

April 2016

# WHAT'S UP



Newsletter of the Syracuse Rocket Club / NAR section 566 / TRA Prefecture 53  
Volume 11 Number 2



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Parts and kits at eRockets (p. 7)



# NARCON 2016

We in the northern latitudes generally don't launch in the winter, but if you can't fly rockets you can at least talk about them. The last week in February the National Association of Rocketry held its annual conference, NARCON, this year in Dayton Ohio. Organizers were the Wright Stuff Rocketeers, NAR section 703, headed up by Randy Boadway, the owner of eRockets.

Dayton not being unreasonably far to go for a weekend, I attended. After seeing the forecast I decided not to try to drive the whole way Friday but booked a room at a Super 8 in Erie, PA for Thursday night, then drove to Erie Thursday and on to Dayton Friday. Good call. First 120 miles were fairly bad winter weather, the rest of the trip was long but aside from about 20 minutes in a traffic jam leaving Columbus, not bad. Lunch was at Melt Bar and Grilled in Columbus.

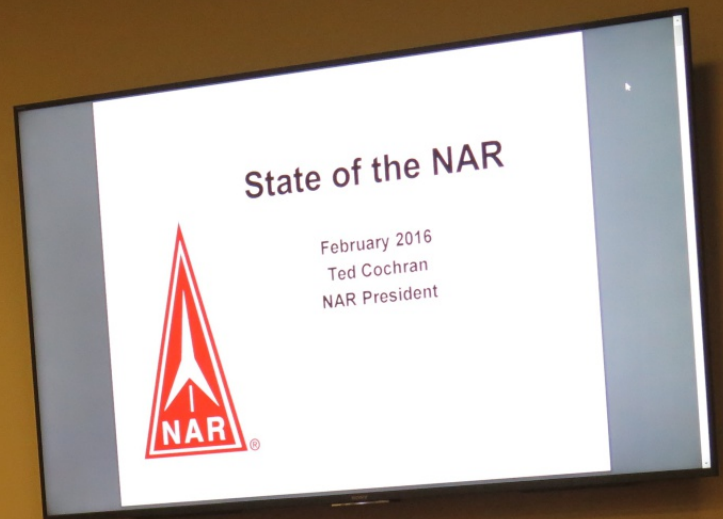
I went to check in at the Holiday Inn in Dayton (Fairborn) and they had two rooms reserved for me. I told them I'd asked for (and needed) only one, so they cancelled one. The one I got was, for some reason, a suite. Living room, bedroom, one and a half bathrooms, and so on, for the same \$89 the regular rooms were. Too bad I didn't

know anyone there, I could have thrown a party.

Friday night was the dinner, with Boadway speaking afterward on "more rocketry for everyone". A few others were heard from, including John Boren of Estes in the form of a note apologizing for his non attendance. It went on to say (1) due to the success of the recent Mercury Redstone and Little Joe II kits, expect to see more scale models from Estes and (2) there will be no new B14 motors in your lifetime.

Saturday there was free breakfast at the hotel, as compensation for the fact the lobby was mostly under reconstruction. Nothing was scheduled at the hotel during the day, so we could go to the National Museum of the United States Air Force. A great place if you're into aircraft and military history. Which I'm not particularly. So instead of spending most of two or three days there and wishing I had longer, I spent

**NAR President  
Ted Cochran:  
"State of the NAR"**







V-2 missile at the Air Force Museum

a few hours Saturday and that was fine. I buzzed past a lot of oh look another war plane, though I paid a bit more attention to the pre-World War II exhibit. I don't know why, I just am more interested in Wright planes and Sopwith Camels and all that than a lot of F-whatevers.

I took a lot of pictures, skewed toward biplanes, wind tunnels, missiles, Apollo 15 command modules, and Glenn Miller's trombone. Lunch was at the museum. Eventually back to the hotel and I took a nap before it took me.

Then the vendors' room was open. I bought a rocket from Rick Randol of New Way Rocketry, who's been figuring out how to silkscreen white decals; he threw in a bonus rocket as a freebie. I also got some composite Ds from Merlin Missiles and a sticker from Apogee. eRockets had all their Semroc kits on display, but nothing for sale there — but see page 7.

Before going to Dayton I'd gone Googling for restaurants. There are lots and lots and lots of chain restaurants surrounding the hotel, but there were a few local restaurants that looked interesting. But there in the vendors' room I realized it was past 5:30 already and the presentations started at 6:30, and the



NARCON organizer  
Randy Boadway



one I wanted to see most was in the first time slot. So I abandoned my restaurant list and walked a thousand feet or so to Taco Bell for dinner.

Presentations were in three parallel sessions making for some tough choices. I started with Peter Alway on the first 700 years of rocketry, and it was excellent. Interesting stuff, but it helped that Alway did a great job of presenting it. Next I saw James Duffy talking about some finds in the National Air and Space Museum's G. Harry Stine archive relating to the early days of model rocketry and the NAR. Also present was Steve Krystal with his collection of Stiniana including Rock-a-Chute Aerobee-Hi and Arcon kits, which he encouraged us to open up, pick up, and examine.

Third was Rick Wills talking about amateur liquid fuel rockets and amateur-to-space efforts. Part of his talk was focused on his organization, the Midwest Propulsion Group, which is restoring a 1960s thruster. A static fire test was planned for March. Then I moved on to Randy Gilbert's talk on homemade waterslide and vinyl decals. A lot of that was familiar to me, but there's always a few new things to learn and resolve to try sometime; I didn't know, for instance, that ink jet printable vinyl media are available.

Finally there were vendor presentations. Fred Burke spoke briefly about Dynasoar Rocketry. Gary Rosenfield of Aerotech/Quest filled us in on what's new and coming. New non-hazmat shippable H and K motors, for instance, and new AT kits soon. Quest is working on certifying domestically produced A, B, and C motors! The Chinese motors keep going up in price and it's getting unprofitable to import them. (I didn't think to ask about Micro Maxx motors. Or B14s...) Unfortunately the Chinese suppliers don't want to sell them Q2G2 igniters unless they buy motors also; bottom line is, if you want Q2G2s buy them when you can, because they may not be available forever. Randy Boadway then gave a short update on eRockets and Semroc. There are 42 more Semroc kits to be put into production, hopefully by the middle of this year, and then the whole line as it was will be back except for the X Kits which will not be reissued.

Sunday was another free breakfast, then the Town Hall which mostly was Ted Cochran's presentation on the state of the NAR. Membership is at an all time high of 6419 with 171 sections. Updates to the NAR web site include all old R&D reports now available in the members area, and they're starting to put up

past issues of NAR magazines (at this writing, Model Rocketeer for 1973 to 1974 are available). NAR section renewal is moving online. There's much more money budgeted for section grants than is being requested ("I can't recall ever turning a request down") and they're looking into getting subsidized pricing on such items as fire extinguishers, PA systems, etc. for sections to buy.

Contest rocketry participation is flat to declining. There's a subcommittee report on contest rocketry alternatives coming which Cochran is enthusiastic about.

Biggest concern: Rockets that should *not* be flown too often *do* get flown. There are too many near misses. A major incident under NAR coverage would significantly impact the organization's financial health. We need to keep rockets from flying above people and cars, and keep cars from parking under rockets.

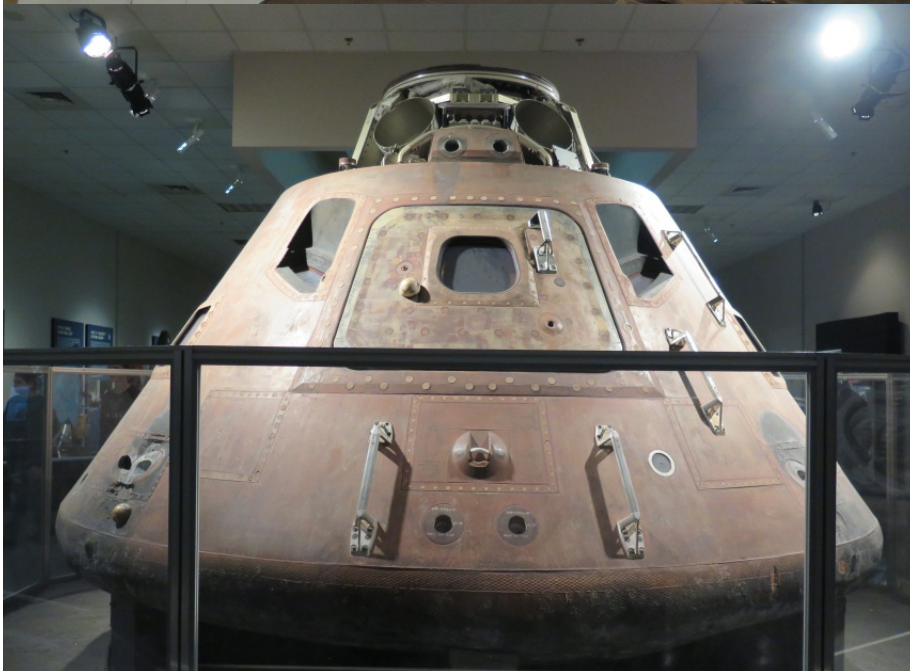
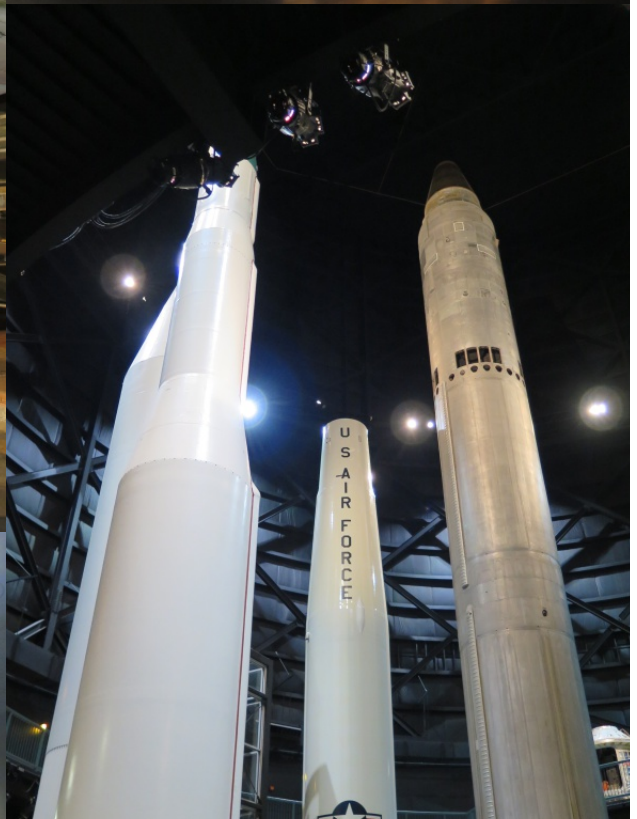
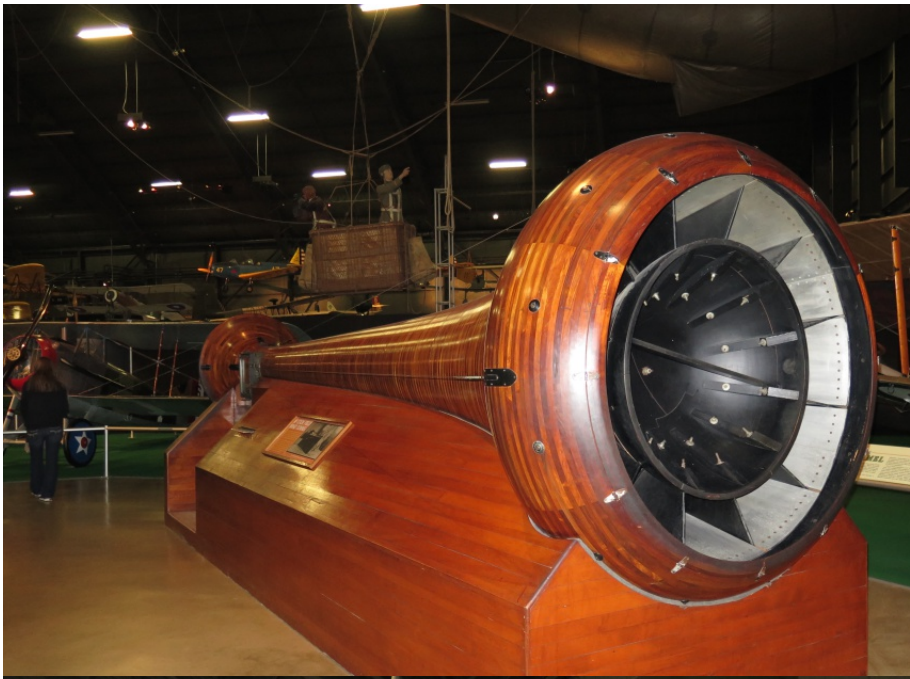
That was it for scheduled activities at the hotel. I got in my car and drove, first to the headquarters of eRockets (page 7), then on to Syracuse. A long drive but not bad. It was a great weekend; if you get a chance to go to a future NARCON, do. Meanwhile you can check this year's NARCON out virtually via videos of most of the events on YouTube. Go to <http://preview.tinyurl.com/narcon2016> for the playlist. One of these days when I have the time I'll be watching the presentations I missed myself.

- Rich Holmes

Peter Alway







Clockwise from top left: Wright brothers wind tunnel; SM-62 Snark; some missiles; Apollo 15 command module; AGM-45 Shrike.



(Top) Rick Randol of New Way Rocketry in vendor's room.

(Bottom) Model Missiles Aerobee-Hi and Arcon kits from collection of Steve Krystal.





# VISITING EROCKETS

Dayton, Ohio is the home of one of the largest online sellers of rocketry merchandise, eRockets. Perhaps the biggest event in the rocketry market last year was the announcement that eRockets had bought Semroc and would be bringing their kits and parts back into production.

eRockets had an open house Sunday after the NARCON Town Meeting and quite a few rocketeers squeezed into the narrow aisles to see what was there. Answer: A lot.

This, by the way, isn't only a warehouse; it's where Wright Stuff Rocketeers meets on Tuesdays. *Every* Tuesday. It's a wonder any of them has any money left!

Top: An aisle of parts  
Center: The Estes kits  
Bottom: Some more kits





# EARLY 2016 MEETINGS

## Jan 4:

There being no further nominees for officers, the nominated slate took office for the year.

The annual awards were "postponed" again. Actually consigned to the dustbin for 2015, it would seem, unless the last couple of missing months of launch data turn up. We'll try to do better for 2016.

We decided to schedule a session to work on the club rocket for Jan 17.

Launch directors for the launches that didn't have them were designated. (August, James Shattell; September, Scott Sellers; October, Rich Holmes.)

A friend of Tim Catterson's who works at Syracuse University contacted him about some rockets spotted in trees near the Rocket Team Challenge launch site. We should see if we can recover them.

Scott gave us a reminder about launch safety in view of the recent first recorded fatality due to a model rocket mishap.

Observers are going to be needed for TARC launches.

## Feb 1:

Progress has been made on the upscale Saber club rocket (page 10). The next work session was scheduled for Feb. 13.

There being no real business to discuss we moved right along to a presentation on dual deployment by James Shattell and Paul Gagnon.

## Mar 7:

James Shattell reported we have a balance of \$1182.73, a record high. Much of that was due to the rockets donated to the club and sold off last year, and to various cash donations. The perennial subject of the porta potty came up. We just need to select one and buy it.

Speaking of donated rockets, there were more, contributed by a former SRC member who now works for SpaceX.

James brought some rockets in need of TLC to be used for giveaways. Various members took them home to work on them.

He also brought the upscale Saber, with all the tube fins now in place. There was some discussion as to whether the epoxy-only joints between the longer tube fins and the airframe need to be reinforced, eg. with threaded rods. We decided probably not. Next steps are to do some sanding and to get the electronics together, both of which don't need a work







session, and then finishing. We'll schedule that later when Paul is available to discuss using his shop.

Milt Weigand has requested we move the September launch to the 11th, which is a Sunday. He has friends visiting who would like to see a rocket launch. There being no objections we decided to make that change to the calendar.

MARS has contacted us to see if we'd like to run a contest at NYPower. Looks like we can do so.

Rich Holmes gave a presentation on the recent NARCON.

# 2016 EVENTS UPDATE

Some new information on events in and out of the area:

## **Red Glare (April 8–10, Price, MD):**

There's a new web page with details: <http://wpsite.mdrocketry.net/red-glare/>

## **NYPower 20 (May 28–30 (Memorial Day weekend), Geneseo, NY):**

Registration is now open for NYPower. Adult range fee for the entire event is \$30; children 18 and under fly free. T shirts are \$20. There will be a night launch this year. Food vendor is Three Legged Pig BBQ. Stuff vendors at this writing are AMW, CATO-Chutes, MAC Performance Rocketry, Onebadhawk, Performance Hobbies, and Rockets Magazine. Web site: <http://nypower.org/> .

## **URRF 3 (June 24–26, Potter, NY):**

The three day URRG June launch is indeed URRF 3. Registration is \$40 until April 1, \$45 after that, and \$50 at the field. Vendors include AMW, MAC Performance Rocketry, Onebadhawk, Performance Hobbies, and Python Rocketry. Web site: <http://urrf.us/> .

## **Syracuse September launch (September 11, Van Buren, NY):**

The September launch has been moved to Sunday (repeat, *Sunday!*) September 11.



# CLUB ROCKET PROGRESS

The upscale Saber we've been working on since ~~time immemorial~~ 2014 is back on track and we're determined to finish and fly it this year. We met on Jan. 17 at Walt's to start putting the tube fins together. Paul Gagnon brought a right angle drill adapter and a pop rivet gun to put pairs of long tube fins together, after which we put down epoxy fillets. Work continued at Paul's shop on Feb. 13 for those not daunted by the snow, and by the March meeting the tube fins were all assembled and epoxied to the airframe and the motor mount was glued in. It's starting to look like a rocket! Note the original scale Saber also in the photo.





## About the Syracuse Rocket Club

The Syracuse Rocket Club (SRC), serving hobby rocketry in central New York, is section 566 of the National Association of Rocketry (NAR) and Prefecture 53 of the Tripoli Rocketry Association (TRA) and was founded in 1997.

SRC holds a monthly sport launch in Van Buren once a month, May through October, typically on the third Saturday (weather permitting); see our calendar elsewhere in this newsletter for specifics. Launches are open to the public, with a \$5 launch fee for non SRC members who wish to fly rockets.

SRC welcomes all prospective new members to our monthly meetings. They are held on the first Monday of the month (second Monday if the first is a holiday) from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at Walt's Hobby Town on Dwight Park Drive, near the State Fair Boulevard exit of I-690.

For more information see our website: <http://syracuserocketclub.org>. We also are on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SyracuseRocketClub>.

SRC officers are:

President:	Scott Sellers
Vice President/Treasurer:	James Shattell
Secretary/Editor:	Rich Holmes
Web Master:	Scott Sellers
Prefect:	Roger Forell

## About *What's Up*

*What's Up* is the official newsletter of the Syracuse Rocket Club.

*What's Up* is published five times a year and is distributed electronically on the SRC website; latest and back issues may be downloaded at <http://syracuserocketclub.org/newsletters.html>.

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Next issue target publication date is June 2016.



# UPCOMING SRC EVENTS

(Abbreviated; for details and full year see <http://syracuserocketclub.org/calendar.html>)

Date	Time	Location	Event
Apr Mon 4	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club meeting. Topics: CNY Rocket Team Challenge planning; Club equipment setup and testing.
May Mon 2	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club meeting. Topic: Fuel mixing.
Sat 21	10:00 am–3:00 pm	Weigand's Field	Club launch. Theme: Staging. Contests: 2-stage spot landing; B streamer spot landing.
Jun Sat 4	9:00 am–2:00 pm	Skytop	CNY Rocket Team Challenge
Mon 6	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club meeting
Sat 18	10:00 am–3:00 pm	Weigand's Field	Club launch
Jul Mon 11	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club meeting
Sat 16	10:00 am–3:00 pm	Weigand's Field	Club launch
Aug Mon 1	7:00–8:00 pm	Walt's HobbyTown	Club meeting
Sat 20	10:00 am–8:30 pm	Weigand's Field	Club family picnic launch

**Please check web site (<http://syracuserocketclub.org>) for changes, cancellations, and last minute events!** Go/no go status of each launch will be posted on the web the evening before.

Directions to Walt's HobbyTown: From I-690, take Exit 5 (State Fair Blvd./Lakeland). Turn right onto Van Vleck Rd. Take the first right onto Dwight Park Dr. Walt's is immediately on your right.

Directions to Weigand's Field: From I-690, take Exit 2 (Jones Rd.). Turn left onto Jones Rd. Take the first right onto Van Buren Rd. After 1.6 miles turn left onto Connors Rd. After 1.0 miles turn left onto Canton Street Rd. Launch site is about 0.4 miles on your left; look for sign. Park in designated area. Please do not drive onto field without launch director's permission.