



# Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

November 2025

## SCI-FI: GIVE IT A TRY!

by **Mike Bird**

**P**icture this scene: the judges' table at the Georgetown Community Center has just finished evaluating a beautiful Sherman (your fourth of the day), and it's time to pick the next model to be judged. There's a nice-looking M1 Abrams, but Chris got there just ahead of you. You move towards that Tiger, but Bill grabs it just before you. I guess there's always another Sherman, but wait, Mike dives for it before you get there. There's one entry left on the

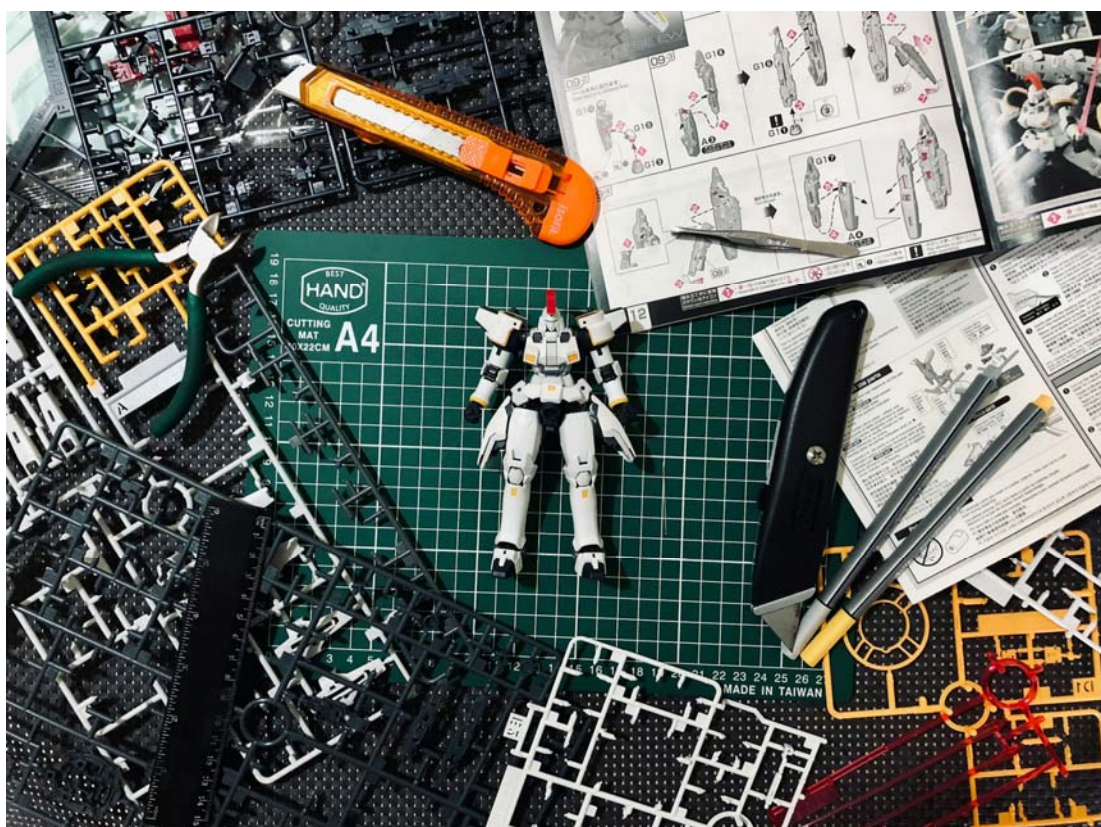
ledge: no... it can't be... anything but that... please, don't do it to me... not a GUNDAM!

The preceding scene is of course a dramatization, and I know that many judging tables ably and competently judged a number of Gundam models at our show, but I did have a few conversations where people shared that they weren't as confident assessing these models because of their unfamiliarity with the genre. I thought I'd use the article this month to

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ Nov 5 - AABS Meeting
- ◆ Nov 8 - Capital Classic 2025, Williamson County Expo Center, Taylor
- ◆ Dec 5 - AABS Meeting and XMAS PARTY
- ◆ January 3, 2026 - Modelfiesta 44, New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center, New Braunfels
- ◆ Jan 7 - AABS Meeting
- ◆ Jan 24 - WinterBlitz 2026, Museum of the American GI, College Station



### AABS Officers Feb 2025 – Jan 2027

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## Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January 2025	* OFFICER ELECTIONS *	Ted Paone
February	Ted Paone	Eric Choy
March‡	Bob Bethea	Kevin Hutchison
April	Ron Askew	Bill Zych
May	Mike Reeves	Greg Beckman
June‡	Quiz Night!	Craig Bland
July	* KIT AUCTION *	Aaron Smischney
August	Eric Choy	Allan Romer
September‡	Marty Hebda	Marty Hebda
October	AMPS Judging Review	Bill Menzie
November	* KIT-SWAP NITE *	Mike Bird
December	WE Gift Exchange	Chris Chany
January 2026‡	Chris Chany	Ted Paone

Here is a list of members who are responsible for providing articles for the newsletter and program presentation at our monthly meetings.

Please note any member may contribute as many articles as he wants at any time. The purpose of this schedule is to ensure we have at least one article in the newsletter each month.

Prompt submission of your article is much appreciated. The deadline is always **11:59PM on the last Wednesday of the previous month** (e.g. Ted Paone's article for January 2025 is due on the last Wednesday of December 2024).

‡ Quarterly contest month





## *From the Turret*

**W**ell, it's November already! We had a great show with almost 50% more models and entrants than the last show. I am sure that Eric will be giving us a wrap up at the meeting. A BIG THANKS go out to Eric for running another spectacular show, Bob Bethea being the head judge of figures, and all the volunteers without whom our shindig would never happen!

On November 5<sup>th</sup> of...

**1915:** Born in Webster Groves, MO, first Lieutenant George H. Cannon was the first U.S. Marine in WWII to receive the Medal of Honor. He died from his wound in December 1941 during the Japanese bombardment of the Midway Island.

Also born on the same day in Stillwater, OK was Lieutenant General Julian Ewell, US Army commander of the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and II Field Force during the Vietnam War. Recipient of the Legion of Merit, Air Medal, Silver Star, Distinguished



George H. Cannon



Julian Ewell

Service Cross and Distinguished Service Medal, he died in 2009 at the age of 93.

**1940:** Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented third term as President of the United States, carrying 38 of the 48 states.

**1945:** Peter Pace, future 16<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (2005-2007), was born in New York City.

**1950:** The Battle of Pakchon between the Australian and the Chinese forces during the Korea War began as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) captured a well-defended hill with limited offensive support. The diggers held it in the face of heavy counterattacks before making a disorganized night withdrawal.



*Australian mortar crew in action at Pakchon  
(Wikipedia)*

Shortly before midnight, the Chinese offensive abruptly halted across the Korea Peninsular. The temporarily withdrawal of PLA forces was later described "as incomprehensible as it was welcomed" by an South Korean observer.

This month's program is the Kit Swap, so bring those kits you might want to get rid of and get something in return. Please, no parking lot deals before the meeting!

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Looking ahead, next month is Holiday Party month. Eric could not get the room at his community center for the first Saturday of December. Instead we are having our Christmas party a day earlier on **Friday December 5<sup>th</sup>**.

We also could not get the library meeting room for that week because of the library's rule of three-reservation limit within a 90-day span. So, we are going to combine the meeting and the party in one sitting. There will be a short (very short) business meeting after we eat, and the program will be our annual white elephant gift exchange.

Remember whoever won the last door prize is responsible for bringing a model for the raffle.

Don't forget to vote, and I'll see you all shortly on Wednesday!

**Chris Chany**  
President

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(Continued from page 1)

try and convey a little about what the “big deal” is about Gundam and suggest some other sci-fi subjects as an encouragement to give one a go!

## Gundam: Giant Robots in Space

Gundam began in 1979 with the Japanese animated TV series “Mobile Suit Gundam.” It featured giant robots, and while the TV show debuted to mix success, a year later it was followed by what would be a hugely successful model kit line, with the genre often referred to as “Gunpla” from Gundam Plastic Model. Fast-forward to 2025, Bandai Namco reports Gundam-related annual revenues of 153.5 billion yen—that’s over \$1 billion dollars—and a significant proportion is from model kit sales!

Modern Gundam kits are usually easy to build thanks to Bandai’s great engineering. They come in colored plastic which allows for a presentable replica when unpainted, but the top builders will always paint their kits. The kits come in several different designations, called “grades,” which can appear complicated at first, but in summary, they are:

- ♦ High Grade (HG): 1:144<sup>th</sup> scale, affordable, many choices of subjects
- ♦ Master Grade (MG): 1:100<sup>th</sup> scale, much more detail, a range of prices
- ♦ Real Grade (RG): 1:144<sup>th</sup> scale, more detailed like MG above, but scaled down
- ♦ Perfect Grade (PG): 1:60<sup>th</sup> scale behemoths, with all the detail, articulation, and LEDs you could shake a stick

If you’re interested in practicing a different set of skills from “regular” armor modeling, then Gundam might be a good choice for you. Achieving the flawless and colorful paint jobs is more akin to automotive modeling, and the top Gunpla competitors are also skilled in adding additional scratchbuild details and rescribing panel lines to make them more intricate. Because the kits offer great articulation, deciding on a dynamic pose is also an important part of the presentation.



*Pose is an important part of a top-level Gundam model.*

If a TV-inspired build sounds good but Gundam doesn’t sound like exactly your cup of tea, then there are a wealth of other media-inspired model kit lines to choose from (e.g. Star Wars, Transformers, Gerry Anderson’s Thunderbirds).

## Maschinen Krieger: Robotic Subjects with Armor Painting and Weathering

If you’d like to build a sci-fi subject but want something a bit closer to home where the painting and weathering is concerned, then *Maschinen Krieger* (Ma.K) could be a good option for you. Created by Japanese artist Kow Yokoyama in the 1980s, the series has a grittier and more realistic aesthetic. It features armored fighting suits as well as larger vehicles, and many of the color schemes are WWII-inspired.

Over the years Ma.K model kits have been produced by a number of companies, including Nitto and Wave Corporation, with some of the early kits becoming highly sought-after collectors’ items. In recent times, Hasegawa also obtained the license to

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produce kits, which has resulted in a big increase in both availability and popularity.

Most Ma.K kits are in 1/20<sup>th</sup> scale, but there is also a new 1/35<sup>th</sup> line which means all of your figures and stowage items are fair game!

## What-Ifs: Something Closer to Home

If galactic warfare doesn't float your boat, you could consider some of the "what-if" options available, depicting subjects could have existed if history had played out slightly differently. Options in this category include ModelCollect's "Fist of War" series, the line of apocalypse tanks from the Red Alert video game produced by Border Models, and a plethora of "paper panzers," including the gargantuan *Landkreuzer P.1000 "Ratte"* which has been kitted by Takom among others.



*Red Primer, Dunkelgelb, and paint chipping makes armor modeler feel at home.*



*Ratte: Bigger than the Maus!*

Whatever you choose, a sci-fi subject can be a fun and rewarding diversion, allowing you to build new skills or transfer existing ones, all while letting your imagination run wild!

**Mike**

## www.webuymodelkits.com

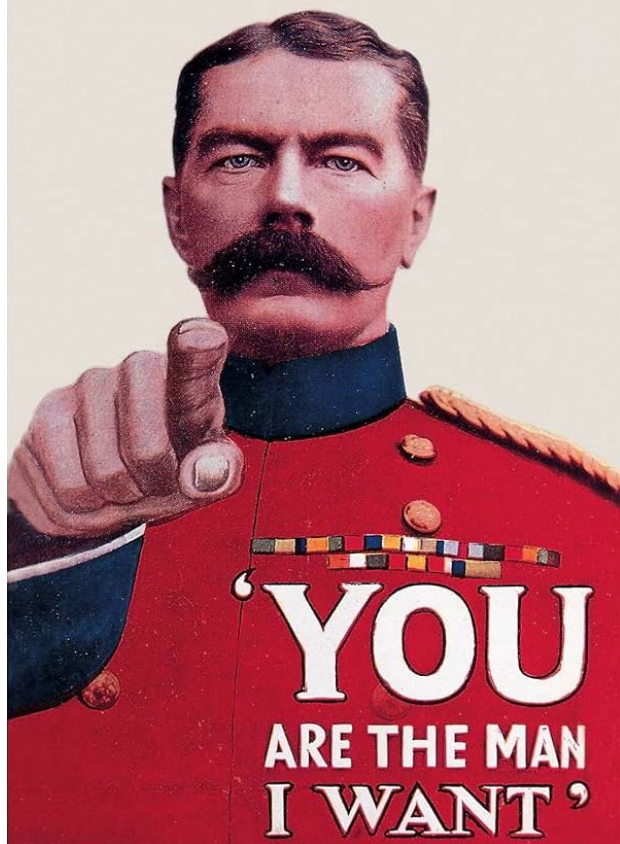
Our goal is to respectfully purchase entire collections of plastic model kits from hobbyists or their estates and to individually sell them to active modelers who will be thrilled to build the model kits or add them to their own collection.

We inspect each and every one of our unsealed model kits to ensure completeness as well for condition of decals. We also make every attempt to identify aftermarket extras that exist within the model kit. We offer a 100% money back guarantee on all model kits that we sell.

Do you have plastic model kits or a collection that you would like to sell? We pay CASH! Please contact us at

[www.webuymodelkits.com](http://www.webuymodelkits.com)





Our brothers in Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) are hosting their annual **Capital Classic** show this coming weekend (see flyer on the right), and once again AABS member **Bill Zych** has volunteered to be the Head Armor Judge. He is in need of line-judges for armor categories and is asking AABS members for help. Let's lend him a hand and pitch in for a good cause. ASMS members were there at our show for the "Tank Buster Challenge" judging. Now it's our turn to reciprocate. After all, who knows armor modeling more than we do?

Be THE MAN, be A JUDGE, and go home A HERO!

*Editor*

**Austin Scale Modelers Society**  
Presents The  
**2025**  
**CAPITOL CLASSIC**



Show Theme  
**250th Anniversary of the**

**Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup> 2025**  
**8:30 AM – 5:00 PM**  
**Williamson County Expo Center**  
5350 Bill Pickett Trail, Taylor, TX 76574

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★ **IPMS Model Contest** ★  
**Gundam Contest** ★ **Figure Contest**  
★ **Vendor Tables** ★  
**Make 'N' Take** ★ **Door Prizes**  
General Admission:  
\$5 per person      12 and under FREE.  
Contest Entry (includes admission):  
Senior (≥18): \$12 for first model, \$3 each additional  
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Junior (≤17): \$5 for first model, \$1 each additional  
[www.austinsms.org](http://www.austinsms.org)  
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## WINTERBLITZ 2026

SATURDAY JANUARY 24, 2026

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

*Museum of the American G.I.*  
College Station, Texas



- Raffles
- Best of Awards
- Hall of Fame Inductees
- Door Prizes
- Vendor Room
- Demonstrations

- 100 – Youth (younger than 18) (all scales, all eras)
- 200 – Classic Kits (kits, accessories, and add-ons manufactured before 1979)
- 300 – Artillery (all scales, all eras)
- 350 – All Things Towed (all scales, all eras) – must have BOTH “tractor and trailer”
- 400 – 1/48<sup>th</sup> Scale (Allied)
- 450 – 1/48<sup>th</sup> Scale (Axis)
- 500 – 1/72 and smaller (all eras)
- 600 – Fully Tracked Origin to 1934 (all scales)
- 700 – Fully Tracked Open Top Vehicles 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and 1/35<sup>th</sup> (all eras)
- 800 – Fully Tracked WWII Axis 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and 1/35<sup>th</sup> (closed top)
- 900 – Fully Tracked WWII Allied 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and 1/35<sup>th</sup> (closed top)
- 1000 – Fully Tracked Post WWII to 1990 (e.g. Korea, Vietnam, Cold War) 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and 1/35<sup>th</sup> (closed top)
- 1100 – Fully Tracked Desert Shield/Storm to Present (1991 to 2026) 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and 1/35<sup>th</sup> (closed top)
- 1200 – Paper Panzer/Fictional (all scales)
- 1300 – Halftracks (all scales and all eras)
- 1400 – Armored Cars (wheeled) (all scales, all eras)
- 1500 – Softskin Vehicles (all scales, all eras)
- 1600 – Motorcycles – with or without sidecar (all scales, all eras)
- 1700 – Miscellaneous Military and Support Vehicle (all scales, all eras)
- 2000 – Fully Tracked Full Interior (all scales, all eras)
- 3000 – Larger than 1/32<sup>nd</sup> (all eras)
- 4000 – Self Propelled FlaK (anti-aircraft) Vehicles (all scales, all eras)
- 5000 – Figures (all scales, all eras)
- 6000 – Dioramas/Vignettes (all scales, all eras)
- 6500 – Rotary Wing (Helicopter) Tank Busters (all scales, all eras)
- 7000 – The P-47 Challenge U.S. P-47s ONLY (all scales, all eras)
- 7500 – Brown Water Navy – Vietnam Riverine (all scales)
- 8500 – Landing Craft - watercraft that delivers men and/or equipment to shore (all scales, all eras)
- 9000 – Maschinen Krieger Armor Suits (all scales)

**Tank of the Year: Panzer 38(t)** – special prize for the best 38(t) or 38(t) variant (all scales, all eras)

**Show Theme: Military Support Vehicles** (all scales, all eras)

VISIT [www.winter-blitz.com](http://www.winter-blitz.com) FOR MORE INFO



## Gifts of Christmas Past

Time to get cranking for our White Elephant Contest to be held at our first meeting of 2026 on **January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. In case you have forgotten what you received in our past Christmas parties, here are photos from...

2024:



2023:





2022:



2021:



## AMPS Boresight (Volume 33, Issue 3)

The latest issue of **Boresight** is out. Here is a quick look inside:

- ◆ **AMPS 2025 Convention Recap** by Peter Espada
- ◆ **2025 Medal Winners**
- ◆ **Best of Awards**
- ◆ **Skill Level Promotion & AMPS Masters Honor Roll**





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Family <sup>4</sup>	\$5	\$10	\$15

<sup>1</sup> Digital package includes four (4) Digital and two (2) Printed issues of *Boresight* per year.

<sup>2</sup> All Printed package includes six (6) Printed issues of *Boresight* per year.

<sup>3</sup> Juniors are members aged 17 years or younger.

<sup>4</sup> Family rates are for anyone living at the same address as an active regular member.

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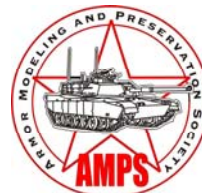
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All payments must be made in U.S. funds. For outside U.S. (Canada and International) rates, please visit AMPS website at [www.amps-armor.org](http://www.amps-armor.org).

## New On The Block



Neverland, a new Chinese company, has released its first 1/35<sup>th</sup> kit: Geschützter Geländewagen "Wolf" SSA based on Mercedes-Benz's G-wagen chassis.

Is Amusing Hobby's new 1/35<sup>th</sup> Centurion Action X (Roman numeral 10, not the letter 'X') real or just another make-believe from the online game "World of Tanks?" The "Mantletless Turret" design was real: a concept to create a heavily sloped turret on the older Centurion chassis as a low-cost alternative to the Chieftain tank for the export market. Unfortunately, the project was cancelled after three turrets were made for field trials. So the turret is real, but the tank is just another paper panzer!



Star Decals strikes again with two 1/35<sup>th</sup> sheets depicting vehicles used in Ukraine's recent incursion into Russia's Kursk Oblast.

## About Us

The Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) started in 1999 when Don Jones, a member of the local IPMS chapter, decided "what a good idea to get out two nights a month, and on least one night talk tanks."

AABS is the first scale model club in Central Texas devoted solely to armor modeling. We don't build planes because they are just plain! Our passion is armored fighting vehicles and military figures. Subjects of our interest range from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Middle East, to the most recent war in Ukraine.



At each monthly meeting, we talk tanks, swap kits, and share our building techniques. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town trips to museums and modeling events. Every odd-numbered year, AABS hosts the biggest armor modeling show that attracts some of the best armor modelers in the Lone Star as well as neighboring states.

Since inception AABS is a local chapter of Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS), a national organization dedicated to the promotion of scale modeling and armored vehicle preservation.

For more info, please visit [www.ampscentex.org](http://www.ampscentex.org)