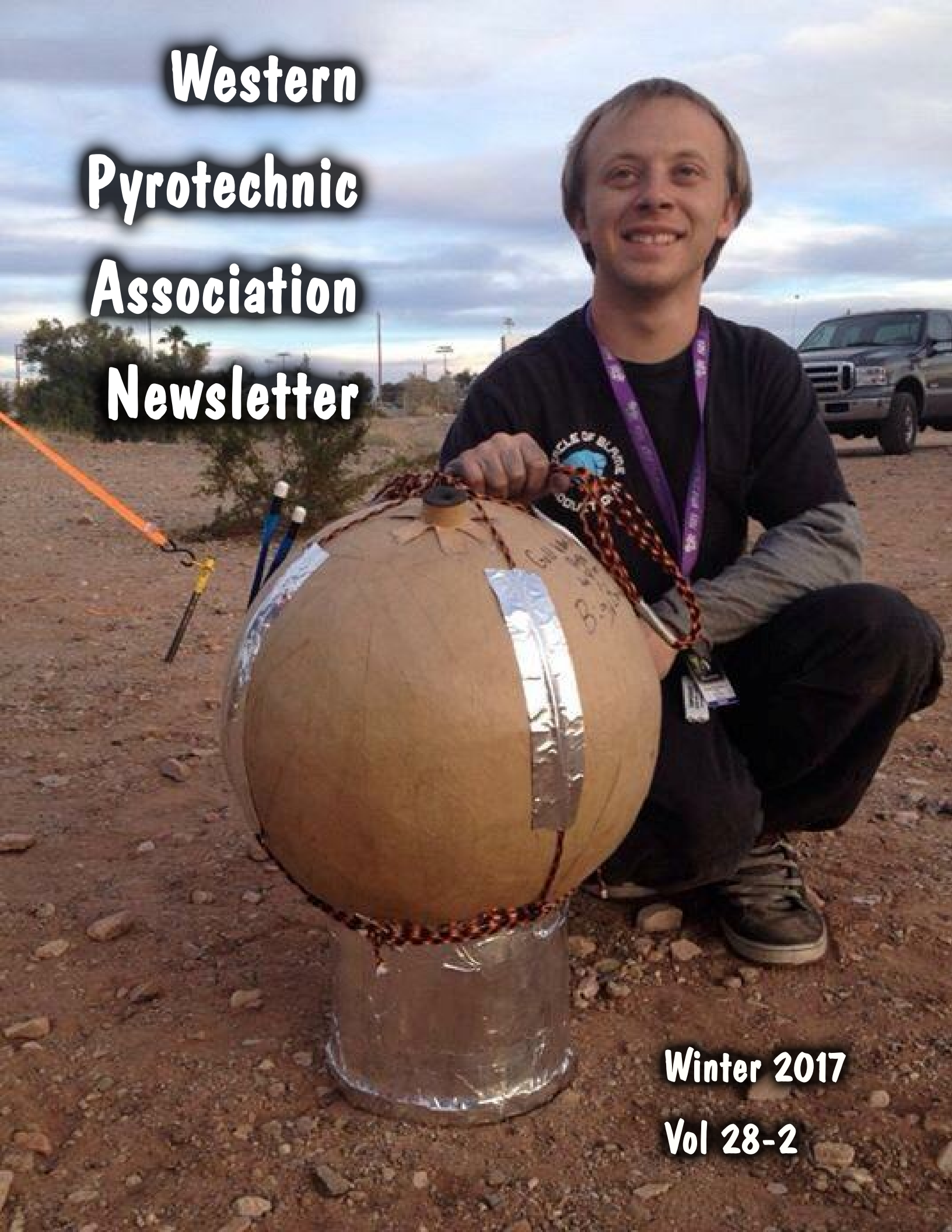
Western Pyrotechnic Association Newsletter



Winter 2017
Vol 28-2

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Cover: Tommy's 16 inch shell

Elected Officers of the WPA

President:	Chuck Eriksen
Vice President:	Greg Dandurand
VP Communications:	Pete Hand
Treasurer:	Jane Anderson
Secretary:	Dennis Miele

THE SMALL PRINT

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A message from the Editor

This will be my final newsletter, folks. My term as VP Communications ends in February, and I will not be standing for re-election. As some of you know, I've had a rough year, with serious health problems, and I no longer have the energy to serve as an officer of the club. It's been an honor to serve, but now it's time to pass the torch to someone else. I will continue to contribute occasional articles to the newsletter, but mainly I look forward to being an ordinary member again, making fireworks, which is all I ever really wanted to do. I also look forward to being able to express my sometimes caustic opinion without people saying they're shocked, *shocked,* that a board member would say such a thing.

In addition to my position, the offices of President and Treasurer are also up for election in February. I have not heard that anyone plans to run for these positions. However, we do have a candidate for Communications VP. I'll let him speak for himself.

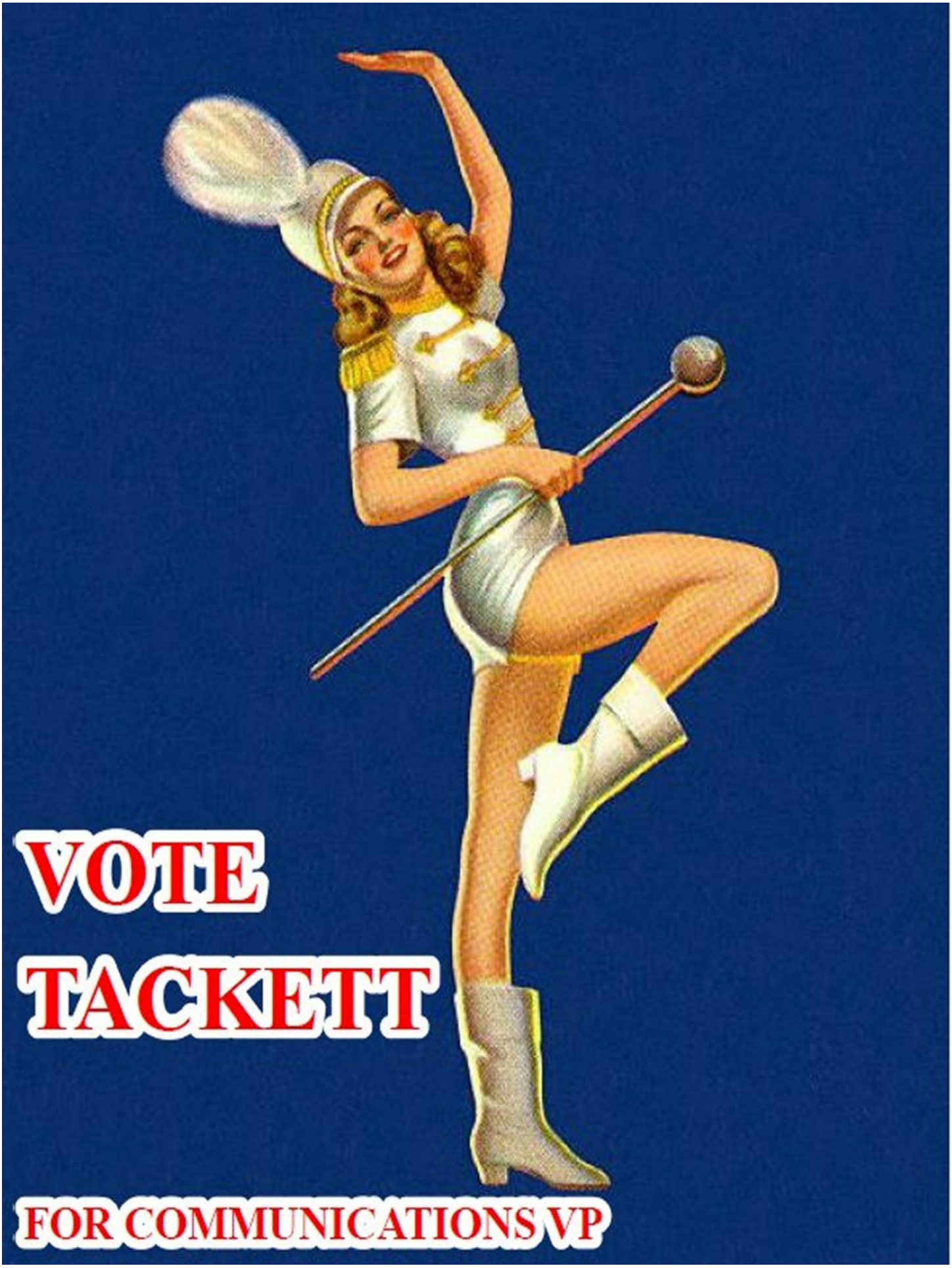
Pete Hand

I'm Tackett Austin, and I'm running for the position of VP of Communications for the WPA.



I was introduced to hand made fireworks about 15 years ago. Before then, I had never thought about regular people making them. To me, it was an activity that happened on the other side of the ocean, in a factory. 8 or 9 years ago, I was invited to attend WWB, and one of the first things I found was a seminar on making shells. I haven't missed a WWB since then, and have been to every Do-It in Hawthorne. Being a member of the club is something I'm proud of, and I look forward to the events every year. You'll find me in manufacturing, with my friends and family.

I'm a writer, instructor and organizer, and am confident I can carry out the duties of the position. I'm looking forward to serving (hopefully) as VP of Communications for the club.


VOTE
TACKETT
FOR COMMUNICATIONS VP

OBITUARY



All things must come to an end. Sadly, this year Harry Gilliam decided to retire, and being unable to find a buyer for Skylighter, has sold off all the stock and is closing it down.

Skylighter has been a fixture in the Pyro world for more than 30 years. It survived the CPSC persecution in 2007, which closed down many other suppliers or placed them under such restrictions that they couldn't do business. Although it was *by far* the most expensive place to buy chemicals and supplies, it had an unparalleled selection - if Skylighter didn't have it, nobody did. But most of all, the how-to articles on its web site were a tremendous resource that introduced a whole generation of amateur pyros to the hobby. Most of this was the work of Ned Gorski, who is a WPA member and now operates his own web site, pyrotechnics.com . Although this is a subscription site, Ned has made his video class "Fireworking 101" available at no charge. Take a look.

At the time of writing, the Skylighter web site is still open, and clicking on Project Plans takes you to the how-to articles. How long this will remain open, I have no idea. Harry is selling a PDF of the collected articles for about $100, but for now you can still read them for free.

http://www.skylighter.com/

DO IT 2017



It was a wet one.

This year we extended Do It for an extra day, starting Wednesday, to allow more time for manufacturing. It was just as well we did. This was the ominous scene that greeted us mid-morning on Thursday,. We watched helplessly as a cold front swept down from the north, blotting out the mountain view and bringing lashing rain with bitterly cold winds.

Everything closed down in the afternoon, and even the Afterglow had to be canceled.

In the morning we sloshed through the puddles to see what was left standing.



The switch box at the Hawthorne track had been condemned for lack of maintenance, so we had no city power and were dependent on generators this year.



The rain stopped eventually and the sun came out, but the icy winds never let up.





This was a good year to bring a converted toy hauler instead of an EZ-Up.







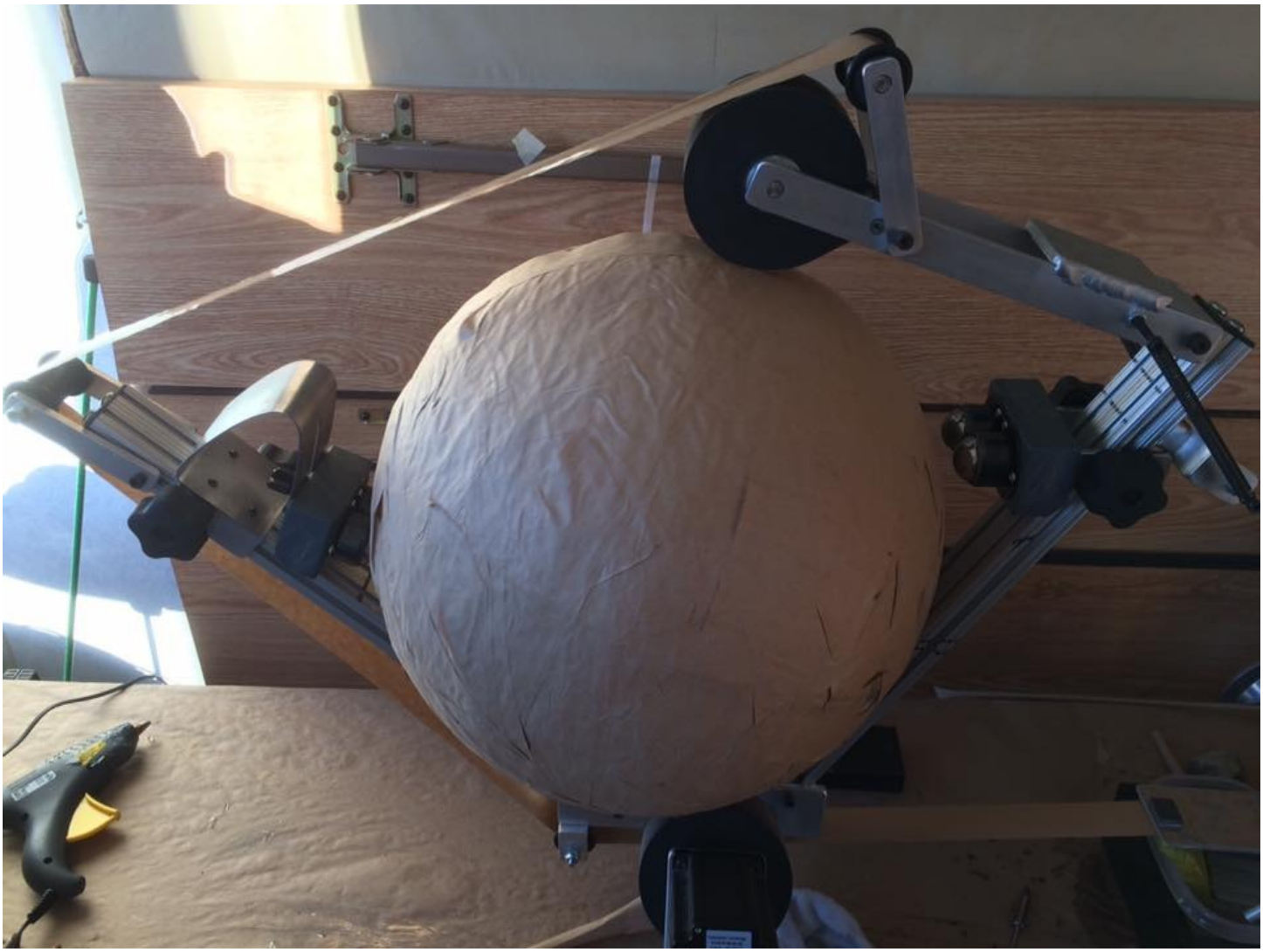


It was a good year for 16 inch shells too! A goodly number of smaller shells from six to twelve inches were made and wrapped with the club WASP, with gummed tape donated by Jim Widmann, but the 16 inch shells stole the show. Here, Lonny Ross's 16 inch shell of stars, comets and inserts shown in various stages of construction.









Pictures courtesy of Lonny Ross



We had a visitor from England, Roger - known online as Arthur Brown - who built a 16 inch containing a whole case of 3 inch shells around an inner 6 inch. Roger deserves extra credit for building it in an EZ-Up instead of a trailer, although the trailer crews wrapped it on one of their WASPs.







It wouldn’t be Do It without Dave Ferguson, who showed up towing his latest BFR on its custom made launch trailer. This was actually a *small* rocket to test his new motors - seven of them, 3.4 inches internal diameter, 32 inches long, with 7 pounds of black powder each. Fitted with a 12 inch shell header by Lonny Ross, the rocket was launched with an awesome sound, the test flight filmed by a television crew.







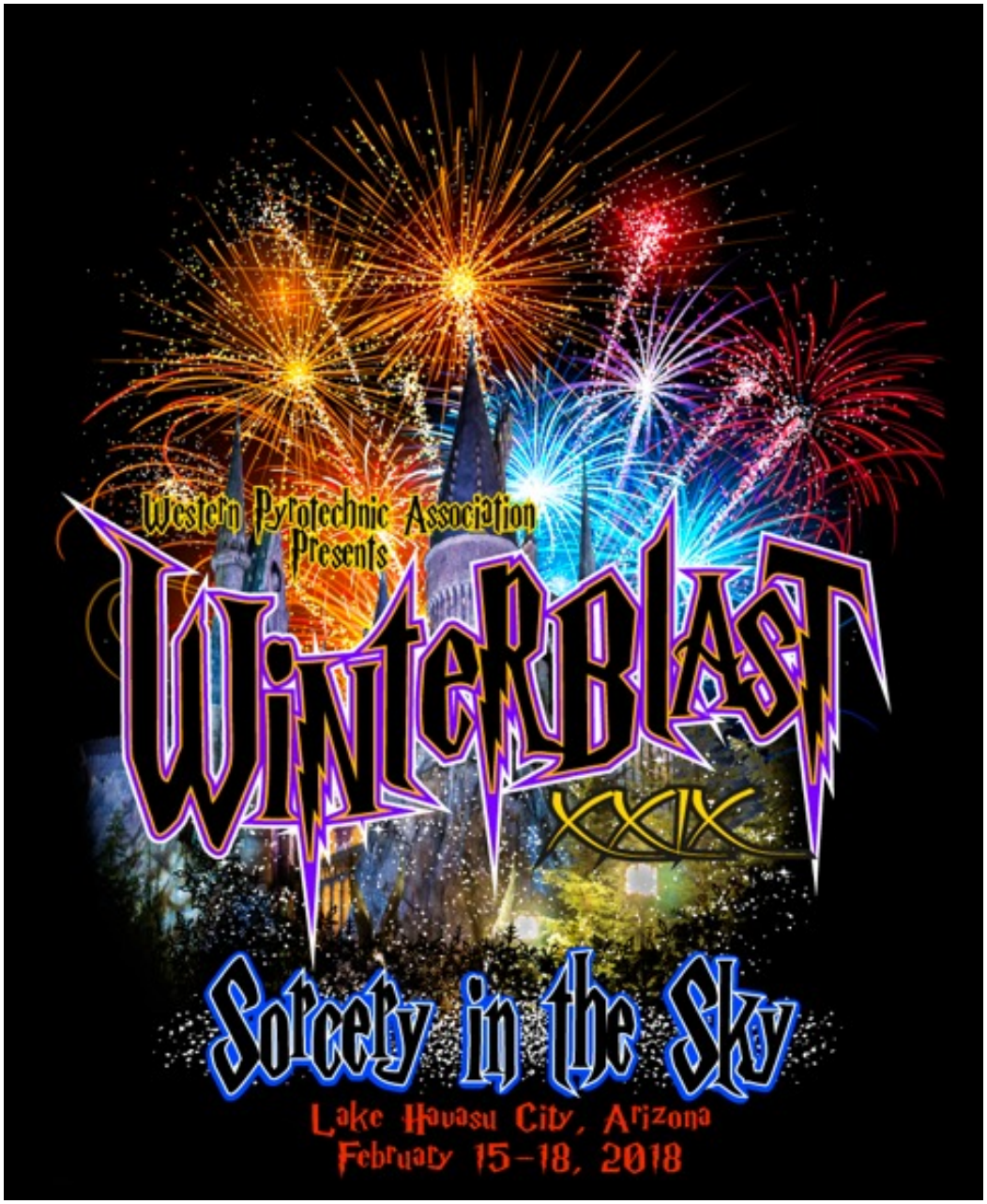
Your editor's own rockets this Do It were less than glorious. I made half a dozen. The first motors, made Wednesday before the rains, performed as expected, leaping out of the tubes. When I fired the remainder, however, after they sat in the rain and damp for two days, they *refused to leave the tubes*. They just sat there fizzing prettily before blowing their headers at the spectators. It was so embarrassing, I haven't the heart to show you a picture.

I also made some Lampares, of the kind described in last year's Spring newsletter. As I wrote in that article, ".. If one of them CATOs it will take out a whole rack…".

In the interests of scientific research I demonstrated the accuracy of this statement, when the second one fired did exactly that. Happily it didn't set off the others that were loaded next to it, but it made an impressive mess of the ¼ inch thick HDPE mortar, turning it *inside out.*

Just 20 grams - ¾ ounce - of flash did this.





Winter Blast 2018 registration is open

Hurry hurry hurry to get your registration in by January 14th for the Early Bird rate.

Registration Type and Fees		
	Early Bird Rate Received by 1/14/18	Regular Rate Received after 1/14/18
Member	$165	$215
Spouse/Life Partner Reduced Rate	$100	$115
Child (13-17)	$35	
Student Member or Sponsored Student Guest	$100	$115
Sponsored Guest	$165	

Old Jokes Home

Since this is my last newsletter and I can't be fired, and also since nobody sent me any other material for the newsletter, here are my last words. Thank you and goodnight.

A young lawyer was spinning along in his Maserati when it went out of control. At the gates of Heaven, he appealed to Saint Peter. "Look, I shouldn't be here! I'm only 31 years old! Can you do something?" Saint Peter looked him up in the ledger and said, "We have a different system for lawyers. We go by billable hours, and it says here you're a hundred and ten."

An Afghan, an Albanian, an Algerian, an American, an American Samoan, an Andorran, an Angolan, an Antiguan, an Argentinian, an Armenian, an Australian, an Azerbaijani, a Bahamian, a Bahraini, a Basotho, a Bengali, a Barbadian, a Barbudan, a Belorussian, a Belgian, a Belizean, a Beninese, a Bermudan, a Bhutanese, a Bissau-Guinean, a Bolivian, a Bosnian, a Botswanan, a Brazilian, a Bruneian, a Bulgarian, a Burkinabe, a Burmese, a Burundian, a Cape Verdean, a Cambodian, a Cameroonian, a Canadian, a Caymanian, a Central African, a Chadian, a Chilean, a Chinese, a Colombian, a Comorian, a Congolese, a Cook Islander, a Costa Rican, an Ivorian, a Croatian, a Cuban, a Cypriot, a Czechlander, a Danish, a Djiboutian, a Dominican, a Timorese, an Ecuadorian, an Egyptian, an Englishman, an Equatoguinean, an Eritrean, an Estonian, an Ethiopian, a Fijian, a Finnish, a French, a Gabonese, a Gambian, a Georgian, a German, a Ghanaian, a Greek, a Grenadian, a Guatemalan, a Guinean, a Guyanan, a Haitian, a Herzegovinan, a Honduran, a Hungarian, an Icelander, an Indian, an Indonesian, an Iranian, an Iraqi, an Irishman, an Israeli, an Italian, a Jamaican, a Japanese, a Jordinian, a Kazakh, a Kenyan, an I-Kirbati, a Kittitian, a Korean, a Kosovar, a Kuwaiti, a Kyrgyz, a Laotian, a Latvian, a Lebanese, a Liberian, a Libyan, a Liechtensteiner, a Lithuanian, a Luxembourder, a Macedonian, a Malagasy, a Malawian, a Malaysian, a Maldivian, a Malian, a Maltese, a Marshallese, a Mauritanian, a Mauritian, a Mexican, a Moldovan, a Monacan, a Mongolian, a Montenegrin, a Moroccan, a Mozambican, a Namibian, a Nauruan, a Nepali, a Nevisian, a Dutch, New Zealean, a Nicaraguan, a Nigerien, a Nigerian, a Niuean, a Norwegian, an Omani, Pakistani, a Palauan, a Palestinian, a Panamanian, a Papuan, a Paraguayan, a Peruvian, a Filipino, a Pole, a Portuguese, a Puerto Rican, a Qatari, a Romanian, a Russian, a Rwandan, a Saint Lucian, a Saint Vincentian, a Salvadoran, a Samoan, a Sammarinese, a São Toméan, a Saudi Arabian, a Scot, a Senegalese, a Serbian, a Seychellois, a Seirra Leonean, a Singaporean, a Slovak, a Slovene, a Solomon Islander, a Somali, a South African, a South Sudanese, a Sudanese, a Spanish, a Sri Lankan, a Surinamer, a Swazi, a Swede, a Swiss, a Syrian, a Tajik, a Tanzanian, a Togolese, a Tokelauan, a Tongan, a Trinidadian and a Tobagonian, a Tunisian, a Turk, a Turkmen, a Tuvaluan, a Ugandan, a Ukranian, a Uruguayan, an Uzbek, a Ni-Vanuatu, a Vaticanian, a Venezuelan, a Vietnamese, a Welshman, a Yemeni, a Zambian, and a Zimbabwean all walk into a fancy restaurant.

The maître d' says, "Sorry, you can't come in here without a Thai."