



Team Pittsburgh

Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Space Command NAR #473



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#93

Nov/Dec 2000

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We slipped away from NARAM-42 for a personal tour of ESTES Industries!



Barry Tunick, president of Estes Industries, along with Mary Roberts and Art Nestor, section advisor of Pittsburgh Space Command.

By ART NESTOR, PSC Advisor

When I heard that NARAM 42 was to be held in Colorado on Vern Estes' property, I knew I was going to be there. I also knew that if I did not go, I would probably be missing what amounted to an opportunity of a lifetime resulting in one more reason to kick myself hard. I was not disappointed. Other than the meet's loss of its' FAA waiver, the trip was everything I had expected and wanted it to be. One expectation was the fulfillment of my lifelong dream to tour Estes Industries.

In the early years of model rocketry, Estes Industries freely extended invitations to its' mail order customers to come to Colorado and tour its' facilities. Detailed maps were included with nearly every order. A staff of tour guides was maintained and each tour concluded with a demo launch. Perhaps before I ever flew my first rocket, I had wanted to visit the company. According to some Estes literature, more than 10,000 visitors could be expected annually in the early seventies.

Continued on page 4...

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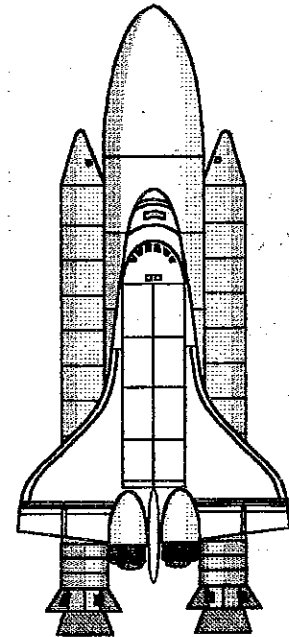
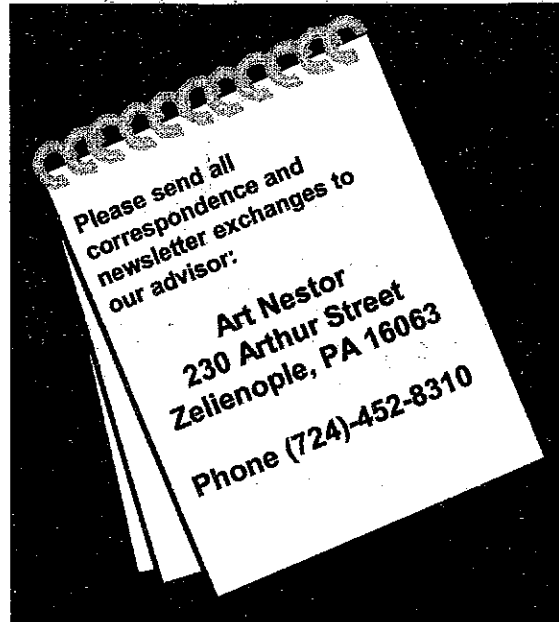
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PSC Officers for 2001:

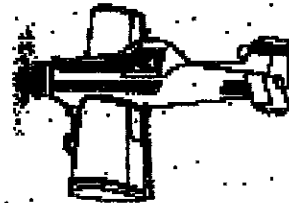
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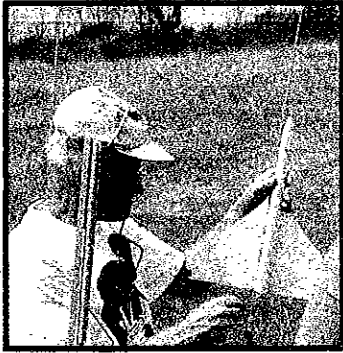
(724) 625-1550

HOURS:
MON. - FRI. 11-9 SAT. 10-6



Mort's Column By Mort Binstock, NAR 27182

MORT'S COLUMN by Mort Binstock



ROCKET RECOVERY GUIDELINES:

The purpose of this article is NOT to establish guidelines as the title might imply, but solicit guideline inputs from club members. How does one recover a rocket? I suspect thankfully, any recovery & even more so an intact recovery must be a good one!

I have observed that NORMALLY each owner recovers their own rocket. Occasionally others help to recover a rocket. Exuberant children with high energy levels (older folks with less energy and stiffer joints might appreciate) chase & recover rockets.

I am writing about normal recoveries, not difficult to retrieve treed rockets or lost rockets found by chance. Some rocket owners are appreciative when their rocket is retrieved, others are concerned that their rocket might be damaged or all the pieces not fully recovered. So what is best? I suspect its a matter of choice, fliers should discuss/ask. I don't really know.

I do have some ideas concerning basic retrieval guidelines. I'd like to suggest these guidelines applicable to retrieving a rocket, even your own. I wish to also open this subject to your ideas. Send in your response to be printed in "Team Pittsburgh" (TP).

I believe recovering a rocket should include:

- 1) Safety - Make sure the engine is spent & the ejection charge fired. Don't attempt to retrieve a rocket if doing so will place you in danger, such as from a power line, poison ivy, or by climbing a tree, or other dangerous situation. NO rocket is worth risking a personal injury.
- 2) Before walking away from the landing site make sure you have all the pieces. Sometimes a fin will break off upon landing. It's almost impossible to go back later to find where the rocket landed & retrieve the missing part.

- 3) Protect the chute & shock cord from damage while walking back to the launch site. The best way is to put them back into the rocket.

I'd like to get your ideas concerning:

- 1) Recovery guidelines
- 2) Safety concerns
- 3) When/should/how others retrieve your rocket

MORE WAY TO GOs - CONTINUED HIGH/INTERNATIONAL CLUB VISIBILITY:

I listed in my column last month various members names and published accomplishments. The most prolific JOE PEKLICZ diplomatically let me know that he is not a member of Pittsburgh Space Command (PSC), but rather just a subscriber to the club's newsletter. JOE is correct!

JOE, if it is OK with you, I'd like to take some club ownership of you. YOU are a major contributor to both the rocket community and to our newsletter.

PSC continues to publish in NAR's "Sport Rocketry". The July/August issue published a photograph of JOE's beautifully built "Door Ends" & "Gemini - Titan II", plus plans for the "Moondog X 3" high performance park rocket. Also published was my Micro balloons tech tip and a detailed report by FRANCIS GRAHAM of PSC's 3/19/00 launch.

Way to go guys!

INSURANCE TIDBITS:

Our NAR club & all NAR members have NAR liability insurance. NAR insurance is an umbrella policy. This means that their insurance pays after other policies such as home owners have paid first. To allow PSC to fly at Lutherlyn our NARm section provides an insurance certificate to both Camp Lutherlyn and to the neighboring farmer. Rocket insurance is also provided by Tripoli and to a more limited extent (up to 3.3 pounds/"G" engine) by the American Modelers Association (AMA).

I tend to be straight, I think that insurance should be used to pay for TRUE harm. I heard of two possibly questionable cases I thought might be of interest concerning model airplanes & the AMA.

One suit concerned a member who was thrown out of his local club. He won on the grounds he was improperly expelled?

Another suit concerned damages resulting from a mid air collision between two model airplanes.

Small claims court initially had trouble understanding what the suit was all about. This case was thrown out. I don't think either of these cases represent what our insurance should be used for.

FRANCIS GRAHAM:

PSC is honored to have FRANCIS GRAHAM as a member. FRANCIS is one of Tripoli's founding fathers. Tripoli recently nominated FRANCIS to receive a prestigious life time membership for his unselfish & untiring contributions.

Normally in my column I say, "wow!" or "way to go!" when something great is accomplished. This time I think the only appropriate words are, "CONGRATULATIONS FRANCIS GRAHAM".

CONGRATULATIONS FRANCIS GRAHAM!

SIZE TRENDS:

I think I see a similar trend between model airplane and model rocket sizes. Model airplanes started simple, then became large, complex, and expensive requiring difficult to obtain large fields. There is a trend now towards smaller, cheaper, simpler model airplanes that can be flown in smaller fields.

Rockets seem to be the same. Initially only small simple model rockets were available. I remember when Estes came out with the scary powerful expensive "C" engine. Then came much larger more complex expensive high power rockets. Is there now, with the development of Quest Micro Max rockets, a trend back to small inexpensive rockets able to be flown in locally available small fields?

I hope you noticed & enjoyed the classy Sept/Oct issue of "TEAM PITTSBURGH" (TP) COMPLETE with COLOR photos. WOW!

The year 2000 sure has passed quickly. I write six columns a year. This is my last column for this year. I hope you had a great year and a great year flying rockets with PITTSBURGH SPACE COMMAND (PSC).

Please send your 2001 dues in early on time. Doing so will make our job easier, allow the (volunteer) club officers to put the business end of running the club behind us, and allow the pure enjoyment of just flying rockets.

See you at the next launch!
Mort Binstock NAR 27182

**Estes Industries Tour
by Art Nestor
(continued)**

Times have
changed.
Tours were

discontinued because the facilities are not handicapped accessible and the company chose not to spend the money to make the necessary changes. Estes Industries' President and CEO Barry Tunick and NAR through Vern Estes were unable to negotiate a special NARAM event which would have included a tour and picnic at the plant. In fact, the company had nothing to do with the national meet held in it's own backyard. A series of ongoing disputes had soured the relationship. Rocketeers were turned away at the door. So you might ask, how did Peg and I get in? Well, not only did we get in but we received a grand tour of the facilities by Barry Tunick himself.

A week before NARAM, I called Mary Roberts, Manager of Technical Services. A very nice person whom I've known for many years. Mary is the person you would want if someone had to tell you bad news. She informed me that I would not be permitted past the receptionist's desk but that I was more than welcome to drive past the plant. Mary, please forgive me if my laugh sounded rude. But it was not up to Mary whether or not I got in. She explained to me the legal reasons and the fact that the company (i.e. Barry) was not going to have anything to do with NARAM 42. I brooded on these developments for two days. There was only one thing to do: ask Barry himself for a tour.

When I got Barry on the phone, I explained why I called and that I understood the situation but thought that my past working relationship with the company proved me worthy of a visit. And you know what? He quickly agreed. But with two stipulations: It had to be on Monday or Tuesday and that I was not to bring anyone else with me ("oh yeah, bring your wife, that's okay"). Sorry Rod, Richard and Steve.

We arrived about 9:30 Monday morning. Barry met us in the lobby and to my surprise conducted the tour himself. It lasted about an hour and he ended it with a visit to Mary Roberts' office allowing us to visit with her for awhile. Mary then took us to Barry's office where Peg and I presented them both with a few Pittsburgh souvenirs. Finally, all four of us posed for pictures in the lobby and said good-bye. But what was the tour and Barry Tunick really like? Read on.

Continued next page

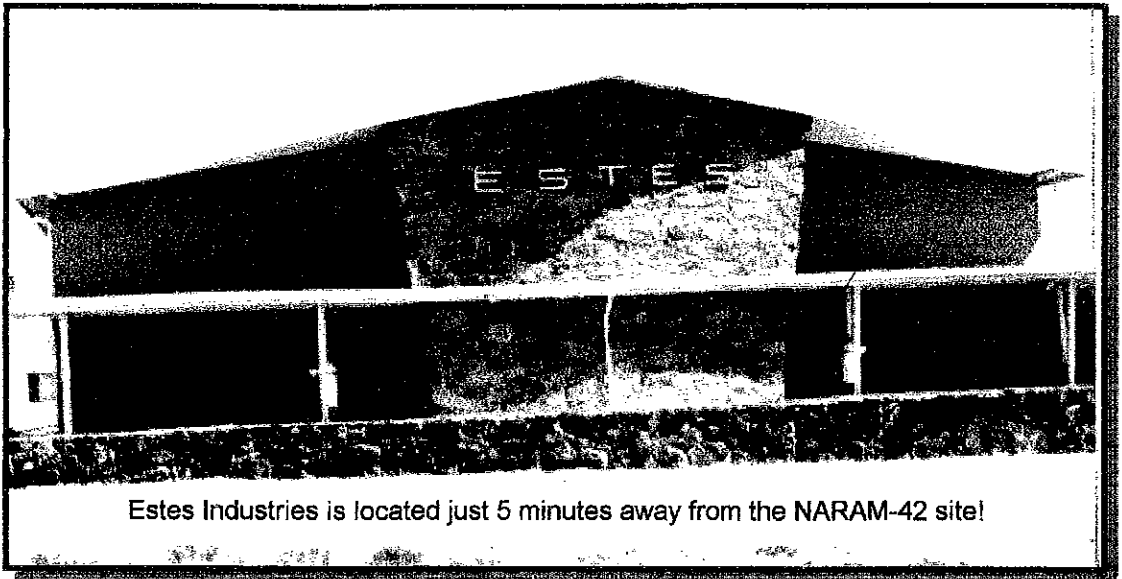
Estes Tour (continued)

I thought Barry (nobody calls me Mr. Tunick) was quite gracious with us. He was very talkative and answered all questions. No subject was off limits. He spoke quite frankly regarding NAR, NARAM, the rocketeers' criticisms of the company, the future of Estes, a little of his own personal views on life and more. It would

be hard for Peg and I not to like him. In fact, I feel our conversations provide almost enough material for another article. I am not going to do that but feel compelled to give my opinion on several subjects we talked about.

I hear quite often about the sad state of the current line of Estes rocket kits. Too many ready to fly models. The good kits are gone. They don't bring out anything really new. Barry Tunick ruined the company. The truth is Barry hasn't ruined the company. Yes, the really cool kits are gone and all but the classic limited edition kits are made in the orient. Most, if not all, research and development is devoted to the non-model rocket products. But Barry is running Estes to be a profitable BUSINESS. He doesn't see the company through the same starry eyes that we do. That Estes Industries is long gone. Vern sold the farm. Get over it. You want the Orbital Transport rereleased? Then start buying up all the classic kits that just came out. If Barry thinks Estes can make a profit on an Orbital Transport then you'll see it. If this classic line doesn't sell, then kiss the Transport and the other neat kits goodbye. Where has all the recent growth in hobby rocketry been? High power and high tech. Experienced modelers aren't rushing out to buy model rockets like they used to. Barry is running Estes Industries much like the way a professional athlete plays baseball. The company is chasing a buck. Apparently he isn't seeing any big bucks in high power. And baseball isn't the same as it was 35 years ago either.

Barry and the Association have been at odds for some time now. Each have made accusations about the other. I have heard mud hitting the wall on both



Estes Industries is located just 5 minutes away from the NARAM-42 site!

sides. I remember something about a video tape. I'm not going to defend either Barry or the NAR here because I don't know what the full truth is. But there should be an ending to the muckraking for the betterment of the hobby. Barry, it just wasn't right for Estes Industries not to be involved with NARAM 42. We considered Vern's launch site property to be practically sacred ground, less than what, 2 miles from your plant? I'm not saying a special NARAM plant tour. But something should have been done regardless of your feelings toward NAR. It was an opportunity missed for goodwill. Don't take it out on all of us because of some immature internet loudmouths. You simply gave them one more thing to complain about. NAR members comprise a very small percentage of your customers. Don't forget these others. Would it cost Estes Industries that much to return some of that personal touch?

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

The NARAM 42 program also included a separate four page virtual tour of Estes Industries as it was in the early seventies by Vern Estes. It is a combination of reprint material (including photos and maps) and new commentary by Vern. If anyone would like to read it, I will gladly make you a copy. Peg and I also had the pleasure of speaking with one of Vern's daughters and we just had to ask her what it was like as a child, to have a father who owned a model rocket company. To her, it was just her dad's job. But she had many good memories of the place and shared some with us.

We arrived at Estes early Monday as we had range duty in the afternoon. We had to sign in at the receptionist's desk and checked out the lobby while waiting for Barry. The first thing to catch our eye was

Continued on page 7

NAME	SCORE	NAR PTS.
------	-------	----------

1/4 A FLEXWING BOOST GLIDER DURATION (MULTI)

Rod Schafer	135 sec	660
Steve Foster	79 sec	396
Richard Freed	63 sec	264
John Pace	26	132

1/4 A HELICOPTER DURATION

Steve Foster	39 sec	600
Rod Schafer	30 sec	360
John Pace	16 sec	240
Richard Freed	10 sec	120

C DUAL EGGLOFT DURATION

Rod Schafer	57 sec	840
Richard Freed	25 sec	504
John Pace	19 sec	336
Mark Cassata	15 sec	168
Steve Foster	DQ	0

RANDOM DURATION (75 SEC)

	Error %	
Richard Freed	6.7%	300
John Pace	33.3%	180
Mark Cassata	41.3%	120
Steve Foster	74.7%	60
Rod Schafer	78.7%	30
John Sarosi	78.7%	30
Dave Rose	81.3%	30
Mort Binstock	82.7%	30
Andy Nigra	84.0%	30
Christine Rial	129.3%	30

**"Fall Flyer VII"
Regional Contest
Results**

NAME	SECTION	NAR PTS.
1. Rod Schafer	473	1890
2. Richard Freed	473	1188
3. Steve Foster	473	1056
4. John Pace	473	888
5. Mark Cassata	473	288
6. Christine Rial	473	30
6. Mort Binstock	Ind	30
6. Dave Rose	Ind	30
6. Andrew Nigra	Ind	30
6. John Sarosi	Ind	30

**Notes From the Prez
By Rod Schafer, PSC President**

1. Officers For 2001!

Will be the same as those of 2000. I did not receive any nominations.

2. Winter Activities!

Plans are in the works for a video night and a presentation on building Flex-Wing Boost Gliders. Full details of these two winter events will appear in the Jan.-Feb. 2001 issue of Team Pittsburgh.

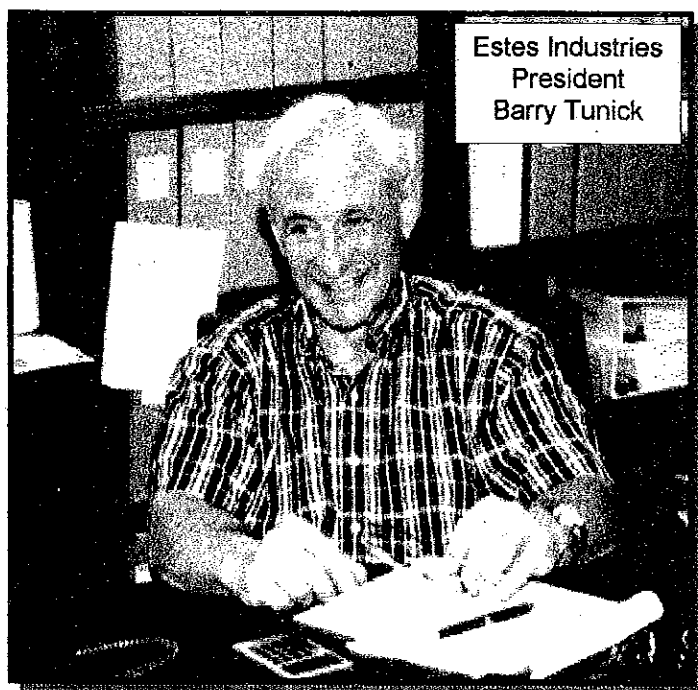
Have a wonderful upcoming Holiday Season!

Until Next Time...
Fly'em High,

Rod

the most beautiful model rocket artwork hanging throughout the lobby and office hallways. It appeared to be the original artwork for Estes catalogs and advertisements. Glass display cases in the entranceway housed many classic Estes rockets. I suspect they were the models photographed for the annual catalogs. Also on display but not under glass was the line of North Coast Rocketry kits. The lobby is completely finished in wood and two stories high. Unique and attractive. Within moments, Barry came to meet us. He jokingly told us he was the only one he could spare to give us a tour. I think he runs a tight ship.

Barry greeted everyone we met by their first name and asked us at the end of the tour how PSC vice president Mort Binstock was doing. (You should ask



PSC Team Pittsburgh editor Rich Freed about the good treatment he received from Barry when he returned defective motors to the plant the next day.)

We saw research and development, customer service, Mary and Barry's offices, a warehouse and shipping area, the graphic design department, the engine labeling machine, the recovery wadding (toilet paper) machine, ignitors being made, engine blister packs being assembled mechanically, and an engine making machine but the entire engine area was shut down for maintenance. The assembly areas were well kept and clean. The classic kit line was not in operation but we saw where they are assembled.

Did you know Estes Industries owns a warehouse in Pueblo? It will probably be sold in the not too distant

future for quite a tidy profit and a new building to replace it constructed on Estes property in Penrose.

At the conclusion of our visit we presented these souvenirs to Barry in his office: A NARAM 41 Pittsburgh patch and program, a copy of Team Pittsburgh, a NARAM 42 patch, a carton of commemorative Three Rivers Stadium coca cola and two bags of Pittsburgh Pretzels. To Mary we gave a NARAM 42 patch, three NARAM 41 programs and two bags of Pittsburgh Pretzels. Barry promptly jumped from his chair and pinned both patches to the wall facing his desk.

No, we did not see any hidden cache of ancient collectable kits, catalogs, engines or parts. They would have caught my eye. I was looking!

Vern and Gleda Estes were both surprised that we got a tour. I think they would love to roam the buildings and property again. And speaking of Vern. Do you know how cool it is to be shopping in Walmart and have someone come up behind you to talk and find out it's Vern?

Our tour concluded where it began, in the lobby. We greatly enjoyed it. Thanks Barry!

**An Editorial Postscript
by Richard Freed, Editor
Team Pittsburgh**

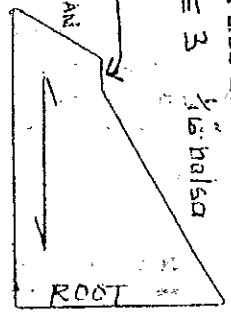
At Lutherlyn, I ran into a batch of A8-3 engines which had malfunctioning ejection charges which put a number of Alpha rockets into the ground. They were all from the same lot number. After 4 crashes, I pulled all the engines with that lot number from the educator bulk packs and contacted Estes about their replacement. As I was attending NARAM shortly, I inquired about dropping them off at the factory rather than going through the hassle of shipping. After a few phone calls back and forth, Estes agreed. I drove out to the plant on Tuesday morning with the engines. As I was talking to an employee, Barry came out of his office and instructed them to replace the engines 2 for 1. I guess I have to echo Art's sentiment... Thanks, Barry! (I wonder if he realized that I had 110 engines with me for replacement?)

"MINI" DISC

FULL SIZE FIN PATTERN DRAWING IS FULL SIZE

MAKE 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ " balsa

NOTCH
MAY NEED
SANDPAPER AN
EMERY BOARD.



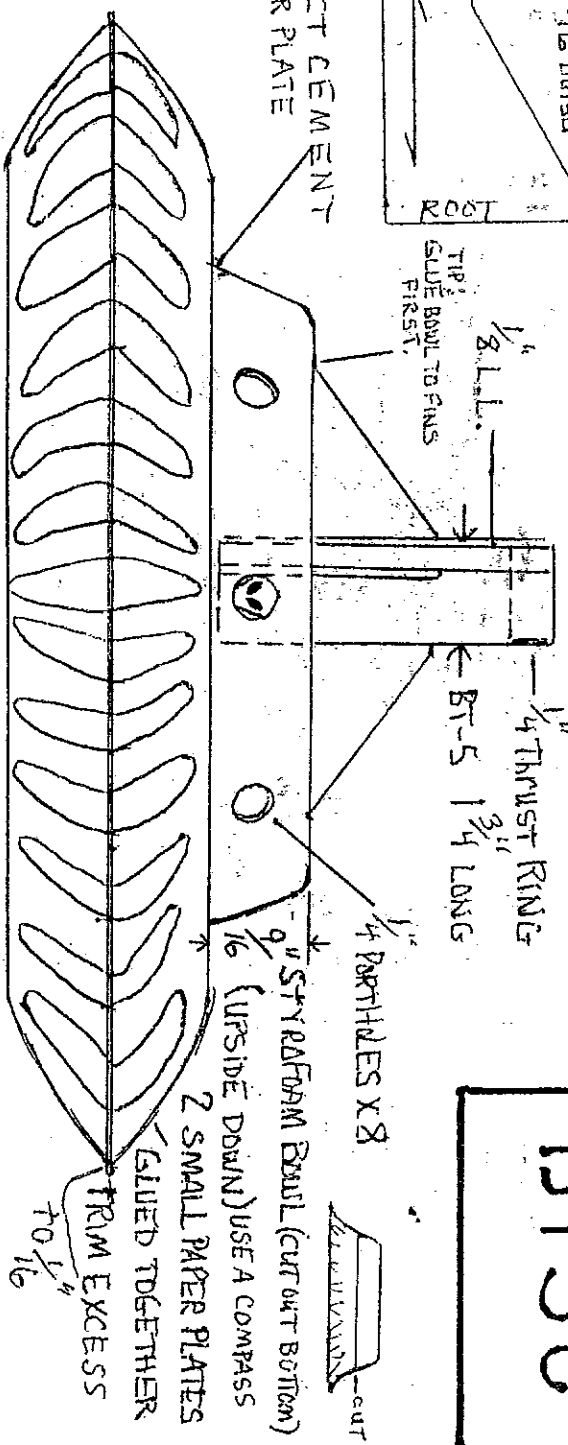
TIP'S
GLUE BOWL TO PINS
FIRST.

$\frac{1}{8}$ " L.L.

$\frac{1}{4}$ " THRU
BT-5 $1\frac{3}{4}$ " LONG

$\frac{1}{4}$ " PORTHoles X 8

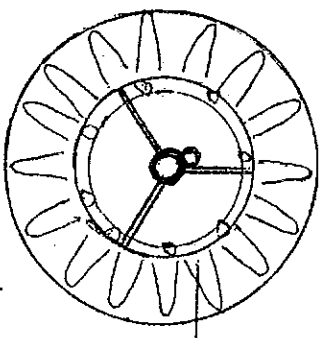
CONTACT CEMENT
TO UPPER PLATE



$\frac{1}{8}$ " STYROFOAM BOWL (CUT OUT BOTTOM)
 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (UPSIDE DOWN) USE A COMPASS

2 SMALL PAPER PLATES
GLUED TOGETHER
TRIM EXCESS
TO $\frac{1}{16}$ "

PLATES!
CUT OUT W/ SCISSORS ON
EXISTING DEPRESSIONS



BOTTOM VIEW (REDUCED)

FRICITION FIT AN
A10-3T

DESIGN & DRAWN BY:

7126100

Joseph Peklicz
635 S Zane Hwy
Martins Ferry, OH 43935-1236



ROCKET



MAIL

Goodbye old friend —
and thanks!

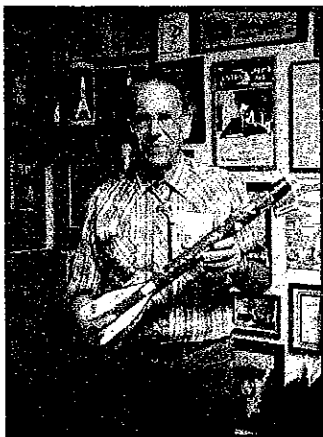
An evening with
Vern & Gleda Estes
by Dick Freed NAR 24586

It all began at registration. Kathleen Williams handed me a ticket, and said, "Fill it out... there's a raffle Wednesday evening at the auction." And so I did. At the auction, a ticket was drawn... "and the winner is...Richard Freed!" I had won a much-sought-after prize — an evening at Vern & Gleda Estes' home including refreshments and a tour of Vern's rocketry museum.

On arrival, refreshments were on the dining room table, and Lynda and I, along with 4 other "invitees" relaxed on the back deck enjoying conversation with the Estes' along with a breathtaking view of the Rocky Mountains overlooking the Arkansas River.

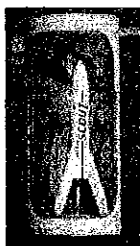
Then Vern took us in to see the museum. It was a converted bedroom on the main floor, which included wall to wall photographs, awards, rockets, and a large screen TV with surround sound. Vern demonstrated his "theater" with footage from a LDRS launch that was taken from the payload section of a rocket. Spectacular!

Then he went around the room showing many of the pictures and artifacts he had assembled over the years. Below and on the next page are some of the items he displayed.



First, to the left, Vern showed us the original prototype for the "Big Bertha", a rocket still in production today.

The scout rocket on the lower right actually flew in space... not on a Z engine, but it was taken onto the Space Shuttle by Jay Apt, and then presented to Vern.

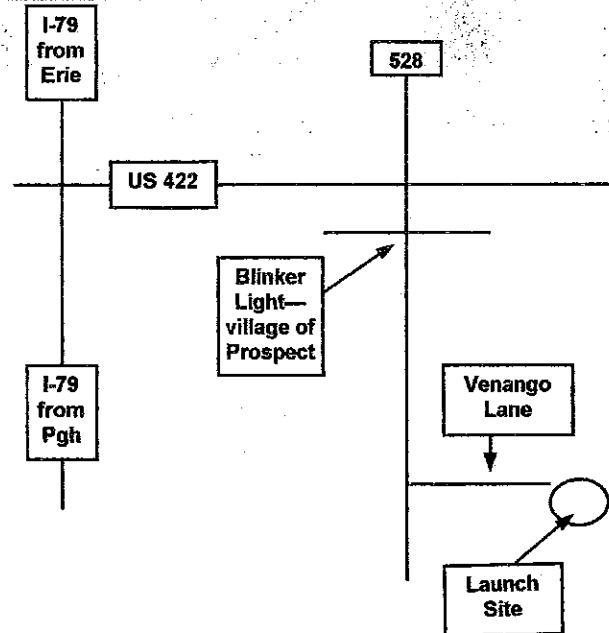


PSC
Launch Windows 2001

Lutherlyn:

- Jan. 21
- Feb. 18
- Mar. 18
- April 21 & 22 Comp. "Rocket Into Spring 7"
- May 19 & 20 Comp. "Reach For The Sky XIII"
(Possible location change...)
- June 24
- July 15
- Aug. 19 "R&R 7 Picnic"
- Sept. 16
- Oct. 20 & 21 Competition "Fall Flyer VIII"
- Nov. 11
- Dec. 9

Map to Camp Lutherlyn
PSC Launch Site



FROM 422 —

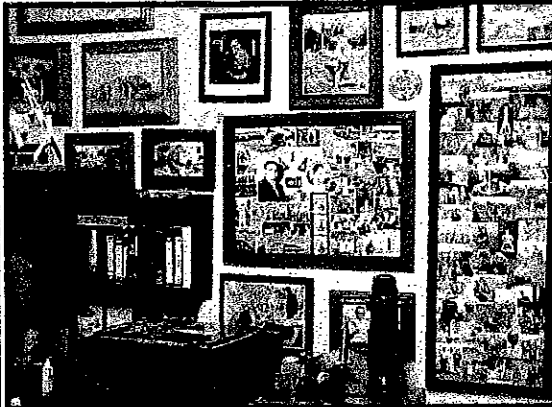
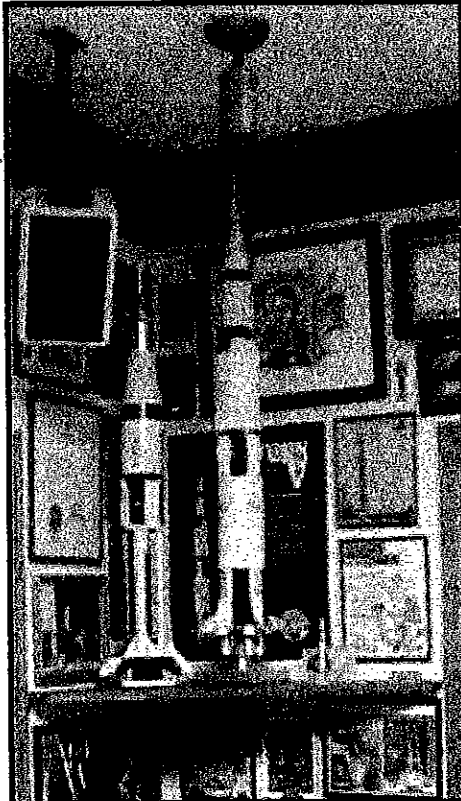
Get off at Prospect exit (528) and head south. Continue to blinker light about 0.3 miles from exit. Go straight through this intersection. Continue south on 528 for approximately 3 miles — look for a sign on the east (left) side of the road which says, "Lutherlyn Rustic Retreat Center". Turn left onto dirt road and continue approx 1/4 mi to the launch site.

An evening with Vern & Gleda Estes
(continued from p. 9)

Vern's Video Theater & Rocket Museum



(above) Photo of the late Bob Cannon, Estes Education Director



Team Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Space Command
Richard Freed, Editor

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