

WELCOME TO

The NAVIGATOR

ALAMO SQUADRON'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



HAPPY NEW YEAR! | JANUARY 2026 Edition

MODELFiesta 44 UPDATE



ModelFiesta 44 Fiesta Coverage

As many of you know, the Navigator Newsletter is normally published just a few days prior to our scheduled monthly meetings. Since ModelFiesta 44 took place only recently on January 3, 2026, there simply has not been enough time to compile, verify, and publish the complete results and award information for this issue.

ModelFiesta 44 was a great show, and many of our club members earned well-deserved medals and recognition. Full coverage, including all club award winners and highlights from the event, will be featured in our upcoming February 2026 issue. ***Thank you for your support.***

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2026



As we welcome a brand-new year, the Editing Staff of The Navigator would like to extend our warmest wishes to all Alamo Squadron members and their families for a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. We hope 2026 brings good health, happiness, fresh inspiration, and renewed passion for the hobby we love.

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Remembering
HERB SCRANTON

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General Information

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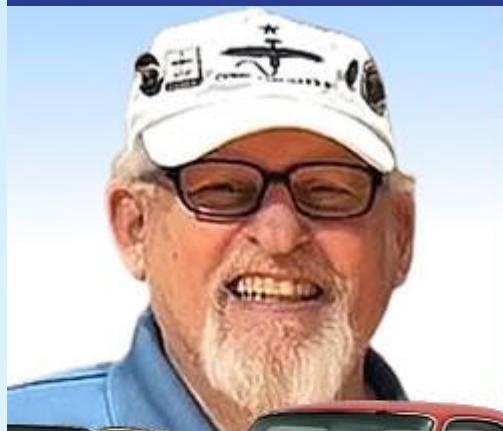
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REMEMBERING OUR FRIEND
AND FELLOW MODELER

HERB SCRANTON



Brought to you by his friends | Graphics and composition by Julio A. Caro

A Ford Man All the Way!

Please join us in celebrating Herb's life through the stories and anecdotes shared by those who knew him and were fortunate to call him a friend.

We remember with gratitude and affection the life of Herb Scranton, a cherished member of Alamo Squadron and a true friend to so many in our club. Herb was an avid modeler whose interests spanned many genres, but he was especially well known for his lifelong devotion to Ford automobiles. His enthusiasm, craftsmanship, and willingness to share his knowledge left a lasting impression on everyone who built alongside him.

Herb also gave back to the club in a meaningful and lasting way as the creator of the Model Summit Award, a popular recognition honoring fellow modelers who are not only active builders but also deeply involved in supporting and participating in club activities. The spirit of that award reflects Herb himself: engaged, encouraging, and always invested in the success of others.

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Remembering HERB SCRANTON: Friend and Fellow Modeler.

Please join us in celebrating Herb's life through the stories and anecdotes shared by All those who knew him and were fortunate to call him a friend.

Gerardo "Jerry" Escobedo:



"Herb was a great modeler, very active in the scale modeling community, and always the spearhead to many initiatives of the Alamo Squadron Modeling Club, in San Antonio, Texas. Here's Herb standing with the club members in an event in Houston in 2022."



Julio A. Caro:



"Herb was the kind of person who always let you know where he stood. Friendly, honest, and sincere."

He was someone you could count on to always lend a helping hand whenever needed. He was a true leader and pillar of our club,

consistently offering his time, support, and encouragement whenever needed.

One of my fondest memories of Herb, was riding up with him to one of the many IPMS shows in his decked-out Ford F-150. True to tradition, we first made the obligatory stop at McDonald's for his favorite road trip breakfast—two Egg McMuffins, hash browns, and a coffee with one cream and two sugars!

HERB SCRANTON'S ROAD TRIP BREAKFAST SPECIAL

- Two Hot-off-the-griddle Egg McMuffins
- Hash Browns (if really hungry)
- And a Coffee (1 cream & 2 sugars)



The drive was filled with fascinating war stories and of course, a very generous supply of car talk!" We're going to miss you, buddy!

Dana Mathes:



Herb had a big heart! He was always the host and he made sure folks felt included and comfortable. Whether it was a Club Christmas meeting or a ModelFiesta planning meeting, Herb made sure that everyone had something to eat and drink. Likewise, Herb was always the first one to greet visitors to our club meetings. He was so generous, using his own stash to augment the Model Summit and ModelFiesta raffle prizes.

Herb combined this generosity with an encyclopedic knowledge for cars. He seemed to know everything about every model of American cars: which color, which engine, which trim, etc. If there was a question about a car model, Herb was quick to help. When I undertook the project to model my granddad's pickup, it was Herb who recommended the best automotive paints, the right tires, the right wheels, etc. And it was Herb who gave me the parts for the tools in the truck's bed.

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Remembering **HERB SCRANTON**: Friend and Fellow Modeler.

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He was not only a host, but a servant. Herb served as a club officer for several years. In addition, he managed the Alamo Squadron's Model Summit program and judged in many contests across IPMS Region VI. Respected as a judge and a modeler, Herb also judged at several IPMS National contests. When something needed to get done, Herb was there.

Our club was better for Herb having been part of it. I will miss Herb's friendship and his big heart.

Jim Norton:



"When I made the decision to attend my first meeting of the Alamo Squadron, I walked in the room and the first person to see me was Herb. He was welcoming, asking me my interests and we talked quite a while before he started introducing me around. What a positive first impression! I spent time with Herb at the Pre-Registration table at the Nats in San Marcos and learned even more. My best word I could use to describe Herb is "Genuine". He was the real deal and he will be missed."

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Lee Forbes:



"I first met Herb in the fall of 2014 at the Northside Ford dealership at Highway 281 and Nakoma Drive, where the Alamo Squadron was holding its meetings in the conference room at the time. I was conducting what would turn out to be the club's final Adult Building Course (ABC), held on Saturday afternoons, using the 1/48 scale Tamiya A6M2 Type 21 Zero kit.

Herb introduced himself, along with the other class members, and mentioned that he was a retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant (E-8) who enjoyed building car models—especially Fords. The fact that he had attained the rank of E-8 (a distinction reached by only about 2% of the enlisted force, by law under Title 10 of the U.S. Code) told me a great deal about him right away. He was very much a "take-charge" kind of guy, with a great sense of humor, and when he spoke, there was never any doubt that he meant exactly what he said.

He showed a strong interest in the ABC course content and quickly

picked up the building techniques, especially airbrushing. Just as importantly, he readily helped others in the class who were newcomers to the hobby. It was immediately clear that Herb was a natural leader and an exceptional "people person."

It didn't take long for Herb to establish himself across the full range of Alamo Squadron activities once he became a member. In recognition of his leadership, he served two terms as Vice President (2016–2017 and 2017–2018), followed by a term as President (2018–2019), and later a partial term during 2020–2021, when he had to resign for family health reasons. He was also well known—and fondly remembered—for bringing a cake to our annual December gift exchange meetings.

My most vivid remembrance of Herb came at a July club meeting when he announced that he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, stating firmly that he was "only going to talk about this one time." I will never forget the personal courage and strength he displayed in making that announcement.

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Remembering HERB SCRANTON: Friend and Fellow Modeler.

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Few men, I believe, could have delivered such tragic news with the conviction and composure that Herb did.

Lastly, Herb was a highly accomplished car modeler who was always willing to share his skills, advice, and assistance with anyone who asked.

Rest in peace, Herb. I am honored to have known you."

David Auth:



"When I first got back into model building a few years ago, a friend and former Alamo Squadron member encouraged me to bring some cars to ModelFiesta 2022. I entered three models. As I was setting up, a friendly gentleman came up to me and asked if I would help judge Automotive. I clumsily muttered something like "ugh, uhm, I don't really know anything about judging, this is my first contest." He said something to the effect of, "it's no big deal, I can teach you, and you'll be working directly with me." How could I say no? Of course that person was Herb. He took me off

the sidelines and got me involved in the hobby that I've come to love. Herb was an ambassador for our hobby. When I came to my first Alamo Squadron meeting a month later, there he was, positioned so that he was the first person you would meet as you came in the door. He was the keeper of the name tags and of the Model Summit and always made sure everyone, new member or old, felt welcome.

Herb had a great sense of humor and comedic timing. Later, as Herb was suffering from a terminal illness, we decided to make him an honorary lifetime club member. When Keith presented him with the award it was a stressful, difficult and solemn moment as we knew that he would not be with us much longer. Without hesitation Herb looks over at Jim, our treasurer, and says with a straight face: "can I have my money back?" He was referring to the annual dues he'd just paid.

Herb was a one of a kind, irreplaceable member of our club and I will miss him."

Gene Botkins:



I don't know why but I always feel slightly diminished when someone I knew passes away, so matter how much or how little I knew them. Surprisingly, I also get a little weepy as I get older.

Herb was the very first person I met when I went to my first Alamo meeting. Sitting there like the Grand Poobah, I didn't even have the time to introduce myself first; he greeted me warmly as if he hadn't seen me in a while. He made sure he had my name right and explained everything I needed to know about the club, especially Model Summit. He even gave me his number and asked what my preferred model to build. In short, I made a new friend. Once, I left behind a model at our monthly meeting. Herb later called me and we made arrangements to meet at Hobby Town. I didn't know where he lived but surely he went out of his way more than I had to. But that was Herb – generous of his time, knowledge and an appreciation of old things.

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Remembering **HERB SCRANTON**: Friend and Fellow Modeler.

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I sure it was just a coincidence, but after the graveside service my smart phone played "Go Rest High on that Mountain" on my way home. Yes, I feel slightly diminished, a little weepy and a little more alone. I'm sure he is sitting at the model bench of his dreams with all the time in the world.

Goodbye Herb, and thank you."

Dick Montgomery:



"For many months—indeed, years—Herb served as the caretaker of the member name tags. When new

members joined, he would tell them that he would prepare a name tag and have it ready by the next meeting. His promptness helped new members feel welcomed and acknowledged, providing a positive introduction to the club.

Herb also maintained records of members who completed model projects. Knowing that their work was being tracked and recognized gave members a sense of satisfaction and reinforced that their efforts were valued."

Brett Scholten:



"I "really" met Herb going to a show (Shreveport IIRC).

I sat up front with him and got to enjoy 8 hours of war stories and car stories, loved it.

Herb had the gift of gab, some would just say he talked non-stop, but I was always amazed how he could strike up a meaningful conversation with a stranger. To me, that is the gift of gab. Those conversations flowed naturally, never forced. Explains why he did so well as an Army Recruiter.

RIP Herb, I will miss you."

Alan Larrumbide:



"I knew Herb for only a few short years, beginning when I returned to modeling about three years ago and joined the Alamo Squadron. In that time, I came to know him as a friendly, chatty, funny, deeply involved, warm-hearted person and a skilled model builder and devoted

Ford enthusiast.

I truly got to know Herb during our drive from San Antonio to the 2024 Nationals in Madison, Wisconsin. You learn a lot about someone when you spend four days on the road together. Although he was reluctant to let me drive for more than a couple of hours, I had a great time. During the roughly forty hours we spent in his beloved Ford F-150, Herb was always ready with a story—about his cherished wife, his family, Ford Galaxies, and, of course, his career in the Army. Listening to him, it quickly became clear that he had lived a rich, honorable, and fulfilling life.

I also discovered that Herb was a wonderful listener. Through our many conversations, I realized how much we had in common, which made the journey all the more meaningful.

From the moment he delivered the devastating news to the club until the last time I was able to visit him, I watched Herb face everything with remarkable grace and courage. Near the end, we spoke about our shared faith in Jesus Christ, and I believe that faith was the source of his strength and his ability to meet

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this challenge so bravely. That evening, we prayed together, said goodbye, and after that, things moved quickly—much faster than I had expected. Still, I take comfort in knowing that he was surrounded by family who loved him deeply.

Here is a photo of our group at the 2024 Nationals with Herb in the front row on the right.



God bless you, Master Sergeant Scranton. It was truly an honor to have been your friend."

No Photo Available

Rachel & Wade Brooks:

"Herb was always willing to talk shop concerning models and especially old Ford cars. His eyes would light up when he talked about his own old 1:1 Ford. I could listen for hours and he was always willing to help when it came to techniques

and details. He was one of the first folks I looked for at each model show. I'll miss him because there aren't many car guys around in the area. Go high on that mountain Herb.

B. Wade Brooks"

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HERBERT EDGAR SCRANTON, III | 09-01-1953 - 11-27-2025

Herbert "Herb" Scranton III, age 72, of New Haven, CT, passed away on November 27, 2025. Born September 1, 1953, Herb was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and patriot.

A proud American, Herb enlisted in the United States Army at age 18 and served honorably for 20 years, retiring as a Master Sergeant. His dedication to service and country was unwavering.

Herb graduated from West Haven High School in 1972, where he and his brother shared a love for marksmanship. Together, they served as President and Vice President of the school's Rifle Club, often swapping first place in competitions—a friendly rivalry that became a cherished memory.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Stacy Scranton; his father, Herbert Scranton Jr.; and his son, John Scranton. He is survived by his mother, June Kerekes; his children, Herb Scranton IV (Jessica), Heather Bleier (Daniel), and Sarah Newman (Bryan Flanigan); and eight cherished grandchildren: Harley Scranton, Ayden Scranton, Stacy Bleier, Wade Bleier, Aurora Newman, Morley Newman, Audrey Flanigan, and Eiley Flanigan. He is also survived by his siblings, George Scranton (Maureen) and Carol Senecal (David), and preceded by many life-long friends who shared in his journey. Herb also remained close to his former wife, Susan Nunnery, with whom he shared many years and an enduring friendship.

Herb had a passion for building model cars, planes, and military vehicles. He was an active member of the Alamo Squadron model club and a former president of the Best Little Ford Club of Texas. He loved attending local car shows with his prized Ford Galaxies—a '64 and a '69. Herb believed in strong values and self-reliance, teaching his children practical skills like caring for their cars.

Herb also had a sweet tradition—he loved Dunkin' Donuts coffee and often showed up with a dozen donuts to share, bringing joy and laughter to family gatherings.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Disabled American Veterans: ihelpveterans.org honoring Herb's lifelong commitment to those who served. Herb's family finds comfort in knowing he is now reunited with loved ones, sitting with Jesus and sharing a cup of coffee—one cream, two sugars.

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The Queen Mary 2 Illuminated



Article by **Gene Myers**,
Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS)

Every once in a while Revell releases one of their higher-end kits as a “Platinum Edition” where for a ship, for example, it includes wood decking stickers, a comprehensive set of PE sheets for detailing up, and milled metal pieces for things like gun barrels, masts, and yardarms.

I love these kits and stash them when they come out as I find it really convenient not to have to spend a lot of time searching for and buying what I consider essential 3rd party add-ons, especially for a ship. So when I found a Platinum Edition of the iconic Queen Mary 2, I snapped it up.



Before I build anything, I spend time on the internet finding videos and blogs of other people’s builds of the model in question to give me ideas and inspire me to try new techniques. I came across a couple of videos of finished versions of the QM2 model that were lit up

with LEDs, so when I pulled my box from the stash, I decided that the technical challenge for this model was to learn how to wire up and install LED’s. I bought a soldering iron, some insulated red & black wire, a 3V battery holder for two AA’s, a bunch of 3mm LED’s in a variety of colors, and some smaller SMD LED’s for spots.

Construction began with the hull which came in two massive pieces, almost a yard long. Except for the decks 4, 5 and 6 passenger balcony openings, all the portholes were indentations in the hull, so each had to be drilled/cut out. This was no small effort as there were over 300, the plastic was 4mm thick, and most of them were not round and hence easy to drill. Ships in general can involve a lot of repetition, worse than building tank tread in my experience, so I’ve developed the strategy of starting a session in the shop with the repetitive “chore” and once achieving some milestone (e.g. drilling and cutting out another 30 portals) I get the “treat” of working on something that’s more interesting.

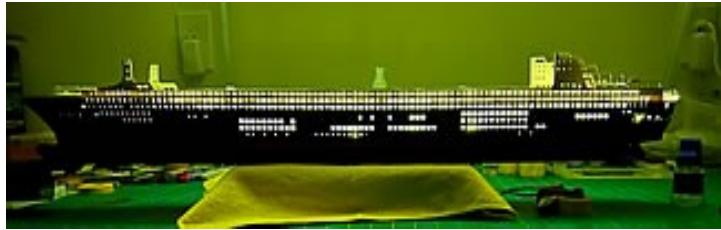
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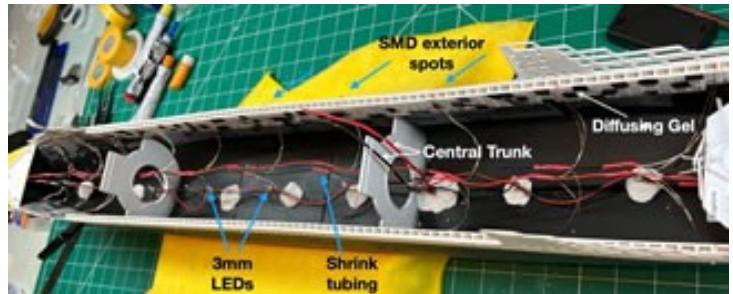
Two weeks later it was all cut out so interior light would shine through each opening as below.



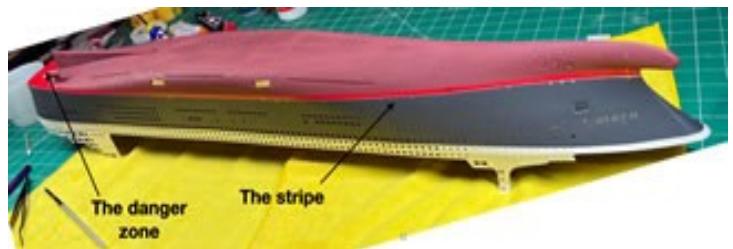
Before joining the two hull pieces, I put on a very thick coat of semi-gloss black on the relevant part of their interior so that the plastic would not glow from the internal LED light where it should not. This is something one needs to think about whenever placing an LED in a model. With the two halves together, a row of 10 off-white 3mm LEDs was placed along the bottom in parallel and evenly spaced across the span. To keep it simple and avoid a lot of step-down transistors I just used a 3V source (2 AA batteries) that could be jacked in at the base of the hull just aft of the stand the ship sits on. Most LEDs except the longer-wave colors, e.g. orange and red, require 3V across them, so basically I could "organically" grow a parallel wiring network and mostly avoid step-down resistors. The horizontal row of LED's was anchored with epoxy clay to the bottom of the hull and tied into a vertical "trunk" red/black pair that arises from the power jack. You can see that in the picture immediately below along with a second horizontal parallel row of 21 external spots at the lip of the hull upon which the main deck will sit (deck 7 for passengers).

The spots are 0306 bright white SMD LEDs and shrink tubing was used to prevent a short circuit. Lastly, all the apertures where light would come through were covered with white diffusing gel with a random pattern of some further darkened with "black" diffusing gel and

some completely darkened with black paint. Reference the following photo below.



The exterior painting was straightforward with the exception of the bright red water line. I had wanted to paint it, but the decals for it actually had a lot of small markings on them that would have been difficult to duplicate. Alas the decal segments for the stern simply did not conform to the proper shape and it was at times frightening as I struggled to get a good result. I had to patch a few spots but it looked reasonable in the end. In hindsight I should have painted the stripe and just cut off the little markings that sit above and below it.

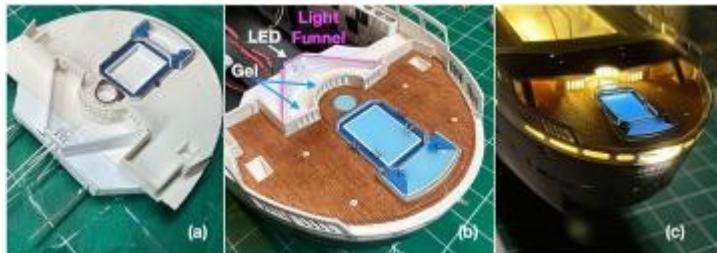


The first visible stern deck at level 5 and the bow deck went on without incident and a good fit. The next challenge came with the placement of the stern deck at level 6 which had a pool and a hot tub on it. I wanted these to be lit from beneath so I thinned the plastic underneath them and built a light box from Evergreen 1mm polystyrene sheet, silvering the interior with Alclad over a black gloss coat. The tricky part was



The Queen Mary 2 Illuminated | Page 3 of 6

getting the geometry of the box so that it would not interfere with the deck below it, as it was also to be lit so that light would spill out the large oval openings at that level (see (c) below). Once constructed and painted (see (a) below), the photo etch ladders and rails that are partly in the water were added before filling the pools (very carefully!) with clear epoxy latex with a bit of light blue tint. After installing the deck into the hull, a wood deck sticker stained with an "Amaretto" wood stain was applied (see (b) below). You can also see the light funnel directing a 3mm LED to shine through the aft facing windows overlooking the pools. These are, of course, covered with diffusing gel. The result is shown in panel (c).



The main deck at level 7 went on next. It's a single very long piece that goes from bow to stern (see (a)). It had two stabilizing ribs that were removed to accommodate the wiring for the exterior spotlights which made it a very wobbly piece of plastic until in place.

The fit was reasonable but the seam work made enough mess that the white paint on the hull and the deck needed to be sprayed again. This involved a lot of masking as you can see in panel (b).

There was also a tricky seam in the concave join at the bow which was solved nicely with Plastic Putty applied liberally with my pinky (see panel (c)).

I also got a beautifully flush seam at the bow deck using Tamiya's polyester putty which does not shrink while drying. Refer to the photos below.



I scratch built covers for the exterior spots so the light would be directed downward. At left you can see my template for the tops around which I wrapped .125ml polystyrene sheet around the sides. The interior of each was painted black and then slivered, the outside white. Each cover was then CA-glued to the side of the boat. At right the build to this point with all the lights on.



The stern "stair-case" of aft-facing lido decks was perhaps the most fun part of the build as progress was rapid and each deck was unique. All pools and hot-tubs were given light boxes and filled with tinted epoxy latex as described previously. All the aft facing windows had diffusing gel and light funnels projecting outwards. I masked and painted the black stripes you can see in the center panel below rather than using the decals.

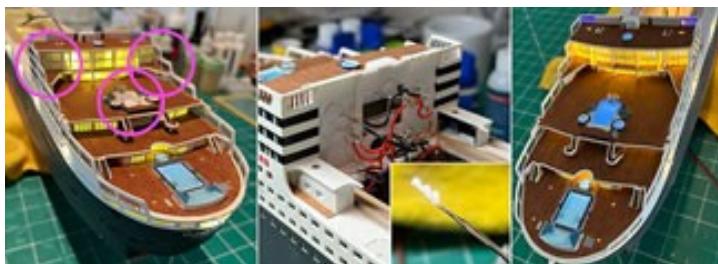
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When I tested the lighting you can see in the magenta-circled areas in the right pane below, that I had missed these spots, the most problematic being that the pool on deck 8 just wasn't getting enough light. I make mistakes all the time so I've come to conclude that figuring out how to creatively recover from these is a significant part of the art of model making, at least for me. At this point I only had access via the bow facing wall shown in the center panel which will ultimately be interior to the upper decks and so not visible. I made a few big holes so I could see in and inserted LEDs to the 3 areas using a wand of 3 SMD LEDs as shown in the small inset to push into the pool light box. Phew, looks good in the panel at right.



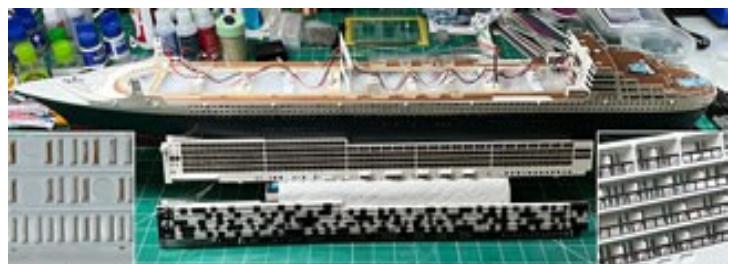
Above the main deck promenade level are 5 floors of passenger cabins with balconies before the top decks at levels 13 and 14, and they span most of the ship from the stern staircase to the bridge at the bow. In the model this is two huge pieces of plastic. While the plastic was mercifully true, every window was filled with flashing as you can see in the small inset at left below.

In general, there was a lot of flashing suggesting old plates or unusually poor production standards for a Revell kit. There were 100s of these windows on each piece and each one had to be cut out, pure drudgery! Then each balcony had to be hand painted as the shape defeated any attempt at masking. To add insult to injury the Revell Aqua light beige paint required 3 coats

before the color was solid. The balconies all have rails with glass plate between sections. In the model these are clear pieces with rails that must be painted and again no option but to do it by hand. The model in general had a lot of such pieces. I discovered that you did not need to be dead on with your brush as with clear plastic you can cleanly and precisely remove any excess with a sharpened tooth pick.

In the small inset at right below you can see a close up of a section of the railings. The two pieces, one facing outward and the other inward so you can see the diffusing gel and random dimmed and dark cabins, are in the following picture. You can also see that the entire lower deck has been filled with synthetic pillow stuffing to further diffuse the general interior illumination provided by the row of 10 LEDs at the bottom of the hull.

Also I put in another row of 10 at the main deck level to illuminate all the upper cabins. LEDs generate no heat so you don't need to worry about things like the pillow stuffing catching fire.



It took 3 weeks of fairly constant effort to prepare those cabin balcony panels. As per strategy, after starting with that task I would reward myself at the end of each session by beginning to work on the top decks which came in an aft section and an elevated forward section (under luxury cabins on deck 13).

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In the picture below you see, from left to right, the funnel, a water housing (the large bulb is a water tank much as you might see in a rural town), and the mast and radar housing.



Next it was time to build the forecastle and forward section of the superstructure atop which is the bridge.



The beautiful rounded rise came in three pieces so great care was taken to make the seams perfectly smooth in order to do it justice. The fit of this piece was not good, one side of the join was lower than the other where the joins were to projections (blue in the photo at left) from the 2 huge hull pieces glued together at the start. I used superglue to force things into alignment as there was no way to hold it in place to allow polystyrene glue to bond. And then just a bit of shaving and it was OK. The other really tricky thing was painting the black stripes given the curved geometry. I painted the interior of the bridge black and decided to light it red requiring for the first time the use of 100Ω step-down resistors to reduce the voltage across the LEDs. All the windows here had the necessary diffusing gel behind them.

The best touch was that I was actually able to get the smallest SMD LEDs (02/04's) embedded into the actual spots that hang below the bridge wings (reference the picture at right) of the photo shown.

The top deck then quickly followed. All the various lights I put in the top deck structures were wired together in parallel on the underside of the two top deck pieces so that there was one junction pair of wires that had to be tied in to the rest of the network. The top portion of the boat was filled with pillow stuffing to diffuse the top row of internal LEDs. Basically, the entire interior of the model except for the stern lido decks is so filled. Each top deck piece was wired in and then put in place sealing the interior and completing the LED work. Reference photos below.



My last LED technique was to back light the Queen Mary 2 sign on the sides of the funnel housing. This was done by thinning the plastic behind the sign, masking the shape of the "glow cloud", and then turning the unmasked interior into a silvered box. Two orange LEDs in this box create the glow. It remained to put the finishing touches on the top deck and just a bit more tedious building and painting 26 lifeboats and their davit cranes. The decals when placed on the wood decking were quite silvered as it is not a smooth surface. Gently cutting with a brand new #11 and lots of solvent gave a decent result for smaller decals like the suffle boards. But when it came to a very large round helicopter hover decal with yellow landing lines and lots of transfer film in between, I decided to cut



The Queen Mary 2 Illuminated | Page 6 of 6

out just the lines of the decal before applying. A disaster ensued where the decal for the outer circle broke into a dozen bits. The decals in general were old and brittle. I was able to salvage it to some degree but I'm sure it would not pass judging muster. In hindsight I should have applied the decal and then cut out the clear parts, especially as the blade marks would not have been noticeable in the wood decking, as they would have been on a painted plastic surface. There was a tennis court and a basketball court on either side of the mast housing and that went smoothly, including the decals. I even built nets for the basketball hoops!



Closing Comments

It always seems to be a bit more work than one thinks as the construction comes to a close: railings, antennae, and lot's of touching up here and there but finally she was done. From a show quality perspective, I can see some flaws in my build: the horrific helipad decal and other small things like the plastic not being perfectly furbished on some of the glass rails. In reflection, I should have gone even slower and taken more time with every piece. This seems to be the nature of model building: the more experienced I become, the more care and patience I take. Yet I was still happy with the result of this four month cruise. It was for me an epic build and I love having this model in my collection.

Here a photo of the finished model in all its glory! I hope you enjoyed reading this article as much as I did writing it!



Cheers,

Gene

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HAPPY NEW YEAR! | JANUARY 2026 Edition

Completed VC-54C Skymaster VIP Transport Kit

By Julio A. Caro



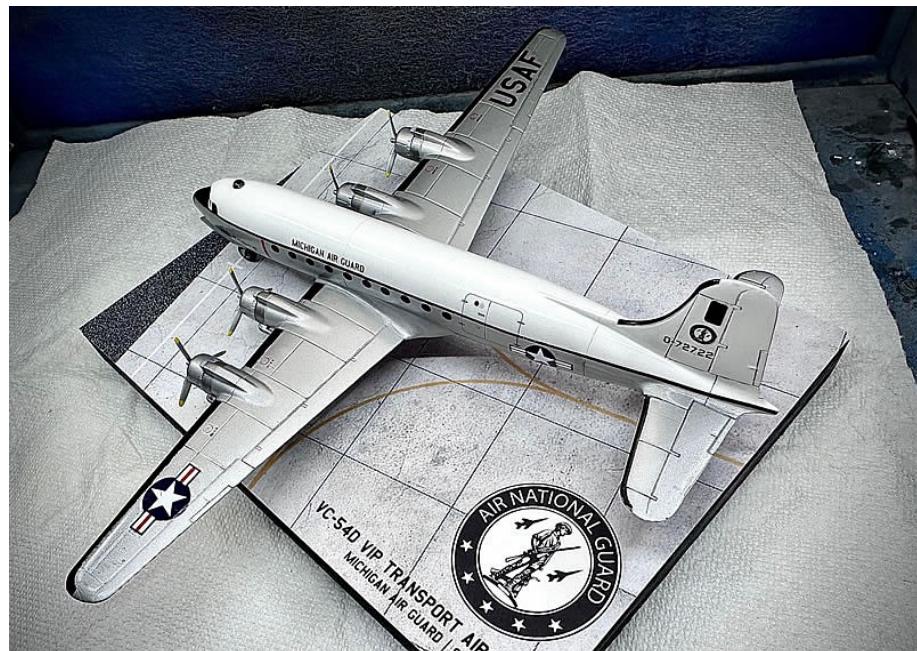
Finally, after several months of steady work—and, I must admit, a few unexpected trials

and tribulations along the way—I am happy to say that the Michigan Air National Guard VC-54D Skymaster is complete. This project proved to be both rewarding and challenging, testing my patience and problem-solving skills more than once, but seeing it finished on the bench made every bit of effort worthwhile.

This article serves as the second and concluding part of my *Michigan Air Guard Skymaster Work in Progress Review* article originally published in the October 2025 issue of *The Navigator*.

For those who read that article, I promised to share photos of the completed model and, at long last, here they are.

Julio



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HAPPY NEW YEAR! | JANUARY 2026 Edition

THCSM Tuesday Build Night 2026 Monthly Schedule

By Rob Booth



Hello, everyone!

Texas Hill Country Scale Modelers hosts a hobby build night every Tuesday evening from **7:00–9:00 PM**. Anyone who enjoys making smaller versions of bigger things is welcome to attend and participate.

Members of **Alamo Squadron** and **San Antonio Armor Builders (SAAB)**—as well as members of any other modeling group—are welcome to join us at any session. In particular, we invite you to attend the **second Tuesday build night at The Model Box in Boerne**, which we consider a joint club build session.



2026 Build Night Schedule (Beginning January 6, 2026)

1st and 3rd Tuesdays (and 5th Tuesdays, when applicable):

7:00–9:00 PM at **Rob Booth's home**
475 Cypress Estates Pkwy., Ingram, TX
Phone: (830) 739-8767 | Email: rbooth@hctc.net

2nd Tuesday:

At **The Model Box**, Boerne — anytime until 9:00 PM
1022 North Main St., Boerne, TX
Phone: (830) 331-9144
Email: stan@themodelbox.co (note: .co, not .com)
The shop will remain open for sales until 9:00 PM.

4th Tuesday:

At **Will Winmill's home**
740 FM 472, Comfort, TX
(Approximately 10 miles east of Comfort)

The only rules are simple:

- Love the hobby
- Be willing to share tips and techniques
- Be respectful of your fellow hobbyists

If the contacts for **Alamo Squadron** and **SAAB** could forward this information to their member rosters, it would be greatly appreciated.

We hope to see you around the build tables starting in January. Until then, have a **blessed and Merry Christmas**, and a **happy and prosperous New Year**.

Best regards,

Rob

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Message from Help Heal Veterans

By Melody Guptil

Healing the Invisible Wounds of War Through Creativity

Since 1971, Heal Vets has been providing therapeutic craft kits to veterans and active duty military.

At its core, Help Heal Veterans exists to empower veterans to heal through creativity, connection, and purpose. By providing therapeutic craft kits and community-driven programs, Heal Vets helps veterans facing physical injuries, PTSD, and emotional isolation find a path to recovery. It's about restoring dignity, fostering resilience, and ensuring no veteran feels forgotten. Help Heal Veterans has been helping veterans heal for more than fifty years through the use of arts and crafts. Craft kits are provided to veterans as well as active-duty military personnel who have sustained injuries, and to treatment facilities that serve those who served. The kits are created through the generosity and compassion of countless donors and volunteers eager to honor our veterans. No one is ever charged a fee for one of our kits because our service members have already paid the price through their sacrifice and service to our country.



Melody Guptil attended ModelFiesta 44 on Saturday, January 1, 2026. The event saw an impressive outpouring of generosity, with many attendees donating model kits—likely numbering well over 200 in total.



Help Heal Veterans

Therapeutic Craft Kits

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Dec. 4th, 2025 White Elephant Exchange Photos

By Julio A. Caro | Page 1 of 2

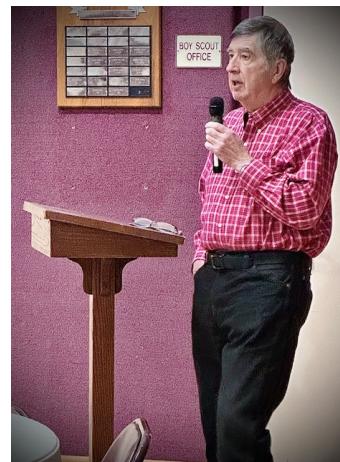


Our annual Alamo Squadron White Elephant Gift Exchange once again brought plenty of laughter, surprises, and good-natured thievery to our December club meeting.

As always, the gifts stayed true to our shared passion—

model kits, books, tools, and all manner of scale-modeling treasures filled the table and fueled the excitement.

From the moment the first package was opened, the room buzzed with fun and anticipation. Members eagerly unwrapped mystery gifts, only to watch them get “liberated” moments later, keeping the tradition of spirited exchanges alive and well. Whether you walked away with a long-sought kit or your gift changed hands three times before the dust settled, the evening delivered exactly what we’ve come to love: camaraderie, laughs, and a great celebration to close out the year. Here are some photos of the event for your viewing pleasure!



Keith Rule, President of Alamo Squadron, opens the celebrations.



We were warned! The Grinch was in a foul mood this year as every year!



The Grinch and his fellow helper Max preside over the gifts on the table.



John Kress snatches a treasure from the table and surprise: He got a car!

More photos follow on the next page!

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Dec. 4th, 2025 White Elephant Exchange Photos

By Julio A. Caro | Page 2 of 2



Brett Scholten and John Kress relaxing just before the festivities begin.



The crowd listens to the Grinch's flawless instructions about the event.



Friends having a great time with some of the gifts picked up .



The Grinch and Max follow the pick and unwrapping of a treasure closely.



Oh boy! He got a great tank! But, will he be able to keep it?



Kent Knebel steals a good one! Will he be able to hold on to it?



Peter Hortense unwraps a treasure from the gift table.



Thank you all for bravely following my rules, dutifully obeying my orders, and only mildly testing my patience! Thanks to my clearly flawless leadership and your mostly angelic behavior, this year's event was a smashing success. Same time, same place in December—I'll be watching.

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Upcoming IPMS Shows and Events

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



EVENT DATE	NAME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
03/14/2026	Rivercon XV - 2026	Shreveport, LA	One University Place, Shreveport, LA 71115
3/28/2026	Showdown 2026	Plano, TX	Willowcreek Fellowship Church 1804 P Ave , Plano , TX 75074
4/18/2026	Route 66 Model Expo	Tulsa, OK	The Park Church of Christ 10600 E 96th ST S, Tulsa, OK 74133
05/2/2026	ModelMania 2026	Stafford, TX	The Stafford Center 10505 Cash Rd, Stafford, TX 77477
05/16/2026	CALMEX 2026	Sulphur, LA	West-Cal Arena & Events Center 401 Arena Road Sulphur, LA 70665
August 5-8, 2026	2026 IPMS Nationals	Fort Wayne, IN	Grand Wayne Convention Center 120 W. Jefferson Blvd. Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802

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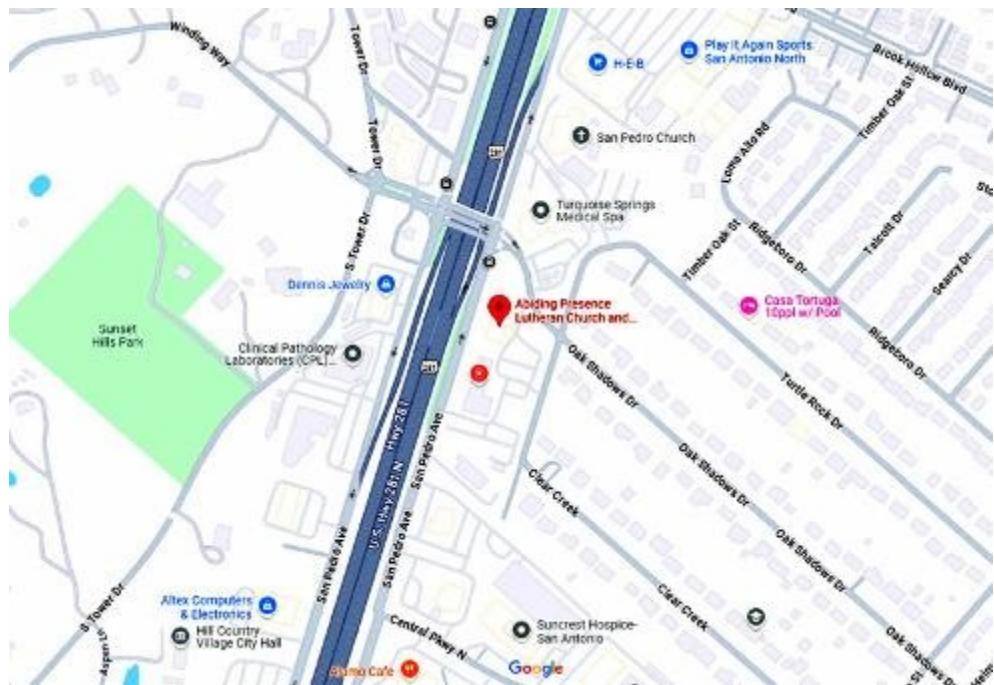
Monthly Club Meeting Information

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 February 6, 2026.

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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)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$17.00	Date of Birth _____
Adult One year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00	
Two years	<input type="checkbox"/> \$58.00	
Three years	<input type="checkbox"/> \$86.00	
Canada & Mexico	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00	
Foreign Surface	<input type="checkbox"/> \$38.00	
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
- Friend
- Ad in IPMS Journal
- Facebook
- Ad in other magazine
- Internet search
- IPMS web site
- I'm a former member rejoining
- Other _____

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.



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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

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David Auth
Vice President



Jim Norton
Treasurer



Don Weaver
Chapter Contact



Mario Fernandez
Webmaster



Alan Larrumbide
The Navigator
Managing Editor



Julio A. Caro
The Navigator
Editor & Production



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>

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