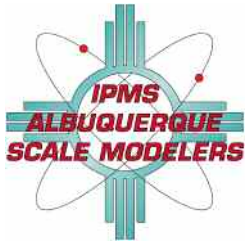


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

June 2017

## THE EAGLE'S VIEW MIKE BLOHM

We are now less than a month out from Chile Con 4. I'm sure everybody is wishing they had "a bit more time" to get that cosmic project finished. I foresee some late nights coming up in the next few weeks. I wanted to mention a couple of the Special Awards that have not received too much coverage. Everybody is probably aware of the four *Star*

*Wars* awards (Best Spaceship, Figure, Terrestrial Vehicle, and Miscellaneous) and the two World War I awards (Best Air and Land subjects).

The other lesser-known Special awards include the Best New Mexico Subject and the ever-popular and highly-coveted Lopez Demente award for the best tasteless subject.



Sponsored Awards include the Best Frickin' Laser Beams subject hosted by Patrick Dick; the Best Kirtland AFB-related Aircraft hosted by Jerry Little; the

"Captain Danny Roberts Memorial—Best American Ace Aircraft Award" hosted by Mike & Matt Blohm and John Tate; the Head Judge's Personal Favorite "Art Evans Memorial Award" hosted by Ken Liotta; and the Chairman's Choice "Don Alberts Memorial Award" hosted by Tom Perea.

Hopefully you guys are building and entering models that fit some of these categories and themes. If you have Juniors in the family, please encourage them to build



May Meeting highlights, top to bottom: Members checking out the model entries, and the business meeting back in our usual room!



and enter some models. This is always an under-represented area. We have Junior's categories and trophies and would love to give them away.

If you would like to help out at CC4, please get with the points of contact during the June ASM meeting for the area that you are interested in. We need help with judging, photography, registration, security, and the Make & Take. The list of CC4 POCs is on the website (<http://tinyurl.com/asm1706a>).

To close, here is another short ace story applicable to the many Battle of Midway themes elsewhere in this newsletter, on Lieutenant Elbert "Scott" McCuskey, US Navy.



McCuskey was the top-scoring fighter pilot of the battle with five victories while flying the F4F Wildcat with VF-3 aboard the *USS Yorktown*. He claimed three Vals destroyed and three damaged during his first sortie on 4 June 1942, and two Zeros destroyed on his second.

At that time he was the top Navy ace of the first six months of the Pacific war with 6.5 victories. He later added seven more victories flying the F6F Hellcat with VF-8 on the *USS Bunker Hill*, scoring a "triple" on 21 Sep 1944 (Oscars) over Luzon; and a "triple" (two Zeros and a Nick) on 12 Oct 1944.

McCuskey had fourteen total victories, and is the 38th-ranking American ace (tie) and the seventh-ranking US Navy ace (tie). Pictures of McCuskey and a model of his Wildcat are included in the [Bonus Pages](#). The red and white tail stripes and red dot in the national insignia shown on this model were removed from use per a directive in mid 1942 to avoid confusion with Japanese aircraft markings.

## FRED'S FOTO FILE

### FRED FRANCESCHI

#### Confederate Air Force, German Planes

More photos from Harlingen, Texas, this time of "German" airplanes. As I was typing this, I remembered a manager I worked for on the midnight shift at a bank data processing center in the early 1970s. Her name was Anita, and she had a German accent. She knew that I was very interested in military history and items. One night we were taking a coffee break together and she opened her wallet and showed me her German glider instructor pilot's license. During the Second World War she had trained the pilot candidates in glider flying before the pilots transitioned to powered aircraft. I still remember that the license had a Reich eagle on it. We talked a bit, and one of her duties was checking the bodies in crashed British and American aircraft for items of intelligence value to the German forces. When I expressed surprise, she said that during the war "that was how it was." I will never forget that coffee break.



A former Spanish Air Force Hispano Aviacion HA-1112 M1L Buchon, a Bf-109 powered by a 1600 hp Rolls Royce engine.



A CASA 2.111, a Heinkel He-111 powered by Rolls Royce Merlin engines. Formerly of the Spanish Air Force.

*[Editor's note: The full text of Fred's article, and many more photos of this CAF display (larger and in higher resolution) can be found in the [Bonus Pages](#). -JW]*

## VP REPORT

JERRY LITTLE

**Think of it as an opportunity...**

Modeling offers a lot of opportunities for those that

## Year 2017 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 06 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1:**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**  
Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)
- 03 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 03 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 07 Apr** **100 Years of US Involvement in The Great War**—Any kit/subject/scale involved in WWI.
- 05 May** **Star Wars, 40th Anniversary**—Any kit/subject/scale from any of the Star Wars universe.
- 02 Jun** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2: KILL MARKINGS**  
Sponsored Contest: "General Motors" (Patrick Dick)
- 07 Jul** **1967**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents the year 1967.
- 04 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 01 Sep** **First or Last**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents the first or last of anything.  
Sponsored Contest: "Knife Fight / Night Light" (ASM E-Board)
- 06 Oct** **Red Star**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents Communist-influenced nations  
Sponsored Contest: "Orange" (Gil De La Plain)
- 10 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
Sponsored Contest: "Heavies" (Brian Peck)
- 01 Dec** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3: SUPERSONIC**  
Model of the Year competition!

**Note: The most complete and up-to-date details on the contests, as well as detailed rules, as always, are on the ASM Website: <http://tinyurl.com/asmsched>**

are members of a club. We get to expand the hobby beyond the workbench with things like Make & Takes for the Boy Scouts, displays at ComicCon, and even updating the Cavalcade of Wings at the ABQ Sunport. Just think what the folks on the other end of those opportunities are thinking. Many of them are seeing scale modeling for the first time or the first time they've gotten to ask someone about it. It must be wondrous for many young enthusiasts as well.

We'll see many new people at the upcoming Chile Con 4 as we host the Region 10 convention. And yes, there will be people wandering around the tables wide-eyed and amazed at the models! They'll see all the guys diving deep in the details of this or that particular subject wondering how they know so much. Kids will want to

touch and wonder if they are for sale. You might even get a "can I have that" or two. It will be a spectacle.

Each of these visitors will quickly find a favorite, much like we modelers do when we peruse the tables. And this will be another opportunity to invite others into the hobby. We need to take the time to introduce the visitors to the hobby. Explain to them the art form and how they can get involved. Perhaps a personal story or two about how we each got started and what drew us to this life-long passion (or vice depending on how you see it!) The idea is to motivate them to pick up a kit and give it a try. Take the opportunity and maybe we'll have a new modeler for life.

Although Chile Con is just around the corner, there's a lot of other activity going on this summer. Of course the Elephant in the room is the Nationals. This year it is in Omaha, Nebraska, July 26 through 29. The Nats are being hosted by IPMS/Ft Crook Chapter and this is not their first rodeo (see what I did there... Nebraska... rodeo... anyway). There are a few club members going so we can look forward to a great report in August or September. And speaking of Nats, the 2018 Nats will be held in Phoenix, so all of those not going to Omaha will get the chance to attend next summer. I spoke with the Craig Hewett guys about hosting ModelZona (Nov 4, 2017) the same year and they said, "ModelZona is a go in November! We're not going to let a little ol' Nats slow us down!"

In October (the 21st), the IPMS/High Plains Modelers will be hosting "High Plains Con XVIII" at the Larimer County Fairgrounds in Loveland, Colorado. I don't have any details at this time, but the timing is great for us in that it doesn't interfere with our normal meeting time and it's a month before ModelZona.

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## CONTEST DIRECTOR VICTOR MAESTAS

May's contest theme was the third points contest of the year with a Star Wars theme.

In the Juniors category, Aleya Montañó took Best of Show and People's Choice awards with her X-Wing fighter in a flying pose with nicely-done weathering.

In Basic, Logan Carbin also took Best of Show and People's Choice with an impressive Rebel X-Wing fighter (Poe's). His entry had well-done weathering and laser bolts for a dramatic display.

In Intermediate, David Epstein took People's Choice with his well-executed French Submarine/Cruiser, *Surcouf*. You don't see floatplanes parked on the deck of a sub very often! Adrian Montañó's imposing and impressive large-scale *Millenium Falcon* took Best of Show.

In Masters, Patrick Dick took People's Choice with his TIE Striker in NVA markings. I look forward to seeing the rest of this collection! Larry Glenn's sharp build of a TIE Striker took Best of Show in the Masters category.

### Special and Sponsored Contests

Next month we will be having a Special Contest (Kill Markings) and a Sponsored Contest (General Motors, sponsored by Patrick Dick). For special contests, the rules are a little different compared to the regular Theme Points contests.

First of all, there are no Modeler of the Year points awarded for Special or Sponsored contests. Also, in Special contests, all entries have to be in-theme, five entries per person are allowed, and generally there is only one "Best Of" award per divisional level.

Best-Of winners in Special contests are also eligible to be entered in the Model of the Year Contest in December. Sponsored contest's rules and awards are determined by the sponsor.

All of these rules are spelled out in more detail in the contest guidelines found on the club website. If you have questions or need clarifications on something specific, please let me know.

## IN THE BONUS PAGES! JOE WALTERS

In this month's **Bonus Pages**:

- May's Contest Winners
- The photos referenced in Mike's article above
- The full text and photos of Fred's Foto File
- More photos from Don Smith of Star Wars props and costumes
- An article on the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Midway by John Tate, including a Dauntless kit report
- Museum photos by Mike Blohm featuring the Dauntless referenced in John Tate's article
- Armor Files by Ken Piniak
- A report on StarFest 2017 by Joe Walters
- And more!



### Master

John Tate. . . . .	945
Chris Kurtze. . . . .	562
Larry Glenn. . . . .	539
Ken Liotta. . . . .	287
Patrick Dick. . . . .	199
Frank Randall. . . . .	184
Bret Kinman. . . . .	129
Glen Bingham. . . . .	125
James Strickland. . . . .	106
Mike Blohm. . . . .	39
Steve Brodeur. . . . .	27
Jerry Little. . . . .	12
Victor Maestas. . . . .	2
Tony Humphries. . . . .	2

### Intermediate

David Epstein. . . . .	1293
Robert Meeker, Jr.. . . . .	520
Robert Henderson. . . . .	420
Len Faulconer. . . . .	385
Adrian Montaña. . . . .	355
Michael O'Brien. . . . .	295
Ken Piniak. . . . .	294
Chuck Hermann. . . . .	283
David Haskins. . . . .	225
Mark Yoder. . . . .	125
Don Smith. . . . .	12
Partap Davis. . . . .	2
Chris Kurtze, Jr.. . . . .	2

### Basic

Logan Carbin. . . . .	1022
Aaron Schmiedicke. . . . .	410
Jeannie Garriss. . . . .	310
Anthony Weaver. . . . .	210
Charles Petrilli. . . . .	114
Rolf Nitsche. . . . .	6

### Junior

Aleya Montaña. . . . .	335
Josh Kinman. . . . .	2

### MODELER OF THE YEAR POINTS STANDINGS

As of 22 May 17

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ASM members are encouraged to submit articles, reviews and other items as appropriate. Contact editor Joe Walters for details and specs. Submission deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month.

# BONUS PAGES!

## BEST OF SHOW WINNERS

### FROM MAY'S STAR WARS CONTEST

Photos by Frank Randall; first up, a pair of X-Wing fighters. Top: *X-Wing Fighter* by Aleya Montaña (Junior); bottom: *Poe Dameron's X-Wing* by Logan Carbin (Basic).



Top: *Millennium Falcon* by Adrian Montaña (Intermediate); *TIE Striker* by Larry Glenn (Masters).



# BONUS PAGES! THE EAGLE'S VIEW MIKE BLOHM

The photos referenced in Mike Blohm's article at the head of this newsletter.







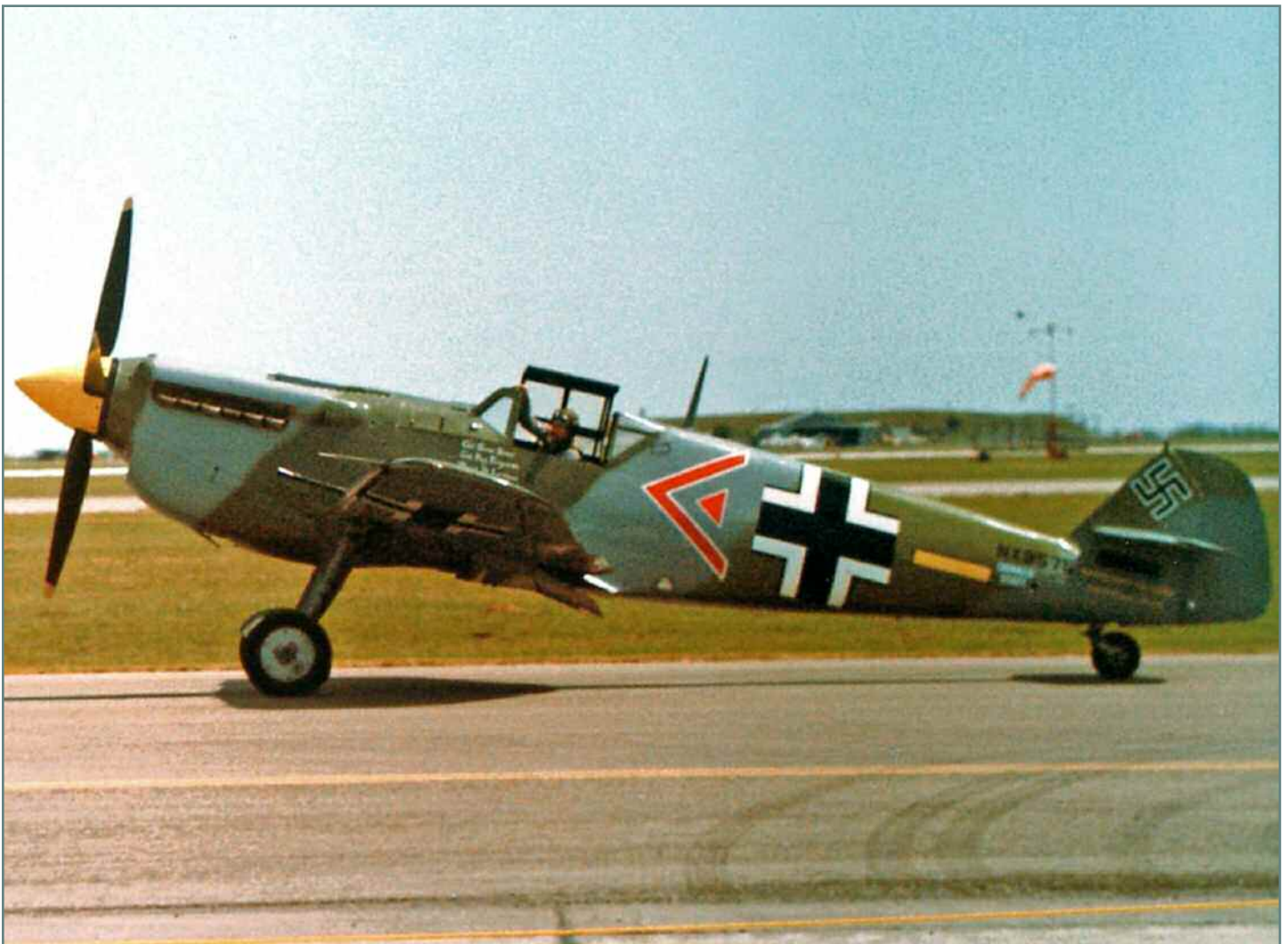
# BONUS PAGES!

## FRED'S FOTO FILE

### FRED FRANCESCHI

#### **Confederate Air Force, German Planes**

More photos from Harlingen, Texas, this time of "German" airplanes. As I was typing this, I remembered a manager I worked for on the midnight shift at a bank data processing center in the early 1970s. Her name was Anita, and she had a German accent. She knew that I was very interested in military history and items. One night we were taking a coffee break together and she opened her wallet and showed me her German glider instructor pilot's license. During the Second World War she had trained the pilot candidates in glider flying before the pilots transitioned to powered aircraft. I still remember that the license had a Reich eagle on it. We talked a bit, and one of her duties was checking the bodies in crashed British and American aircraft for items of intelligence value to the German forces. When I expressed surprise, she said that during the war "that was how it was." I will never forget that coffee break.



This page and next: A former Spanish Air Force Hispano Aviacion HA-1112 M1L Buchon, a Bf-109 powered by a 1600 hp Rolls Royce engine.





A CASA 2.111, a Heinkel He-111 powered by Rolls Royce Merlin engines. Formerly of the Spanish Air Force.



A Fieseler Storch liaison aircraft.



I think that this is a Focke-Wulf Fw 44C biplane trainer.



A Messerschmitt Me-108 sport and utility airplane.



A Kubelwagen in front of the HA-1112 MiL Bf-109. Notice the aircraft's cowling and radiator shape, very different to the German Daimler Benz-powered airplanes.

# BONUS PAGES!

## STAR WARS PROPS & COSTUMES

### DON SMITH

*[Editor's Note: In an unexpected continuation of the article of the same title from last month's issue, Don provided some more photos from this exhibit. Alas, once again there was no explanatory text to accompany them. I added short notes mainly from the file names. -JW]*

Below: Details on Chewbacca's costume, and the full Chewie costume with Han Solo's outfit.



The ill-fated Fett boys. Things never did seem to work out for them, did they? Here are the costumes for Jango Fett (blue) and Boba Fett (green).



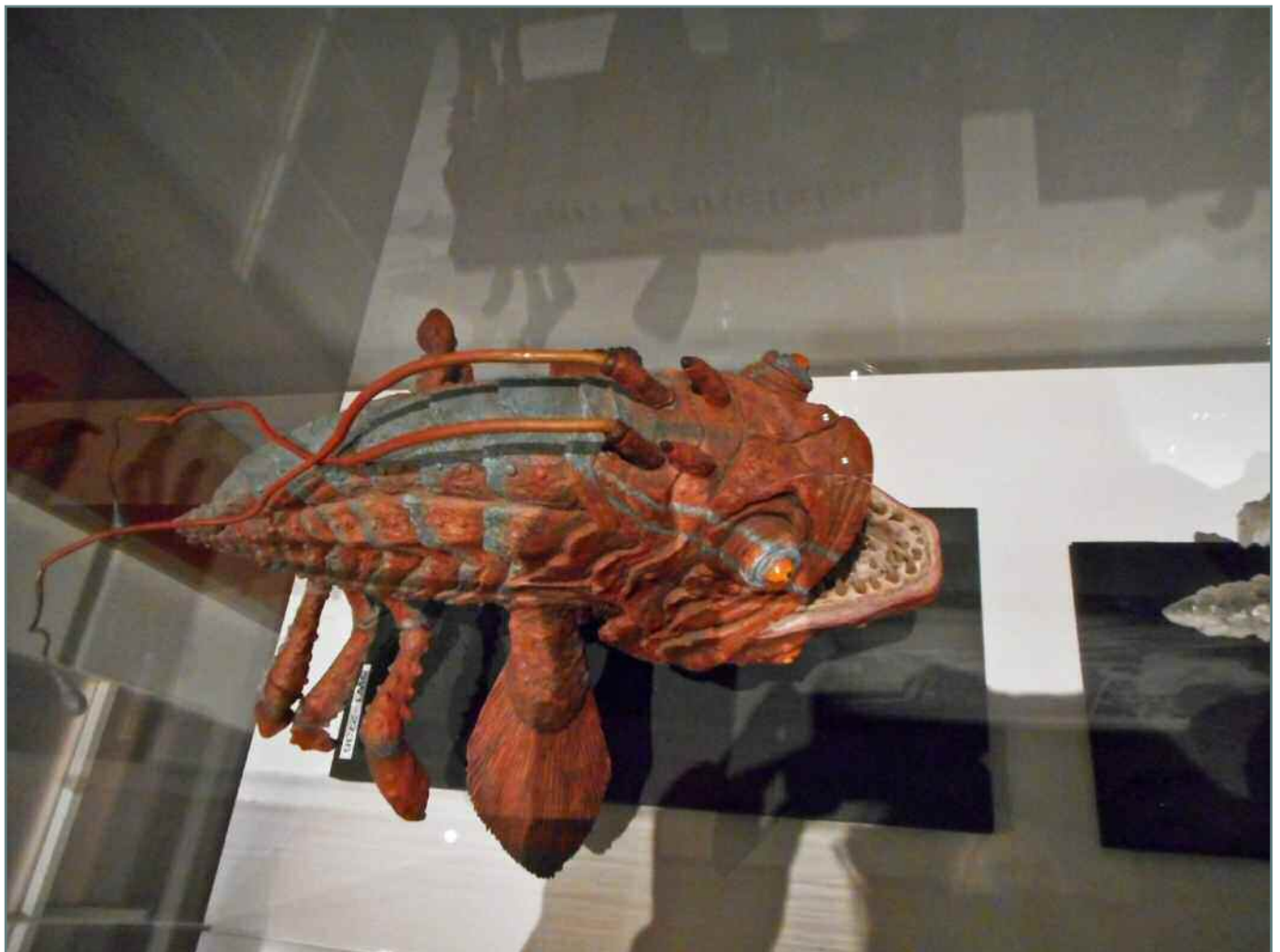








Below: There's always a bigger fish.



# BONUS PAGES!

## REMEMBERING MIDWAY

### JOHN TATE

This month is the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Midway, one of the two most critical battles in US history, the other being the Battle of Gettysburg. Had either of those battles gone the other way, this is not a country we would recognize today. Unfortunately, the American public has largely forgotten Midway, a tiny atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, and as air/sea battles leave no trace of combat, there is no National Military Park that can be visited easily, as is the case with Gettysburg. So we, as modelers, can have a small part in commemorating the guts, skill, luck, and sacrifice of Navy, Marine Corps, and Army personnel who stopped cold the onslaught of Imperial Japan back in 1942.

Midway was a clash of aircraft carriers, and the American planes that decided the battle were SBD-3 Dauntless dive bombers, whose courageous Naval aviators were able to plant 1000-pound ship-killing bombs squarely on the flight decks of the Emperor's best flat-tops—Akagi, Kaga, Soryu and Hiryu. There are some good kits of the Dauntless out there, from Trumpeter in  $\frac{1}{32}$  scale and Accurate Miniatures in  $\frac{1}{48}$  scale, but my favorite is the Hasegawa  $\frac{1}{48}$  Dauntless, which is accurate in outline and the easiest of the three to build.

It's been a number of years since I built the Hasegawa kit but I recall it being a breeze to construct, the only attention spot being the dive flaps, which are molded integrally with the wings and lack perforations. However, rather than removing the kit dive flaps and replacing them with photoetch, I drilled out each perforation with a sharp No. 11 X-ACTO knife, before assembling the wings. It took some extra time but wasn't too difficult and any imperfections were corrected with a little putty and sanding. This method



allows the integrity of the wings to be maintained and also provides a more accurate representation of the real aircraft; I've never been a fan of open dive flaps, since this configuration was seen only during maintenance, or when the aircraft dived.

Decal markings for aircraft that participated in the battle are not exactly plentiful but fortunately a new sheet by Starfighter Decals, No 4808, was just released and includes markings for two of the most important Dauntlesses from the battle, both from *Enterprise* (CV-6): Dick Best's Bu. No. 4687 from VB-6, which killed *Akagi*, and Bu. No. 4618, flown by Wade McClusky, CAG Air Group Six, who made the fateful decision to follow the wake of a Japanese destroyer that led his dive bombers to the Japanese carriers. I can't imagine a better choice of markings for Dauntless builds.

If you have some models in your stash that would fit a Midway theme, give some thought to building one this month, and take the time to do some research and learn about the battle; this hobby is at its most worthwhile when it gives us pause to remember our fallen, and what they accomplished for us on June 4, 1942, should never be forgotten.



**Starfighter Decals**  
by  
*Mark's Models and Toys*  
Decals and Accessories for Classic Model Kits

**Dauntless at War**  
SBD-3S from June-Nov 1942

Mark's Models and Toys  
124 Highlander Rd  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Copyright 2014 MM&T

**4808 \$12.00**









# BONUS PAGES!

## SBD DAUNTLESS DISPLAYS

### COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY

MIKE BLOHM

This article covers two displays commemorating the Battle of Midway that feature SDB Dauntless aircraft, and was inspired by John Tate's "Remembering Midway" article elsewhere in this newsletter. June 2017 is the 75th anniversary of the battle.

The first display is the Battle of Midway Memorial located at Midway Airport in Chicago. I have been through Midway several times and took pictures of the Memorial, meaning to eventually write up a trip report on it. The airport was originally built in 1923 and called Chicago Air Park. It was leased by the city in 1926 and renamed Chicago Municipal Airport in December 1927. In July 1949 the airport was renamed "Chicago Midway Airport" after the Battle of Midway. The Midway Memorial features a Dauntless hanging from the ceiling just as you approach Concourse A. It also includes some displays with information, pictures, and videos on the battle. This particular aircraft was used in training at Chicago's Glenview Naval Air Station and aboard the simulated flattops *USS Wolverine* and *USS Sable* on Lake Michigan, and fell overboard during training. It was recovered and restored with the Memorial being formally dedicated on June 4, 2001. Pictures of the display are included below. It is not too far from the central part of the airport, and you can see it even if you are not on a flight departing or coming into Concourse A. Well worth checking out if you have time.





Concourse A









The second display is an SDB-2 featured in the collection at the National Naval Air Museum in Pensacola, Florida. This Dauntless, Bureau Number 2106, actually participated in dive bombing runs against the Japanese carrier *Hiryu* during the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942, while assigned to Marine Scout



Bombing Squadron (VMSB) 241. It returned from that mission with over 200 bullet holes and a wounded gunner. It is the only known surviving aircraft from the Midway battle. This particular SDB was also a survivor of the attack on Pearl Harbor, having been parked on Ford Island at that time. In early 1942 it served in Bombing Squadron (VB) 2 aboard the carrier *USS Lexington (CV 2)*, taking part in raids on Lae and Salamaua, New Guinea before being transferred to the Marine Corps in May 1942. This SDB was subsequently transferred to the Carrier Qualification Training Unit in Chicago and sank in Lake Michigan in June 1943. The displayed aircraft has several unrestored areas showing the original color scheme and markings. Several pictures of the SDB are included below. This is a must-see aircraft if you get the chance to visit this outstanding museum. Additional pictures of the museum are available in the trip report that I wrote in 2012 that is posted on the [ASM Website's Field Trips page](#).

**A RARE COMBAT VETERAN**

*SBD Dauntless*

Of the thousands of naval aircraft that rolled off assembly lines during World War II and flew through hostile skies in the greatest air war in history, few genuine combat veterans aircraft survive today. Even among them, the SBD-2 Dauntless dive-bomber displayed here holds a unique place. On the morning of 7 December 1941, the aircraft was ashore at Ford Island in the middle of Pearl Harbor when Japanese bombs began raining down on the assembled ships of the U. S. Pacific Fleet. On 10 March 1942, it participated in one of the early carrier raids against Japanese forces in the Pacific; launching from the deck of *Lexington (CV-2)*, the U.S. Navy's second aircraft carrier, to attack Japanese shipping at Lae and Salamaua, New Guinea. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a message to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, called the raid "the best day's work we've had." Transferred to service with the Marine Corps in May 1942, the aircraft flew a combat mission against Japanese carriers on the morning of 4 June 1942, attacking *Hiryu* in the face of intense opposition by enemy aircraft and antiaircraft gunners. It returned to Midway punctured with over 200 bullet holes, a wounded gunner, and only one operable wheel of its landing gear.

Nearly one hundred dedicated staff members and volunteers have painstakingly restored Bureau Number 2106, logging approximately 70,000 hours of work putting the old warbird into display condition. Over 90% of the aircraft consists of period parts, combining refurbished original components that were on the aircraft when it sank to the depths of Lake Michigan with wartime parts obtained from other sources.

Recovered from the depths of Lake Michigan, where it crashed on 11 June 1943 after being assigned to the Carrier Qualification Training Unit, this warbird is the most historically significant Navy combat aircraft ever placed on display, the only known survivor of the Battle of Midway, the most important battle in the history of naval aviation, and one of the few naval aircraft anywhere to have seen the face of battle firsthand.

**BUREAU NUMBER 2106**













# BONUS PAGES!

## KEN'S ARMOR FILES

### KEN PINIAK

#### **We are the Thunder and Lightning of the Desert Storm! [Part 1]**

On January 17, 1991, the UN deadline for Iraq expired and Operation Desert Storm began. But before I can get into all that, I must backtrack a little bit to November 1990. 1st Squadron 3rd ACR was out in the desert when we got a visit from General Norman Schwarzkopf. During this visit, he told us what he planned to do if war came; and to his credit, he kept his word. He was a great commander. We knew what was coming, and prepared for it.

On January 1, I, along with a whole lot of other Specialists, was promoted to Sergeant. Saddam had promised "the mother of all battles" and the Army needed junior NCOs to step up and replace higher ranking soldiers who would be killed. The Army was preparing for heavy casualties. Oh joy!

When we deployed, 3rd ACR had the oldest M1A1 tanks and basic M3 Bradleys in use; all the units coming from Germany had newer, better equipment. In January, we began to receive brand new vehicles, in what has come to be known as the "big swap." For the first part of the swap, we got brand new M1A1s, right off the assembly line. These were the new Heavy Armor (HA) tanks with the new T-158 tracks. Oh, we liked these; especially the new tracks, much easier to work on. These tanks had been painted sand near the end of the building process, they were still green underneath and around the suspension, and the back side of the road wheels. While we were outfitting the new tanks, the rest of the vehicles (still in NATO camouflage) were being painted desert tan. Then we broke camp and loaded up on French Army trucks.



Brief by Gen Schwarzkopf, November 1990

History books refer to Gen. Schwarzkopf's "left hook" attack far to the West of Kuwait and deep into Iraq. The "left hook" was conducted by the XVIII Airborne Corps, consisting of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, 24th Infantry division, and 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. To accomplish this, we loaded up our vehicles on these French Army trucks and headed out on Tapline Road, with the crews still in their vehicles. This was, of course, extremely dangerous, and would never be allowed in the States. But we



A well-dressed Tanker—Nomex, flak vest, survival vest, CVC

were in Saudi Arabia, and there was a war on. War is, by definition, inherently dangerous; we did what we had to do. There were lots of accidents, it was pure luck that none of our people got killed.

Once in position, we took up patrolling the border. On January 22, one week before the famous battle of Khafji, a patrol led by Col. Starr (Regimental Commander) engaged in the first ground combat of the war, attacking and destroying an Iraqi patrol that had attacked a Saudi border unit. 3rd ACR had drawn first blood.

All through January and February, the Air Force was bombing the crap out of Iraq. At night we could see (and hear) the jets going over, the flash and crash of bombs and artillery, and even see the occasional tracers from the flak. We were too far out in the desert to worry about Scuds, but we did have a few scares when we thought that we were being attacked by chemical weapons. At that point, you see how all that constant training pays off; we got into our chemical gear in record time, even in the middle of the night.

Once all the tanks had been replaced, the scouts began to replace their old M3s with

brand new M3A2s, with the bolt-on armor. The Army did not have enough M3A2s, so some crews got infantry M2A2s, and a few had to keep their old M3s. At the same time, a number of our tanks were fitted with mine plows or rollers. My tank was chosen to get a roller. The mounting plate was attached to the front of the tank, making the driver very happy—he liked the extra protection it gave him. The rollers themselves would only be attached if needed. This was good because we did not like the roller. It was big, heavy, and awkward; and made it very difficult to drive or maneuver the tank. We hated it (I know I did). We felt that the mine plows were much better. All of this was completed just days before the ground assault began.

[Continues next issue!]



Wenning on our new tank



My tank



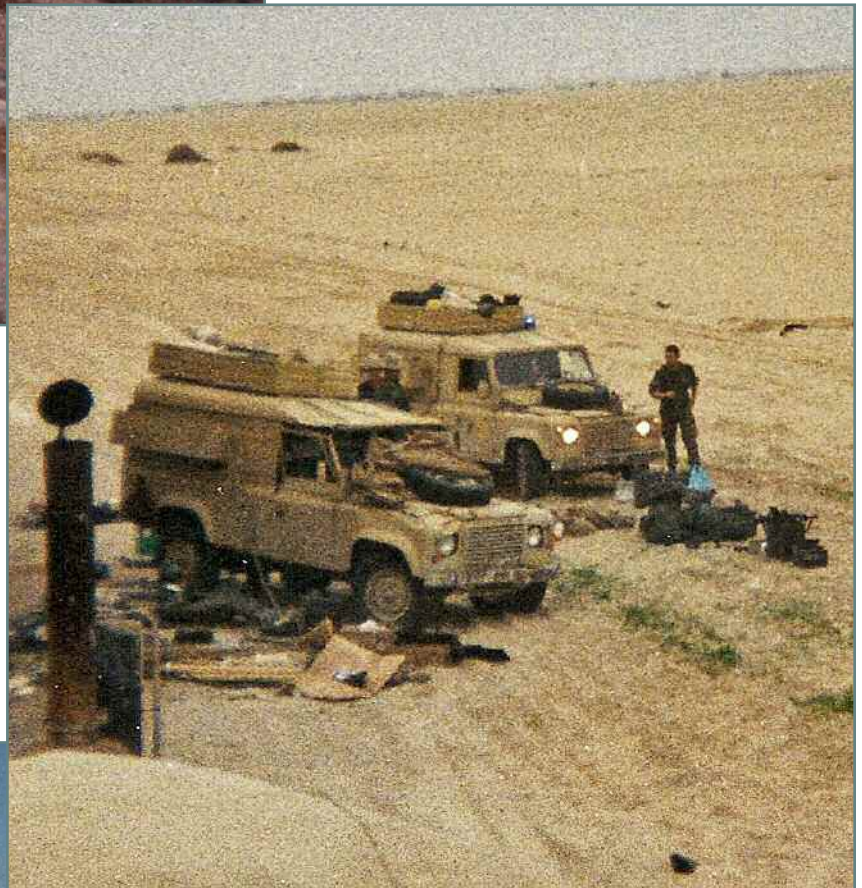
French truck crew



On the road



Above: Canadian truck with women drivers



Right: British Breakdown

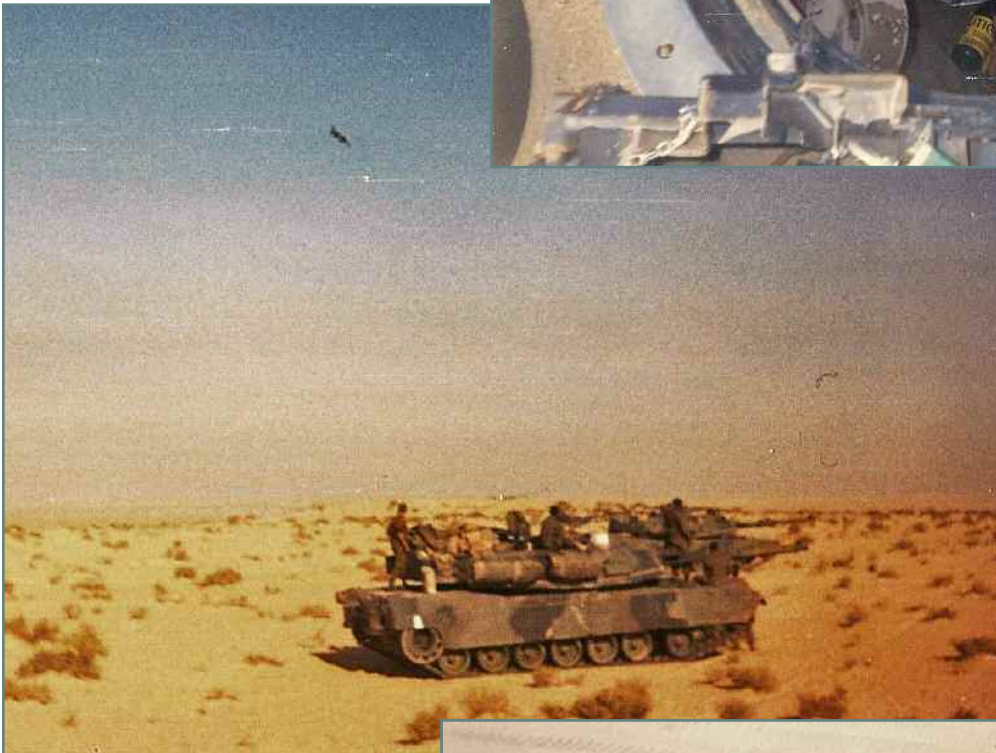
Below: Tank under camo



Top: Service ammunition

Center: F-18 over tanks

Below: CPL Ortiz Casualty Evac Training







Top: In a gas mask



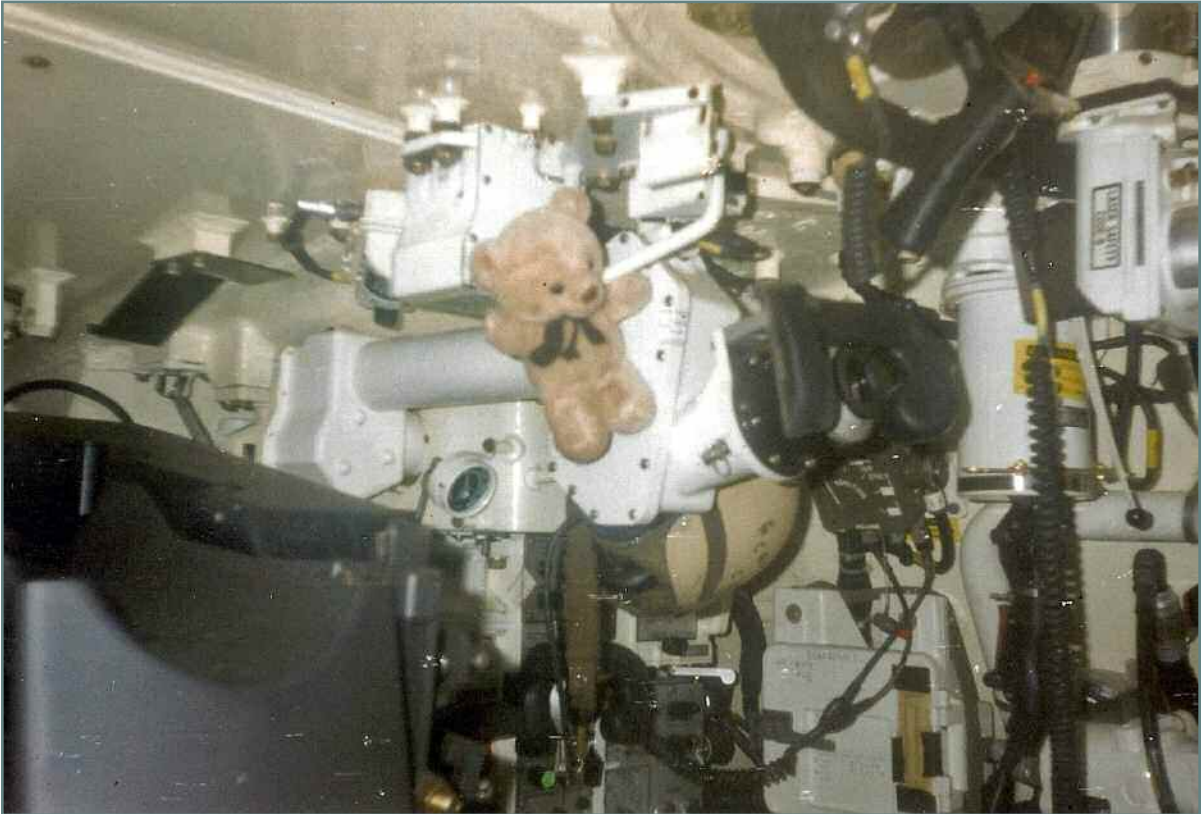
Right: POW training

Below: Painting name





Cobra artwork



Teddy bear mascot

# BONUS PAGES!

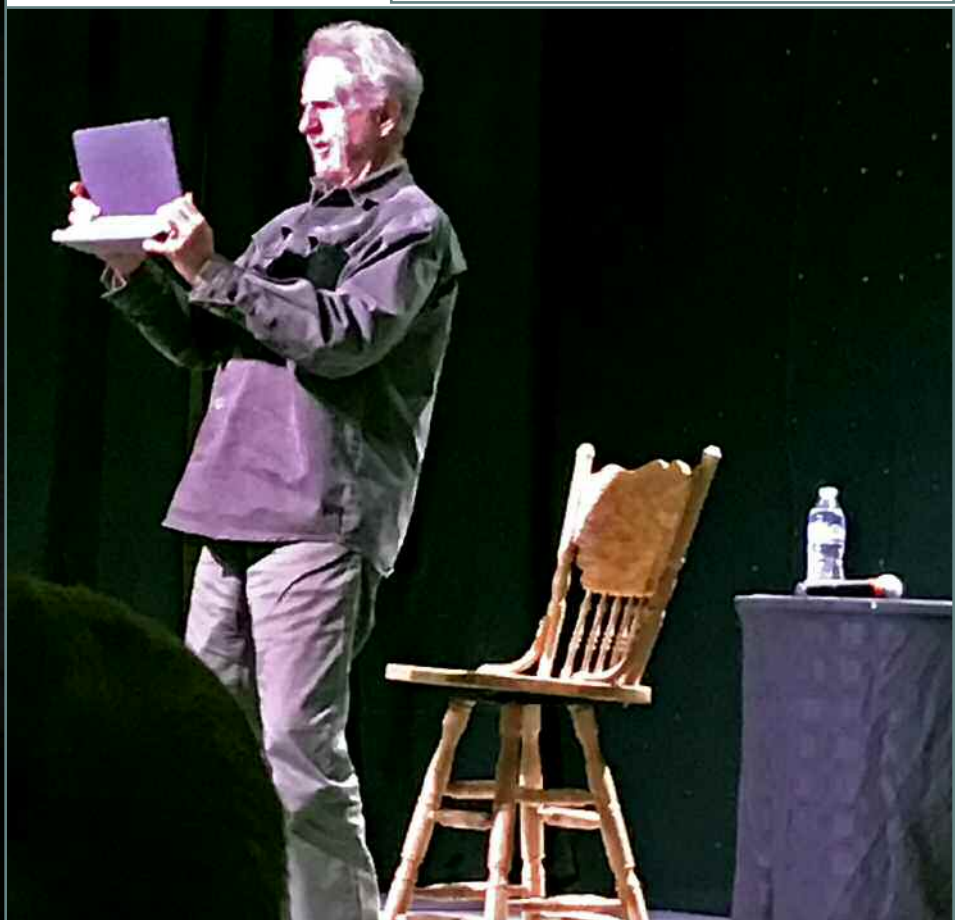
## STARFEST 2017, DENVER, COLORADO

### JOE WALTERS

For the fortieth year in a row, the good folks in Denver hosted the annual StarFest Sci-Fi/Fantasy convention this past April 21 – 23 (and as they used to do them twice a year, they've now hosted well over fifty of them!).

This show tends to bring in between 3000 – 4000 attendees (that's just my estimate), and everyone has a great time. After last year's convention in a smaller and lesser facility, we were back in the Marriott Denver Tech Center, following their year-long major refurbishment.

The place looks fantastic, and was greatly improved for a convention attendee! There are far more places to sit down now (they used to be very scarce), all the rooms are larger (due to removal of atrium balconies and large bulky furniture formerly housing large CRT-based televisions, now replaced by wall-mounted flat screens), and there are far more and better dining options than before.



Left: Walter Koenig, now 80 years old, stayed on his feet for his entire appearance. He was very animated and lively, and seemed to really enjoy himself despite having done this for fifty years now. Right: Rene Auberjonois had to take a pic of the audience before getting going.

This show features many guests from all sorts of sci-fi and fantasy media, as well as some “realspace” guests, who often provide real highlights of the show.

From the Star Trek side, we had Walter Koenig (Chekov from the original series) and Rene Auberjonois (Odo from Deep Space Nine). There were also guests from such TV series as *Grimm*, *The Magicians*, *The Librarians*, and *Dark Matters*, as well as Star Wars movies and authors of many books. Science guests included an operator of the Hubble Space Telescope, who showed recent photos and detailed plans for the satellite’s future, a fellow in charge of a project to send a rover to the south pole of the Moon to map out water ice locations for use in future explorations, and scientists planning probes to study asteroids near Jupiter. Fascinating stuff!

StarFest also features an art show, gaming (board and video), panel discussions, classes on making things (including models!), a costume competition, special areas for autographs and photo ops with the guests, trivia competitions, and many many more activities. One of the first things we have to do whenever we arrive and get a copy of the schedule is figure out what events we’ll have to miss due to conflicts.

We have learned that, in order to even have a *chance* of finding a parking space at the hotel, we need to arrive a day early, so we drive up on Thursday, the day before the con begins. This allows us to get there without as much stress and be ready early when things start up the next day. And since the show runs into late afternoon on Sunday, we drive back on Monday. Much easier!

Also, when you travel on a weekday, you can be assured that the mechanic’s shop will be open when your engine seizes way out on the northern New Mexico prairie and you get towed to Las Vegas. I won’t bore you with the details...

There’s always a Dealer Room at these conventions, and, as we had arrived the day before the dealers started their setup, I happened to peek in and see the room while it was still just a maze of tables. Below, the StarFest Dealer Room, before and after.





One of the (to me) improvements in the hotel was the installation of this spacious restaurant and bar in what used to be the huge open space in the atrium (note the balconies are all gone from the rooms). Excellent food, wide selection of meals and drinks, and even a surprisingly good green chile stew! In Colorado! Unheard of. And if there's a wait for a table, you can wander about the convention and they text you when your table is ready. No more carrying around beepers and pagers. Very efficient!

Below, the restaurant is at left and this shot looks north to where the old (tiny) bar and grill used to be. This is now the autograph area and tables are set up for authors in that same area. To the right is where the photo ops take place. Note some Dealer Room overflows at left.



Costumes abound throughout the convention, and not just during the competition. Here are a few snaps of folks I saw around the show.



At left: Great Scott! Is that an apple?

Bottom Left: Hey, Marty! Look up! And behind him, a very recognizable character from *The Fifth Element*. People were throwing his lines to him wherever he went. Not just anyone can pull off that look. Or should try. Or would want to. Zzzzzz!

Below: L – R: Thor, Loki and the Enchantress. Well, sort of. Something seems off here.





Above: a lady in a Hellboy outfit along with Negan from *The Walking Dead* chats with some pirates. Arrrrr!

(I counted at least four Negans at this show, one gray-haired and one female, each carrying a bat wrapped in barbed wire.)

Right: Star-Lord ("Who?") and a Starfleet babe photographed by a passing Borg drone.



Right: It's the star-spangled man with a plan! This was a very impressive costume. I have no idea whether it was available by purchase or he made it himself.

Below: Why so blue?





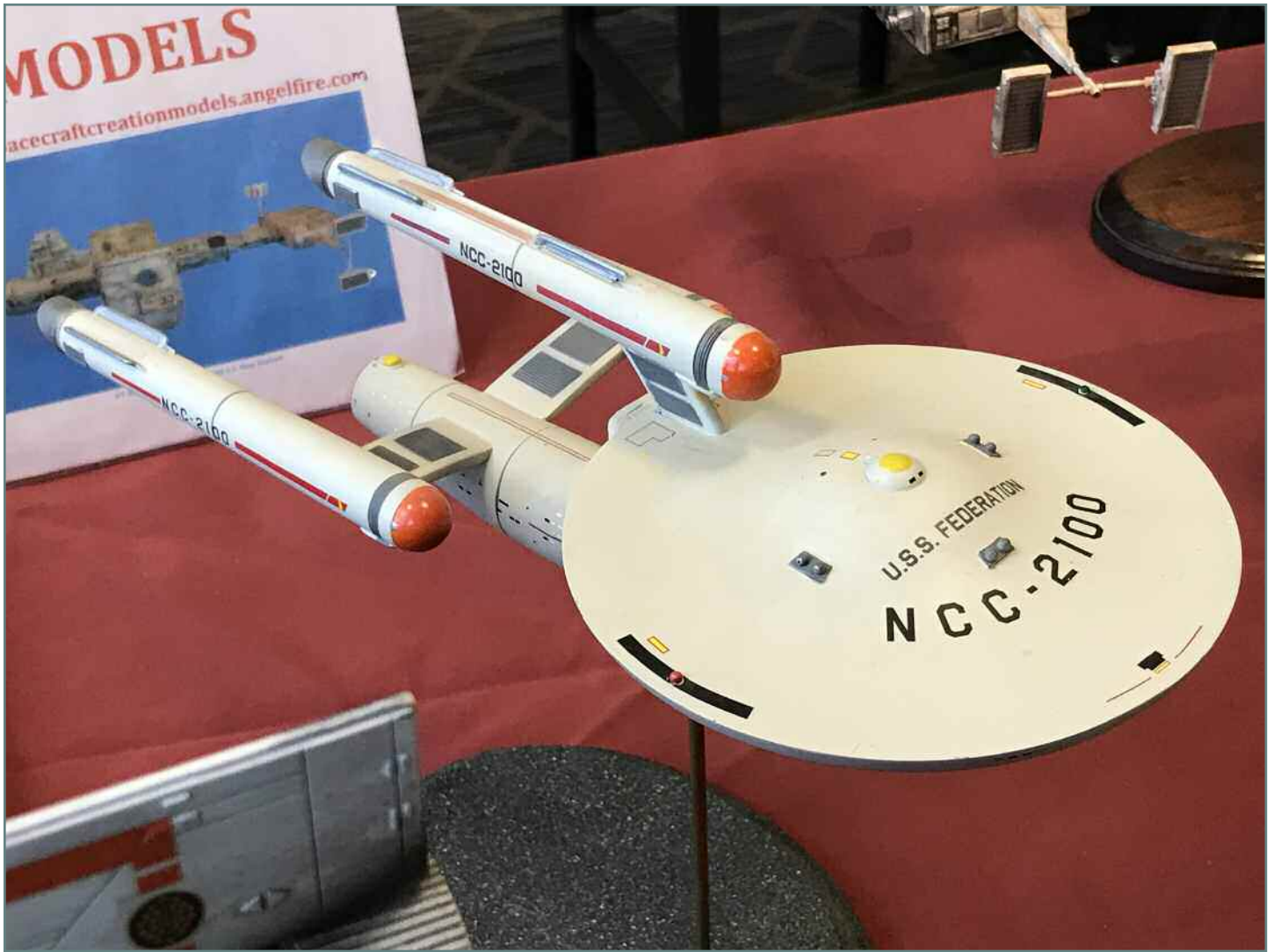
But this is a model-related newsletter, so let's get to the models! One of the highlights of this convention is a model competition, known simply as the Model Show. There is always a good turnout, and there are always surprisingly excellent models on display. The prizes can be pretty nifty too! There really should be an ASM contingent going up there every year to bring back the goodies!

First off, someone appears to have brought in a number of the small Polar Lights *Enterprise* kits, modified to reflect various class vessels, many of them from the old Franz Joseph *Star Trek Technical Manual*. However he did it, it's a pretty darn impressive array!



I couldn't help but notice that this transport/tug is from the "mirror universe," and is designated *ISS Cassini*. A nice *Botany Bay* lurked menacingly behind this set.





Fans of the *Alien* franchise will recognize the *Nostromo*'s escape pod.



Here are a couple of Colonial Vipers from the original *Battlestar Galactica*.





Here are some Star Wars entries. We might see some of these at Chile Con! Here's a nice X-Wing fighter, and fans of *Star Wars Rebels* will recognize that odd-looking TIE fighter below.





Nice TIE fighter at top. At bottom, a TIE Bomber variant unfamiliar to me!

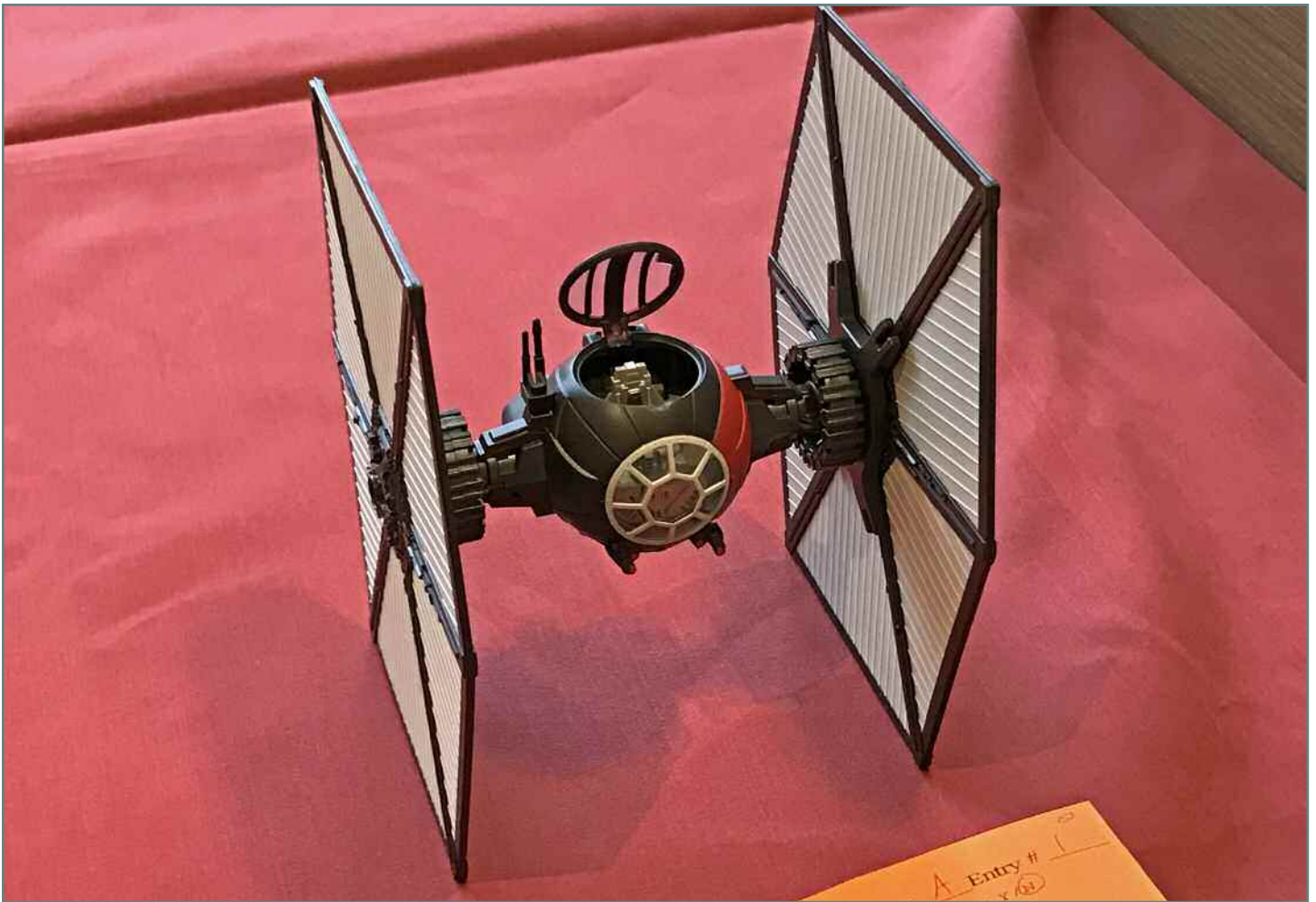


A Republic Star Destroyer and an Imperial Star Destroyer.





Here's a TIE Fighter from *The Force Awakens*.



I confess I have no idea what this one is. Looks nice, though!



Figure models. I don't know what they're from! Looks like there was some staff involvement in the second one.







Above: The Batmobile from *Batman v. Superman*.

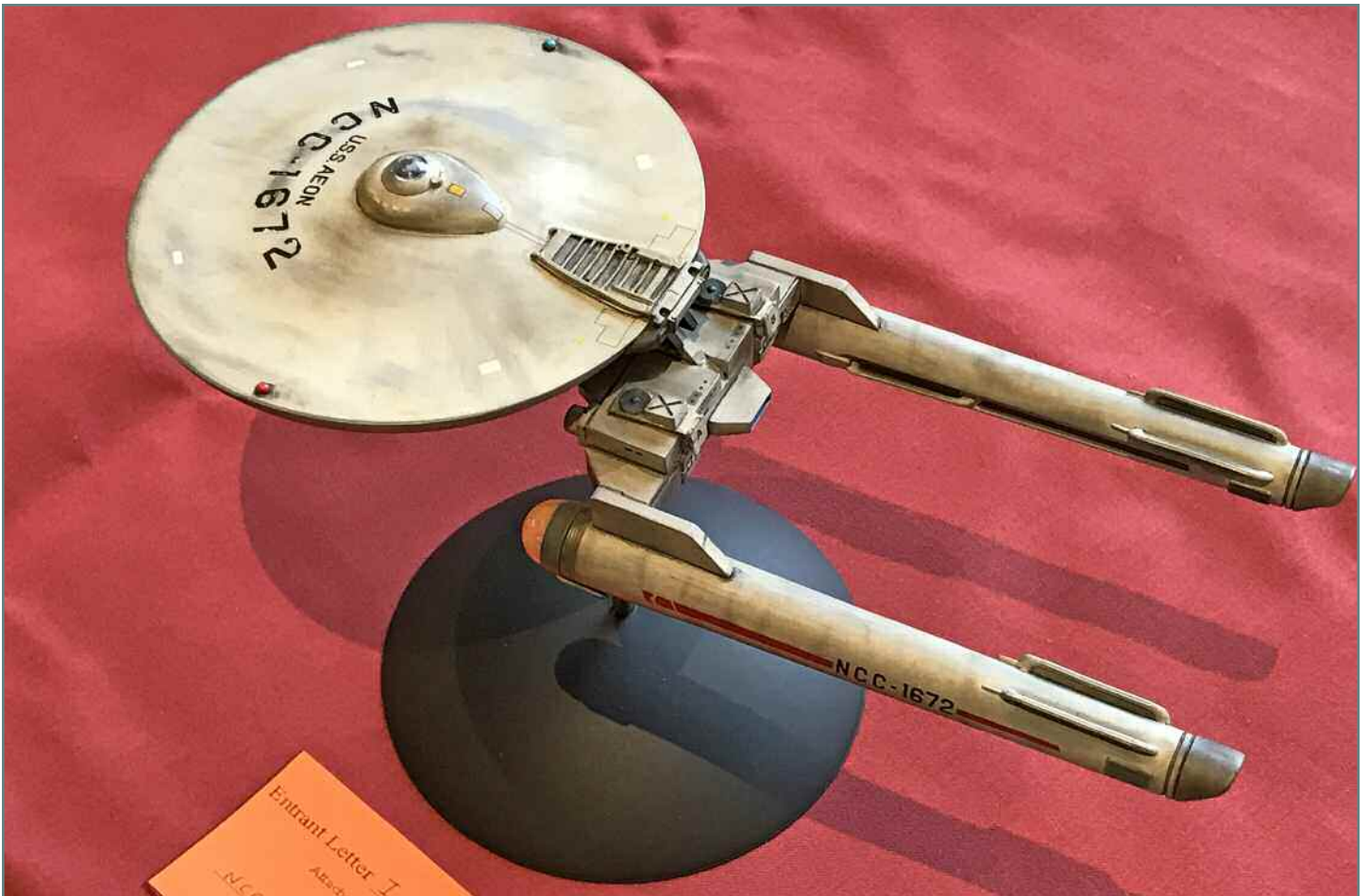
Left: I don't know. I really don't know. But there it was! Anybody have a clue?

Below: Mars attacks!



Always remember, when taking photos of a model of a Romulan vessel, get the top *and* the bottom! Interesting color scheme, though. And note the Make & Take going on in the background of the bottom photo.





Above, an interesting variant on a Starfleet design. Below: I saved the best for last. This thing was incredible! This Klingon Bird of Prey has a wingspan of easily over three feet. The level of detail is eye-searing, and the paint job on this one is amazing. It is fully illuminated with animated lighting effects all around.



It is built from a kit available online (<http://www.nicenmodeldesigns.com>), but only if you have a significant amount of disposable income lying about. And they offer several other studio-scale kits in case you are just *too* rich.



Above, a closeup to show the detail of this paint scheme. A video of this model (taken at this convention!) shows all the lighting effects and various angles on the model (<http://www.modelermagic.com/?p=90824>).

StarFest is more than just one convention. It takes place simultaneously with HorrorFest, RoboFest, GameFest, WhoFest, and a host of others, all but one in the same hotel; ComicFest takes place in the hotel next door. A pass to one gets you in to all.

All in all, this was another great convention, and a wonderful time had by all!

StarFest has the largest model competition of any sci-fi convention I've ever been to; I suppose WonderCon has a bigger one, but this one is a one-day drive away! And it's in the south part of Denver, so you don't have to fight your way through the entire megalopolis!

This show usually takes place the weekend after tax day, and next year it's scheduled for April 20 -22. We'll be going up Thursday the 19th! Hopefully the car will get there too.





# BONUS PAGES! MISCELLANEOUS

Is that black paint you're using just not black *enough*? Well, check this out:  
<https://www.thisiswhyimbroke.com/worlds-mattest-flattest-black-paint>



**IT'S Coming!!!**

**Sat. Nov. 4th**



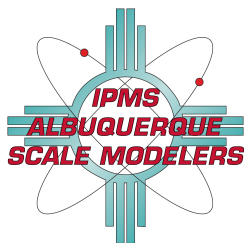
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