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APOGEE PEAK OF FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

Start a Rocketry Club

By Tim Van Milligan

In this issue of the Apogee e-zine newsletter, we'll talk about starting a rocketry club. I've talked about this topic before (Newsletter #21), but I think it is very important; so I'd like to expand on that previous article.

First: Why Start a local rocketry club?

With national organizations such as the N.A.R. and Tripoli, why is it necessary to start a club? After all, when you join the N.A.R. or Tripoli, you get a nifty magazine.

My opinions on this are well known. (see the article at: http://www.rocketryonline.com/Search/db_search.cgi?setup_file=Opinion&submit_search=yes&db_id=22). The benefits of joining a local club are very tangible and numerous. They dwarf those of any national organization. I sure wished that I had joined a club when I was just starting out in rocketry. It would have saved me a lot of time and effort. I would have learned a lot more, and done it much quicker.

The problem was that there was no local club in my town. The nearest club was too far away.

In this article, I'd like to try to convince you to start a local rocketry club. And if you're already flying models in a group, I'd like to convince you to make that group a bit more formalized. I'd love to see 1000 localized rocketry clubs around the United States and Canada.

Starting a rocketry club is hard work. So why do it?

There are many reasons that belonging to a club is valuable. I've listed over 20 reasons in my little booklet *"Attracting and Retaining New Club Members."* But I'd like to give you a couple more reasons why "YOU" should be the one to start the new club.

I know that you are a person with above average character, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this newsletter. Because of this, I think you have certain traits that make you more protective of our ability to openly use model rockets in this country.

Unfortunately, the previledge to fly model rockets that we enjoy is under constant attack. Especially after September 11. Not only from federal agencies, but from local ones as well.

By forming a club, you gain political clout when dealing with government agencies. If you go through all the effort of officially forming a group, they know you're not some kook or radical. And if 1000 other clubs are out there doing the same thing, it multiples the effective clout that rocketry has.

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Start a Rocketry Club cont.

Also by forming a new club, you gain political clout with rocket manufacturers. This helps if you have a beef with them. They're less likely to blow you off if they know you are the president of a club. That would be very bad public relations. Why make the club formalized?

You may be involved with a group right now that gets together and flys rockets. But it may not be an official N.A.R. or Tripoli club. I think you should go through the process and make it official.

By chartering an official club, you make it easier for other people to find you. The N.A.R. will put you on their web site, which will direct people to your club's own web site. This is important, because you do want to grow the club with new members.

How to get new members?

In the booklet: *"Attracting and Retaining New Club Members,"* I listed 22 different ways to publicize the new club. The number one method on the very top of the list was: "Put up posters in your local hobby store." I still think this is a great idea, and I want to help you.

That's why you'll find a nice recruitment poster in this issue of the Apogee e-zine newsletter. You can print it out and use it to get new people to join your new club. You can even download a higher resolution version from the Apogee web site that you can take down to Kinkos and have it printed up on a larger piece of paper. The bigger it is, the more exposure you'll get.

After printing it out, add or write in the contact information about your new local club. Then start putting it up where you think other rocketeers will see it. Ask the owner of the hobby store near you if you can place it in their store. I'm pretty sure that the owner will love the idea.

They know that people that belong to a rocketry club spend a lot more in their store.

So they'll want to encourage other rocketeers to join your club. And after all, the poster is rather attractive.

If you're starting a club at your local school, I'm sure that there are places in the halls where you're allowed to place the poster. You can even ask the science teacher if he/she will allow you to put it up in their classroom.

Another thing you can do with the artwork is to make it into a flyer. On the back side of the flyer, you can add more information about your club, where it meets, and where its flying field is. And don't forget to add in some reasons why joining a club is a good idea.

After printing up the flyer, you can leave a small stack with your local hobby store, and distribute the remainders. I'd think that handing them out at events like air shows, rocket launches, and kite festivals would get a lot of new members for the club.

For additional ideas on get exposure for the club, check out back issues of this e-zine. Particularly issues #13, #19, #20 and #21. These are archived on the Apogee Components' web site at: http://www.apogeerockets.com/education/newsletter_archive.asp

In conclusion, starting a new rocketry club is important for the hobby. The more clubs there are, the stronger the hobby becomes; and the more fun we all have.

Author Information: ----------

Tim Van Milligan is the owner of Apogee Components (http://www.apogeerockets.com) and the new rocketry education web site: http://www.apogeerockets.com/education. He is also the author of the books: *"Model Rocket Design and Construction," "69 Simple Science Fair Projects with Model Rockets: Aeronautics"* and publisher of the FREE e-zine newsletter about model rockets. You can subscribe to this e-zine at the Apogee Components web site, or sending any message to: ezine@apogeerockets.com with "SUBSCRIBE" as the subject of the message.

FIND THE POSTER ON PAGE 03 !

About this Newsletter - Apogee Components Rocketry E-Zine Newsletter is a FREE optional newsletter about model rocketry. We have, and we'll continue to discuss a lot of different rocketry topics, including: rocket design philosophy, computer simulations, construction techniques, rocketry in education, happenings in the rocket industry, competition strategies, and new product announcements.

THE FIRST STEP INTO SPACE IS A MODEL ROCKET

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THIS LOCAL CLUB

NEW FEATURE
WEB SITE OF THE WEEK

I'd like to start a new feature here in the Apogee e-zine. And I'd like to invite you to participate. This new feature is a review of a neat rocketry web sites.

The criteria that will use to select the web sites for publication here is that they need to be rocketry related, plus educational or "how-to" in nature.

There are over 2000 readers of this e-zine, so if you have a web site that you'd like to send some traffic toward, or if you know of a neat site that other rocketeers would benefit from seeing, please send it to us at: tvm@apogeerockets.com (hint: to increase your odds of making it to the "site of the week," have a link back to the Apogee web site... We need publicity too.)

Our first web site comes from Sean Rose. His web site shows how to build a low-cost "do-it-yourself" launch rail pad. This can be constructed from materials that you find at your local hardware store.

The really nice thing about launch rails is that they are stiff, and the rocket doesn't sway around in the wind. Plus, there is no limit to the length of the launch rail. This is important, because a long rail allows the rocket to build up speed so that it flies straight and true. I've always recommended that people use a longer launcher, and now you can build one yourself.

See Sean's page about his rail launcher system design at: http://www.cycline3.com/rockets/freshgear/index.html

Set the course of human destiny by displaying this poster in your favorite store and meeting place. Print out the image on page 03 for a flyer, or download the high resolution image for a nice poster. Local print shops can help you with this, if you tell them what it is for they might do it for free! (It's worth a shot.)

url: http://www.apogeerockets.com/education/outreach/posters.asp

Pete McClure

ONE MAN'S SAGA OF BUILDING THE APOGEE SATURN V

Pete McClure writes,

Hi Tim,

I just finished the SatV I bought from Apogee after having received it in November, waiting until very late December to start construction and spending many, many hours working on it. Before I tell you how pleased I am with this rocket, I'd like to take a minute to tell you why I decided to buy this bird.

No. 1 reason was your reputation and the manner of service Apogee has rendered. Part and parcel of this is the way in which you keep the lines of communication open. Whenever I had a question about something, you responded with helpful advice and/or directions. I can't say the same with respect to a lot of the rocket dealers and manufacturers out there. I was confident you would provide what you promised - and you did, in aces!

No. 2 reason was just as important as the first but it is far more personal. Way back when I was a kid building and launching rockets, I took the plunge and sprang for the Estes Saturn V. I can't tell you the time and effort I put into that rocket. It sat in my room seemingly constantly beckoning me to ante up with some money, buy some motors and go fly it. Finally, I scrounged up enough bucks for a few motors and they arrived in the mail. Here's the killer, Tim. I had spent so much time building the rocket and it looked so pretty, I just couldn't bring myself to launch it and risk seeing it crash and destroyed.

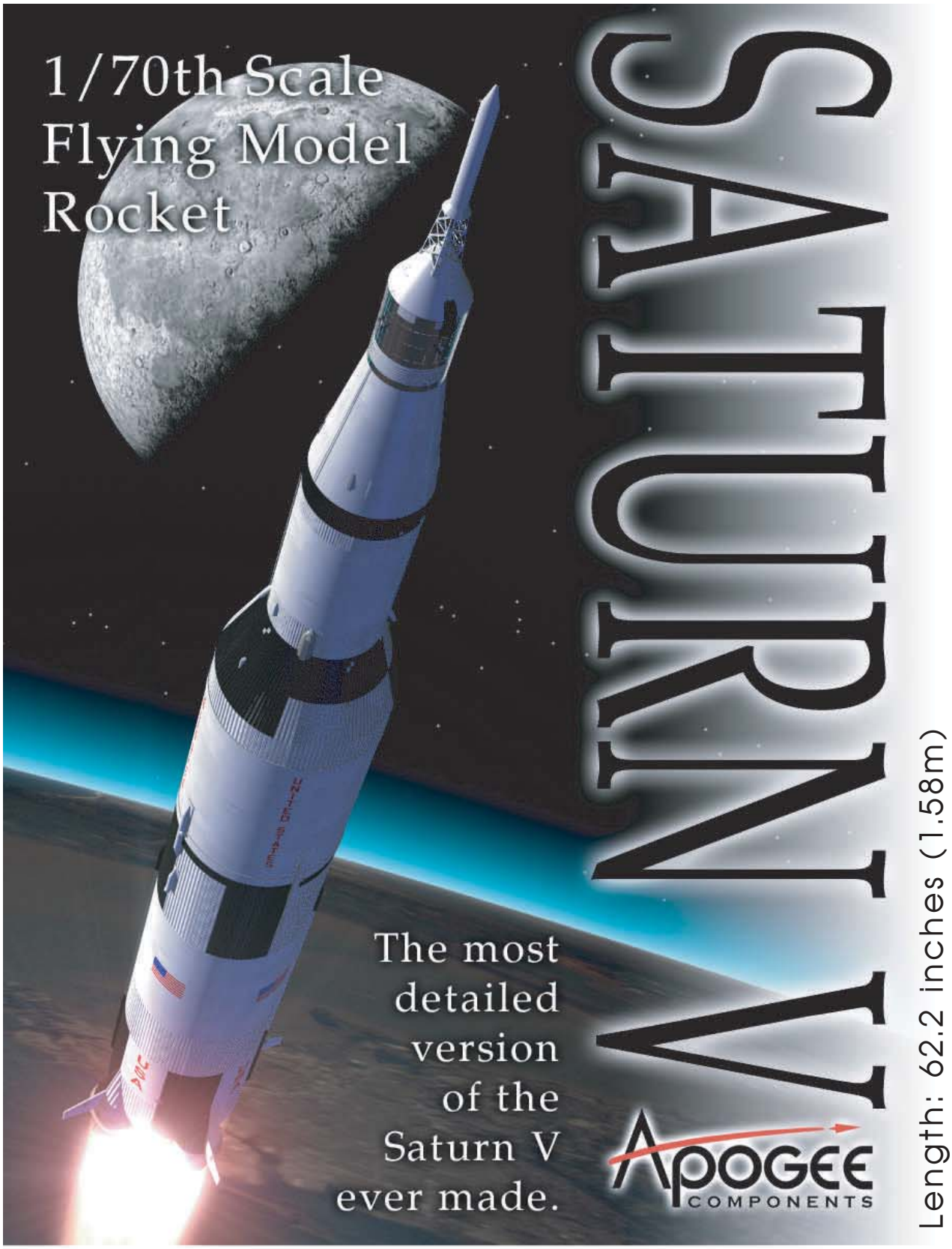
So it sat in my room for a couple more months and then, one day, a neighbor kid was over visiting and saw it. He thought it was pretty neat, so I gave it to him. I have no idea if he ever launched it or what happened to it. But when I saw your announcement, I saw a way to redeem myself from that decision of over 30 years ago. I would buy it, I would build it and I would fly it. The first two have been accomplished and I anticipate the third being met sometime this spring or summer.
I look forward to it without fear (although I will fly it without the tower) because this rocket deserves to fly. If it crashes, it will be because I did something wrong, I'll figure out what, repair it, and try again.

Thanks again.

Pete McClure NAR 78617 - L1 # pending

P.S. I weighed it after the photo and it came in at 40 oz. - right at what you said it should!

Saturn Man Pete McClure



Length: 62.2 inches (1.58m)
Diameter: 5.65 inches (14.35 cm)
Weight: 40 oz (1.13 Kg)
Recovery: Two Parachutes: 58" (147 cm) & 36" (91.4 cm)
Recommended 29mm motor: Aerotech G80-4