

STARDUST

The newsletter of the ASTRE Model Rocketry club

www.astre471.org

Volume 16, Issue 3

May/June 2002

ASTRE Membership Shows Off!

By Mark Hutchinson

During the month of April, ASTRE set up a display at the East Greenbush Library. We've been holding our meetings at the library for a few months now, and booked the month to coincide with an "Intro to Rocketry" class that Alex DeMarco put on. You can read about that on page 4.

Several members brought in a range of kits, from competition kits, sport flyers, scale models and some odd-roc rockets. I think those who saw the display got to see a good selection of rockets in our display. Alex and I were joking about putting his Aerotech Sumo in, but I had hoped to have the 6 1/2 foot tall Mean Machine in the case. Only if I wanted to break off a fin, would it fit... Oh well, I can dream.

While setting up the display, we had a number of library visitors ogling, and asking questions. A couple people that stopped mentioned that they had built

and flown rockets. Thanks to Alex DeMarco, Heather Hutchinson, Ben Patrone, Eric and Mattie Schadow and Jeff Vincent for the loan of the models listed below:



On display (left to right):

Estes Explorer Aquarius
NCR X-Wing
Centuri Mach-10
Quest DC-X
AeroRocket Sprint ABM

Hand-built MicroMaxx models

Edmonds Deltie
Estes Prowler
Hand-built Tetrahedron
Estes custom made "Barbie"

Estes Jayhawk
Estes Little John
Estes Bullpup
Estes Bomarc

Hutchinson Yellow Jacket

Estes Big Dawg
Estes Alpha
Estes Wizard
Estes Gemini DC
Estes Orbital Transport
Estes Plans Sputnik
Estes Plans Birdie

In This Issue...

ASTRE Membership Shows Off!.....	1	Upcoming Events—Spooooky Sport Launch.....	5
Editor's Thermal	2	Events with FAA NOTAMs	5
Topics.....	2	Product Review—	
Stardust Schedule of Publishing	2	Estes "Launchables" - Bandit Kit	6
Carlo's Rocket Birthday Party	3	Calendar of Events.....	7
Reach out and launch someone!	4	How To Get To ASTRE's Flying Field	7

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Stardust is published bimonthly by the Albany, Schenectady, Troy Rocket Enthusiasts (ASTRE), Section #471 of the National Association of Rocketry (NAR).

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ASTRE Online

<http://www.astre471.org>

ASTRE471 on eGroups

<http://www.egroups.com/group/ASTRE471>

Newsletter content in this issue by:

Jeff Vincent
Alex DeMarco
Mark Hutchinson

Editor's Thermal:



Stardust Renewed

It is with great pleasure, and some trepidation that I announce a rebuild of Stardust, ASTRE's club newsletter. I hope this nudge helps the club membership feel more active in each issue, and not be quite as difficult to publish / maintain.

Briefly, these changes are

1. Each issue will have core common topics. These will be in EVERY issue. Anyone may still submit articles to or on any topic they want.
2. Stardust will return to bi-monthly status.
3. Each issue will have a submit-by and publish-by date. You'll have an idea when you'll see each issue.
4. Email me copy, with separate graphics in the **full resolution** you have them. It takes less time to add to each issue, than to have everyone work on Stardust.
5. Membership ads and inserts. If you want to send a message, and get it in print—member copy is free!

I hope these changes will make it easier for each member to consider a submission at least twice a year. It should not take that long to write up an article on one of your favorite topics!

I've also started to maintain a gallery of rocket related graphics, logos, and comics. Anyone with talent that can be useful in art, history, or inside connections to the trillion dollar model rocketry newsletter industry, please contact me.

— Mark Hutchinson

Topics:

Want to write an article, but don't know what to write about? Here's a list of the topics/items you'll find in most issues:

NAR / Hobby News
Upcoming Event Calendar / Results / Info
Competition Corner / Event Hints
New Releases
Product Review
Tech Tip / Tips + Tricks
Plan / JimZ Archive
Websites
Flashback
Club/Member Projects

Stardust Schedule of Publishing:

Stardust Issue.....	Submissions by.....	Print Date
1-Jan/Feb Issue	Dec 15	Jan 10
2-March/April	Feb 15	Mar 10
3-May/June.....	April 15	May 10
4-July/August.....	June 15.....	July 10
5-September/October	August 15.....	Sept 10
6-November/December.....	October 15.....	Nov 10

Club members who wish to may have ads, pictures or messages printed in Stardust, space permitting. Copy must be in good taste, with editor having final cancel option. Non-member or commercial ads will currently be billed at a mutually agreed compensation rate.

Carlo's Rocket Birthday Party

By Maria Elena Vidal
Additional By Jorge Vidal

This Birthday Party was a real blast!

A few weeks ago my husband Jorge and I started planning our son Carlo's 9th birthday party. The previous weekend we had attended ASTRE's interesting (& fun) Model Rocketry presentation at the East Greenbush Library, conducted by Alex and Mark. Carlo loved the show and the awesome models on display, since he already considered himself an "expert" and avid "rocketeer" with plenty of exciting flight experiences shared with his dad Jorge.

When we left the presentation and after seeing the rocket launch Demo, we decided to join ASTRE and came out with the idea of throwing a "Rocketry Birthday Party" for Carlo. We also promised him that he would have an awesome kind of cake... truly out of this world!!

We invited a dozen of his best buddies to the party. We had gotten a bunch of basic Estes kits (Skywriters, X-Rays & Alphas for the "big" guys, Mini-meanies and Freaky-flyers for the little ones) which we handed out to each kid at their arrival on Sunday, May 5th (Cinco de Mayo!).

It took the kids about an hour to put the spaceships together (with a bit of help from the grown-ups). Then, while the glue dried, we fed them a yummy (and quite original) "rocket" cake that we had designed and built the night before (we used chocolate-glazed doughnuts stacked over each other 20-high, cinnamon grahams for fins, ice cream cones as engines and a capsule built with a sugar cone



decorated with M&M's (Carlo built the launch tower using his favorite building set). We added 8 candles around the rocket launcher and a 9th one at the top, the escape tower.

The children sang the Happy Birthday song and then started the count down while Carlo blew each of the candles out: 9, 8, 7... and shouted "LIFT-OFF!!!" as he blew out the last candle. Each child then took a "rocket stage" (doughnut) and downed it with some ice cream.

When we finished eating the cake and opening presents, we took the children to the nearest school field and launched each kid's rocket a couple of times. The weather couldn't have been better: clear, blue and sunny skies with a slight, warm breeze - in short, a gorgeous day!

Everything was a success and the best part was that the children enjoyed the party, learned something new and went home very happy with a brand new rocket built by themselves and with the curiosity to find out more about science and rocketry!

Jorge Adds:

Since Carlo and I had spent the previous two nights pre-assembling the most tricky parts, it took less than an hour to put them all together—including customizing them with craft store stickers. I think it was an unforgettable experience for all involved and all the children went home very happy and with a brand new hobby to try!



Reach out and launch someone!

By Alex DeMarco



Alex DeMarco talks to the group at one of the new East Greenbush Library's Meeting Rooms.

On Saturday April 20, Mark Hutchinson and I ran an Intro to Model Rocketry seminar at the East Greenbush Public Library. 19 out of the 21 people that signed up were present.

We discussed the origins of our hobby, how it got started and by whom. Parts of a model rocket as well as the different types were discussed and presented to the group. We finished with a brief discussion of the safety code. Two Estes Mighty Mite starter kits were given away as door prizes.

It had been raining all day, but luckily it stopped long enough at the end of our seminar to do a little sport launch in the parking lot of the Library. Mark flew a stretched Alpha, while I flew a flying saucer and a regular Estes Alpha. All flights met with applause from our audience.

As a result of this seminar we have gained a lot of interest, and the membership of a new family, the Vidals. Be sure to say hello to them at our next launch!

- Alex



Alex preps a flying saucer model in the parking lot.



Alex DeMarco's Alpha streaks skyward to many peoples delight!



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Upcoming events

By Mark Hutchinson

Spooooky Sport Launch
October 19th, 2002
SATURDAY

ASTRE Johnstown

We will have FAA notification, so limited High power is acceptable.

All ghosts and goblins are welcome. Rockets, too

Freaky Fliers welcome, and all those odd-rocs!

There are plenty of plans for weird rockets, even some of the stock rocket kits out there would qualify.

Add some weird paint scheme, and you are almost set there too!



Flying chicken, crayon banks, fire hydrant, flying stovepipe, and others are all odd-rocs or Freaky flyers. Make a flying pumpkin, or ghost rocket, whatever fits your fancy!

Events with FAA NOTAMS

By Alex DeMarco

Some background first. As you know, we have been limiting flights at our Johnstown field to models that weighed less than one pound. Due to our close proximity to the airport we are not able to obtain an FAA Waiver which would allow us to fly any sized model as long as we stayed within the waiver's maximum altitude. And since our field isn't that big, flying the smaller stuff increases our chances of getting them back. However, by posting notification to the FAA and the Johnstown airport we can fly models up to 3.3 lbs. and engines with 62.5 grams of propellant or less (G motors).

Given our close proximity to the airport and the size of our field we have imposed the following rules and procedures for flying models that are above 1 lb. but less than 3.3 lbs.

Flying Rules

- Please park in the designated parking area.
- Maximum Impulse G (62.5 grams).
- Max Altitude 2000 ft. substantiated either by a RockSim printout or vendor supplied data. **YOU MUST HAVE THIS TO FLY!**
- Only currently certified listed motors shall be flown.
- Only NAR and Tripoli members in good standing can fly F & G, you must have your membership card.
- Sport Flight Cards for all F & G flights **MUST** be filled out, including repeat flights.
- Given the varying wind conditions the LCO has the option to cancel any F & G flight at any time.
- Each model will go through a thorough safety inspection before each flight and will be weighed.

Product Review

Estes "Launchables" Bandit Kit
By Mark Hutchinson

Estes this year has been on a design and packaging streak. For almost three months, reports on the newsgroup:rec.models.rocketry have been talking about the new kits on the shelves of Wal-Mart. In the Albany area, we have no less than ten Wal-Marts, however none that I visited ever seemed to stock the new kits.

On a recent visit, all that changed. Spotting an oddly shaped box on the shelf, I at first thought these might be more of the Ready To Fly (RTF) kits that Estes has produced as of late. Turning the package up and seeing "Launchables" (a play on the food item "Lunchables") on the cover made me realize that the kits were finally in our stores.

Flipping that first package over, I thought the four different kits listed on the back were it. There are actually at LEAST 2 sets of four different packs, each pack being boxed with one or two kits in a box. I've spotted every launchable on the shelf except for the Heatseeker. You can see the packages are quite eye-catching, as long as they aren't covered up with bike parts and baseball gloves (which Wal-Mart stocks right next to the rocket section in most stores).



For this review, I opened up the Bandit kit. (Yep, I got almost all of the others—at \$8.88 each, they are a deal!) What I found was the typical instructions to actually build (assemble) the rocket. All parts accurately illustrated, and parts bagging was kept to a minimum. All parts fit the first time, and total assembly time was around half hour (including time for pictures!). The only modification done was the typical shock cord replacement, although Estes has gone longer on the cords! The stock cord with the kit was about 1 1/2 times the body length, certainly sufficient to get by on a few flights. The shock cord is also "mounted" in their "hooded bubble", a double knot on the end of the cord keeps it in place. Replacement is easy.



Kit Stats

Bandit™	Product ID: 2060
Length:	16.6" (42.2 cm)
Diameter:	1.0" (25.4 mm)
Weight:	1.6 oz (45 g)
Recovery:	12" (30 cm) parachute
Fins:	T3™ plastic (TTW)
Maximum Altitude:	1000 ft (305 m)
Engine Mount:	18 mm
Recommended Engines:	A8-3 (FF), B4-4, B6-4, B6-6, C6-5, C6-7



Calendar of Events

ASTRE Contacts :

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 Jeff Vincent 439-2055 jvincent@acmenet.net

The meetings are usually informal bull sessions where club business is discussed first, followed by either general "what's new," or a predetermined topic or activity. This schedule can change, and it is advisable to contact Alex DeMarco to find out about any last-minute changes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: ASTRE events appear in **bold type**.

- May 25-26 Northeast Air Show (Scotia, NY)
- June 1 ASTRE Open Competition / Sport Launch**
- June 15-16 RAMTEC-10 (Center Valley, PA)
- July 27 ASTRE Open Competition / Sport Launch**
- August 4-9 NARAM-44 (McGregor, TX)
- August 24 ASTRE Open Competition / Sport Launch**
- Sept. 15 ASTRE Open Competition / Sport Launch**
- Oct. 19 ASTRE Spooooky Sport Launch**

Watch the ASTRE web site

(<http://www.astre471.org>)

or ASTRE471 on eGroups

(<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ASTRE471>)

for announcements of more meetings/launches.

For more NAR Northeast Region meet info, see:

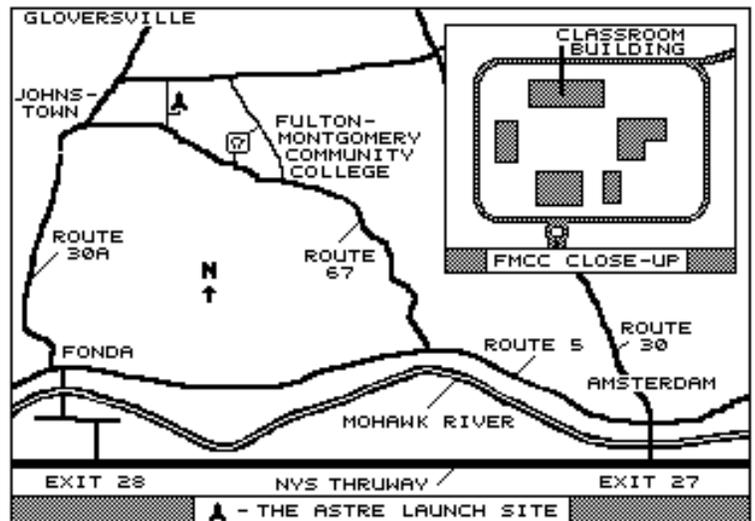
<http://www.acmenet.net/~jvincent/nercb.html>

Is your
Membership
 up to date?
 Visit astre471.org to
 download a form!

How to get to ASTRE's Flying Field

Our field is just outside of Johnstown, NY.

- From the east, take the Amsterdam exit (#27) off the NYS Thruway.
- Take a right and follow Route 30 North for one mile.
- Take a left at the second light after the bridge onto Route 5 West.
- Follow Route 5 for three miles. Take a right onto Route 67.
- Follow Route 67 for 5.5 miles. Shortly after passing FMCC, take a right onto the small road by Ed's RC shop. After one half mile you will see a white fence on your right. Follow the driveway just before the fence, and park in the parking lot. Walk to the range.



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