 PM, but obviously the location will vary depending on the activity. Always check this space for further details. Members usually retire after the event or launch to a local restaurant, so plan on making a day out of it.

WINTER ACTIVITY DATES

March 19, 1989

NIRA Goes Bowling - Come out and enjoy some fun. Prizes (i.e. some good rocket kits) for these "performances"; Highest and Lowest Total Score, Worst Score in the Beer Frame. Place is Hesterman Bowl, 500 Roosevelt Road, Glen Ellyn. Contact Lawrence Bercini, 561-8098 for further details.

April 8-9, 1989

SAM Base 1 - Open Meet

Fort Custer Recreation Area, Augusta (very near Kalamazoo), MI. Insurance required by the Michigan DNR. Events: F SR Altitude, D Altitude, B HD, A SD, B BG, Open Spot, Predicted Duration. Contact either Bob Alway (616-327-1324) or Henry Holzgrefe (616-375-4891).

May 5-7 1989

MASCON 89 Convention

A great convention back in 1987, NIRA will attend and car pool. Door prizes, kitbashing, scale data and plans exchange, movies, NAR Sanctioned R&D, water rocket contest and numerous discussion groups on HPR, computers, scale, etc. Pre-registration required for dormitory housing. Write MASCON T89, Huron Valley Rocket Society, 2742 Beacon Hill, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, or call Mark O'Brien at 313-971-6033.

1989 LAUNCH DATES

April 16, 1989

May 21, 1989

June 18, 1989

July 16, 1989

August 20, 1989

September 17, 1989

October 15, 1989

November 19, 1989

THE LEADING EDGE

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Heard on the Street

Rumors and such, with apologies to the Wall Street Journal

Soviet Expansionism - The USSR is planning a major expansion of the Mir Space Station this year. Recent photos show a Mir crowded with experiments and equipment. A Proton booster will loft a new section to Mir where it will attach to the 5 port docking adapter. Mir's attitude control system would have a problem if a single section remained attached for an extended period, so a second module will be lofted 2 to 3 months after the first to regain the station's symmetry. Also to be lofted with the addition is the Soviet version of the MMU. Initial tests will be done tethered to Mir. Tass reports the MMU will be used for construction and satellite repair, probably in conjunction with the Soviet Shuttle.

Tripoli Troubles - Political intrigue abounds within the Tripoli Rocketry Association, the HPR version of the NAR. Some Tripoli members have taken issue with Ed Tindell's leadership as president. Another faction apparently asked members to restructure the entire organization at a Central Blast 1 informal meeting. Tripoli remains unresponsive to inquiries from NAR representatives concerning changes in national rocket regulations. Perhaps more dialogue will occur when the political dust settles.

Damon Divests - Several Damon executives, including the CEO, have resigned from the board of Damon Biotech. The resignations are the first step in a plan for Damon to be acquired by Nomad Partners. The resignations clear the way for Damon to sell its 61% holdings in Damon Biotech and distribute the after tax proceeds to Damon stockholders as part of the acquisition plan. No word yet on the dissolution of other Damon businesses.

Wanna Buy an Air Base? - The AMA's Land Committee is intensively reviewing two large parcels in the Midwest for acquisition and conversion into a permanent national flying site. Engineering studies are being conducted to determine the feasibility and cost of converting the sites for use by the AMA. While the primary purpose of the site is obviously model airplane use, if NARAM didn't conflict with the AMA Nats, look for a future NARAM to be held at whatever site the AMA eventually buys. Since Chanute AFB is scheduled for closing in about 4 years, it might be available for purchase. Hey, AMA! Wanna buy Chanute?

Roumanian FAI Fumble - The FAI withdrew its sanction of the 1989 World Spacemodels Championships from Roumania. The Roumanians haven't paid their FAI dues for two years, owing the FAI about \$14,000. The chances for an '89 Championships appear slim, and most likely the meet will be postponed a year with Bulgaria and the USSR being likely candidates for the site. More information may be coming out of the FAI meeting late in March.

Blacksburg Bells - Congratulations are due to Larry London and Carol Meyers who plan to "tie the knot" Sunday, August 13, 1989 in Blacksburg, VA. Larry and Carol are graduate students in engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI), Terry Lee's alma mater. They join Tom Beach and Joyce Guzik as NIRA "items" who eventually made it down the aisle. Our best wishes to Carol and Larry.

Winter Trustees Meeting
(continued from page 1)

Texas Instruments to lead the 7 1/2 hour session. The major long term goals developed were: (a) have 10,000 NAR members by 1995, (b) have American Spacemodeling operating without an NAR subsidy by 1995, (c) have 10% of NAR members participate in one sanctioned contest per year by 1995, (d) be able to subsidize 50% of the cost of FAI teams by 1995, and (e) have \$50,000 of NARTS sales by 1995. The Board directed committee chairmen to develop action plans around these goals, providing some suggested implementation ideas of their own. The Board will review action plans at the August meeting prior to NARAM.

In preparation for financing the action plans, the Board approved a dues increase effective April 1. Existing members will be given the opportunity to extend their membership at current rates for one year. The new dues structure will be \$15 for Juniors and Leaders, and \$25 for Seniors. The increase was the first since 1982 and is actually less than the sum of inflation rates incurred since then.

Among committee reports, S&T was authorized to purchase a new testing system. The old system, designed, built and programmed by Guppy Youngren, is near the end of its useful life. The replacement system is designed around a laptop computer and an analog to digital conversion board. The system's portability should be useful at NARAM and World Championships.

The Board seems comfortable making big decisions in Reston. AMA HQ has served as the site for the Barber and Barrowman commission reports and now the site of a major step forward to long term planning.

Let's hope this good work continues in the future. See you in Manassas!

NIRA BIRTHDAY CORNER

Barb Bundick - March 8

NIRA WANT ADS

*OLD ENGINES FOR SALE
(NOT FOR FLYING)*

Estes engines in unopened mailing tubes. These are late 60's to early 70's vintage with Astron ignitors. 1/4A3-2 at 3/\$3.00; 1/4A3-2S at 3/\$3.00; 1/4A3-4 at 3/\$3.00; A8-5 at 3/\$3.25; and B3- 7 at 3/\$3.50. Also available, Composite Dynamics Pro-Jets; loose motors, no ignitors. E20-4, 7, 10 at \$4 each; F40-6, 9, 15 at \$6 each; F45-4, 8, 12 at \$7.00 each. Quantities limited! Make checks payable to Bob Kaplow, 1628 Waterford Lane, Palatine TWP, IL 60074.

CRAZY GAFF'S PLASTIC MODEL SALE

Crazy Gaff still has a few choice kits left for you conversions artists out there. Contact Ric at 298-7896 for a complete list including hard to beat prices!

NEED TO PLACE A CLASSIFIED?

Remember, classified ads are free to any NIRA member! Just get your ad to Bunny before the next issue.

CONSTRUCTION

Most assembly consists of gluing parts together with a high quality carpenter's glue. (I used Elmers.) You then tack the parts together with small brads to hold them tight while the glue sets. While the parts fit together nicely, none of the parts are labeled. You have to refer to the drawings to make sure you've got the right pieces for the assembly you're working on. Sometimes the instructions weren't as helpful in identifying the parts as I would have liked.

The instructions recommend a lot of sanding to improve the finishing of the box. I got lazy and used a vibrating pad electric sander with good results. An electric drill helped put pilot holes in for the screws, but wasn't an absolute necessity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The product itself is quite good, even with some lackluster instructions. I ended up with a field box that should last for years. For most rocketeers however, this piece of ground support equipment is overkill. Using some scrap 1/4" plywood you probably have lying around, you can design, build and finish an open topped box with rope handle for less than \$10 and quit worrying about disintegrating cardboard. For the super serious rocketeers, the Tower box is a quality product that saves you time designing a box and running around finding the parts. The finished result will more than serve your needs on any rocket field.

It was a beautiful 1978 Memorial Day weekend when I journeyed to Eau Claire, WI to help run a rocket contest. Some people from Tomah impressed me with their large sheeted wing RG's. I silently wondered how these unknowns had acquired the skill to build such well crafted machines.

Grandfather Al Nienast proved to be a quick learner of both the art and science of model rocket contest flying. As a former fisherman who made his own equipment and a furniture builder, he came to the hobby with the necessary woodworking skills. He read model airplane books and developed a practical sense of how to make things work for him.

Al put together a string of contest wins in the Midwest that would be hard to equal, and laid claim to National Championships in 1979 and 1983. His '83 win, by 22 points over Jeff Vincent was particularly memorable for me as he battled Houston heat and tough C Division flyers to win a second championship at age 65.

Win or lose, Al always had a smile at the end of the contest. And he was equally glad to accept first place ribbons or the prang award. Even though you knew you were in for a tough contest when Uncle Al showed up, you were glad to see him. You knew at least somebody would enjoy the meet.

Al passed away January 28 at age 70. He was buried along with one of his RG's on a hill overlooking the Wisconsin countryside where he spent most of his life. He left behind a lot of good designs, and good sportsmanship. If you want to honor the man, build one of his birds, fly it as well as you can at a contest, but most importantly, smile at the end of the meet.

THE LEADING EDGE
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9999

0919 - Bowling
A 16 - Launch A Landmark
M 21 - LEHMAN'S "EAT"
J 18 - KITZLER SCALE
INSTANT KIT
J 16 - TERMINAL ATTITUDE
A 20 - PLASTIC CONTAIN
S 17 - HENRYLOC DNR.
O 15 - SEPERATION
N 19 00DROC
APR. 15 TASTE
MAY 5-7 GRASSCO

The "Final Ad"

By vote of the members,
future issues of the
Leading Edge will no
longer contain
advertisements for the
Glen Ellyn Toy and Card
Shop.

